



Mid-Atlantic Robotics, d.b.a. *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic Policy on Grants for Teams

1.0 Scope

This document sets forth the policy of Mid-Atlantic Robotics (MAR) regarding the processes through which grant funds may be made available by Mid-Atlantic Robotics, teams may apply for grants, and grants are approved and disbursed.

All teams are encouraged to read the entire document in order to understand the application procedures, priorities for consideration, and important deadlines for action.

These Rules do not pertain to grants made with donated funds from entities outside Mid-Atlantic Robotics which are intended for specific FRC teams.

2.0 Background and Statement of Intent

In a desire to provide financial assistance to teams that have qualified for the FIRST Mid-Atlantic District Championship but do not have sufficient funding, the Board of Directors has promulgated these procedures. When sufficient funds are available, consideration for *FIRST* Championship support is also permitted. However, there are limits on the amounts of such support, and eligibility is prioritized as described herein.

In addition, provision is included for assistance to a Rookie team for certain purposes. Lastly, there is provision for what is defined as an emergency situation.

3.0 Approving Body

The Chair shall appoint a review team as a subcommittee of the Finance Committee (hereinafter referred to as the Grants Sub-Committee) no later than August 31 each year whose members will have the authority to adjudicate all grant requests, except as specified below. These members shall not be affiliated with an FRC team unless such individual(s) provide a written release by the lead mentor that the individual's team will NOT be applying for a grant in the current competition season.

There shall be a minimum of three such members and a maximum of seven, one of whom will be designated as the Chairman, who may not be currently affiliated with an FRC team under any circumstances. The Chairman shall receive all grant applications, as described below.



4.0 Mechanics of Operation

Funding

Funds to support grants may be made available on a yearly basis at the discretion of the Board, depending upon available revenue and the priorities of the Board. The presence or absence of available funds shall be made known to the Grants Sub-Committee Chair by September 1st for the upcoming competition season. The final tally of approved funds will be made available to the Grants Sub-Committee Chair by the Monday before the District event(s) that immediately precede the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship. The Treasurer shall maintain a spreadsheet of Grants disbursed each season, beginning with the full amount of the authorized Grants budget and indicating each amount disbursed, the team number, the type of grant and ending with the remaining balance.

Approval Time-frame

The Grants Sub-Committee shall issue its decision on each complete application pertaining to the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship within 24 hours of the conclusion of the final District event. The review team shall issue its decision on each complete application pertaining to the *FIRST* Championship within 24 hours of the conclusion of the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship.

Use of Funds - Events

First priority shall be for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship. Funds (up to the amount requested or permitted by rule or availability, whichever is less) shall be authorized for all teams deemed appropriate by the Grants Sub-Committee to receive support for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship before any applications are considered for the *FIRST* Championships. Applications for the *FIRST* Championships will only be considered if there are residual funds available.

Use of Funds – Expenditures and Priorities

- ▶ Grants for events are limited to the amount of registration fees or travel expenses (not to exceed the amount of the registration fee for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship). If approved for registration, the amount shall be remitted directly to *FIRST* by the Treasurer in a timely fashion. If approved for travel expenses, a check shall be remitted to the entity identified in the application to receive such payment on behalf of the team. For funds other than registration fees, the Team must also provide a signed W-9 Form to *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic prior to any disbursement of such funds.

- ▶ Applications from teams expending funds to travel outside of the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District to compete in other regional or district events will be given the lowest priority for grants from MAR



funds, and will only be considered for grant approval if there are residual funds after support of other eligible teams, up to the amount requested or the maximum amount, whichever is less.

► In order to aim for the goal of team self-sufficiency and effective budgeting, teams receiving support for either the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship or the *FIRST* Championships will receive a lower priority for grants the following year (starting in 2019). The grants disbursed spreadsheet(s) from the previous year(s) shall be the sole source of data for the priority feature.

► The priority for grant consideration and fund distribution will be as follows:

- 1) teams either without a grant approved in the preceding year or with a grant approved for less than \$2,000 except for Rookie or Emergency grant(s);
- 2) teams with a grant of \$2,000 or more approved in the preceding year;
- 3) teams with late grant submissions (see below); and
- 4) teams that traveled outside the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District to compete in other regional or district events.

► No funds will be distributed on behalf of a team in a lower priority group unless there are funds available after complete allocation for all eligible teams in the higher priority group(s) for that event. Funds for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship will be authorized according to this priority list before any grant for the *FIRST* Championships is considered.

► Grants for any other expenditure – except for Rookie Teams and Emergency Situations as described below -- must be approved by the Executive Committee.

Amount of Grants

No individual grant shall exceed the registration fee for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship for that year. When total funds allocated by the Board of Directors in the Budget will not provide sufficient funds to support the aggregate amount of all qualified applications, the Grants Sub-Committee shall provide partial grants to all qualified teams to the extent that funds are available.

