



# Girl Scout Gold Award - Overview

Girl Scouts Heart of Central California | 6601 Elvas Avenue Sacramento, CA 95819 | [www.girlscoutshcc.org](http://www.girlscoutshcc.org)

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award given to a girl in Girl Scouting. Employers, organizations and colleges nationwide recognize it as a prestigious award. The award represents 2-4 years of hard work. Steps 1-4 can be completed while a girl is in grades 9-12; steps 5-7 must be completed when she is in grades 10-12. The Final Report must be turned into the council before September 30<sup>th</sup> after high school graduation.

Girls should not make any final decisions about the project until they have completed Steps 1-4. Projects must be age and experience appropriate, while being challenging to the Girl Scout. Project plans require a minimum of 65 hours of commitment, leadership and work.

Realistic timelines are critical – Steps 1-4 usually take two years, and Steps 5-7 take one to two years. The timeline for Steps 5-7 will include a minimum of a two-month span of time for project implementation and a minimum of six weeks for the application approval process prior to project implementation. Most projects take four to six months to complete and include 75-100 hours of service time.

Girl Scouts Heart of Central California purchases the Girl Scout Gold Award pin for each recipient. They are distributed at the annual awards ceremony held in May. Recipients and family members may purchase further mementos from the Girl Scout Shop. Girls must keep accurate records and copies of all work.

## SEVEN STEPS TO EARNING THE GIRL SCOUT GOLD AWARD

- Step 1:** **Get Organized** – Find an advisor; attend *Achieving Excellence: Earning your Girl Scout Gold Award* (look in the program calendar for dates and locations); buy and use the Girl Scout binder insert *Go For It: Gold* and track your progress.
- Step 2:** **Girl Scout Gold Leadership Award** – Earn three Interest Project Patches relating to different parts of the Girl Scout Law, One Focus book with Leadership Goals and 30 hours of leadership activities.
- Step 3:** **Girl Scout Gold Career Award** – 40 hours of career-related activities
- Step 4:** **Girl Scout Gold 4B's Challenge** – search for personal passions and research your community
- Step 5:** **Develop a Girl Scout Gold Award Project** – Contact the Program Specialist who oversees the Girl Scout Gold Award to generate or discuss project ideas and learn how to write a project proposal. Plan and secure the most up-to-date application packet, available at [www.girlscoutshcc.org](http://www.girlscoutshcc.org) (NOTE: DO NOT use the forms on the GSUSA website. They provide only the basic guideline and not the complete application required for council approval). Submit the application packet to the Program Specialist in charge of the Girl Scout Gold Award process at least six weeks prior to the start of your project. *Girls must have approval from the council BEFORE implementing their project.*
- Step 6:** **Act** – Implement the Girl Scout Gold Award project; *minimum* of 65 hours.
- Step 7:** **Reflect & Celebrate** – Submit the Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report, timeline and final budget within 8 weeks of completing the project. Attend the council's annual recognition ceremony in May. The council will mail an official letter congratulating the girl on her accomplishment. The Girl Scout council shop carries extra celebration items, such as a parent pin, patch, photo frames, jewelry and more.

## DEADLINES FOR APPROVAL

- Six Weeks** Application packets must be submitted a minimum of six weeks prior to project implementation to obtain council approval. This will allow enough time for the Program Specialist overseeing the Girl Scout Gold Award process to work with the Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory Committee, the girl and her supporting adults.
- November 15** **Deadline to submit application packet** to receive the Girl Scout Gold Award at the annual ceremony the following May.
- March 20** **Deadline to submit project report** (after approval of application and completion of project) to receive the Girl Scout Gold Award at the annual ceremony in May.
- September 30** **(of a girl's last year as a Girl Scout girl member)** Last chance to submit final project report (after approval of application and completion of the project) to be recognized as earning the Girl Scout Gold Award by GSUSA and Girl Scouts Heart of Central California.

Questions? Contact the Program Specialist overseeing the with Girl Scout Gold Award process:  
916.452.9181 or 800.322.4475 or [goldaward@girlscoutshcc.org](mailto:goldaward@girlscoutshcc.org).



## Girl Scout Gold Award – FAQ's

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### **What forms should a girl use for council approval?**

Girl Scouts Heart of Central California has a Proposal Packet and Final Report form used by the Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory Committee that are specific to our council; forms from the GSUSA site will not be accepted. Girls should visit [www.girlscoutshcc.org](http://www.girlscoutshcc.org), call the council office or email [goldaward@girlscoutshcc.org](mailto:goldaward@girlscoutshcc.org) to secure the most current forms.

### **What if a girl has already done some similar activities while doing other Girl Scout awards? Can these activities count toward her Girl Scout Gold Award?**

Activities done prior to working on the Girl Scout Gold Award may not count toward this award. (No “double dipping”) If the charm for a Focus book is earned and should she choose to apply it to her Girl Scout Gold Award, the girl will need to set new goals for herself in that Focus book.

### **What is the role of the Girl Scout Gold Award Advisory Committee?**

This is a group of adult volunteers dedicated to helping girls succeed. They review project proposals via email. They will review the size, scope, and cost of the project and make recommendations to ensure that it is an appropriate project to earn the Girl Scout Gold Award, while ensuring the applicant's success. Committee members are often aware of community issues and understand the dynamics that could impact projects. They may also be able to introduce the girl to other adults who can assist them.

### **Is the Girl Scout Gold Award Project an individual project or may a team implement it?**

Because the Girl Scout Gold Award is earned by individuals, the project must be an individual project. Girls who want to work together can often find a similar community issue to address, but each girl must implement a unique, “stand alone” project. Once the criteria for an individual project are met girls can share an additional component above and beyond the requirements for their individual projects. No projects may depend upon the implementation of another project. Often times, girls find that group projects need to be so large, complex, and diverse that they find working by themselves to be much more beneficial and personally satisfying. Groups of more than two are highly discouraged from addressing the same community issue.

### **Should the steps be completed in any particular order?**

Step one must be completed first and steps 5-7 last. Steps 2-4 can be completed in any order or simultaneously.

### **Who can earn the Girl Scout Gold Award?**

Registered Girl Scouts of the appropriate age may earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. Girls do not need to earn the Girl Scout Silver Award in order to work on the Girl Scout Gold Award. Girls must be in grades 9-12 to complete Steps 1-4 and in grades 10-12 to complete Steps 5-7.

### **How do girls get \$\$\$?**

Every girl going for this award will face some financial challenges. When designing a project, it's important to think creatively about how a difference can be made with little or no money. Candidates may collect donated materials and services, receive funds from cooperating agencies, request troop or service unit money and develop other money earning strategies. Consult the council's *Money Matters* publication and the *Go For It: Gold* Girl Scout binder insert for more information and guidelines.

### **Can the project address an issue for the Girl Scout community?**

Girl Scout Gold Award projects must address a community issue outside of Girl Scouting. Girl Scout Gold Award projects are much broader in scope and impact than any community service project. Girl Scouts may be among those recruited as project volunteers.

### **What types of projects should be avoided?**

“Canned” service projects, projects where the girl is simply “doing the leg-work” for an agency or group, single events that have previously been developed and implemented by others, and anything that is Girl Scout-exclusive do not qualify as Girl Scout Gold projects. These are all excellent and worthy *service* projects, but it takes something extra to be a Girl Scout Gold Award project. Girl Scout Gold Award projects address a community issue in 3-5 different, stand-alone ways (components), have at least one ongoing element, challenge a girl's leadership and organizational skills and make a lasting change to life in her community.

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