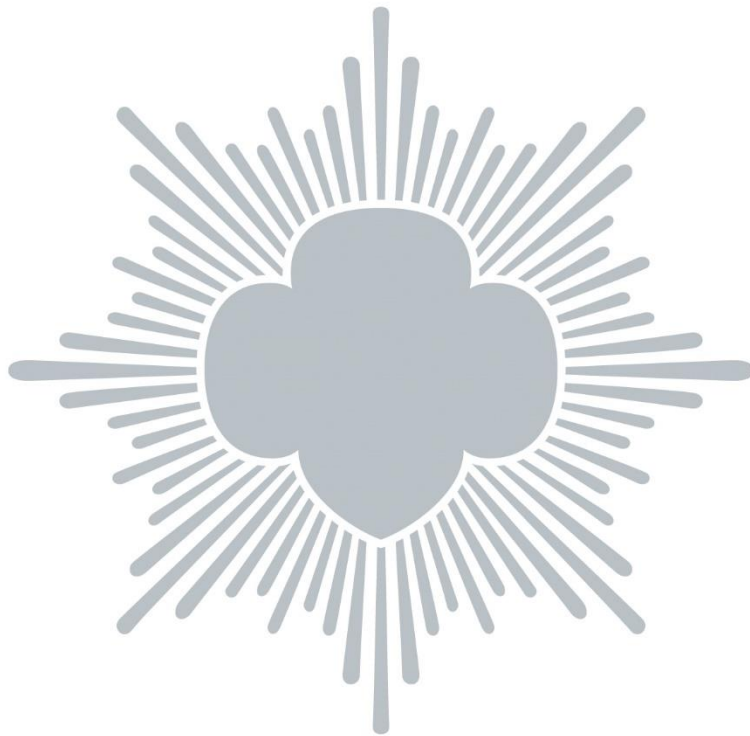




girl scouts
of northern california



Silver Award Packet

Last Revised: November 5, 2020

Table of Contents

Silver Award Overview

The Silver Award Advantage.....	1
Silver Award Project Essentials.....	1
Silver Award Requirements at a Glance.....	2
Projects Benefitting Girl Scouting.....	2

Accessibility and the Silver Award

Individually Registered Girl Scouts.....	3
Girl Scouts with Disabilities.....	3
Girl Scouts with Limited Technology Access.....	3

Silver Award Project Specifics – How to Earn the Silver Award

Adult and Volunteer Roles in the Silver Award.....	4
Steps to Earning the Silver Award.....	5
Silver Award Example Track.....	6
Community Service vs. Take Action Projects.....	7
How to Choose a Silver Award Project.....	8
Conducting Research.....	9
Recruiting a Project Advisor.....	9
Common Projects and Pitfalls.....	10
Silver Award Project Hours.....	11
Project Timeline Examples.....	12
Silver Award Checklist.....	13
Enacting Your Plan.....	13

Final Report Submission and Final Review Process

Silver Award Final Report Submission Process.....	14
Possible Results of the Review.....	15
When Additional Work is Required.....	15
Silver Award Final Report Questions.....	16

Other Rules, Requirements, and Resources

Money and Your Gold Award Project.....	17
Travel and Your Gold Award Project.....	19
Safety, Insurance, and Your Gold Award Project.....	20
Media and Your Gold Award Project.....	21
Frequently Asked Questions.....	22
Girl Scout Trainings.....	24
So What, Now What?.....	24

The Silver Award Advantage



When Girl Scout Cadettes focus on an issue they care about, learn the facts, and take action to make a difference, they gain the confidence and skills that will catapult them to lifelong success. It all adds up to the **Girl Scout Silver Award**—the highest honor a Cadette can achieve.

Girl Scouts should only pursue the Silver Award if it is something that they are **personally passionate** about. You should not undertake this process for your parent, Troop Leader, or anyone else. Earning the Silver Award takes a lot of work. In order to have a truly successful project, it should be something you are genuinely interested in pursuing.

If earning the Silver Award is something that excites you, you should know that there are many **benefits**:

- Developing an understanding of yourself and your values
- Connecting with others that care about the same issues that you do
- Making a long-term impact in your community and making the world a better place
- Completing one prerequisite of the Girl Scout Gold Award

Silver Award Project Essentials

Silver Award projects must meet the requirements that are key to taking sustainable action. Regardless of where a project takes place or the issue it tackles, it **must**..

- Make a **lasting difference** in the local community, region, Girl Scout Council, or beyond
- Put the **Girl Scout Promise and Law** into action
- Include provisions to ensure a **long-term impact** or total **sustainability**
- Identify **national and/or global links** to the girl's selected issue
- If benefitting Girl Scouting, the project must fit the **Council's strategic goals and/or property plans** as identified by Council staff
- **Inspire** others!



Silver Award Requirements at a Glance



We will go into detail about all of the Silver Award requirements throughout this packet. Here are some of the most important details Girl Scouts and Troop Leaders need to be aware of at a glance for your **quick reference**.

Girl Scouts, please make sure to review this information with your entire Silver Award team and your Troop Leader!

- Before starting a Girl Scout Silver Award project, prospective candidates must meet the **prerequisites**. To be eligible to earn the Silver Award, **each** Girl Scout must:
 - Complete **1 Cadette Journey** (plus the Take Action project at the end)
 - Complete the **GSNorCal Silver Award training**
- The Silver Award is earned **individually** or in **small teams of 2 to 4**. Keeping teams small ensures that each girl will be able to participate fully. Multiple teams may not collaborate on one larger project.
 - 4 Girl Scouts per Silver Award team is the maximum; we are not able to make exceptions.
- Each girl earning the award must be a registered **Cadette Girl Scout** in **grade 6, 7, or 8** (or equivalent).
- Silver Award projects must qualify as **Take Action**—they are not community service projects, even if the community service project is very large and takes a lot of time and hard work!
 - Please refer to page 7 for more information about Take Action projects.
- Projects must take a **minimum of 50 hours** of work **per girl** to complete.
 - Please refer to page 11 for more information about project hours.
- The **deadline** for project completion **and** final report submission is the **September 30th** immediately following your or **any** team member's completion of the 8th grade. Mixed grade level teams must be especially aware of this.
- Your **Troop Leader** approves your Silver Award project to **start work**.
- **Council** will review and approve your **Final Report**.

Projects Benefitting Girl Scouting



GSUSA is now allowing Highest Award projects to benefit Girl Scouting under certain circumstances. In addition to meeting all of the standard requirements for the Silver Award, projects benefitting Girl Scouting must also **align with Council strategic goals and/or property plans** as identified by GSNorCal staff. Girls should **first** investigate an issue they care about (rather than a particular camp or part of Girl Scouting), and **then** determine if Girl Scouts is the most logical beneficiary of the project. This requires Council approval. To determine if your project idea meets these requirements, you will need to connect with the Awards Team by emailing awards@gsnorcal.org or calling 800-447-4475 during regular business hours.

Keep in mind that if a project could earn any of the **other awards** in Girl Scouting, it will **NOT** qualify for a Silver Award. For example, girls cannot run badge days or camporees, take over a volunteer-run camp, or start a troop in an area that needs it for their Silver Award. These are great things to do, but they do not meet the requirements for the Silver Award. They can however potentially earn those other existing awards! Be sure to check out the other amazing awards girls can earn on GSNorCal.org.



Individually Registered Girl Scouts



Individually registered Girl Scouts, such as girls who are not members of a formal Troop or who participate in Girl Scouting through our Community Based Programs (Daughters of Farmworkers, Got Choices, or Camp CEO) are also eligible to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award! There are just a few items that these Girl Scouts must take note of.

A registered adult Girl Scouts volunteer must be listed as the Girl Scout's Troop Leader, and sign off on her prerequisites. This person may **NOT** be the individual girl's parent/guardian or immediate family member. A Service Unit Volunteer, Troop Helper, other local Troop Leader, or Girl Scout staff member (if no other volunteers can be found) may sign off in this capacity. If this volunteer does not have firsthand knowledge of the prerequisite completion, the Girl Scout should describe what she did and when before the volunteer provides verification.

