



SPONSORSHIP INFORMATION, SUGGESTIONS AND GUIDELINES FOR SYNCHRONIZED SKATING TEAMS

There are two types of sponsorship synchronized skating teams can obtain to help subsidize training and competitions expenses:

1. Private
2. Corporate / Business

PRIVATE SPONSORSHIP: An overview

This sponsorship is financial support from private individuals (friends, relatives, neighbors, teachers, acquaintances, etc.) or a business entity who simply want to help pay for your team's training and competition expenses and who do not expect anything in return for their contribution. Private sponsorship can be viewed as "philanthropic" giving, generally meaning that the sponsor or "donor" believes in your team, your sport or in helping people.

Money they provide to you is considered a "gift" and as such, there is no financial benefit to a private sponsor. They are not eligible for a tax deduction.

If you obtain a private sponsor, you do not need to execute a U.S. Figure Skating Eligible Skaters Compensation Agreement (ESCA). All arrangements of the sponsorship are between your team and the sponsor. Additionally, you do not need to declare income received from private sponsorship to U.S. Figure Skating.

A. Getting Started

Compile a comprehensive name and address list of acquaintances and people that members of the synchronized skating team know. Think globally and include people who live in your community as well as in other cities or states. Be sure to include team alumni and / or their parents.

Create a four-part "sponsorship kit" that explains who you are and what you are seeking. Include:

1. Cover letter
2. A fact sheet or team biography that illustrates the accomplishments and goals of your team. (see p. 12 for a sample)
3. Team expense sheet: Illustrate the cost of your team's yearly operation and the amount that each skater is required to contribute. (see pgs. 10-11 for a worksheet.)
4. The U.S. Figure Skating Fact Sheet for Synchronized Skating to explain what the sport is about.

B. Cover Letter

The cover letter should explain your reasons for contacting the potential sponsor. Briefly explain your team's goals and objectives and how you plan to achieve them. Illustrate your level of skating so that you don't mislead them. For example, if you are a teen introductory team you do not want them to think you are trying to make the U.S. World Synchronized Skating Team. Many people you contact may not be knowledgeable about the sport.

If you have a specific goal, explain it. For example, if you are trying to raise money to go to U.S. Synchronized Skating Championships, tell them about the qualification process. Explain the length of time you will be at the Championships, and the expenses necessary to get your team there (airfare, hotel, busses, food, chaperones, entry fees, etc.).

Close by asking for their support. Give specific instructions on how they can contribute, where to send the checks and to whom the checks should be made payable. If you are working with a target date, don't forget to include that date. Do not give them the impression that their contribution is tax deductible. (See p. 9 for a sample)

C. Fact Sheet / Team Biography

This document should let your sponsors know about your team's history, goals for the season, individual team members, competitive history, etc. It should help your potential sponsors to get to know the team and athletes a little better. Here are some things to include in your document:

- Brief team history
- Competitive record (your team's accomplishments over the past few years).
- Competitive level & requirements for that level
- Competitive calendar for the upcoming season
- List of exhibitions or performances locally where potential sponsors can see the team
- Weekly training schedule
- Skaters: What is required to join the team?
- List of team members (may want to include a brief bio of each skater – school & grade, hometown, other activities, skating background)
- Season goal
- Anything else that is interesting about your team
- It should be 1-2 pages

D. Creating a Relationship With Your Private Sponsors

Once your team receives support from a sponsor, immediately send a personal thank you note signed by a team captain, or all members of the team. Be personal and express gratitude for their support.

People who sponsor your team will be interested in hearing from your team. Make an effort to contact them periodically to share information about your team and your endeavors. By doing so, you can turn a one-time contributor into a returning contributor over the years. Appoint a team member or team captain to be responsible for creating information to share with sponsors. Here are some ideas:

Create a web site: Make sure that it is updated often and reflects the most current information about your team and its progress. Send an e-mail to each sponsor with the direct URL when it is updated.

Create a newsletter: After you initial team biography, create a newsletter part way through and following your season to update your sponsors on your progress. It should look good. Ask a

team member who knows how to use newsletter software to create it. Don't forget to consider costs of printing and postage. Or, consider e-mailing the newsletter.

