



GAISCE
THE PRESIDENT'S
AWARD



**GOLD AWARD
INFORMATION PACK**

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INTRODUCTION

The Gaisce Gold Award is the highest Gaisce Award level and an extraordinary achievement.

Enclosed in this pack is information that will be useful should you chose to embark on your Gold Award.

BEFORE YOU GET STATRED

You must be between the ages of 17-25 to register for the Gold Award.

If you are 16 years old and your peers are registering for Gold, you will be able to register.

You will need a **Gaisce President's Award Leader (PAL)** to support you on your Gold Journey and in order to register. PALs deliver the Gaisce programme in **Gaisce Award Partner Organisations**.

You may wish to progress to your Gold award after having achieved your Bronze and Silver Gaisce Awards. It is also possible to undertake the Gold Award without having completed Bronze or Silver, however there will be additional requirements if you chose the direct entry route (explained in this pack).

REGISTRATION FEE

The registration fee for the Gaisce Gold Award is €25.

GOLD AWARD CRITERIA

THE GOLD AWARD INVOLVES:

- 1 hour per week for **52 weeks** in each main Challenge Area; Personal Skill, Community Involvement, Physical Recreation.
 - If you have not already completed a Silver Award you will be required to do an additional 26 weeks of one of these activities.
- The **Adventure Journey** which takes place over 4 days and 3 nights, an expedition or exploration.
- The **Residential Project** which takes place over 5 days and 4 nights.
- The **Portfolio**, which is a record of your Gold Award experience.

Remember: your PAL is your main point of contact. It is important to keep them informed of your progress throughout the award.



52 weeks (each)
Community Involvement
Personal Skill
Physical Recreation

+



+ **26** weeks * An additional 26 additional weeks in any of the above activities if you are a direct entrant i.e. you do not have a Silver Award.

Residential Project

5 days + 4 nights | A shared activity in a residential setting

+



Portfolio

YOUR CHALLENGE AREAS

As with the previous awards, your PAL can support you to decide on what activities you would like to take on for each of your Challenge Areas.

Your PAL must approve your Challenge Area choices and ensure that they meet the criteria.

You can continue with the same activities you did for previous awards or you can chose new activities.

When choosing what activity you are doing for your award, make sure to consider the following:



- Will it last for the required 52 weeks?
- Who will sign off on my activities?
- If you don't have a Silver award, what activity will you do for your additional 26 weeks?

Below are some ideas for each challenge area. See also a list of our Challenge Partners here: [Gaisce Challenge Partner - Gaisce](#)

IDEAS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR CHALLENGE AREAS:



**Personal Skill
Ideas**

[Click to download](#) >



**Community
Involvement
Ideas**

[Click to download](#) >



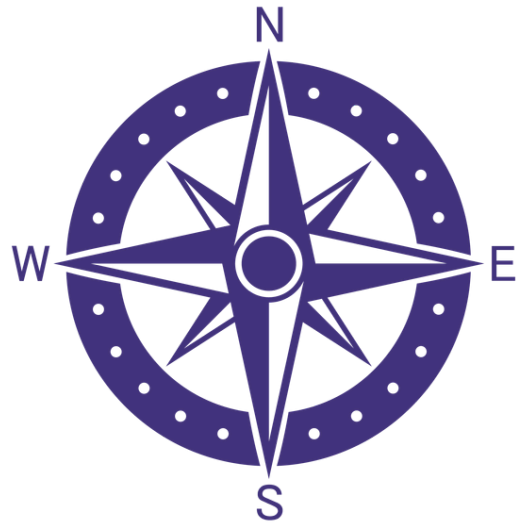
**Physical
Recreation
Ideas**

[Click to download](#) >

THE ADVENTURE JOURNEY

The Adventure Journey is often one of the highlights of Gaisce for participants, and an experience you will remember long after you've completed your award.

The Gold Adventure Journey takes place over **4 days and 3 nights**. It can be an Expedition or an Exploration. If you think an exploration would be more suitable for you, you can discuss this with your PAL and it must also be approved by Gaisce.