If an individually registered Girl Scout wants to conduct **additional money-earning** for her project, she must participate in the Girl Scout Product Sale of another local Troop and meet the Product Sale minimum requirement. The troop must sell 48 items on average per girl in the Troop (including the individually registered Girl Scout joining them). You should first contact your Service Unit for help finding a Troop. If they cannot find one, you can contact Council Product Sales staff by calling 800-447-4475 ext. 0. Money earned from Product Sales or additional money-earning activities must go into a **bank account** held by a Girl Scout group, Troop, or Service Unit. Before earning any money, you need to work out a contract with the group to determine how the funds earned will be earmarked and dispersed for your project.

Girl Scouts with Disabilities

The Silver Award can be earned by any Girl Scout who puts her mind to it—it is **completed to the best of a girl's ability**. It is not necessary to have a separate set of requirements for girls with disabilities, because the Silver Award process allows flexibility and the recruitment of advisors who can work with the girl based on her individual needs. We believe in the power of all girls, and strive to make accommodations for Girl Scouts to achieve their goals on a case-by-case basis.



Girl Scouts with disabilities and their guardians should work with the Troop Leader to determine if any accommodations need to be made when working in a group. Guardians or Troop Leaders should also **inform the Council** of any circumstances that may impact a Girl Scout's ability to work on your project, or that they may need additional support or guidance with. If you have any formal arrangements with your school such as an Individualized Education Program (IEP), our Awards team may use that as a basis for any accommodations in your Silver Award process. If you have a method of communication that you prefer (for example, if you prefer email because you are deaf or hard-of-hearing), any Council staff who may need to connect with you are aware of that. The best way to contact us about this is by emailing awards@gsnorcal.org. We are also happy to schedule a phone call or in-person meeting if additional communication is needed.

Girl Scouts with Limited Technology Access



If a Girl Scout pursuing her Silver Award has **limited access** to necessary tools or resources such as home internet or a phone, she should work directly with her Silver Award team, Troop Leader, or other Girl Scout volunteers to help. If there are further questions about how to gain access to tools, contact our Highest Awards staff by emailing awards@gsnorcal.org or calling 800-447-4475 during regular business hours.

If you are unable to do either of those, please enlist the help of your Troop Leader, Service Unit volunteer, or other trusted adult to help you make the connection to our staff by contacting us on your behalf. We can work with you to **develop a plan** and/or help you find ways to gain access to the resources you need to complete your project. What this plan looks like will depend on your particular situation.

Adult and Volunteer Roles in the Silver Award

Girl Scouts is a “by girls, for girls” experience. All activities must be **girl-led**. At the same time, each girl working to earn the Silver Award will need support in order to be successful. Each volunteer plays a role:



Girl Scout Troop Leader (or other registered adult Girl Scouts volunteer): The interested Girl Scouts notify their Troop Leader that they would like to earn the Silver Award. The Troop Leader provides general assistance to the Girl Scouts in developing, planning, and evaluating their progress in the steps to the Silver Award. They help the girls understand any rules or regulations set by GSUSA or GSNorCal. The Troop Leader should point the Girl Scouts to online training and documentation for the Silver Award. Instead of simply telling Girl Scouts what to do, the Troop Leader can ask questions of the Girl Scouts until they are satisfied the Girl Scouts understand what to do.



Parent/Guardian/Caregiver: Guardians play a significant role in supporting Girl Scouts throughout the Silver Award process. This role includes being a coach, mentor, cheerleader, sounding board, transportation... the list goes on! However, a parent should never take charge of the project, as this must be the girl’s endeavor. Guardians should check in with Troop Leaders to make sure they have everything they need to support the girls.



Project Advisor: The Project Advisor is an adult who gives expert or professional advice related to the specific Silver Award project (whether that is the issue, its root cause, or the solution the girls want to implement). The Project Advisor may be associated with an organization the girls are working with. A Project Advisor offers Girl Scouts **guidance and expertise as needed** during the planning and execution of the Silver Award. They aide in the design and development of the project, however it is important that the project and its core ideas be the Girl Scout’s own. Parents, guardians, immediate relatives, and Troop Leaders may **not** serve as Project Advisors. If during the project the Advisor is no longer able to support, the Girl Scouts may find another Advisor or the Troop Leader may step in.



Volunteer Team: Volunteers are the people you will recruit/train, delegate tasks to, and direct the work of as they help you with your project. This is how you demonstrate **leadership**. The precise number of people you need will depend on the size and scope of your project, but **every project requires a volunteer team**. Think about what tasks need to be accomplished. Who can help you get things done? Teams may include family, friends, troop members, peers, neighbors, members of the organization you are working with... anyone who can help. Your team should extend outside your immediate family.



Steps to Earning the Silver Award



Complete the prerequisite and Silver Award training

Each girl must complete one Cadette Journey (including the Take Action project at the end). Journeys may be completed together or individually. Each girl must also take the GSNorCal Silver Award training.



Identify issues you care about

Use your values and skills to identify issues that you care about. Start by having everyone make a list of ten things they are passionate about off the top of their heads. You can also look into the issues that exist in your local or global community.



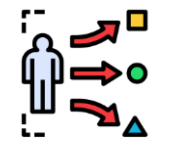
Build your Girl Scout Silver Award team, or decide to go solo

The Silver Award can be earned **individually**, or in **small teams of 2 to 4 Girl Scout Cadettes**. It is best to build or divide up teams based on the issues you are interested in! Remember that each girl must commit to working together respectfully to create and develop a plan, and contribute to the project fairly. Whether you earn the Silver Award individually or with other Girl Scouts, you will need to **partner with others in the community** to complete your project.



Explore your community and investigate issues thoroughly

Now that you have begun to think about issues that concern you, it's time to do some exploring to find out what your community needs, and where your areas of interest and the community issues may overlap. You may belong to many communities—this could be your school, neighborhood, place of worship, a group that cares about the same things as you. This is where you will start speaking to experts and conducting research.



Pick your Silver Award Take Action project

It's time to choose a project based on what you've learned. Make sure you have identified the issue and root cause through research. Answer the questions: What is our project? Why does it matter? Who will it help? Who can help us with it?



Develop your project

Now that you've chosen a project, it's time to make a plan. Identify the steps you need to reach your goal. What needs to happen, and when? Who is responsible for which tasks? Make sure your Project Advisor and community members are able to help you with this stage. Your project ideas must be your own, but they can provide insight. This is where you may decide to benefit the Girl Scout community if a Girl Scout facility is the most logical beneficiary of the project. This decision should not happen before this step; you must first know the issue you want to address before deciding if it is a good fit for Girl Scouting.



Put your plan in motion

Your Troop Leader will approve your project to start work. Then, lead your team and carry out your plan. It is possible that you will run into roadblocks or need support—and that is okay! Always keep your Troop Leader and Project Advisor updated about what is going on with your project and what you may need. Be sure to keep track of your time as you go along—if you try to recreate your timeline at the end, you will forget tasks, and it is not an entirely accurate representation of the work you have done!



Reflect, share your story, and celebrate!

Tell your story and share your results. You must complete your Gold Award Final Report in GoGold Online AND submit it to the Council for approval by your deadline (either the September 30th immediately following your high school graduation or your 18th birthday—whichever gives you more time).

Silver Award Example Track

Not sure how to get started? This is an **example track** you can follow to get a sense for what earning the Silver Award looks like from beginning to end. Please note that you are **not** required to begin the process in 6th grade, and in fact many girls start in 7th or 8th grade. The steps should be completed in this same order.



6th Grade

7th Grade

8th Grade

Complete prerequisite

Each girl pursuing the Silver Award must complete 1 Cadette Journey, plus the Take Action project at the end.

Complete a GSNorCal Silver Award training

Identify issues you care about

These should be topics you are genuinely interested in.

Build your Girl Scout Silver Award team, or decide to go solo

Girls may earn the Silver Award individually, or in small groups of 2-4 Girl Scouts. Build your teams based on the issues you are interested in! Your Troop Leader can help with this.

Explore your community and investigate issues

It's time to see where your interests and community problems may overlap.

Pick your Silver Award project

Now that you've thought about the issues your community is facing and looked into them, select your project.

Develop your project plan

It's time to make a plan. Your Troop Leader will approve your project to start work.

This is the point when you can see if your project would be a good fit to benefit Girl Scouting! Projects benefiting Girl Scouting do require Council approval.