In those years when allocated grant funds are plentiful, the Grants Sub-Committee may approve multiple grant requests from the same team (i.e. one for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship and one for the *FIRST* Championships), providing that all teams that made an eligible request for one grant have been awarded a grant, if deemed qualified and appropriate. It is not required that a grant be issued just because an application was filed.



Application Process

A team seeking a grant must prepare and submit the Grant Application and Budget forms available on <https://www.midatlanticrobotics.com/team-grants/>. Submission of a completed form certifies its accuracy by the submitter. For funds other than registration fees, the applying team must also submit a signed IRS Form W-9 as noted in the Use of Funds section above. The W-9 Form provides *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic with the entity name and address for directing the check on behalf of the team. After review, the identified team contact will receive an e-mail regarding the Grants Sub-Committee's decision and/or instructions if any additional action(s) is required. It is the team's responsibility to ensure team contact's e-mail address does not block/filter any incoming messages that are sent from the midatlanticrobotics.org domain.

Grant applications may be submitted any time after the competition season has commenced. Deadlines for Grant applications are as follows: a) For *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship Grants, no later than 5:00 PM on Tuesday in the second week before the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship, AND b) For *FIRST* Championship Grants, no later than 5:00 PM on Tuesday of the week of the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship. Any applications that do not meet the deadline will be assigned a lower priority (below all on-time applications from eligible teams, but above those who traveled to other regional or non-FMA district events), and will be considered for funding after all eligible on-time applications have been funded (if deemed appropriate for funding by the review team) if any funds remain.

A copy of the current year's budget – including all revenue (actual and projected) and expenditures (actual and projected, including the item for which a grant is being requested) for the team must accompany the form. The Grants Sub-Committee will base its decision on awarding a grant based on the information in the application and the team budget.

Teams that have registered for one or more regional or district events outside MAR are not precluded from a grant; but such application will have lowest priority in the aggregate review process.

Teams applying for a grant to the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship, which show funds pre-allocated to the *FIRST* Championships will not be considered eligible for a grant to the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championships but may apply for a grant to the *FIRST* Championships.



Consideration for Rookie Teams

Notwithstanding any other provisions for use of grants and/or time-frame for submission of applications, a Rookie Team, as defined by *FIRST*, may submit a grant application any time after September 1st of the year in which the team receives its four-digit identifier from *FIRST*.

Rookie team grants are capped at \$1000 and are not influenced by the presence of grants from other sources, if there is demonstrated financial need by the team, in the view of the Grants Sub-Committee. The use of funds may be for such requisite purposes as tools, rental of temporary space, services received from a machine shop, purchase of raw material, robot parts, etc. Items such as apparel, giveaways, etc., and registration fees are excluded. Such grants shall not be disbursed until the team's registration fee has been received by *FIRST* and the team has provided a signed IRS Form W-9 to *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic indicating the entity name and address to which the funds are to be disbursed on behalf of the team.

Any grant in this category shall be charged to the budget line items for *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship and *FIRST* Championship in the same ratio as the percent of each of those two line items relates to the sum of those two budget line items. Example: A \$1,000 rookie team grant would be charged \$600 to the former category and \$400 to the latter, if the former category's budget line item were \$45,000 and the latter category's budget line item were \$30,000.

Any rookie team that receives such a grant may submit a separate request during the competition season for *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship or *FIRST* Championships.

Emergency Situations

A team, which has qualified for either the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship or *FIRST* Championship and suddenly experiences a situation in which previously committed funds are no longer available, may apply for relief via an emergency grant. Any grant that exceeds that permitted by these rules must be approved by the Executive Committee and the Grants Sub-Committee. Such grants shall not be disbursed until the team has provided a signed IRS Form W-9 to *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic indicating the entity name and address to which the funds are to be disbursed on behalf of the team.

In addition to providing its budget with the Application, the team must provide sufficient justification of financial hardship to warrant such an emergency grant.



Provision for Residual Funds

Teams that budget to carryover a small balance to the following season shall not be penalized for such a practice. However, teams with a budgeted carryover balance in excess of half of the registration fee for the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship (after payment of the registration fee using the grant funds) will not be eligible for a grant, as the purpose of the granting process is to help teams in need attend the *FIRST* Mid-Atlantic District Championship or *FIRST* Championships, and not to replenish teams' operating budgets.

Appeal Process

A team, which has been denied a grant or for which the approved amount was less than the requested amount, may submit an appeal to the MAR Chair or the Finance Committee Chair. This appeal shall be submitted as expeditiously as practicable with a thorough explanation for the basis of the appeal. Appeals will not be considered that involve partial support when the amount of grant support requested from eligible teams exceeded the budgeted amount and partial support was necessary to stay within the MAR budget.

The recipient of the appeal will expeditiously review the circumstances with the Grants Sub-Committee Chairperson. If relief is to be considered, it must be approved by the Executive Committee.

5.0 Additional Provisions

Actions by the Board of Directors

This policy may be reviewed and modified by the Board of Directors, as necessary.

Effectivity and Initial Implementation

This policy becomes effective upon an affirmative vote on a motion to adopt the policy by the currently seated Board of Directors.