If you are under 18 or a vulnerable adult, your PAL will work with you to coordinate your Gold Adventure Journey.

If you are over 18, you should take the lead in planning and undertaking your adventure journey. **Ensure that you agree with your PAL** how you will undertake and evidence your Adventure Journey, and how it will fulfil the requirements.

The suggested distance for a Gold expedition is **80km walking or 300km cycling or 8 hours of meaningful activity per day**, across the **4 consecutive days**.

Important: Looped routes are **not** acceptable for Gold. The route of the journey should go from point A to point B to point C etc.



GOLD AWARD

ADVENTURE JOURNEY REQUIREMENTS



- The Adventure Journey, with an agreed purpose, must be planned as either an expedition or an exploration, both require journeying.
 - All Adventure Journeys should be undertaken in small teams of peers between 4-10 people at Bronze, Silver and Gold level. For larger groups, break up into smaller teams and start the journey at intervals.
 - All journeys must be by the participants own physical effort – foot, cycle, wheelchair, sail, kayak etc., without motorised, or outside assistance. The Adventure Journey can take place on land or water.
- If participants are under the age of 18 or are vulnerable adults, the Adventure Journey should be supervised by the PAL (and appropriate supervision ratios). Where a PAL is not in a position to supervise the Adventure Journey another adult from the Gaisce Award Partner who has been vetted/screened and is familiar with the Adventure Journey planning and requirements can cover for them.

- Participants must be involved in the planning and preparation of their Adventure Journey.
- All participants must be properly equipped and prepared for their Adventure Journey.



- The participants must stay in a self-catering hostel, camping or in another suitable form of similar accommodation.
- Participants must be involved in the planning and preparation of at least one substantial meal over the course of each day of the Adventure Journey.

GOLD AWARD

ADVENTURE JOURNEY REQUIREMENTS (CONT)

- The Adventure Journey should be undertaken with a suitably trained or qualified person where appropriate e.g. horse riding, water activities.
- Participants must source and transport all gear and equipment that they will require with them on the Adventure Journey.
- The Adventure Journey should be challenging but within the capabilities of the participants.
- The travel days of the Adventure Journey must be consecutive.
- With the exception of the Bronze Award, where looped routes are acceptable, the route of the journey should go from point A to point B to point C etc.
- On completion of the Adventure Journey, PALs should review and evaluate the experience with participants



THE RESIDENTIAL PROJECT

The Residential Project requires Gaisce Gold participants to embark on a **5 Days, 4 Night** residential in an unfamiliar environment with people who are not their usual companions, working towards a common goal. The Residential Project activity should take place over consecutive days and nights.

In exceptional circumstances, the residential can be completed over two weekends, using the same activity, within the same calendar year. This must be approved in advance with Gaisce.

If a participant is aged under 18, the PAL must ensure that safeguarding principles are paramount.



WHAT CAN PARTICIPANTS DO?

Any 5 Days, 4 Nights residential, **in Ireland or abroad**, will qualify as a Residential Project so long as the participant **is staying away from home or their usual place of residence**, and is in the company of others who are not their usual companions.

Please note:

- Staying with friends or family is not acceptable.
- Participants must not gain materially from the experience (though assistance can be sought for out of pocket expenses).

THE RESIDENTIAL PROJECT (CONT)

RESIDENTIAL PROJECT EXAMPLES

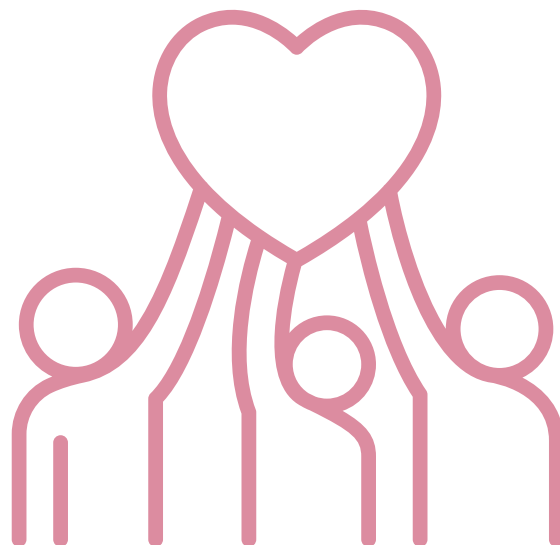
- Children's Camps
- Residential Youth Camp
- Environmental and Conservation Projects
- Language residential course e.g. Irish or Spanish
- Residential Training Course
- Residential volunteering e.g. Care Home
- International volunteering
- Peace and reconciliation projects

