



Notes for Eagle Project Approvers, Unit Leaders and Boards of Review

This guide supports Scouters at the unit, area, and council levels involved in approving Eagle Scout service projects. Adults guiding Scouts on their Eagle journey are facilitators, not gatekeepers. Scouting America policy prohibits adding requirements beyond those in the rank requirements and the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook. Our role is to understand these requirements and help Scouts achieve the Eagle rank.

Required Documents for Project Approvers

Approvers at all levels must be familiar with:

- Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, Scouting America publication No. 512-927 (scouting.org/advancements).
- Guide to Advancement, Chapter 9: The Eagle Scout Rank (scouting.org/advancements).
- Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook Procedures (scouting.org/advancements).

If this guide conflicts with these documents, the official documents take precedence. Scouts should review the workbook instructions and the "Read Me First" document on the council website (<https://support.scoutingaz.org/main/eagleprocess/>) and the Eagle Rank Requirement 5 in their Scouting BSA Handbook, before selecting a project.

How to Help Scouts Create an Outstanding Eagle Scout Service Project

Adapted from the September-October 2017 issue of Scouting Magazine

The Eagle Scout service project is a significant requirement for Scouting's highest rank. It challenges Scouts to research, plan, lead, and execute a meaningful project, often the largest endeavor of their young lives. The project requires selecting a beneficiary, securing approvals, planning, leading others, and ensuring success while demonstrating leadership.

Key Principles for a Successful Project

- **Focus on Leadership, Not Labor**
The project emphasizes leadership, not physical work. The Scout should be directing the effort, not performing the bulk of the labor. Encourage perseverance and responsibility to ensure a successful outcome.
- **Make It Personal**
Scouts should choose a project tied to a cause they care about, enhancing their sense of pride and connection. A personally meaningful project fosters long-term fulfillment.
- **Engage with a Project Coach or Advisor**
Regular meetings with a project coach or advisor help Scouts organize, plan, and refine their project. This adult mentor provides guidance while allowing the Scout to lead.
- **Ensure Scout-Led Planning**
The project must involve planning by the Scout and beneficiary, not just labor for a pre-

existing plan. Routine tasks, like maintenance work, are ineligible unless they require significant planning and leadership.

- **Fundraising, If Needed**

Fundraising is optional and should only secure materials or facilitate the project. Scouting America prefers low- or no-cost projects. If fundraising is necessary, Scouts can seek contributions from the beneficiary, family, or unit without a fundraising application. Public fundraising, like crowdfunding (e.g., GoFundMe.com), requires approval and must comply with legal and platform guidelines. Scouts may opt out of fundraising, and their leadership in the project itself is the primary evaluation criterion. All funds collected belong to the beneficiary and any left-over funds must be sent to the beneficiary. Tax documents, if requested, must come from the beneficiary.

- **Promote the Project Publicly**

Encourage Scouts to share their project through community media, church bulletins, or beneficiary publications. Public recognition, such as a ceremony or proclamation, boosts Scouting's visibility and celebrates the Scout's achievement.

- **Prepare for the Future**

The project teaches skills like planning, organization, and leadership, preparing Scouts for future challenges. Encourage Scouts to view it as a stepping stone to lifelong service and leadership.

For inspiration, explore Eagle Scout service projects at eagleprojects.boyslife.org.

Evaluating a Project Proposal

Before reviewing the written proposal, have the Scout explain their project and confirm they've read the entire Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook (verified by their signature). Use the workbook's proposal section as the sole basis for evaluation; no additional requirements are permitted (see Guide to Advancement, section 9.0.2.7).

Notes:

- The workbook's Contact Information page is optional and for the Scout's use, not required for approval. It is meant to be a place for them to reference as they do their project and paperwork. It is of little use after the project is completed so it should be filled in at the beginning of the process, not the end.
- The Service Project Plan section is for the Scout's planning and is not subject to approval. It is optional, however since most Scouts have never done a project before, it is of great value for the Scout to sit down with their beneficiary and Scoutmaster after the project is approved and fill this section out. However, the section is optional

Five Tests for Proposal Approval

1. **Meets the Requirement**

Eagle Requirement #5 states: While a Life Scout, plan, develop, and give leadership to others in a service project helpful to any religious institution, school, or community. (The project must benefit an organization other than Scouting America.) A project proposal must be approved by the beneficiary, unit leader, unit committee, and council or area

before starting. Use the Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook, Scouting America publication No. 512-927.

