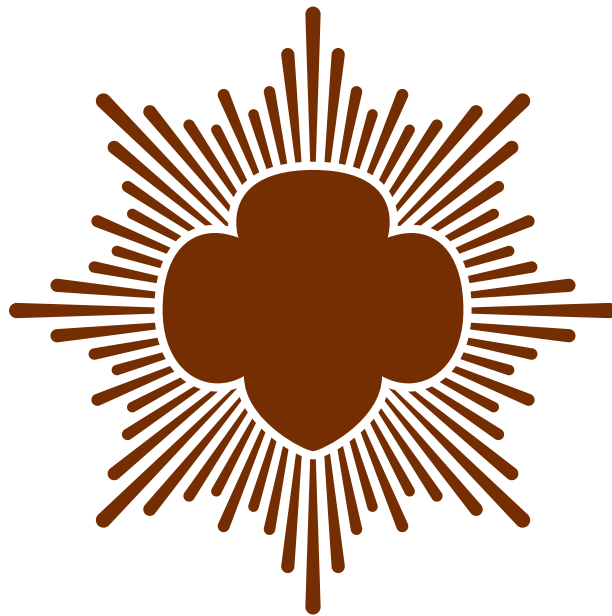


Adult Guide for Earning the Bronze Award

Your guide on the path to Bronze!



Forward / Welcome

Greetings!

We are excited that you are going to be leading your Juliette or troop towards completing the Girl Scout Bronze Award with Girl Scouts River Valleys. Volunteers working directly with Girl Scouts are the backbone of this organization, and without them the Bronze Award could not happen for the hundreds of Girl Scouts who earn the award each year.

We hope that this workbook is helpful in leading your team towards attaining the Bronze Award. If you have questions at any point in the process, you can always reach out to Council via email at girlscouts@girlscoutsrv.org.

The Bronze Award was introduced by GSUSA in 2001 and is the highest award a Girl Scout Junior (grades 4-5) can earn. The project can be completed alone, as a small group, or with the entire troop. As the Girl Scouts pursue their project, they put the Girl Scout Promise and Law into action. They also learn about sustainability and gain an understanding of the wider world by discussing how others may experience the same problem that their project helped resolve. Besides creating positive change in their community, Girl Scouts learn essential leadership and career skills through the process of completing their project. Earning the Bronze Award can also help prepare Girl Scouts to earn the other Highest Awards: the Silver Award and the Gold Award (as Cadettes and Seniors/Ambassadors, respectively).

How to use the workbook

This volunteer workbook mirrors the Girl Scout Bronze Award Workbook. It follows the same steps and includes more details and tips for you to guide and support your Girl Scout(s). If you haven't already, please read the Girl Scout Bronze Award Workbook in addition to this workbook. You will never have to submit this workbook, so feel free to use it in the best way for you! You can select portions of the workbook to complete during your troop meetings and have troop members work on the rest on their own at home. Or, you can complete all the steps together at your troop meetings. Choose the method that works best for your team.

Girl-Led

Remember to keep the project girl-led throughout! The Bronze Award is a prestigious honor, and the project will be challenging for Girl Scouts. Your job is to let the Girl Scouts lead the way, answer their questions, and help them refine the skills they will gain as they work on the project. If they encounter obstacles or problems that will alter the course of the project, encourage the Girl Scouts to think of solutions instead of fixing the problems for them. Be sure to offer encouragement along the way!

Thank you for all that you do for Girl Scouts,
Girl Scouts River Valleys Highest Awards Team

Getting Started

Junior Journey Prerequisite

Before starting a project, all Girl Scouts must complete at least one Junior Journey, including the Take Action project.

Let your Girl Scout(s) pick the Journey they are most interested in:

It's Your World-Change It! Agent of Change This powerful Journey is filled with ceremonies, circles, and real-life heroines. Along this Journey, Girl Scouts will learn how their own power combines with others' into team power and then becomes community power.

It's Your Planet—Love It! Get Moving Girl Scouts will investigate and innovate as they explore their own energy, the energy of places and spaces, and the energy of getting from here to there. Meet energizing people and “get moving” to get others moving, too!

It's Your Story-Tell It! aMUSE Girl Scouts explore their potential by combining storytelling with the many roles—real and creative—that the world offers. They'll have fun trying on roles, learning about people, and learning about the power of real-life leadership in action.

Engineering Journey Think like an Engineer. Girl Scouts discover how to think like an engineer by participating in hands-on design challenges and completing a Take Action project.

Computer Science Journey Think Like a Programmer. Girl Scouts learn how programmers solve problems as they participate in interactive computational-thinking activities and complete a Take Action project.

