

Guidelines for Organizing an OAR Tour!

So, you want to organize a tour! Well, congratulations on planning to provide the rowing community with another beautiful, enjoyable event. This guide will help you plan and execute your vision. And... thank you!

For a list of the e-mail addresses and phone numbers of the OAR Board, including the tour facilitator, treasurer, and president go here: <https://www.adventurerowing.ca/members-information/board-of-directors/>

Appendix I contains a quick timetable/check list

Appendix II has the Kawartha Lakes Tour safety plan

Appendix III contains the OAR Guest Application (good for one tour only)

Appendix IV has Row Canada (RCA) registration information for independent rowers



Part 1 “I’ve got an excellent idea”

You’ve got an excellent idea for an epic tour! The first step is to contact the OAR President, Richard or Cynthia, the Tour Facilitator, ideally in the Fall or early Winter before the rowing season schedule is formalized. Each year’s schedule is worked out at planning meetings held in January and February.

Next, you must reconnoiter the proposed route to make sure it’s feasible. Things to consider:

- Launching and landing places
- The length of each section and how long it will take
- Seasonal changes, which can include water levels, currents, flooding, wind, etc.
- Facilities (like toilets!)

It’s helpful to get help! If you can enlist a few people from your club to assist you, all the better! Two to three enthusiastic people are ideal.

For further information on all things touring, go here: https://www.adventurerowing.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/tour-manual-final_2022.pdf . This is the ROW TOURING MANUAL FOR CANADA. Though it is long and meandering, it has many useful nuggets buried in its verbiage.

Part 2: “Let’s get to work!”

*Ah, Paperwork, how would our lives improve without you!
This is the boring bit so PAY ATTENTION!*



Develop the Safety Plan:

Read pages 6 - 7 of the Row Touring Manual https://www.adventurerowing.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/tour-manual-final_2022.pdf and refer to the example Safety Plan from the Kawartha Lakes Tour in Appendix II.

Apply for sanction:

Go to <https://membership.rowingcanada.org> (not <https://rowingcanada.org>!). Choose “My Account” and log in (you must have an RCA number, and if you don’t have a password already you will have to register first), then choose, “Propose an Event”, and then choose “Tour”.

RCA passes the responsibility for sanctioning to Row Ontario, so look for emails from Row Ontario in your inbox, within a few days. However, do this step early – we don’t want to derail awesome adventure with bureaucratic issues!

It is not necessary to place the event on Regatta Central and pay their fees.

Make arrangements:

Do we need to launch or land at a park or recreation area? Let the management of these spaces know what you are planning and find out about fees.

Planning to feed the participants (recommended)? Contact the caterers or the restaurant you have in mind.

Do you need to buy a lock pass for the boats? If yes, let the lock masters know what day and approximate time we will ‘lock’ through.

Find sponsors if you wish. Any one who will give you money for this adventure is a new friend!

Make sure you arrange enough boats for the expected number of participants. Contact OAR Equipment, Arnold (meer.AHVandermeer@gmail.com) regarding OAR equipment and its transport to the site (if needed).

Advertise:

A promotional ad (what, when, where) in the OAR newsletter, at *least* two months before the tour, is the first and best way to get participants to save the date. The enticing ad that you supply will also appear on the OAR web-site. OAR Publicity (Shelagh at bakertorrance@rogers.com) will send your information to the club champions throughout Ontario.



Part 3: “Getting and Spending”

Okay, this is the really important bit!

Who’s got the money?

If you are working with your own home rowing club on this tour, you should discuss with your financial people how the club wants to receive fees and pay expenses, retain profit or cover losses. It should be noted that sometimes, expenses need to be paid before any tour-income is received.

If you are an independent member of OAR, you would use your own account for the financial activity. OAR requires a written accounting of revenue and expenditures, and remittance of seat fees, and any profit (see Part 6).

If you’re thinking big, and the tour budget will be over \$10,000, contact the OAR Treasurer, Diana (oartreasurer@gmail.com): HST may be involved!

