



School Yard Initiative HOW-TO-APPLY GUIDE

1

- Download the SYI application from [GOCO's website](#), and read it thoroughly. Refer back to the application questions as a guide throughout the process.
- Visit the [Applicant Resources](#) page on GOCO.org to download and review examples of successful applications.

2

- Discuss the project and this process with school leadership and the school district to understand their capacity to support the project with matching funds. A 25% match is required for all GOCO grants, and the majority of your matching funds must be secured by the time you submit your application.

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- Contact [GOCO staff](#) to discuss your project and ensure it will be competitive for funding.

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- Contact your local government (town, city, county, or parks and recreation district) to discuss its willingness to sponsor your project and serve as the official applicant and fiscal sponsor. One local government can sponsor multiple schools and receive funding for more than one school. Local governments are not precluded from applying for any other GOCO grant because they are sponsoring a school yard application. If you are not sure whom to contact, call GOCO for guidance.

5

- Create a Youth Task Force (YTF) with students of various ages. The YTF should be the driving force behind your school's project and be engaged throughout the entire process.

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- Begin raising matching funds. Matching funds can come from the school or district; the local government's Conservation Trust Fund; grants from other organizations, fundraisers, or donations; etc.

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- Research and partner with a [design consultant](#) to help guide the school yard design process. You will need a conceptual design of the play yard to submit with your application.
- Keep in mind that the planning and design of the project should be led by the YTF.

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- Organize opportunities for community members (parents, teachers, local business owners, and neighbors, for example) to participate in and provide feedback on the project at back-to-school night, parent teacher conferences, city council meetings, and other meetings.

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- Secure required documents: [resolution](#) passed by your governing body (e.g. city council); letter of support from the school, school district, and facilities and risk department; and a draft [IGA](#) (i.e. between the local government and school). Give yourself at least three months to secure these documents.

10

- Begin answering the application questions and preparing a budget. Give yourself at least four months to do so.
- Call GOCO staff with any questions or for guidance as you work on your application.

