

SPONSORSHIP

SOAR blueprints

COURSE

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course teaches STEM racing teams how to identify, approach, secure, and maintain corporate sponsorships. The sponsorship lifecycle has six critical stages: budgeting, value proposition development, prospect research, outreach, negotiation, and long-term relationship management.

Course learning outcomes: By the end, teams will:

- Create a detailed budget tied to specific sponsorship needs
- Develop a compelling ROI case and unique selling proposition
- Build a qualified prospect list and outreach pipeline
- Execute professional sponsorship proposals
- Track sponsor engagement and measure ROI



MODULE 1: BUDGET CREATION

Purpose: Specific, itemized budgets show professionalism and help sponsors understand exactly what their money funds.

Step 1: Inventory all costs

Create a line-item budget including:

Marketing & Branding:

- Team apparel and branded gear
- Portfolio/presentation materials
- Sponsorship pitch deck
- Social media content creation
- Pit Display

Vehicle design & manufacturing:

- CAD software subscriptions
- 3D printing materials
- Assembly testing
- Safety equipment and inspections

Contingency:

- Design iterations
- Material price fluctuations
- Emergency repairs

Step 2: Categorize sponsorship tiers

Break the budget into sponsorship packages so different companies can participate at their level:

Platinum Sponsorship:

Exclusive category (one per tier): title on vehicle, prominent logo placement, speaking role at events, custom ROI report, team visit to sponsor office

Gold Sponsorship

Logo on vehicle side panel, social media features, competition attendance invitation, quarterly updates

Silver Sponsorship

Logo on team website/apparel, social mentions, online recognition, monthly update

Bronze Sponsorship

Logo in portfolio/website, thank-you recognition, annual update

In-Kind Sponsorship (product/service donation)

Materials, services, or products of stated value, negotiated rate



MODULE 2: CREATE ROI & UNIQUE SELLING POINT

Understanding Sponsor ROI

Sponsors don't fund "a team." They invest in brand visibility, market reach, community impact, and association with innovation

Quantify Your Reach

Audience Inventory:

- Social media followers (Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube) with engagement rates
- Website traffic and portfolio views
- Email list size
- On-ground attendees at competitions
- Local/regional media coverage potential
- School/district partnerships and student population

Build Your Unique Selling Proposition

Answer these questions:

Why choose your team?

- Novel vehicle design or engineering approach
- Exceptional track record or achievements
- Diversity and inclusion initiatives
- STEM outreach programs you run
- Geographic region (local pride angle for regional sponsors)
- Social impact or community service
- Media presence or storytelling angle



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MODULE 3: SPONSOR OUTREACH STRATEGY & PROSPECT RESEARCH

Prospect Research Framework

For each prospect, document:

Company Profile

- Industry and business model
- Annual revenue (if public)
- Geographic footprint (especially if local/regional)
- Key decision-makers (sponsorship, marketing, HR)

Sponsorship History

- Past STEM/education sponsorships
- Sports or event partnerships
- Cause marketing initiatives
- Budget allocation (estimate from annual reports or press releases)

Connection Points

- Alumni or parent connections
- Customers or partners using your school/district
- Shared geographic region
- Alignment with company values or DEI goals
- Employees interested in mentoring

Building Your Prospect Pipeline

Month 1–2: Identify 40–50 prospects

Month 2–3: Research top 20–25 and build target list

Month 3–6: Execute tiered outreach (hot → warm → cold)

Target conversation rate: 30–50% of outreach attempts should yield meetings/calls



MODULE 5: SPONSORSHIP PROPOSAL & OUTREACH EXECUTION

Outreach Sequence

Step 1: Introduction/Discovery (Week 1-2)

- Channel: Email or LinkedIn
- Goal: Introduce team, request brief call to explore fit
- Tone: Respectful, specific, not desperate

Template Email

Subject: STEM Racing Team Partnership Opportunity – [Team Name]

Hi [Name], I'm [Your Name], business manager for Team [Name], competing at the [Competition Name] this [Month].

I came across [Company] because of your commitment to [specific initiative: STEM education/innovation / local community], which aligns perfectly with our mission to develop young engineers.

I'd love to share how a partnership with our team could benefit [Company]. Please email us with any questions.

Best, [Your Name]

[School/Team]

[Phone] [Email]

After sending the initial email, follow up within 5 business days. Remember to be adamant; sending out cold emails with no follow-up would lead to very low engagement.



MODULE 6: DELIVERING ROI

Documentation for ROI Report

Track and document:

Reach & Visibility

- Social media impressions (track monthly Instagram, LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube analytics)
- Hashtag reach and mentions
- Website portfolio views
- News coverage and media hits (screenshots with dates)
- Print or digital publications featuring team/sponsor

Engagement Quality

- Follower growth during sponsorship period
- Engagement rate on sponsored posts (comments, shares, reactions)
- Website referral traffic to sponsor's site (if linked)
- Mentions in team communications

Audience Demographics

- Age, location, education level of followers
- Career stage (students, early-career, experienced professionals)
- Industry overlap with sponsor's customer base

Brand Association Metrics

- Sentiment analysis of social mentions (is coverage positive?)
- Number of times sponsor logo appeared
- Quality of visible placement (video, photography, written features)



MODULE 7: ASSESSMENT - IS YOUR SPONSORSHIP READY

Documentation for ROI Report

Assessment: Is Your Sponsorship Program Ready?

Use this checklist before launching outreach:

Budget & Value Prop

- ☐ Itemized budget complete with all cost categories
- ☐ Sponsorship tiers defined with clear benefits
- ☐ ROI value proposition written for each tier
- ☐ Unique selling proposition developed

Research & Outreach

- ☐ 30+ prospect companies researched
- ☐ Top 15–20 companies scored and prioritized
- ☐ Outreach email template created
- ☐ Discovery call script prepared

Proposals & Documentation

- ☐ Sponsorship proposal template completed
- ☐ Professional proposal PDF created (with logos and branding)
- ☐ Sponsorship agreement template drafted
- ☐ Communication calendar built

Tracking & Follow-Up

- ☐ Prospect spreadsheet with contact info
- ☐ Communication log template ready
- ☐ ROI tracking dashboard set up
- ☒ Post-competition report template drafted

Relationship Management

- ☐ Monthly update email template prepared
- ☐ Social media tagging strategy defined
- ☐ Photo/media asset folder organized
- ☐ Renewal strategy outlined

