



# The X-Culture Guide on Securing Travel Funding for the Global Business Week Conference

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## The Economics of the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference

X-Culture hosts two Global Conferences annually: one in the USA in October and one internationally in July. Past events have been held in Thailand, Italy, Canada, and Italy, as well as Washington, D.C., Miami, Atlanta, St. Louis, and Panama City in the U.S. These conferences are organized by the world's leading international business professors, hosted at world-renowned universities, and provide students with an exceptional opportunity to gain hands-on international business experience, collaborate with peers from around the world, and network with industry leaders.

The **X-Culture Global Business Week Conference** is one of the world's premier learning and networking experiences in international business. Students don't just listen to lectures, they work on real-world business challenges, engage in intensive cross-cultural collaboration, network with industry leaders, visit major international companies, attend expert-led career development workshops, and gain hands-on experience in solving global business problems.

Since 2010, over 130,000 students from more than 70 countries have completed the X-Culture program. To date, we have successfully organized over 20 conferences, attended by more than 2,000 students from across the world.

Despite its size and global reach, X-Culture is not a wealthy organization with the resources to provide travel stipends to students. It is a non-profit educational initiative, powered by a network of international business professors who volunteer their time and expertise to provide students with an exceptional learning experience.

### ***The X-Culture Conference Finances***

X-Culture does not receive government grants or major external funding. Instead, it relies on a cost-sharing model to cover the expenses of organizing the conferences.

Professors dedicate countless hours to securing venues, inviting speakers, arranging company visits, and designing workshops. However, the operational costs—lodging, meals, local transportation, conference materials, and other logistical expenses—must be covered. These costs are then divided among participants, with each student and professor paying their share to make the conference possible.

Most professors and students receive travel funding from their universities. Some students cover the cost personally, viewing it as an investment in their education and career. Others obtain sponsorships from employers, local businesses, or professional organizations.

While X-Culture cannot directly fund students' travel, we are committed to helping students secure financial support.

**This guide** provides strategies for obtaining sponsorships, grants, and other funding sources.

Additionally, if a student needs a support letter for a potential sponsor, we are happy to provide assistance.

## Understanding Your Funding Needs

Before seeking financial support, determine how much funding you need. A clear budget will help you set realistic goals and demonstrate to sponsors that you have a solid plan.

### *What is covered vs. out-of-pocket:*

**What is covered by the conference fee:** event participation, lodging/hotel accommodations for the week of the event, daily breakfasts and lunches, dinner on the opening and closing days (as described below), company site visits, local cultural tours, lectures and workshops, and daily transportation to and from the hotel, company visits, and cultural activities.

### **What is out-of-pocket (what sponsors often help with):**

- **Registration Fee:** \$2,195, or \$1,995 with the early-bird discount (if registered before April 30).
- **Airfare:** \$200 – \$2,000 (varies by location and booking time)
- **Lodging accommodation outside of conference days:** X-Culture provides lodging/hotel accommodations for the week of the event. However, if you plan to extend your stay for sightseeing, expect to pay \$30–\$150 per night (hostels or hotels).
- **Meals:** X-Culture covers all breakfasts and lunches, as well as dinner on the opening and closing days. No dinner is provided on other conference days. You will also need to cover your meals before and after the event if you extend your stay. Expect to pay \$5 – \$20 per meal.
- **Local transport on days of arrival and departure:** \$20 – \$100 (buses, metro, taxis).
- **Visa (if applicable):** \$50 – \$150 (varies by country).
- **Miscellaneous:** \$50 – \$200 (insurance, SIM card, personal expenses).

**Sponsor-ready budget summary:** Sponsors often want one clear total plus a simple breakdown of what is covered vs. what you still need to pay out of pocket.

**Example total needed:** \$3,350 (example only, replace with your real costs). This example assumes early-bird registration (\$1,995), airfare (\$900), dinners on four conference days (\$200), local transport (\$60), visa (\$100), and miscellaneous (\$95).

**Tip:** When requesting support, include (1) your total budget, (2) your total amount requested, and (3) bullets stating exactly what the requested amount will cover (e.g., airfare + dinners + visa).

