

Girl Guides Australia

Framework for Public Advocacy and Partnerships

A resource for Australian
Guides on social partnerships
and issues advocacy



GIRL GUIDES
AUSTRALIA

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Background to the Framework	2
A. Establishing Social Partnerships	3
Introduction – What is this Model?	3
So how does it work?	3
Answering the questions	3
What is the acid test?	3
B. Issues Matrix	5
Introduction	5
What is the matrix?	5
Okay, so how does it work?	5
Adding it all up	5
What else?	6
Matrix for Action	7
Question of affiliation	7

Background to the Framework

Often, Girl Guide organisations across Australia – and that includes regions, districts and units – are approached by organisations and individuals with the offer to collaborate to do a range of work for a good cause and/or form an alliance for one purpose or another. As an organisation Guiding is often called upon to support issues and a range of community activities which may involve fundraising, supporting the organisation by providing volunteer time and skills and even being involved in advocacy and campaign work.

The reality is that all these organisations are such worthy causes.. but sometimes Guiding can be asked to collaborate with lots of different organisations and it can be hard to make a decision as to which organisation to work with!

That is where this handy framework come in!!

Girl Guides Australia has developed the following framework to help support Guiding organisations across Australia to make informed choices about what community organisations *outside of Girl Guides* would be good to partner with and what issues to champion.

It consists of two independent parts

- A. A model to assess the benefits of creating a partnership with an outside organisation – Social Partnerships Model
- B. Issues Matrix – a set of questions to assist Guiding decide what issues are appropriate to align with

The framework attached has been developed for Guiding by Guiding and we have had input on the framework from all leadership in the State Girl Guide Organisations, the National Board and all State Commissioners as well as the heads of all the volunteer areas of Program, Olave, International, Learning and Development and Outdoor Activities.



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Girl Guides Australia

Suite 103, Level 1, 100 William Street,
Woolloomooloo NSW 2011
www.girlguides.org.au

Framework for Public Advocacy and Partnerships
A Resource for Australia Guides on Social partnership issues
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Key Contact: Girl Guides Australia, Chief Executive Officer

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A

Establishing Social Partnerships – a Model

INTRODUCTION – WHAT IS THIS MODEL?

At its most simple level it is a set of questions that tries to support our members to work out if a potential alliance is a good one. It is based on the fact that it works for our girls, it supports our program and it will grow our movement

The responses to the questions are not absolute! Members completing the tool should know that they may decide to create an alliance with an organisation outside of Guides *in spite of the fact* that the responses are mostly negative. The important thing here is that the framework attempts to support Girl Guide organisations make informed choices!

SO HOW DOES IT WORK?

The model encourages us to make partnerships work well for Australian Girl Guiding in 6 key areas. In essence it encourages us to make sure that the social partnership:

1. Is good for girls
2. Is good for our organisation
3. In keeping with our mission and goals
4. Supports the way we work
5. Helps our people grow
6. Supports us to build our membership numbers

Under each area there are some criteria just to help you work out what it means. For instance *Good for Girls* is really about finding out if the partnership and what is involved will be in keeping with our AGP, provide fun activities for our girls and also be supportive of our role in the Asia Pacific Region.

Another area *Build our numbers* really seeks to get us to understand the value of the alliance in terms of growing our organisation. This is really important question as it really makes sure that there is a return for our organisation. Its only one question – but an important one.

The area *help us work* really is focused in on making sure that the alliance does take too much away from us doing what we do best – that is being Girl Guides! It might sound a bit obvious but you would be surprised how often we enter into partnerships forgetting this bit!

ANSWERING THE QUESTIONS

The preferred approach is to answer the questions either with a “Yes” or “No”. Whilst it is tempting to answer “Maybe” remember that this may actually indicate that you are not sure about a response or perhaps need to get further information. The design of this framework is around yes or no and to that extent you should consider a “maybe” a “no”.

WHAT IS THE ACID TEST?

To make a determination if the proposed alliance is of value we have set the bar at a standard that we think Guiding deserves! One “no” on any of the points should be considered as a “no” to the alliance.

Of course, you may go through the process and decide that you still want to go ahead with the alliance. Remember though, it is important that you are able to validate to yourself and your organisation why this decision has been made.

A NOTE ON TIME...

Finally, just a small reminder that building good relationships across organisations takes time. It takes time to build trust and understanding. Practically, we need to time to understand what we mean, where our common goals and if we want the same goals. You need to keep this in your mind when setting out on developing a partnership.

