



Financial Transparency Report 2019

Lang Sustainability Conference Financial Transparency Report

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Introduction

The Lang Sustainability Conference (LSC) is an intensive 3-day conference hosted by the Lang Students' Association at the University of Guelph. It connects students from across Canada and allows them to discover and explore solutions to the current social, environmental and economic challenges facing our world. The conference this year brought together 100 of Canada's brightest students to engage in workshops, discussion, and competition around the development of sustainable business models with sponsors, industry experts, and researchers. Together, our goal is to create an ethos of community engagement and ethical and responsible leadership in a complex and ever-changing world.

This report is meant to provide an overview of LSC finance, including the revenue, expenses, return on investment, and suggestions for future LSC.

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Revenues

Details of revenues

The list below summarizes the actual revenue inflow of LSC 2019. The description of each type of income is also provided on the list.

- Delegation Income

Every student who would attend LSC needs to pay their delegate fee for their entrance to the conference. The amount of delegate fees varies with the type of students.

- External Delegate Fees

Students who are not from Lang School of Business, such as art students at the University of Guelph or students from other universities, are considered external delegates. The delegate fee is \$325 per student.

- Lang Graduate Delegate Fees

Graduate students from Lang School of Business are required to pay the full amount for delegation, which is \$ 325 per person.

- Lang Undergraduate Delegate Fees

Supported by PDR funding of Lang School of Business, undergraduate students from Lang School of Business only need to pay \$ 99 for their delegation. The rest of \$ 226 per student is automatically covered by the PDR funding.

- RBC Sponsorship

- RBC unrestricted contribution

Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) sponsored LSC with \$ 3,500 to support the preparation and organization of LSC.

- RBC restricted contribution

RBC also provided \$ 6,000 restrictedly dedicated to the prizes. The allocation is listed below:



1st place winning team	\$ 3,000
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2nd place	\$ 2,000
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3rd place	\$ 1,000
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- Rumina Sponsorship

Rumina sponsored LSC with \$ 5,000 to help LSC deliver a sustainable conference. This fund was allocated to multiple expense categories throughout the time.



- Bruce Power Sponsorship

Bruce Power sponsored \$ 1,500 for LSC with restricted conditions. According to the sponsorship agreement, the spend breakdown is shown below:



Component	Justification	Total Cost
Carbon Offsets	To reduce the carbon produced during LSC, we would purchase the equivalent in carbon offset to support the Niagara Escarpment Forest Carbon project --- roughly 65 tonnes of GHG emissions over 3 days.	\$ 500.00
Sustainable Product Sourcing	To deliver the most sustainable experience possible, we needed to ensure the venue is equipped with the most sustainable products by sourcing straws, glass bottles, and sustainable food.	\$ 1,000.00
Total		\$ 1,500.00

- Intact Sponsorship

Intact donated \$ 500 to LSC, mainly dedicated to the daily operation of LSC.



- Green Standards Sponsorship

Green Standards donated \$ 500 to LSC, ensuring the sustainable experience delivered to students who attended.



- Amplify Sponsorship

Amplify sponsored \$ 200 to LSC mainly for delivering sustainable image through media channels.



- LSA Contribution

- LSA Sponsorship

LSA contributed \$19,800 to LSC to maximize the students' experience at the conference. The fund was mainly allocated to the overall service provided by Delta.



- LSA PDR

LSA PDR is a restricted contribution that only allocated to Lang students who attended the conference, which was \$ 450 in total.

- Lang PDR Contribution

The Professional Development Reimbursement (PDR) is a fund provided by the University of Guelph to financially support students to pursue their professional development, such as attending case competitions and conferences. Lang School of Business contributed \$ 13,500, covering 60 Lang undergraduate students to attend LSC.



- MEFSAL Sponsorship

Management Economics and Finance Students' Association at Lang (MEFSAL) donated \$ 3,000 to LSC for delivering a positive student experience.