Put your plan in motion

This is where you "Take Action!" Enact your project plan and follow it through to completion.

Submit your final report

You need to submit your final report using the form on our website, GSNorCal.org.

Reminder:

The final deadline to complete your project and submit the Silver Award final report is the September 30th immediately after any member of your Silver Award team completes the 8th grade. Council provides the final review and approval.

Reflect, share your story, and celebrate!

Once you have earned the Silver Award, reflect on what you've learned and be sure to thank those that helped you.

Community Service vs. Take Action Projects

Community Service projects help solve an immediate **need** (a condition requiring supply or relief) but do not impact the root cause of an issue. These often center on making and donating needed items or beautifying spaces. These projects are very important, but they do **not** qualify for the Silver Award.

Take Action projects help solve an **issue** (a community problem that must be addressed on a larger scale) by discovering the **root cause** (the reason the issue exists in the first place) and implementing a solution that reduces or eliminates that root cause. **Silver Award projects must be Take Action.**

Community Service Project	Take Action Project
Addresses an immediate need in the community	Addresses the root cause of an issue in the community
A project done for the community	A project done with the community
A one-time or short-term impact project that helps someone right now	A long-term project that makes a lasting impact or is fully sustainable

Community Service vs. Take Action Project Examples	
	<p>Issue: Popular local hiking trail is littered with trash</p> <p>Root Cause(s): Lack of awareness of trash impact; no trash cans on the trails themselves</p> <p>Community Service Project (not a Silver Award): Hosting a trash pickup day on the trail</p> <p>Take Action Project (potentially a Silver Award): Installing trash cans at regular intervals on the trail, coordinating with a junior ranger program to empty them. Creating a trash-cycle education poster for the visitor center so hikers are informed about the impact of their trash</p> <p>How to measure your impact: Set up a comment system with the visitor center to track what people think about the trail condition. Compare the time the park ranger spends picking up trash now, vs. before the trash cans were installed</p> <p>How to make a long-term impact: Ensure the junior rangers will be able to continue to empty the cans. Get the visitor center's commitment to highlight your trash-cycle poster and education</p>
	<p>Issue: Unhoused people are sleeping outside during the winter months</p> <p>Root Cause(s): Limited shelter during cold winter months due to high-demand</p> <p>Community Service Project (not a Silver Award): Holding a warm coat drive to provide individuals with a way to stay a little warmer if they cannot find shelter</p> <p>Take Action Project (potentially a Silver Award): Coordinating multiple community centers to hold weekly pop-up shelters on an ongoing basis</p> <p>How to measure your impact: Assess how many more unhoused folks have access to shelter (using insight from homeless shelter/community center staff, not random interviews!)</p> <p>How to make a long-term impact: Petition shelters to host this program every year</p>
	<p>Issue: The art education program at a local elementary school is being cut</p> <p>Root Cause(s): Lack of funding to hire an art teacher or host a program</p> <p>Community Service Project (not a Silver Award): Hosting one art workshop at an assembly</p> <p>Take Action Project (potentially a Silver Award): Creating a 6-week elementary art curriculum that you and your volunteer team can host for elementary students during lunch or after school</p> <p>How to measure your impact: Track the number of students that attend (and return) to your workshop series. Collect survey information about their experience of the program/art enrichment</p> <p>How to make a long-term impact: Create a partnership between your high school art department/service clubs and the elementary school to keep the program running</p>

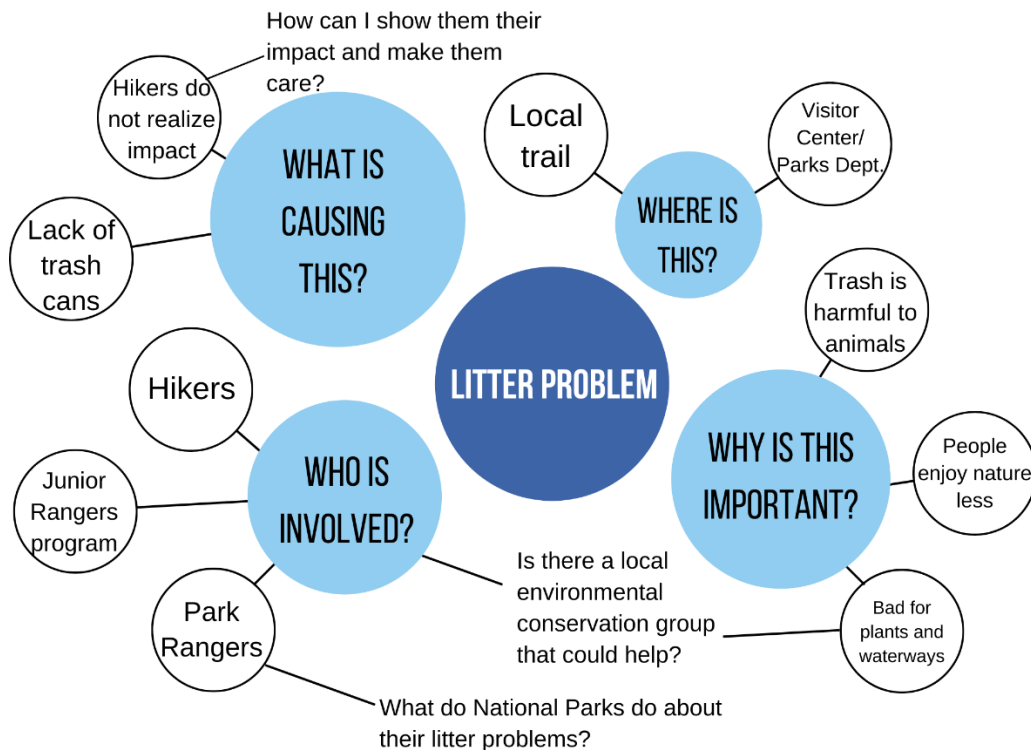
How to Choose a Silver Award Project

The issue you choose to address with your Silver Award project should be one you and your teammates are **personally passionate** about—not one that someone else told you to do, or you think you “should” do!

Make a list of **ten issues** you care about—think about your skills, interests, and the needs of your community. From that list, narrow down your options to the three that are most interesting to you. Then, **create mind maps for those three most interesting topics!** Start with your basic issue or topic in the center, and build your map out gradually by asking yourself relevant questions, including:

- **Why** is this issue important?
- **What** is causing the issue in the first place? It is okay to make assumptions in the mind mapping phase as long as you follow-up with research and investigation later (which we'll talk about on the next page)!
- **Where** is this an issue? It could be your school, neighborhood, city, state, nation, or the world!
- **Who** is involved? Who is impacted by the problem? Who are the subject-matter experts? What groups or organizations are already doing work on the topic?

This process will help you connect and organize your ideas, think about possible root causes, and identify which issue you are actually the most excited about as a possible project. Your mind map can look HOWEVER you want it to and include any thoughts or ideas you have—this is just one example!



Important note: your Silver Award project **cannot**

- Be a fundraiser or generate profit for any organization, group, or individual (including Girl Scouts)
- Be a recruitment push for any organization (including Girl Scouts)
- Be an endorsement for a consumer product or political candidate
- Take a job away from someone, including store workers, maintenance staff, gardeners, cleaners, or other service providers

Conducting Research

In order to develop a successful project, you must conduct **research**. It is not enough to say that your chosen topic is an issue because you assume it is, or because one or two other people told you it might be. You must **investigate your issue thoroughly** using multiple sources of information to determine the actual truth of the matter. You should conduct research both when you identify your issue and as you develop your project. Up to approximately **10% of your total project hours** may consist of research you conduct for your project. Make sure to write down everything you learn!



Why do you need to conduct research for your Silver Award project? Here are a few reasons:

- Learning more about the issue you have chosen and identifying its root cause so you fully understand what is going on, what is causing it, and develop a solution that makes sense
- Identifying what work is already being done to address the issue, if any
- Hearing from experts and people involved with the issue about what they think needs to happen

Research information from **books** and **reliable online sources**—what studies have been done about your issue, and what data is available about past solutions? You also need to talk to **subject-matter experts** in the field. These could be staff members at the organization you wish to partner with, people who teach about the topic, or others with professional or expert-level experience. You'll need to recruit a subject-matter expert to be your Project Advisor, so this may be the time you are able to do that!

