

Ideas as you write your letter to solicit sponsorship

Who are you and why should the sponsor support you?

Is there a special story the potential sponsor might want to share pre- and post-competition with their customers, in advertising, or on their website based on certain aspects of your team members? For example, is there a national company or local organization/business (see “Who will sponsor your team” tip sheet for ideas on groups to approach) that specifically targets the demographics of your team (women, seniors, college students, school-age children, baby boomers with disposable incomes, outdoors people in their 30s, families, etc.)? Find your team’s ideal target sponsors and go after them.

Another angle to consider is whether or not your team might place high and be eligible for the Conservation Grants in the competition. The key is to determine whether or not your team fits the target audience of a certain sponsor or could offer them additional press opportunities based on your team members or your potential team standing in the tournament and highlight those angles in your request.

If there is no special angle for your team, use other tips on the “Who will sponsor your team” sheet to find local businesses that may be interested in you due to personal ties to the company or your being their “local team.” Be creative when looking for potential sponsors and pitching your case to them.

What are you requesting?

Include a budget for your proposal including the GTBC sponsorship fees. Let the sponsor know if there is flexibility in what you are asking. Will you only accept the full budget of GTBC sponsorship fee, rental car, food, and gas or would you accept the sponsor only paying your entry sponsorship fee? Include additional opportunities for the sponsor to promote themselves through your team such as t-shirts, hats and other gear for your team members with their logo that they could provide you. This could be listed under in-kind contributions from them in your budget proposal.

In short, the applicant must convince the potential sponsor that it is a good way to spend their money. Deliverables to include in the proposal letter:

Summary report and photos – Give your commitment to provide these to the sponsor post-event for their publicity uses. The sponsor can use this on websites, newsletters, etc.

Press release - This should be sent out to local media outlets one week prior to the event. Give your commitment to help write a press release detailing your team members, your proposed route if you know it, some birds of note that you might see on the coast, additional tournament details, the conservation goals of

the Birding Classic, and other aspects of your story that your sponsor might find of interest. All the press you can garner increases the value to the sponsor.

Be courteous and prompt in all communications and think about it from the sponsor's point of view. How can they benefit if they fund this proposal.