### *Prepare these attachments before you ask:*

- **Proof of participation/selection:** Your acceptance letter
- **One-page budget** showing total cost and what you are requesting (with line items)
- **One-page resume** (PDF)

## Identifying Potential Sponsors

- **Universities and Academic Institutions**
  - Study abroad offices, international business departments, student government associations, career development centers.
  - Research travel grants, student competition funds, and academic conference funding.
- **Employers and Professional Organizations**
  - Your current or past employer, especially if your work is related to international business.
  - Professional business associations (e.g., Chambers of Commerce, Rotary Clubs, international business organizations).
- **Local Businesses and Corporations**
  - Companies with an interest in international business, consulting, marketing, or finance.
  - Businesses where X-Culture alumni or your connections work.
- **Government Officials and Local Representatives**
  - City mayors, regional government offices, and economic development boards.
  - Politicians and government-backed educational initiatives supporting student global engagement.
- **Non-profit Organizations and Foundations**
  - Organizations promoting leadership, cultural exchange, or business education.
  - Search for scholarships/grants from international education foundations.

## How to Approach Sponsors

Securing sponsorship requires a strategic approach. Sponsors are more likely to support you if they see a clear benefit in doing so. Follow these steps to maximize your chances of success.

### *1. Do Your Research*

Before reaching out, identify the right person within the organization who handles sponsorships, donations, or professional development funding.

- **Universities:** Contact your study abroad office, business department, career center, or student government association.
- **Employers:** Reach out to HR, your manager, or the professional development department.
- **Local Businesses & Corporations:** Find sponsorship coordinators or corporate social responsibility (CSR) representatives.
- **Government Officials:** Look for city council members, economic development offices, or local politicians who support education initiatives.
- **Professional Organizations & Foundations:** Identify grant officers or board members in organizations that fund student travel or leadership programs.

Once you have the correct contact person, research their organization's mission and past sponsorships to tailor your request accordingly.

## *2. Craft a Strong Request Letter*

A well-written sponsorship request letter should be professional, concise, and persuasive. Here's what to include:

### *Introduce Yourself and the Opportunity*

- Briefly explain who you are (name, university, field of study).
- Describe the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference, emphasizing its global nature, hands-on business experience, and networking opportunities.

### *Highlight the Benefits of the Event*

- Explain how attending will contribute to your education, career, and leadership development.
- Mention any prestigious activities, competitions, or networking opportunities at the event.

### *Align Your Request with the Sponsor's Interests*

- If contacting a business, highlight how their industry relates to X-Culture's global business focus.
- If reaching out to an employer, show how this experience will enhance your skills and benefit your workplace.
- If asking a university department, explain how attending aligns with their goals for student development, global engagement, or business education.

### *Be Specific About What You Need and How It Will Be Used*

- Clearly state how much funding you are requesting and what it will cover (e.g., airfare, registration, meals).
- If asking for partial support, mention that you are securing funds from multiple sources.

### *Offer Something in Return*

- Offer to provide a post-event presentation, write a report, or share insights on social media.
- If contacting a business, suggest featuring their name in your event materials, thanking them in a LinkedIn post, or wearing their branded apparel.

Templates are provided at the end of this guide.

## *3. Follow Up*

Not all sponsors will respond right away, so following up is essential.

- **If no response after a week:** Send a polite follow-up email restating your request and asking if they need additional information.
- **If they show interest but hesitate:** Offer flexibility in funding amount and reinforce how their support will make an impact.

Templates are provided at the end of this guide.

## *Final Tips*

- Personalize each request—generic emails are less effective.
- Be professional but enthusiastic—let them see your passion for the event.
- Always express gratitude, whether they sponsor you or not.

By taking a thoughtful and strategic approach, you'll increase your chances of securing the funding needed to attend the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference.

## **Other Ways to Secure Funding for the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference**

If traditional sponsorship efforts don't cover your full travel expenses, consider alternative fundraising methods. Many students successfully raise funds through crowdfunding, community support, and creative initiatives.

