Becoming Mansa Musa:

THE OFFICIAL PARC GUIDE

TO FUNDRAISING

PARC
Pan-African Robotics Competition

Contents

Intro

Welcome!

The Pan African Robotics Competition (PARC) is a youth robotics competition by SenEcole that brings together middle school and high school robotics students across Africa and its diaspora. Competing teams are given challenges based on real-world topics relevant to science, engineering, and the sustainable development of Africa. To learn more, please visit www.parcrobotics.org.

PARC provides the robot kit, meals, and lodging for competing teams, however, transportation and other costs must be financed independently. This handbook is a comprehensive guide designed to assist PARC teams with securing the necessary funds to cover their expenses. If you are one of these teams, congratulations on deciding to be a part of our PARC family, we welcome you to our growing network of innovators and we look forward to meeting you soon!

For templates in this guide, note that square brackets "[]" are used to indicate areas where content that is specific to your team's requirements should be inserted. Additionally, teams may further customize templates according to their preferences.

Step One: Know Your Target

To get started, you should determine how much money you will need to raise. Take inventory of any funding you may already have and refer to the PARC Team Expenses detailed in the most current Letter of Notice (found by clicking "PARC DETAILS" on www.parcrobotics.org) in order to assess ALL costs related to team activities that you will have to incur.

Details about expenses and your target amount of finance will guide you over the course of your team fundraising journey. It is recommended that you keep a cash flow statement or an income and expenditure account to track your finances and measure your progress. See the sample (which you can customize to your specific needs) below to help you get started...

PARC Team ABC February 2018 Income and Expenditure Account (sample) *please note costs in the sample are not representative of actual costs.*

Income:

SPONSORS	
Sponsor DEF donation	$250.00
Sponsor GHJ donation	$300.00
ONLINE CROWFUNIDNG	
LaunchGood campaign donations	$50.00
FUNDRAISING PROJECTS	
STEM Expo profit	$100.00
Mufti Day profit	$250.00
MEMBERSHIP FEES	$60.00
	TOTAL: $1,010.00

Expenditure:

REGISTRATION FEES	$300.00
PASSPORT AND VISA FEES	
Passport	$250.00
Visa	$200.00
CUSTOMS FEES	$30.00
OTHER	
Team shirts	$20.00
Country Flag	$10.00
	TOTAL: $810.00

Step Two: Reach Out to Potential Sponsors

There are many organizations and individuals who would be willing to help PARC teams with their needs either by directly funding specific services/items (i.e. need-in-kind donations) or by donating some amount of money for the following reasons:

- PARC provides opportunities to market their organization.
- PARC challenges students to think critically and become accustomed to solving real-world issues.
- PARC team members may eventually join the workforce and thus help boost the economy.
- PARC students cultivate leadership qualities while learning the importance of collaborative skills.
- PARC encourages students to learn about relevant current affairs to propagate future development.
- PARC gives students the platform to apply theoretical knowledge and enhance innovative abilities.

<u>Who to ask</u>
Potential sponsors are usually more likely to help when they are asked by someone they know. Start by having a meeting with team members, parents and coaches to list potential sponsors who they have a personal relationship with. Examples of potential sponsors are...
- Diplomats (perhaps those relevant to the country PARC will be held in)
- Banks
- Relatives
- Friends
- Charity Organizations (Lion's Club, Rotary)
- Community leaders
- Transportation companies
- Organizations that align with and support the objectives of PARC
- Other businesses that you, a family member or a friend is a customer of/is employed in/owns

You may also ask any current sponsors if they can suggest and even introduce/put you in contact with other potential sponsors.

Try to determine who the best person to contact at each organization is (i.e. the Point of Contact). Most firms have a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) department - it may be ideal to reach out to the head of this department. If your team has a link to anyone in the organization, they can help you decide who your Point of Contact should be.

