



Questions & Answers about Transatlantic Council BSA (TAC) and Friends of Scouting (FOS)

What is TAC (Transatlantic Council BSA)?

The Boy Scouts of America (BSA) is organized in around 250 local councils. All but three of them serve youth exclusively in part or all of a US state. TAC is the supporting structure for over 150 BSA units in Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia. TAC units are served by six districts, and each district contains around 20-50 packs, troops, crews, and ships.

What does TAC do?

TAC delivers top-quality BSA experiences, with unique geographic opportunities, to open the outdoors, teach skills, encourage service, develop leaders, and instill values to youth across Europe, the Middle East, Africa, and Central Asia. We serve every US military installation in Europe, along with dozens of international schools, diplomatic centers, and major American corporate communities. We provide a continuous path to the ranks of Arrow of Light and Eagle Scout for youth on the move. TAC has even been appointed a Custodian of Omaha Beach by the French Republic.

What is FOS (Friends of Scouting)?

FOS is the local fundraising appeal that TAC runs from December through February to help fund its annual programs and services.

What does TAC do with the funds raised in FOS?

- Programs and activities for your Scout (Participant charges for events are set at break-even for direct costs only. Indirect costs are not covered by participants)
- Employment investments for TAC professional staff and their travel costs to visit with local units and support district and council events
- Employment investments for TAC administrative staff
- Council office expenses and the Program Supply Center mail-order operations



- Insurance coverage to protect volunteers, chartered organizations, and staff—both accident and sickness
- Communications costs—cell phone, internet access, website development

What would my Scout lose if TAC did not exist?

All district and all council programs, facilities, support, and networks would disappear. Your unit would stand alone, using the national programs. There is no unit support structure from the National BSA Council. You would lose the following:

Camps and events, run by the district and council for your Scout:

- Normandy Camporees on Omaha Beach in France every 2-3 years, famed throughout the BSA
- Unique BSA summer camps in the Swiss Alps (Camp Alpine), on the Adriatic Sea in Croatia (Camp Avantura BSA), and in the African savannah near Nairobi (Camp Kenya)
- Camp equipment like tents, cooking equipment, rental of camp vehicles, canoes, equipment replacement and repair, and general upkeep of council camps
- Spring and Fall Camporees (district)
- Cub Scout Day Camps and Family Camps (council and district)
- Merit Badge Universities (district)
- Klondike Derbies (council)
- Order of the Arrow programs
- BSA National Scout Jamboree and World Scout Jamboree contingents

Eight full-time staff to support your unit:

- Full-time experienced BSA staff – travelling all around the council and giving direct support to your unit leaders
- Administrative staff dedicated to servicing only TAC units, not the entire BSA
- Program Supply Center in Europe and on the road in many Scouting communities for uniforms, handbooks, badges, and awards
- Support for your Eagle Scout candidates
- Guidance in the detailed operating methods of Scouting
- Among the few professionals in the BSA who understand and can deal with the challenges of supporting a BSA program outside the USA

Hundreds of volunteers, organized by the council, who support your unit:

- Executive board members supporting programs, finances, legal and regulatory services, fundraising, membership outreach, and connections with BSA National programs and services
- Commissioner service structure, supporting local registration, advancement, program building, charter renewal, and administration
- Roundtables of unit leaders in the district, coming together face to face or online to share ideas and support
- Merit badge counselors, helping your unit offer more merit badges than its own leaders can provide
- Support for your Eagle Scout candidates

Leadership training for your Scouts and their leaders:

- National Youth Leader Training (NYLT) program
- Adult leader position-specific training
- Adult leader advanced “Wood Badge” training

Why doesn't the money come from the BSA?

No money comes from the National BSA. Like all councils, TAC must be self-sustaining. Unless TAC is self-sufficient, there is no TAC. Almost all BSA local councils conduct an annual Friends of Scouting appeal.

Do all FOS contributions to TAC stay with TAC?

