girl scouts
of western new york

Online Gold Award Training Packet
Choose an issue for a Gold Award Project

What Issues do I care about?
Fill in the Issues Chart with issues that concern you. This is not choosing your project, just focusing on issues you care about. You can begin to see connections between issues you care about, and issues in your own community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue that Concern You</th>
<th>Why Is it Important to You?</th>
<th>How Does this Issue Affect Your Community?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community: A community is a group of interacting people sharing an environment. This can be your block, neighborhood, place of worship or school.

Needs: A gap between what is and what should be. It can be felt by a group, individual or an entire community

No one knows your community better than you do! Can you name problems in your community? Start a list:

What is a problem or need you think is a priority?

Problems can vary from place to place and person to person, or can be a global issue reaching beyond your community. Examining situations closely helps uncover what is truly needed, and leads towards future improvement.
Is there an issue you are passionate about, that is also a problem or need in your local community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Contact</th>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>How They Can Help</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Talk to people to get in-depth information about community issues. As you conduct interviews, you’ll improve your communication skills, begin to see how your time and talents can make an impact, and build a network of contacts you may need when you do your Take Action project.

Start by talking to people you know; such as neighbors or teachers. Ask them to introduce you to other people in your community, such as business owners, school officials, religious leaders, public officials, and staff members at community centers.
Leadership is the ability to inspire or influence others towards the leader's goal. If someone has followers, he or she is a leader.

Honesty: the quality of being honest
Confidence: belief in oneself and one's powers or abilities; self-confidence; self-reliance; assurance.
Passion: a strong or extravagant fondness, enthusiasm, or desire for anything.
Respect: esteem for or a sense of the worth or excellence of a person, a personal quality or ability.
Integrity: adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty.
Compassion: a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.
Humility: the quality or condition of being humble; modest opinion or estimate of one's own importance, rank, etc.
Empowering: to give power or authority to.
Supportive: providing sympathy or encouragement.
Cooperative: working or acting together willingly for a common purpose or benefit.
Dependable: capable of being depended on; worthy of trust; reliable.
Friendly: favorably disposed; inclined to approve, help, or support.
Courageous: possessing or characterized by courage; brave.
Inclusive: including a great deal, or encompassing everything concerned.
Standards of Excellence

When you decide to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, you are on your honor to uphold the Standards of Excellence. These standards set a high benchmark for everything you do and invite you to think deeply, explore opportunities, and challenge yourself. Following the Standards of Excellence challenges you to develop yourself as a leader, achieve the Girl Scout Leadership Outcomes and make a mark on your community that creates a lasting impact on the lives of others.

Girl Scout Gold Award Steps and Standards of Excellence

**Girl Scout Gold Award Steps**

1. **Choose an Issue:** Use your values and skills to identify a community issue you care about.

2. **Investigate:** Research everything you can about the issue.

3. **Get help:** Invite others to support and take action with you.

4. **Create a plan:** Create a project plan that achieves sustainable and measurable impact.

5. **Present your plan and get feedback:** Sum up your project plan for your Girl Scout council.

6. **Take Action:** Take the lead to carry out your plan.

7. **Educate and inspire:** Share what you have experienced with others.

**Standards of Excellence**

- **Live the Girl Scout Promise and Law.**
  - Demonstrate civic responsibility.

- 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.

- 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 advisor who will bring special skills to your Take Action project.

- Lead the planning of your Take Action project.
  - Work collaboratively to develop a plan for your project that creates lasting change.

- Submit a project proposal to your 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.

- Take action to address the root cause of an issue, so that your solution has measurable and sustainable impact.
  - Actively seek partnerships to achieve greater community participation and impact for your Take Action project.
  - Challenge yourself to try different ways to solve problems.
  - Use resources wisely.
  - Speak out and act on behalf of yourself and others.

- Reflect on what you have learned when you present your Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report to your council.
  - Summarize the effectiveness of your project and the impact it has had on you and your community.
  - Share the project beyond your local community and inspire others to take action in their own communities.
Insurance Guidelines for Higher Awards

All events held for Higher Awards or for fundraising purposes associated with a Higher Award must have insurance coverage. All places and/or persons must be covered by Girl Scout Insurance at all Higher Award events.

