



GSOC Solicitation Guidelines for Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors for Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects

The Girl Scout Gold Award is the highest award for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors. Gold Award Girl Scouts show remarkable dedication to improving their communities and the world.

Gold Award Girl Scouts don't just change the world for the better, they change it for good. The Gold Award is earned by girls in grades 9–12 who demonstrate extraordinary leadership in developing sustainable solutions to local, national, and global challenges. Since 1916, Girl Scouts have answered the call to drive lasting, impactful change. The Gold Award is the mark of the truly remarkable.

NEW! [GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents](#) and [Girl Scouts of Orange County \(GSOC\) Policies and Standards](#) allow a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador to solicit philanthropic donations to her council of cash and in-kind contributions for Gold Award Take Action projects with written permission. These Solicitation Guidelines are to be followed by girls and adults who help guide them to “go gold.”

Guidelines

A Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador who wishes to solicit philanthropic donations to GSOC for Girl Scout Gold Award projects must:

1. Be a registered member of GSOC.
2. Comply with Safety Activity Checkpoints.
3. Be able to understand and clearly explain why funds are being solicited.
4. Follow the GSOC [Money-Earning](#) and these Solicitation Guidelines.

Girls may not solicit donations without written permission.

Examples of Prospective Donors

- Local businesses – i.e. grocery store, hardware store, craft store, florist, etc.
- Local organizations – i.e. Soroptomists, Rotary, Lions, Kiwanis, Elks, places of worship, etc.
- Individuals – Family and Friends

References

- [GSUSA Blue Book of Basic Documents, 2019](#)
- [GSOC Policies and Standards, 2019](#)
- [Safety Activity Checkpoints, 2018](#)
- [GSOC Money-Earning Guidelines](#)
- [Go Gold Online](#) – www.girlscouts.org/gogoldonline
- [Solicitation Request Form](#) and [Solicitation Report Form](#)

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Considerations

Keeping in mind that Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects are part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience, and soliciting donations for this purpose may be part of a girl's effort to "go gold," yet is **not the primary goal** of Girl Scouting, girls the [Solicitation Request Form](#) must consider the following:

1. Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador participation in Product Programs is strongly *encouraged* for both the Fall Product Program and Girl Scout Cookie Program.
2. A Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador who is part of a registered troop may also plan to work with her troop to complete Money-Earning Projects according to [GSOC Money-Earning Guidelines for Troops, Groups, and Individual Girls](#).
3. Cash donations from national corporations are not likely to be approved. When possible, girls should request to solicit from local companies rather than corporation headquarters.
4. Girls may only solicit within the council's jurisdiction (Orange County).
5. A Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador should use the [GSOC Dates to Remember](#) and work with her Troop/Group Volunteer to make a timeline and plan to submit the [Solicitation Request Form](#) at the same time she submits her Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal (on [Go Gold Online](#)) and the [Solicitation Report Form](#) at the same time she submits her Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report (Steps 6-7 on [Go Gold Online](#)).
6. Philanthropic donations to GSOC (cash or in-kind goods) for Girl Scout Gold Award projects must be used for the purposes of Girl Scouting and be directly connected to Girl Scout Gold Award projects.
7. A girl may plan to fund her project through:
 - Fall Product Program/Girl Scout Cookie Program
 - Troop/Service Unit assistance
 - Money Earning Project – see [GSOC Money Earning Guidelines](#)
 - Girl/Parent/Family/Friends contribution
 - Participant fees
 - Solicitation of Philanthropic Donations to GSOC (cash or in-kind donations)
 - Other (as approved by GSOC)
8. Funds secured may be used for Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action project expenses including food, snacks, water, activity supplies, fees and insurance, office supplies, printing/copying, etc.
9. Funds secured may not be used for Girl Scout registration dues or any troop or other expenses unrelated to a Girl Scout Gold Award project.

GSOC Solicitation Guidelines for Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors for Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects

Process

BEFORE You Solicit

1. As part of the project plan, a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador who wishes to solicit philanthropic donations to GSOC for Girl Scout Gold Award projects (cash or in-kind goods) must complete both the Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal (using [Go Gold Online](#)) and a [Solicitation Request Form](#).
2. GSOC strongly encourages the girl to work with her Troop/Group Volunteer to submit the [Solicitation Request Form](#) at the same time she submits the Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal (on [Go Gold Online](#)). Girls should allow 2-3 weeks for a response.
3. The Girl Experience Team reviews submitted requests, provides a copy of the [Solicitation Request Form](#) to the Fund Development Department, communicates with the Girl Scout Gold Award Support Team, and follows up with the girl, her Girl Scout Gold Award Liaison (who conducts her required council interview), Troop/Group Volunteer, Parent, and Troop Leader (when applicable) regarding the status of the [Solicitation Request Form](#) within 2-3 weeks of receipt of the online form.
4. The [Solicitation Request Form](#) must be approved by GSOC prior to soliciting donations.

AFTER You Solicit

1. If the [Solicitation Request Form](#) is approved, the [Solicitation Report Form](#) must be submitted to the council by the Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador.
2. GSOC strongly encourages the girl to work with her Troop/Group Volunteer to submit the [Solicitation Report Form](#) at the same time she submits the Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report (Steps 6-7 on [Go Gold Online](#)).
3. The [Solicitation Report Form](#) must be received by GSOC in order for the girl to obtain final approval of her Girl Scout Gold Award Final Report.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. **Why change the policy on Girl Scouts soliciting financial donations?**

It's important to provide a girl with flexible options to gain financial support for her Girl Scout Gold Award project. By expanding a girl's opportunities to secure resources, she can implement sustainable significant projects, effectively partner with the community, learn new skills such as grant-writing, budgeting, planning, networking, advocacy, and about philanthropy, and surpass expectations of what a girl can do.