Develop a budget

Bottom line, you need boats and you need them delivered to your launch site. Go here for the OAR Fees page - <https://www.adventurerowing.ca/fee-structure/> This is the cost for renting boats and trailers, fuel charges for boat towing to your site, and the vehicle maintenance fee payable for the tow-er. Unless you rent a truck and pay for fuel (and build that into your budget) or have really good, trailer-towing-experienced friends who owes you a favour!

Other expenses will likely include:

- Lock fees, park fees, and overnight storage (if applicable)
- Snacks and water - for heaven’s sake don’t forget the snacks
- Lunch (see “snacks” for comments). If we stop at a restaurant, participants may buy their own lunch.
- Accommodation is usually up to participants to arrange and pay for*
- Honourariums. Is a club letting the tour use their docks? A marina or private owner? an honorarium of \$100 is customarily *offered* so make that part of your budget.

There are currently (2023) no ‘seat fees’ payable to RCA or Row Ontario for tours.

Build in a contingency amount. Even the best estimates can have a shortfall; the cost of fuel can rise, the caterer may have forgotten to add HST to the quote, you may have fewer participants for your fixed costs, etc.

Now you can divide the costs by the number of participants you anticipate. This is the entry fee you will publish (soon) - be sure it clearly states what is included. If this is the first tour that you've organized, reach out to the OAR Tour Facilitator, Cynthia (planetwarn@gmail.com) to ensure you've thought of everything.

*However, a tour is often most enjoyable if everybody stays at the same place so you can reserve a block of rooms, well before your tour. You will need to decide if you want to include accommodation in the tour fee, release a room from your block to a paid participant to register and pay themselves, or let everyone sort out their own accommodation.

You want what?

Sometimes participants withdraw after paying their fees. Rarely is the reason frivolous and we all know how life can interfere with our plans. You should create a refund policy which includes withdrawal deadlines and (if applicable) non-refundable portions of the fee. It is also useful to encourage the person withdrawing to find a replacement for themselves.

Part 4: “Applications and Cover Your Assets”

I bet you already know...this is important too!



Participant Forms

OAR has a way to cover you against legal liability in case something goes wrong – which is pretty darned rare - and RCA provides insurance to registered RCA members. The following steps ensure that you and your tour will be covered and only RCA members will be in the boats!

Go here: <https://www.adventurerowing.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/OAR-Standard-Registration-and-Waiver-1.pdf>. These forms were created for tour organizers to use. You just enter the name and date of the tour, the cost to participants and payment deadlines, and your refund policy. Make sure the participants know how to send the signed forms and tour fees to you.

The blank forms that you have edited, plus your enticing ad (or updated/expanded ad), should again be sent to OAR web guru Homam at hsmichael@rogers.com. He will put this package on the web site and in the OAR newsletter. The newsletter comes out on the first of each month during the rowing season.

The OAR Guest Application Form may be used for 1 tour annually. For details, please see Appendix III.

Before the day of the tour, confirm that you have received the *signed* registration forms and waivers from all participants. If you have unsigned ones, you can thrust a pen into their hands before the trailer unloading commences. Hmmm, sign a form or carry a boat?

Registrar and Registration

As soon as the list of participants is complete, inform the OAR Registrar, Elaine (elainebursztyn@gmail.com). Elaine needs to know:

- Name of Participant they have used to register with RCA or their club
- RCA number (or date of birth)
- E-mail address
- Club affiliation (if any)

Send this information a week or two before the tour because the Registrar checks that all participants are registered for the current year with RCA and Row Ontario. If a participant is not registered, the registrar will inform you so that you can provide information on how to join OAR and register on the RCA website. See appendix IV.



Part 5: “You’ve got this”

Okay, we’re shifting to drive! OAR is behind you and you’ve got this!

Sanction and Press

Check that you have received the sanction. If not, contact the OAR Tour Facilitator, Cynthia *immediately* (planetwarn@gmail.com).

If you think you can drum up any publicity then go for it! Local press, cottager’s newsletters, rowing groups on Facebook, club newsletters – whatever you can think of. If you have a sponsor, work with them on publicity.