Get to know the organisations that you are thinking of collaborating with – what do they stand for? Are the people credible? Have they been around for a while? Do they conflict with any existing relationships that you may have? Answers to these questions, plus going through the process outlined in this resource will put you on the right path.

Finally, establish the partnership with a friend! You have an amazing network in Guiding, and with such experience available to you, don't try to think that you need to do it all yourself! Ask for help! Reach out for a fellow traveler – and remember the best decisions are those that are collaboratively made...

1. Will the partnership/program be good for the girls?

Yes No

To answer this question consider the following:

- ▶ Will it deliver in keeping with the AGP and provide opportunities for our girls to have:
 - fun,
 - learn about the role and practice of service,
 - be with and develop friendships
 - provide opportunities for adventure?

If possible, all of these things!
- ▶ Does the partnership/program contribute to our role to build a better world in the Asia Pacific region? (which, in world guiding is where we are based)

2. Will the partnership/program be good for the organisation? Yes No

To answer this question consider...

- ▶ Are the resources required to deliver the partnership proportional to the level of interest in the Guiding organisation? (Will the resources required by Guiding be disproportionately over what will be delivered by the partnership? Compared to the effort is the outcome at the same – or higher – level?)

3. Will the partnership/program further our mission and goals Yes No

To answer this question consider the following:

- ▶ The partnership/program should assist Guiding organisations deliver to the national strategic plan, priorities and values

If you need to look at a copy of the Strategic Plan to remind yourself see the key priority actions attached. For the values think of the key values described in the Promise and Law and Guiding Code of Conduct.

4. Will it help us do our work? Yes No

To answer this question consider the following:

- ▶ The partnership/program should not divert Guides from our “core work” of Guiding (which could be defined as that contained in your State, Region and/or National Plan)
- ▶ Is the partnership/program applicable across the range of diverse conditions and environments where Girl Guiding occurs – that is, could this be equally well delivered in down town Melbourne and Sydney as in Broome and Tennant Creek?
- ▶ Is enough time provided to Girl Guiding organisation to implement the partnership/program (or does it all feel a bit rushed!)

5. Will it help our people? Yes No

To answer this question consider the following:

- ▶ Will the partnership/program improve/increase the capability of Girl Guiding
- ▶ What are the risks to the individual members of Guiding in participating in the alliance? Is it too high?

6. Will it build our membership? Yes No

To answer this question consider the following:

- ▶ For the income raised and/or effort expended for the alliance, there should be the same return to promote Australian Guiding.

The standard for success should be high - one negatively correlated response means that the social partnership will not fully support Girl Guiding in Australia.

Thank you for taking the time to use this resource.

We would welcome any comments on your experience of using the tool – positive feedback, recommendations for improvement or otherwise.

Feel free to email your feedback via direct message on our Facebook site <https://www.facebook.com/girlguidesaustralia>

B

Issues Matrix

A matrix to help Girl Guides work out what issues to champion...

INTRODUCTION

There are so many issues and opportunities for Girl Guides to take action. So many concerns in our community and so many challenges to address and speak out publically on - for or against.

Making decisions on what causes to champion and what concerns in our community to get behind publically, is a decision that many Australians and leaders in our community make *every day*. As we grown and learn, it is really important to understand that while we would like to explore every opportunity we need to be realistic about making good choices on where to put our energies at a certain point in time.

That is what this set of questions (the matrix) tries to do.

It provides an opportunity to reflect on what is important to us, to calibrate our set of values and priorities with a key issue, and make an informed and transparent decision about where to put our time.

WHAT IS THE MATRIX?

At its most simple level it is a set of questions that is designed for any Guide or organisation in Australian Guiding to use to make a decision on what issue is worthwhile publically supporting at a particular point in time.

It doesn't try to say which issue or cause is right or wrong.

It doesn't say which issue or cause an individual must support.

It suggests that as a Girl Guide there are a series of values and priorities that we are committed to. It also says that whilst this has a range of implications for our work outside and inside Guiding, it is not practical to suggest that our Guides – committed as they are - can support every issue.

Perhaps more specifically it suggests that because of our commitments, there are times when speaking out on a certain issue risks us compromising those commitments. The reality is until we take a moment to reflect on this, we may not have had the chance to understand the range of implications.

So – for want of a better term – this matrix is also a circuit breaker.

It is designed to get our Girl Guide members and organisations to pause and reflect on those commitments and what they mean in practice.

OKAY, SO HOW DOES IT WORK?