Yes! All FOS and other financial contributions to TAC always stay with TAC, to support TAC's core mission. None of that money goes to the National BSA. Contributions to TAC support TAC's own Scouts, and TAC's own operating costs and liabilities – not the costs and liabilities of the National BSA. TAC is a separately incorporated 501(c)3 charitable organization, distinct from the National BSA.

Don't I already pay for this at registration?

Only a small part. Part of what you pay at registration is a BSA national fee, part is to cover your own unit's costs, and part is an “Overseas Council Fee” to TAC. To support each Scout registered in our council, TAC spends on average around \$250/year – far more than the annual \$48 Overseas Council Fee that it receives at charter renewal.

How often does TAC ask for money?

- The Friends of Scouting appeal takes place each December through February, covering a key portion of the operating budget
- Camp and event fees are set at break-even for direct costs only
- TAC solicits major gifts of \$5,000 and up from a small number of generous contributors, inside and outside TAC, to support its long-term growth and stability

Why can't TAC just spend less?

Over the past decade, support from the US Department of Defense has been cut by more than half, while TAC's geographic coverage has expanded greatly. TAC has only 8 staff – among the smallest team of any BSA council – to serve over 4,000 youth in over 50 countries. TAC is now investing more in professional staff, to better serve families.

TAC is a model of fiscal governance and stewardship. We balanced our budget in the midst of the pandemic. We carry no debt and own no property. Over 90% of our functional expenses go directly for programs. We span 7 time zones on 3 continents, all with a small but superb professional staff. Investors can be confident of our stewardship, and of the long-term impact they will create.

It's not in our country's culture to donate. Why should we donate to TAC anyway?

By participating in TAC, you have chosen to benefit from, and participate in, the BSA's culture. That culture includes a decision to charge much less per Scout at registration than TAC spends on average to support each Scout, to make Scouting available to as many youth as possible – in the hope that families that can afford to do so will make up the difference. We hope you will embrace all aspects of the culture of our program.

Additionally, a culture that doesn't donate to help others is focused on self-sufficiency. You can think of a "1 Scout level" FOS contribution of \$250 per Scout as simply a payment to cover the cost for your own child, to make your own family self-sufficient, so that you don't rely on others to fundraise to enable your own family's Scouting activities.

Do the senior volunteers lead the way?

Yes! Volunteers on the TAC executive board collectively pledged over \$89,000 in each of the past 5 years of FOS appeals. Half of TAC board members gave \$1,000 or more.

That financial support is added to the great amounts of time and skills they contribute. They understand the benefits, and hope that every family will follow their lead.

How much should I contribute?

Your gift has tremendous impact. Please consider these suggested giving levels:

GIFT	\$/MONTH (x10)	GIVING LEVEL
\$2,000	\$200/month	8 Scout level
\$1,000	\$100/month	4 Scout level
\$500	\$50/month	2 Scout level
\$250	\$25/month	1 Scout level
\$125	\$12.50/month	“Scout Me In” level

Note: Each giving level reflects the number of Scouts supported annually by that FOS gift, calculated by dividing TAC’s overall budget by the number of Scouts TAC serves in a year. The \$/month column reflects a choice of monthly payments for 10 months.

How can I pay?

It couldn’t be easier!

- Online by credit card or e-check on the TAC website
- Online with a pledge (to be paid later) on the TAC website
- Check (payable to Transatlantic Council, BSA)
- Bank transfer (details upon request)

All gifts are charged in US dollars. You don’t need a US dollar account if you pay by credit card online. Some companies, possibly including yours, match their employees’ charitable contributions or make charitable contributions based on the number of hours you volunteer for a nonprofit. Be sure to check on these giving opportunities.

All gifts to TAC are tax deductible in the US. UK leadership-level gifts of \$1,000 or more can also be made tax deductible in the UK (details upon request).

What are the recognition gifts, and when will they be distributed?

There is a distinctive patch for each level of giving. Upon confirmation of your FOS gift or pledge, TAC will ship the recognition item to you.