If you would like to periodically update the status of your tour on the OAR website, (for example “only 2 seats left”) please notify OAR web guru, Homam (hsmichael@rogers.com)

Lists

You should have a *written* list of everything that has to be done, when and by whom. If you have helpers - make sure they know they are helpers – and what you want them to do and when (we’ll leave the threats and enticements to you).

It is recommended that you have a waiting list of a few names once your tour is full. Knowing how much notice the individuals on your waiting list need if a place opens up is useful information to have in advance.

Once the tour is full, notify Homam (hsmichael@rogers.com) so that the tour status can be changed to “FULL”.

Part 6: “WHOOHOO! You did it!”



Revel in the glory

OAR likes to get positive reinforcement. If we don't get it, we work really hard to make sure we get it next time! Within a day or two of the end of the tour, ask participants what they thought about the tour, using the OAR Tour Survey Form to be found under the Organizers tab.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B1_cp1ltYLfNN3AxY0Y3SzcwQ2hGSFRwVWo2NXpGYnh4R1I0/view?resourcekey=0-sft6ay205-mUiTBUQav9AQ

In your email, request that the participants complete the survey and return it you and OAR Publicity, Shelagh (bakertorrance@rogers.com). This is the best time to also request any photos that they may have taken (again, ask them to send the photos to you and Shelagh).

Write an email about the event, including things that went really well and things that should be improved the next year. Send a copy of this to the OAR Tour Facilitator, Cynthia (planetwarn@gmail.com).

Share your awesomeness - send a recap (with photos!) for the OAR Newsletter to Homam (hsmichael@rogers.com) and your local press.

It makes the world go round...

Complete an accounting showing all your revenue (incoming) and expenses (outgoing) and send it to OAR Treasurer, Diana (oartreasurer@gmail.com). Make sure all the bills have been paid!

- If the tour is organised by a Club and there is a profit, your Club can keep the profit. If there is a deficit, the Club must absorb the deficit.
- If the tour is organised by an individual associated with OAR, submit seat fees and profit to OAR Treasurer, Diana (oartreasurer@gmail.com).

Thank the sponsors and everybody who helped with organizing the event. Sponsors usually like to receive a letter. Don't forget those who provided services such as food and transport

Boats and Oars and Thing-ma-bobs

Inform the Director responsible for equipment, Arnold (Meer.AHVandermeer@gmail.com) about anything that needs to be repaired.

Beer

Put your feet up and have one!

Appendix I

Quick timetable/check list

TOUR PLANNING 'TO-DO' LIST

Autumn/EARLY Winter before tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decide where you would like to hold tour • Review Row Touring Manual • Contact OAR President
2-3 months pre-tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reconnoiter proposed route • Form tour organizing committee • Promote tour • Develop Safety Plan • Apply for Sanction • Contact any outside organizations • Develop budget
2 months pre-tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare application form/waiver • Full announcement to OAR newsletter
1 month pre-tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send list of participants to OAR Registrar • Once tour is full – inform OAR newsletter and set up a waiting list • Confirm sanctioning
TOUR DAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure you have signed registration /waivers from all participants
Post-tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send out any <i>Thank You</i>s • Calculate expenses and submit any monies owing to OAR and other organizations • Seek feedback and photos from participants • Send a 'recap' and photos to OAR newsletter • Send report to OAR President • Give yourself a pat on the back with thanks from OAR

Appendix II

Kawartha Lakes Tour safety plan

Captains, please check that your boat has the following:

- *life jacket for all rowers*
- *safety kit (whistle, heaving line, bailer, and light)*
- *thermal blanket*
- *two hook sticks to traverse locks*
- *mobile phone.*

Captains, each tour must have a first aid kit. Please make sure that you know in which boat the first aid kit is.

Captains, please ensure that:

- *Each one of your crew and yourself have signed the waiver.*
- *You have the phone number of the captain of each boat*
- *Your coxie can read the chart/map of the route and is familiar with the route*
- *You give directions to novice coxies.*
- *Your boat is in visual contact with other boats in the tour at all times.*
- *Your boat goes to shore in the event of lightning and stays there until 30 minutes after the thunder storm is finished*

Emergency Numbers

- *Emergency (only): 911*
- *The number of your closest regional hospital _____*

Emergency Landing Spots

List all landing spots on your tour. For example:

- *All lock stations have a landing area.*
- *Any beaches, parks, or conservation areas*
- *Cottage docks or rowing club docks*

Note: We are using touring quads which are very stable and virtually unsinkable on Ontario's inland waterways.

