Resources for young leaders

Running a community impact project.

Don't forget to take a look at the Community Impact Staged Activity Badge.

At Scouts, we believe that successful community impact projects are four things. They're:

1. Relevant to communities. This means that the community affected by the project identify and recognise the issue the project tackles.
2. This means they make genuine changes to the lives of others and that people's actions contribute to societal change – they're not just an activity that's nice to do.
3. Good for young people. This means that they help young people to develop skills through actions that are challenging and fun.
4. Embedded, progressive, and habit forming. This means that action isn't just a one-off thing – it's sustained over an extended period of time and gets more sophisticated as people grow and develop skills.

The five requirements of every stage of the Community Impact Staged Activity Badge are:

1. **Identify and understand the need.**
   You'll want to do activities that help everyone investigate the issues and challenges that exist in your chosen community. What needs to change for your chosen community?

2. **Plan action.**
   You'll want to do activities that help everyone decide which of the issues they want to take action on and how they plan to do it. What action will lead to the change the young people want to see?

3. **Take action** over 3, 6, 9 or 12 months (the time increases with each stage of the badge).
   Now it's time for everyone to roll their sleeves up and get stuck in. You'll want to follow your plan to take actions that make real change in response to the need that the young people identified. Just make sure what you're doing is challenging and fun – does it give everyone the chance to develop their skills?
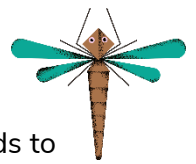
4. **Learn and make more change.**
   You'll want to do activities that help everyone reflect on what they've achieved, how they've grown as a result, and any further action they might take. What has everyone learned? Are they likely to take more action?

5. **Tell the world.**
   You'll want to do activities that help everyone shout about what they've done. It's not just a chance to celebrate what people have achieved – it's a chance to tell others to encourage and inspire them to take action as well. How can you help rest of the world to see how impressive your project is? How can you show people that Scouts is relevant to modern society?

After all that? It's time to award everyone with their Community Impact Staged Activity Badges.

Requirement three: the project

You can tackle most requirements in a single session, but requirement three (take action) needs to happen over several months.

Just like with the other requirements, using a plan, do, review structure is a great way to approach your take action project. You just need to make sure you continue to review, then plan, then do, throughout your months of taking action.

A great way to do this is by creating a stop, start, change document. This is as simple as it sounds – it's a place to record things to stop, start, and change. If you can, stick it somewhere in your meeting place so everyone can review their actions and plan new ones every time you meet.

In each of the three sections, identify what you should:
- You'll want to stop anything that isn't helping your community impact project. For example, if you've been handing out leaflets by a community centre and have found that not many people are using them, you might want to stop handing out leaflets there.
- You'll want to start things that could have a positive effect on your project. For example, you might get more visibility or engagement by running an open evening for people to come and learn about what you're doing.
- You'll want to change things that are working, but that you could do more efficiently (or to a higher standard). For example, if you've set up planters in a park and one person is feeding and watering them every few days, you might recognise that's a lot of work for just one person! Why not create a rota instead, so this task is split between different people?

People can add suggestions to each section of your stop, start, change document. You can come together, consider all the possible actions, and make them happen as you keep learning and improving your project.

Check the list

When you have a project plan in place, make sure it's challenging and relevant for the group taking part. Ask yourself:

- Is it age appropriate?
- Is it the right time of year for this project? You could think about the temperature, light, and whether people and places are available when you need them.
- Is there a mix of activities?
- Have you strayed too far from the original plan?
- Is it inclusive and accessible?
- Is it safe?
- Will people have fun?