



TRAILBLAZERS

OUTDOOR CLUB PROGRAM

Frequently Asked Questions (Updated July 2026)

Trailblazers guidelines are available here: <http://gooutside.nc.gov/trailblazers-info/apply>

Pages 1-4 include questions that are directed at *new applicants*, questions on pages 5-7 should be reviewed by *successful applicants*.

WHAT IS THE TRAILBLAZERS OUTDOOR CLUB PROGRAM?

The N.C. Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission provides outdoor learning opportunities for youth across the state of North Carolina. This state-wide grant program directly supports the creation of outdoor clubs for middle/high school-level students by providing start-up funding, guidance, and resources.

WHAT SCHOOLS ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY?

Eligible schools must qualify as either a North Carolina middle school, high school, or early college (including public, charter, and private schools).

WHO SHOULD COMPLETE THE APPLICATION?

Any member of a school's faculty or administrative staff may apply for a Trailblazers Club, however, it is strongly encouraged that the intended club advisor complete and submit the application.

WHERE DO I GO TO APPLY?

Grant applications must be fully completed through the Grant Lifecycle Manager application portal found [HERE](#).

HOW DO I LOGON TO GRANT LIFECYCLE MANAGER (GLM)?

If you have an existing GLM account, follow this [link](#) and use your username and password to logon.

If you do not have a GLM account, please create one before submitting an application.

I CAN ONLY PREVIEW THE TRAILBLAZERS CLUB APPLICATION. WHAT SHOULD I DO?

If you do not see the “Apply” button, please ensure that you are logged into GLM prior to completing an application.

If you do not have a GLM account, please create one before submitting an application.

What If I Forgot My Logon Information?

If you have forgotten your username or password, please email GoOutside@nc.gov to have NCYOE staff reset your logon information.

CAN I EMAIL MY DOCUMENTS TO YOU?

All reporting documentation must be submitted through GLM in your “End of Year Report” form assigned upon grant approval. Please ensure that you are uploading one zip file or one Google Drive link containing all your reporting documents. If you are having issues, please email GoOutside@nc.gov for assistance.

WHEN IS THE APPLICATION SUBMISSION PERIOD?

The application reopens each year in August and closes March 31st.

HOW ARE THE CLUBS STRUCTURED?

The structure of the club is determined by the recipient school. A club advisor is required, and student leadership positions are strongly encouraged:

A. **Club Advisor(s)**

The club advisor is the faculty member responsible for leading the club, planning field trips and activities, purchasing equipment, and grant reporting. You may decide to have multiple advisors and share these responsibilities.

B. **Student Leadership**

Electing club members to leadership roles can provide an excellent opportunity for students to develop leadership and communication skills. You may choose to have positions such as President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.

HOW SHOULD CLUB ACTIVITIES BE PLANNED?

The planning of your club’s activities throughout the school year will be determined by your club advisor and faculty, however, we make recommendations for the allocation of field trips, club meeting activities, and equipment purchases. A sample curriculum with suggestions on field trips and club meeting activities can be found [HERE](#).

A. **Field Trips**

Field trips must include an outdoor learning component/activity (e.g., camping, hiking, kayaking) and may include visits to National/State parks, city/county parks, outdoor recreation areas, outdoor activity/education centers, and historical sites.

B. Club Meeting Activities

Club meetings provide an opportunity for students to be involved in planning and preparation for field trips, and to learn outdoor skills. Examples of skills students could learn about in a club meeting include how to: safely build a campfire, put up a tent, pack a backpack, cook with a campfire.

C. Equipment Purchases

Equipment purchases will be dependent on your club's proposed activities but may include items such as fishing rods, tents, backpacks, kayaks, and first-aid kits.

HOW CAN FUNDING BE USED?

Funding is intended to build a club and fund field trips, club meeting activities, and equipment for the inaugural school year.

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D. Professional Development

Club advisors may request to utilize a portion of the funding for professional development that contributes to the safety and longevity of the club. This may include courses such as Wilderness First Aid.

HOW MANY FIELD TRIPS AND OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES SHOULD WE PLAN FOR?

Our expectation is that club advisors will maximize the impact of their club funding by sustainably planning as many outdoor field trips as possible within the school year and holding regular activity/planning meetings with members. For example:

4 field trips to local outdoor areas (costing \$2,000 each) to go camping, hiking, kayaking, fishing with \$2,000 allocated to equipment (that can be reused) is preferable.

1 large field trip costing \$10,000 with no sustainable equipment purchases is not preferable.

WHEN WILL I FIND OUT THE STATUS OF MY APPLICATION?

Once the application period closes, please allow up to 4 weeks for your application to be reviewed. Typically, you will be notified of the status of your application within 4 weeks of the application close date. Exceptions may occur for applications that require the submission of additional documentation or further review.

CAN I SUBMIT SUPPORTING INFORMATION WITH MY APPLICATION?

You are welcome to submit presentations, videos (ideally no more than 2 minutes in length), photos, testimonials, etc. with your application. However, this is not required, and it will not negatively affect the review of your application if you choose not to submit supporting information.

MY APPLICATION WAS SUCCESSFUL, WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

If your application is successful, you will be assigned a Grant Agreement form and a Club Plan form through Grant Lifecycle Manager for the school year. The Grant Agreement must be completed and signed before your club plan can be submitted. Your club plan will detail the field trips you intend to take, outdoor skills your members will develop, equipment purchases, and other costs associated with running your club.

MY SCHOOL HAS A TRAILBLAZERS CLUB, DO I NEED TO REAPPLY EACH YEAR?

