



# SIGMA PI SIGMA

The physics honor society

## Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter Project Award Proposal

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<b>Project Proposal Title</b>	UVA Sigma Pi Sigma Luncheon with Lighthouse Instruments
<b>Name of School</b>	University of Virginia
<b>Sigma Pi Sigma Chapter Number</b>	153
<b>Total Amount Requested</b>	\$400

### Abstract

The University of Virginia chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma will invite representatives from Lighthouse Instruments to attend our annual inductee luncheon. This event will encourage interest in different physics career paths as well as strengthening ties between our students and a local physic business.

# Proposal Statement

## **Overview of Proposed Project**

Every year, the UVA chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma holds a luncheon for its new inductees. This year, we wish to elevate our annual luncheon by inviting guests from a local physics industry, Lighthouse Instruments, to expose students to industry careers and encourage enthusiasm for applying physics to solve real-world problems. With the requested funding, we will be able to accommodate physics and astronomy non-inductee students, as well as new inductees, existing Sigma Pi Sigma members, and physics department faculty at our luncheon. With enough venue capacity and refreshments to host up to 40 non-inductees, we will bolster motivation to succeed in physics and become a member of Sigma Pi Sigma, privy to such opportunities to network with peers and local physics businesses. The project proposed here will continue to build a relationship between UVA physics students and Lighthouse Instruments, whom we also invited to last year's annual luncheon and to speak at a weekly chapter meeting. With our proposed project, a greater number of physics students will have the opportunity to forge advantageous connections with fellow physics students and a local physics-based company. This would be a setting in which students can hear about the experiences of professional physicists who work outside of a strictly academic environment, and gain from their valuable insight, in a more personal and accessible manner than is possible at just a formal speaker event. Representatives from Lighthouse Instruments can inspire students to consider the real-world lasting benefits of hard work and high achievement in undergraduate physics classes and research, even if students do not intend to pursue a career in academia.

## **How Proposed Project Meets the Purpose of the Award**

With the proposed project, we will add distinction to our induction ceremony by obtaining additional support for and acclamation of students' accomplishments in physics. Having a professional institution participate in celebrating the achievement of Sigma Pi Sigma inductees will encourage more students to strive to be a part of the UVA chapter of Sigma Pi Sigma. Ultimately demonstrating the benefits of community and networking opportunities, we will increase the induction of new members in the years to come. This event will enhance our inductees' first impression with our chapter, driving engagement, making a more active and effective chapter. By advertising to the greater UVA physics community rather than inductees only, we will broaden our influence in the university. This will create more engagement and allow the continued growth of our chapter. Finally, the annual inductee luncheon has historically been a wonderful opportunity for new Sigma Pi Sigma members to get to know one another and forge stronger ties within the physics community at UVA. With the requested funding, we will make it possible for more students to benefit from this opportunity. In particular, this funding will allow current members of Sigma Pi Sigma to attend the luncheon and provide encouragement and inspiration to the next generation of aspiring physicists at UVA.

## **Plan for Carrying Out Proposed Project**

**Personnel and Marketing:** The current executive officers of Sigma Pi Sigma at UVA will plan this event with support from other officers of UVA SPS. The responsibilities will be divided as follows:

- Sigma Pi Sigma president: Contact representatives from Lighthouse Instruments and create a general schedule for the event. Secure a venue and refreshments for the event. Monitor progress, keeping in mind the evaluation criteria outlined in the "Project Evaluation Plan" section given below.

- Sigma Pi Sigma vice president: Keep track of RSVPs. Advertise the event to physics, astronomy, and engineering students through email listservs, social media, and posters. Ensure the event is advertised at weekly SPS meetings leading up to the event. Monitor progress, keeping in mind the evaluation criteria outlined in the “Project Evaluation Plan” section given below.

Sigma Pi Sigma member participation: all new inductees of UVA Sigma Pi Sigma will be expected to attend this event as primary guests. Existing members will also be highly encouraged to attend, bringing the total anticipated number of Sigma Pi Sigma members to about 25 students. In addition, we will invite other SPS members and physics and astronomy students to attend, bringing the total anticipated attendance to 50.

### **Project Timeline**

- The event will take place on April 5, 2023
- Catering will be finalized by the Monday before (March 25)
- Advertising to students will begin the day of Sigma Pi Sigma inductions, which takes place two weeks before the event (March 22). Advertising will be done every few days starting from this point, through multiple media outlets.
- The venue will be secured at least one month before the event, i.e. by March 1. By this time, we will finalize the details of the Lighthouse Instruments representatives’ visit for our luncheon and ceremony in April.
- We will reach out to Lighthouse Instruments representatives about attending our event by February 6.

### **Project Evaluation Plan**

To evaluate the performance of the luncheon and how well it succeeded in connecting Sigma Pi Sigma students to one another and to the greater UVA physics community, the chapter will keep records of the participants. This will include noting the number of inductees for this year, as well inductees from previous years and physics students who are not yet members of Sigma Pi Sigma. We will compare the number of new inductees during the spring of 2025 to the number of new inductees during the spring of 2024. An increased number of inductees could serve as an indication that the proposed event will have been successful in encouraging the dedication and hard work necessary to become a member of Sigma Pi Sigma. We also hope that this event will connect the new inductees to old Sigma Pi Sigma members. We will obtain feedback on the event from current Sigma Pi Sigma members, specifically inquiring whether they felt they had an adequate opportunity to encourage and inspire new inductees. We will poll physics students who are not yet Sigma Pi Sigma inductees and ask them whether they enjoyed the event and whether they were more motivated to be inducted into the chapter in the upcoming years. Finally, we will also ask for feedback from the recent inductees on what they thought went well or what could be improved.

### **Budget Justification**

The proposed budget is critical meeting the goals of our induction ceremony. We will use the funds to buy 50 sandwiches and 40 cookies. This food is important to market the event to the wider university community. By providing an incentive for attendance, we are more likely to see more engagement. It will help us build a strong reputation for future events so that we can keep higher attendance following months. Providing food will offer all attendees the opportunity to socialize with the Sigma Pi Sigma members, UVA physics department faculty, and Lighthouse Instruments representatives, as providing refreshments is an excellent way to create an organic social situation. This is critical for creating a strong community within our chapter and encouraging conversation with the representatives.