2. **Can girls raise funds for another organization?**

No, solicited funds are to be used explicitly for Girl Scout Gold Award projects, which should have a defined project scope. Girls may not solicit donations for another non-profit organization.

3. **Who reviews the girl's plan to solicit donations?**

The Girl Experience Team reviews all requests to solicit donations and provides a copy to the Fund Development Department. The Girl Scout Gold Award Support Team reviews the Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal and provides recommendations to the Girl Experience Team. The Girl Awards Specialist follows up with the girl regarding the status of solicitation requests. Girls should allow 2-3 weeks for a response and must receive written permission prior to soliciting donations.

4. **What is the role of the girl's Gold Award Troop/Group Volunteer with regard to the solicitation of funds?**

The Troop/Group Volunteer can support girls in the solicitation process but girls determine the best route for funding and secure council approval.

5. **Do donations go directly to the girl or through the council and then to the girl?**

Donations (for approved Project Proposals) are processed through GSOC so a donor receipt can be provided.

- For a girl registered as part of a troop, checks will be mailed to the troop (to be deposited into a council-approved troop bank account with a council EIN) to administer funds for girl's Gold Award projects.
- For a Juliette (individually registered girl), GSOC will hold the funds and girls submit receipts for reimbursement.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

6. Will the council issue tax letters to the donor?

Yes, GSOC will issue acknowledgement letters for tax purposes just as with any donor. Donors cannot usually claim a tax deduction for any contribution without a record of the contribution such as a bank record or receipt from the charity. In addition, any philanthropic donation of \$250 or more requires an acknowledgement letter from the beneficiary organization - in this case, GSOC.

7. Is there an IRS restriction about a girl soliciting cash? Does the “ask” need to come from an adult?

No, a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador may solicit cash and in-kind donations for a Gold Award project. As long as the donation is being used exclusively for a Gold Award project and GSOC has given written permission to solicit the donation, the girl is not in violation of IRS regulations.

8. Will the girl need to prove she used all the funds from the donation?

Yes, the girl must keep good records of expenditures by maintaining all receipts and invoices associated with her project. At the end of the project, the girl will need to account for every dollar donated and spent using the [Solicitation Report Form](#).

9. What happens if the girl does not complete her project or use all donations?

Unused funds must be returned to GSOC to be used for future Gold Award projects and/or to support the council’s mission to build girls of courage, confidence and character who make the world a better place. Donors are informed of this in connection with their donation.

10. Can a girl hold a 'walk-a-thon' (ie. walk for hope) for her own cause?

Yes, if the event is part of an approved [money-earning project](#) and all funds raised from the event are dedicated to an approved Gold Award project. Girl Scouts may not solicit funds on behalf of another organization.

11. Can a girl use crowdfunding websites?

GSOC is exploring this option and we hope to provide an update at the start of the new membership year.



GSOC Solicitation Guidelines for Girl Scout Seniors/Ambassadors for Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

12. Can a girl sell products to raise funds for her Gold Award?

No, a girl may not sell products outside of the Fall Product Program and Girl Scout Cookie Program.

13. Can a girl engage in other money-earning activities to raise funds for her Gold Award?

Yes, a girl may participate in a money-earning project according to [Money Earning Guidelines](#).

14. Can a girl earning the Girl Scout Silver Award or Bronze Award solicit financial donations?

No, only a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador working on her Girl Scout Gold Award project can solicit funds with written permission from GSOC.

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Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

15. Can a girl apply for a grant?

Yes, with permission, a Girl Scout Senior or Ambassador may apply for a small grant for a Girl Scout Gold Award project. To request permission to apply for a grant, contact CustomerCare@girlscoutsOC.org.

16. If a girl applies and receives a grant, do grant funds need to go through GSOC as a 501(C)(3)?

Yes, typically, funders require a non-profit organization to serve as a fiduciary agent.

17. Are there national guidelines on the amount of grant funds for which a girl can solicit?

Each grant is unique. However, most youth grant awards range from \$250 - \$1,000. A girl should solicit only the funds necessary for her project.

Possible Grants for Girl Scout Gold Award projects

[Dragon Kim Fellowship Program](#)

[Peace First](#)

[Youth Service America](#)

18. When a girl applies for a grant, is council approval needed?

Yes, a girl needs to list small grant requests on her Girl Scout Gold Award Project Proposal and request approval using the [Solicitation Request Form](#) when applying for a grant to support a Girl Scout Gold Award project, as with any request to solicit philanthropic donations to GSOC. The girl should keep in mind grant application deadlines when submitting the [Solicitation Request Form](#).

19. The grant process usually involves a report to the funder at the end of the funding period. Who would complete this?

If a girl is awarded a grant, she would complete the required paperwork for grant completion and submit a copy to GSOC as part of the [Solicitation Report Form](#). Failure to comply with grant deadlines may jeopardize future funding opportunities for other girls. GSOC Fund Development staff can provide the girl with support for this process.