### *Crowdfunding (GoFundMe, etc.)*

Crowdfunding platforms allow you to reach a broad audience of potential supporters, including friends, family, and strangers who believe in your journey.

#### ***How to Set Up a Successful Campaign:***

- **Choose the Right Platform:** GoFundMe, and Indiegogo are popular options for student travel funding.
- **Create a Compelling Story:** Explain why attending the X-Culture Conference is important to you and how it will impact your education and career.
- **Set a Realistic Goal:** Aim for a funding amount that aligns with your travel costs.
- **Use Engaging Media:** Add a personal video and photos to make your campaign more relatable.
- **Offer Small Rewards:** While not required, offering thank-you notes, social media shoutouts, or event updates can encourage donations.
- **Promote Your Campaign:**
  - Share your link on social media, LinkedIn, and student forums.
  - Ask family and friends to share it.
  - Regularly update donors on your progress.

### *University and Student Government Funding*

Many universities have travel grants, scholarships, or student government funding for academic conferences.

- **Check with:**
  - Study abroad offices
  - Business/International Studies departments
  - Career development centers
  - Student government associations
- **Application Tip:** *Many funding sources require a short essay or proposal, so prepare a strong case highlighting how the conference aligns with your academic and career goals.*

## *Employer Sponsorship & Professional Development Funds*

- If you are employed, ask if your company offers professional development funds for educational events.
- If your job relates to international business, highlight how the conference will enhance your skills and benefit the company.
- Even if your company doesn't have a formal sponsorship program, they may offer partial reimbursement for work-related training and travel.

## *Community & Local Business Support*

- Approach local businesses that have international connections or support education initiatives.
- Offer to mention them in your event presentations, social media posts, or blog updates.
- Reach out to community organizations like Rotary Clubs, Chambers of Commerce, and economic development boards, which often support students engaged in global learning.

## *Fundraising Events & Personal Initiatives*

If you need additional funds, consider organizing a **small fundraiser**:

- **Skill-based fundraising:** Offer tutoring, consulting, or freelance work in exchange for donations.
- **Local events:** Host a bake sale, car wash, or ticketed event with friends and family.
- **Social media raffles:** Organize a small giveaway where people donate for a chance to win a prize.

## *Apply for Travel Grants & Scholarships*

Many organizations offer **small travel grants for students** attending global events. Search for:

- **Educational foundations** that fund international learning experiences.
- **Corporate scholarships** for business or leadership programs.
- **Government-backed programs** supporting student mobility.

A quick online search or asking your university's **financial aid office** can help you find relevant funding sources.

## **Organizing Your Fundraising Strategy**

### *Combine Multiple Sources*

Instead of depending on one large sponsor, secure smaller amounts from different sources, such as

- A university grant for \$500
- A local business sponsorship for \$300
- A GoFundMe campaign raising \$700 from family and friends
- Personal savings covering the rest

By diversifying, you minimize risk and increase the likelihood of reaching your goal.

## *Create an Online Fundraising Campaign*

Crowdfunding platforms like **GoFundMe, Indiegogo, and Fundly** help you raise money from a wide audience.

- **Set a realistic goal** and break down how the funds will be used.
- **Write a compelling story** explaining why this opportunity matters.
- **Include photos or videos** to make your campaign more engaging.
- **Promote your campaign** on social media, LinkedIn, and within your community.

## *Leverage Social Media & Networking*

Use your network to spread the word:

- **LinkedIn:** Share your story and tag potential sponsors.
- **Instagram & Facebook:** Post updates on your journey, fundraising milestones, and event preparations.
- **University & Business Forums:** Ask professors, mentors, or alumni for support.
- **Community Groups:** Reach out to local organizations, Rotary Clubs, and small businesses.

Make it easy for people to support you by including a donation link in every post.

## *Offer Something in Return*

People are more likely to support you if they feel valued. Offer something in exchange for their sponsorship:

- **Public Recognition:** Thank them in a LinkedIn post or event report.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Offer to present your learnings at their company, school, or organization.
- **Regular Updates:** Send sponsors emails or blog posts about your experience at the conference.
- **Social Media Shoutouts:** Tag businesses or individuals who contribute to your campaign.