- **Plan:** The Scout must plan the project, not just provide labor for someone else's plan. Verify they have a coach or advisor to assist with the detailed Final Plan, which the coach and beneficiary review before work begins (no area approval required).
- **Develop:** The Scout identifies a need with the beneficiary, outlines steps, and organizes execution. Similar projects are acceptable if uniquely planned or implemented.
- **Give Leadership:** The Scout leads a team, with leadership varying by experience, age, and personality. Projects relying on the beneficiary for all resources or planning do not qualify.
- **Helpful to Community:** The project must benefit a religious institution, school, or community (including global communities). It cannot benefit Scouting America or commercial entities, though community-serving businesses (e.g., public parks) may qualify. Routine labor is ineligible unless scaled to require significant planning and leadership. No minimum hours are required, and references to "average hours" should be avoided to prevent implying a minimum standard.
- **Impact and Pride:** The project should have a meaningful impact and be something the Scout will be proud of years later. Ask: If you were explaining this project to a college admissions officer or employer, what would you say?

2. **Feasibility**

Assess whether the project is realistic and likely to succeed.

3. **Safety**

Confirm the Scout has identified and addressed safety concerns. Note that Eagle projects are official troop activities and all Scouting America adult supervision requirements are in effect.

The [SAFE Project Tool Use](#), [Safe Power Tool Use](#), [SAFE Service Project Planning Checklist](#) and the [Guide to Safe Scouting](#) should be consulted during project planning.

4. **Planning Steps**

Review the proposal's planning sections to ensure the Scout has outlined how they will develop a detailed plan. Emphasize that planning requires significant effort.

5. **Positive Experience**

Ensure the Scout is on track for a rewarding experience with a reasonable chance of success.

Fundraising Approval

Projects cannot primarily involve raising money, even for charities. Fundraising is allowed only to secure materials or facilitate the project and is not required. Scouting America prefers low-cost projects. Fundraising from the beneficiary, Scout, family, unit, or unit families (or under

\$500) does not require a fundraising application. Car washes and garage sales are exempt from applications.

The fundraising application is located at the end of the Planning Section of the workbook and should be handed in with the project proposal section during the proposal approval meeting. Council Area approvers have the authority to sign these applications for all fundraising where no one specific person outside the unit, beneficiary, or relations contribute over \$500 cash. In the case of this specific instance, the application should be sent to bill.nelson@scouting.org.

Reminders for Scouts at Proposal Review

- Track time accurately for yourself and all participants, including research, planning, obtaining materials, documenting, approvals, project execution, and travel.
- Notify original proposal signers of significant scope changes to ensure the project still qualifies.
- Include discussions with the area reviewer about the Final Plan write-up.

Additional Guidelines for Reviewing Projects

- Conduct reviews in a helpful, friendly, courteous, and kind manner, respecting the Scout's dignity. Scouts may have a parent, unit leader, or other adult observer present.
- Aim to approve proposals in one meeting. If minor details are missing, allow the Scout to add them on the spot. If approval isn't possible, provide a clear, preferably written, explanation of what needs improvement.
- Only one Scout may receive credit for a single Eagle Scout service project.
- Projects do not need lasting value or excessive detail beyond the workbook's Proposal Section.
- Collection and blood drives are acceptable if they meet the five tests above.

Evaluating Completed Projects

Evaluate projects based on their impact on the beneficiary and the leadership demonstrated by the Scout. Only the final project report in the workbook is considered during the board of review. If the project shows adequate planning, development, and leadership, and is satisfactory to the unit leader and beneficiary, it should generally be approved.

Significant deviations from the proposal may lead the unit leader or beneficiary to withhold approval. The Scout may follow their guidance or submit the workbook without approval but must be granted a board of review.

Additional Resources

- [Guide for project beneficiaries](#) at the end of the project workbook

- Articles on Eagle projects and approval processes: [Advancement News, August/September 2013](#) and [May 2012](#).
- Article on leadership in Eagle projects: scoutingmagazine.org.