



## Olympus Spark Grant Program Overview

The purpose of the **Spark Grant** program is to help students achieve an important and meaningful milestone for their business, and/or overcome a barrier prohibiting progress. Examples of such purposes could be summer internship (most common request, usually to develop an POC or MVP), attendance at a key conference or event to conduct customer discovery, development of a specialty application or purchase of specialty equipment. Legal fees, basic research, as well as generic equipment such as a laptop are generally not eligible for Spark Grants.

Grants can be up to \$3000. A partial payment is granted initially and if the proposed milestone(s) is reached, the student is eligible for the remaining amount.

Spark Grants are available only to active projects that have met regularly over time with an Olympus EIR. We look for projects that have demonstrated commitment to the business idea by consistently making progress toward milestones, goals and objectives, and participated regularly in the Olympus program(s). One of the founders must be a current CMU student.

Generally, **Spark Grants** are awarded on an as-needed basis. Students should talk with Kit Needham, to determine if they are eligible. If eligible, students are asked to submit an application. Finalists are expected to give a 8-minute presentation. The presentation can be given to staff, Olympus advisors, fund donors, experienced entrepreneurs and/or investors.

Awardees are expected to meet at least monthly with Kit Needham, Project Olympus Director or their assigned EIR to report on progress, provide brief final written reports on milestones/objectives reached, challenges/issues experienced and other outcomes or progress made according to the timeframes specified in the application. The report may be shared with Olympus Spark Fund donors. At the Spark Fund donor's discretion, awardees may be asked to meet with a donor who wishes to learn more about the project.

Students can contact Kit Needham ([kit@cs.cmu.edu](mailto:kit@cs.cmu.edu)) to learn more about the program and eligibility.

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