



BACKGROUND OF ADULTS IN SCOUTING

Shortly after Scouting began in 1907, 'Adult Leader Training', as it was later known, followed. While Baden-Powell's first passion was to spread his ideas to young people, he also attended the training of adults as Scoutmasters, personally conducting two courses in 1911 and 1912. These first series of talks would be formalised a year later as 'Wood Badge Training'.

The use of the Patrol System and a balanced mix of theory and practice sufficed for a time. Only after the First World War, when Scouting was growing rapidly, did Baden-Powell's look to guide the development and enthusiasm of Scoutmasters *"to make quite certain that when I am gone, the future leaders of Scouting will really understand what it is all about and what my intentions have been"*. (Lord Baden Powel)

On 8 September 1919 the first training course for Scoutmasters took place, following the principles laid down in 1913. The guidebook for Adults, Aids to Scoutmastership was published the same year.

What had begun in 1913 and advanced in 1919 served the Movement well for decades to follow. As Scouting grew nationally and globally so too did the management system within each National Scout Organization (NSO), and the need for broader training.

In 1988 the World Scout Committee submitted a paper - Towards a Strategy for Scouting - to the 31st World Scout Conference in Melbourne, Australia (1988), highlighting the challenges faced by NSOs in recruiting competent leaders, Commissioners and administrators, and providing them with appropriate training.

In reply the Adults in Scouting Policy was developed during the 32nd World Scout Conference in Paris, France (1990), outlining the basic principles for the management of adult volunteers and resources. The document covers, amongst other specifics, the training elements for adult development. The principles of this document are the foundation of the World Adult Resources Policy, adopted by the 33rd World Scout Conference in Bangkok, Thailand in 1993, establishing Adult Leader Training as a fundamental element in the management of Adults in Scouting.

The World Adult Resources Handbook published in 2005, provides guidelines on the management of Adults in Scouting. This major shift in thinking considered the wider aspects of the management of adult volunteers and Staff and emphasised training for leaders as a part of the Adult Life Cycle as described in the Adults in Scouting Policy.

Updates and reviews of the policy were made during the 38th World Scout Conference (Korea, 2008), and subsequent conferences in Brazil (2011), Slovenia (2014), and Azerbaijan (2017). The Wood Badge Framework was also revised in 2010 as requested by



the 38th World Scout Conference, providing guidance for the development of Adult Training

Since the release of the 2005 World Adult Resources Handbook, NSOs have been following the policy by appointing Adults in Scouting Commissioners, responsible for promoting and implementing the policy, and complementing and supporting the Training Commissioners, who are responsible specifically for Adult Training.

In 2017 after the update of the Adult in Scouting Life Cycle the process of the Wood Badge Framework review started and was successfully completed in 2020.

Today NSOs are at different stages of the implementation process for the Adults in Scouting Policy. With this *Scoutship* digital resource the World Organization of the Scout Movement (WOSM) aims to provide full support and understanding of the Adults in Scouting Policy to address the NSOs needs to the fullest.

Visit also:

[Wood Badge Framework](#)

[World Adult in Scouting Policy](#)

[World Scout Conferences Resolutions](#)