

Project Handbook

Edition 1 (July 2022)

EXPLORER BELT

2023

A guide to major and minor projects

The Explorer Belt Award is achieved by travelling in a foreign country for ten days. The minimum travelling requirement is 50 hours, working as part of a small team.

The purpose of the expedition is to gain a real understanding of a different country, its people, culture and way of life. The most effective way to do that is by meeting and talking to local people as project work is carried out on the expedition.

This booklet will help explain how to develop your project work.

# Explorer Belt project requirements

As part of the Explorer Belt Award, participants will be required to complete:

One major project and ten minor projects.

**The major project** is developed by each team and approved by the Leadership Team. It should take roughly 10-15 hours to complete with these hours spread over the 10 days of your expedition.

**The minor projects** will be developed and set by the Leadership Team and Mentors. Each minor project should take roughly 45-60 minutes to complete and be achievable within that time. There are examples at the end of this booklet.

**All project work** is likely to occupy roughly 2 hours per day of the expedition. Everyone must be included in project work and should take an active role in the planning of it too.

Participants should make every effort to ensure they are prepared for each day and complete project work efficiently each day. However, this shouldn’t negatively impact or compromise on the exploring experience or timing of the expedition.

# What’s different about the Explorer Belt?

The projects are just one part of the Explorer Belt. It’s an equal part of the Award just as much as teamwork, exploration, new experiences, planning and preparation. All these parts need equal levels of consideration and effort. But no single part should overwhelm the others.

The purpose of an Explorer Belt expedition is different from your Chief Scout’s or Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. These expeditions are as part of a self-sufficient team, fully independent of people outside your team, completing a journey usually in a remote location.

For your Explorer Belt, it’s different. The purpose is social and people-based. You’ll be very dependent on people outside your team. You’ll have to meet and talk to people you don’t know, possibly in a foreign language, to gather the information for your projects and to engage with the local culture and way of life.

# Expectations of project planning

It is expected that participants will develop a set of ideas for the major project and that they will work on them with their Mentors throughout the training programme. Participants will be encouraged to think creatively about their major project. They will be asked to develop these ideas throughout the programme and tweak them as more ideas emerge.

Teams should complete their ‘*Project Outline’* and submit their plans to their Mentors and also:

**Carol Frain** (ACC Top Awards)

Explorer Belt Award Advisor

carol.frain@cheshirescouts.org.uk

# *Top Tips!* for developing the major project

These four top tips will help teams think about what to focus on for their major project. They’re from the Expedition Advisory Centre at the Royal Geographical Society.

**Think small.** A small, simple, well thought-through major project will be one you can complete. It won’t become overwhelming. An overly ambitious major project will likely take over the expedition, be impossible to finish, and make participants wonder why they ever wanted to do their Explorer Belt.

**Think interesting.** Major projects don’t come out of thin air. They usually come from what the team already know and what they all find interesting. Since the major project takes a total of 10-15 hours to complete – and is going to be worked on every day of the expedition, it needs to interest every person on the team. The one thing it doesn’t need to be is an academic exercise.

**Ask for help.** Teams should do some background reading and research on the country you’re going to. A Mentorship Team is in place to help support all teams through the planning stages. These Mentors will be allocated specifically to teams and will be the point of contact for all enquiries and guidance.

**Leave plenty of time.** The ‘*Project Outline*’ is a key part of Explorer Belt planning. It needs to be developed by each team, with involvement from every team member. This will take you more time than perhaps is imagined. The tip here is to encourage team members to be on time with submissions and to stay in communication regularly.

# Ideas Worksheet

To help generate some ideas for the major project, complete the worksheet below.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Team name** |  |
| What are your interests?What do you do in your spare time? What do you know something about? |  |
| Research some websites and make brief notes on some of the history, politics, geography, economy, demographics, culture, language and ways of life in the country you’re going to.Look at some maps to get a sense of the size, scale and place of the country. Add to your notes.Search some news sites for recent stories on the country and recent events. Make some notes opposite |  |
| What are people of your age, who live in the country you’re going to, interested in? |  |
| Looking at the notes you’ve made: What connects up your interests, what you’ve found in your research on the country, and the interests of people of your age in the country?Therefore, what topics might be interesting for your major project? Ideally think of at least three. |  |
| What questions could you ask people you meet to explore your topics and to gain an understanding of the country’s people, culture and way of life? |  |

# Additional notes

# Major Project Outline

Your Ideas Worksheet(s) will give you the basis to start your Major Project Outline whilst you’re planning your Explorer Belt expedition during training. You’ll go on to complete your Outline and submit it as part of your required documentation. To help make your project interesting, people-based and inspiring, use the Challenge Questions to help you improve your PO.