**Girl Scout Basic Insurance:**

Registered Girl Scout and registered adult members in the Girl Scout movement are automatically covered under the basic plan upon registration. The entire premium cost for this protection is borne by Girl Scouts of the USA. The basic plan is effective during the regular fiscal year (October to the following October).

Non-registered parents, tagalongs (brothers, sisters, friends), and other persons are not covered by basic coverage.

**Girl Scout Activity Insurance:**

An optional plan of activity insurance is available for non-members who participate in Girl Scout activities. These plans are secondary insurance that a council offers to cover participants taking part in any council-approved, supervised Girl Scout activity. Optional insurance coverage is available for any Girl Scout activity that involves non-Girl Scouts.

You can locate the form to request insurance under the Troop/Group section in the forms library at our website.

[www.gswny.org](http://www.gswny.org)

There is a cost associated with the insurance that should be included with your Higher Award budget planning. If you are unable to pay for the cost of the additional insurance please contact [programs@gswny.org](mailto:programs@gswny.org) for assistance.

It is also the responsibility of the Girl to make sure she is holding her event at a place that is covered by Council Insurance. You can always contact programs to verify a place is covered or to obtain the Certificate of Insurance for verification purposes. If the location is not currently covered you may request a certificate from programs@gswny.org.

You can locate the form to request insurance under the Troop/Group section in the forms library at our website.

[www.gswny.org](http://www.gswny.org)

*Please make sure to have all insurance paperwork in at least two weeks prior to any event. The paperwork is sent directly to the Buffalo Council Office.*
Financial Guidelines for the Higher Awards

- Girls may not raise or solicit money for other organizations.
- Girl Scout Blue Book policy forbids girls from the direct solicitation of cash.
- Girls may not ask for any donations of materials or service from organizations, businesses, corporations, foundations or individuals. As the girls are minors, all requests must come from the girl’s leader, project advisor, mentor or parent. Girls may request donations to be placed on GSWNY letterhead.
- Girls may not ask individuals or businesses for money or gift cards, although they can use any gift cards that are donated to you.
- Money-earning should not exceed what is needed to support the Take Action Project.
- All fundraising methods employed by Girl Scouts must be in keeping with the principles for which the organization stands.
- All fundraising events must have council approval.
- Any individual donation of over $200 must be preapproved by the Council office.
- Girl Scouts discourages the use of games of chance. Any activity which could be considered a game of chance (raffles, contests, bingo) must be approved by the local Girl Scout Council and be conducted in compliance with all local and state laws.
- You must make Council aware of the businesses you are reaching out to for donations.
- Money-earning applications must be submitted for approval AT LEAST THIRTY (30) DAYS prior to project.
- If a donor wants to claim the donation as a tax deduction, he or she will need to make the donation to the council for IRS purposes and get a receipt signed by a council staff person.

Q: Can I use my own money on the Girl Scout Gold Award Project?
A: Yes. If you want to use your own money, you can. You may receive help from your family too. However, we encourage you to work with others to earn the money. That’s part of the process. Completing your Gold Award Project should not be a hardship. As you design your project, think about how you can make a difference with little or no money.

Q: Can I ask friends and neighbors for help?
A: You shouldn’t ask for donations of money, but you can ask for donations of time and materials.

Q: Can I seek help from other organizations when doing my Gold Award Project?
A: Yes, with some qualifications. Many service organizations have budgets for community projects. You can use their interest as leverage to support your project and get volunteers to help you. However, remember the rules about having the adult doing the “ask” for donations and clearing your joint approach with council. (Council may be asking the same group for a major donation and you don’t want to interfere with the council’s “ask”.)

Q: Can we charge for a Girl Scout event to earn money?
A: If it is a service project, a fee can be collected to cover the cost of materials. The project ceases to be a service project if you are charging a fee for the event above cost, in which case the hours cannot go toward service hours in any award. If you are doing an event as a Girl Scout (e.g., a Badge Workshop, Bike Rodeo, etc.) and are planning to charge a fee above the cost of materials, you must first clear this with your Girl Scout Council. Provision should be made for scholarships for troop/groups or individual girls who cannot afford fees to your event and you must be clear in your advertisements and materials that this is a money-earning event for your troop/group. If your actual project is an event for the public, you can charge a fee to cover the cost of materials.
Take Action Vs Community Service

Is your Success Sustainable?

