



# *Guide to* Rounds 4 Research

Updated 10/13



Presented in Partnership  
with The Toro Company



Rhett Evans  
Chief Executive Officer  
GCSAA/EIFG

## GCSAA Chapter Leaders and Organization Executives:

We know that industries do not survive if resources are not invested to support innovation and react to changes in the climate in which they operate. I shudder to think where the golf industry would be had it not invested in agronomic research over the years. There is no doubt the playing conditions would not be as enjoyable for golfers, environmental stewardship would suffer and operations would lack the efficiency to ensure facility profitability.

That is why GCSAA's philanthropic organization, the Environmental Institute for Golf, is excited to offer a means for your chapter to generate the funds that will help to ensure the golf industry remains strong and viable. We are presenting the Rounds 4 Research program to GCSAA chapters and turfgrass organizations as a platform for revenue generation through the online auction of rounds of golf.

The following guide provides specific information on how the program functions and how your organization can work with the EIFG to raise funds to support activities that serve to preserve the industry. The beauty of Rounds 4 Research is that the EIFG works hand in hand with your chapter or organization to execute the program, with a minimum of 80 percent of funds generated directed to you for use as you deem appropriate. We know Rounds 4 Research works. Since 2012, more than 50 organizations have participated with the program and raised nearly \$175,000.

Again, we are enthused about the potential of this program to assist you and your members. Should you have questions, please do not hesitate to contact Mark Johnson, GCSAA Sr. Manager of Environmental Programs, at [mjohnson@gcsaa.org](mailto:mjohnson@gcsaa.org) or 800-472-7878, ext. 5161.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "J. Rhett Evans". The signature is stylized and cursive.

J. Rhett Evans  
Chief Executive Officer  
Golf Course Superintendents Association of America/  
The Environmental Institute for Golf

# Welcome to Rounds 4 Research

Rounds 4 Research is a novel fundraising program conducted by the Environmental Institute for Golf (EIFG) whereby rounds of golf (defined as a tee time for two or four, generally with carts) are auctioned to the public through an online auction. Through this program, participating organizations can solicit donated rounds with a minimum 80 percent of the proceeds being directed back to the organization.

The EIFG's Rounds 4 Research is an expansion of the innovative program that was introduced by the Carolinas Golf Course Superintendents Association. The scope had grown beyond what the Carolinas GCSA could administer and in 2012 the EIFG took over the program to elevate it to a national level. The EIFG is now administering the program.

The Rounds 4 Research auction will take advantage of an online auction platform such as Bidding for Good, Ebay, etc. National communications efforts and grassroots efforts from the participating organizations will drive golfers to the bidding platform. These efforts will provide a nationwide marketing opportunity for the golf facility.

There will be two auctions in 2014. The first auction will be held June 9-22, and the second auction will be held August 1-10.

## Who can participate?

GCSAA-affiliated chapters, golf course superintendent associations (state, national or international) or their foundations can participate in the program.

Other turfgrass- and research-related foundations and not-for-profit organizations are free to inquire, but GCSAA-affiliated chapters will generally have precedence in their respective state or region. The EIFG will review the circumstances in regard to the precedence of chapter participation.

## How your organization can participate

Although the EIFG is administering the Rounds 4 Research program, it is actually a local "franchised" fundraising program that enables participating organizations to raise revenue. In fact, participating organizations should consider the Rounds 4 Research program their own fundraising program that is supported by the EIFG.

## Key responsibilities

There are three primary responsibilities for all participating organizations:

1. Solicit for and obtain donated rounds to be sent to the EIFG for the auction.
2. Promote the program to golfers, allied associations, golf associations, media and members of your organization to supplement the national efforts being made by the EIFG.
3. Provide an annual summary of distributions received from the EIFG that indicates how the monies were used.

## Getting Started:

### Sign and return the pledge form

To get started, the organization's leaders need only to sign the enclosed pledge form.





The Environmental Institute for Golf fosters sustainability by providing funding for research grants, education programs, scholarships, advocacy and environmental programs. Founded in 1955 as the GCSAA Scholarship & Research Fund for the Golf Course Superintendents Association of America, the EIFG serves as the association's philanthropic organization. The purposes of the EIFG include the advancement of education and research in the field of turfgrass improvement and management, the collection and dissemination of information, environmental protection, and the promotion of public awareness and safety. Visit the EIFG at [www.eifg.org](http://www.eifg.org).

## How your organization can use the proceeds

Participating organizations are asked to use the monies in accordance with the not-for-profit purpose of the Environmental Institute for Golf – research, education, environmental programs, advocacy and scholarships. Your organization will be asked to provide an annual summary that describes how the funds were used.

This summary will be used in two ways: It will ensure that the EIFG is in compliance with its purpose as a 501(c)(3) organization, and it will allow us to communicate a comprehensive look at the many positive achievements of the Rounds 4 Research program.

