

# REQUESTING EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF SWE



Many SWE members turn to their employers for financial relief for some of the costs associated with serving in a SWE leadership role. Organizations are often supportive of this, as doing so is mutually beneficial because the skills you learn being a SWE leader transfer to the workplace.

We encourage you to discover the ways your employer can support your involvement at SWE, and to initiate the conversation with your human resources representative, diversity coordinator, manager or director.

## HOW YOUR EMPLOYER CAN SUPPORT YOU

- Annual SWE membership fee
- Registration fees for conferences or events
- Travel cost for conferences or events (hotel, airfare, mileage, meals, etc.)
- Company time for travel (i.e. no PTO deductions)
- Sponsorship of a SWE event (section event, WE conference, etc.)
- Recruiting at a SWE career fair

## BEFORE TALKING TO YOUR EMPLOYER ABOUT SWE

### Do your research.

- Find out if and how your employer is currently involved in SWE.
- Talk to other female engineers in your company to find out what support they receive.
- Know the fiscal year for your company and when budgets are developed.
- Visit the SWE website and download the materials you need to present to your employer.

### Develop your SWE resume and support materials.

- List all your SWE leadership experience and other volunteer positions.
- Provide examples of competencies you learned through SWE that relate to your current position or duties.
- Consider asking for a letter from the SWE leader you report to.

### Develop your SWE leadership plan

- Explain what you will gain from additional leadership experiences in SWE and what those positions look like.
- Explain what your employer will gain from your involvement in SWE. Articulate the benefits to your organization in addition to the benefits to you.
- Explain how your employer's support will help you achieve future leadership positions within SWE and at your organization.

### Have your ASK ready.

- Determine what you need from your employer and present this information with costs/numbers.

# REQUESTING EMPLOYER SUPPORT OF SWE (Cont'd)

## INVESTMENT

Use the following table to help calculate costs of your involvement at SWE.

ITEM	COST	NOTES
Membership Dues	\$100	Varies based on membership status and relevant discounts
Annual Conference		
Registration	\$500	Varies based on membership status and relevant discounts
Hotel	\$1000	Approximately \$250/night for 4 nights
Travel	\$400	Round-trip airfare
Meals/Incidentals	\$150	\$50/day
WE Local Conference		
Registration	\$150	Varies based on membership status and relevant discounts
Hotel	\$400	Approximately \$200/night for 2 nights
Travel	\$400	Round-trip airfare
Meals/Incidentals	\$100	\$50/day

## MEETING WITH YOUR EMPLOYER

- Draft a proposal letter to use as a leave-behind and summary of your ask (see SWE template).
- Be direct, clear and confident when presenting your ask.
- Have a plan, but be flexible if conversation shifts.
- Be ready to negotiate.

## IF EMPLOYER SUPPORT IS NOT AN OPTION

Many of our members who do not receive employer support take advantage of the following opportunities to experience cost-savings for SWE:

- **Fulfill a leadership role:** Some SWE leadership positions provide funding to attend conferences.
- **Registration and Travel Grants:** Grants are made possible by SWE members, donors and partners. These can be found on SWE conference sites and can provide financial relief for certain elements of SWE conferences and events.
- **Volunteer:** Most SWE events have volunteer opportunities that will get you discounts on registration fees for just a few hours of your time.
- **Talk to SWE Members:** Many members coordinate hotel room sharing programs and carpools to reduce travel costs. Our **SWE Member Closed Facebook Group** is a great forum to get this conversation going.