Here are some ideas for things to include in your newsletters throughout the season:

- Your recent achievements (*did you just win a medal at the Dr. Porter competition?*)
- A diary of your recent travels to a competition (*how did the team prepare, did you have fun?*)
- Recent photos (*the team on the podium, on the bus, training at the rink, etc.*)
- Updates on your team's training regime
- Explanation of your competitive programs (*music, costumes design, choreography, etc.*)
- Updated competition schedule
- Create a "thank you" section that acknowledges your sponsors.
- Include information on how people can continue to support your team. Give an address where they can mail checks, etc.

Communicate via e-mail: Give sponsors an e-mail address (your team captain or team representative) and encourage them to keep in touch with you.

News articles: If the team, or any members of the team, have been featured in any recent news articles, copy them and send them to sponsors.

Post cards: When on the road at a competition or a training camp, send post cards to your sponsors explaining where you are and what you're doing there.

Note: Team members, rather than team managers or parents, should be the ones communicating with sponsors whenever possible. Appoint a "sponsorship committee" of team members (supervised by parents, if necessary) to keep in touch with sponsors. Make sure skaters understand how important the sponsors are to their team.

CORPORATE SPONSORSHIP: *An overview*

Corporate or business sponsorship is support from a business entity that is interested in helping support your synchronized skating team but is also interested in receiving a benefit from the sponsorship.

A. Getting Started

Start by listing companies and people who could be potential sponsors. Consider any personal contacts in the local business community, friends, family, etc. Go to your local library's reference section to research companies. Look for company names in books such as:

- Taft Corporate Giving Directory
- Sport Marketplaces- Corporate Sponsor Section
- The Foundation Grants Index
- Athletes Guide to Sponsorships
- The Foundation Directory
- The Yellow Pages of your local telephone directory

In addition, look for companies that advertise in skating or sport related magazines. Look in local sporting event programs to see which companies are patrons. These companies usually have a budget for sponsorship and may be more likely to sponsor a sports team. Ask friends and

associates for companies they know of in your area that may be willing to sponsor a skating team. Other potential prospects include:

- Community, civic or service organizations (Lions Club, Rotary Club, etc.)
- Professional associations
- Clubs

B. Cover Letter and Team Information

Prepare a cover letter (see Private Sponsorship section) to send to the company. If you have a personal contact at the company or organization, address it to them, and request that it be passed onto the appropriate person. If you don't have a personal contact, direct the letter to the President or the Director of Marketing. You can find this persons name by calling the company or locating their web site on the internet.

Like the cover letter to a private sponsor, be sure to discuss goals and accomplishments, but also add why you have chosen this particular company or organization.

Include the newsletter, fact sheet or resume you prepared for a private sponsor and a copy of U.S. Figure Skating's Fact Sheet for Synchronized Skating.

C. Follow up call

It is important to make follow-up calls for every cover letter that was sent out. Ask if the individual received the letter and arrange for a meeting. If possible, schedule the meeting at your practice rink. This will give the potential sponsor a better feeling for the sport, and may excite them into a sponsorship agreement. If they prefer an office meeting, try to arrange to have a VCR in the meeting room so that they can watch your performances.

Remember that it is a team member who should be following up with sponsor. If the skaters are too young to do this, then ask the coach.

D. Prepare a Sponsorship Kit and Organize Your Proposal

When you go to meet with a potential sponsor, take the following with you:

- **Team biography** or fact sheet
- **Photographs** of the team and/ or athletes
- **Press clippings:** any newspaper or magazine articles concerning the team's achievements (photocopy)
- **A proposal** to the company outlining what your team will provide for them and what you are asking them for (see p. 6 for suggestions as to what your team can provide and p. 7 for a sample proposal)
- **Budget information:** Your team's annual training and travel expenses
- **Videotapes:** Bring tapes of past performances in case the sponsor request to view your performance. You can also obtain a promotional video on synchronized skating from U.S. Figure Skating Headquarters if your sponsor isn't familiar with synchronized skating.

How much should we ask for?