## How your organization can be successful

An organization's success with this program will be directly related to the effort put into it. Here are a few tips that will be important to your group's success:

- **Set goals.** Work as a group to set annual goals for the number of facilities donating rounds and for a total number of rounds donated. After these goals are set, your group should develop a plan of action, communicate the plan to members, implement and monitor the plan for success, and act when necessary to ensure success.
- **Solicit a range of rounds to be donated.** Be sure to build a donation portfolio that contains a mix of high-end rounds, as well as a variety of affordable golf opportunities. Also, unique opportunities not normally available to the public will have special appeal to bidders.
- **Promote the program.** Communicate and market the auction within all your communications channels, including your website, publications, news releases and social media. Also, ask your members to communicate the program at their facilities.
- **Align with your peer groups.** Partner with local allied organizations, including owners, managers and golf professionals. Your allied groups can provide key support in several ways:
  - Communication to golfers. Ask them to communicate the program in their e-mails, handicap reports, publications and more.
  - Assistance in soliciting rounds. Allied golf associations can help put you in contact with those who can grant the donation or even ask for it on your behalf.
  - Customer service. It is also very important that when the buyer's group shows up to play, they are afforded a high level of customer service. Everyone who interacts with the golfer should know about the program.

## How the EIFG will support the program

The EIFG is committed to the success of Rounds 4 Research and will provide national administrative and communications support, as well as tools and resources to support the efforts of the participating organizations. Highlights of these efforts include:

- Maintaining the Rounds 4 Research website, which will serve as the central source for news and information about the program.
- Working at the national level with allied golf organizations to promote and market the program.
- Implementing a communications and marketing plan to promote the program to members, golfers and the media.
- Providing participating organizations with a communications kit that includes advertisements and materials to support the donation process.
- Providing donating facilities with materials that will help them market their participation to golfers.

### The EIFG will also:

- Manage the donated rounds, as well as maintain the auction platform(s).
- Notify winning bidders, collect revenues, and process the donated items sold, including certificates and thank you letters (including required tax notifications).
- Process the revenues generated from the auction and distribute the funding earmarked for participating organizations.

### How the donation process works

Once your organization has committed to Rounds 4 Research, you will receive information and tools to begin your campaign. In the meantime, here are some guidelines that apply specifically to organizations:

- Participating organizations can submit donated rounds from any golf facility regardless of geographic location. However, you are encouraged to be aware of and respect similar fundraising efforts already being conducted in states and locations outside of your own local and regional boundaries. That said, donors may help more than one program at their discretion.
- A donating facility can direct the proceeds to any participating organization or the EIFG. In the event there is no local participating organization, the facility can still designate its local affiliated chapter, and the EIFG will notify the chapter about the available monies. The affiliated chapter can then either elect to participate in the program or donate the monies to the EIFG. The EIFG will follow up with donors as necessary to clarify donations and directions regarding beneficiaries.

When soliciting donations, you are encouraged to ask for two donations per year from each facility. However, we sincerely appreciate every donation and recognize that some facilities may not be able to give at this level.

### How the proceeds will be distributed

As a participating organization, you will receive a minimum of 80 percent of the proceeds (amount of sale per round, excluding any fees or surcharges) from each donation that has been designated for your organization. The EIFG will retain 20 percent, plus any fees and surcharges collected, to offset programmatic costs, including expenses related to the auction platform, advertising and marketing costs, administrative overhead, and other fees associated with managing the program on a national scale.

The EIFG will process revenues received and distribute payments to the participating organizations within 90 days of the close of an auction period. The amount of revenue received will depend on the number of rounds sold and when they are sold during the auction period. Organizations accustomed to lump sum distributions from annual auctions should adjust for this change in distribution.

### Example:

A donated round for four has sold for \$150 plus \$15 for fees. The donating facility specified that the proceeds are to benefit the Carolinas GCSA. The EIFG will pay the Carolinas GCSA \$120 for the round and retain \$30 in addition to the \$15 fee.

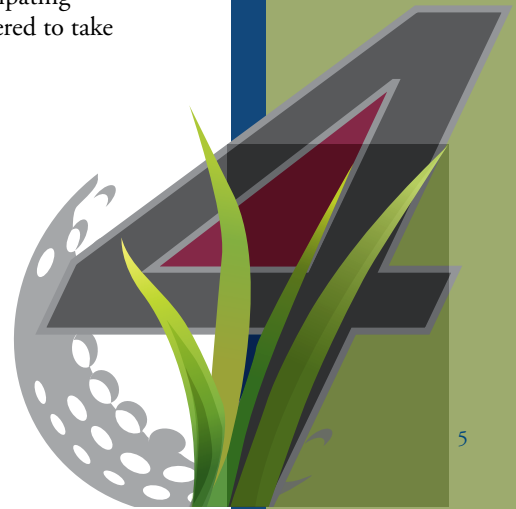
### Terms

The EIFG appreciates the support and involvement of all those participating in the Rounds 4 Research program and strives to provide the best customer service possible. As with any program that involves multiple organizations, as well as public involvement, miscommunications and other actions that are not in alignment with the Rounds 4 Research program may occur.

The EIFG reserves the right to make final determinations regarding all aspects of the Rounds 4 Research program specific to:

- The right to determine whether a donation will be accepted, placed upon the auction, sold, and when not sold, reoffered on an online auction platform.
- The right to determine the national programmatic messaging and communications platform, as well as operations and policy regarding the processing of donations, bidder relations, revenue and distribution of proceeds.
- The right to determine whether an organization can participate. The EIFG can also discontinue the relationship with an organization at any time. The EIFG will notify the organization with which it intends to discontinue the relationship and provide an effective date.

The EIFG will complete the auction and revenue distribution processes with participating organizations unless lawfully ordered to take action otherwise.





The Environmental Institute for Golf is  
the philanthropic organization of GCSAA.