Funding Guidelines for Political Campaigns or Parties

1. The IOP cannot provide funding for students to work for a federal campaign, campaign committee or political party. Harvard is a corporation organized under the laws of Massachusetts. The Institute of Politics (IOP) is part of Harvard University. Federal campaign finance laws prohibit corporations from making contributions to campaigns, campaign committees or political parties that are regulated by the Federal Elections Commission (FEC). Any funding provided by the IOP to a student to allow that student to work on a federal political campaign or any other FEC regulated entity would be considered an in-kind contribution by Harvard.

As a result, the IOP cannot offer funding for students to work for federal campaigns, as well as any other entity regulated by the FEC.

This includes campaigns of any candidate for President, the US House and the US Senate, as well as the Democratic National Committee, the Republican National Committee, the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, the National Republican Senatorial Committee, the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, the National Republican Congressional Committee, and the activities of any state political party that is regulated by the FEC.

2. The IOP may be able to offer funding to students to work for a state or local campaign or political party. State and local campaign finance laws vary by jurisdiction. Some prohibit corporate contributions altogether. Others place limits on the amount of a contribution. Some place no limits or restrictions on such contributions at all.

In order to receive funding to work for a state or local campaign, such as a campaign for governor, mayor or the state legislature, a state or local political party or other political entity, the student must provide the IOP with a letter from the entity certifying that the funding is not prohibited under the relevant governing jurisdiction’s campaign finance rules.

3. The IOP can offer funding to students who work for entities that provide services to political campaigns or parties, such as polling or media firms. These firms contract with political campaigns or parties, but IOP funding to an employee of such a firm is not considered a contribution to the campaigns who are their customers.