

GSEM Silver Award Rubric for Troop Leaders

Troop Leaders and/or adult volunteers are responsible for approving their Girl Scout Cadette's Silver Award projects from start to finish. This document is intended to help Troop Leaders and/or adult volunteers determine if the Silver Award project idea meets GSUSA and GSEM's criteria to set their teams up for success early on. This document does **not** need to be submitted to the Council. Please refer to girlscoutsem.org/highestawards for more detailed information. To be included in the annual recognitions celebration in June, each Cadette must complete the submission form on the GSEM website by March 1 of that year. Cadettes that complete the submission form after March 1 will be celebrated at next year's awards event. Troop Leaders and caregivers are responsible for purchasing the Silver Award Pin from the Girl Scout Shop once the Cadette completes the submission form.

Requirements and Prerequisites	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Silver Award can be earned as a individual or as a team of Cadettes, but with a MAXIMUM of 4 Girl Scouts
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each Cadette is a current registered Girl Scout member. <i>(Cadettes must be finished before September 30 after completing 8th grade)</i>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each Cadette is between grades 6 and 8
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each Cadette has completed ONE prerequisite : earned the Bronze Award, or a Cadette Journey, or a Cadette Leadership Award
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each Cadette has read the Silver Award Guidebook .
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each Cadette will work a minimum of 50 hours on the project

After the prerequisite is completed, Cadettes should start to think about what specifically they want to do. They will need to explore their community and **research** the issue they are interested in. Ask the Cadettes the following questions:

1.	What is the primary issue this Silver Award project is concerned with? Example: Girl Scouts do not like to swim in the local lake because of the blue-green algae, which is also deadly to the fish.
2.	What is the root cause of that issue? Example: Through research, the Troop learns that fertilizer run-off in their area increases the blue-green algae problem.
3.	What is the specific project idea and why is this specific project needed? Example: The Troop takes on a lake clean-up project, educating farmers and gardeners about the negative effects of fertilizer run-off on aquatic life. They partner with their local Master Gardener group to offer workshops on safe fertilizing, which are new to the area and informative to the community.
4.	How will this project affect the issue by reducing or eliminating the root cause? <i>(What is the solution?)</i> Example: The blue-green algae problem has been addressed because the fertilizer run-off from local farmers and gardeners was reduced by creating a new community resource that helps prevent the run-off in the first place.

Once Cadettes have thought about their project, they may need to make adjustments or conduct additional research to make sure that their ideas will meet the basic requirements of the Silver Award. The Cadette will complete the **Project Proposal** and submit to their troop leader/adult volunteer for approval.

Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria	Basic Requirements when reviewing the Project Proposal
		This project is Take Action*, NOT Community Service
		The project addresses an issue by reducing or eliminating the root cause
		This project is large enough that each Cadette will be able to complete a MINIMUM of 50 hours of work on the project. It is strongly recommended that Girl Scouts keep a detailed timeline (Girl Scouts may NOT count prerequisite hours, Girl Scout product sales time, travel time, or the hours that their volunteer team helpers spent working)
		Rules, regulations, and safety issues are identified, and there are plans to address them
		Cadettes conduct research to determine what was causing the issue, and what solutions (if any) were already in place to help alleviate the root cause. (Research does NOT stop after asking one person about the issue—they should talk to community members/experts AND do data research)
		The project is either #1: A new solution because current measures are not working/no solutions to the problem were previously in place #2: The project is similar to the solution(s) that are already in place because current measures are working, but are not sufficiently addressing the root cause. (In either cause, the project must be backed up with research!)
		The target audience is clearly identified, and the project reaches both beyond Girl Scouting** and beyond the Girl Scout's immediate community (i.e., their Troop, classroom at school, the street that they live on, et cetera)
		The project actively engages/educates members of the community
		Cadettes have a volunteer team of helpers—they are not doing all the work themselves
		Cadettes are able to demonstrate leadership while enacting their project. (This means delegating tasks, training volunteers, leading initiatives)
		The project will be sustainable and make a long-term impact on the root cause. (The impact of the project should continue even after the Girl Scouts stop work on it)
		Optional: Cadettes are able to measure the impact of their project. (Counting the smiles at the workshop, or how many people visit a website does not count as measuring impact—you will need to measure the observable change created by the project!)

*A Take Action project should involve the community, have a lasting impact, and educate the community about the issue and solution

**Silver Award projects may benefit the Girl Scout Camp community. However, projects MUST be approved before implementing any plans. See the Highest Awards website for the camp request form or contact Program Manager-Highest Awards at amiller@girlscoutsem.org.

Red Flags to watch out for—your project might NOT qualify for the Silver Award:

- Volunteering for another organization or an existing program is community service, **NOT** a Silver Award project.
- Donating toys, food, books, and other materials to an organization is community service, **NOT** a Silver Award project on its own (even if the items are homemade). Donations make a short-term, rather than a long-term impact on an issue. Making material donations to an organization may be **PART** of a larger Silver Award project.
- Organizing materials/donations/supplies or performing other short-term tasks to benefit Girl Scouts or another organization is community service, **NOT** a Silver Award project. This may be **PART** of a larger project.
- The project **must directly affect the issue**. For example, building a Little Library to address low literacy rates in a neighborhood, where literacy rates are high/there is a public library, does not actually address low literacy rates.
- Girl Scouts are **NOT** allowed to donate money to other organizations, programs, or individuals in any situation.
- Multiple teams (1-4 Girl Scouts) may **NOT** be collaborating on the same Silver Award project as other teams.