



MONEY III: SPENDING TEAM \$\$\$

FALL 2009

TIP I: Any **DESIGN CHALLENGE** reference to "project funding" refers to funds designated specifically for project use. These funds cannot be used to benefit team members personally.

TIP II: Any **DESIGN CHALLENGE** reference to "scholarship funds" refers to opportunities for US Citizen team members to receive money directly in the form of "scholarships."

TIP III: When in doubt about team expenses - - **ASK!**



As you might imagine, there are RULES OF USE for any funds received from a federal agency. NASA is a federal agency; therefore, some restrictions exist on how team money can be spent or distributed. For instance:

☞ The following expenditures are considered "allowable," although excessive spending in any allowable area would not be approved or reimbursed.

- Reference Materials
- Equipment Rental
- Postage
- Software
- Display Materials
- Model Materials
- Team Travel
- Meeting
- Registration Fees

☞ Expenditures considered NOT-allowable include:

- Alcohol
- Entertainment
- Personal Use
- Regular Meals
- Activity Fees
- Non-project related travel

☞ All funds received from TSGC in the form of Level earnings or Travel Grant must be used for the direct purpose of addressing the **TSGC DESIGN CHALLENGE** topic. Funds remaining at the completion of the team's participation [one or two semesters] will remain with the faculty advisor and may be spent at his/her discretion.

☞ All funds received from TSGC in the form of Scholarship will be distributed directly to the team; no restrictions on use. Please note that NASA does prohibit the distribution of scholarship funds to non-U.S. Citizens.

☞ Any funding area labeled as "reimbursable" or "up to" requires a tally of spending and copies of receipts. Your Faculty Advisor or Department Accountant has express knowledge of what type of spending is considered eligible for reimbursement. Always check on the university rules for reimbursement before spending.

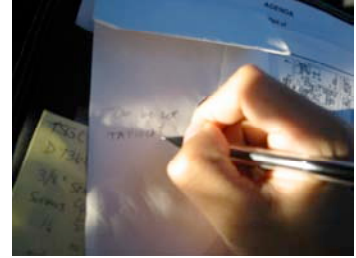
☞ Funds received from TSGC are for the sole use of the team members and faculty advisor; and may not be used for expenses incurred by others outside the team membership.

☞ Suggested Reading: *Money I, Money II* in the online Design Team Notebook.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT TEAM SPENDING:

① We'd like to have a team dinner to celebrate the end of the semester. Is this an allowable expense? As far as TSGC is concerned - - Yes! A celebration meal used as a team incentive is allowed. Pizza orders for late-night work sessions, a team celebration meal or a class party are also okay. Meals ordered on a regular basis are not allowed - nor an extravagant team dinner. Some departments or institutions have strict policies against using funds in this way, so be sure to discuss plans first with your faculty advisor and department accountant to avoid getting stuck with the bill later.



② We are a two-semester team, but we didn't use all of our funds from the first semester . . . can we carry that over for use during semester II? Absolutely. You have a choice of invoicing for the first semester earnings and depositing it to your departmental account; or leaving it on the TSGC books and invoicing later. Either way, the funds are yours for use as you continue.

③ We've finished up - but we have leftover funds remaining. How can leftover funds be used? Any team earnings left unused at the end of the semester may be used at the discretion of the Faculty Advisor. Here are some examples of how faculty have put a team's earning to good use:

- Purchases for classroom or lab use - including software, reference materials, band saw.
- Holding an end of semester celebration that included students, parents, spouses and siblings.
- Purchasing a display case for use by the department to house student displays & awards.
- Banking the funds for use by unfunded design teams in a future semester.
- Distributing leftover funds as "scholarships" to the team members.

Again, policies vary from institution to institution - - don't assume that because one institution spent funds in a particular way that your institution will allow the same thing. Ask first.

④ I needed to purchase a new suit for the Design Challenge Showcase presentation. Can I charge this to the team account? No. Only project related expenses are allowed.

⑤ We plan to use my car to travel to Houston for the Design Challenge Showcase - can I use team funds to purchase a new set of tires for the trip? No. Again, this is considered a personal expense because you would benefit by the purchase. It would be a better idea for the team to ride together in a rental car. Your department contact can help you make arrangements to use a rental car and this can be charged to team funds.

⑥ I heard that last year some of the teams received scholarships for their own use. How can I get one? Award dollars earned in a variety of competitive categories are applied toward "scholarships" including Best in Poster, Model and Oral Presentation at the Showcase.

⑦ I don't understand why we have to use our own credit cards to pay for our Showcase hotel stay. Can't TSGC just pay for this up front so we don't have to worry about it? In rare occasions a "group contract" can be arranged to pay in advance for group stays; however, this would require the program to contract for a set number of rooms regardless of whether or not they were actually used. Typically, when on university travel, expenses are paid with a personal credit card, receipts kept and reimbursement received with submission of an travel expense form.

OTHER MONEY RELATED QUESTIONS? Contact Debbie Mullins [mullins@tsgc.utexas.edu]