- YES Sponsorship

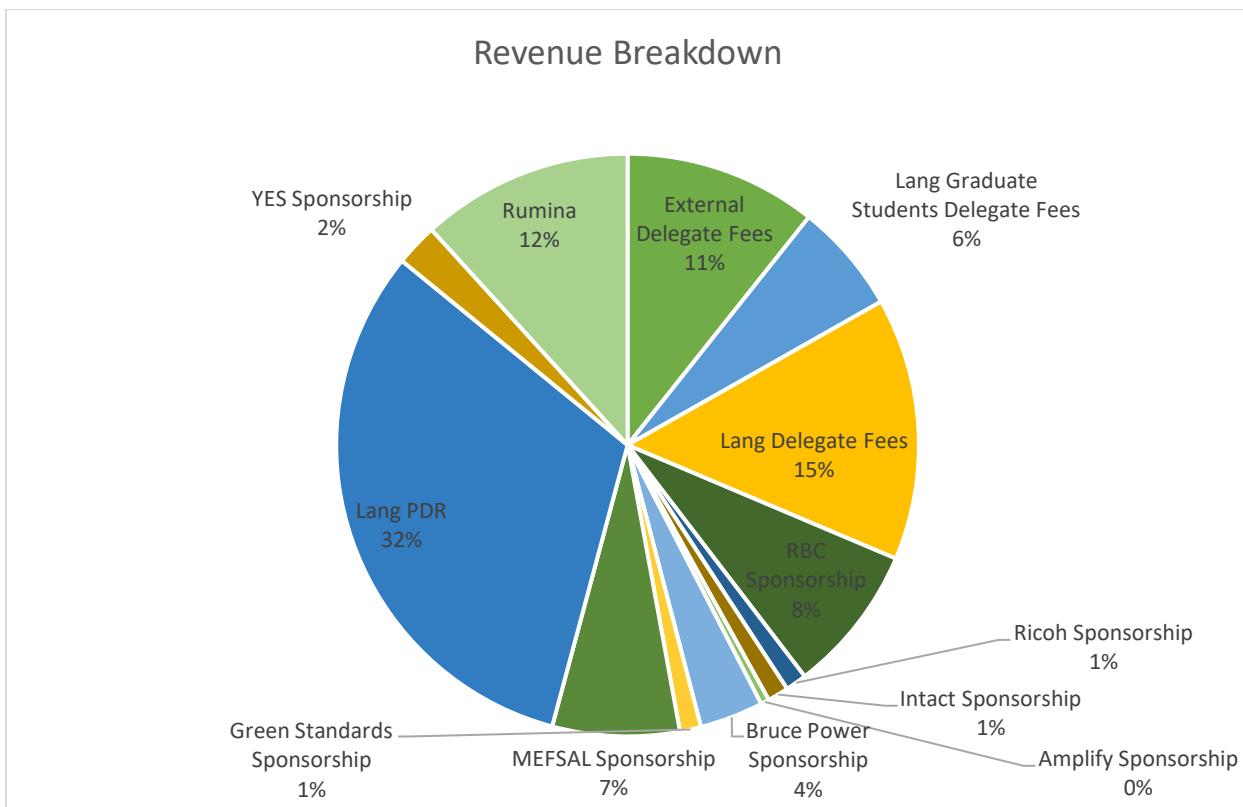
Young Economists' Society Guelph (YES) sponsored \$ 1,000 for the general operation of LSC.



Summary of revenues

In total, LSC received \$ 68,300.00 from delegates, corporate sponsors, Lang School of Business, and other Affiliated Student Organizations (ASO) in 2019. It provided strong financial support and brought in immeasurable intangible benefit to sustain LSC, expanding LSC's influence in the local community and among students across Ontario.





Disclosure of obstacles for revenue collection

From the financial perspective, multiple difficulties incurred from the beginning to the end of the running of LSC. The main difficulties have been listed below.

1. Application of delegates

- Lang Students

Lang students here specifically refers to undergraduate students at Lang School of Business and Economics. Although roughly \$10,000 PDR had been previously dedicated to supporting Lang students, since students still needed to pay the full amount (\$ 325) at the front and then wait for the refund, not a lot of students were willing to purchase the ticket. To encourage students' engagement, LSC contingently reached out to Dean's Office and request an immediate Lang PDR support. As a result, Lang students could directly purchase their tickets with a discount (\$ 99.99) and Lang PDR paid the rest \$ 225 for each student. It effectively helped LSC to convert its selected students into official delegates and eased the finance condition of LSC.

- Non-Lang Students

The “Non-Lang Students” here includes Guelph students from non-business major, all Guelph graduate students, and all students from other universities. Because LSC did not launch the Campus Ambassador program successfully and Non-Lang students often needed to deal with many other obstacles, such as difficulty with applying PDR from their own school, concerns with transportation, school schedule, and so on. It was even harder for LSC to obtain this kind of delegates. Some students applied but ended up not paying for the ticket.

