

QUESTION:

ISES 2011 Delegate #1

Hey Kali: don't you think its hypocrisy on our part to be taking funds from "big oil". These funds are generated from the very petro-fuels that we want to replace with renewable ?! ...is it that if they provide our initiative with money and we'll change our opinions on their environmental record ?!

RESPONSES:

ISES 2011 Delegate #2

I don't think that it is really that hypocritical. Many large oil and gas companies are pouring a lot of money into renewable and sustainable energy. While a lot of this is done solely for the PR, a lot of it is also done because it saves them money (and the environment) to be cleaner in their operations. By promoting a group which is promoting sustainable energy - they may be thinking that the students belonging to this group will create the solutions they need to reach these goals.

Kali Taylor, President of Student Energy

Thanks for your comment and concern. I think it is a great question and one that we have been very clear about from the beginning. As an organization, Student Energy is dedicated to engaging students in a dialogue on ENERGY. The environment often plays a big part in the conversation however we are intentionally not an environmental organization. We feel it is important that information be disseminated on all forms of energy - renewable, fossil, and any other that may arise. Fossil fuels are going to be a large part of the world's energy mix for the foreseeable future and therefore it is imperative that we discuss them realistically; their advantages and their challenges. We do not pretend to have a formula for a sustainable future and we rely on the students who are involved with Student Energy to take the information we provide and draw their own conclusions and come up with their own ideas for what the future may look like. We have always taken sponsorship from large energy companies as a means of funding our initiatives (including both ISES event) and that won't change. But what we have always been very clear about is that they have NO SAY in what we present to our students or the manner in which we do so. It is literally an iron curtain.

Regarding our funding campaign for our initial seed dollars, we have been very clear that for our first bit of funding we will not accept corporate sponsorship (money that requires us to provide benefits to the sponsor) however the Fuelling Change program is a grant that does not require us to provide benefits to Shell and therefore we feel it does not jeopardize the goal of our current campaign. If you want to read more about our funding campaign strategy see the [attached link](#). We are also in the process of writing a funding ethics statement that will ensure we are always transparent with everyone about how we are funded and the measures we put into place to ensure funding does not change our mandate.

Finally, I want to thank you for a great question. It is imperative to the future that we can engage in honest conversation about these types of topics. Student Energy promises to never hide anything for the simple reason that we have nothing to hide, not now and not ever. We believe in working across disciplines - government, academia AND industry - because there is no way to solve our energy challenges without this cooperation. Let me know if everything I said here makes sense, I hope I have fully answered your question.