Recruiting a Project Advisor



Who can be a Project Advisor?

A Project Advisor is an **adult subject-matter expert** on the issue the Silver Award project addresses, its root cause(s), and/or the solution the Girl Scouts wish to implement. Parents, caregivers, or troop leaders of girls pursuing their Silver Award **cannot** be the primary Project Advisors. Troop Leaders should step in as Project Advisors only if the one the girls recruited is no longer able to support the project.

How can I find a Project Advisor?

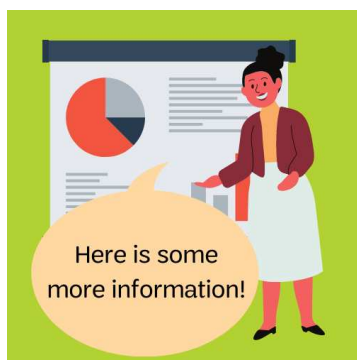
You must **investigate and ask!** If you are partnering with another organization, like a school or non-profit, your Project Advisor might be a staff member there. If your project does not directly involve another organization, you can still find experts by investigating people who are involved in the cause you are pursuing.

What is the role of a Project Advisor?

A Project Advisor offers a Girl Scout **guidance and expertise as needed** during the planning and execution of the Silver Award project. Note that it's important that **the project and its core ideas be the Girl Scout's own**.

How can Project Advisors support Girl Scouts?

There are many things Project Advisors can do to help! This includes: Letting girls interview them to help explain the issue they are addressing. Referring girls to colleagues or acquaintances for interviews or advice. Referring them to relevant books, web resources, and/or organizations. Help them brainstorm the metrics most useful in ensuring their project has a measurable impact.



Common Projects and Pitfalls

Silver Award projects require Girl Scouts to **first** identify an issue in their community and determine its root cause, **then** develop a project to address that root cause.

There are some **common projects** we see that are awesome, but in many cases do not work for the Silver Award. Usually, these are projects that girls chose to do before investigating their community for issues. They picked the project they wanted to do first, and then tried to find somewhere it would fit or that would accept it. **Before** starting one of the following projects, make sure you have first identified a true community issue, and then developed a unique, long-term impact Take Action project.



The following projects **typically cannot earn the Silver Award on their own**. However, they could potentially be **parts** of larger Silver Award projects, depending on your community and the issue you are trying to address. Remember—research your issue and root cause first, then develop your project plan!

Project	Why it might not earn the Silver Award on its own
Donation Drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making and donating or collecting and donating needed items is community service. After you stop donating, the issue/root cause itself remains the same. • Girl Scouts are not permitted to donate money as their Highest Award project.
Buddy Bench	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and installing a Buddy Bench on its own is community service. • How will students know how to use the bench? How will this be enforced? • Measuring impact: how can you tell it is having the effect you wanted it to? • Long-term impact: who is keeping up the program?
Little Free Library	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the actual issue this is addressing: access to books? Low literacy rates? • Project must address the root cause of the issue. Providing books in this way does not guarantee that students who need them are 1: going to have improved long-term access to books, or 2: going to improve their reading skills. • Where will it be installed? It must be somewhere that actually needs and wants it, and where it is not redundant. How close is it to other public libraries? • Long-term impact: how will the Little Free Library be restocked with books? As with a traditional library, it is not enough to trust patrons to bring the books back.
Blessing Boxes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and installing Blessing Boxes on its own is community service. • Where will it be installed? It must be somewhere that actually needs and wants it, and where it is not redundant. How close is it to other food/supply pantries? • Long-term impact: how will the Blessing Box be regularly restocked? It is not enough to hope that the community will take over this project.
Community Mural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Painting a mural on its own is community service. Silver Awards must directly address the root cause of an issue. Murals beautify a space, but true community issues are not caused by the absence of a mural. • Painting a mural on its own does not actively and directly engage the community. • You must be able to measure the impact of your project. How can you tell it is having the effect you wanted it to?
Building a website and/or creating video tutorials for [insert issue/project]	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most cases, building a website or creating video tutorials on their own do not actively and directly engage any community. Websites/videos may be part of a project but cannot typically be the entire project. • Counting the number of views on a website or video does not allow you to measure the impact of your project—you cannot tell who has viewed the project and what impact it had on them or the issue more broadly. • Many websites and videos created by girls have to compete with highly trafficked official or professional sites already dedicated to the issue. The girl-created resource is not new and its reach will often extend to your immediate circle only. What websites/videos already exist on this topic?

Silver Award Project Hours

To earn your Silver Award, you must complete a **minimum of 50 hours of your own work** towards your project. **Each** Girl Scout on your team must complete 50 hours—it is not cumulative for the group. You must plan a project that will take you each at least that amount of time to complete. If your project cannot quite reach 50 hours, you may need to broaden your scope. So—what do those 50 hours look like?

Tasks You **Can** Count Towards Your Silver Award

- **Research** you conduct about your issue, root cause or solution. This can account for approximately 10% of your total hours.
- Time you spend **enacting your plan yourself**, whether that is building a structure, leading a workshop, facilitating an event, et cetera. If multiple girls work on one task together, they can each count that time in their timeline. This should account for most of your project hours.
- Time spent **leading your team**: recruiting/training volunteers, delegating tasks, otherwise directing the work of others.
- Time spent doing **additional money-earning activities** or otherwise acquiring materials for your project. This should account for a **maximum** of 10% of your total hours.

Tasks You **Cannot** Count Towards Your Silver Award

- Time spent completing **Silver Award prerequisites** (Journeys, the Silver Award training)
- Time spent **writing and submitting** your Silver Award final report or supplemental materials.
- Time spent participating in **Girl Scout Product Sales**, even if you are participating to earn money for your Silver Award project.
- Time spent **traveling** to and from different locations you may need to visit for your project (including but not limited to driving and flying).
- Time your team or **volunteers** spent doing work on your behalf.
- Time your **teammate(s)** spent working on tasks that you did not help with.



It is also important to note that the completion of your project is **not** measured solely by this hour requirement! If you complete 50 hours of work, but you have not enacted your entire plan, then you are not quite done yet.



We recommend that you create an **estimated timeline** while you are developing your Silver Award project. The timeline will help you think through the major elements of your project, the sequence of events, whether you have enough hours planned, and key milestone dates and dependencies (which task must be completed before another task can start).

You should consider your project in terms of “working” and “leadership” tasks. **Working tasks** are those related to creating and building the content of your project. These might include designing a curriculum, leading a workshop, or building a structure. **Leadership tasks** are associated with coordinating and directing the work of the team. These include recruiting/training volunteers, planning meetings, delegating tasks, and otherwise directing the work of others.

You must **keep track of your work** as you go along! The hours you ultimately report to us the end must be honest reflections of the work you did. We strongly recommend that you submit your complete timelines with your Silver Award final report. This will help the Awards Team understand your project better in review.

Project Timeline Examples

Here is an example of an **estimated timeline** you and your team can use to plan out your project in the beginning. You can create something like this using tools such as Microsoft Word or Excel, or Google Docs or Sheets. Alternatively, you can just use a piece of paper! But make sure to keep track of it.

TASK: provide a brief/clear description	DATE: when does this need to be done by?	Who will complete this task?	What materials will you need?	How will you get those materials?	Hours	
					Working	Leadership
Researching issue	May 15, 2020	Sophia, Ann, Aditi, Olivia	Reliable sources	Online/library advisor	3	
Recruiting volunteer team	June 3, 2020	Sophia and Aditi	Outreach plan	Create together with Troop Leader		2
Planning workshops	June 15, 2020	Sophia, Ann, Aditi, Olivia	Input from advisor	Meeting	4	
Training volunteer instructors	July 17, 2020	Olivia and Ann	PowerPoint slides, worksheets	Create together with GS team		3
Coordinate with organization	August 9, 2020	Aditi	Phone call, mom's support	Borrow mom's phone, support	2	
Lead first workshop	September 20, 2020	Sophia, Ann, Aditi, Olivia	Slides, worksheets	Create together	1.5	
...And so on, until you have a good sense for the project!						

