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Your Guide to Going Gold

How to Become a Gold Award Girl Scout

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the mark of the truly remarkable. Through pursuing the Gold Award, Girl Scouts change the world by tackling issues they are passionate about to drive lasting change in their communities and beyond while they learn essential skills that will prepare them for all aspects of life. As a bonus, the Gold Award opens doors to a variety of scholarships, preferred admission tracks for college, strong networking and amazing career opportunities, and much more.

This guide offers a comprehensive overview of everything from planning to proposals and teamwork to time logs. So, whether you've been dreaming of your Gold Award since you were a Daisy or you're a new member in high school looking to make a difference, this guide is for you. Let's get going and let's Go Gold!

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Part 1: The Gold Award Defined

Curious about the Gold Award? Read on to learn more about what it means and how you'll lead lasting change in your community.

The benefits of becoming a Gold Award Girl Scout

When you become a Gold Award Girl Scout, you delve deep into your passions, flex your problem-solving muscle, stand up for what you believe in, inspire others, and make a difference. It's an opportunity to do something more and to set your sights on true leadership.

Here are a few other reasons to Go Gold:

- **Grow professional skills.** Gold Award Girl Scouts become pros in team building, problem solving, project planning, and time management. These are invaluable skills that all professionals need—and all people value. You can highlight these experiences as you apply to schools, jobs, internships, and other opportunities.
- **Earn scholarships.** Many universities and colleges award scholarships to Gold Award Girl Scouts.
- **Build your network.** Gold Award Girl Scouts recruit and lead teams to do amazing things! This experience will give you a network of supporters that lasts a lifetime.
- **Enlist at a higher pay grade when you join the military.**

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: Do this for you—not for anyone else! This isn't your parent's or troop leader's project. The Gold Award is an opportunity to harness your passion and put your ideas into motion. It's challenging. It's immensely rewarding. And it's entirely up to you.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: Once you've earned the Gold Award, you can proudly claim your Gold Award digital credential from Credly, our verification partner! You can display it on your social media profiles, including LinkedIn. This allows prospective employers, universities/colleges, military academies, and others to verify your achievement simply by viewing your profile.

Key elements of the Gold Award

The Girl Scout Gold Award is a **Take Action project** that must include **five elements.** Your project must (1) address a **root cause** of an issue that you feel passionate about that has a (2) **national and/or global link.** Through your actions, you must demonstrate (3) **leadership** while also creating (4) **sustainable** and (5) **measurable** impact.

What does "take action" really mean?

Taking action means working to understand the root cause of a problem so that you can develop a solution that continues to address that issue—even after your Gold Award project has been completed. Simply put, taking action goes beyond community service.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN COMMUNITY SERVICE AND A TAKE ACTION PROJECT?

Take Action and community service projects are different, and both are essential to Girl Scouting. When you earn the Gold Award, you are transformed from living the Girl Scout Law to bringing it to life!



SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: Collecting, beautifying, decorating, and cleaning can be part of a Take Action project; however these activities are not stand-alone Gold Award projects. Stay focused on unique solutions with long-term relief.

Community service projects are acts of kindness and important ways to help something or someone right now. They are commonly "one and done" activities. Performing community service almost always multiplies efforts that are already in place. Examples include collecting food for an existing food pantry, providing clothing or toiletries to people who have suffered a disaster, cleaning up a run-down playground, or picking up trash at a park, forest, or beach.

Girl Scout Take Action projects address an issue by tackling the factors that cause or contribute to it. As you may expect, these projects have a far-reaching impact. They are designed to change something for the better—forever.

Use this table to help determine whether an idea is a community service or Take Action project.

Community Service	Take Action
A short-term effort that helps something or someone fulfill an immediate need	A long-term project with sustainable and ongoing impact that addresses a root cause of an issue
Done FOR the community	Done WITH the community
Joining an existing effort to solve a problem	Creating a unique initiative to address an issue
Done as part of an existing team (usually as a volunteer)	Creating and leading your own team of volunteers
Working towards a goal that's set by others	Setting the goals and leading a team to achieve them

What is a root cause?

Root causes are an issue's trigger—they identify why an issue is happening. Often, you'll have to look for the why in a lot of places in order to get to the root causes. Once you've identified your issue, you can create a "mind map" in GoGold, the Gold Award web app (learn more about GoGold). This will help you find its root causes. A mind map can help you understand what triggers your issue and will help you look further to find the root causes of those triggers.

ROOT CAUSE EXAMPLE: *Rachel is passionate about ocean conservation. She asks why ocean pollution happens and lists several causes, including acid rain, soil runoff, and oil spills. She remembers witnessing the harmful impact of a major oil spill in her local ecosystem and decides to learn more about why oil spills happen. Rachel reaches out to experts and, after additional research, learns that a lack of safety protocols for oil storage is one of the root causes. She chooses to create a project that addresses how oil storage can be made safer to prevent spills.*

Step 2: Investigate will walk you through how to use a mind map and then research your issue's root causes. When you're ready, visit Step 2 of GoGold to do it yourself!

How do I include a national and/or global link in my project?

Identifying a national and/or global link doesn't mean you need to travel or expand your project across the globe. It's likely that the issue you've been working towards addressing is relevant worldwide—it can be found in your own local, regional, or national community and across the globe, whether it's poverty, hunger, illiteracy, homelessness, or pollution.

Research how other areas, communities, or countries address your issue. Seeing how other people and places implement solutions might inspire your actions and will absolutely show you a national or global connection. Consider reaching out, explaining your ideas, and asking for their advice, ideas, and even collaboration. You can use what you learn to inform your project. Plus, these kinds of partnerships can be excellent ways to ensure your project's sustainability.

NATIONAL AND/OR GLOBAL LINK EXAMPLE: *For the past four years, Maria has volunteered at a local animal rescue group. It regularly operates at its maximum capacity and is unable to take in additional animals. Maria decides to tackle one of the root causes of this issue for her Gold Award. As she begins her research, she learns that animal rescue groups across the country share similar challenges and discovers various perspectives on animal welfare across the globe. Then, she reaches out to relevant animal welfare organizations to better understand the issue and to access the research that they have available. She decides to focus on a solution that she can implement at animal rescue groups in her community and share widely.*

Visit Step 4 of GoGold to identify your issue's national and/or global link. Be sure to include research that backs it up!

How do I show leadership in my project?

It isn't a leader's job to do everything; rather, it's the leader's job to make sure everything gets done. You will demonstrate leadership by recruiting and engaging a diverse team of volunteers from your network and around the community. Share your vision to help align your team—you can also map out activities, set schedules, create a communication plan, and solve challenges if they arise.

Take Action projects require partnering with the community you're serving, so be sure to enlist appropriate individuals, groups, or organizations before, during, and after your project to ensure they are engaged with and benefit from your project. Ideally, your project will provide the community you serve with a much-needed solution, so they will help sustain your project.

LEADERSHIP EXAMPLE: *Caitlin elevated her passion for theater to raise awareness about substance abuse issues among high school students. She reached out to her high school's drama club for volunteer actors and backstage crew members. She found volunteers within her Girl Scout troop to design and distribute promotional materials for performances.*
At a local drug abuse education nonprofit, Caitlin learned about the extent of substance abuse in her town and found her project advisor. Her advisor connected her with volunteer educators who informed the educational components of Caitlin's project and hosted talk-backs after performances. Finally, Caitlin engaged other high school drama clubs to ensure that the program continued to reach her target audience.

Step 3: Get Help features important members of your team and the roles they might play. When you're ready, visit Step 3 of GoGold to list your team members and share how you plan to lead them as you implement your project.

What does a sustainable project look like?

Sustainability means that your project, as well as the work towards addressing your issue, carries on or continues even after you've done your part and earned the Gold Award. In a nutshell: you'll put a plan in place that ensures your Gold Award creates lasting change.

Sustainability is not one-size-fits-all. Here are three different ways you can ensure your project is sustainable:

1 ***Create a permanent solution … and ensure it's used.***

Short project description	How you know it's sustained …
Brand-new girls wrestling team at your school	Get a letter of support from your school administration to sustain the team
Cultural competency club at a local community center	Provide a how-to manual with guidelines and your organization charter to the community center so they can maintain your project after you wrap up
Formal-wear lending boutique for military families	Establish a system for rotating and refreshing available items that outlasts your support

2 ***Educate others by inspiring them to change their attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors … and prove the changes by using a measurement tool and either 1) putting a plan in place to continue the education beyond your involvement or 2) enacting a call to action.***

Short project description	How you know it's sustained …
Stress-relief awareness campaign	Collect pre- and post-surveys to measure change in your audience's knowledge and perceptions and enact a call to action, like a pledge, to track who commits to adopting new self-care habits
Reading workshops to promote early literacy	Collect pre- and post-surveys to measure how audience reading skills improve and share the curriculum with a community partner to continue literacy education
School recycling presentations	Collect pre- and post-surveys to measure increase in recycling know-how and enact a call to action, like an online tracking system to count the number of students recycling at the school and total pounds of recycled material annually

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: When your goal is to change someone's mind, education can be a powerful tool. You can create and deploy a wide range of materials that will educate others about the issue you care about. We call this a "force multiplier" when someone makes a significant change to an attitude and/or behavior.

3 ***Advocate to change a rule, regulation, or law … and engage others in your advocacy.***

Short project description	How you know it's sustained …
Protecting sea turtle habitats	Get others to take up the cause by signing a petition as part of a campaign to enact a law protecting animals' habitats. Your advocacy is what matters—bonus points if you get a law passed, but even if you don't, you can still change minds and behavior along the way.

Visit Step 4 GoGold to plan your project's sustainability.

How do I measure my impact?

Your impact is measurable when you collect information or data throughout your project and use it to show that your actions have had a positive effect on the community and/or contributed to addressing your issue.

Think about what you can ***count*** in order to measure the effectiveness of your project. This means that you will need to set a goal or two! That way, when you measure your results, you'll know how effective your project was overall. Goals can feel intimidating, but remember, you're setting them for yourself—and they are adaptable.

You can begin demonstrating your impact by asking "how much?" or "how many?"

- You can count ***how many*** people your project helped, involved, or educated, or how many people changed their behavior or attitudes. You can also count the number of members in a group (social media or in person) or how may clicks, shares, views, or comments your website or posts received.

- If you are introducing a new concept to a group, you can use a pre- and post-questionnaire to measure ***how much*** they've learned or assess what behaviors they've changed.

Successful Gold Award projects have goals and measure true impact. Be confident in setting and measuring multiple goals, so you can understand the impact of each part of your project. And don't be shy about expanding your efforts as you go!

MEASUREMENT EXAMPLE: *Nancy is creating a technology class for women in the prison system to help prepare them for future employment. She sets two goals: to reach 50 women in the prison system with her technology class by the end of the school year and to be sure at least 75% of the women feel like they have increased their tech skills. To measure her impact, she plans to use two metrics: she will track participation to ensure she serves at least 50 women, and she will circulate questionnaires before and after the classes to assess if her participants are increasing their tech skills. By consistently tracking her progress, she can adjust her plan to better meet her goals.*

Visit Step 4 of GoGold to create your project's goals and outline how you'll measure your impact.



SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: While goals are important guidelines, they may change as you go along. It's OK—it's all part of the learning process. Collecting and analyzing data throughout your project will help you gauge the impact your project is having, make improvements and adjust your goals as necessary, and ultimately tell a compelling story about your Gold Award. If you think you need to change your goals after your proposal has been approved, reach out to your council contact for advice and support.

Part 2: Achieving Your Gold Award

Now that you've learned about the Gold Award, you're ready to earn it—the greatest achievement in Girl Scouting! It may sound daunting, but we'll break it down into smaller, more manageable steps. Read on for more on how to get started. And remember: your council and the Girl Scout Movement will be there to support you every step of the way!

How do I know I'm ready?

You can begin working on your Gold Award proposal in GoGold after you've crossed certain items off your to-do list. You're ready when:

- You're in grades 9–12.
- You're a registered Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador.
- You've completed a Silver Award or a Senior/Ambassador Leadership Award
- You feel compelled to do something meaningful that will make the world a better place!

How do I know what to do—and when?

If you're ready to start your Gold Award journey, here's the order of events you'll follow:

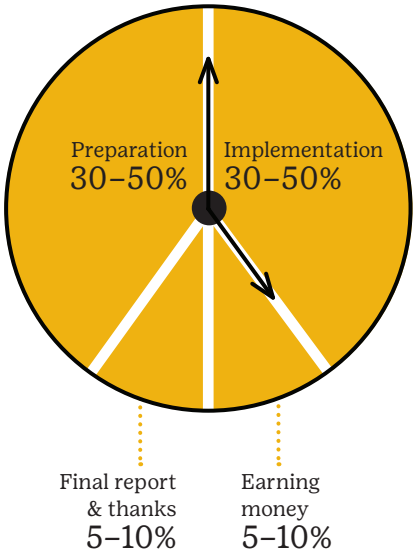
- Submit a Letter of Intent to let GSCB know that you are interested in earning your Gold Award.
- Complete required Gold Award Training in gsLearn or in person.
- Complete informational call with GSCB staff.
- Your mentor will be assigned to you and you will work with your mentor to complete your Project Proposal and submit it in GoGold.
- Present your Gold Award Proposal to the Gold Award Review Committee.
- Review proposal feedback and make any updates in GoGold, resubmitting if necessary.
- Complete your project as outlined in your proposal, documenting any changes you make to your plan.
- Submit Final Report for approval.
- Schedule Final Report presentation.
- Complete feedback surveys and Press Release request.

How much time does it take?

Plan to spend 80 hours bringing your project to life—that's the minimum. These hours will give you the time you need to properly plan and execute your project—though keep in mind that your schedule and other time commitments will influence how long it takes to complete your project. This is OK, whatever timeline you follow is just fine!

Use this chart—and the definitions below—to help you plan how to best invest your time for maximum efficiency and impact.

BUDGET YOUR HOURS



Preparation (30–50%) includes time planning pre- and post-approval.

- **Pre-approval (up to 25%)** is the process of preparing your project plan before council review and approval. *This includes some research, contacting possible community partners, investigating potential venues, finding prospective volunteers, and ultimately completing your project proposal.*
- **Post-approval (up to 25%)** is the work of finalizing your research and locking in your logistics after your proposal is approved by your council. *For example, you might contact your venue and set dates and times for workshops.*

Implementation (30–50%) is the process of leading and executing the plan you defined in your project proposal and making changes, when necessary, to achieve the project's goal. *This includes training your volunteers, leading your team to do your project, and more!*

Earning money (5–10%) is optional, and only includes time you spend earning money for your Gold Award.

Final report & thanks (5–10%) includes reflecting on your impact and appreciating your team, which are essential parts of the Gold Award, so make these a priority as you wrap up.

It's easy to forget an activity, email, or conversation, so use the "Track My Work" tab in GoGold to make sure you don't miss a thing.

What is the GoGold web app?

GoGold is a mobile-friendly web app you will use to track your progress towards completing the 7 steps of the Gold Award—from idea to proposal, to taking action and final report—online!

You can use GoGold to brainstorm and submit your Gold Award proposal as well as your final report. It is designed with you in mind and offers more than just a place to upload documents.

GoGold takes you through each of the Gold Award steps while offering new ways to examine the issue you want to work on and its root causes, plan your project, set goals, map a timeline, and add your team members.

The functionality built into GoGold is going to save you time, too. The system includes options for your troop leader to virtually sign off on your prerequisites, like your Silver Award, and for your project advisor to verify your proposal is ready for your council's review process. (We will tell you more about the role of a project advisor in Step 3.)

Think of GoGold as an interactive, informative, and enormous filing cabinet up in the cloud—where every single Gold Award proposal and final report is proudly safeguarded and catalogued for all the Girl Scouts who are on this amazing journey.

What are the #1 tips to help me succeed?

DO THIS	NOT THIS
Pull a team of volunteers together and put your leadership skills to work.	Do it all yourself with just a few or no volunteers.
Choose a project advisor who is an expert on your issue and willing to be involved.	Choose a parent or troop leader as an advisor.
Plan ahead and anticipate obstacles.	Wing it without a plan.
Break up your work into small, manageable bundles and assign each bundle a timeline.	Procrastinate or try to do it all at once.
Update your project advisor and council contact and ask questions when needed.	Keep project progress, obstacles, and details to yourself until you submit your final report.
Document everything as it occurs so that the information you collect is accurate and honest.	Make up a timeline after you've finished the project or put together several small projects.
Measure your project's outcome—you can always look to your council contact for guidance on collecting data, conducting surveys, and doing pre- and post-evaluations.	Complete your project with no real way to measure the impact you've made.
Make sure your project includes the five Gold Award elements.	Submit your project proposal without addressing root cause or including a national and/or global link, sustainability, measurability, or leadership.
Include detailed goals in your project proposal that show your anticipated impact.	Skip goal setting.
Do research to make sure any organizations you plan to work with want to sustain your project.	Assume that organizations need your help.
Create a dynamic project with measurable impact on a community.	Create a static website as the focus of your project or hold a one-day workshop.
Be original—this is your chance to shine!	Copy what others have done.

What are the seven steps to the Gold Award?

- Step 1: Choose an issue
- Step 2: Investigate
- Step 3: Get help
- Step 4: Create a plan
- Step 5: Present your plan
- Step 6: Take action
- Step 7: Educate and inspire

Let's break it down with a description of each step and tips for success. You'll complete these steps using GoGold. When you're ready, create a GoGold account and get started!

Step 1: Choose an issue

In this step, you'll answer questions that will help you reflect on your personal values, education, experience, and interests in order to find an issue you care about.

Use the interactive question tree in GoGold to answer questions that will help you explore how to merge your passions and skills to take action. It's easy! Simply answer the questions and GoGold will do the rest, compiling your responses into project themes that may interest you.

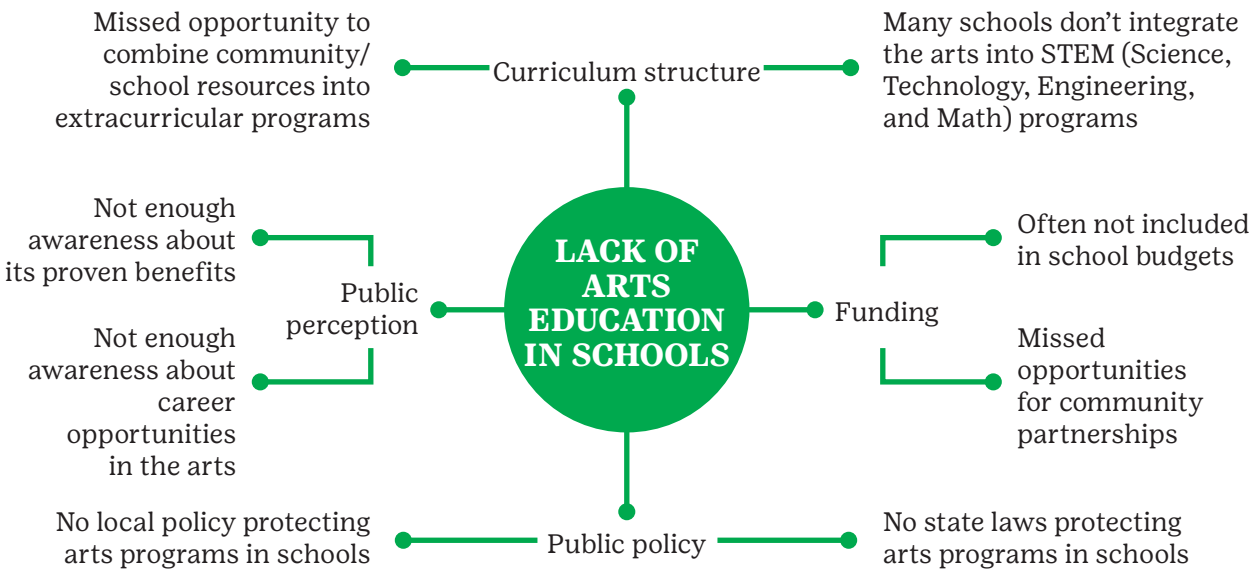
Why?	Who?	Where?	What?	How?
Why are you inspired? Do you care about poverty, women's rights, environmental sustainability, health and relationships, animals, human rights, veterans, sports, or something else?	Who do you want to help? The elderly, children, those less fortunate, nature, people with disabilities, or animals?	Where do you want to make an impact? Your school, neighborhood, city, state, country, or around the world?	What are your strengths and talents? Public speaking, math, community building, empathy, research, or people skills?	How do you want to make a difference? Will you change a law, lead workshops, start a club, develop curriculum, give presentations, teach a skill, or take action another way?

You can complete the quiz as many times as you want. And you'll leave the step with an issue or two you may want to explore further.

Step 2: Investigate

In Step 1, you identified a community issue or two that you're interested in exploring further. You'll need to trace back the issues to their root causes for your project and then connect with issue experts to plan your project. By addressing the root causes of your issue and involving your community in the solution, you'll be primed to make a sustainable impact.

Start by using a mind-mapping tool to explore the root causes of the issue you've chosen. Here's an example mind map:



Notice that the community issue "lack of arts education in schools" is placed in the center and that things that trigger it, like funding, public policy, public perception, and curriculum structure are explored further. When you explore further, you find root causes. In this example, the root causes are in the outer prongs. For example, the root causes of the public's perception of lack of arts education in schools include not enough awareness about proven benefits and not enough awareness about career opportunities in the arts.

Once you've identified root causes, take your research further to make sure:

- You've identified a real need in the community.
- You can make your project idea happen—it's realistic.
- You can learn about resources and develop a network beyond your friends and family.

Get online. Check news and organizations' sites related to your issue. Explore how the media in other countries cover your issue.

Get reading. Find books that offer in-depth analysis of your issue, read your local newspaper, and look for magazine articles that offer different perspectives.

Interview experts. Talk to friends, neighbors, teachers, business owners, community partners, and others who can offer information or insight about the issue you've chosen.

Need help identifying organizations or people who have knowledge of your issue or finding an expert to interview? Click the help icon next to the "Research" tab in GoGold for suggestions, including a community map, a short list of thought starters, and interview tips.

SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: Before you meet with new people, get safety tips from your troop/ group volunteer and always make sure your family knows who you're talking to or meeting with—safety first!

Step 3: Get help

In Step 3, you'll form a team of volunteers. Working together to put your plans into action allows you to flex your leadership muscle and make a bigger impact than you would on your own. Anyone can be on your team—you don't need to limit yourself to just people your age or those who are Girl Scouts. But do choose a diverse group of volunteers with different skill sets who will work to put your project into action and stick it out until you're done.

Here are some important members of your team:

Your project advisor is an adult you approach and invite to be on your team, who has some level of expertise in one or more areas of the issue your project addresses. Think of your project advisor as a professional consultant; they can guide you as you plan and implement your project. The project advisor does not design your project but does offer valuable insight, advice, and guidance.

Parents/guardians and troop volunteers cannot be project advisors. Sometimes adult siblings or family members such as aunts or uncles can be approved project advisors if they are experts on your issue. However, we strongly encourage you to reach outside your familiar circle and grow your network. The Project Advisor Guide will help your advisor understand their role and how they can support you.

Parents or guardians are amazing supporters! They can act as cheerleaders, sounding boards, and chauffeurs. They can also help you out with safety, transportation, and travel guidelines. The Guide for Adults lists helpful ways your parents or caregivers can help you; however, as we said above: parents/guardians cannot act as your project advisor.

Troop volunteers can help make sure you've met Gold Award prerequisites and may also agree to be a part of your volunteer team. They can also review Gold Award funding, safety, and travel guidelines with you. The Guide for Leaders will get them started!

Your Gold Award Mentor is a Girl Scout Gold Award process expert who will guide you to ensure your proposal meets the Gold Award requirements. Council will assign you a Gold Award Mentor after your Letter of Intent has been submitted and you attend the informational call with GSCB staff. Working with your Gold Award Mentor is a required part of the Gold Award process.

Use your Gold Award Mentor as a resource! Ask questions, brainstorm, and get advice along the way. Your mentor may have constructive criticisms to make your Gold Award better. It is your responsibility to reach out to your Mentor and schedule time to review. **Before submitting your proposal or your final report on GoGold, review them with your mentor**. When your proposal has been approved, stay in touch with your Mentor and share your progress. If you have any questions, you can reach out to them as a resource at any point during your journey.

Friends and family may want to help you implement your plan. Troop sisters, relatives, friends, siblings, and cousins can all



SOMETHING TO REMEMBER: When you expand your circle, you expand your impact. You may feel a little bit uneasy to approach and invite those outside your network to join your team, but remember to use your proposal as your guide to explain your plans. Chances are—they will be impressed!

make terrific team members. Feel confident about giving them hands-on roles and delegating tasks to them, too!

Use Step 3 of GoGold to keep a list of your confirmed team members. You're required to work with at least one adult volunteer—your project advisor, so be sure to list them first. Then, add at least three to five additional team members who are not your parent/guardian or troop volunteer. From there, you can add as many others as you'd like!

Keep in mind that a good leader identifies specific team members with varied backgrounds and skill sets to assist with specific tasks associated with their project. While you may be inclined to primarily enlist your peers, adult support can help you form partnerships with organizations, access resources, and provide important safety measures (your council can help make sure you're covered). So, be ready to identify each volunteer's role and don't worry about missing someone—you can add more team members as you go along.

Step 4: Create a plan

In Step 4, you'll bring together the work and research you did in Steps 1–3 to show how you will achieve your project's purpose. You'll work out the specific details of your project proposal, including a project description, proposed budget and timeline, and your thoughts on how the project will impact you, your target audience, and your wider community. You'll also define your project's national and/or global link, set goals to measure your impact, and plan how you'll sustain your project (refer back to Part 1 for a refresher).

Provide as much detail as you can so your council can evaluate your timeline and proposed scope of work. Ensure you've clearly articulated your ideas and plans, identified your team, set clear goals, and determined how your impact will be measured so it can be easily understood and evaluated. The people reviewing your proposal may not know you personally; be specific so your vision is clear to them.

You **must** request a letter of support from any partner organization who agrees to help you. The letter should be on official letterhead and should describe the nature of support. For example, the organization may support you by offering the use of their facilities. Or their support may be in the form of content that the organization shares. Plan to submit the letter of support to the Gold Award Review Committee as you finish Step 5 on GoGold Online and turn your proposal in for review. You can find a sample letter on page 27.

HOW DO I EARN MONEY FOR MY PROJECT?

We believe it's important to provide girls with flexible options to gain financial support for their Girl Scout Gold Award! By expanding girls' opportunities to secure resources, you can implement significant work, effectively partner with the community, learn new skills such as grant-writing, budgeting, planning, networking, advocacy, and about philanthropy, and surpass expectations of what girls can do!

It's likely that you'll need some funds to support your Gold Award. Finding funds can feel a little daunting. But being really passionate about your issue can help you overcome money concerns.

Here are some ideas for money-earning;

Council-sponsored product programs. Participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product program is not required to complete your Gold Award, but it is one of the best ways to earn money for your Girl Scout Gold Award. And because these activities get you out in your community, they offer an opportunity to talk to others about your Girl Scout Gold Award. A cookie booth might be just the place to meet a volunteer or a person who can support you.

Something to remember: Money earned from product programs and troop money-earning projects belongs to the whole troop. You'll need permission from your troop to use these funds.

Fundraising requiring additional permission— All of the following fundraising opportunities require additional permission to complete. You can complete the forms online here.

- **Troop/group money-earning.** These are activities organized by your troop. Examples include car washes, present wrapping stations, bake sales, garage sales, recycling, etc.
- **Grants.** Girl Scouts may only apply for small grants. You will work with GSCB to make sure you are meeting the Council requirements to apply for a grant. You're also responsible for meeting the grant requirements.
- **Donations.** Girl Scout can solicit cash and in-kind donations for their Gold Award. As long as the donation is being used exclusively for their Gold Award, and the council is aware of the donation, they are not in violation of IRS regulations.

  It is very important to understand, that when you are requesting donations for your Gold Award, you are representing Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay and our non-profit status. There are very explicit rules for non-profits receiving donations, which are explained in this guidebook. Please do not hesitate to ask questions if you have any!

  - If anyone gives you a donation and requests a receipt (this often happens for tax purposes) please let them know GSCB will provide a receipt. You will send the name of the donor, amount/ product they donated and contact information to gogold@cbgsc.org.
  - Donations of $250 or more: If you receive an in kind donation (donation of items or labor) of a value of $250 or more, GSCB must be made aware of the donation. Tax laws require GSCB to record the donation and provide a tax receipt to the donor. If anyone gives you a donation of funds of $250.00 or more, you must submit the money to GSCB. GSCB will not be taking any funds or fees from you, however the donation must be cataloged and recorded. GSCB will receive the funds, log it, provide a donation receipt for the donor and give the funds directly back to you.

  Donations are processed through the council so a donor receipt can be provided and then administered to the girl in line with her proposal. Donations are regulated by Girl Scout of the Chesapeake Bay policy to protect the non-profit standing of the entire council.
- **Crowd Sourcing.** In order to utilize popular Crowdsourcing sites (such as GoFundMe) for Gold Award projects, you must receive approval. All submissions will be handled on a case by case basis. All submissions must be approved prior to proceeding with crowdsourcing.

You must complete the GSCB Gold Award Money-Earning Application if you plan on using any of these efforts. You may not begin solicitations until you receive approval from GSCB staff.

Using your own money. You can use your own money. But going for the Girl Scout Gold Award isn't meant to be a hardship on you or your family, this should be a last resort. It's more of a learning opportunity. So put on your creative thinking cap, and think about easy activities you can do to earn the money you need to get started. Consider pet-walking, babysitting, lawn mowing, recycling, tutoring, or making something to sell. The possibilities are endless!

CAN I USE MEDIA TO SHARE MY PROJECT?

You are free to include videos, photos, websites, blogs, books, and flyers in your Gold Award project. But keep these considerations in mind when you do:

- Think safety. Be sure that the location of the people in your photos and videos can't be traced. For example, avoid filming the front of a home with address or street names in sight or filming driveway with a car license plate visible.
- Get written consent. You'll need to get written consent from anyone (adult or minor) you capture in a video or photo you plan to make public. If you're working with people under 18, you'll need a parent signature on the consent form too.
- Represent yourself well. As you know, what you post on a website can be read by anyone. So be guided by safety and how you represent yourself as a Girl Scout. Things to consider: privacy, language use, sponsorship, links, and proper use of copyrighted material (writing, music, brand images, and pictures).

If you are thinking about publishing a book, website, or digital content, please thoughtfully consider the following:

- Weigh whether you truly need the desired medium. It's common for Gold Award projects to have videos, photos, websites, blogs, books, and flyers. Creating these assets can be a great way to learn a skill. You can also recruit an expert who can guide you on the technical and legal aspects of production. This is your project, so get involved in the process at all levels - decision making, research, writing, graphics, and media creation.

    1. Why do you want a website or book? Do you need to convey info to your target audience? Or update your team about the project? Do you need a site to keep track of the work you've done? If you answered "yes" to any of those, a website or book may be right for you. It is important to discuss all your ideas with your Gold Award Mentor and Project Advisor when deciding if this is the right choice for you.
    2. How many websites or books already exist on your topic? Are there a lot? If so, will another really make an impact, or will it just get lost?
    3. How will your book or webiste be found? Did you know that just putting a website on the Internet does not guarantee that people will find it? Another myth is that a site is immediately found through a search engine the moment it's uploaded. A website needs to be optimized before it can be found by search engines and rank in their search results. This process can take months, sometimes years. It's important that if you decide that your project needs a website that you have a plan for making it rank in search engine results.

4. Does your target audience have internet access? Choose another communication tool if your target audience doesn't have internet access. If your target audience has access, how will they know about the web page? Will it show up on an internet search (see above regarding optimization)? Will you need to market it?
5. How much will it cost? Will your website be part of another site? Or do you need to purchase your own URL? Will you have to pay for a password protected site? Does the site provide a way to keep individual files and downloads? Does it have all the functions you need (e.g. a calendar function, email and comment box features, social account linking, etc.)? How much will your book cost to publish?
6. How much time will be required for upkeep? Who will be responsible for posting changes? How often do you want to change the site—weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly?
7. Will you need interactivity? Is your site an information-only site, or will you need an interactive component? If so, do you need to build in password protection?
8. If creating a website, video, or book, are you sharing it with the benefiting organization or related groups? Creating a YouTube video or website that is not linked to your organization or related groups is not a sustainable component. Your sustainable project is creating a solution AND to ensure it's used.

Website/Youtube FAQs

- **Who is reviewing the content for plagiarism and accuracy?** Reviewing message and content for plagiarism is the responsibility of the Project Advisor who is the subject matter expert. All non-fiction information should be cited appropriately.
- **Is the Girl Scout council liable for the content?** The Girl Scout and their project advisor.
- **Does a Girl Scout need to have a release signed by those assisting with the project or featured in content?** If a Girl Scout has someone assisting with content, they should have an agreement or memorandum of understanding between the Girl Scout and the individual, as well as a media release. Any person assisting with the production of the website/ YouTube should be listed as a contributing party somewhere on the site.
- **Can Girl Scouts under 18 publish websites/YouTube videos?** Yes.
- **Does GSCB Staff need to review website/YouTube content before they are published?** Yes.
- **Can a Girl Scout have two Project Advisors - one for content and one for media speciality?** Yes.

Book FAQs

- **To be listed on Amazon, must be sold for $0.99. Where do those funds go?** Currently, Amazon take 65% of funds from the sale of a book listed under $2.99. Any revenue from

the sale of the book must be used to address root cause or to purchase books to donate to schools, libraries, and targeted audiences.

- **How long does a book need to be?**

  The following was determined based on review of several industry guidelines.

  Ages 0-3 = under 50 words (8-24 total pages)

  Ages 2-5 = under 200 words (24-32 total pages)

  Ages 4-8 (Grades PreK-2) = at/under 500 words (32-40 pages)

  Ages 7-10 (Grades 2-4) = at/under 1,000 words (picture book – 32-48 pages)

  Ages 9-14 (Grade 3-8) = at/under 2,000 (picture book – 40-50 total pages or a chapter book, graphic novel, or illustrated/photographed informational 48-80 total page) Please note: word counts for chapter books and middle school grades can range from 1,500-30,000 or more.

- **Who is reviewing the content for plagiarism and accuracy?** Reviewing message and content for plagiarism is the responsibility of the Project Advisor who is the subject matter expert. All non-fiction information should be cited appropriately.
- **Does a Girl Scout need to copyright their book?** Copyrighting their book is not a GSCB requirement. A Girl Scout may choose to look into this path on their own.
- **Minimum number of copies needed to be printed?** No printed copies required.
- **Is the Girl Scout or the council liable for the content?** The Girl Scout and their Project Advisor.
- **Does a Girl Scout need to have a release signed by those assisting with the project, such as illustrators?** If a Girl Scout has someone assisting with illustration, they should have an agreement or memorandum of understanding between the Girl Scout and the individual. Any person assisting with the production of the book should be listed as a contributing party somewhere in the book.
- **Can under 18 publish books online?** Yes.
- **Does GSCB Staff need to review books before they are published?** Yes.
- **Can a Girl Scout have two project advisors, one for content and one for media speciality?** Yes.

Once you have completed your project, you can request that council send out a press release on your behalf using the Gold Award Press Release Request.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT SAFETY?

As a Girl Scout, you know that safety is important. When you work on the Gold Award, it's a good idea to make a basic safety management plan. In advance, think about:

- What could go wrong
- How to prevent things from going wrong
- What to do if they go wrong anyway

For any activities you complete while earning your Gold Award, including additional money earning, reference the Safety Activity Checkpoints first.

As of October 1st, 2023, our insurance policy is changing:

- Additional insurance is no longer needed for Girl Scout activities, meetings, domestic travel or events. All participants, non-members and members will be automatically covered.
- Yes, this includes family, tag-alongs and friends that were invited to and are participating in any and all approved Girl Scout activities.
- It also includes coverage to and from the activities.

Additional insurance can still be purchased using the GSCB Additional Activity Insurance Request for accident plus sickness coverage if volunteers/staff would like to add on the sickness coverage, otherwise every participant will be covered for accidents.

Step 5: Present your plan

You'll know you're ready to submit your proposal to your council for review and approval when you can confidently check all the boxes below:

- ☐ You've met the prerequisites (see "How do I know I'm ready?")
- ☐ You've created a unique project
- ☐ You've chosen an expert project advisor (Step 3: Get Help)
- ☐ You've engaged a team of volunteers who will take action with you
- ☐ You've received a Letter of Support from any partnering organization
- ☐ You've addressed the root cause of an issue
- ☐ You've tackled your target audience's needs
- ☐ You've set clear goals. You can say, "Here is the change I plan to make, and here's how I'll know I've made it."
- ☐ You've designed a sustainable project
- ☐ You've identified a national and/or global link
- ☐ You've developed a realistic budget and identified the resources you need to carry out the project
- ☐ Your project will take at least 80 hours to complete

- ☐ You have the skills to get started
- ☐ You've created a plan to inspire others about your project and its impact

Before you submit, be sure to upload any additional required files and download a copy of your proposal to keep for your records. Once you have worked with your mentor to complete your proposal, you will submit in GoGold for your Project Advisor and troop leader/volunteer to approve. After the Project Advisor and troop leader approves, submit your Gold Award proposal to council for review. You'll be able to use GoGold to send an email request for verification that they can complete online in just a few clicks.

All proposals received by received by 5 p.m. on the first of the month will be reviewed virtually on the third Wednesday of that month. Proposals received after the first will be reviewed the next month. April 1st is the recommended last day to submit proposals for high school seniors. Proposals from high school graduates submitted after June 1st will NOT be accepted.

You will receive your Gold Award Proposal Review invitation by email.

PROPOSAL REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

What to expect at the Gold Award proposal review—

It is expected that girls be dressed professionally and suggested that the Gold Award attend the proposal review in full uniform. Arrive 5-10 minutes early to prepare and get your thoughts together.

Your review will be a brief summary of your proposal (explain your project from start to finish) and will give the committee time to ask you questions about your proposal. Be prepared to talk about your Gold Award's root issue and why it is important to you. Do not be afraid to ask the committee questions! Now is the time to ask the committee for advice or to clarify anything you are confused or unsure about.

If you'd like, it is always helpful to bring someone who will be supporting you through the process such as your parent, troop leader or even the Gold Award Advisor. The committee will be discussing your Gold Award proposal with you and only you, the adult would only be there as the second set of ears.

Something to remember: We understand this can sometimes feel very intimidating, but we want you to understand that this a volunteer group, dedicated to helping you rise and succeed and become a Gold Award Girl Scout. They have all been in your shoes!

What to expect after the Gold Award proposal review—

The committee will either approve your Gold Award proposal as is or they will give you constructive suggestions to improve your proposal. Don't be discouraged if your proposal isn't approved at the review, the committee is there to support and help you make the corrections you need to achieve your Gold Award.

After your Girl Scout Gold Award Review, Council will change your status in GoGold to Approved or Needs Improvement and send you a letter, via email containing the details of the discussion from the Gold Award proposal review, including the list of any missing components about how to improve your proposal and instructions for resubmission.

The letter will let you know if: Your proposal has been approved OR your proposal needs improvement and resubmission.

Something to remember: You cannot proceed with your Gold Award after the proposal without written approval from Council. About 95% of proposals are not approved at review, but need small revisions. It's okay!

Step 6: Take action

Once your proposal is approved, it's go time! Lead your team to carry out your plan. Log your hours and track your income and expenses as you put your proposal into action. Use the Experience Log to upload photos, videos, and/or text posts showing your project in action. These posts will be shared with your council when you submit your final report in Step 7.

Check the "Summary" tab in Step 6 of GoGold for an overview at any time.

WHAT IF I NEED TO MODIFY MY PROJECT?

If you received approval, you can begin your work! If your proposal isn't approved, don't worry! Review and make the changes the committee suggested and resubmit. You can contact your Girl Scout Gold Award Mentor to discuss the suggestions and to work on changes. GSCB Staff and Gold Award Review Committee are here to support you in achieving your Gold Award. Be prepared to resubmit and wait one-two weeks to receive approval as the committee must re-review the proposal.

Step 7: Educate and inspire

By Step 7, you're in the home stretch and completing your final report. It's time to tell your story—to tell others what you did, what you learned, and the impact your project had on your target audience. This is your chance to shine, so be sure to fully reflect on each question and provide thoughtful, detailed answers.

Upload any files and download a copy of your final report for your records. You'll obtain project advisor verification for the great work you completed and then submit to your council for review and approval.

FINAL REPORT REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS

Review your Gold Award experience as a whole, complete your Final Report and submit to your project advisor for final approval. After the Project Advisor approves, submit your Gold Award Final Report to council for final review. The last possible day to submit your Final Report is September 30 following your high school graduation.

High school seniors must turn in their final report to their Gold Award mentor for approval by September 15th of their graduation year. This allows time for review and revision before the September 30th submission deadline. September 30th is the absolute last day for high school seniors to have their Gold Award Final Report approved.

Something to remember: Please remember that after your Project Advisor has approved your Final Report, you must login to GoGold and you must click the "Send my Final Report" button in the Submit tab of Step 7! Without clicking "Send my Final Report" GSCB cannot view your Gold Award Final Report.

Once GSCB has received your final report, GSCB staff will review it. When your Final Report is approved, you will receive a congratulatory letter, an invitation to GSCB's Gold Award Facebook group, and the press release request form to allow GSCB to share the good news about your Gold Award! We will also ask you to sign up for an upcoming Final Report Presentation that will be held virtually once a quarter. This is an opportunity to share about your Gold Award journey and the impact it had on you. Lastly, you will be asked to complete surveys and submit your feedback on the process, your mentor, advisor, and staff.

When your final report is approved, you're officially a Gold Award Girl Scout! Celebrate and be sure to thank your project advisor, your team, and all the other people who helped you along the way!

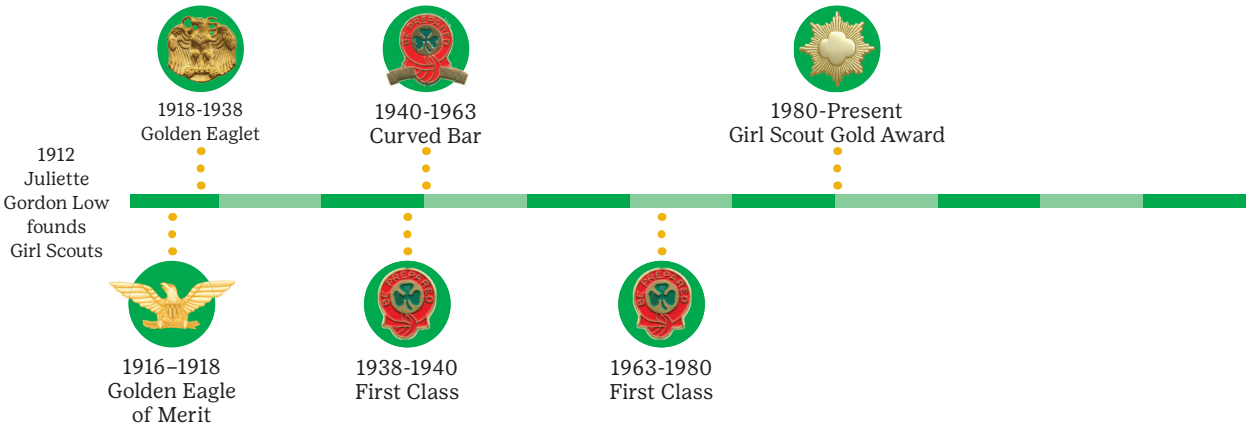
Congratulations—you're a Gold Award Girl Scout!

You've earned the Gold Award, the most highly regarded award in the world for girls. It's the mark of the truly remarkable. Becoming a Gold Award Girl Scout marks an important milestone in your Girl Scout career. The same vision, commitment, and leadership that brought you through the Gold Award process will now carry you to new heights. This will distinguish you on scholarship applications, college admission essays, and on your résumé—forever. What you have earned will set you apart, in all the best possible ways!

In addition to accomplishing this challenging personal goal, you can now join an esteemed group of Girl Scouts who share this distinction.

From its beginning in 1916, the greatest achievement in Girl Scouting has been a symbol of excellence and leadership that recognizes the extraordinary efforts of extraordinary girls. While the Gold Award has gone by many names, now all Girl Scouts who earned the First Class, Curved Bar, Golden Eaglet, or Golden Eagle of Merit are part of the Gold Award Girl Scout Family (see GSUSA's proclamation). Its timelessness has inspired generations of young women to find greatness inside themselves and share their ideas and passions with their communities and the world. Congratulations on joining this network of talented and inspirational women!

YOU'VE JOINED HISTORY—WELCOME TO THE GOLD AWARD GIRL SCOUT FAMILY!



Share your accomplishment with the world!

How many other teenagers can say they led a team that tackled an issue in their community to create lasting change? We know you can say it! You stand out in a crowd—own it! Now that you're a Gold Award Girl Scout, it's time to leverage your accomplishment and share your passion:

- **Capture the skills you gained**. Remember all the things you learned while earning the Gold Award. Things like project management, team building, public speaking, and resource

development are real-life skills that need to be highlighted. Make sure you add your new skills and competencies to your future applications and résumés.

- **Apply for scholarships.** When applying for scholarships (and you should be!), you'll want your Gold Award to be a highlight. The work that goes into earning it will show you as a well-rounded, community-minded, forward-focused can-doer! Be sure to review these specific scholarships designed just for Gold Award Girl Scouts.
- **Expand your network.** Think of all the people you met and engaged with while working towards the Gold Award. Keep all those contacts and add them to your professional social media accounts, like LinkedIn, whenever possible. Those individuals will be proud to be connected to you, and the Girl Scout Gold Award, forever.
- **Get paid more.** If you join the military, you can enlist at a higher pay grade.
- **Get the job.** Highlight your Gold Award on your résumé—as well as all of the skills you gained while earning it. Don't underestimate the power of a Girl Scout alum, or sister Gold Award Girl Scout, receiving your résumé or application!

RÉSUMÉ TIPS:

Describe what the Gold Award means for anyone who may not be familiar with it (ideally one sentence or less). For example:

- Earned the Girl Scout Gold Award by planning and executing an 80-hour service-learning project and managing a team of volunteers and community partners

Quantify, quantify, quantify! Include measurable outcomes from your project to tell about your leadership experience and impact. Instead of saying:

- Developed a robotics program for girls

Try something more powerful, like:

- Created a robotics curriculum that reached 80 girls—90% of whom reported an increased interest in STEM careers
- Partnered with two school districts to add the curriculum to 10 school clubs
- Implemented a social media strategy to educate girls on STEM opportunities, achieving more than 5,000 impressions in total

List skills that you developed in pursuing your Gold Award. Shine a light on transferable skills like project management, communication, strategic planning, research, budget oversight, fundraising, team building, and social media marketing.

Elevate your online story. If you created a website as part of your Gold Award, consider adding a link. You can use a free URL shortener to make the link memorable.

WHEN IS THE GOLD AWARD CEREMONY?

The Gold Award Ceremony is held annually and is invitation only. More information will be shared with Gold Award Girl Scouts and their families as it becomes available.

Resource roundup for Girl Scouts

Here you'll find a roundup of internet resources that will help you become a Gold Award Girl Scout. We recommend referencing this list as you work on your project, then again once you're officially a Gold Award Girl Scout.

Building a Team and Network

- The Gold Award Guide for Project Advisors
- The Gold Award Guide for Adults
- The Gold Award Guide for Troop Leaders

Designing and Carrying Out a Project: Gold Award Girl Scouts Share their Wisdom on YouTube

- Go for the Gold—Tips from Gold Award Girl Scouts

Ready To Get Started?

- Create a GoGold Account
- FAQs (GoGold Account Required)

You're a Gold Award Girl Scout! What's Next?

- Search the Scholarship Database for Opportunities for Gold Award Girl Scouts
- Share your Project on the Girls Changing the World Map
- Get your Gold Award Credential

GSCB RESOURCES

GSCB Gold Award Checklist

Review of Forms

Communication with your Project Advisor - Suggested - This may be your project advisor's first time being involved with a Girl Scout Gold Award. Take the opportunity to educate them about Girl Scouts and the Gold Award. We have provided a template on page 26 to support you in getting started. This does not need to be turned into GSCB.

Letter of Support - Required - This form is due with your Gold Award proposal. You must include a letter of support from a community partner you're going to work with on your Girl Scout Gold Award in your Gold Award Proposal. The letter should be on the community partner's letterhead, acknowledge they are aware that you're working on your Girl Scout Gold Award, and describe the anticipated benefits of your work. We have provided an example on page 27.

Publicity Release - Required for photo, video, and audio recordings - This form is only required for taking photos/videos/audio of attendees to your Gold Award. This is due with your Gold Award final report. You must collect a publicity release form of any attendee to your Gold Award that you will be taking photos, videos, or audio recordings of. If you have a registration or sign-in table, that would be a good location to collect publicity releases. You should not prevent individuals from attending your event whom do not give permission - think instead of a creative way to indicate that attendee to your photographer. We have provided the form for minor attendees on page 28 and for adult attendees on page 29.

Philanthropic Solicitation Agreement & Additional Money Earning - Required for any money earning activities - This form is due with your Gold Award Proposal. You must complete the online Philanthropic Solicitation Agreement Form stating that you understand and will abide by the rules for soliciting donations Please review page 15-16 for more information specific to each type of money earning opportunity.

GSCB Additional Insurance Form - Strongly recommended for any events with non-Girl Scout attendees. Please review page 17 for more information.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Do I present my Girl Scout Gold Award proposal to the Girl Scout Gold Award Committee? Yes. You'll submit your proposal using the GoGold Online web tool and meet with the Girl Scouts Gold Award Review Committee on the third Wednesday of the month following the date you submitted.

When should I submit my Girl Scout Gold Award proposal? The Girl Scout Gold Award Committee meets each month on the third Wednesday. Submit your proposal by 5 p.m. on the first of the month for processing.

Can I meet with a Girl Scout Gold Award Committee mentor in person? Yes. Once you have submitted your Letter of Intent and have been notified who your mentor is, arrange to meet either in person or by phone. It is your responsibility to reach out to your Mentor and work with both of your schedules to arrange a time to meet or talk.

Can I do my Gold Award to benefit Girl Scouts? Yes. Girls may complete their Gold Award to benefit the Girl Scout community. All Girl Scout Gold Award must meet the requirements that are key to taking sustainable action.

What is a target audience? Your target audience is the portion of the community who will benefit from the work you do as you carry out your proposal.

Can I include volunteer hours in my required 80 hours? No. Those 80 hours must be the time you've spent on the Girl Scout Gold Award. But you can track hours your volunteers donated to your Gold Award in your final report as supporting data. Please review page 7 for more information.

Can I start my Gold Award before the proposal is approved? You can start to prepare for your Gold Award. You can research your topic. You can also contact venues and possible community partners. And you can create resources or begin seeking volunteers. But you should not implement your work until your proposal is approved.

Can I do a Girl Scout Gold Award with my friends or my troop? No. The Girl Scout Gold Award is an individual award. But you can certainly help your friends with their awards, and they can help you.

Can Juliettes earn their Gold Award? Absolutely! Juliettes can earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Please be aware, like girls participating in a troop, your Project advisors cannot be a guardian or Troop Leader.

A special thank you to Girl Scouts San Diego for creating the guide that inspired this national template and to the 2020 Highest Award Council Thought Partners—Girl Scouts of Alaska, Girl Scouts of Central Texas, Girl Scouts of Connecticut, Girl Scouts of Nassau County, Girl Scouts Northeast Texas, Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois, Girl Scouts of San Gorgonio, Girl Scouts of Southeast Florida, Girl Scouts of Maine, and Girl Scouts of Western Ohio—for informing the updated Gold Award Guidelines for our Movement at every step.

Communication with your Project Advisor

This is a template to support you in starting your communication if needed and does not need to be turned in to GSCB.

This may be your project advisor's first time being involved with a Gold Award. So take the opportunity to educate them about Girl Scouts and the Gold Award. Below is a template to help you, though keep in mind that it's just a jumping-off point—be sure to add your own voice and thoughts! Consider laying out a communication strategy with your advisor from the get-go, based on what works best with your timeline and your advisor's schedule. Let your advisor know how, and how often, you plan to check in, and because they may have a busy schedule, it can also be helpful to suggest some specific dates in advance.

[Date]

[Name]

[Street Address]

[City, State Zip]

Dear [Project Advisor Name],

Thank you for volunteering to be my project advisor for my Girl Scout Gold Award. I would like to share more with you about what the Gold Award means and what you can expect.

The Gold Award is the highest award that Senior and Ambassador Girl Scouts can earn. In order to become a Gold Award Girl Scout, a girl identifies an issue that's important to her, then develops and carries out an innovative and sustainable solution with measurable impact. Each Gold Award must link to a national and/or global issue.

I plan to earn my Gold Award by addressing [description of your chosen issue, why it's important to you, and how you'll approach it].

Project advisors play an important role in this process. Although plans and ideas should be my own, I will appreciate any knowledge and advice you can offer along the way.

I would like to check in with you by [your communication stratgey]. Please let me know if that makes sense to you.

If you'd like, you can learn more about the Gold Award at girlscouts.org. I have also attached

additional information to help you understand the instrumental role you'll play in supporting my efforts.

Thank you again for your time and support.

Sincerely,

[your signature]

Letter of Support

This form is required from everyone and due with your Gold Award proposal.

You must include a letter of support from a community partner you're going to work with on your Girl Scout Gold Award in your Girl Scout Gold Award proposal. The letter should be on the community partner's letterhead, acknowledge they are aware that you're working on your Girl Scout Gold Award, and describe the anticipated benefits of your work. Below is an example, for if GSCB were to write a letter of support for a Girl Scout. *Please note this letter is only an example.*

girl scouts of the chesapeake bay

1051 Sharpless Rd. Hockessin, DE 19707
T: 800.341.4007
F: 302.456.7188
www.gscb.org

[Date]
[Name]
[Street Address]
[City, State Zip]

Dear [Name]

On [date], Girl Scout [name] met with Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay to propose a multifaceted project to benefit her community and earn her Girl Scout Gold Award. Her project will enhance our organization by doing X, Y, Z and we look forward to supporting her in this endeavor and to witness [name] enhance her community with her hard work, dedication, and follow through.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,
Danielle Lubbers
Girl Program Coordinator
dlubbers@cbgsc.org

Committed to building girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place in the following counties across Delaware and the Eastern Shores of Maryland and Virginia: Accomack, Caroline, Cecil, Dorchester, Kent, New Castle, Northampton, Queen Anne's, Somerset, Sussex, Talbot, Wicomico and Worcester.

Publicity Release - Minors

This form is only required for girls photos/videos/audio recordings of attendees to their Gold Award. This form is due with your Gold Award final report.

You must collect a publicity release form of any attendee to your Gold Award that you will be taking photos, videos or audio recordings of.

Activity: _____

Date(s): _____ Location: _____

This activity is part of a project for the Girl Scout Gold Award. Through their Girl Scout Gold Award projects, girls identify a need in their communities and take action to create a sustainable solution. The Girl Scout Gold Award Candidate is facilitating the activity independently of the local council (Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay) or the national organization (Girl Scouts of the USA) in order to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay or Girl Scouts of the USA may be interested in promoting her project.

Girl Scout Gold Award candidate: _____

Image release

Name of minor (please print): _____

I, being the parent or legal guardian of the minor named above, hereby certify that I have the authority to consent to the following conditions on behalf of my child or ward, and hereby consent that my child's or ward's name, image and likeness, as shown in the photographs, videos, motion picture film and/or electronic images in which my child or ward appears, and/or audio recording made of my child's or ward's voice may be used by the Girl Scout Gold Award Candidate above, Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay and Girl Scouts of the USA, and their assigns or successors, in whatever way they desire, including TV, print and/or social media. Furthermore, I hereby consent that such photographs, films, recordings and electronic images and the tapes and/or software from which they are made shall be their sole property, and they shall have the right to sell, duplicate, reproduce and make other uses of such photographs, films, recordings, electronic images, tapes and software as they may desire free and clear of any claim whatsoever on my part. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand:

Name of legal guardian (please print): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Your contact information will not be used for any other purposes or distributed to third parties.

Signature of legal guardian (required): _____ Date:_____

Publicity Release - Adults

This form is only required for girls photos/videos/audio recordings of attendees to their Gold Award. This form is due with your Gold Award final report.

You must collect a publicity release form of any attendee to your Gold Award that you will be taking photos, videos or audio recordings of.

Activity: _____

Date(s): _____ Location: _____

This activity is part of a project for the Girl Scout Gold Award. Through their Girl Scout Gold Award projects, girls identify a need in their communities and take action to create a sustainable solution. The Girl Scout Gold Award Candidate is facilitating the activity independently of the local council (Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay) or the national organization (Girl Scouts of the USA) in order to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay or Girl Scouts of the USA may be interested in promoting her project.

Girl Scout Gold Award candidate: _____

Image release

I, being the person named below, hereby certify that I have the authority to consent to the following conditions, and hereby consent that my name, image and likeness, as shown in the photographs, videos, motion picture film and/or electronic images in which I appear, and/or audio recording made of my voice may be used by the Girl Scout Gold Award Candidate above, Girl Scouts of the Chesapeake Bay and Girl Scouts of the USA, and their assigns or successors, in whatever way they desire, including TV, print and/or social media. Furthermore, I hereby consent that such photographs, films, recordings and electronic images and the tapes and/or software from which they are made shall be their sole property, and they shall have the right to sell, duplicate, reproduce and make other uses of such photographs, films, recordings, electronic images, tapes and software as they may desire free and clear of any claim whatsoever on my part. In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand:

Name (please print): _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Your contact information will not be used for any other purposes or distributed to third parties.

Signature (required): _____ Date:_____

Highest Awards: ChatGPT Use Policy

Purpose

This policy explains how Girl Scouts may use ChatGPT or similar AI tools to support their work on Bronze, Silver, and Gold Award proposals and final reports, while ensuring the final work remains theirs.

Acceptable Use

- Use ChatGPT to brainstorm project ideas and explore potential community needs.
- Ask ChatGPT for help structuring your ideas or organizing your thoughts.
- Get suggestions on project planning, resources, and timelines.

Unacceptable Use

- Do not copy and paste text from ChatGPT into your proposal or final report.
- Do not ask ChatGPT to write your project sections, proposals, or final report responses.
- Do not rely on AI tools instead of doing your own research, interviews, and planning.

Your Voice Matters

The Highest Awards are about your leadership, your voice, and your impact. ChatGPT can help spark ideas, but the work must come from you. Using your words, experience, and creativity makes your project powerful and authentic.

Consequences for Inappropriate Use

If it is discovered that ChatGPT or any AI tool has been misused, such as copying and pasting responses into the proposal or final report, or submitting AI-generated work as your own, the following consequences may apply:

- The proposal may be rejected or returned for revision.
- The Girl Scout may be asked to redo the proposal entirely in their own words.
- In severe or repeated cases, the project may be disqualified from receiving the award.
- The troop leader or council may require a meeting to review integrity expectations moving forward.

Girl Scouts is committed to building girls of courage, confidence, and character. Honesty and originality are essential values in every part of your award journey.

Adult Guidance

Troop leaders, advisors, and parents/caregivers should:

- Encourage thoughtful, responsible use of AI tools.
- Remind Girl Scouts to stay true to the values of honesty, effort, and originality.
- Help Girl Scouts reflect on their work and ensure their voice is unmistakable in their responses.

Reminder

- ChatGPT is a tool, not a shortcut.
- Use it to support your thinking, not to replace it.
- Your Highest Award should represent the best of you.

Questions: Contact Member Care at MemberCare@cbgsc.org or 800-341-4007.