## **Timeline & Next Steps**

A well-planned timeline ensures you secure funding in time for the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference.

### *Start Early (3-4 Months Before the Event)*

- Begin researching potential sponsors and funding sources **at least 3-4 months before the conference.**
- Many funding applications, corporate sponsorship approvals, and university grants take time to process.
- If launching a **crowdfunding campaign**, allow enough time to promote it and receive contributions.

### *Track Your Outreach & Deadlines*

- Keep a spreadsheet or list of all funding requests, including:
  - Who you contacted (name, organization)
  - Date of contact and follow-ups
  - Response status (pending, approved, declined)
- Set reminders to follow up with sponsors and ensure you meet university or grant application deadlines.

### *Express Gratitude & Share Your Experience*

- Always thank sponsors, donors, and supporters—whether they contribute financially or help connect you to resources.
- Show appreciation through:
  - Personalized thank-you emails or handwritten notes
  - Social media recognition (tagging and thanking sponsors publicly)
  - A post-event report or short presentation about what you learned
- Keeping sponsors updated makes them more likely to support future students attending X-Culture.

Templates are provided at the end of this guide.

### *Outreach timeline example (week-by-week):*

- **Week 1:** Confirm your budget, identify potential sponsors, and send your first round of tailored requests.
- **Week 2:** Continue outreach to additional sponsors and follow up with anyone you contacted in Week 1 who hasn't responded.
- **Week 3:** Follow up again, ask for introductions or referrals, and submit any grant or university funding applications with upcoming deadlines. If needed, launch or strengthen a crowdfunding effort.
- **Week 4:** Confirm commitments, send thank-you notes, and close any remaining gaps using additional outreach or other fundraising options.

## TEMPLATES

### Sponsorship Request Letter

**Subject:** Sponsorship Request for X-Culture Global Business Week Conference

Dear [Sponsor's Name],

My name is [Your Name], and I am a [Your University] student majoring in [Your Field]. I have been selected from over 100,000 X-Culture alumni worldwide to be among 150 students to attend the prestigious X-Culture Global Business Week Conference in [City, Country] this summer, where I will collaborate with top international business students and industry professionals.

This event will provide hands-on experience in solving real business challenges, professional networking opportunities, and leadership development.

I am reaching out to request financial support to help cover my travel expenses. Specifically, I need assistance with [airfare, registration, etc.], totaling [\$Amount]. I am securing funding from multiple sources and would greatly appreciate any level of support.

Attending this conference will allow me to bring back valuable insights to [sponsor's organization], and I would be happy to [give a presentation, write a summary, promote your organization]. I believe this opportunity aligns well with [sponsor's mission/interests], and I would love to discuss how we can collaborate.

Please let me know if we can set up a meeting or call at your convenience. Thank you for your time and consideration!

Respectfully,  
[Your Name]  
[Your Contact Information]

## Script for Phone Call or In-Person Meeting

While emails are the primary method of contact, sometimes a phone call or in-person meeting can be more personal and effective. Here's a suggested script:

### **Introduction:**

"Hello, [Sponsor's Name], my name is [Your Name], and I'm a [Your University] student. I'm reaching out because I've been selected to attend the **X-Culture Global Business Week Conference** in [Location], and I'm looking for sponsors to help cover my travel expenses. Do you have a few minutes to discuss how you might be able to support my attendance?"

### **Why You're Attending:**

"This conference is an amazing opportunity to collaborate with students and professionals from around the world, working on real-world business challenges. It will give me the chance to gain practical experience, build a global network, and strengthen my leadership skills."

### **Why They Should Support You:**

"I believe this experience aligns with your organization's mission, especially in terms of [mention any alignment with the sponsor's business or goals]. I would be happy to share insights from the event, whether through a report, presentation, or social media shoutouts."

### **Ask for Sponsorship:**

"I'm seeking sponsorship to help cover costs like airfare, accommodation, and the registration fee. Would your organization be open to supporting this opportunity? Any contribution, big or small, would make a difference."