Then, once you start work on the project, each Girl Scout involved must be sure to **keep track of her own time** working on the project as she goes along. The timeline you keep for your own hours can look however you would like, but we strongly recommend something like this:

Aditi's Silver Award Timeline		Hours	
Date	Task	Working	Leadership
May 15, 2020	Researched with the team – library	3	
May 20, 2020	Researched with the team – talked to experts	3	
June 1, 2020	Recruited volunteers from class at school		2
June 10, 2020	Planned workshops with team and advisor	4	
June 15, 2020	Trained volunteer workshop instructors		3
Sept 1, 2020	Lead workshop 1 for my class	1	
Sept 2, 2020	Phone call with principal about assembly	20 minutes	
...And so on, until the project is complete and you have worked at least 50 hours!			

***Note** that the same time you count in one “working” column cannot be double counted in “leadership!”

Silver Award Checklist

You can use this **checklist** to help you determine if your project will meet the Silver Award requirements.

Yes	No	Question
		Did you find an issue in the community backed by research from multiple sources?
		Did you research and discover the root cause of that issue?
		Did you find out what was already in place to help alleviate the issue?
		Does your plan directly address the root cause you identified?
		Did you develop your plan with the help of your Project Advisor, community members and others involved with the issue?
		Is your target audience (group the project is to benefit) clearly identified?
		Does your plan allow you to directly engage with your target audience and community members? (It is not passive—"I put X here and hope someone will find it and use it.")
		Does your project fit one out of these two descriptions? 1. It is a completely new solution (backed up by research) because current measures are not working to reduce or eliminate the issue 2. It is a new take or similar to a solution that is already in place because current measures are not working or insufficient to reduce or eliminate the issue
		Will the project developed impact the issue/root cause in a long-term or totally sustainable way? (Impact continues after your immediate involvement ends).
		Will you be able to measure the impact your project creates?
		Will you be able to demonstrate leadership (recruit/train volunteers, delegate tasks, set priorities, otherwise direct the work of others)?
		Is the project led by an individual or a small team of 2-4 Cadette Girl Scouts?
		Will each girl be able to spend at least 50 hours working on this project?

If you answer "no" to one or more of the questions, your idea could be a valuable service, but it is not yet a Silver Award. You may have more research to do! If you answer "yes" to all of the questions, then your idea may be a viable Silver Award project, though it's possible there are still changes to be made.

Enacting Your Project Plan

Once you have gained approval to start work from your Troop Leader, it is time to **enact your project plan**.

Remember: you must each **keep track of your work** as you go along. For both individual and group Silver Award projects, you will need to figure out who is responsible for which tasks (this can mean your Silver Award team and/or non-Girl Scout volunteer team). Consider:

- What work can be done **all together**? What work can be **divided up**?
- What are everyone's unique **strengths** and **interests**? Make sure you are each getting a chance to contribute to the parts of the project you are most excited about and challenged by.
- Is work being divided **fairly**? Everyone should contribute what they are able to. This includes working tasks that may be less fun or exciting!
- Is everyone on the **same page** about what needs to be done, and when it needs to happen? Will there be a chance to check-in with each other before finalizing any important details?



Keep your **project deadline** in mind! You need to complete work on your Silver Award and submit your final report to the Council no later than the **September 30th** immediately after you or any member of your team completes the 8th grade. (This is often the beginning of the 9th grade school year).

Silver Award Final Report Submission Process

Once you have completed your project, you must submit your **Silver Award Final Report** to the Girl Scouts of Northern California for review! Please review these steps and follow instructions carefully. **Please note:** only one Final Report is submitted per project—all team members should work together to complete it.

1. Create an account through the GSNorCal Silver Award Final Report form.



Our Council is called Girl Scouts of Northern California, and our Final Report form can be found on GSNorCal.org. Do not submit your report to a different Council. There is an option titled "First Step - Create an Account Now." Follow those instructions.

Please note: if this is an obstacle because you do not have any access to the internet, contact the Awards team by emailing awards@gsnorcal.org or calling 800-447-4475 during regular business hours. Ask to speak with the staff member that manages the Silver Award.

2. Answer all of the prompts and questions as clearly as possible.



Take your time going through the Silver Award Final Report questions. You will complete only one Silver Award final report for your project. There are some questions to be answered as a group, and some for each individual girl to answer. We strongly recommend saving your answers in a separate document as you type them to avoid losing work if you experience any technical issues. Have your Troop Leader proofread!

3. Complete and upload our Council's supplemental forms.



You can find the required signature page on GSNorCal.org. You will need to fill it out completely and collect all required signatures. We recommend that each girl upload a timeline of the work she completed, as well as photos of the project in action! We want to see all the great work you did.

4. Make sure your final report is complete, and hit submit!



You will receive an email confirming your final report was received. If your report is incomplete or you have not uploaded the signature page, this will delay your review. If you do not receive a confirmation email from GSNorCal within one week of submission, email awards@gsnorcal.org.

REVIEW



5. The Awards Team will review your final report within 4-6 weeks.

During our busy seasons, this can take up to 8 weeks. After the review, you will receive an email or phone call with questions and feedback following up on your project.

6. Receive final approval.



Once it is determined that your project meets all of the requirements for the Silver Award, you will receive final approval! If you are missing any requirements, the Awards team will help you devise next steps to complete your project.

Possible Results of the Final Report Review

Your Silver Award Final Report will be reviewed within 4-6 weeks after you receive your submission confirmation, but this can sometimes take up to 8 weeks. Please be patient if you submit during a school break or our busy seasons (summer and fall) as many other Girl Scouts submit reports then, too. You will be notified about the results of the review as soon as possible. **Possible results of the review** include:



Approved as submitted

You have met all requirements of the Silver Award, and earned it! You will receive an official email from Council that will allow you to purchase the Silver Award pin and other commendations.



Request for additional information

The Council was confused by something you wrote in the final report, or otherwise needs more information. Depending on your answers, this will lead to “approved as submitted” or “additional work is required.”



Additional work is required

The Council has determined that your project has not yet met all of the requirements of the Silver Award. In order to earn the Silver Award, you and your team must complete additional work. This will include an assigned deadline.

GSNorCal will NOT accept:

- Projects that are turned in after the deadline
- Projects that do not complete required additional work by their new assigned deadline
- Projects that have unanswered questions after several attempts by Council to get in touch with Girl Scouts and Troop Leaders (we will attempt to contact you at least 3 times)

When Additional Work is Required

If your Silver Award did not meet all requirements, you will be asked to complete **additional work** in order to earn the award. Being asked to complete additional work does **not** mean that your project is bad or that you did not do a good job! It just means that certain rules were not followed or there are some pieces missing, and you are not quite done yet. You will need to complete these pieces in order to gain final approval. Some **common reasons** additional work is required include:

- The Silver Award team completed 50 hours cumulatively (Girl A completed 25 hours on the project and Girl B completed 25 hours on the project). **Each girl must complete 50 hours of her own work!**
- The project completed does not have a feasible long-term impact; it stopped as soon as the girls did. **The girls will likely need to devise a way they could keep their project going past their involvement.**
- The girls are not sure the impact their project is having on the issue at the time of submission. **The girls will likely need to determine how to measure their impact and identify what it has been thus far.**
- The project completed is a pre-existing (“canned”) project the Girl Scouts did not plan themselves.
- The project completed is a collection-only (“make and donate”) project. Making and donating items can be part of a Silver Award, but not the entire project.

In any case, you will receive feedback and support from Council about what next steps may be possible, and when those steps must be completed. If you are confused about the feedback you receive or are not sure how to move forward, please be sure to ask us!

Silver Award Final Report Questions

Below are the Silver Award Final Report questions GSNorCal will ask of you and your team (as of latest revision of this packet—questions are subject to change in the future). But first, three important notes:

1. We strongly recommend **drafting and saving your responses** in a separate document, such as a Google doc, to avoid losing your work. You can copy and paste them into the final form.
2. Make sure you are **only accessing materials from Girl Scouts of Northern California**, not those used by a different Council. We do not accept other Council's materials in place of our own.
3. **Submit your Silver Award final report through our online system**, found on GSNorCal.org. We do not accept submissions via email or post unless you have a special circumstance that you have worked out with us in advance. Otherwise, you will be required to resubmit electronically.