2. Sponsorship

- External sponsorship

LSC reached to many organizations and some of them became sponsors of LSC, providing all kinds of support. The whole LSC team was working on contacting companies and organizations that they know. The in-kind contribution got confirmed quickly, including gift bags from the City of Guelph, delegates gift from Bumble, and souvenirs from LSA. However, the collection of monetary contribution was much harder. LSC was being held on the waiting line for a long time and a large sum of contribution did not arrive until the end of the delegation registration deadline. Some contribution even did not come until LSC was ended.

- Internal sponsorship

Internal sponsorship from LSA and other ASOs helped LSC ease its finance condition significantly, especially when the external monetary contribution was not received.

Expenses

Details of expenses:

The list below summarizes the actual expense outflows of LSC 2019. The description of each type is also provided in the list.

- Delta: Hotel Rooms

Based on the purpose of maintaining the consistency of students' experience and providing necessary accommodations to external delegates, LSC team chose Delta as one of the main venues for the conference and booked 25 rooms at Delta for 3 nights. Each room costs \$ 169 before tax.

- Delta: Food, Beverages, and Technology

Apart from booking hotel rooms for accommodation, LSC also booked Delta's conference center for holding most of LSC events, such as opening remarks, keynote speeches, workshops, and food for most of the days all day. The expense includes meal expenses, corkage fee*, microphones and projectors rented from Delta, and event rooms.



Special note for Delta - Attrition

In the initial contract, LSC team agreed to enter an attrition with Delta Hotel with a promised minimum spending of \$ 30,000 on meals and beverages. Based on the achievement of this minimum spending, Delta would provide complementary function room rental to LSC. However, if LSC cannot achieve the \$ 30,000 minimum spending on meals and beverages, LSC would be obligated to pay 75% of the difference.

The number of actual participants was less than estimation. Since LSC did not intend to order more than enough food, LSC could not achieve the minimum spending amount, which led to amount LSC eventually paid.

- Hanlon

Hanlon was chosen as a venue for LSC Green Globes Gala where closing remarks and social events were held. The total expense at Hanlon consists of the facility charge and meal expenses.



- Wine

Wine provided for all dinners was purchased from Harwood Wine Estate, a local supplier located in Ontario. LSC purchased 34 bottles of red wine and 35 bottles of white wine with a 10% discount. Since not all of the wine was consumed during the conference, LSC sold the rest of the bottles to the LSA events team.

- Lunch provided by the University of Guelph

The lunch on the second day of LSC was provided by the hospitality service at the University of Guelph since the case competition was held on campus. In total, it cost \$ 1,094.79 before tax.

- Transportation



To maximize delegates' experience and ensure sustainability, LSC booked buses for transportation, sending delegates to downtown Guelph for social and back to Delta hotel.

- Prizes

To recognize delegates' achievement, LSC provided prizes for the top three teams, sponsored by RBC. The breakdown is shown below:

1st place winning team	\$ 3,000
2nd place	\$ 2,000
3rd place	\$ 1,000

- Marketing expenses

Marketing expenses include name tags, gift cards, and banners ordered by the LSC Marketing team for promoting the LSC conference.

