



# The Girl Scout Silver Award: A Guide for Troop/Group Volunteers

## *How can girls earn the Silver Award?*

The first step is to complete Silver Award Training to introduce all Cadettes to the Silver Award. Refer to GSOC's Silver Award resources including the Cadette Workbook, Adult Guide, and Project Proposal and Final Report Forms to guide girls through the seven steps to earn the Silver Award.

When girls are ready to get started, they work with a small team (of up to three other Girl Scouts) or on their own to complete the Silver Award Project Proposal including the signature page and submit a copy with the online GSOC Silver Award Intent Form at least 30 days prior to the planned project start date.

After the project, girls complete the Final Report including the signature page and submit a digital copy with the online GSOC Silver Award Report Form.

## *What are the core components of earning the Silver Award?*

The Silver Award is a Take Action Project. It's important for girls to understand the difference between Take Action and Community Service and the five elements of a Highest Awards Take Action Project. The Silver Award requires three elements: leadership, root cause, sustainable. To earn the Silver Award, girls show leadership, research and address a root cause of an issue in their community, and create a plan to make the project sustainable.

Optional: Girls might also "try" to make the project measurable and to make a national and/or global link.

## **Here's more on that:**

- **Girls brainstorm to identify issues** they care about first, then think about possible solutions they might want to implement before choosing one they want to develop into their project plan using the Project Proposal.

- **Sustainable** projects continue to have an impact after the Girl Scout has completed her part.
- **Measurable** projects enable a girl to demonstrate her impact through data and other information. She can use numbers to say, "Here's how I know I made a change."
- A Silver Award project has a **national and/or global link** when a Girl Scout can explain how her project connects to an issue that is relevant beyond her own community. Examples: poverty, literacy, women's rights, environmental sustainability.

## *What resources are available to help girls and caregivers understand the Silver Award?*

Visit the GSOC [Silver Award](#) page for council resources including the Cadette Workbook, Adult Guide, Project Proposal, and Final Report. NEW guides are designed to complement new training available beginning October 2023 and feature step-by-step instructions for earning the Silver Award, helpful resources and guidance for Cadettes and adults, prerequisites and requirements, ready-to-use-templates, checklists to help girls track progress.

**Pro-tip:** Help your troop parents learn about the Silver Award and invite them to serve as Adult Girl Scout Volunteer Supervisors! When they understand the process and see the value, they can help their daughters prioritize it among their other commitments.

## *What is the time commitment to earn Silver Award?*

Silver Award projects require a commitment of at least 50 hours from Girl Scouts, though the girls themselves design the timelines. In some cases, the work is completed over the course of a summer, and in others, over a year.

*When are Girl Scouts eligible to begin working toward their Silver Award?*

Girl Scouts should be a registered Cadette in grades 6–9. In order to be eligible, girls must have completed one Cadette Journey.

*When do Girl Scouts need to finish working toward their Silver Award?*

Girls must finish the Silver Award Take Action Project and submit the Final Report and GSOC Final Report Form by September 30 of the year they or their oldest team members complete 8<sup>th</sup> grade.

*What are some ways that leaders can support girls as they become Silver Award Girl Scouts?*

- Help girls understand the value of becoming a Silver Award Girl Scout. It's the chance to make the world a better place, be recognized as a community leader, work with a team, build leadership skills, and develop skills and abilities to earn the Silver Award!

**Pro-tip:** The Bronze Award isn't a required prerequisite for the Silver; however, the skills girls develop in earning this award will help prepare them to become Silver Award Girl Scouts. The Bronze helps girls discover how to plan and lead projects, connect with their communities, and drive intentional change.

- **Provide encouragement, but not pressure.** The Silver Award is a big time commitment. It's not for everyone, and that's OK! A girl's decision to become a Silver Award Girl Scout should be entirely her own.
- **Help girls understand the prerequisites** as early on as possible. You might help them identify Leadership Journeys that align with their interests, or even complete a Journey as a troop.
- **Get to know the safety and fundraising guidelines.** Reach out to council staff for info about GSOC's specific requirements.
- **Introduce parents/caregivers to the Silver Award.** Share The Girl Scout Silver Award: A Guide for Adults, GSOC's Parent/Caregiver Guide. Host and encourage parents/caregivers to attend an info session with you and/or your troop.

- **Dedicate a few minutes of meeting time to updates on girls' Silver Award projects.** This gives Girl Scouts the opportunity to talk through challenges, celebrate successes, and find support in brainstorming. And keep in mind though that any decisions about a girl's project should ultimately be her own and/or her team.

**Meeting Time:** If and how you dedicate meeting time to the Silver Award is up to you.

GSOC strongly encourages all Girl Scout Cadettes to complete Silver Award Training for an introduction to the Silver Award and to help girls decide if they want to earn the Silver.

You might gather and share resources with girls, complete training, talk about the benefits to becoming a Silver Award Girl Scout, and survey your troop to find out how many members plan to become Silver Award Girl Scouts—and decide with girls on a plan for how many meetings to dedicate to the Silver Award, in addition to short check-ins during regular meetings.

In dedicated Silver Award meetings, you can talk about issues in your area that girls could address, map the steps for requesting permission to do the projects (if needed), and brainstorm general tips for moving forward, troubleshoot obstacles, etc. This approach can help you support your girls to become Silver Award Girl Scouts!

- **Help girls make community connections.** Girls may choose to seek experts to speak with about their chosen issues. Are there any other volunteers or caregivers who can help or introduce a girl to a potential community partner? Identify a possible Project Advisor?
- **Brainstorm ways your troop members can support one another.** Girls might join forces to fundraise for their projects. They might volunteer on one another's projects—or help recruit volunteers from their schools, teams, and clubs. Assisting with another Girl Scout's project may help fulfill community service requirements for school or religious organizations.