### **Thank You:**

"Thank you so much for your time, and I truly appreciate your consideration. I look forward to hearing back from you soon."

This script helps guide students through the conversation without sounding too scripted. It's flexible and can be adapted based on the sponsor's responses.

- **If they decline:** Thank them for their time and ask if they can refer you to someone else who might be interested.

## Follow-Up Email Template

After the initial sponsorship request, follow-up is key. Here's a simple follow-up template:

**Subject:** Follow-Up: Sponsorship Request for X-Culture Global Business Week Conference

Dear [Sponsor's Name],

I hope this message finds you well. I wanted to follow up on my previous email regarding my request for sponsorship to attend the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference in [Location] this summer. I would greatly appreciate your support in making this valuable educational opportunity possible.

If you need more details or if there's any further information I can provide, please don't hesitate to let me know. Thank you again for considering my request, and I look forward to your response.

Best regards,  
[Your Name]

## Sponsor Rejection Response Template (Keeping the Door Open for Future Support)

Even if a sponsor initially declines your request, responding professionally and maintaining a positive relationship can leave the door open for reconsideration or future opportunities. Here's a template for responding after a rejection while subtly encouraging them to reconsider:

**Subject:** Thank You for Your Time & Consideration

Dear [Sponsor's Name],

Thank you for taking the time to review my sponsorship request and for considering my participation in the **X-Culture Global Business Week Conference**. I truly appreciate your time and the insights you shared.

I completely understand that sponsorship decisions involve many factors, and while I am disappointed, I remain grateful for the opportunity to connect with you and your organization. I truly believe that my participation in this conference aligns well with [mention their company/university values, goals, or interests], and I would still love to find ways to collaborate in the future.

If circumstances change or if there are alternative ways your organization could support my participation—whether through a partial contribution, introductions to other potential sponsors, or even advice on securing funding—I would greatly appreciate any guidance you can offer.

Regardless, I will be sure to keep you updated on my progress, and I hope we can stay in touch. Thank you again for your time and consideration, and I hope we have the opportunity to connect again soon.

Best regards,  
[Your Name]  
[Your Contact Information]

### Why This Works:

- Expresses gratitude and professionalism.
- Shows understanding while reinforcing the alignment of your request with their values.
- Keeps the door open for alternative forms of support (partial funding, referrals, advice).
- Maintains the relationship for future opportunities.

## Thank You Email Template

Once a sponsor has agreed to support the student, a thank-you note is essential. Here's a template for expressing gratitude:

**Subject:** Thank You for Your Sponsorship!

Dear [Sponsor's Name],

I wanted to sincerely thank you for your generous support in helping me attend the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference. This opportunity will be invaluable in furthering my education and career, and I deeply appreciate your contribution to making it possible.

I will be sure to keep you updated on my experience at the event, and I look forward to sharing the insights I gain with you and your team. Thank you again for your support!

Best regards,  
[Your Name]

## Social Media & Shoutout Templates

If students are offering shoutouts or social media mentions in exchange for sponsorship, providing some guidelines on what to say can help them present themselves professionally:

### Instagram/Facebook Post:

“A big thank you to [Sponsor Name] for supporting me in attending the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference! I’m excited for this incredible opportunity to learn, network, and grow in the field of international business. I’ll be sure to share updates on my journey. #Grateful #XCulture #InternationalBusiness”

### LinkedIn Post:

“I am grateful to [Sponsor Name] for their generous support in making my participation in the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference possible. This experience will provide invaluable insights and connections in the international business field, and I’m proud to represent [Sponsor Name] as a supporter of global education and leadership.”

## Fundraising Campaign Page (GoFundMe, etc.)

Provide a brief outline of what the fundraising page should look like, including:

- **A Catchy Headline:** “Help Me Attend the X-Culture Global Business Week Conference in Italy!”
- **Personal Story:** Why attending is important and how it will benefit the student’s education and career.
- **Funding Goal:** The specific amount needed and a breakdown of expenses.
- **Updates:** Encourage students to keep donors informed throughout the process.