One issue to be addressed is how much your team is worth to a potential sponsor. These factors should be considered:

- The overall exposure of the team
- The team's competitive record
- The events the team will be competing / exhibiting in
- The media interest those events will draw (esp. locally, if it's a local business)
- The size of the company or organization
- The sponsor's knowledge of figure skating and synchronized skating
- What the company will receive in return for sponsoring your team

After all these factors have been taken into consideration, you can begin to develop your plan of action. Generally, there are two ways to go about asking for support from a sponsor:

- **Ask for a monetary donation/gift.** Your team will be paid directly to help defray your training expenses. The sponsor must consider this type of support a gift, and they may not use you in any way for promotional purposes.
- **Submit a proposal to the potential sponsor.** This proposal will **outline** the services that will be provided in return for financial support from the sponsor (see p. 7 for a sample proposal).

E. The Meeting

Select a team representative to attend the meeting. (A coach or team manager should accompany the skater if he/she is under 16 years. The team representative should look professional – wear team apparel or choose an outfit that is “business casual.” (Men: nice slacks, shirt and tie. Women: a nice pantsuit or a simple skirt and blouse). Be very enthusiastic, as the negotiation process may be difficult.

Have a general idea of what to ask for (in your proposal), however, before stating a specific dollar figure, try to find out what they can give. Instead of throwing out the first number, ask, “How much funding is available?” and “Does the company have a budgeted amount for this type of sponsorship?” When explaining your reasons for needing sponsorship, try to focus the attention on your goals, what they require (costs associated with coaching, ice time, equipment, travel, etc.) and how you plan to reach them. Refer to your proposal when it comes time to discuss the details of the sponsorship. Be prepared to leave your sponsorship kit with the potential sponsor. Make sure to find out when they will be getting back to you or when to contact them again. If the company agrees to enter into a sponsorship agreement for promotional purposes, then be sure to follow up with a written and signed contract specifically stating what will transpire throughout the sponsorship.

E. Thank You Letters

Always send a letter thanking every potential sponsor you meet with, even if they have declined a sponsorship. They may reconsider.

F. Services That Your Team Provides the Sponsor

Once an agreement is entered into with a sponsor, the easy part is over. The hard part is keeping your sponsor happy. Services for your sponsor include the following points:

- Live up to your end of the contract and more. (*Promote your sponsor whenever there is an opportunity.*)
- Provide competition results, photographs, copies of all media coverage, etc.
- Invite the sponsor to team events, competitions and functions
- Make your sponsor feel “part of the team”

SUGGESTIONS OF SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES / SERVICES YOUR TEAM CAN PROVIDE

A. Title or Primary Sponsorship for your special event:

- Sponsor’s name may appear on merchandise
- Sponsor’s name appears in event title (*eg., 2004 xxxxx Mid-America Synchronized Skating Championships*)
- Right to use team’s likeness in advertising
- Right to use team’s logo in advertising and promotions (not U.S. Figure Skating logo)
- Acknowledgement in all printed promotional materials relating to the event or team (*print advertising, event program, stationery, flyers, posters, media releases, etc.*)
- On-site recognition via banners
- Public address announcements
- VIP tickets to event and special receptions; VIP parking and hospitality

B. Presenting Sponsorship for your team or special event:

- Sponsor’s name appears prominently in association with the event title (*eg., 2004 Mid-America Synchronized Skating Championships presented by xxxx*)
- Sponsor’s name may appear on merchandise
- Sponsor’s name may appear on team clothing (except competition costume)
- Acknowledgement in all printed promotional materials relating to event or team
- On-site recognition of company via banners/ signage
- Public address announcement
- Right to use team logo in advertising and promotions (not U.S. Figure Skating logo)

C. Supporting Sponsorship for your team:

- Sponsor contributes to overall team operating budget
- Sponsor’s name may appear on team clothing (except competition costume)
- Acknowledgement in all printed promotional materials
- Right to refer to team in advertising
- On-site recognition via posters and signage
- VIP tickets to event(s) / special receptions

D. Single event / special sponsor:

- Sponsor provides for special, related event (*eg., The xxxx Competitors’ Party*)
- Sponsor’s name appears on merchandise related to that event
- Acknowledgement in all printed promotional materials
- Right to refer to team in agreed-upon advertising

E. Official Suppliers

- Sponsor provides a product for the team to use
- Sponsor’s name appears on that merchandise
- Sponsor’s name may appear on team clothing (except competition costume)
- Acknowledgement in all printed materials relating to the team
- On-site recognition via banners

- VIP tickets to event, reception, etc.

