

Changes to the Girl Scout Silver Award and the Girl Scout Gold Award

We are pleased to announce a change in requirements for the Girl Scout Silver Award and the Girl Scout Gold Award. Girls may now do final projects that benefit the Girl Scout community. In order to make sure that this change doesn't dilute the prestige, leadership efforts, or impact of each girl's project, Silver and Gold Awards must still meet the requirements that are key to taking sustainable action:

- The project makes a lasting difference in the local community, region, or beyond.
- The project puts the Girl Scout Promise and Law into action.
- The project includes provisions to ensure sustainability.
- The project identifies national and/global links to the girl's selected issue.
- And the project inspires others.

This change goes into effect as of October 1st, so it does not impact girls who have already begun or submitted a project plan, since girls choose an issue first, and then add in the other parameters that will make it sustainable.



These remain the Seven Steps to the Girl Scout Silver Award:

1) Identify an issue you care about.

Girls first consider issues they are passionate about in their community, school, or world that they would like to impact.

2) Build your Girl Scout Silver Award team or decide to go solo. This step remains the same

3) Explore your community. Girls think about how the issues they are considering are impacting the community. In this step they also are learning about community partners and community solutions that they can use to address their issue.

4) Pick your Silver Award project. Girls pick their issue, what they want to do about the issue and who their audience or beneficiary will be. *This is the step* where girls working on their Silver Award will decide if their best audience is the Girl Scout community or if the project they are doing is best done at a Girl Scout facility – not before.

5) Develop your project. Girls determine the steps to their project and who will lead each step.

6) Make a plan and put it into motion. Girls take leadership and complete their project.

7) Reflect, share your story, and celebrate!



These remain the Seven Steps to the
Girl Scout Gold Award:

- 1) Identify an issue.** Girls use their values and skills to choose a *community or global issue* that they care about.
- 2) Investigate it thoroughly.** Girls Use their sleuthing skills to learn everything they can about the issue they've identified.
- 3) Get help and build your team.** Each girl forms a team to support her efforts and help her take action.
- 4) Create a plan.** She identifies the root cause of an issue, and then creates a plan to tackle it. This is where a girl may decide to benefit the Girl Scout community, if Girl Scouts or a Girl Scout facility is the most logical beneficiary of the project. That decision should not happen before this step.
- 5) Present your plan and gather feedback.** Candidates submit a Project Proposal Form to the Girl Scout council for approval, clearly identifying how the project will address the issue in a sustainable way.
- 6) Take action.** Girls take the lead, manage their teams and carry out the plan.
- 7) Educate and inspire.** Each Gold Award Girl Scout tells her story and shares her results, while ensuring that her project will have lasting impact.

To implement these changes:

- 1)** Share this information with the colleagues in your council. Schedule dedicated time to explain the changes to the C suite, and the teams that you work with including:
 - a. Girl Experience/Program
 - b. Volunteer
 - c. Membership
 - d. Property/Camp
 - e. Merchandising
 - f. MarComm
 - g. Fund Development
 - h. Business Services
 - i. Product Program
 - j. IT
 - k. Legal
- 2)** Plan to include this information in Highest Awards training for girls, volunteers and parents. Explain to these groups that while their ideas may address an issue that they can solve for with a sustainable project through the application process, girls will need to seek council approval via the channels you've determined, to align with your council, program, and property strategy and vision.

3) Make certain girls understand that the Girl Scout highest awards are always “what, how, then who” plans. Girls first decide what they would like to do to *make the world a better place*, and then they decide how they’ll tackle it and for whom.

4) Give girls examples:

A Cadette troop doesn’t like to swim in their area lakes because of the blue-green algae. They learn that fertilizer run-off in their locale increases the blue-green algae problem and is deadly to the fish, so they plan to take on a lake clean-up project, educating farmers and gardeners about the danger of fertilizer run-off on fish and aquatic life. They partner with their local Master Gardener group to offer workshops on safe fertilizing. Upon more research, they discover the lake their camp sits on is one of the top impacted lakes in their county. They use their camp as the hub for their project, and offer area farmers and gardeners workshops using the camp dining hall as their workshop location.

A Girl Scout Senior is concerned about childhood obesity, and wants to start a fun nutrition and exercise program for kids. After doing research, she learns about a kids’ fitness trail that features active challenges along the way, and recruits her school basketball team to help her plan a trail and build the elements. As a CIT at her summer camp, she realizes that there are lots of campers who could benefit from her program, and she works with the camp ranger to build the trail and the camp chef to develop a cookbook for kids on healthy snacks and meals.

5) Orient your Highest Awards or Gold Award Committee on the changes. Strategize together how they will manage and maintain the sustainability, leadership, and impact of the awards.

Note: this change does not necessitate creating a new form. It is one option for girls to choose from as they tackle the issue at hand and you will simply need to allow time to check in with the appropriate team (that the Highest Awards staff decide upon). Some councils may choose to seek CEO or COO approval or seek approval from the team the Gold Award Candidate will be working with as she completes her project, to be sure her efforts align with council plans or needs.