Use your list to create a database of sponsors and monitor your partnerships by populating and updating it with basic information such as the following:

- Organization Info: name, website, type of firm, address
- Status (Are they a potential sponsor, current sponsor or partner for a particular event?)
- Point of Contact Info: name, contact details (email, phone number)
- Funds/services from organization: target, actual received
- Details about the last time they were contacted by the team: date, method (phone, email, in-person), team rep(s), follow-up date, additional notes
- Team Appreciation: *see "Saying Thank You" section for more details*

<u>How to ask</u>
It is best to start by sending the potential sponsor a request letter along with a "Team Needs and Sponsorship Form" (see sample below), then following up with a phone call after a few days. During this call, you can then schedule an in-person meeting to present your sponsorship proposal, provide details of sponsor benefits and give them more information about PARC.

Examples of sponsor benefits:

- Recognition and sponsor's logo on team website
- Recognition on social media (e.g. by posting pictures with sponsors or pictures of the teams holding sponsor banners)
- Sponsor's logo on team shirts
- Sponsor's logo on robot
- Presenting team members as potential interns

Try to come up with more sponsor benefits! It is important to think from each <u>specific</u> sponsor's perspective when deciding on benefits. What would be helpful for them? This is usually in the form of publicity, fulfilling corporate social responsibility or labour force (i.e. providing them with interns or employees).

Sponsorship Request Letter

Ideally, your letter should be concise and formal. It should contain the following...
- PARC details
- Specific information about your team
- The exact amount of funds/items/services you are requesting for (you may refer them to the Team Needs and Sponsorship Form for this)

You may use the template letter below:

[school/organization name]
[address]
[date]

Dear [potential sponsor/partner organization name],

[team name] Pan African Robotics Competition [sponsorship/partnership] Request Letter

I am writing to you as a participant of the Pan African Robotics Challenge (PARC) from [your school/organization name] in the hopes of gaining your support as a [sponsor/partner].

PARC is an annual event hosted by SenEcole that brings together students from all over Africa and the diaspora for a three-day robotics competition themed on a real-world topic relevant to science and the sustainable development of the continent. Media coverage has ranged from the New York Times, BBC, Le Monde, France 24, Voice of America, RFI, and Aljazeera, just to name a few.

Through PARC, my team and I collaborate to think critically and apply our theoretical knowledge of Math and Science by building and programming purposeful robots. [details about number of students on the team and information about your coach(es)]. As you may be aware, the STEM field holds immense power to positively impact communities and it is vital that the youth is able to explore and engage in it through opportunities like PARC.

In anticipation of this year's competition in [month and year of competition], we are, from [potential sponsor/partner organization name], seeking [details of services/items/amount of funds you require from this sponsor/partner].

We are looking forward to having the support of [potential sponsor/partner organization name]. [brief information about sponsor/partnership benefits].

Our team would like to plan a meeting with you to explain why we are so keen on attending PARC. We would also like to expatiate on the benefits of [partnering/sponsoring] us. In the next few days, my [coach/team member], [coach name/team member name], will be calling to set up a meeting. You may also contact [him/her] at [coach phone number] or send an e-mail to [team e-mail address].

More information about our team can be found at [URL of team website, if available]. Further information about PARC can be found at www.parcrobotics.org.

Thank you for the [partnership/sponsorship] consideration. We hope to work with you soon!

Sincerely,

[name]
PARC Team team name]
[team email address]

Team Needs and Sponsorship Form

This is important for sponsors to be able to clearly see what expenses they can help you with while maintaining paperwork about the agreement for the sponsor's records as well as your team's. Note that if you want to ask sponsors for help with only specific items/services (i.e. not all your expenses), you may edit the table of expenses to reflect this.

Ensure each party involved in the agreement has a copy of this document.

Below is a template that you may use:

PARC Team [team name] Needs and Sponsorship Form

Team Needs:

Expense	Quantity	Single Item Cost	Total Cost

Thank you for agreeing to sponsor PARC Team [team name]. We sincerely appreciate your support!