- Events expenses

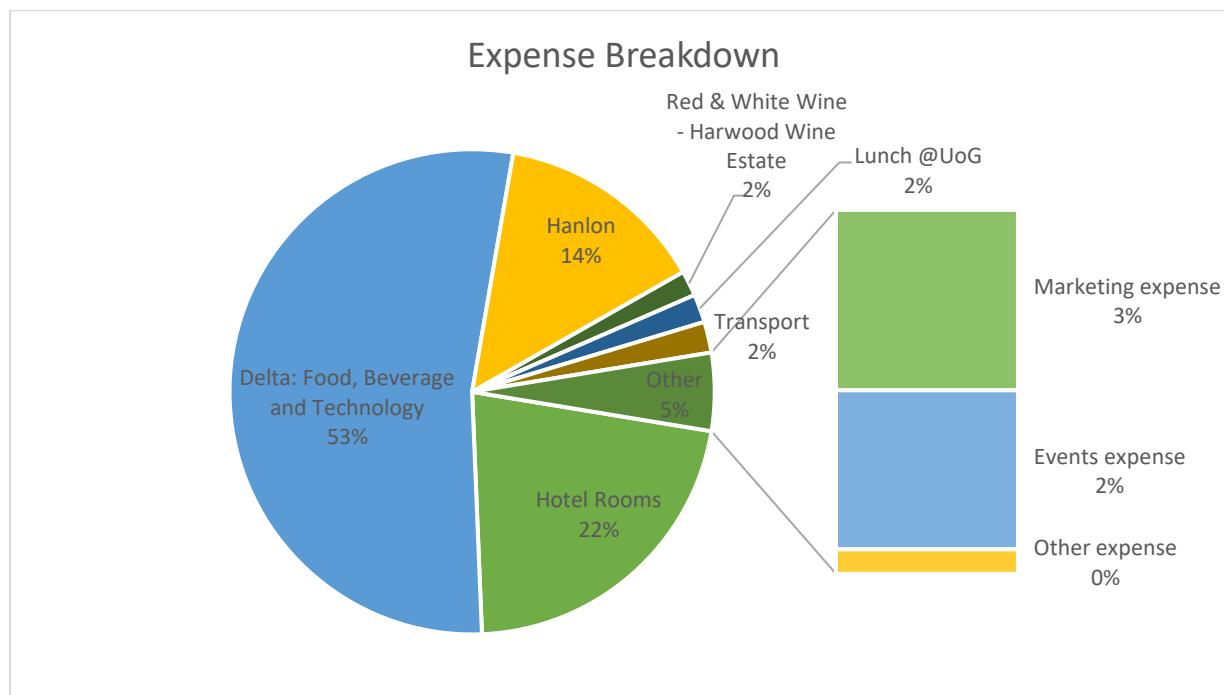
Event expenses include decorations, candies, balloons, and DJ expenses incurred by the LSC Events team to deliver a better conference experience.

- Other expense

This category of expense is from Lang School Dean's Office since LSC purchased 15 Lang branded mugs and 15 packs of coffee from the Dean's Office.

Summary of expenses

In total, the overall cost of the conference is \$ 65,832.48. About 75% of the expense was from Delta, including hotel rooms, meals, and all other expenses. Given the limited budget and delegates' feedback, the rest 25% spending on other venues, marketing, and event-planning fully delivered its impact.



Delegates' expense breakdown

To give a more direct explanation in terms of how delegates are paying for their attendance, we can refer to the pie chart below which is the expense breakdown of LSC 2019.

Items	Full Price	Discounted Price
Delta: Hotel Rooms	\$ 70.71	\$ 21.75
Delta: Food, Beverage and Technology	\$ 173.44	\$ 53.36
Hanlon	\$ 45.69	\$ 14.06
Red & White Wine - Harwood Wine Estate	\$ 5.48	\$ 1.69
Lunch @UoG	\$ 6.11	\$ 1.88
Transport	\$ 6.69	\$ 2.06
Marketing expense	\$ 8.37	\$ 2.57
Events expense	\$ 7.38	\$ 2.27
Other expense	\$ 1.13	\$ 0.35
Total	\$ 325.00	99.99

Highlights:

For delegates who paid at full price:

- \$ 70 for a 3-night-stay at a 4-star hotel
- \$ 5.48 for unlimited wine for all 3 nights
- \$ 6.69 for transportation to downtown Guelph and Hanlon every day

For delegates who purchased with a discount:

- \$ 21 for 3-night-stay at a 4-star hotel
- \$ 1.69 for unlimited wine for all 3 nights
- \$ 2.06 for transportation to downtown Guelph and Hanlon every day

Cost-saving initiatives

Throughout the planning and running of LSC 2019, the LSC team took multiple cost-saving initiatives to drive down the cost while still maintaining the quality of students' experience.

1. Events: Sustainable decorations



Most of the decorations that the LSC team chose were aligned with the sustainable purpose. Decorations such as glass vases and jars were purchased through Amazon and can be continuously used for future events. Other decorations were obtained even without either extra monetary cost or environmental cost. The wood slices placed in the dinner table were borrowed from the University while trees on Johnson Green were cut down; the little stones, branches, and other botanical pieces were picked by LSC events team members in person. Therefore, the spending on events was kept at a fairly low level and does not involve significant environmental costs.

2. Wine from Harwood Wine Estate

Instead of ordering wine provided by Delta, the LSC team chose to purchase wine from our local supplier directly. It decreased the wine cost by about 50% and helped to sustain local produce.

3. Delegate bags

Delegate bags and gifts inside were provided LSC sponsors. It not only eased the financial pressure on LSC but also showcased Guelph's local culture and provide more exposure to LSC sponsors.