Outdoor STEM Journey Girl Scouts practice the scientific method by undertaking a citizen science project. They make observations, collect data, and work with scientists who provide feedback on research and findings.

Outdoor Journey Strengthen outdoor skills and ignite interest in environmental stewardship.

You can find the program plans for the Journeys at volunteers.girlscoutsrv.org or in the [Volunteer Toolkit](#).

Establish the Team

Help your Girl Scout(s) determine who their team members are. Girl Scouts can complete the Bronze Award alone, with some members of their troop, or with their entire troop. Keep in mind that smaller teams typically allow for more leadership opportunities for each team member, so larger troops may want to split into smaller teams with different projects. At the end of your first Bronze Award meeting, talk about what everyone thinks the group should do to be a great team, such as, “listen to others without interrupting” or “help out at each meeting.” Write the ideas on a large piece of paper and post it on the wall whenever you have team meetings.

Step 1: Explore & Decide

In Step 1, Girl Scouts will identify who they want to help (the community), what the problem is (the issue), and why the problem is happening (root cause).

Some ideas for facilitation:

- Print page 2 of the workbook for Girl Scouts to take home as an assignment between meetings.
- Use part of a meeting to have Girl Scouts work on the questions in small groups within your troop.
- Work together with a chalkboard or whiteboard to answer the questions as an entire troop.

Ways to bump up the fun:

- In small groups, Girl Scouts can make a quick skit showing community issues they thought about.
- With butcher paper and crayons, Girl Scouts can spend 5 minutes drawing the answers to the questions.
- Compete with yourself (set a goal and exceed it), e.g.: Can we think of 10 communities as a group? 15?

If your troop gets stuck, or needs some more prompting, the following questions can help. Remember to let the Girl Scouts discover their own answers!

Communities:

- Where do you spend time with others? (at school, in neighborhood, at place of worship)
- What are some things that you like? (animals, sports, art)
- What do you do on the weekend or after school? (park-goers, soccer players, ice fishers)

Problems:

- What problems are facing the community groups you thought of?

Root Causes:

- Why is the problem a problem?

When deciding on a single community, problem, and root cause, your troop may decide to do different projects. For example, if you have a troop of 12 Girl Scouts, and 5 are passionate about getting their school to recycle, and 7 are excited about getting a soccer field established in the neighborhood, feel free to have your troop working on 2 projects.

Community Service vs. Take Action Projects

Bronze Award projects are not community service, but rather Take Action projects. Help the team choose a project that goes beyond community service. A service project is a project that addresses an immediate, short-term need in the community and can include volunteering time with an organization. For example: Organizing a clothing drive for a local nonprofit would be considered a community service project. This addresses an immediate community need: free, new clothing. This is important and useful for the community, but this would not be considered a Bronze Award project. A Take Action project is a project that addresses the root cause of a community issue and has long-term impact. Take Action projects pick up from where a short-term project leaves off. For example: Girl Scouts organizing a clothing drive could work with a local nonprofit to add a community clothes closet geared towards teenagers in need and help publicize it. Now, community members know where to find free, new clothing year-round.

Feel free to contact us at girlscouts@girlscoutsrv.org if you're not sure if your group's Bronze Award project is a Take Action project.

Step 2: Make A Plan

This is where the project takes shape. Once the team has decided what they want to change, they can make a plan. The plan should be pretty detailed, so be sure to ask the team follow up questions so that they have a strong, collective idea of the project goals, outcomes, and risks.

Read on for tips when working through each part of the plan with the team:

Goal: Help the Girl Scouts connect the issue to root cause, or the reason *why* the issue is happening. The root cause of a community issue usually cannot be resolved with a quick fix.

Project: Help the Girl Scouts consider what project will lead to their goal. Ask the Girl Scouts: What can you do to reach your goal? Who can help you reach this goal?

Challenges: Help the Girl Scouts consider multiple possible outcomes. While we may want to protect our Girl Scouts from getting discouraged, we know that the world is unpredictable, and not every challenge can be avoided. Talking through potential roadblocks and how the group could respond will help the group be more prepared.

Sustainability (optional): The concept of sustainability is introduced with the Bronze Award and is optional, whereas Silver Award and Gold Award projects are required to be sustainable. Help the Girl Scouts consider how their impact will last, since Take Action Projects are intended to continue having a positive effect on the community after the project is completed. How will the community continue to benefit from their project in the future?