Sponsor Name: _____

[Ask for Sponsor Contact Details]

Contribution Amount: _____

[Ask for details of Payment Method]

[Details of Benefits that Sponsor will receive]

Sponsor Signature and date: _____   Team Representative Signature and date: _____

Phone Call

This is how you may follow up with sponsors after you have sent them the initial sponsorship request letter along with the Team Needs and Sponsorship Form. Below is a template script:

FIRST CALL:

"Hello, may I please speak to [point of contact name/position]?"	
o If the person is not around/available: Ask for their contact details and inquire about when would be best to contact them. Call at the recommended time.	o If the person is around/available: "Hi! I'm a member of the [your team name] Pan African Robotics team from [your team's school/organization]. I'm calling to confirm that you received the letter we sent you a few days ago. I'd be happy to further discuss our proposal and set up a meeting with my team if you like. Is this a good time to do so?"

	o If they say no: "When would you prefer that I call back to talk about the benefits of sponsoring a youth robotics team for the largest robotics competition Africa?"	o If they say yes: Give them the space to speak about their organization's (marketing) needs and emphasize the advantages of sponsorship/partnership with your team accordingly. Ask them what kind of promotion they would like to focus on and make sure they are aware about the media coverage PARC receives. Talk about the forms of advertisement you can offer them by adding their logo to your t-shirts, robot, website etc. Give them the option to confirm sponsorship/partnership with you over the phone but also allow them the opportunity to set up a meeting with you or contact you later (provide your team's email address, phone number etc.) if they prefer. If they are not sure about their decision yet, inform them that you will call to follow up in a few days. Thank them for the time they took to speak with you and for considering the partnership/sponsorship.

FOLLOW-UP CALL(S):

    o   If they haven't contacted after saying they'll think about the sponsorship/partnership:
Tell them you are happy to answer any further questions they may have. Ask if there are any concerns they would like you to address. Reiterate the advantages of the sponsorship/partnership. Offer to set up a meeting with your team or give them a robot demonstration.

    o   If they have agreed but you have not received any funding:
Tell them you are happy to answer any further questions they may have. Ask if there are any concerns they would like you to address. Ask when it would be a good time to pick up their filled-in sponsorship form. Keep following up with them every few days until you receive the donation, or they decline the proposal.

In-person Meeting

It is a good idea to design a detailed but brief pitch presentation with lots of pictures/videos or any kind of media that can provide evidence of the work that your team does - sponsors love this. Make sure you cover the following in your presentation:

- Background information about PARC (mission and overview) and your team (founding, member details, activities and any achievements ==e.g.)==.
- The benefits of participating in PARC (the skills you have gained and other educational opportunities your members may have access to through PARC).
- The funding/items/services you need from the organization (and have already gained from others) and how they will be used.
- Sponsorship/partnership benefits.

Extra Tips:

- Before the meeting, practise the entire presentation until it is perfect.
- Be polite.
- Be punctual.
- Dress formally.
- Bring your robot. You don't have to bring it inside, but you may do so if you offer a demonstration.
- Bring all documents: the sponsorship request letter and Team Needs and Sponsorship Form you sent them as well as any additional documents you may have containing information about PARC and your specific team.
- Remember to thank them for their time.

Saying Thank You

Once you have secured a sponsorship/partnership, it is important to thank the sponsor/partner in order to maintain your relationship. Here are some guidelines:

- **Highly recommended and expected: Send them a thank you letter.**
- Send them a thank you card.
- Invite them as "VIP" to team events.
- Invite them for a robot demonstration.
- Send them thank you team photos/videos made by the team (especially once you get to the PARC venue).
- Ensure they have received all benefits you promised them.
- Encourage your members to apply for internships at their organization.
- Update them about your robot building journey as you progress.
- Send them reviews/reflections about your team's time participating in PARC and how it benefitted you.

Step Three: Set up a Fundraiser

In addition to help from sponsors, fundraisers may be necessary for your team to acquire your target amount of finance. In this section you will find detailed guides for three example fundraising projects of increasing levels of time and energy investments (School Mufti Day, Food Sale, STEM Expo), online crowdfunding advice, team membership plans (i.e. internal fundraising) and details about how to connect with other PARC teams to exchange even more fundraising ideas through PARC Collaborate.

