



GUIDE TO URBAN EXPLORATIONS - A BRIEFING FOR AWARD PARTICIPANTS

An Exploration is a purpose with a journey. During an Exploration, the primary focus is to collect data and research information external to the group perspective. Time and effort must be spent on the purpose of the exploration, and consequently less time is devoted to journeying. A minimum of broadly one third of the purposeful effort must still be spent on journeying, depending on local circumstances.

An Urban Exploration takes you out of nature and into an urban setting, exploring, collecting data, and studying any number of topics related to a chosen subject. Keep in mind that an Exploration must be based on participants' own research, first-hand observations, or data collection. In other words, you must be present in the venture area and moving about (through physical effort) when carrying out your study. Some ideas may include studying urban area X and its:

| | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| Design/layout | Administration | Innovation |
| History | Architecture | Traffic |
| Renewal/re-development | Homelessness | Crime |
| Economics | Cultural and ethnic diversity | Transportation systems |

Looking at the above list, you may think that urban economics is interesting. Remember, your group aim must be focused so an example could be to study the impact of COVID-19 on the economy of [insert city name here]. Each group member can study a specific area within the aim i.e. the restaurant sector, small business, banks, and investment companies, etc.

Note: your Award Leader may want to consult with your Award Office to ensure your topic is appropriate and your plans fulfill Award requirements.

GETTING STARTED

Group work is a key part of the Adventurous Journey section. While you may not be able to complete the Adventurous Journey with a group of peers in person during COVID-19, you must still meet virtually to plan and prepare.

1) In consultation with your Award Leader, find a group of 4-7 of your peers who are interested in doing an Urban Exploration.

2) Arrange a group meeting. If COVID-19 does not permit in-person group meetings, there are a variety of virtual options such as Zoom, MS Teams, Google Classroom, FB messenger etc. Do not forget to invite your Award Leader.

At your group meeting:

- Choose an area of interest to all members.

- Identify possible candidates for an appropriate Subject Matter Expert.
- Identify possible candidates for an appropriate Assessor.
- NOTE: your Subject Matter Expert, Assessor, and Award Leader could be the same person. Alternatively, you may need to find an independent Subject Matter Expert and Assessor.
- Identify options for Supervisor[s]. COVID-19 restrictions regarding group gathering might mean individual Supervisors.

3) Seek and confirm a Subject Matter Expert, an Assessor, and a Supervisor[s]. Clearly explain to them their roles and responsibilities.

Subject Matter Expert: must be knowledgeable and experienced in the chosen field of interest and must be willing to help the group by suggesting sources for information and suitable areas for study and help your group build a solid proposal.

Assessor: must be willing to check in with you at least once per day during your qualifying exploration, review your final report, and validate that the group has meet all 13 AJ requirements by providing a final assessment.

Supervisor: During the pandemic, this may be a family member or guardian. The Supervisor is responsible for participant safety. Their role is not to guide the participant[s]. They should not intervene in any decisions unless safety is at risk. The participant[s] must be self-sufficient and take the lead.

Note: adequate lines of communication should be established prior to the Exploration with the Award Leader, Subject Matter Expert, Assessor, and Supervisor[s]

4) Meet with your group and Subject Matter Expert to develop your proposal. It should have a clear aim and realistic and achievable tasks.

- Each group member decides on a specific area within the aim.
- Discuss and decide on study and recording techniques, equipment, meals, and the format of your final report.
- Plan your route(s). Remember, there is an element of journeying through physical effort.
- Submit your plan to your Award Leader for approval.

5) Test your Exploration proposal against these criteria in the early stages of planning and during development to ensure a successful and rewarding outcome:

- The purpose of the Exploration must be limited and properly focused.
- The Exploration must be located in an area where it is safe for the participants to work by themselves, taking into account training, preparation, and experience.
- The Exploration must be suited to the aptitudes and abilities of the participants.
- The Exploration must be based on all participants' own research, first-hand observations, experience, or study.
- The recording techniques and equipment should be appropriate to the study.
- The fieldwork during the Exploration should be based on the previous study or activity.
- The pre-journey research is to be carried out and submitted with the final report.



- It is useful if someone with specialist knowledge, a Subject Matter Expert, is involved from the early planning stage of the venture.
- The roles of the Subject Matter Expert, Supervisor, and Assessor should be agreed on beforehand and adequate lines of communication should be established prior to the Exploration.
- The format of the report should be agreed by your group beforehand.

6) Once your proposal has been approved by your Award Leader, meet with your group and your Assessor.

- Review your proposal with your Assessor.
- Discuss and assign pre-journey research.

7) Complete your pre-journey research.

8) Meet with your group, including your Subject Matter Expert and Assessor.

- Share and discuss your findings and upload all pre-journey research to your ORB.
- Review the next steps of your plan including route[s], study techniques, equipment, meals, and where you will set up camp.
- Confirm with your Assessor the agreed upon check-in times.

Note: With an Urban Exploration, the use of a familiar environment is permitted for camp set-up. To better understand what your options are, contact your Award Leader or Award Office for more information.

9) Begin your study on your specific area within the aim, keeping in mind:

- The hours of purposeful effort for your Award level - Bronze [6], Silver [7], Gold [8].
- At least 1/3 of your purposeful effort must be spent journeying through physical effort.
- Your Supervisor must accompany you each day of your Exploration.
- You must check in at least once daily with your Assessor.

10) Meet with your group to compile your final report.

FURTHER INFORMATION FOR AWARD LEADERS

For an Urban Exploration, participants must work together as a group, write a proposal for Award Leader approval, complete pre-journey research, carry out an in-person study of the topic, and submit a final group report.

Below is a short list of modifications related to Urban Explorations during COVID-19:

- Participants are permitted to travel to and from a location with the use of a vehicle, but this time cannot be part of the minimum hours of purposeful effort.
- Participants are permitted to camp in their backyards, greenspaces, etc. They should remain completely self-sufficient and prepare their own meals.
- If a participant does not have access to a greenspace, they are permitted to sleep in their homes, using their kitchen to prepare their own meals.
- The topic of study is only limited by their creativity. For confirmation or questions about a topic, contact your Award office.