More residential project examples [here](#)

Important: You must ask for a certificate of attendance or letter of attendance for the portfolio evidences.

Check out Gaisce Challenge Partners for Residential ideas:

[Gaisce Challenge Partners](#)



KEEPING TRACK OF YOUR AWARD

Make sure to speak to your PAL about keeping track of your award. Your PAL is the person who is responsible for approving your Gold award.

You must use **Record Sheets** to track your progress and get your activities signed off by supervisors.

[Click to download your GOLD Award Record Sheet](#)

[Gold Award Record Sheet](#)



You must also include key pieces of evidence in your Portfolio, which explained in the **Portfolio section**. These include:

- Residential project letter
- Record Sheets
- Maps and route plans for your adventure journey
- Photographs
- etc.



THE PORTFOLIO

Gold Award participants are required to prepare a portfolio. The Portfolio is a record of a participant's Gold Award experience, exhibiting evidence of their award activities. It can be compiled during their Gaisce journey, or when they complete all of the activities.

PORTFOLIO GUIDELINES

The portfolio can be digital or hard copy, written and/or visual, once the key sections and pieces of evidence are included.

Below are the key areas that you must include:

Cover Page: Ensure you include a cover page which states:

- Full name
- County
- School/organisation
- Email address
- Your PAL name

Previous Award experience: If you achieved your Bronze/Silver awards, tell us a bit about it.

Your PAL: Tell us a little bit about your PAL who supported you through your Gold journey.

Your Award Experience: Write a piece about each of your Challenge Area activities - Personal Skill, Community Involvement and Physical Recreation. Include some photos, videos or evidence of activities. Record sheets for each activity must also be included.

The Residential Project: Write a piece about your Residential Project and include a residential letter signed by the organisation you did it with.

Adventure Journey: Write a piece about your Adventure Journey. This must include maps, route plans, and photos from the Adventure Journey as well as details or photos of meal preparation.

Record Sheets: All corresponding Record Sheets must be included in the Portfolio.

Conclusion: Summarise your experience and what you have learned from doing your award, did you have any learnings you would pass on to potential Gold participants?

THE PORTFOLIO (CONT)

SUBMITTING YOUR PORTFOLIO

When the portfolio has been completed, participants must get their PALs to review their portfolio and **mark it as 'Approved' on the GO system.**



Participants must then **send the portfolio to Gaisce**, either digitally or by post, for assessment in order that it meets the appropriate standard. You will receive an email confirmation of receipt of your portfolio.

Digital submissions should be sent to: gold@gaisce.ie

Postal submissions should be sent to: Gaisce - The President's Award, Ratra House, North Road, Phoenix Park, Dublin 8, D08 YD62.

The Portfolio is returned to awardees after they receive their Gold Award and is a lovely reminder of their Gaisce Journey.

GOLD PARTICIPANT RESOURCES

ONLINE WORKSHOPS

Gaisce holds regular online workshops for Gold awardees and PALs to get more information about the Gold Award:



Going for Gold - This 1 hour online workshop is for anyone starting Gold or considering embarking on their Gold award. It goes through all the criteria, gives ideas and tips, and a Q&A with Gaisce staff.

Portfolio workshop - This takes place in February before the Portfolio deadline, to support anyone who needs help getting their Portfolio completed.

You can sign up for our next Going for Gold or Portfolio workshop here:

[Book a workshop](#)



GOLD MEET UPS

Gaisce holds meet up events bi-annually for Gold award participants to come together, meet fellow participants, and share experiences. Whether you just want to get some ideas from the Gaisce team, or find others to do your Adventure Journey with, this can be a great opportunity to connect with others doing Gold from across the country.