Plan: Help the group write their plan from start to finish. Be realistic and specific. Some tasks may require all of the team members, and some may only require a few. Use multiple pages if needed. Make sure each Girl Scout has at least 20 hours scheduled, and that tasks are distributed evenly and fairly. Also, help each Girl Scout practice leadership by taking on certain tasks.

Resources: Help the group determine what supplies they will need for their project, and how to source them. Some projects require a lot of supplies while others require very few.



Step 3: Action & Tracking

Once your troop has a plan in place, they are ready to get started doing the work! Help your troop stay on track to complete the tasks needed to reach their goal.

Suggestions & Reminders:

Track hours as they happen.

This will be easier than trying to remember everything at the end. Each Girl Scout should complete at least 20 hours, which does not include time to complete prerequisite Journey, but does include time spent planning.

Track the budget carefully.

Not all projects require a lot of income or supplies, but some do. Your troop or Juliette may choose to use troop funds/Juliette Program Credits to help fund their project. If your troop receives any additional income for the project, be sure that the project expenses match the income. Remember that you must follow all money-earning and finance guidelines when carrying out the project.

Policy reminders:

Girl Scouts cannot raise money for other organizations. Girl members cannot personally ask for a donation of items; an adult must ask on their behalf. You may not directly ask for donations of money, but may ask for in-kind donations of supplies, services, or volunteer time. You may only ask for these in-kind donations from smaller local businesses, not large corporations or chains such as Target, Lowes, Home Depot, or Michael's. Family members may contribute to the project, but only up to 25% of the total project costs. For more details, please review our money earning, donation solicitation, and fundraising policies at girlscoutsrv.org.

Remind your Girl Scouts that the plan might change, so flexibility is key!

You might not complete the tasks in the exact order you planned, or unexpected circumstances might force the plans to change. You might need or want to add more tasks. Feel free to adjust as needed, and continue to make decisions as a group.

Encourage teamwork!

Let the Girl Scouts volunteer for tasks that they feel comfortable doing, but also give everyone an opportunity to try new tasks! For example, if two Girl Scouts are great at making posters, ask them to include two troop members who have never made posters before so that they can work together and learn from one another.



Step 4: Submit Final Report

Once your Girl Scout(s) complete their project, you will submit the final report by email to Girl Scouts River Valleys. The final report is available to download online at girlscoutsrv.org.

Meet with your Girl Scouts one more time to go through the final report questions together. You only need to submit one final report for the whole group.

In addition to your contact information, the final report will ask for these details and reflection:

Project Title:

Prerequisite Junior Journey(s) completed:

Give a brief description of the Girl Scouts' Bronze Award project. What community issue and root cause did they address?

What was the goal of the Bronze Award project and did they accomplish it?

Which community partner(s) (groups or organizations) did the Girl Scouts work with?

What was their favorite part of the Bronze Award project?

List 1-3 things they learned from their Bronze Award project experience.

Total hours logged:

Step 5: Reflect & Celebrate

Congratulations! You and your Girl Scout team have created and completed a project that makes a difference in the world around you! After you submit the Final Report to Girl Scouts River Valleys, we will send a confirmation email to you and a congratulatory letter to each Girl Scout. You can purchase a Bronze Award pin and other accessories for each Girl Scout.

Purchasing Pins

Bronze Award pins can be purchased from one of the Girl Scouts River Valleys shops. You can purchase them in person, by emailing shop@girlscoutsrv.org, or by phone (800-845-0787). The shop also has certificates, patches, and other optional items.

Presenting the Pins

You may choose how to award the pins to your Girl Scouts. You could hold an casual pinning celebration, a more formal Court of Awards, or a small party to celebrate the achievement. Inviting friends and family is encouraged. Read more about ceremonies online [here](#) and [here](#).

Share your story (Optional)

Your team put in a lot of work for this project, so show the broader community all that they accomplished! You might consider sharing the story of your group's Bronze Award Project through various outlets, such as:

- Social media
- Local newspaper, community bulletins, or school newsletters
- Presentation at a community meeting or Service Unit meeting

Ask your team how they want to share their story, and you can start creating the story by asking these questions:

- How did you decide what was needed in your community?
- What did you discover about yourself during this experience?
- How did your team work together?
- What problems came up? How did you solve them?
- What leadership skills did you use?
- What did you do to inspire others to act?
- How do you feel you and your team made the world a better place?
- How did you live out the Girl Scout Promise and Law?
- Who do you want to inspire to make a difference? Younger Girl Scouts? Peers? Other youth around the world?

Be creative in the way you tell your story! Make a photo collage, put together a scrapbook, create a short film, or write a play about what you did and what you learned.