F. Individual Donations / Gifts

- Sponsor provides funding to the team
- Sponsor's name appears in all printed materials
- Sponsor's name may appear in signage / banners
- VIP tickets to events, receptions, etc.

SAMPLE PROPOSAL

**A Proposal to Smith & Company
Official Sponsor of The Edge Synchronized Skating Team**

Offerings of The Edge Synchronized Skating Team:

The first section should focus primarily on how the company can benefit from serving as your sponsor. List all of the things offered to the company being approached:

1. Smith and Company will be granted the right to use The Edge Synchronized Skating Team's picture and / or competition results for advertising and promotional purposes (to be outlined in the contract).
2. The Edge Synchronized Skating Team will place an ad in the program of every competition we participating in acknowledging Smith and Company (Smith and Company will provide the ad).
3. The Edge Synchronized Skating Team will have Smith and Company's logo embroidered on their official team warm-up suits (Smith and Company's expense).

Your list can have as many items as you want. However, do not forget that you are committing yourself and your time. Do not promise things that cannot be done or that interfere with your training and competition schedule. If the sponsor reduces the level of sponsorship from your proposal, you may want to reduce or delete some of their benefits.

Sponsorship Requirements:

List all of the benefits received from the company for what is offered. Examples:

1. Smith and Company will pay The Edge Synchronized Skating Team \$ xxxx in the year 2004.
2. Smith and Company will supply The Edge Synchronized Skating Team with warm-up suits with the company's logo on it.

The list can have as many items as you want. However, keep in mind that what is received should be in balance with what is offered.

Note: Please contact U.S. Figure Skating's Sponsorship and Communications Department to approve anything that you offer a sponsor to ensure that it doesn't conflict with any

SAMPLE COVER LETTER FOR PRIVATE SPONSORSHIPS

The Edge Synchronized Skating Team
20 First Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
Phone: (719) 635- 5200
E-mail: usfsa@usfsa.org

← Or use team logo & Letterhead

September 3, 2003

Mrs. Jennifer Smith
6 Main Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Dear Mrs. Smith:

Opening:

Briefly introduce your synchronized skating team, your reasons for needing their support and what your plans are once you receive a contribution.

Body:

Briefly describe what synchronized skating is – use U.S. Figure Skating’s Fact Sheet for Synchronized Skating and refer them to an enclosed copy.

Briefly describe your team’s goals and objectives for the season and how you plan to achieve them. Describe how their support will enable your team to focus on these goals and objectives. Attach a copy of your team’s newsletter, fact sheet or resume for reference.

Closing:

Give specific instructions on how they can contribute. Thank them for their time and list where and when you can be reached, or when you will call, to discuss further details.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Jane Skater, Captain, The Edge Synchronized Skating Team

SAMPLE COVER LETTER FOR PRIVATE SPONSORSHIPS

The Edge Synchronized Skating Team
20 First Street
Colorado Springs, CO 80906
Phone: (719) 635- 5200
E-mail: usfsa@usfsa.org

← Or use team logo &
Letterhead

September 3, 2003

Jennifer Smith
Director of Marketing
Smith and Company
6 Main St. Ste. 200
Colorado Springs, CO 80906

Dear Ms. Smith:

Opening:

Briefly introduce your synchronized skating team, your reasons for writing to them, identify the sponsorship for which you would like to receive consideration and indicate how the contact was made.

Body:

Briefly describe what synchronized skating is – use U.S. Figure Skating’s Fact Sheet for Synchronized Skating and refer them to an enclosed copy.

Briefly describe why your team should be considered for sponsorship and how the company can benefit from serving as your sponsor. Give concrete examples of results, experiences, accomplishments and goals that will make the company want to sponsor you. Refer the potential sponsor to your attached newsletter, fact sheet or resume.

Closing:

Thank the individual for his or her time. List where and when they can reach you and when your will call to discuss further details.

