

**Girls Soliciting Donations for  
Girl Scout Gold Award Take Action Projects  
Frequently Asked Questions**

**Q: Why change the policy on Girl Scouts soliciting financial donations?**

**A:** We believe it's important to provide girls with flexible options to gain financial support for their Girl Scout Gold Award projects. By expanding girls' opportunities to secure resources, they can implement significant projects, effectively partner with the community, learn new skills such as budgeting, planning, networking, advocacy, and about philanthropy, and surpass expectations of what girls can do.

**Q: Can I use my own money on the Girl Scout Gold Award Project?**

**A:** Yes. If you want to use your own money, you can. You may receive help from your family, too. However, we encourage you to work with others to earn the money. That's part of the process. "Going for the Gold" is not meant to be a hardship on a family or individual. When designing your project, it's important to think creatively about how you can make a difference with little or no money. Then talk to your council and advisor about ideas for financing the project or arranging for the donation of materials and services.

**Q: What if what I want to do costs too much?**

**A:** It's better to succeed with a smaller project that is within your budget than to be unable to complete a larger project because it exceeds your budget. Be realistic about what you can and can't do. Work with your adult advisor to develop a reasonable budget for your project. If your resources are not sufficient for you to realistically accomplish your goal, then you need to rethink the project. Planning is the key to a good Girl Scout Gold Award Project. You should be prepared with a budget for your project before you turn your proposal in to the Girl Scout Gold Award Committee. Think it through and do your homework! Your council has the right to put a cap on spending, as well as to request that large donations go through the council office. Work with them.

**Q: When would a girl submit an approval request to solicit donations?**

**A:** A girl would submit an approval request with her Gold Award Proposal. The Gold Committee will review the request and ask for additional information if needed.

**Q: Can girls raise funds for another organization?**

**A:** No. Solicited funds are to be used explicitly for the girl's Gold Award project, which should have a defined project scope. Girls may not solicit donations for another non-profit organization.

**Q: I know you can't raise money as a Girl Scout for other organizations, but can I do it on my own?**

**A:** As an individual, you can volunteer for other organizations, but you should not identify work that you do to raise funds for another organization as part of your time going toward the Girl Scout Gold Award. Additionally, you may not present yourself as a Girl Scout to the public in this process since you are a volunteer for another organization.

**Q: Who at the council approves the girl's plan to solicit donations? Can volunteers approve the solicitation of donations?**

**A:** The Gold Award Committee and a designated staff member will approve the girls' request to solicit donations.

**Q: What is the role of the girl's Gold Award advisor with regard to the solicitation of funds?**

**A:** Advisors can support girls in the solicitation process but girls determine the best route for funding and secure council approval.

**Q: Is there an IRS restriction about girls' soliciting cash? Does "the ask" need to come from an adult?**

A: Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors can solicit cash and in-kind donations for their Gold Award projects. As long as the donation is being used exclusively for their Gold Award projects, and the council is aware of the donation, they are not in violation of IRS regulations.

**Q: Will girls need to prove they used all the funds from the donation?**

A: Encourage girls to keep good records of their expenditures by maintaining all receipts and invoices associated with their projects. At the end of the project, girls will need to account for every dollar donated and spent in their final project report.

**Q: What happens if the girl does not complete her project or use all donations?**

A: Girls are required to submit a detailed project budget within their Gold Award Proposal. It is up to the individual to stay as close to the proposed budget and income as possible.

**Q: Does this mean girls can use crowdfunding websites?**

A: Yes, if approved by the council. Girls will need to submit a detailed plan within their proposal on which crowdfunding sites they will use.

**Q: Can girls earning their Bronze or Silver award also solicit financial donations?**

A: Girls working on their Bronze and Silver can request in-kind donations. In-kind donations are defined as “paid or given goods, commodities, or services instead of money.” This includes donations of actual items, labor or gift cards. It does not include donations made by cash or check. All solicitations need council approval beforehand.

**Q: Can girls sell products or engage in other money earning activities to raise funds for their Gold Award?**

A: The Blue Book change to allow girls to solicit donations for their Gold Award projects does not change existing guidance on product sales and other money-earning activities. With regard to product sales, girls may not sell products outside of the Girl Scout Cookie Program and council-run Girl Scout Product program. Money-earning activities are troop or individually registered girl’s activities such as car washes, babysitting, or computer tutoring. A troop may, as a troop, decide to apply troop funds raised from such product sales or troop money-earning activities to support a Girl Scout’s Gold Award project.

**Q: Can we charge for a Girl Scout event to earn money?**

A: A Money Earning Request Form needs to be submitted and approved. If it is a service project, a fee can be collected to cover the cost of materials. The project ceases to be a service project if you are charging a fee for the event above cost, in which case the hours cannot go toward service hours in any award. If you are doing an event as a Girl Scout (e.g., a Badge Workshop, Bike Rodeo, etc.) and are planning to charge a fee **above** the cost of materials, you **must first** clear this with your Girl Scout council. Provision should be made for scholarships for troop/groups or individual girls who cannot afford fees to your event and you must be clear in your advertisements and materials that this is a money-earning event for your troop/group. If your actual project is an event for the public, you can charge a fee to cover the cost of materials.

**Q: What about safety?**

A: Girls should read, discuss and sign the Internet Safety Pledge with her project advisor.