How do you Measure Your Success?

Your Take Action project should be sustainable and measurable!

Will the success of your project last? Was this a onetime project? What are the tools used to ensure the success of your project lasts? **You must be able to articulate how your project is sustainable and what root cause it addresses.**

How do you measure your project’s impact? You have made a difference in the world, now how do you show it? What are the tools used to evaluate your project’s success? **You will need to collect, manage, analyze, and report data findings to measure your project impact.**

**SUSTAINABILITY**

What does it mean to have a sustainable project?
- To be sustainable, you must ensure that your project creates lasting change after your involvement ends. A sustainable project is not a one-time event.
  - Including an aspect of continued education and raising awareness is one way to make sure a project is carried on.
  - Workshops and hands-on learning sessions can inspire others to keep the project going.
  - Another way to create sustainable projects is by collaborating with community groups, non-profit agencies, civic associations, local government, and/or religious organizations to ensure the project lasts beyond your involvement.

**MEASURABILITY**

How does a girl measure project impact?
- The success of a project should be measurable based on the number of people the project helped, the number of people who were involved, a reduction in the community’s need, or other concrete numbers.
  - You should identify your project goal for your community, target audience, and yourself by developing success indicators that are measurable.
Take Action Project versus Community Service Projects.

Take a look at the short term Community Service Projects below. What can be done to create a Sustainable, Measurable Take Action Project from the community Service project?

Remember a Take Action project identifies the root cause of an issue, has a long term impact, is sustainable and can be measured.

Example #1
Community Service Project: A troop held a clothing drive to help the homeless.

What is the problem? Homeless do not have clothing to stay warm.

What is a root cause of the problem? There is not a set place for homeless to turn to for clothes and needed supplies to stay warm.

What is a Take Action Project that is sustainable and creates a lasting difference? Work with the community to set up a clothing closet that they would be open all year, to help support the homeless.

How can you measure the impact of the Take Action Project? You can keep track of how many individuals you are able to provide clothing to over a set period of time. (We were able to provide clothing to 250 individuals over three months.) You can keep track of how much clothing you were able to provide. (We were able to provide over 1500 items of clothing to homeless in the community over a 60 day period.)

Example #2
Community Service Project: A troop held an Earth Day Clean-Up event.

What is the problem?

What is a root cause of the problem?

What is a Take Action Project that is sustainable and creates a lasting difference?

How can you measure the impact of the Take Action Project?

Example #3
Community Service Project: A troop held a book drive for children who don’t have books at home.

What is the problem?

What is a root cause of the problem?

What is a Take Action Project that is sustainable and creates a lasting difference?

How can you measure the impact of the Take Action Project?
Gold Award Project Planning Sheet

A Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action project addresses the root cause of an issue, produces impact that is measurable and sustainable, and is a local project that links to a national and/or global issue. Here are a few tips to help you lay out your project plan:

Set Project Goals:

What is your project?

What is my final goal of the project?

Why does it matter?

Who will it help?

The difference I intend to make in the world is:

Does this issue affect people in other parts of the world?

How will I meet my goal?

What are the obstacles I may run into?

Who do I need for help?

How will it last?

How will I measure the impact?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>List the Steps to Achieve Your Goal</th>
<th>What Resources and Materials Will You Need?</th>
<th>Where Can You Get the Resources and Materials?</th>
<th>How Much Will They Cost?</th>
<th>How Do You Plan to Cover These Costs?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CAN YOU SAY YES?

Project Planning Checklist
The answers to all of the questions below should be yes before you begin your Take Action project.

✓ Will your project demonstrate your leadership skills?

✓ Have you set your project goal and identified what you would like to learn?

✓ Have you chosen your Take Action team? Have you discussed the project with them?

✓ Have you created a budget for the project?

✓ Have you created a plan to raise funds, if necessary?

✓ Have you made a timeline for your project?

✓ Does your project address a need in the local community and have you found national and/or global links?

✓ Can your project be sustainable?