Sincerely,

(Signature)

Jane Skater, Captain, The Edge Synchronized Skating Team

SAMPLE BUDGET WORKSHEET FOR SYNCHRONIZED SKATING TEAMS

SECTION 1: EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING

ITEM	COST PER UNIT	NUMBER	TOTAL
Competition costume			

Tights			
Practice clothing			
Warm-up suit			
Make –up & accessories			
Skate paint			
Team apparel			
Skate bags			
Other			

TOTAL \$ _____

SECTION 2: TEAM EXPENSES

ITEM	COST	NUMBER	TOTAL
U.S. Figure Skating Team Registration	\$10	1	\$10
Music editing			
Copies of music			
Postage & Phone			
Recruiting			
Coaching cost			
Ice time			

TOTAL \$ _____

SAMPLE BUDGET WORKSHEET FOR SYNCHRONIZED SKATING TEAMS *cont'd.*

SECTION 3: COMPETITION EXPENSES

Note: You should prepare this budget item for each of the competitions that your team plans on attending.

ITEM	COST	NUMBER	TOTAL
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Entry Fee			
Practice Ice Fee			
Coaching Fee			
Hotel rooms			
Transportation (bus, airline tickets, cars)			
Local transportation			
Meals			

SECTION 4: ADDITIONAL EXPENSES

In this category, budget for additional expenses and programs that your team might want to do. These are all optional type activities that may enhance the performance of your team.

ITEM	COST	NUMBER	TOTAL
Choreographer			
Specialty coach			
Off – ice training			
Team – building / sports psychology			

TOTAL \$ _____

TOTAL ANTICIPATED EXPENSES \$ _____

Fundraising \$ _____

Each team members' contribution

Sample Team Biography / Fact Sheet

The Edge Synchronized Skating Team

2003- 2004



The Edge Synchronized Skating Team skates out of the Colorado Springs Figure Skating Club and competes in U.S. Figure Skating sanctioned synchronized skating competitions. We will be entering our third competitive season and will compete at the intermediate level. Our team is comprised of

**The Edge Synchronized Skating Team
2003-04**

Tatiana Arguello, 8th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Christine Barton, 9th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Rebecca Bourden, 9th grade, Castle Rock, CO
 Alison Cargo, 7th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Amanda Chaney, 6th grade, Pueblo, CO
 Lisa Emery, 9th grade, Monument, CO
 Sharon Funk, 10th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Jennifer Smith, 7th grade, Littleton, CO
 Jenny Kilstrup, 8th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Andrea Lindhal, 6th grade, Monument, CO
 Susi McInnes, 7th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Kristy McNeal, 10th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Rhonda Morrison, 9th grade, Pueblo, CO
 Julie Nyikos, 8th grade, Widefield, CO
 Carrie Phillips, 9th grade, Monument, CO
 Carolyn Proctor, 6th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Polly Swartzfager, 9th grade, Colorado Springs, CO
 Dara Tribelhorn, 7th grade, Colorado Springs, CO

*A synchronized team at the **intermediate level** is comprised of 12- 20 skaters, all 15 years old or younger.*

Competitive Record

Intermediate level:

2003 U.S. Synchronized Team Championships
 2003 Pacific Coast Synchronized Championships
 2003 Mid-America Synchronized Championships
 2003 Broadmoor Open Competition

Juvenile level:

2002 U.S. Synchronized Team Championships
 2002 Pacific Coast Synchronized Championships
 2002 Dr. Porter Synchronized Skating Competition
 2002 Broadmoor Open Competition

www.edgesynchro.com

The Edge



The Edge Synchronized Skating Team practices at the Colorado Springs Figure Skating Club three times per week:

*Mondays: 6:00 – 8:30pm
 Wednesdays: 5:00 – 7:00pm
 Fridays: 4:00 – 6:00pm*

2003-04 Competition & Exhibition Schedule

December 6-7	<i>Dr. Porter Classic</i>	Ann Arbor, Mich.
December 15	<i>Christmas Show</i>	Colorado Springs
January 30-31	<i>Pacific Coast Championships</i>	Salt Lake City, UT
February 15-16	<i>Broadmoor Open</i>	Colorado Springs
March 2-7	<i>U.S. Synchronized Team Skating Championships</i>	San Diego, Calif.
April 1	<i>Colorado Springs Ice Show</i>	Colorado Springs

12th
 3rd
 9th
 1st
 10th
 2nd
 7th
 1st



Your support will help us to reach our goal and have a great season!