**Major Project Outline** *Write or type your ‘Project Outline’ in this table. Expand over two or more pages as needed*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Team name and number:** |  |
| **Major Project title:** |  |
| What is the main question you are asking to understand the country in which your Explorer Belt is taking place, its people, culture and way of life? |  |
| What are the 3-5 sub-questions that you are going to ask to enable you to answer your main question? |  |
| How do you plan to answer your questions? What techniques will you use? How will you capture the information? |  |
| How will you report back your findings? How will you inspire the next generation of Explorers and Network members? |  |
| What safety and ethical considerations do you need to make for your Project? |  |

# Challenge Questions

Use the Challenge Questions below to score your ‘*Project Outline*’.

Then edit your PO to improve each of your scores by 1 or more points.

#  1

Not at all

 2

 Slightly

 3

 Fairly

 4

 Very

 5

 Extremely

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| How interesting is your project title and main question to each and every member of your team? |  |  |  |  |  |
| To what extent will answering your questions help everyone in your team understand the country of your Explorer Belt, its people, culture and way of life? |  |  |  |  |  |
| Does answering your questions require you to meet local people? 1= Not at all to 5 = All the time |  |  |  |  |  |
| Estimating the time your project will take, how close is it to 10 to 15 hours? |  |  |  |  |  |
| How confident are you that you will have the information needed to report back your findings and to be inspiring when you present them? |  |  |  |  |  |
| How safe and ethical is your project? |  |  |  |  |  |

# Additional notes

# Sample major projects

Below are some ideas and some major projects from previous Explorer Belts and from samples provided by The Scouts and other Scout Counties running Explorer Belt expeditions. They might help you to think about your own ideas.

* How life has changed in the last 20 years in The Netherlands
* A study of religious buildings and their uses
* Myths, ghosts and folk stories of North West Germany
* The leisure and recreation interests of young people compared to those of older people in Maastricht and the facilities available to them – OR - What young people do to have fun in Holland and how this differs to young people in the UK
* What are the impacts or uses of EU rulings in European towns?
* Investigate the history of a specific area or period in the country – OR - An investigation of the impact of particular historic events on the people living in an area
* Compare and contrast an aspect of the country you are in with that aspect in the UK, for example: Scouting, education, places of worship, agriculture, environment, architecture, culture, life of a young person, health facilities
* Follow the course of a river, road, path or other major feature and investigate the different communities it serves and their lifestyles
* Identify local cottage industries and interview industry participants to understand their work and their lifestyles

# Sample minor projects

Here are some popular minor projects teams have done in the past plus some samples from The Scouts. The EB23 Mentors will develop and set these projects. This is give you an idea of what to expect.

* Visit a local market and buy a selection of local produce to use in your cooking
* Cook a local meal and share it with a local family
* Cook a national dish or make a delicacy from your home country for a family
* Taste as many different local chocolates as you can
* Have your photograph taken in national costume
* Teach or learn a local / national folk dance or song
* Visit a local art gallery or meet a local artist and see their work
* Visit a local craftsman
* Visit a particular museum, cultural site or tourist attraction
* Visit a local leisure facility and talk with people your own age there about what they do for leisure activities
* Find out from local people their views on the effectiveness of their local public transport system
* Appear on local TV / radio / newspaper
* Sleep within sight of a specific landmark
* Teach about UK culture at a local school
* Visit a local Scout / youth group
* Work for a family for a morning or afternoon
* Visit or take part in a local ceremony
* Visit or take part in a baptism, wedding or funeral
* Visit a local place of worship, or take part in an act of worship
* Interview a local police, fire, or ambulance officer and get your picture taken.
* Interview a local mayor and get your picture taken with a local dignitary or celebrity
* Find three ways in which local family life differs from your own and three ways in which it is similar