✓ Does your project challenge your abilities and your interests?
# BUDGET FORM

**Name:**

**Project Title:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income From:</th>
<th>Details:</th>
<th>Amount:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Income:** $

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expense From:</th>
<th>Details:</th>
<th>Amount:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Expenses:** $

Girl Scouts of Western New York – Gold Award Paperwork
TIME LOG

Remember to be very specific and detailed in your explanation of activities!
Also remember that no more than 3 hours spent on project paperwork should be recorded.
Travel or sleeping time should not be counted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Title:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Start Date:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completed Date:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date:</th>
<th>Time Spent:</th>
<th>Explain Activity (in detail)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total Number of Hours for Project

Girl Scouts of Western New York – Gold Award Paperwork
Check out the seven steps below.

1. **Identify an issue.**
   Use your values and skills to choose a community issue that you care about.

2. **Investigate it thoroughly.**
   Use your sleuthing skills to learn everything you can about the issue you've identified.

3. **Get help and build your team.**
   Form a team to support your efforts and help you Take Action.

4. **Create a plan.**
   Identify the root cause of an issue, and then create a plan to tackle it.

5. **Present your plan and gather feedback.**
   Submit your Project Proposal Form to your Girl Scout council for approval.

6. **Take action.**
   Lead your team and carry out your plan.

7. **Educate and inspire.**
   Tell your story and share your results.
MY GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD: HOW DO I GET STARTED?

Start Here

Begin your Take Action project proposal and identify your Project Advisor.

Complete Gold Award pre-requisites: Earn the Silver Award and complete one Senior or Ambassador Journey.

Submit your Take Action project proposal to your council for approval.

Ask your council about Gold Award volunteer opportunities and be a role model to other girls.

Receive Take Action project feedback/approval from your council and start your Take Action project.

Congratulations! You've earned your Gold Award. Share your story and celebrate.

Submit your Take Action final report to your council for feedback/approval.

Complete your Take Action project.

This chart provides you with a snapshot of the Gold Award process.
Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Project Ideas

Community Development
- Civic/Public Infrastructure
- Homeless Assistance
- Transportation
- Community Clean-up
- Social Services
- Volunteer Capacity/Management
- Historic Preservation
- Animal Care Services
- Independent Living Assistance
- Other Community Development (specify)

Economic Development
- Financial Literacy
- Workforce Development
- Financial Asset Development
- Economic Revitalization
- Technology Access
- Other Economic Development

Disaster Recovery and Relief
- Disaster Mitigation
- Disaster Recovery
- Other Disaster
- Disaster Preparedness
- Disaster Relief

Education
- Adult Literacy
- Computer Literacy
- Special Education Programs
- After School Programs
- English Language Learning
- Classroom Education
- Child Literacy
- Job Preparedness
- Cultural Heritage
- School Preparedness
- Other Education (specify)

Environment and Energy
- Clean Air
- Environmental Protection
- Waste Reduction/Recycling
- Clean Water
- Environmental Restoration
- Weatherization
- Energy Conservation
- Indoor Environment
- Environmental Awareness
- Other Environment (specify)

Health & Wellness/Nutrition
- Disabilities Services
- HIV/AIDS Prevention
- Nutrition Education
- Food Distribution/Collection
- Health & Wellness Education
- Substance Abuse Prevention/Rehabilitation
- Food Production
- Maternal/Child Health Services
- Aid to Seniors/Elders
- Health Service Delivery
- Mental Health Services
- Other Health/Nutrition (specify)

Public Safety
- Accident Prevention
- Crisis Intervention
- Victim/Witness Services
- Community Policing
- Fire Prevention
- Public Safety Education
- Conflict Resolution/Mediation
- Legal Assistance
- Crime Awareness/Prevention
- Offender/Ex-Offender Services/Rehabilitation
- Children and Youth Safety
- Other Public Safety (specify)

Youth Development
- Children and Youth Safety
- Juvenile Justice Services
- Bullying Prevention
- Delinquency Prevention
- Teen Pregnancy/Parenting Services
- Other Youth Development (specify)
- Gang Prevention/Rehabilitation
- Youth Leadership Development

Veterans Assistance
- Housing Assistance
- Military Family Assistance
- Veteran Employment Services
- Outreach and Counseling
- Veteran Disabilities/Rehabilitation Assistance
- Other Veterans (specify)