Scouting America

Middle Tennessee Council

Eagle Scout Project Fundraising Guidelines

(Revision – March 2026)
Addendum to Guide to Advancement 9.0.2.10

I. Purpose

The Eagle Scout Service Project is a demonstration of leadership and service. While fundraising is sometimes necessary to support project materials and supplies, the national organization prefers that fundraising be kept to a minimum and conducted in a manner consistent with the ideals of Scouting.

This document provides Middle Tennessee Council standards to ensure:

- Consistency across districts
- Protection of Scouts and units
- Financial transparency
- Preservation of the image and integrity of Scouting
- Alignment with the Guide to Advancement 9.0.2.10

The value of an Eagle project is not measured by the amount of money raised, but by the leadership demonstrated in serving others.

II. General Fundraising Principles

1. An Eagle Scout Service Project may not be a fundraiser itself; fundraising is permitted only to secure materials or otherwise facilitate the project.
2. Fundraising for an Eagle Scout Service Project must not be required of any candidate. The decision to fundraise rests with the Scout based on project needs.
3. Fundraising must be for the Eagle Scout Service Project only — not for the Scout personally.
4. The Scout must lead and manage the fundraising effort.
5. Funds raised in excess of project needs must be turned over to the project beneficiary.
6. Fundraising should be conducted in a restrained and responsible manner similar to unit money-earning projects.

7. All fundraising activities must comply with the current edition of the Guide to Advancement.

III. Fundraising Application Requirements

The Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application must be submitted when required under national Scouting America guidelines.

Within the Middle Tennessee Council:

- Fundraising efforts expected to exceed $1,000 in value must be reviewed by the District Advancement representative.

The purpose of review is compliance and consistency — not to discourage appropriate fundraising. Review and approval of fundraising applications, including crowdfunding, is limited to ensuring compliance with national and council policy prior to launch. District representatives are not responsible for monitoring active fundraising campaigns or supervising ongoing activities. Once approved, the Scout and unit are responsible for conducting fundraising in accordance with this policy.

Scouts planning fundraising efforts expected to remain below the $1,000 threshold are encouraged to plan their fundraising carefully and conclude fundraising activities once project needs are met or the threshold is approached.

IV. Financial Controls and Accountability

The following financial handling requirements apply to all fundraising conducted in support of an Eagle Scout Service Project, regardless of method:

1. Funds raised are for the benefit of the project beneficiary and are not the personal property of the Scout.
2. A written ledger of all funds raised and expenditures must be maintained.
3. Funds raised in excess of project needs must be turned over to the project beneficiary.
4. If the beneficiary is unable to retain excess funds or materials, the beneficiary shall designate a suitable charitable recipient in accordance with national guidelines.

V. Use of Crowdfunding Platforms

Definition of Crowdfunding

For purposes of these guidelines, crowdfunding refers to the use of a third-party online fundraising platform that:

- Collects monetary donations electronically through a hosted campaign page;
- Processes payments through an integrated payment system;
- May charge platform or processing fees; and
- Distributes collected funds to an organizer or designated account.

Examples include services such as GoFundMe, FundRazr, Zeffy, and similar web-based fundraising platforms.

Crowdfunding does not include:

- Individual requests for donations made through personal email, text message, or social media posts;
- Announcements shared on social media directing donors to contribute by check or cash;
- Traditional unit fundraising activities (e.g., car washes, bake sales, etc.);
- Direct contributions made by the beneficiary, unit, chartered organization, family members, or relatives as described in the Guide to Advancement.

If a Scout creates a hosted fundraising page on a third-party platform that collects and processes donations electronically, it shall be considered crowdfunding under this policy and subject to the review requirements outlined below.

A. Leadership and Ownership

- The Scout must create and manage the campaign.
- The fundraising narrative must clearly describe the service project and its beneficiary.
- The Scout and unit leadership are responsible for ensuring that the fundraising campaign remains consistent with the approved plan and applicable guidelines.

B. Required Disclosures

The campaign must clearly state:

1. Funds are being raised to support an Eagle Scout Service Project.
2. Any funds remaining after project completion will be given to the project beneficiary.
3. Donations are not tax-deductible unless confirmed in writing by the beneficiary organization.

C. Platform Fees

- Platform processing and service fees must be disclosed in the project budget.

- Scouts are encouraged to select reputable platforms with reasonable and transparent fee structures.
- Fees should be considered when establishing fundraising goals to ensure project needs are met.
- Some crowdfunding platforms advertise zero platform fees or optional tip models. Scouts are encouraged to research multiple platforms and select one with transparent and reasonable fee structures. The Council does not endorse any specific platform.

D. Branding and Representation

- Use of Scouting America trademarks, logos, or uniforms in campaign materials must comply with Scouting America brand guidelines.
- Campaign messaging must reflect the values and image of Scouting.
- Campaigns may not imply endorsement by Scouting America beyond the Scout's participation in the program.

VI. Scale and Scope of Fundraising

Large-scale fundraising efforts may introduce legal, accounting, and custodial complexities. Scouts should:

- Carefully evaluate project scope before pursuing extensive fundraising.
- Consider lower-cost alternatives where appropriate.
- Seek guidance from unit leaders and district advancement representatives early in the planning process.

The Middle Tennessee Council encourages thoughtful project design that balances ambition with practical stewardship.

VII. Consistency Across Districts

To ensure fairness and clarity:

- These guidelines apply uniformly across all districts within the Middle Tennessee Council.
- Districts may not impose additional prohibitions on crowdfunding if conducted in compliance with this policy and the Guide to Advancement.
- Questions regarding interpretation should be directed to the Council Advancement Committee.

VIII. Guiding Principle

Fundraising for an Eagle Scout Service Project is not required and should be kept to a minimum whenever reasonably possible. Scouts are encouraged to design projects that can be accomplished with limited financial complexity.

When fundraising is undertaken, it is not about maximizing dollars raised, but about demonstrating leadership, responsibility, initiative, and ethical conduct in service to the project beneficiary. The primary measure of success remains the Scout's leadership in planning and executing the service project itself.

When conducted transparently and in accordance with Scouting values and national guidelines, fundraising — including crowdfunding — may serve as one appropriate tool among many to support meaningful service to the community.

Finally, scouts are encouraged to exercise good judgment and stewardship when managing funds raised in support of their project.