



The BCU Expeditions Committee

Introduction

The purpose of the Committee is...

1] To support and advise UK paddlers undertaking challenging overseas trips.

Ask us! We might be able to offer helpful advice, or point you to someone else who can help you out.

2] To consider applications from proposed expeditions for BCU Approval and in some cases, for Grants.

Planning a trip which is out of the ordinary, and looking for BCU support? The procedure is outlined below.

How does it work?

The BCU Expeditions Committee consists of experienced British expedition paddlers with a range of specialisms and interests. The committee has always been made up of active paddlers with a good network of friends around the world and a wealth of knowledge built up over the years.

In the days when the Committee was first formed, expeditions were rarer, more formal and often planned and prepared over the winter by paddlers before they set off to attempt their expedition some months later. Now-a-days expeditions tend to be a group of friends who select a destination - Nepal say - and when they hear a few words from fellow travellers and they are off to some new run that has opened up. A rush round the shops and a dash to the bus station and the expedition has happened. No one really calls these trips "Expeditions" more often they are referred to as "Missions".

So what direction for the Expeditions Committee? In recent years, the majority of applications the committee has received have been "gap year" students doing Operation Raleigh or similar organised trips which include some canoeing or kayaking. We do not want to belittle these trips but feel that this was not the reason for the committee's existence.

There is nothing we can do about the lads and lassies in Kathmandu or similar destination even with the marvels of e-mail, and the committee will continue to try and support the "gap year" type of expedition if the tag "canoeing or kayaking" expedition is sufficiently

warranted. However, in between these two types of trips are (slightly!?) more organised expeditions and *we look forward to hearing from these trips*. The expeditions committee works like this:-

1. Expeditions apply by mid January - application forms [here](#). Email them to [Dave Manby](#).
2. Dave Manby checks the expeditions: feasibility, capability of the team, references and the like if necessary.
3. Dave circulates the rest of the committee with the details.
4. The committee decides whether an expedition will receive 'BCU Approval'. This tag may prove useful in your expedition planning for opening doors and establishing credibility.
5. The committee considers whether grant aid is available for your expedition. Grant sizes vary depending on the number of expeditions applying, the nature of the expedition, and the budget we have to spend but vary from £100 to £1000.
6. The expeditions who applied are contacted and told if they have been successful.
7. They go off on their expedition and on return, write of their experiences. They have to write a trip report and provide photographs for publication in [Canoe Focus](#). Some examples of completed trip reports can be found [here](#).
8. On receipt of the article we pay the grant whether or not the editor of [Canoe Focus](#) chooses to publish their account. Many previous paddlers who have received a grant have used the "article in Focus" line as a lever for further sponsorship.
9. (We try to be fairly helpful as a committee and through the marvels of e-mail will consider exceptional applications that may want faster processing - for instance an expedition may be conceived in April and the window for it is October.)

Making an Application

To be considered for a grant as an expedition here are some guide lines...

- + Grants are given to an expedition, not an individual.
- + Expeditions must be outside of Western Europe.
- + As far can be ascertained the expedition should include pioneering paddling, first descents or at least first British descents.
- + The committee also considers Sea Kayaking expeditions - but definitions here are even harder - so be sensible in your application!

+ The majority of the members should be British passport holders and members of the British Canoe Union.

+ Youth expeditions need not involve first descents but 75% of the expedition team should be under 18.

Notes on writing a good trip report for Canoe Focus

We do not need to have a blow by blow account of your trip.

We do not want a packing list of what you took unless there was some really specialist equipment involved

We do not require an itinerary of your trip

We do not want to mark a boring English essay.

WE DO WANT TO KNOW IF YOU ENJOYED YOUR TRIP.

We want to know what you learnt about the place you went to.

We want to know who was on the trip.

We want to know what you learnt from your trip.

We want to know the problems and successes or failures you encountered.

We want others to enjoy reading about your trip and to be inspired by it so that they to go out there and have a look around.

To use "like a washing machine", "proactive", "resource management", or "negative reinforcement" in your report is a criminal if not capital offence.

Length is not important but Canoe Focus will cut it to around 2000 words (max.). Say what you have to say and then shut up!

Remember photographs should be relevant to your trip - a picture of a training weekend on the Dart is not relevant to your article about paddling a river in Yakistan - it is relevant to an account of a trip to the Dart.

Photographs featuring faces are good - the trip is about people as well as places.

Remember to read through your account and see if it answers the simple standard journalist's questions: Who, What, Where, When, What happened, What resulted.

Committee Members (2006)

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