The first thing that you are asked to do is to define the issue. This may sound obvious but if we are not clear on what we are being asked to speak on then, it is unhelpful to anyone – including ourselves – to be involved.

So start by asking yourself, *what am I being asked to speak out on?* It maybe gender based violence for example – but think about where and when. Or, it may be about animal rights – think about what issue in particular. These areas are huge and many factors are involved – we need to be clear.

Next you will be asked to reflect on two sets of questions that are scored:

Affiliation – out of 45

First set relates to how much the issue connects with Girl Guiding and our values and culture. There are 9 questions ranging from testing if the issue has actually been verified by a credible source (and this may need to be more than one group claiming the issue), through to understanding if we have any evidence that this is an issue for our members. For scoring, the scale is from 1 to 5 where the higher the number the stronger the affiliation. So scoring a 5 is a very big strong yes – where as a 1 score indicates that the issue is not really strongly aligned.

Risk – out of 35

The second set actually asks us to look at the opportunity from a risk perspective. Here there are 6 questions. Again, we are looking for a “yes” response with the higher “yes” indicating a higher number from 1 to 5 (with 5 being a strong yes, and 1 not so). Here we are looking at areas like controversy, originating organisation credibility and requirements on Guiding resources to support the issue or call to action.

ADDING IT ALL UP

After you have done that, add all the scores up and then turn them into a percentage of the sections total. The higher percentage on the affiliation side means it is worthwhile pursuing. A higher percentage on the risk sides indicates that at this time it may not be a good idea to pursue.

To make a final decision - you need to compare the percentages of both risk and affiliation

For instance you may get a score of 30/45 for affiliation (66%) and a score of 20/35 for Risk (57%) indicating that the issue may be one to go for as benefits outweigh the risks. Alternatively you could get a score of 25/45 for affiliation (55%) and 25/35 for risk (71%) which will mean that is not a good issue to go for as the risks are too high.

WHAT ELSE?

For some this may all seem a bit too complicated!

.. and we can understand that..

What we are trying to do is layout a way to make decisions on something that is essentially very complex.

And here's the thing...Guides and Guide organisations who use the matrix should know that these are supporting tools – there are no absolutes!

There may be an issue with higher risks than benefits and in spite of this, maybe the view still is to support the call to action. In this case as long as you have made an informed decision, are clear and accountable for the decision to yourself, to Guiding and to your community, then we would argue that this is part of being a contributing member to our democratic society!

Have fun making those decisions and taking informed choices on how to contribute to your society and community.

If you have any feedback on the tool we would love to hear about it. Send us a direct message via our face book page - <https://www.facebook.com/girlguidesaustralia>.

Matrix for Action

Question of affiliation	Indicator 5 = strong, 1 = weak
Is this a real issue? Has it been verified? GGA should verify the issue first through credible sources	
Is the organisation that has raised the issue credible? Indicators may be - values align to Girl Guides, large organisation, strategic plan, the organisation has produced evidence to support its call beyond a media release	
Is there a demonstrated need in the community to address the issue? Does this issue have relevance to the Australian community? Is the information that is raising the issue verifiable and credible?	
Is there a specific and evidence based impact on girls and women – in Australia and overseas?	
What links does the issue have with current GGA and WAGGGS programs?	
How does this link with the Millenium Development Goals?	
Does the issue link to aspects in the GGA statement <i>Building Australia and Contributing to a Better Tomorrow</i> ?	
Do we have evidence that it is an issue of concern to our young members?	
Do we have a credible speaker on the subject?	
Total /45	

Higher numbers more affiliation – decision leans to GGA involvement in issue.

Questions to indicate high risk to GGA involvement - (i.e. lower interest to GGA)	Indicator 5 = strong, 1 = weak
Is the issue controversial? Indications of this may be – heated public discussion, use of emotional language, significant difference of opinion. Is the issue attracting stakeholders who are engaging in it for promotion purposes? Has the issue been involved in a protracted dispute?	
Is the issue irrelevant to our members – keeping in mind that the majority of our members are under 12 years old	
Will involvement in the issue result in negative environmental impact?	
Will involvement require significant use of GGA resources (is GGA ready to speak to the issue with existing knowledge and talent)	
Will speaking on the issue alienate our membership?	
Is the call for action on the issue about raising money (rather than action)	
Total /35	

Higher numbers less affiliation and greater reputational risk to GGA – decision leans to GGA NOT being involved in issue.

SO ON THIS ISSUE, OUR/MY CONCLUSION IS: **Support** **Not Support**

Because:



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