References / Questions

Below is a list of common questions and answers:

Is _____ a good project?

Because projects are as diverse and varied as the Girl Scouts who complete them, it is hard to say whether a project is good or bad. If the project addresses the root cause of a community problem and allows the Girl Scouts to practice being leaders, then the project meets the standards of the Bronze Award.

Can I get feedback on my team's project?

Yes! If you want feedback from Girl Scouts River Valleys, please call or email, and we are happy to review and discuss your project.

How long should the Bronze Award take?

The minimum hours required is 20 hours per Girl Scout. Depending on how frequently your team works on the project, it could take less than a month, or up to a year. You can be as ambitious or measured as you like.

Isn't this a lot to ask of Junior Girl Scouts?

This is the highest award that a Junior Girl Scout can earn. It is designed to prepare them for the next phase of life, and help them to develop developmentally appropriate aptitude in leadership, project management, and social skills.

How do we make a project sustainable?

Bronze Award projects are not required to be sustainable, but it is encouraged, and you can discuss possibilities with your Girl Scouts. GSUSA suggests three methods to make a project sustainable: 1. Create a permanent solution & maintenance plan that can be used after the project is complete. 2. Educate and inspire others in the community or within Girl Scouts to be part of the change. 3. Advocate to change a rule, regulation, or law, and encourage others to join. Silver Award and Gold Award projects are required to be sustainable.

What can my troop not do as a project?

Projects that are built around fundraising for an organization cannot be highest award projects. Projects that do not meet the minimum hours, or that make a profit cannot be approved. Also, projects should be Take Action Projects, not community service, so make sure your project is not a one-time gift to the community (see page 4 of this workbook). Please be sure to follow all Girl Scouts River Valleys policies.

What if something goes wrong with my team's project?

Things come up in the course of highest awards, and that is okay. If your team is unable to complete a project due to outside, unforeseen circumstances, please contact council for further guidance. You may be able to make adjustments that will allow you to meet the spirit of the award, and the hours requirement for approval.

When does everything need to be submitted?

The final deadline for Bronze Award Final Reports is September 30 after the team completes 5th grade. Final Reports can be submitted any time of year. If you submit close to the deadline, please allow extra time for responses from council.

How can we accommodate access needs?

If you have a Girl Scout with access needs, and are not sure how to make an accommodation, please reach out to council. The award is designed to be achievable for all, and we are happy to talk through any specific circumstances.

References / Questions

How many Girl Scouts can be on a team?

There is no official limit to the number of Girl Scouts that can work on a project together. Final Reports only have space for 20 names. If you have more than 20 Girl Scouts working on one project, please consider having your troop break into smaller groups working on 2 projects (related or not). This will allow space for more leadership time, and can help prepare them for the smaller group size of the Silver Award, later on in their Girl Scout paths.

Do all Girl Scouts working on a project need to be in the same troop?

No, but all Girl Scouts working on the project must be Girl Scout Juniors (grades 4-5).

What exactly does active leadership mean?

Active leadership is a key component of all Highest Awards. Active leadership means actively involving other people and directing them to help meet the goals of the project. One goal of the Bronze Award is to teach Junior Girl Scouts how to be leaders in their community. This might mean that the Girl Scout(s) find and recruit volunteers, ask community organizations to help with their project, delegate tasks to others, etc.

Does the project have to be new and unique?

As unique as your Girl Scout(s) can make it! The Bronze Award is prestigious partly because it recognizes creativity and ingenuity in tackling community issues. We know that every community has numerous issues that can be addressed, and we challenge Girl Scout Juniors to find new and different ways to make an impact.

What other options are there besides the Bronze Award?

The Bronze Award is the highest honor that a Girl Scout Junior can earn. However, Junior troops and Juliette Girl Scouts are always encouraged to complete Take Action projects that they are passionate about, whenever that may be, and with or without the intention of earning the Bronze Award. Instead of earning the Bronze, Junior Girl Scouts can complete multiple Journeys, work on community service projects, or lead their community in other ways.

After the Bronze Award, what is next?

The Bronze Award is the highest honor that a Girl Scout Junior can earn, and earning the Bronze Award greatly helps prepare a Girl Scout to earn the remaining Highest Awards, the Silver (Cadettes) and Gold Awards (Senior/ Ambassadors) if they are interested. Earning the Bronze Award is not a prerequisite for earning the Silver or Gold Award. Learn more about these other Highest Awards at girlscoutsrv.org. In addition, the skills that Girl Scouts gain in completing a Bronze Award will also serve them in school and beyond, hopefully inspiring them to lead positive community change wherever they go!