Check out our Eventbrite to see when the next meet up is happening:

[Attend a meet up](#)



GOLD COMMUNITY FACEBOOK GROUP

Connect with other Gold participants and awardees on our [Gold Community Facebook group](#).

CHECKLIST FOR PARTICIPANTS



To complete your Gaisce Gold Award and be included in the ceremony following completion there is a checklist below of areas that must be completed and **submitted before March 31th** the year you complete your award.

CHECKLIST

- ✓ All Challenge Areas completed, with the corresponding Record Sheets included in your portfolio.
- ✓ Adventure Journey has met the requirements. See Adventure Journey section of this document.
- ✓ Residential Project has met the requirements and you have included a letter of confirmation in the Portfolio. See Residential Project section of this document.
- ✓ Your award marked as 'Approved' by your PAL on the Gaisce Online (GO) system. Only the PAL can access GO.
- ✓ Portfolio submitted to Gaisce (digitally or by post) on or before March 31st of that year.

GOLD FAQ



Am I insured to do my gold award?

Gaisce recommends that all participants have their own insurance to cover them for the activities they do while completing the Gaisce award, including the possibility of additional insurance in relation to the adventure journey.

I am leaving the organisation I currently do Gaisce through. Can I change my PAL?

Yes you need to notify Gaisce at info@gaisce.ie that you want to be transferred to another organisation and the name of the PAL you wish to be transferred too. Gaisce will need to check with the new PAL that they are happy to take you on as a participant.

Where can I get extra support to carry out the award?

All participants should attend the Going for Gold webinar that Gaisce hold frequently throughout the year. This webinar is recommended for all gold participants before they complete the award, you can register [here](#)

I am not sure if my activities reach the requirements of Gaisce. What can I do?

You should contact your PAL and they will be able to advise you. If your PAL is uncertain they will contact their Gaisce Development Officer on your behalf.

What is the Gold Portfolio?

The portfolio is a record of your gold award experience. What you need to include in the portfolio is covered earlier in this document in the Gold Portfolio section.

When do I need to send my Gold Portfolio in by?

The portfolio deadline is 31st of March 2025.

How can I get further support with my portfolio?

Gaisce regularly holds Going for Gold workshops where you can ask questions about the Gold Portfolio. Every year Gaisce holds one Portfolio Workshop that Gaisce recommends all participants submitting that year attends please register [here](#). You should also speak to your PAL for support and make sure they look over your portfolio before you submit it to Gaisce.



Where can I submit my Gold portfolio?

In hardcopy your portfolio should be sent to (our address) and if you are sending it in digital form it should be sent to Gold@gaisce.ie

Do I need my portfolio approved by my PAL?

Yes, your PAL should review your portfolio before you submit it to Gaisce. Once they are happy, they will approve your status on our online system.

How do I know my Portfolio has reached Gaisce by the 31st of March?

Gaisce will acknowledge receipt of your portfolio by email. If you do not receive this please email Gold@gaisce.ie

What if I miss the 31st March Portfolio deadline?

If you miss the deadline, you will still get receipt of acknowledgement, but you may not be eligible to receive the award until the following year.

What happens after I submit my portfolio?

After your portfolio is submitted, a team of assessors will review your portfolio. This may take some time. You will receive acknowledgement if your portfolio is fully approved and you are eligible for the award.

What happens if my portfolio is not approved?

If your portfolio has missing elements your regional Development Officer will either contact you directly or contact your PAL requesting additional information.

How long will I have to submit the additional information?

You will be advised at the time how long you have to submit the additional information. If you do not submit it by the requested time, you will not be eligible for the current years ceremony.

When is the Gold Award ceremony?

Gaisce - The President's Award coordinates the Gold Award ceremony annually. The date for the ceremony will be provided after your Gold Award portfolio has been approved by your PAL and by Gaisce (this happens after the portfolio deadline 31st March 2025).