



Girl Scout Gold Award: Quick Start Guide

Before You Begin: Complete the Prerequisites

Awesome! You've decided to Go for Gold and GSHPA is here to support you along the way. Before you begin, please make sure you have completed two Senior or Ambassador Journeys **OR** one Journey **AND** your Silver Award. These steps are important as they will help you learn how to take the lead and work collaboratively with the team that you assemble!

Please note: You must submit a proposal to Council *before* you begin to work on your project. The steps below guide you through the Gold Award process to ensure that you have all the information you need before you begin. Feel free to reach out if you have any questions!

Step One: Choose an Issue

1 Once you've created an account in GoGold, start by choosing an issue. You'll want to choose an issue that means something to you, but also to your community. The most important part of this step is addressing the *root cause* of an issue; remember, think long-term solutions! Once you've determined the issue you would like to address, think about your audience; you'll want to reach beyond just your friends, family, and troops.

Step Two: Investigate

Start with the mind-mapping tool to help you uncover the root cause of your issue. Research everything you can about your issue and be sure to use a variety of sources: Interviews, books and articles from the library or online, or connecting with a local group or organization that relates to your issue, are great places to start.

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Step Three: Get Help

Minimum requirement: Identify 3-5 team members outside of self, family, and Girl Scouts and identify Project Advisor.

3 While the support of family, friends, and troop members is important during your Gold Award, we want you to branch out beyond your inner circle. Think about people in your community who would help support you as you tackle your issue! Is there someone at a local organization who could serve as your Project Advisor? Is there someone you know who is passionate about the issue you are addressing? Your advisor should be someone who is knowledgeable on your subject matter, and who is willing to take the time to offer you encouragement and help you through any roadblocks you might encounter.

Step Four: Create a Plan

Minimum Requirements: A clearly described project description detailing what your issue is and how you plan to address the root cause of the issue with your project. At least 1 clearly defined project goal.

Project milestones clearly defined in timeline. Expenses and fundraising plan clearly outlined (if needed). Plan for sharing beyond target audience.

During this part you'll want to think about your timeline, budget, resources, and plan of action.

Connect with your Project Advisor to create a Take Action plan that achieves sustainable and measurable impact. Remember to create realistic goals for yourself, if you have any roadblocks we're here to help! Fill out your project proposal on the GoGold website and submit it to be reviewed by GSHPA Gold Award Staff. Please be sure to write at least two to three sentences per answer, articulate your issue clearly.

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Keep in mind, your project must meet these 4 criteria (in addition to the minimum requirements):

- **Root Cause** - identify and address the root cause of your issue.
- **Sustainability** - a concrete plan to continue implementing the project.
- **Measurability** - the impact of your project is defined and measurement tools are identified.
- **National/Global Link** - include research and evidence at the local and national level and a plan to spread your project beyond your local community.
- **Education/Advocacy** - plan for a mix of passive and active sharing beyond the target audience.

****Submit your Proposal for verification by your Troop Leader and Project Advisor. Then it will be sent to council staff for review****

Step Five: Present Your Plan

Minimum Requirement: Participate in Gold Award Proposal Interview and submit the GSHPA Gold Award Agreement. Use feedback to make changes to your proposal.

Once you submit your proposal, GSHPA Staff will reach out to schedule your interview and send you a link to the Gold Award Agreement form. During your interview, be prepared to answer questions about what makes your project a Gold Award project, accept feedback on how to make your project better, and ask thoughtful questions to help you project meet the Gold Standard.

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****After the initial interview, most girls have to go back and revise Step Four before they can continue to Step 6. Be patient and don't be afraid to ask for help along the way if you get stuck!****

Step Six: Take Action

Once your project has been approved by GSHPA, you can begin setting things into motion! Don't forget to keep records of your time, the tasks you've completed, and most importantly, take pictures! You'll want to remember this part.

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Step Seven: Educate and Inspire

Complete your final report via GoGold and submit it to have it's final review. Now take a moment and celebrate your wonderful accomplishment! Once your final project has been reviewed and accepted, you can officially call yourself a Gold Award Girl Scout! Keep an eye out for emails on how GSHPA will plan to recognize your accomplishments

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Frequently Asked Questions:

Q: What is the deadline to submit my final report:

A: The deadline for 2020 graduating seniors is December 31, 2020. The deadline for all other classes is September 31 after you graduate from High School. If you would like to be recognized during the 2021 recognition, you need to submit your final report for approval by April 1, 2021.

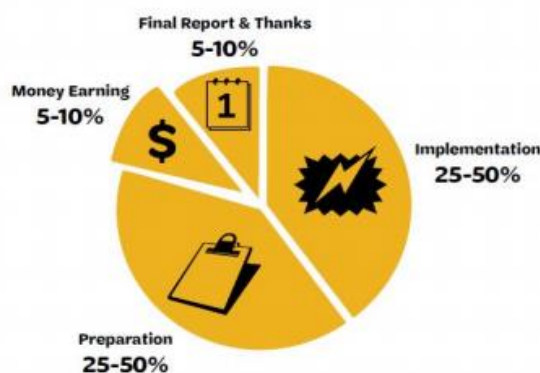
Q: Where can I get more information about the Gold Award?

