

Eagle Scout Service Project — Proposal Tips

Practical guidance for writing a strong project proposal. This is a resource guide, not the official BSA workbook — always use the official Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook from [scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org).

WHAT MAKES A GOOD EAGLE PROJECT

Benefits a community organization

A religious institution, school, or community group — not a for-profit business or a family member. The organization must confirm they want and approve the project.

Requires real leadership

You plan and lead volunteers through the project. You do not do all the work yourself. Managing others is the whole point.

Has a clear, lasting deliverable

Something that will exist and be used after you're done. A cleaned-up park, a built structure, a planted garden, a stocked library.

Matches your current skills and can be completed before you turn 18

Ambitious is good. Unrealistic is a trap. Scope it so you can finish it well, not just finish it.

Is approved before any work begins

Do not start physical work until your proposal is approved by the Scoutmaster, committee, and council or district representative. Any work done before approval does not count.

WRITING THE PROPOSAL — SECTION BY SECTION

Description of the project

Describe the project in plain language. What will be built, created, or improved?

Explain who benefits and how. Be specific — "the 200 students at Lincoln Elementary" not "the community."

Include a before-and-after description: what does it look like now, and what will it look like when you're done?

Project organization and leadership

Name who you will recruit as volunteers and how you will manage them.

Describe how you will communicate the plan to volunteers.

Explain how you will handle problems if they arise (weather, no-shows, material shortage).

Materials and budget

List every material you need with estimated cost. Show you've researched actual prices.

Explain how materials will be funded — donations, fundraising, troop funds, personal contribution.

Add a 10–15% contingency. Things always cost more than planned.

Keep receipts for everything. The project workbook requires documentation.

Schedule and timeline

Break the project into phases: planning, materials acquisition, construction, cleanup.

Estimate realistic hours per phase — then add 25% buffer.

Set a completion date well before your 18th birthday.

Name specific dates for key milestones.

Beneficiary information

Name the organization and your contact there.

Include their written confirmation that they want and approve the project.

Confirm what, if anything, the organization will provide (storage space, equipment, access).

COMMON MISTAKES — AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Starting work before approval

Any physical work done before council/district approval does not count. Period. Wait.

Scope that's too large to complete

Better to do a smaller project extremely well than a large one poorly. Discuss realistic scope with your SM.

Vague beneficiary description

"The community" is not a beneficiary. Name the specific organization and contact person.

Not documenting as you go

Take photos before, during, and after. Keep all receipts. Track volunteer hours as you go, not at the end.

Doing the work yourself

The project is about leading others. If you're doing most of the physical work, you're doing it wrong.

BEFORE YOU SUBMIT — QUICK CHECK

- ☐ Beneficiary has confirmed they want and approve the project (in writing)
- ☐ All materials and costs are itemized with realistic estimates
- ☐ Volunteer plan is described — who, how many, how you'll manage them
- ☐ Timeline includes a completion date before your 18th birthday
- ☐ Scoutmaster has reviewed and supports the proposal
- ☐ You are using the current official BSA Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook

Official resource: Always use the current Eagle Scout Service Project Workbook from [scouting.org](https://www.scouting.org). This guide supplements — it does not replace — the official workbook. Requirements change; verify with your council.

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