



# Fundraising

Funding for a *FIRST*® Tech Challenge Team is an ongoing process for both Rookie and Veteran teams. Understanding that this should be a year-round (if possible) effort that your Team commits to will not only make your Team more financially strong, but also provide a way to ensure sustainability between the seasons. The cost for a Rookie Team differs from a Veteran team in one main way: Start-up costs for building the robot.

Rookie Teams have a higher cost when starting out, because of the need to purchase all the components to build a robot to compete in competitions. Registration is a yearly cost that all teams must pay, but once the hurdle of starting the team is finalized, costs will often times fluctuate from year to year, depending on needs and location of your Team. These costs may include:

- Regional Registrations/Competition Fees (this is separate from the Program Registration Fee)
- Purchasing replacement parts and/or additional components the Team wants to utilize.
- Tools
- Renting Meeting space
- Branding - Teams often develop a brand (logos, t-shirts, banners, etc.)
- Transportation/Hotel Accommodation

The Mentor Manual goes into great detail regarding funding a *FIRST* Tech Challenge Team. However, your strongest resources are the [Fundraising Resources](#). Here, not only do we provide a great Sample Team Budget ([PDF](#) / [excel](#)), you can also find more information on:

- **Fundraising Guides** - *there are great resources to investigate, samples to take advantage of, and tips to go over.*
- **Sponsorships** - *having your team sponsored by a local or regional business is a great way to secure funding for your team.*
- **Grants** - *grants is another source of funding for your Team. FIRST® also offers grants on behalf of our generous sponsors. When applying to grants, remember, even if you received a grant the year before, it is not guarantee you will receive one this season. Make sure to be complete in your application and do not rely solely on grants as your main source of fundraising.*

Regardless of where you are in the competition season, you should always be planning to fundraise for your next goal. May it be purchasing new product, traveling to different workshops, or maybe even starting a new *FIRST* Tech Challenge Team. Budget & Fundraising is an ongoing process. One of the best pieces of advice that was shared with me from a Mentor was that their Team always made sure to fundraise the funds to not only start their season, but fundraised to the level of competition they set as their goal to reach. This means, if you plan on making it to your Regional Championship, ask yourself:

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- Do you have the funds for any Entry fees?
  - Do you have funds for travel/hotel accommodations?
  - How do you plan to fund for meals during the event?
  - Do you have enough spare parts?

If you hope to move further along the advancement path, from your State/Regional Championship to Super-Regionals or all the way up to the *FIRST* Tech Challenge World Championship, make sure you ask your Team these questions for each new competition. Making a goal and planning ahead will ensure that it is not funding creating a barrier to see how far you are capable of reaching in this season's Challenge.

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