

# Gold Award Crowdfunding Policy

Girl Scouts of Western Ohio offers in-house crowdfunding for Girl Scouts pursuing the Gold Award. Girl Scouts who wish to take advantage of this exciting opportunity should read the policy, procedures, and FAQ below prior to completing the interest form.

## Prerequisites

To be eligible to use the crowdfunding tool, Girl Scouts must meet the following requirements:

- Meet all prerequisites to begin the Gold Award process.
  - Be a currently registered Senior or Ambassador Girl Scout.
  - Complete two Journeys at the Senior or Ambassador level, or have earned a Silver Award and one Journey at the Senior or Ambassador level.
- Girls who are in a troop: The troop must have a financial report for the most recent year on file and be in good standing. The troop must agree to allowing the girl to hold the funds in the troop bank account. Funds cannot be used for anything other than the approved Gold Award project.
- Juliette Girl Scouts: Are you a Juliette (Individual) Girl Scout? No problem! GSWO will work with you to help you take advantage of this money earning opportunity

## Crowdfunding Process

- **Complete the Crowdfunding Interest Form at [gswo.org](http://gswo.org)** and submit your Gold Award Proposal online at Go Gold.
- Once your project proposal and crowdfunding idea is approved by the Gold Award Committee, you'll be prompted to connect with a staff member in our Fund Development department to set up your campaign.
- Once your campaign is complete, the funds that you have earned will be deposited by GSWO into your troop bank account. For Juliette Girl Scouts, the funds will go through your service unit account, so it's important that you speak with your service unit coordinator when you begin this process.
- A staff member in our Fund Development department will also send you a list of your donors to support you in thanking them (ie. writing a thank you letter, inviting them to your event, etc.).

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Why the change in policy?

Girl Scouts of the USA recently updated its guidelines for solicitation of donations. Whereas previously no Girl Scouts were allowed to directly solicit cash donations, the policy was updated to allow only Girl Scouts pursuing the Gold Award, whose project proposals have been approved by the council, to solicit cash donations.

### Can I use a different crowdfunding site separate from GSWO's crowdfunding tool, such as GoFundMe?

No. All crowdfunding must go through an approved GSWO crowdfunding site. Once your project proposal and crowdfunding idea is approved by the Gold Award Committee, you'll be prompted to connect with a staff member in our Fund Development department to set up your campaign.

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**My proposal was approved a while ago and I did not know crowdfunding was allowed. Am I still eligible?** Yes! Girl Scouts whose projects are approved are eligible if the girl is still needing funds to support her project. Funds raised cannot be used to reimburse you or other supporters for expenses already incurred.

## **Can I raise more than my original goal?**

The crowdfunding tool is set up to close the campaign as soon as the goal is reached. A big part of project management is defining the scope of your project, and setting a realistic budget early in the planning process. We understand that occasionally unforeseen costs arise, and encourage you to use additional money earning methods such as Girl Scout product programs to meet your budget needs.

## **What happens if my project cost less than expected and I have leftover funds from the crowdfunding campaign?**

Any leftover funds should be used to support the Gold Award Project whenever possible. Excess funds should be used to ensure the ongoing support of your project.

## **How will this process be girl-led?**

Our goal is to make this process as girl-led as possible. Girls set their fundraising goals during the proposal approval process and create all promotional materials that are uploaded to their crowdfunding page, including messaging, photos, and short videos, etc. explaining their goals. While anyone can access the site, it will be completely up to the girl to share her page with friends, family, partnering organizations, and other potential supporters.

## **How long are the campaigns active for?**

The most successful crowdfunding campaigns run for a relatively short period of time and create a sense of urgency to support your project. While girls will ultimately decide the time frame, we recommend campaigns be limited to 30-60 days.

## **Can I extend the campaign if I do not meet my goals the first time?**

Generally, it is expected that the campaign will only run for the time frame agreed upon during the approval process. However, we understand that extenuating circumstances occur, and may grant exceptions on a case-by-case basis.

## **Can I apply for more than one crowdfunding campaign?**

No. Girls may only run one crowdfunding campaign. No exceptions will be made.