- A. **Define the community issue that your group chose to impact. Include all of the research your group did on this topic and cite your sources. If you worked with an organization, also include your independent online or library research on the community issue.**
 - To be answered collectively by the group in a single response.
 - What are we looking for in this response?: We want to see that you identified a true community issue through research. If girls assume something is a problem but do not do any research or speak to experts, it may not actually be a true issue that needs addressing!
- B. **What is the root cause (reason it happens) of the community issue you defined in Question A that you chose to impact with your project? If your issue has multiple root causes, please include them with the research that you have done.**
 - To be answered collectively by the group in a single response.
 - What are we looking for in this response?: We want to see that you identified the root cause of the issue through research (not assumptions) and tried to address it directly.
- C. **What was your Silver Award project? Exactly what did you and your group do for your project?**
 - To be answered collectively by the group in a single response.
 - What are we looking for in this response?: We want to see specifically what you did for your project (including if it had multiple pieces). We want to see that it logically connects to the root cause.
- D. **How did you evaluate the impact your project had? Based on your evaluation, what impact do you believe your project had on the issue you defined on Question A, and on the root cause you defined in Question B?**
 - To be answered collectively by the group in a single response.
 - What are we looking for in this response?: We want to see that you took steps to ensure that your project has a long-term impact on the issue—it is not a “one and done” or short-term impact project.
- E. **How did you connect with your community? Who do you and your group know now that you did not know before? What did you learn about your community and the world through this project?**
 - To be answered collectively by the group in a single response.
 - What are we looking for in this response?: We want to see how you engaged with your community to make sure they were included in the project. We also want to see that you had the opportunity to demonstrate leadership.
- F. **What skills did each member of your group gain (such as public speaking, team building, advocacy, blogging, and so on) that helps each girl as a person and a leader? Please specifically state what skill(s) each girl individually gained.**
 - To be answered by each girl individually in separate responses.
- G. **What did you discover about yourself through completing this project?**
 - To be answered by each girl individually in separate responses.

Money and Your Silver Award Project

Most Silver Award projects have financial or material needs, and therefore involve money in one way or another. It is important to understand what you may and may not do to fund your Silver Award project.

Things you **can** do to fund your project:

- **Use money earned from Girl Scout Product Sales.**
You may use money earned from Girl Scout Fall Product and/or Cookie Program towards your Silver Award. To do so, you must be part of or participate with a Troop. Money you earn through product program is Troop money and is held in a Troop bank account, so you need to work out an agreement with your Troop ahead of time about how much (if any) money is to be used towards Silver Award projects. The entire Troop must agree, and it is a good idea to write the agreement down so it is not forgotten.
- **Use Product Program reward card conversions.**
You may convert Girl Scout Product Program reward cards to Troop funds for your Silver Award. To do so, you must be part of or partnering with a Troop/Service Unit to hold your money. Money in a Troop bank account is Troop money, so you need to work out an agreement and contract with the entire group. You will need to fill out the [Reward Card Conversion](#) form on [gsnorcal.org/forms](#).
- **Ask for in-kind donations.**
You may ask businesses or other groups for gifts of supplies, equipment, meeting spaces, or other services (NOT money). If you receive in-kind donations, you need to fill out the [Donation Form](#) on [gsnorcal.org/forms](#), and specify that the donation was for a Silver Award.
- **Hold additional money-earning activities.**
These are activities planned and carried out by girls to earn money for their Silver Awards. Examples may include garage sales, bake sales, or car washes. To be eligible to host these events, Troops must have participated in the Fall Product or Cookie Sale in the last 12 months. They must have met the minimum level of 48 items on average per registered girl in the troop sold. You must submit the Money-Earning application on [gsnorcal.org/forms](#) at least 4 weeks before the activity. Additional money-earning activities may not take place during any portion of the Fall Product or Cookie Programs.
- **Participate in cause-related marketing.**
This is when a business donates a percentage of their sales/profits when customers bring in promotional flyers distributed by the Girl Scouts. You need to fill out the Donation Form on [gsnorcal.org/forms](#) after the event takes place, and specify that the donation was for a Silver Award.
- **Apply for grants.**
Grants are sums of money given by organizations for a specific purpose, like an award project. You can research and apply for grants that may apply to your approved project. Make sure the grant you are applying for is youth-based (for students/individuals only). You will need to check with Fund Development before applying for a grant that is >\$250 and/or not youth-based. Contact: helpdeskfdmailbox@gsnorcal.org.
- **Use personal money.**
You may use your own personal money, such as from a job or allowance, to fund your Silver Award. However, the Silver Award is not meant to be a financial hardship on any family or individual, and we encourage girls to pursue other or additional avenues to fund their projects.
- **Conduct fundraising.***
Girl Scouts may **not** directly ask businesses, organizations, or individuals for money for their projects themselves. Fundraising is the sole responsibility of **adults**. One example of this might be: Girl Scouts attend a local Soroptimist Club meeting to discuss their project, and adults ask for a donation to fund the project after the speech. Neither Girl Scouts nor adults may use crowdfunding sites. Adults must check with Fund Development by emailing helpdeskfdmailbox@gsnorcal.org before soliciting a donation of \$500 or greater. Donations of \$500+ must have a written plan and budget for its proposed use. Any financial donations **MUST** have a [Donation Form](#) submitted to GSNorCal.

There are also some things that you are not permitted to do when earning money to fund your Silver Award project/with the money you earn. Please be sure to review this list carefully.

Things you **cannot** do to fund your project or with your money:

- **You may not ask businesses or friends/neighbors for money by yourself.** Without Council permission, solicitation of money from organizations is only done by adults.
- **You may not sell retail items or sell via the internet to earn money.**
- **You may not hold raffles, bingo's, poker nights, or other games of chance to raise money.** These are considered gambling, which Girl Scouts does not support.
- **You may not host money-earning projects where you are potentially doing an activity that someone else is normally hired to do.** You cannot take a job away from someone, including store workers, maintenance staff, gardeners, cleaners, or other service providers.
- **You may not host a project where GSUSA or GSNorCal might be perceived as endorsing a product, political viewpoint, or cause.** This includes retail product sales, demonstration parties, being paid to pass out flyers for a candidate, or giving out freebies from a business (with the exception of restaurant nights).
- **You may not host projects where the money goes to an individual rather than to the Troop.** Independently registered members should partner with their Service Unit or another local troop to hold their money for them, with an understanding of how the money is to be earmarked.
- **You may not engage in crowd funding opportunities, such as GoFundMe.**
- **You may not use your project as a fundraiser for any organization, including Girl Scouts.** Donating money to an organization, group, or individual is not allowed, even if you have money that is left over from your project. Leftover money must be used to further your project materially or returned to its source.

Money - Frequently Asked Questions

If I don't participate in Girl Scout Product Sales, can I still earn the Silver Award?

Yes! Participation in Girl Scout Product Sales is a requirement if you want to do additional money-earning for your project, but not for the Silver Award itself. We do however recommend participating in Product Sales.

What if my project costs more money than I can potentially earn?

If you are concerned that you may not be able to fully fund your project, but it's what you truly want to do, think creatively about how to get what you need in other ways. You may be able to solicit in-kind donations, apply for grants, or any of the other approved methods of funding. We have had girls build hospital wings without spending a dime of their own money.

Can I charge for a Girl Scout event to earn money?

If you are conducting an event as a Girl Scout (such as a badge workshop) and plan to charge a fee above the cost of materials, you must first have this approved by submitting the Money-Earning form. In addition, you must be clear in your advertisements and materials that this is a money-earning event for your Girl Scout Silver Award project, not for Girl Scouts of Northern California. The money you earn must go into a Girl Scout account. This is generally your Troop, and they must agree to be the custodial account. If your troop does not agree to be the custodial account, you can get help from your Service Unit.

I cannot raise money for other organizations for my Silver Award, but can I do it on my own?

As an individual, you can volunteer for other organizations and raise money on their behalf. However, any funds raised cannot be put towards your Silver Award project, nor can you count the hours in your project timeline. You may not represent yourself as a Girl Scout to the public since you are volunteering for another organization. For example, if your local Red Cross chapter is raising money to purchase training dummies, you may participate as their volunteer. However, you cannot count that service as part of your time toward any Girl Scout award or service hours. However, you can plan a Silver Award project using the equipment that was purchased as part of your efforts as a volunteer for that organization.