A: Visit GSHPA's website for resources on Going for Gold. [Watch the recorded webinar](#) for the most up-to-date information and a thorough explanation of the Gold Award process from council staff.

Q: How much time should I spend on each step?

A: You should spend a minimum of 80 hours on your Gold Award Project, but some projects spend more time than that! This pie chart gives a good idea of what the breakdown of your project should look like. Keep in mind, you want to submit your Proposal as soon as possible in the planning stage, so make sure you don't put in too much time before your project is approved.

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



Q: What is acceptable to count towards my 80 hours?

A: Plenty of tasks are acceptable to count towards your minimum requirement of 80 hours for this project; they range from brainstorming to paperwork associated with your project. Check out the table below for some examples as to what counts and what doesn't. If you have more specific questions about this, reach out to Council's Gold Award Staff Member.

Tasks that count:

- Developing your project.
- Implementing your project.
- Communicating with others
- Research and planning.
- Recruiting, training, and supervising your team
- You can count up to 15 hours on research and development

- Buying and gathering supplies
- Researching, developing, and planning approved Money-Earning-Activities to fund your project
- Attending a Highest Awards Info Session or watching the webinar

Tasks that do not count:

- Completing the prerequisites: 2 Journeys or Silver Award and 1 Journey.
- Time given by the people helping you.
- Volunteering for the agency that benefits from the project.

Q: Can I use GO!Dough to fund my Gold Award Project?

A: You can use GO!Dough to purchase materials from the GSHPA online store. You can also use troop cookie proceeds toward your Gold Award Project, with your troop leaders' permission. If you need more money than that for your Gold Award, consult the [Guide to Fundraising](#) on our website.

Q: Can I fundraise for my Gold Award?

A: Yes, you can fundraise for your Gold Award. GSHPA works with The Foundation for Enhancing Communities to ensure that all of our Gold Award fundraising complies with federal and state guidelines. Check out this [Guide to Fundraising](#) for more information about the kinds of fundraising you can do for Gold Award. Keep in mind, fundraising can take time and effort, so make sure you factor that time into your Gold Award project. Starting too late can make it hard to raise the necessary funds and execute your project in time.

Tip: The best proposals include a plan for fundraising, and then TFEC helps you execute that plan!

Q: How do I find the root cause of an issue?

A: Consider using the mind-mapping tool in Step 2 of GoGold. Start with the issue you're trying to address, and create branches of potential causes. Using those potential causes, consider project ideas.

Q: What's the difference between Take Action and Service?

A: A Take Action project addresses the *root cause* of an issue, while a Service project addresses a *need*. Think of a Service project as a Band-Aid - it solves the problem for a short time, but does not resolve the underlying issue. Here are some examples:

Issue	Service Project	Evolution	Gold
Food Scarcity	Hold a collection for canned foods and donate them to the local food pantry.	Think about a sustainable solution to address this issue. How can you make sure the food pantry <i>always</i> has food?	Work with local schools to donate extra lunch food to the food pantry. Create a community campaign to make it happen. Establish a program at your school where students volunteer at the pantry on lunch breaks.
Library/ Literacy	Volunteering at your local library	Go back to the issue you want to address- how can you <i>sustainably</i> increase library usage in your town? Consider ways to appeal to young readers.	Working with your local elementary school to create a QR code for every book for an entire grade. Teach students, parents, and teachers how to utilize and get the most out of the codes.

Q: Can my Project Advisor be my Troop Leader?

A: No, your Project Advisor cannot be your Troop Leader or parent/guardian. Your Project Advisor should be a subject matter expert on the issue you are trying to address (ex. If you are addressing the issue of food scarcity, then your Project Advisor could be the director of a local food pantry).

Q: I submitted my proposal a week ago and haven't heard anything, what should I do?

A: Email mygoldaward@gshpa.org and let GSHPA council staff know that you submitted your proposal. They will reach out shortly to schedule an interview.

Q: I forgot my GoGold login information, what should I do?

A: Email mygoldaward@gshpa.org and request a new password.

Q: I finished my proposal, but GoGold won't let me submit it.

A: Make sure you have completed each field in the proposal stage. Make sure you've entered at least one teammate and budget field (even if you don't anticipate any project expenses). If you are still having issues submitting, contact mygoldaward@gshpa.org.

Q: My project is time-sensitive, can I start working on my project before my proposal is approved?

A: No, you should always wait for your proposal to be approved before you begin working on your project. The project approval process frequently takes a few weeks, depending on the initial proposal. Consider that if your project is time sensitive, it may not work for your Gold Award.

Q: How do I know if my project will be approved?

A: Compare your project to the [rubric on our website](#). Does it meet the minimum standard for all of the criteria? If not, revise your proposal before submitting. Keep in mind, proposals often have to be revised before they can be approved. Don't be discouraged if your first proposal needs some improvements!