4. Marketing: Online strategy

Out of the sustainable purpose, the LSC marketing team chose marketing tools and products that either can be used for a long time or only has minimal impact on the environment. Except for the necessary marketing work such as printing name tags and banners, most of the marketing work was completed online. Instead of the traditional marketing approach such as poster printing and so on, the LSC marketing team tried to fully utilize its online resources to expand its impact among students. This marketing strategy successfully avoided unnecessary costs and reduced LSC's impact on the environment.

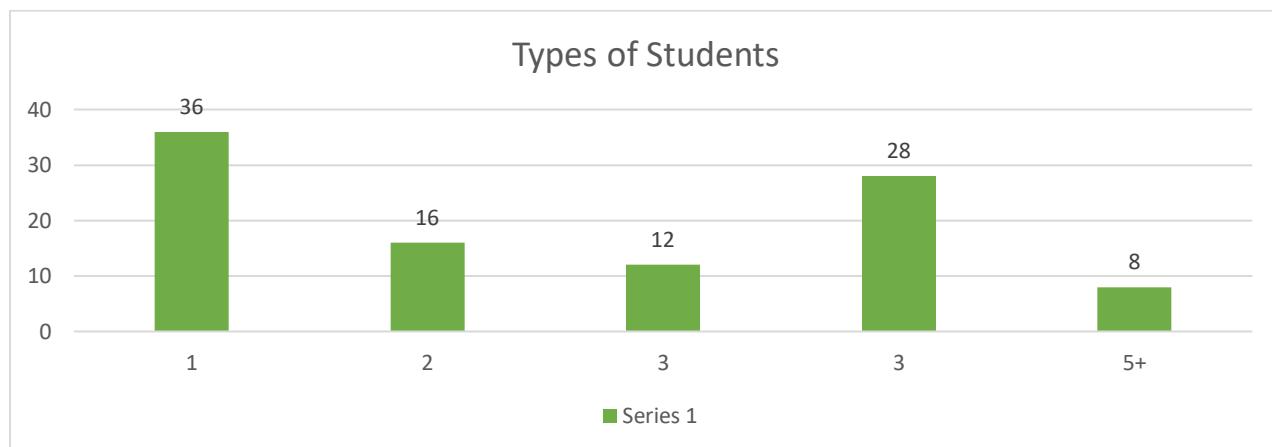
Return on Investment

Short-term

- \$ 3,000 exponentially influenced the **4** top students (1st winning team)
- \$ 3,000 directly influenced **8** outstanding students (2nd & 3rd teams)
- \$ 11,700 from external sponsors directly & indirectly influenced diversified **100** students:
 - **5** different universities across Ontario
 - University of Guelph
 - University of Waterloo
 - University of Windsor
 - University of Ottawa
 - University of Western Ontario
 - McMaster University
 - **5+** different majors

Long-term

- More than **60%** of LSC delegates are from 1st – 3rd year
- More than **50%** of LSC delegates are looking forward to graduating in **2023+**
- The effect of \$ 62,800 spending can last for **at least 3 years** (upon delegates' graduation). It would benefit students, Guelph campus, and sponsors, such as:
 - Broadened understanding of different industries
 - Increased awareness of sustainability
 - Better preparation for future career planning
 - Obtained skills of networking
 - An enhanced experience of teamwork
 - Gained knowledge of RBC Early Talent Acquisition program



Conclusion and Recommendations for Future

Overall, LSC 2019 was successfully launched and excelled itself given the budget it had. Apart from maintaining what was done well, here are some further recommendations for running LSC in the future.

Recommendations for LSC 2020

- Cooperation with the University of Guelph

Given the actual expenses and service at different venues, the hospitality service at the University of Guelph was very cost-effective compared to others. Solely from the financial perspective, it would be good to cooperate more with the university, which is not only budget-friendly but also provides a lot of other conveniences.

- Negotiation with venues

When it comes to getting quotes from venues, negotiation might play a vital role. Since LSC is deemed to operate year by year, getting more discounts from venues that are willing to have long-term partnerships with LSC should be viable. As LSC is growing year by year, it should have more bargain power on hand.

- Best and worst scenario analysis

At the early planning stage, after obtaining all the quotes from different venues, having an official best and worst scenario analysis can be a necessary step for LSC Finance. It would help to provide a better-developed image of how LSC finance can be and help the Chairperson to make decisions.

- Financial document drive

Having a financial document drive can help LSC maintain all the financial documents in one central place. It can keep the consistency of confidential information and still maintain the security requirement.