

## GSNorCal Silver Award Rubric for Troop Leaders

Troop Leaders are responsible for approving their Girl Scout Cadette’s Silver Award projects to start work, while the final review takes place at the Council level. This document is intended to help Troop Leaders determine if **the Silver Award project idea meets GSUSA and GSNorCal’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 GSNorCal.org for more detailed information and for the Final Report submission form (due by the September 30 immediately **after the girl’s** 8<sup>th</sup> grade graduation, including if the team is made up of girls of different ages and only one girl is in 8<sup>th</sup> grade).

**\*\*Troop Leaders MUST take a Silver Award Training\*\***

Before you get started, make sure all team members fulfill the prerequisites of the Silver Award.

Prerequisites
<p>The Silver Award Team is a MAXIMUM of 4 girls (If the “team” is just 1 girl, the Troop Leader that signs off on her materials may not be her parent/relative. A co-leader, Troop Helper, or another registered adult GSNorCal volunteer will need to sign off in this capacity)</p> <p>Each member of the Silver Award team is an officially registered GSNorCal Cadette Girl Scout</p> <p>Each member of the Silver Award team is between grades 6 and 8</p> <p>Each member of the Silver Award team has completed 1 Cadette Journey (including the Take Action project at the end)</p> <p>Each member of the Silver Award team has read the Silver Award packet</p> <p>Each member of the Silver Award team has taken/attended a GSNorCal Silver Award training (online, webinar, or in-person)</p>

After prerequisites are completed, girls 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 girls the following questions:

<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>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.</p>
<p>4. How will the project affect the issue by reducing or eliminating the root cause? 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.</p>

Once girls 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. This is what Council looks for:

Meets Criteria	Does not meet criteria	Basic Requirements
		The project is Take Action*, <i>NOT</i> Community Service
		The project addresses an issue by reducing or eliminating its root cause
		The project is large enough that each girl 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 pre-requisite Journey hours, Girl Scout product sale time, travel time, final report writing, or the hours that their volunteer team spent working)
		Rules, regulations, and safety issues are identified, and there are plans to address them
		Girls conducted 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 – girls should talk to community members/experts AND do “library research”)
		The project is either: a new solution because current measures are not working/no solutions to the problem were previously in place, or 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 case, the project must be backed up with research!)
		The target audience is clearly identified, and the project reaches both beyond Girl Scouting** and <b>beyond the girl’s immediate community</b> (i.e., their Troop, classroom at school, the street that they live on, et cetera)
		The project actively engages/educates members of the community
		Girls have a volunteer team – they are not doing all the work themselves
		Girls are able to demonstrate leadership while enacting their project (This means delegating tasks, training volunteers, leading initiatives)
		The project will make a long-term impact on the root cause (The impact of the project should continue even after girls stop work on it)
		Girls are able to measure the impact of their project (Counting the smiles at a 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!)

\*It is very important to understand the difference between a Take Action project and a Community Service project! A Silver Award is Take Action, NOT Community Service. For more information, please review the Silver Award packet, and check out this article: <https://trailhead.gsnorcal.org/community-service-projects-vs-take-action-projects/>

\*\*As of October 2018, Silver and Gold Award projects may benefit the Girl Scouting community. However, such projects **MUST align with the Council’s strategic goals and/or** property plans, and therefore require Council approval before beginning. Contact [awards@gsnorcal.org](mailto:awards@gsnorcal.org) if you have an idea for a Silver Award project to benefit Girl Scouting.

**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.