Travel and Your Silver Award Project

All Silver Award projects involve **travel** at some level. This might be **driving** to a school or other local organization close to home, or it might mean **flying** to another country. All award projects need to follow the Girl Scouts of Northern California travel regulations.

A Girl Scout trip for a Silver Award project is defined as **any time you are in charge of transporting people from one place to another**. For example: After one of your troop meetings, your troop decides to go to the site of your project together. Since everyone is going together and carpooling, it is considered a trip. Before travelling, ensure that you have an adult with the relevant training in place for the following roles.



- **Troop Trip Organizer** – Assists girls in planning, budgeting, and organizing short outings, overnights, or longer trips. Training for this role is required.
- **Troop Driver** – Drives girls and adults for trips and outings to ensure that the proper safety procedures are followed while transporting girls. Training for this role is required. As a Girl Scout, you are not allowed to drive volunteers for your Silver Award project.
- **First Aider** – Provides aid as needed during trips/group activities. Must have a current First Aid/CPR certification and have completed GSNorCal online Girl Scout First Aider course. Training for this role is required.

Before any trip, make sure that you do the following:

1. If you need to travel somewhere far away, potentially dangerous, or plan to stay overnight, fill out the [Trip or High-Adventure Approval Form](#) at least 4 weeks to 1 year in advance of your activity.
2. Review the Safety Activity Checkpoints related to the activity/trip.
3. If the trip involves High-Adventure Activities, vendors/facilities must be approved by Council. To find a list of High-Adventure Approved Vendors, go to our website [here](#).
4. Ensure that all drivers have complied with the troop driver guidelines and have completed the troop driver training. The troop trip organizer is responsible for receiving a copy of a current state-issued driver's license for each driver for any trip requiring Council approval. The troop trip organizer is responsible for ensuring that each vehicle to be used in transporting girls for any trip has current insurance coverage. If groups rent a vehicle, they can also purchase Girl Scout auto insurance.

General Guidelines:

- There must be at least one adult **First Aider** travelling with the group.
- GSUSA recommends **2 adults to each car**.
- Each vehicle should be supplied with a **First Aid kit**.
- Ensure you have the proper **adult-girl ratio** for the trip.
- **Additional Accidents and Sickness Coverage** must be purchased for trips lasting 3 nights or more, or trips that are out of state or international.



Remember: time that you or your volunteers spend traveling for your project (by car, plane, bike, et cetera) does not count towards your project timeline! Your project timeline reflects the hours you spend actually working on your project, not the time you spend getting to key locations.

Safety, Insurance, and Your Silver Award Project

It is very important to be aware of all safety requirements and complete all necessary paperwork that may pertain to your project so that **girls are safe, adults are protected from liability, and you can be found in case of emergency**. Please review the following situations and the types of insurance required.

Situation Requiring Insurance	Type of Insurance Required
Your project utilizes a facility that requires a Certificate of Liability Insurance . Check with the location’s facility manager to make sure required contracts are signed/obtained.	If the facilities and city managers for the sites you will be using/visiting for your project require that a contract be signed and/or a Certificate of Liability Insurance be issued, fill out the Certificate of Insurance Request form . This form can be found on our website in the forms and documents section.
Your project includes the participation of non-Girl Scout participants (such as your volunteers).	Plan 2 is recommended for non-member insurance. This covers all non-Girl Scout participants who will be working with or alongside you during your project.
Any participants in your award project do not have personal health insurance .	If you or any participants do not have personal insurance, Plan 3P is recommended to cover all participants during the days of your award project.
You are traveling outside the state of California or country.* Your project requires you to be away from home for 4 or more consecutive days.*	If you are travelling outside the state of California, Plan 3E is required. This insurance must cover all days you will be travelling and working on your project. Insurance must be purchased for each participant (including non-Girl Scouts) for each day. The form must be filled out completely, and you must indicate which award you are pursuing. If you are travelling internationally for your project, Plan 3PI insurance is required to cover you and everyone participating in your award project. This insurance will need to be submitted with the roster of all participants.
Your project includes any activities that are considered “ High Adventure .” *	Check with Council to make sure the activity and vendor you plan on using for your activity are approved. For most High Adventure activities, an approved vendor must be used and a First Aider is required.
* For all projects involving “ High Adventure or trips ,” you must submit a High Adventure and Travel Approval form. This can be found on our website in the forms and documents section. Do not proceed with your trip without approval. Contact travel@gsnorcal.org or call 510-562-8470 x 1104 with questions.	
Note on all forms that you are requesting insurance for your Silver Award project.	
All forms must be submitted 2-4 weeks before your event for processing —the earlier the better. In all cases, a confirmation of processing and approval will be mailed out.	
All insurance is non-refundable and all dates must be accurate , as these cannot be changed. Council will support each girl to the best of our ability in providing liability and plan insurance, but Girl Scouts who do not follow the guidelines provided will not be covered under Girl Scout insurance.	
For other questions about insurance or support with purchasing, contact insurance@gsnorcal.org .	



Please note: most Girl Scout Silver Award projects will require insurance at some point!

Media and Your Silver Award Project

Media is present in some capacity in most award projects. Media includes (but is not limited to) **videos, photos, websites, blogs, brochures, and flyers**. Any media that will be shared publicly must be approved by Council staff before distributing. Email awards@gsnorcal.org with the subject line “Silver Award media review” at least 2 weeks in advance of when you need to release your materials to have them reviewed. When creating any media for your project, keep the following rules and guidelines in mind:



Protect your privacy. Do not use your full name, disclose where you live or go to school (this includes by accident—is your street name visible in a photo?) or provide any other information that could be used to contact you. Do not provide personal phone numbers, email addresses, or home addresses to anyone. If you need people to be able to contact you, create an email address that is specific to your project and use only that address.



You need consent from others. When using images or video of other people in your media, you need their written consent to show the material publicly. If the person in the video/photo is a minor (including young adults that are 18 years old but still in high school), you must get their guardian’s signature on the consent form. Adults in the video/photo must also provide a signed consent form. Make sure to keep these forms for your records.



Be clear that your media is for your Girl Scout Silver Award Project, not created by GSNorCal or GSUSA. We have to be careful to avoid confusion amongst members—we do not want them to think that an event is one thing when it is actually another. You also deserve the credit for your hard work! Example: do not write something like “Girl Scouts of Northern California Presents: Movie Night!” on a flyer. You could write something like: “Presenting: Movie Night Benefitting Alex’s Girl Scout Silver Award Project!”



Media you develop must be a unique creation. It cannot be directly copied from another source and added to yours. Cite your sources. It also should not be a document or online source (like a website) that covers the same thing other sources already cover in the same way. Before planning to create a new website or piece of media, do an online search for what may already be out there.



Copyright permission is required to use copyrighted materials. This may apply if you want to screen a movie, play a song, display a photo, or use written materials like scripts or worksheets. Copyright permission must be obtained from the copyright holder to use these materials. If you cannot get copyright permission for the materials you want, you should investigate works that are now in the public domain—the public, rather than a particular person owns these. There may also be some materials that are exempt from copyright under Fair Use—limited performance of certain materials for educational, non-profit purposes with credit given. Please review the [Copyrights and Trademarks FAQ](#) published by GSUSA for further info.



You need to follow the guidelines in the Internet Safety Pledge. The [Internet Safety Pledge](#) provided by GSUSA outlines the expectations for girls using the internet or publishing materials online.



Remember: in most situations, creating a website, video, blog, or other social media for your Silver Award project will **not** be enough to ensure that your project is sustainable. Just because something will exist on the internet for a long time (or forever) does not mean the **impact of your project** will be sustained beyond your involvement. Check out trailhead.gsnorcal.org for more on sustainability!