School Mufti Day

Time + Energy investment: Low
Resources needed:
1. Partnership with school

- Mufti days are a quick and effective way to fundraise! Approach your school authorities and propose a day when casual clothes (i.e. mufti) can be worn to the school by staff members and students - as opposed to the usual uniforms or formal clothing - *if the individual pays a fee.* Ensure the fee is reasonable and something that everyone (or at least most people) at your school will be willing to pay. Allow those who would like to contribute more to donate a higher amount.
- To collect the fees in as organized a manner as possible, we recommend that the class teachers or representatives individually collect the fees from all the students and staff members in their respective classes and account for this using a form (with names of all the students in the class pre-printed) as shown in the example below:

STUDENT NAME	WEARING MUFTI?	AMOUNT PAID	STUDENT SIGNATURE
Daniella Uzor	Yes	$ 5	*Daniella U*

- Try to collect the fees as early as possible but during a time when everyone is likely to be at the school and in a known place e.g. during homeroom/morning registration.
- Each teacher or class representative can then submit the filled-in form with the money they collected to you by an agreed time.

Food Sale

Time + Energy investment: Medium (if outsourcing food items), High (if making food items)
Resources needed:
1. *(recommended)* Partnership with school/university or other relevant organization AND restaurant/catering service/bakery or other relevant organization
2. Venue
3. Food items for sale
4. *(recommended)* Posters/flyers
5. *(recommended)* Tickets or wristbands (to identify those who have paid entrance fee)

Food. Is. Life.
- This might be the most popular (and delicious) way to raise money for sure! **Partnering with an organization like a school/university may be helpful in providing you with an apt venue (perhaps for free) and easier access to an audience.**
- First, decide what you want to sell - pizza, cupcakes, donuts, pies?
- Then, figure out where to get the food from - you could buy the ingredients and make them as a team (fundraiser *and* a team bonding exercise? Bonus points!) Or (if your teammates are not the best master chefs and you'd rather not sell burnt cakes) get a restaurant/bakery/cafe to sponsor - or at least partially sponsor - the food items.
- Set your prices by considering how many food items you will likely be able to sell (be realistic), any costs incurred and the target amount of money you are trying to raise. Try to maximise profits but

keep prices reasonable enough for your customers and realize you may not be able to raise all of your target money with just one event.
- Advertiseeeee! Use social media, word of mouth, posters, flyers and other forms of advertisement extensively. If you are partnering with an organization you may be able to use their existing channels of communication (assemblies, group chats or noticeboards) to get the word around.
- Sell!

STEM Expos

Time + Energy investment: High

Resources needed:
1. *(recommended)* Partnership with school/university/local laboratory or other relevant organization
2. Venue
3. Chemicals, apparatus and equipment for science experiments
4. *(recommended)* Posters/flyers
5. *(recommended)* Tickets or wristbands (to identify those who have paid the entrance fee)

- STEM Expos are fun ways to raise funds while showing off your science skills! They do, however, require a good amount of planning and you will likely need to gather quite a few resources. **For this reason, it might be a good idea to partner with a school, university, a local laboratory or some other type of organization that can provide you with a venue, audience and the materials you will need.**
- Decide what kind of experiments you will showcase. You can find simple (but mind-blowing) experiments with a quick search online or maybe even from your textbooks! You could even just decide to show people how to build robots and demonstrate how the robots you've already built can function and be controlled.
- Review the materials you will need and figure out how you will source them. If you will have to pay for them, make note of this cost. Decide who will conduct each experiment and make sure each of you knows exactly how to do so **safely.**
- Estimate how many people you will be able to attract to the event. Be as realistic as possible - perhaps try to ask around to gauge the amount of people who would be interested enough to attend.
- Find a venue. You will need a venue that is spacious enough for your estimated number of attendees to move around and for each team member to set up a stall/station where they can display their experiment and present information about how it works. It is best to find a place you will be able to use for one day for free.
- Next, gather the resources and materials you will need: chemicals, apparatus etc. Make sure to try out each planned experiment beforehand so you can be sure you've got the instructions right.
- Use the following formula to calculate the entrance fee that you and your team will set for your STEM expo:
  (target amount of funds + costs to set up STEM expo) / estimated number of attendees = entrance fee.
- Advertise the event! Use social media, word of mouth, posters, flyers and other forms of advertisement extensively. If you are partnering with an organization you may be able to use their existing channels of communication (assemblies, group chats or noticeboards) to get the word around.
- Have a rehearsal: run through every single experiment and presentation you have planned. Confirm that everything will go smoothly.
- Execute the event!