Once your school has successfully joined the program, club status is permanent if all annual requirements continue to be met. Each year, via GLM, clubs must submit a form confirming their available funds, member status, and advisor information. This form must be completed and approved by Commission staff prior to submitting a Club Plan for the upcoming school year.

HOW DO I CONTINUE TO FUND MY CLUB?

It is the Commission's intention to support clubs up to their third year. Funding for these clubs is contingent on an appropriation from the General Assembly and a specific amount will be determined annually by the Commission.

- Note: Please ensure all required tasks for existing clubs are completed and up to date in GLM to be considered for supplemental grant funding, contingent on appropriations from the General Assembly.

It is strongly encouraged that club advisors and faculty formulate a strategy for fundraising and club sponsorship. We have resources available upon request for clubs interested in seeking community sponsors.

WHAT IF MY APPLICATION IS SUCCESSFUL BUT MY PLANS CHANGE?

Club funds must be used for the purchases and costs listed in an approved application. If you need to make a change to your application, you must first complete and submit an **Amendment Request form**. Request a Trailblazers Amendment form by emailing GoOutside@nc.gov. The Trailblazers Amendment form will be assigned via the applicant's Grant Lifecycle Manager portal. An amendment request must be approved by the Commission before grant awards can be used. Improper or unapproved expenditure may result in the Commission requiring a refund of the grant award.

WHEN AND HOW ARE CLUB FUNDS MADE AVAILABLE?

Club funds will be sent directly to the recipient school system within 6 weeks of the school being notified of their acceptance. If your application is successful, it is important to ensure that your school's bookkeeper is aware that you will be receiving funding – the Commission has no control over how a school receives their funding and, depending upon your school's setup, funds may be sent directly to your school's county office.

WHAT IF OUR CLUB FUNDS DIDN'T ARRIVE?

Contact us as soon as possible at GoOutside@nc.gov or Layne.Randolph@nc.gov

HOW WILL I RECEIVE PROGRAM UPDATES?

We send regular newsletters to club advisors via email. Upon acceptance to the program you will be added to the newsletter email list, as well as be notified by Grant Lifecycle Manager when there are assigned tasks.

HOW CAN I CONTACT OTHER CLUB ADVISORS?

We encourage club advisors to use the Find a Club tool under the Trailblazers Program on the NCYOE website to find advisor contact information.

CAN I PLAN ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS WITH OTHER CLUBS?

Absolutely, where possible we encourage club advisors from different schools to work together.

ARE THERE RESOURCES I CAN USE TO PROMOTE MY CLUB?

You can access downloadable resources to assist you with club planning and promotion in the club advisors drive. This exclusive drive will be shared through newsletters or you can contact GoOutside@nc.gov directly.

WHAT IF THERE ARE ACTIVITIES MY SCHOOL IS NOT PERMITTED TO DO?

If there are activities that your school is not permitted to engage in, you may contact us at GoOutside@nc.gov to explore whether there are alternative activities that would be permissible. If you have access to your school field trip policies, we recommend sharing them with us so that the Commission can evaluate field trip options.

WHAT REPORTING DOCUMENTATION AM I REQUIRED TO SUBMIT?

At the end of the school year you are required to log in to Grant Lifecycle Manager and submit proof of payment and photographs. You can view grant reporting information [HERE](#). Reminder notifications will be automatically generated by Grant Lifecycle Manager and emailed to the applicant's email. The following documentation is required:

A. **Club Reporting Form**

This form is where the advisor will indicate how much of their funding has been spent and indicate whether there are funds remaining. This form is signed by the club advisor and the school's Principal.

B. **Proof of Payment**

An expense spreadsheet will be requested in addition to the Club Report form to show expenditures. Applicants, administrators/principals, and/or accountants/bookkeepers are responsible for collecting, collating, and providing proof of payment.

C. **Photographs**

Recipients must submit photographs of their field trips and club activities that we may use on our website, social media, and in our print and other materials.

WHAT IF THE COST OF PURCHASES HAS CHANGED SINCE MY APPROVAL?

Request a Trailblazers Amendment form by emailing GoOutside@nc.gov. The Trailblazers Amendment form will be assigned via the applicant's Grant Lifecycle Manager portal. An amendment request must be approved by the Commission before grant awards can be used. Improper or unapproved expenditure may result in the Commission requiring a refund of the grant award.

WHAT IF THE ORIGINAL CLUB ADVISOR HAS CHANGED?

If this is the case, you must first complete and submit an Amendment Request form designating a new club advisor. Request a Trailblazers Amendment form by emailing GoOutside@nc.gov. The Trailblazers Amendment form will be assigned via the applicant's Grant Lifecycle Manager portal.

WHAT IS THE TRAILBLAZERS RETREAT?

The Trailblazers Retreat is an annual event, led by Commission staff, providing opportunities to learn more about the program. It includes networking opportunities, guest speakers, and options to participate in outdoor activities. Club advisors will receive information on signing up via the email newsletter. Contact GoOutside@nc.gov for more information.

WHAT IF WE HAVE FUNDS LEFTOVER AT THE END OF THE SCHOOL YEAR?

Club funds are intended to be utilized throughout the school year. If funds are leftover the club advisor will document this on a Club Reporting form at the end of the school year so that they can be carried over to the next school year. You can request the use of unused funds for the club's activities in the next school year.

If a club is intending to exit the program, unspent funds must be returned by check to:

N.C. Youth Outdoor Engagement Commission
1715 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1715