Appendix III

Guest Application Form



Only the following can participate in OAR tours as guests:

- Canadian rowers (outside of Ontario) who are in good standing with Rowing Canada Aviron (RCA).
- U.S. and other rowers who are in good standing with their national rowing governing body
- Ontario rowers who are in good standing with an Ontario Club not affiliated with OAR.

Participation is limited to one tour annually. Ontario rowers should encourage their Clubs to join OAR, so that they can participate in several tours. Alternatively, they can join OAR as independent members.

In order for U.S. and Overseas rowers to participate as guests, we need to know that you have travel medical insurance. In addition, you must sign a guest participation waiver.

Name (please print):

Street Address:

City and Province:

Country and Postal Code:

Telephone (primary):

Telephone (alternate):

E-mail address:

I attest that I am a member in good standing of a national rowing governing body.
If Canadian, RCA number _____

U.S. and overseas residents: I attest that I will carry current travel insurance for medical expenses and accidents when row touring in Canada.

I have read the waiver below and agree with it.

Signature _____

OAR Guest Participation Waiver Assumption of Risk, Liability Waiver, and Conduct Agreement



Assumption of risk: I recognise that the use of the facilities and services of Ontario Adventure Rowing (OAR) as well as rowing and related activities involve potential risks. Risks include, but are not limited to, injury from collision with another vessel or stationary objects and from the malfunctioning of equipment and injury or drowning as a result of capsizing or being swamped by waves from passing vessels, adverse weather, or lock operations. I also understand that the physical exertion of rowing, including carrying boats in and out of the water, can result in injury or death.

Liability Waiver: I undertake, in my personal capacity and on behalf of those whom I represent or have custody of, and my heirs and assigns, to indemnify and save harmless Ontario Adventure Rowing, their officers and other representatives, and their successors, heirs and assigns, from and against all claims, damages, loss, costs and expenses relating to any injury including death, or loss of or damage to my or any third party's property arising out of or being incidental to my presence at the event.

Conduct: I certify that I will obey all public safety regulations and OAR's COVID Protocol, if in effect. I have received two doses of Covid-19 vaccines approved by WHO or Health Canada. In addition, I agree to conduct myself respectfully towards my fellow rowers.

Fitness to row: I am an experienced sculler, and I am fit enough to row 30 km in one day, and I can swim 50 m.

Photo release (*strike out if you do not agree*): I consent to photographs being taken of me during my participation in the CSM and to their use by the organizers and rowing organizations for promotional purposes.

Payment

The guest fee amount is \$CDN 30 per day (of scheduled rowing). Please pay this to the tour organiser who will remit this amount to OAR.

Updated: Mar. 6, 2023

Appendix IV

Row Canada (RCA) registration information for independent rower

Regardless of your RCA status, remember:

- There is nothing to pay on the RCA WRS.
- Your status will be "pending". Once "activated" by the OAR Registrar, you will receive confirmation of your registration.

If you already have an account with Rowing Canada Aviron

Go to <https://membership.rowingcanada.org/Home>

- Log in with your username or member number and password
- Click on Register/join
- Click on Join a Program
- Select Ontario and Ontario Adventure Rowing (SPECIAL ASSOCIATION)
- Select the appropriate program for the year and whether "Affiliated Tourer" if you are a member of an Ontario OAR Affiliated Club or "Independent Member" if you are not.

If you are **not** a registered member of Rowing Canada Aviron, you will need to create an account.

Go to <https://membership.rowingcanada.org/Home>

- Click on Log in
- Click on Create Account Now
- Once you have entered all your information and an account has been created for you,
- Click on Register/join
- Click on Join a Program
- Select Ontario and Ontario Adventure Rowing (SPECIAL ASSOCIATION))
- Select appropriate program for the year and whether "Affiliated Tourer" if you are a member of an Ontario OAR Affiliated Club or "Independent Member" if you are not.