

# CORPORATE SPONSORED PROJECTS OVERVIEW

WPI's distinctive project-based approach transforms bright students into thoughtful, action-oriented problem solvers who hit the ground running. Sponsor a project to engage the fresh perspective and technical skills of a dedicated student team, guided by top-notch faculty, to tackle pressing business challenges. Partners from the private sector, governments, and non-profit organizations are integral partners in providing a real-world educational experience for WPI students.

Our record shows that research and ideas presented by WPI students translate into tangible solutions for project sponsors. You'll have access to WPI alumni and students who understand the fundamentals of their chosen fields, work effectively in teams, think creatively, and have the skills and confidence to dive right in.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### What benefits do project sponsors receive?

Project sponsors gain solutions to problems through student work and faculty advising of the project. Additionally, sponsors gain a unique opportunity to screen future talent and build relationships with faculty advisors that benefit the organization over time. Faculty gain exposure to industry problems providing more valuable material for the curriculum and enabling a WPI education to become more effective. At the end of the project, the sponsoring organization receives a report (and sometimes analytics, designs/prototypes, etc) of the work completed.

### What is required for a sponsored project to launch?

Sponsored projects require a project concept from the sponsoring organization and a commitment to mentor and support the students. In order to launch a project, WPI must have a faculty advisor and interested students willing to partner with the organization and complete the project. A formal agreement is required to establish the parameters of the partnership between the organization and WPI. Some projects become sequential and build on each other over time.

### Does the sponsored project program have fees?

Yes, for each sponsored project there is a financial commitment. In providing support to the WPI Projects Program and the program objectives, sponsoring organizations provide a negotiated project fee. There may also be materials and travel related expenses depending on the project structure and needs. Sponsoring organizations interested in having a discussion about projects and fees may contact a member of the WPI Corporate Engagement team via this form:

<http://m.wpi.edu/corporations/request-info.html>

### What type of project is appropriate to provide as a sponsor?

WPI strongly advocates for back-burner projects that will benefit an organization's work, but will not interfere with mission-critical work. By nature, projects are an academic exercise and students and faculty require flexibility to explore concepts and solve the problems presented. The initial project pitch from a company takes the form of an "abstract" with 1-2 paragraphs outlining the problem and problem area.

The faculty and sponsor work together to scope the project and create benchmarks for the students with the work leading to a final presentation. Some sponsored projects are targeted for undergraduate experiences (Major Qualifying Projects/ MQP's) and some sponsored projects are targeted at graduate-level students (Graduate Qualifying Projects / GQP's). The WPI Sponsored Project Administration Team can work with organizations to find the best level and best academic programs available that could potentially solve the business problem.

### I potentially have sensitive information included as part of the project, how does WPI manage this?

The WPI Corporate Engagement Team is familiar with these concerns. We work with organizations to understand these sensitivities prior to the projects moving forward. When the project details are agreed to, WPI's Contract Administrator works with each sponsoring organization to prepare the necessary agreement and forms for each project. WPI's agreement contains provisions that address confidentiality, intellectual property and the publication/presentation of the project work.

### Who can I contact about getting involved with sponsored projects?

If you are interested in a discussion regarding sponsored projects, please contact Sharon Deffely, Executive Director of Academic & Corporate Engagement ([sdeffely@wpi.edu](mailto:sdeffely@wpi.edu) / 508-831-5635) and David Ortendahl, Director of Corporate Relations via email ([dbo@wpi.edu](mailto:dbo@wpi.edu) / 508-831-5831).

Career Development Center  
Project Center  
508-831-5260 | [employer@wpi.edu](mailto:employer@wpi.edu)  
[wpi.edu/+hireWPI](http://wpi.edu/+hireWPI)



WPI

Career  
Development  
Center