Online Crowdfunding
Crowdfunding through the Internet can make it easier for your team to advertise your financial needs to a wider audience in order to gather funds. Details about how to set this up will depend on the website

that you choose to launch your fundraiser on, and you can find several free online resources to guide you. Here, we have included some info about three popular crowdfunding sites:

NAME	WEBSITE	MUST BE CREATED IN...* *note: a trusted contact in one of these countries can set up the fundraiser on your behalf*	FEES	GUIDE LINK
Fundly	https://fundly.com/	US, Canada, Australia, and the UK.	Free. If you raise money: 4.9% platform fee in addition to the standard credit card processing fee of 2.9% + $0.30 per transaction. The platform fees go down if you run a big fundraiser.	https://blog.fundly.com/crowdfunding/
Gofundme	https://www.gofundme.com/	Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States	Depends on country set up in. See: https://www.gofundme.com/pricing/ for details	https://support.gofundme.com/hc/en-us/articles/360001992627-Creating-a-GoFundMe-From-Start-to-Finish-
LaunchGood	https://www.launchgood.com/	No restriction	5% platform fee along with a 3% credit card processing fee. Supporters have the option to cover the 8% in fees upon online checkout. See: https://support.launchgood.com/support/solutions/articles/3500001015-launchgood-fees for more details about bank accounts outside US and Canada.	https://www.launchgood.com/how-it-works

Some crowdfunding websites allow/require you to provide rewards to investors. Brainstorm what rewards your team can provide conveniently. Here are some examples:
- Thank you letters/cards
- Thank you videos made by team members
- Reviews/reflections about your team's time participating in PARC
- Updates about your robot building journey or a robot demonstration (possibly after the competition)
- Videos of your team participating at the PARC venue
- Incorporate something about them (e.g. corporate logo, favourite colour, initials) into the aesthetics of your robot design, team t-shirts or banners

Helpful links about crowdfunding:
Gofundme vs Fundly: https://www.gofundme.com/c/blog/gofundme-vs-fundly
10 Top Crowdfunding websites in Africa: https://moguldom.com/106418/10-top-crowdfunding-websites-in-africa/10/
https://medium.com/swlh/top-5-crowdfunding-platforms-that-nonprofits-social-causes-can-use-8e3dad9c29c7
Top 10 Crowdfunding sites for fundraising:
https://www.forbes.com/sites/chancebarnett/2013/05/08/top-10-crowdfunding-sites-for-fundraising/

Establish a Membership Fee within your PARC team
This may not be possible for each team, so we urge you to confirm that every single member is comfortable with the amount, regularity and duration of this fee before making it official.

Here are some example membership fee scenarios that you might find useful:

1. Team of 5
   Fee of $10
   Collected monthly for 6 months
   Total raised: $300

2. Team of 3
   Fee of $5
   Collected biweekly for 12 months
   Total raised: $360

3. Team of 7
   Fee of $2

Collected monthly for 10 months
Total raised: $140

bRaInStoRM other ideas...with PARC Collaborate!
Get together as a team and come up with a list of the valuable resources that you have easy access to (think skills, products, contacts). Consider how you can design fundraising schemes around these.

If your team is still having a hard time coming up with more ideas, then don't worry - the PARC family is here for you! Reach out to other PARC teams through the PARC Collaborate section of the Virtual Learning Platform. Explore, share and discuss fundraising ideas with them while connecting and making friends. To get started, all you need to do is visit the link below: