



Gold Award Guidelines

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Gold Award Basics

Be a Part of History

From its beginning in 1916, the highest Girl Scout award has been a symbol of excellence and leadership that recognizes the extraordinary efforts of extraordinary girls. While it's gone by many names, it's a timeless award that has inspired generations of young women to find greatness inside themselves and share their ideas and passions with their communities and the world. We hope you'll join them!



Why Go Gold?

You've walked in the footsteps of the very first Girl Scouts. You've camped, explored, learned skills and had fun. You've made lifelong friends in the Girl Scout sisterhood. What's next? Maybe it's time to go gold!

Earning your Gold Award is a chance to start creating the world you want to live in by doing. Doing what? Delving deep into your passions, flexing your problem-solving muscles, inspiring others and standing up for what you believe in to make a real difference. Gold Award projects are opportunities to do something more and set your sights on true leadership.

More reasons to go Gold:

- **Attending college?** Some universities and colleges award scholarships to Gold Award Girl Scouts, and even if they don't have a specific Gold Award scholarship, your experiences will be a powerful part of other scholarship applications.
- **Considering a military career?** Gold Award Girl Scouts who enlist in the U.S. Armed Forces often enter at a higher rank in recognition of their achievement.
- **Looking to stand out?** Girl Scouts of the USA selects ten National Gold Award Girl Scouts every year. The honor comes with scholarship money, national leadership recognition and more opportunities to encourage others to make a difference.



Keep in mind: Go gold for you — not for anyone else! The Gold Award is an opportunity to set your sincere passions in motion. It's challenging. It's immensely rewarding. And it's entirely up to you.

What is a Gold Award Project?

The Gold Award project is a **take action project** that must include **five elements**. In your project you'll identify the **root cause** of a community issue that you're passionate about. You'll create an action plan that must address a **real need** and have **long-term benefits**. You must show **leadership**. And the project must be **sustainable** and **measurable** with a **global link**.

Your Gold Award project needs to reflect what you're capable of. This isn't a time to play it safe, this is a time to stretch yourself and show the world what Girl Scouts can — and will — do to change the world.

What does “take action” really mean?

Taking action means working to understand the root of a problem so that you can develop a project that continues to address the problem — even after you've done your part. It's more than just community service, which is helping others for a short time or with a short-term need. We love community service, but when you undertake a take action project, you'll use your heart and your head to make a difference that **lasts**.

Some examples of taking action:

Gold Award Take Action Project: Backyard Bounty

Aurora noticed that fruit growing on backyard trees in her neighborhood was going to waste. She researched and reached out to people in her community and discovered two root causes: People didn't know about gleaning or about organizations that would take and distribute extra food.

Aurora went into action and created something new — the Backyard Bounty project. She showed leadership by partnering with Jewish Family Services and working with teens in a local leadership program to create a gleaning club. Her club educated the community about what could be done with excess food growing in neighborhoods. The club also harvested unused food from trees and gardens.

Aurora tracked her progress so that the impact of her program was measurable. Altogether, the club gleaned 1,200 servings of healthy produce to donate to struggling families. She tracked the number people who were educated about gleaning and the number of volunteers who helped, too.

Aurora made her project sustainable by agreeing to co-chair the club in its second year. She also made all her project materials available to Jewish Family Services, so that the project could be continues in her absence.

Aurora established a national/global link by expanding her project to other communities outside of her neighborhood.

Gold Award Take Action Project: Girls Love STEAM

Nikki loves science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) and she wanted to change the perception that robotics and other STEAM activities were just for boys. Through her research, she discovered the root cause: Girls weren't the target audience for most STEAM outreach programs. She showed her leadership by partnering with a publisher, local elementary schools, and the school district to create something new. She wrote, illustrated and published two STEAM books for girls and built a companion website and lesson plans. She also formed team to help her present her books and activities to local elementary school classes.

Nikki tracked her progress so that her impact was measurable. Her books have been taught to 180 students from six classes in four schools across the country. She also collected evaluations of her project from the classroom. The feedback she received was rewarding! Students let her know that because of her class, they were excited to try science projects and join robotics teams.

Nikki's project is sustainable because her books and lesson plans have been adopted by schools who continue to use her curriculum. She has also launched a company called Girls Love STEAM and has a third book in the works.

Nikkis established a national/global link by making her STEAM curriculum available to schools across the country.

Getting Started

How do I find the root cause of my issue?



Finding the root cause of your issue is all about asking why. Why does this issue exist, and what created it? If you come up with an answer to your why, ask why again! Root causes are deep-seated and explain how your issue came to be and why it continues to grow over time.

Remember that your root cause is not the same as your issue, it is what causes your issue. For instance, if your issue is that your community is a food desert, your root cause isn't "lack of healthy food options." Your root cause would detail why your community lacks healthy food options.

Doing research and interviewing community partners are important parts of finding your root cause. Community partners are experts in your issue area, including the people most affected by the issue.

How do I show leadership in my project?



Show leadership by gathering and working with a team of volunteers. The Gold Award is not the time to fly solo — in fact your proposal won't be approved unless you have a minimum of five team members. Put your leadership skills to work throughout the project by planning, directing, assigning, motivating, collaborating and making decisions to ensure your project's success.

How do I make my project sustainable?



Your project is sustainable when it carries on or continues to have impact, even after you've done your part. In a nutshell: you create lasting change.

Examples: A school or organization could agree to continue your project, or you might create a toolkit for others to reproduce your project in their communities.

How do I make my project measurable?



Your project is measurable when you collect information or data throughout your project and use it to show that your actions have had an impact on the community issue you've chosen. So, think about what you can count within your project. How much? How many?

Examples: You can show the number of people the project helped, the number of people who got involved or a number that shows the change in a community's need. You can also ask those who have worked with you or those you have helped to complete an evaluation, then use their responses to measure impact.



Keep in mind: A successful Gold Award project has true impact. So, holding one workshop that teaches a handful of girls about body image won't do. Stretch yourself so that you create meaningful change. Then measure it! Get a feel for the scope of Gold Award projects by visiting girlscouts.org and searching for "Girls Changing the World."

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

Your global link isn't about leaving the country. Projects can show a global link in a few different ways. **Take your project outside your community** and inspire others to take action. You can take your project to:

- Local youth groups.
- Health and human services agencies.
- Community centers.
- Religious centers such as churches, synagogues, mosques and other houses of worship.
- School districts.

You can create a global link by investigating how people in other communities or parts of the world are addressing your issue. What kinds of programs do they have in place? What research has been done, and what can you learn from the action others have taken? Incorporate what you learn about other communities into your project.

Show how your project affects more than the people in your community. If you are working on an environmental issue, connect how improvements in your community have an impact elsewhere. If you reduce food waste in your community, investigate what that changes in the national/global food supply chain.

What a Gold Award project is not:

It's not a project geared towards Girl Scouts. That doesn't mean you can't include Girl Scouts, but the Girl Scout community can't be your target audience. At GSOH, we require that **at least** 60% of your audience is made up of people outside Girl Scouts.

It's not a collection project. Collecting food for food pantries or pet shelters, for example, won't qualify. When you collect food once, it's not sustainable. It's just a one-time gig. Even if you want to do multiple collections, it doesn't identify and solve a root cause, such as overcrowding of animal shelters.

It's not a fundraiser. Planning a 5K or another event to raise funds for a cause won't do. That's because money alone doesn't usually address the root cause of a problem. Plus, money runs out, so it's not sustainable. Finally, in your role as a Girl Scout you can't raise money for another organization.

It's not a make or donate project (or a make *and* donate project). Donating food for homeless people or making blankets also won't work. While both of those are helpful actions, they don't identify and solve a root cause, and they provide immediate relief but nothing long-term. They're not sustainable.



Keep in mind: Building/making, collecting and donating are all service projects. Service is important to the community and something we encourage all girls to take part in. But the Gold Award asks you to step into a real leadership role where you research, plan and then create something new that isn't already in place. Your project can have a service component, which can only take up to 30% of your implementation hours.

How much time does it take?

Plan to spend at least 80 hours on your Gold Award project — that’s the minimum. You’ll keep track of your time in a log, making note each time you work on your project. You can track your time in GoGold Online, or use an app, spreadsheet, or simply a notebook.

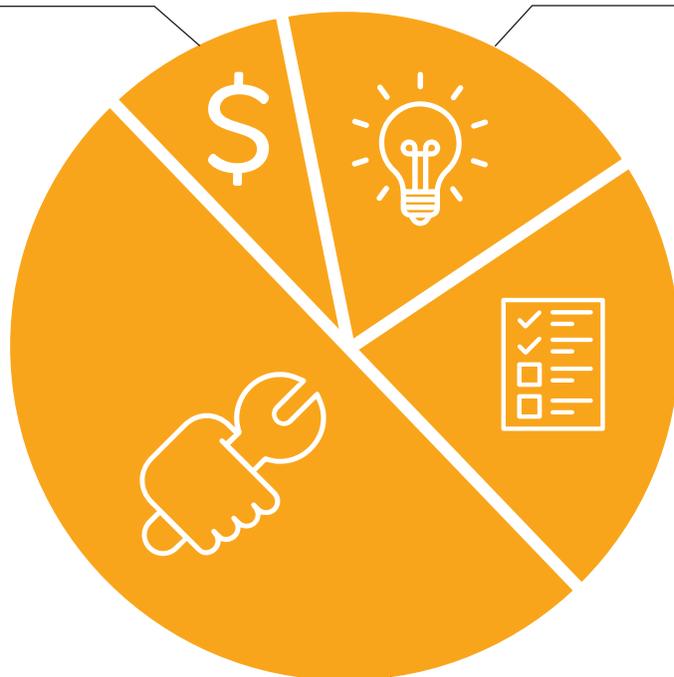


Keep in mind: Your time log should include a short description of how you spent your time. If you log time as “meeting” or “work on project,” your log won’t be approved until you give us the details of what happened during that time. If you have multiple lines in your log that all have the same overall heading, such as “writing curriculum,” make sure you tell us which parts you worked on when, so that we can see how all your hours fit together in the broad scope of your project.

Use this chart to guide you in how you spend project time.

Money earning – 5%-10%

Planning – 15%-20%



Evaluation – 15%-20%

Implementation – 50%

(30% of implementation can be a service component)

Implementation is the process of leading and performing the work you define in your project proposal and making changes, when necessary, to achieve the project’s goal.



Keep in mind: You can start preparing for your project before your proposal is approved. Get started on research, contact possible community partners and venues, and find potential volunteers. But don’t start implementing your project until it’s been approved. You can log up to 20% of your total project hours before approval, all considered part of “planning.”

How to know you're ready

You can submit your Gold Award proposal after you've checked these boxes:

- You are in grades 9-12.
- You are a registered Girl Scouts Senior or Ambassador.
- You've completed two Senior or Ambassador Journeys OR have earned a Silver Award and completed one Senior or Ambassador Journey.
- You've completed the Gold Award Training online.
- You've completed the Money, Money, Money Training online.
- You've taken the accompanying Gold Award Training Quiz and passed with a score of at least 80%.

Training requirements

We are absolutely determined to see you succeed and going through the training components is the best way to make sure you get off on the right foot and head toward earning your Gold Award. Training is a must, and you need to pass the quiz, so we know you absorbed everything.

The good news is that it's designed to be done on your schedule and give you all the information you need to get your project approved. Here's what you can expect:

- **Sam Goes for Gold (Gold Award Training video)** – In under 35 minutes, learn the Gold Award basics and pick up important tips and tricks to make sure your project hits all the marks.
- **Money, Money, Money** – Our financial training video will prepare you for funding your project while sticking to GSUSA and GSOH guidelines.
- **GoGold Walk-through** – Get started using GoGold Online, the web tool you'll log into each time you're ready to complete one of the seven steps of the Gold Award.



Keep in mind: You need to submit your proposal within one year of GSOH receiving your quiz results. If it's been longer than a year, we'll ask you to re-watch the videos to refresh your memory.

What to do and when

We've got you covered! Below is a timeline that stretches your Gold Award project over four years, but you can start your Gold Award in any grade! Giving yourself more time will allow you to develop a well-thought out project that will make you proud.

9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Complete a Journey. Two journeys are required if you don't have a Silver Award.	Develop your project plan. Login to GoGold Online and complete steps 1-4.	Take Action! Carry out your Gold Award project plan.	Submit your final report.* Login to GoGold Online and complete step 7.
Watch online training videos.	Discuss your plan with your project adviser.	Take your time and update your time log and budget as you go. Login to GoGold Online and complete step 6.	Note: Submit your final report by Feb. 15 if you plan to attend this year's Gold Award Ceremony.
Set up GoGold account.	Present your plan for approval.* Login to GoGold Online and complete step 5.		Celebrate! Attend the Gold Award Ceremony in Columbus in June.
			The last possible day to submit your final report is Aug. 15 following graduation.

*Proposal and final reports must be submitted by end of day on the 15th of the month to be reviewed in that month.

Where do I start?



Girl Scout Gold Award Steps and Standards of Excellence

STEPS	STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE
1. Choose an issue: Use your values and knowledge to identify a community issue you care about.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Live the Girl Scout Promise and Law. • Demonstrate Civic Responsibility.
2. Investigate: Research everything you can about the issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a variety of sources: interview people, read books and articles, find professional organizations online. Remember to evaluate each source's reliability and accuracy. • Demonstrate courage as you investigate your issue, knowing that what you learn may challenge your own and others' beliefs. • Identify national and/or global links to your community issue.
3. Get help: Invite others to support and take action with you.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek out and recognize the value of the skills and strengths of others. • Respect different points of view and ways of working. • Build a team and recruit a project adviser who will bring special skills to your take action project.
4. Create a plan: Create a project plan that achieves sustainable and measurable impact.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead the planning of your take action project. • Work collaboratively to develop a plan for your project that creates lasting change.
5. Present your plan and get feedback: Submit your project to GSOH through GoGold Online.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit a project proposal to council that is concise, comprehensive and clear. • Describe your plan, including the Girl Scout leadership outcomes you want to achieve and the impact you plan to make on yourself and the community. • Articulate your issue clearly and explain why it matters to you. • Accept constructive suggestions that will help refine your project.
6. Take action: Take the lead to carry out your plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take action to address the root cause of an issue, so your solution has measurable and sustainable impact. • Actively seek partnerships to achieve greater community participation. • Challenge yourself to try different ways to solve problems. • Use resources wisely. • Speak out and act on behalf of yourself and others.
7. Educate and inspire: Share what you have experienced with others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on what you have learned when you present your Girl Scout Gold Award final report to GSOH. • Summarize the effectiveness of your project on yourself and your community. • Share the project beyond your local community and inspire others to take action in their own communities.



Executing Your Project

What parents need to know

Let your parents know that you're taking the lead. They can still help by:

- **Reading through Gold Award material** so they understand the process and can offer support. In particular, parents can read the adult guidelines and can read through the safety, insurance and travel guidelines and discuss these with you before you put your project into motion.
- **Discussing project ideas** with you to help you come to your own project decisions that reflect your passions.
- **Providing encouragement** but not pressure.
- **Recognizing that you are capable** and that you can assume leadership and responsibility in your own way.
- **Helping you develop a network** of contacts who may provide insight, resources or useful skills.
- **Allowing you to grow by working through issues and problems** on your own — not jumping in to set things straight.
- **Being a cheerleader** from the sidelines and helping when asked.
- **Celebrating big time** as you are honored for your Gold Award accomplishment.



Keep in mind: Your parents can also help you follow Girl Scout safety and financial guidelines as you work on your project.

Can I change my proposal after I've submitted it?

If you need to make a change to your proposal after it has been approved, contact highestawards@gsoh.org to request a Notification of Change form. Once you complete the form and send it to the Highest Awards Review Committee, you will receive feedback about your request. Hold off on carrying out changes until you get approval.

Funding your project?

It's likely that you'll need some funds to support your project. Finding funds can feel a little daunting but being really passionate about your project can help you overcome money concerns. Here are some ideas for project funding:

Council-sponsored product sales – Participating in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and the Girl Scout Fall Product Program are the best ways to earn money for your Gold Award project. Plus, because these activities get you out into your community, they offer an opportunity to talk to others about your Gold Award. You never know where you might meet a potential volunteer or team member!

Troop/group money-earning – These activities are organized by your troop. Examples include car washes, present-wrapping stations, bale sales, garage sales, recycling, etc.



Keep in mind: Money earned from product sales and troop/group money earning belongs to the whole troop. You'll need permission from your troop to use any of these funds. Present your Gold Award project and your proposed budget to your troop and let your troop decide if they'll help fund your project.

Donations – You can seek donations from individuals, businesses and community organizations. Donations can be given to your troop and then passed on to you or given to you in-person. Donations are regulated by Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland policy. When accepting donations, follow these regulations:

If the donation is...	Then...
\$249.99 or less	You can accept the full donation. The donation is not tax deductible. The same donor cannot repeat the donation in the same membership year.
\$250 or more	The full donation amount must be sent to Girl Scouts of Ohio’s Heartland, where our policies require that it be used for “all Girl Scouts.” You will not receive this money back for your project.



The Highest Awards Review Committee recommends only soliciting donations of less than \$250 and informing potential donors that you cannot accept larger donations for your project.



Keep in mind: When you ask for a donation, you can describe your project in-person, write letters, give a presentation and send emails. But an adult, such as a family member or troop leader, must do the actual asking. So, if you write emails or a letter, an adult must sign the bottom and use his or her email address or postal address. If you’re asking in-person, you can provide all the details, but an adult must be the one to say, “Would you be willing to donate to help make this Gold Award project happen?” It’s an Internal Revenue Service regulation and Girl Scout policy: Girls are not allowed to directly solicit money or goods.

Earning grants – A generous donor set up a grant fund within GSOH specifically to support Gold Award projects! You can apply through the Highest Awards Review Committee for project funds from the Monica Girl Power Fund. You can apply for these funds after your proposal has been approved by contacting highestawards@gsoh.org and requesting an application form. GSOH does not allow Girls to apply for outside grants to fund their Gold Awards.

Using your own money – You can use your own money. But earning the Gold Award isn’t meant to be a hardship for you or your family, nor is it meant to advantage some girls and their families over others. For this reason, we discourage use of your own money unless you have no other options. Be creative! Start by designing your project so that it’s sustainable without ongoing funding and think about easy activities you can do to earn the money you need.

Things you can’t do to raise money. As a Girl Scout, you can’t:

- Raise or solicit money for other organizations.
- Raise money by associating Girl Scouts with a product, political viewpoint or cause (such as Avon, Mary Kay, Tupperware, Scentsy, etc.).
- Sell products that create profits for a business besides Girl Scout (such as selling M&Ms, Krispy Kreme, Papa John’s, or other restaurants, catalog sales, etc.)
- Sell items on the internet.
- Use crowdfunding sites (such as Kickstarter, IndieGoGo or GoFundMe).
- Raise money using games of chance such as bingo, a raffle or a contest.

Using media

You are free to include videos, photos, websites, blogs 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 a 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, sponsorships, links and proper use of copyrighted material (writing, music, brand images and pictures).

Weigh whether you need a website – It's common for Gold Award projects to have a website. Building a site can be a great way to learn a new skill or practice leadership but recruit an expert who can guide you through the process. Remember that a website alone is NOT considered a Gold Award project, and it also can't be the only sustainability you plan for your project.

Consider the following questions to help you decide whether to develop a website:

- **Why do you want a website?** Do you need to convey info to your target audience? Or post dates and notices? Would you like to create a scrapbook record for the people who continue your project to follow? Do you need a site to keep track of the work you've done? If you answered "yes" to any of those, a website may be right for you.
- **How many websites already exist on your topic?** Are there a lot? Google it, because the HARC definitely will, and if there are thousands of results you'll need to explain how your site will have an impact rather than getting lost in the shuffle.
- **Does your target audience have internet access?** Choose another communication tool if your target audience doesn't have internet access. If your target audience does have access, how will they know about the site? Will it show up in a search? Will you need to market it?
- **How much will it cost?** Will your website be part of another site or do you need to purchase your own URL? Does the site have all the functions you need (e.g. a calendar function, email and comment box features)?
- **How much time will be required for upkeep?** Who will be responsible for posting changes? How often will you update the site?
- **Will you need interactivity?** Is your site an information-only site, or will you need an interactive component? If so, can you build in password protection?



Keep in mind: You learned in your training that GSOH **strongly discourages** creating your own website unless it is a place for people to keep track of your project and share their own stories of impact. If you include a website in your plan, be prepared to answer all the above questions in your interview.

Being safe during your project

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.

You'll also need to decide if you'll be organizing an official Girl Scout event. How? Ask yourself, "Is my Gold Award event marketed to Girl Scouts?"



Keep in mind: Most Girl Scouts going for their Gold Award don't market the events they do for their Gold Award as official Girl Scout events.

If your answer is no, check out the Safety Activity Checkpoints at <https://bit.ly/3jw4cEM> to prepare and learn the risks of activities you might be doing as part of your project. Use the Safety Activity Checkpoints to help you form your safety management plan.

If you're not sure, contact our Highest Awards staff person at highestawards@gsOH.org.

If your answer is yes, complete these steps:

Step 1: Get the supervision you need.

You'll need a troop leader or parent who has completed GSOH's Leadership Essentials and who is currently First Aid/CPR/AED certified.

Step 2: Check out safety resources.

See the Volunteer Resource Guide for transportation, first aid and supervision requirements. See the Safety Activity Checkpoints for any activities you might do as part of your project. Don't see the activity you need? Contact highestawards@gsOH.org.

Step 3: Look into insurance.

You'll need non-member accident insurance if you have project volunteers who are not current, registered Girl Scout members. The insurance covers costs that are not covered by personal health insurance, such as co-pays and medicines.

Email highestawards@gsOH.org if you have questions.

GOLD AWARD RUBRIC

See the separate rubric in the resources online.

Tips to Succeed

We've pulled together a list of best tips based on years of experience leading young women through the Gold Award process. Follow these for Gold Award success:

Do This

- **Pull a team of volunteers together** and put your leadership skills to work.
- **Choose a project adviser** who is an expert on your issue and willing to be involved.
- **Break up your work** into small, manageable bundles and assign each bundle a timeline.
- **Keep in touch with your project adviser and the Highest Awards Review Committee.** Update the people who can help you and ask questions when you need to.
- **Document everything as it occurs**, including time, so that the information you collect is useful, accurate and honest.
- **Have a plan to measure your project's outcome.** Collect data, conduct surveys, and/or do evaluations before and after your project with your target audience.
- **Make sure your project includes the five Gold Award elements** (see page 4).
- **Include detailed goals in your proposal that show your anticipated impact.**
- **Do your research** to make sure you aren't duplicating something already happening, and to make sure organizations you plan to work with actually want to sustain your project.
- **Create a dynamic project** with measurable impact to a community.
- **Be original – this is your chance to shine!**

Not This

- Do it all yourself with just a few or no volunteers. Remember you need a team of at least five people.
- Choose a parent or family member as an adviser.
- Procrastinate or try to do it all at once.
- Keep project progress, obstacles and details to yourself until you submit your final report.
- Make up a timeline after you've finished the project or put together several small projects.
- Complete your project with no real way to measure the impact you've made, or with measures that don't make sense for your project.
- Submit your project proposal without including a national/global link or plans for making it measurable and sustainable, or without identifying root causes.
- Skip goal-setting.
- Assume that organizations need your help and/or have the time to sustain your project.
- Create a static website as the focus of your project or hold a one-day workshop.
- Copy what others have done.

Team Tips

Think about the people who can help you put your project into action. Choose people who will stick it out until the project is complete. Don't limit your team to people your age or Girl Scouts. Working in a group will help make a bigger impact and cover more ground than you would on your own. A few tips as you build your team:

- Promote a sense of trust and belonging.
- Share ownership.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities.
- Communicate regularly and openly.
- Respect diversity.
- Be open to new ideas and different ways of working.
- Keep learning and growing.
- Have fun and be creative!

Project Adviser Tips

Keep these tips in mind while you select and work with your project adviser.

- Reach out: You've figured out the issue you're going to address with your project. Now it's time to find an expert to support you along the way with advice, suggestions and knowledge. Ask your troop/group volunteer, teachers and parents for suggestions. Select a few people who are related to your issue area that you'd like to have on your team.
- Safety First: Before you meet with new people, talk to your troop/group volunteer for safety tips. Make sure your family knows who you're talking to and meeting with and give them details of any in-person meetings.
- Ask: Start with your first choice and if she or he can't help, go to your next choice. There are likely many people willing and able to help, so don't get discouraged! Approach the people you selected one at a time. Introduce yourself with a short letter or email, explaining what the Gold Award is and how you chose your issue. Let them know you need an adviser who has expertise in their area and give them an idea of what you'll ask for throughout the project (reading your proposal and final report, regular check-ins, advice, etc.).
- Check out this video from GSUSA about finding and engaging a project adviser:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pXs_ReepeOY

Planning your budget

It's budget time! Use the tool below to consider all the possible expenses associated with your project. If you don't think your project will have any expenses, explain to the committee why that's the case. If you can get materials donated, include them in your budget along with the details of where or how you'll get them.

Step to achieve your goal.	Necessary resources/materials/tools.	Where will resources come from?	How much will they cost?	How do you plan to cover the costs?



Keep in mind: This tool will help you prepare to fill out the estimated budget in your proposal in GoGold Online. This is not the final budget you will submit. Your proposal must include resources, estimated costs and how you intend to cover them. Even if you will be using donated materials or time, remember to detail that. Budgets that are unrealistic (i.e. "I don't need anything for my project") or have no clear plan for costs (i.e. "I'll cover any costs that come up.") will be sent back for resubmission.

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I submit my Gold Award proposal?

You'll submit your proposal using GoGold Online. Once your proposal is submitted, you'll get an email letting you know when the Highest Awards Review Committee will review your proposal and when you will get feedback. If you submit your proposal and don't receive an email within two business days, reach out to highestawards@gsoh.org.

When should I submit my Gold Award proposal?

The Highest Awards Review Committee meets each month on the fourth Monday. Submissions are due by 11:59 p.m. on the 15th of the month to be reviewed in that month's meeting. Any submissions received after the 15th will be reviewed in the following month's meeting.



Keep in mind: The Highest Awards Review Committee is committed to supporting all Girl Scouts who go for the Gold Award. But they're not available around the clock! Remember that committee members are volunteers who give time to the committee on top of their work, family and other commitments and respect their time accordingly. Never assume that they can review your project on an emergency or other time-sensitive basis. Be timely and organized when submitting materials.

How do I get approved?

Once you submit your Gold Award project proposal, you'll hear from GSOH with a timeline for review. After your project is reviewed, you'll receive feedback by email. Most Gold Award projects are edited at least twice before they are approved. The best way to expedite approval is to carefully read feedback and address all concerns or questions the committee raises. Ask questions if you're unsure about feedback — GSOH staff are always available to assist. Once your project is approved you will get official notification both from GSOH and from GoGold.

What do I do if my project proposal isn't approved?

Don't worry! Usually the committee just needs more details to understand your project in its entirety. Your feedback email will give you explicit instructions for what the committee needs from you next.

Who is my project adviser?

Your project adviser is an adult who you choose to include on your team, who is an expert in the issue your project addresses. Remember that a family member cannot act as your adviser.

Can my family be on my team?

Yes! You can include family members on your team. But they can't be the only ones. Working with family (and friends) doesn't give you the opportunity to stretch and grow in the way you need to for the Gold Award. Make it a priority to lead others in the community through your project. Gold Award teams need to be made up of at least five people, and family members should make up less than 50% of your team. Remember that when you expand your circle, you expand your impact. That's what it's all about!

Can I meet with a Highest Awards Review Committee member in-person?

Yes! We love to work one-on-one with girls to brainstorm, problem-solve or just lend an ear. Please check the calendar for office hours, or email highestawards@gsoh.org and we will set you up with someone!

Can I do my project to benefit Girl Scouts?

No. Troop members and even your troop leader can help you carry out your project, but the community that benefits from your work can't be Girl Scouts.

Why are Journeys a prerequisite to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award?

The skills you gain when working on Journeys help you develop, plan and implement your Gold Award project. They're a great way to prepare.

What is target audience?

Your target audience is the community or part of a community who will benefit from the work you do as you carry out your project. If your goal is to teach robotics to elementary students, the students themselves are your target audience and teachers and parents are secondary audiences.

Can I include volunteer hours in my required 80 project hours?

No. Those 80 hours must be hands-on time you've spent on your Gold Award project. You can track volunteer hours as supporting data in your final project.

Can I start my project before it's approved?

Sort of. You can start to prepare for your project by doing research, contacting community partners and seeking volunteers. You can't start implementing your project until your proposal is approved.

I have a friend who is also working toward a Gold Award. Can we be partners?

No. The Gold Award is an individual project. You can each donate volunteer hours to the other's project but cannot count them toward your own project.

When is the last day to submit my final report?

Aug. 15 of the calendar year you graduate is the last possible day to submit your final report.

Can I get an extension if I'm too busy to complete my project?

We get it. High school is a busy time. But the committee can't grant extensions if you run out of time. An extension might be granted if you've had a serious illness, lost your home or had an equally difficult experience. If one of these applies to you, contact us at highestawards@gsoh.org.

Girl Scouts with a 504 or IEP may be granted a deadline extension. Contact us at highestawards@gsoh.org.

When do I need to finish to list the Gold Award on my college applications?

You can put "Gold Award candidate" and the estimated year of completion on your applications as soon as you receive approval for your project from the Highest Awards Review Committee. Once you've received approval on your final report you may list yourself as a Gold Award Girl Scout.

Who approves the Gold Award Final Report?

The final report is approved by the Highest Awards Review Committee and accepted by Girl Scouts of Ohio's Heartland.