

Girls Rock El Paso Blueprint

Things we need to get started:

Space

Instructors

Kids

Instruments (& PAs) (drum sticks, instrument cables, speaker cables, picks, straps, stands, mic stands, mics, EARPLUGS, tuners, extension cables, power strips)

Curriculum

Food

Place for showcase

Shirts for screenprinting

Markers, Pens, Paper, tape

Other materials for whatever workshops are decided upon

Big notepads or access to chalkboards/whiteboards

Name tags/lanyards

The idea: a pilot program to be run in El Paso with the support of experienced Girls Rock organizers who can train folks local to El Paso to continue should they choose.

Girls rock camps are social justice programs building self-empowerment through music education and collaborative creative expression. The goal is not to create rock stars, but to give youth the opportunity to grow via mentorship, collaboration, and creation. Ultimately, the sense of self-empowerment will spill over into other aspects of campers' lives giving them the confidence to become agents of positive social change in their communities and the world at large.

Programming format: Day camp from 9am-5pm for one week, Monday through Friday, with a showcase on Saturday. Youth will have instrument instruction and band practice every day, along with a variety of workshops. By the end of the week, campers have learned an instrument, formed a band, and written an original song. On Saturday, the campers perform these songs at a public showcase.

Organizational structure: Ideally, operating under an existing 501c3 or fiscal sponsor.

Youth served: 25 girls, non-binary and trans youth ages 10-17. Typically camps operate under a sliding scale tuition structure to encourage and support youth from low-income households to attend. We want to provide access to instruments, creative space, and instruction that are not readily available to a lot of folks.

Finding a space:

Ideally we would have a space that is located where it can be easily accessed by as many families as possible. Church spaces have proven to be a good resource/option, as sometimes school districts have very cumbersome and expensive policies for rentals. The

main criteria we're looking for is a space with five rooms (fully walled and distinct), one large assembly room, a break room or kitchen with access to a refrigerator and a microwave, and access to a copier/printer. For security purposes, it's much easier if Girls Rock is the only program on the premises, but sharing a space is possible (just makes it harder to keep tabs of who is coming and going) Air Conditioning!!

Instructors: Following basic band structure, we'd be offering instruction in guitar, bass, drums, keys, and vocals. This means we'd have about 5 students in each class, meaning we'd need 10 instructors (2 per instrument). Again, ideally, we are prioritizing leadership of and holding space for women, non-binary folks, and trans leadership, specifically folks of color. ,

Finding/recruiting campers and instructors:

On the ground community outreach is crucial. Given the small number of campers for a pilot program, getting campers enrolled shouldn't be very difficult. The best ways to reach kids and find kids who could really benefit from a program like this is to reach out to school counselors and community leaders. Table at community events. For instructors, reach out to local teachers, artists, and organizers. (Table at shows!) Center organizational mission around social justice when doing outreach and make sure your volunteers/instructors understand this as a guiding force for building a team.

Band Coaches vs Band Counselors

Band coaches are there for helping to guide the campers through writing their song. They don't give input on the song, but they manage time and know how to write a song. Band counselors are kind of more like camp counselors. They are there to help the campers navigate the social-emotional experience of the camp and are generally at camp all day throughout the week to be the band's adult buddy/assigned adult. Band coaches don't have to be there all day, just during band practice.

Instruments and PAs:

With a small pilot program such as this, best path forward is to ask instructors to bring their instrument. Similarly, ask volunteers and community members to loan or donate instruments. You will need 5-7 guitars, 5 keys, 5 basses, 5 drum kits, 10 mics, and 3-5 PAs (if all bands practice at the same time, you need 5, otherwise you can get by with 3)

Curriculum:

We can help build curriculum with instructors for their instrument classes. It essentially ends up being a few hours of very introductory lessons (how to hold your instrument, understanding how the instrument works, learning a few chords, riffs, or beats) and a few hours of practicing those basic skills, with the last day of lessons used to finalize and polish any particular skill the kids need to finish their song. Campers write their own song their own way! Instructors do not interfere to teach theory or the like unless specifically asked by the youth. The goal is for the kids to come up with their own original song as a band, and it can sound like whatever or be about whatever they wish, as long as they are all happy with it. This also makes for some really fun and interesting sounds!

Regarding other workshops, again we can help design a curriculum based on things we've

done in the past. That said, it would be great to find local organizations to partner with to offer workshops on things like healthy relationships, media literacy, community issues, etc.

Food:

Any time you have volunteers, it helps to feed them! Usually, we've relied on local bagel shops for day olds to serve for breakfast. We aim to provide lunches for all volunteers, and if feasible, for campers. It's pretty easy to get pizza donated, but other donations require some legwork in the months leading up to camp. A lot of businesses have donation policies that require a minimum of 6-8 weeks advance notice. Planning food donation asks is something that requires some familiarity with community businesses, contacts, etc. Providing lunch for campers is really helpful when dealing with low-income families, and providing lunch for everyone helps avoid singling out any campers that need lunch provided. That said, getting a large number of donations can be cumbersome, especially trying to accommodate dietary restrictions. It is feasible with enough lead time.

Showcase Space:

This is where the final concert will be held. It can be done in the same venue as camp, but it holds more significance and makes a bigger impact if it happens at a local venue. Playing in a local club gives campers a strong sense of accomplishment and ownership over something not a lot of peers get to do. If someone can donate a backline to the show, that's a huge help (especially because sometimes instruments that are loaned or donated aren't in the best shape). The show should be in the daytime (usually 1pm) to allow for ease in load in, set up, breakdown, and load out. Venue should be all ages and ADA compliant, and ticket prices should be nominal/ optional donation.

Odds and ends:

Graphic/Logo:

It'd be great to have an official GREP!* Design we could screenprint (also sell shirts/patches at showcase)

Social media management (marketing, outreach, answering questions)

EP locals doing outreach to businesses and orgs for in kind or financial donations

GoFundMe? IndieGoGo?

Load in crew, decorating crew, load out crew: dedicated folks to check in gear, inventory (make sure it gets back to rightful owner), set up band rooms, decorate the space and the venue, breakdown and make sure items are returned, clean up space)

Misc needs: drum rugs, water jug, extension cables, power strips, picks, guitar straps, sticks, t shirts, ink, screen, squeegee for band tshirts, earplugs, earplugs, earplugs, first aid kit, tampons and pads

Background checks

Volunteer Orientation

Volunteer Interviews

Application process, acceptance process, assigning instruments

*not actual name, just placeholder