

The Use of Crowdfunding for Eagle Scout Service Projects in Daniel Webster Council

The growth and prevalence of crowdfunding sites has led many Scouts to wonder whether their Eagle project could benefit from this source of money.

The short answer: Yes, boys working on their Eagle project are permitted to use these sites to raise funds for materials, equipment rental, professional services, etc.

The longer answer: The use of crowdfunding sites is allowed but they present several new and unique issues that must be carefully considered and managed to comply with the rules for fundraising an Eagle Service Project.

Keep in mind that an Eagle project doesn't have to cost a lot to be meaningful. Eagle projects carried out with minimal, if any, expense are always preferred to those with high price tags. In fact, the BSA prefers there not be any fundraising at all for an Eagle project. That said, the BSA knows low-price projects aren't always a realistic goal.

If you do choose the crowdfunding route, carefully read the fine print on any site you are considering.

Among the questions prospective Eagle Scouts should consider:

- What is the minimum age for someone to open an account?
- What kind of financial cut will the site take?
- Do you receive donations even if you don't reach your stated monetary goal?
- How long does it take to get your funds after the donating window closes?
- Are you required to offer some sort of reward to backers? If so, what will the rewards be?
- Does the site allow you to donate excess funds to your project beneficiary?
- What will you do if you don't reach your goal? (On Kickstarter, for example, 56 percent of projects never reach their goal.)

These issues, and others, may bring your Eagle Scout Service Project Fundraising Application under additional scrutiny by your district Eagle Board, which may slow your project approval process.

Because of the larger number of potential problems and pitfalls, it is recommended that a Scout choose a more traditional method of fundraising for his Eagle Project (e.g. bake sales, spaghetti suppers, car washes, etc.), if indeed, funds need to be raised at all. It is also worth noting that traditional fundraising activities often serve as an additional opportunity to demonstrate project leadership.

For more information, refer to the *BSA Guide to Advancement*, Section 9.0.2.10.