Frequently Asked Questions

Prerequisites

- **When can I start my Cadette Journey to complete the prerequisite?**
You may start work on your Cadette Journey as early as the summer between 5th and 6th grade.
- **Can I complete my Journey at the same time as the Silver Award?**
No, you must complete your Journey before beginning the Silver Award.
- **Which Journey should I do? Which one is best/easiest?**
All available Cadette level Girl Scout Journeys will satisfy the Silver Award prerequisite, including new ones. All Journeys are about the same amount of work, so you should select the one that seems most interesting to you, or one that you and your Troop would like to complete together.
- **How can I complete my Journey?**
Journeys may be completed individually or at the Troop/group level. Some Journey books are available for purchase at GSNorCal shops, while others are available to Troop Leaders online. You will need to follow the steps of the specific Journey you are doing and make sure you complete each step, including the Take Action project at the end. Sometimes Troops or Service Units host “Journey in a Day” events where girls can complete part of their Journey award.
- **What is the difference between a Journey Take Action project and an Award Take Action project?**
The *Journey Take Action project* is planned individually or as a team based on the topic of the specific Journey. It is completed within the Journey experience to earn the Journey Awards. There is no set amount of time required to complete the Journey Take Action project, and it may benefit Girl Scouting. Journeys are approved entirely at the Troop Leader level. The *Silver Award Take Action project* is planned individually or in small teams of 2-4 Girl Scouts based on interest in an issue or problem in their community. Each girl must complete a minimum of 50 hours on the project, and they must develop a team of volunteers to assist them. The project may benefit Girl Scouting only with Council permission. Approval to start work is provided by Troop Leaders, and final approval is provided by Council.

Project Teams

- **We have a Girl Scout in 5th or 9th grade that really wants to earn the Silver Award. Can she?**
Girl Scouts in 5th or 9th grade are not eligible to earn the Silver Award because the Silver Award can only be earned by Girl Scouts in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade. They should look into the Bronze or Gold Award!
- **What if I really want to do a project with my Troop of 5 or more Girl Scouts?**
The Girl Scout Silver Award is earned by 1-4 Girl Scouts per team, no more. A Troop of 5 or more must divide into smaller groups depending on what each girl or group of girls is interested in.
- **We are having a really difficult time breaking into smaller groups. What should we do?**
We recommend stepping away from the topic for a few days, and revisiting it with a clean slate. Complete the exercise on page 8 of this packet individually, and see where your interests may align.
- **Can I be on a team with Girl Scouts in a different Troop than me?**
Yes! As long as everyone’s Troop Leader is aware of this and provide approval, this is fine.
- **Can a girl who is not a registered Girl Scout be part of my Silver Award team?**
If one of your friends is very interested in working with you on the Silver Award, they may absolutely be part of your volunteer team and help you with your project! However, non-Girl Scouts are not able to earn the Silver Award. If your friend is interested, she can consider joining Girl Scouts and completing the prerequisites to earn the Silver Award with you! Otherwise, she can be an amazing helper for your project.
- **What is the difference between the “Silver Award team” and the “volunteer team”?**
The Silver Award team refers to the group of 2-4 Girl Scouts that may be working together to earn the Silver Award (though many Girl Scouts choose to earn the Silver Award individually, as well). The volunteer team refers to anyone the girls are leading that is helping support the project. Members of the volunteer team are not working towards earning the Silver Award themselves.

Project Content

- **Will [insert project description] work for the Silver Award? / We are not sure if our project idea will meet Silver Award requirements. Can Council approve it for us?**

Be sure to review the resources in this packet, as they can help you determine if a given project will meet Silver Award requirements or miss the mark. Troop Leaders are responsible for approving Silver Award projects to start work. They should take the Silver Award training with their Girl Scouts and refer to resources available on our website. If they still have questions or concerns after using our resources, we can help!

- **I want to do a project that benefits Girl Scouting. Who should I talk to?**

Make sure you have started this process by first identifying an issue that you care about—not by picking a project to do for Girl Scouts. You should determine if Girl Scouts is a logical beneficiary for your project after you identify the issue and start thinking about how to address it. If you feel that Girl Scouts is the most logical beneficiary, make sure to reach out to the GSNorCal Awards Team! They will work with the relevant staff members to make sure your project aligns with our Council strategic goals and/or property plans.

Deadlines

- **When do I have to complete and submit my Silver Award?**

The Girl Scout Silver Award must be completed and submitted to Council by September 30th the year you complete the 8th grade and start the 9th. If you are on a team with multiple Girl Scouts, your deadline is the September 30th the oldest girl in the group completes 8th grade and starts the 9th.

- **If I am in a group with Girl Scouts that are younger than me, can our group deadline be their deadline?**

No, you must plan for the earliest deadline to ensure all the girls on your team can earn the Silver Award.

- **Can I get an extension on the Silver Award project to complete the work if I do not finish in time?**

No, we do not award extensions on Silver Award projects based on not finding the time to fit it into your schedule or forgetting to turn it in. We consider extensions only for extreme situations such as severe illnesses or the loss of your home on a case-by-case basis. If you find yourself in a difficult situation, please contact the Council directly to discuss it in advance of the deadline.

Final Report Submission and Review

- **Where do I submit my Silver Award Final Report?**

The Silver Award Final Report Submission Form can be found on GSNorCal.org as a link on the main Silver Award page. At time of writing, it can be found at [this link](#) or by searching “Silver Award final report” on GSNorCal.org. Make sure you are only using materials from Girl Scouts of Northern California!

- **Does each Girl Scout on my team have to submit a Final Report?**

No, only one Final Report is submitted per project. However, each Girl Scout on your team must work together to write the answers. Some require a single response that the group should work out together, and others require that each girl write her own response.

- **I submitted my Silver Award Final Report YESTERDAY, and I haven't received confirmation yet!**

If you have submitted your Silver Award Final Report very recently and haven't heard back yet (especially if you submitted on the September 30th deadline or during a holiday break), please be patient and only reach out if it is the day of your deadline and you have reason to believe your report is not going through because of a technical error. Our staff receives a large number of final reports and needs time to process them all. If you have submitted over a holiday break when staff are not working, they will process it when they return.

- **I submitted my Silver Award Final Report A WHILE AGO, but I haven't heard back from Council yet!**

If you submitted your Silver Award Final Report a few weeks ago and have not received confirmation that we got your final report, please reach out to us. It is not our intention to leave anyone hanging, and we want to make sure that your final report did not somehow slip through the cracks on our end, or get sent to the wrong Council without anyone realizing. We will work with you to figure out the situation and get everything sorted!

- **How long does it take to review Silver Award Final Reports?**

Depending on a few variables, including when your materials are turned in, it typically takes between 4 and 6 weeks for Council to review Silver Award final reports, but can take up to 8 weeks during busy periods. Do not wait until the deadline to submit if you finish before then—you may get a faster response!

Girl Scout Trainings

The Silver Award demands a lot! There are trainings available through our website, gsnorcal.org, to help you further navigate the award earning process and the specifics of certain project components.

- **Silver Award Training***: This training goes over the Silver Award from start to finish and is a great resource for both girls and adults. You must take this training before starting your project.
- **Safety Wise** and **Girl Scout First Aider**: These trainings review general Girl Scout first aid procedures. First Aiders are required during part of most Silver Award projects. Your First Aider will need to take these trainings and be First Aid/CPR certified.
- **Event Manager***: For most events, fairs, workshop series, or other programs you host for your project, you will be required to take the Event Manager training.
- **Money Matters**: This training reviews money management as it relates to troop funds. Since Silver Award money management is handled in the same way that troop funds are, this is a great training to ensure you know how to manage your money as well as what you can and cannot do with it.
- **Volunteer-Run Camp Director**: This training reviews what is required of a volunteer-run camp and of its director. This is helpful if your Silver Award project includes camp or a camp-like component.
- **Troop Driver**: This training is great for anyone who plans to drive others around for your Silver Award project. If you are providing transportation for anyone, you must take this training and be a licensed driver. Anyone under the age of 18, still in high school, or still registered with Girl Scouts as a girl member is not allowed to serve as a Troop Driver.

So What, Now What?

Now that you have all of the information you need, it is time to go out there and **earn your Girl Scout Silver Award!** Remember to abide by the Girl Scout Promise and Law through your project and beyond. Make sure to **use your resources wisely**. Use this **packet**, the **Girl Scout trainings**, our **Trailhead blog**, and your **support network** to Go for the Silver.

Never be afraid to ask for help. If you cannot find answers to your questions in the resources listed above, our **Awards staff** is happy to assist you. Email awards@gsnorcal.org or call 800-447-4475 during regular business hours.

Once you earn your Silver Award, you can **celebrate** your achievements! You may celebrate with your Troop, Service Unit, and beyond! Tell the world your story.

