



Silver Award Project Guide



For questions about the Silver Award contact:

GSSJC Silver Award Manager

3110 Southwest Fwy., Houston, TX 77098

713-292-0300, silveraward@sjgs.org

www.gssjc.org/silveraward

Revised July 2022



ATTENTION:

The Silver Award is paperless in support of becoming more environmentally friendly. Please note that an editable PDF version of the form sent as an attachment by email to silveraward@sjgs.org is the only format in which submissions will be accepted by Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council (GSSJC).

(Please see page 35 for more information on how to access, download and complete the forms as well as how to obtain digital signatures).

However, if you followed the directions found on page 34 and were not able obtain digital signatures, we will accept this alternative:

Submit two versions of the form by email attachment:

1. Completed digital editable PDF form (without signatures)
2. Scanned copy of the completed form with handwritten signatures

(**NOTE:** If you submit only ONE scanned version of the form, this will not be accepted.)

Table of Contents

Silver Award Basics	4
Benefits of earning the Silver Award	4
Pre-requisites	5
Silver Award steps	6
Time commitment	6
Team size	7
Deadlines	7
Forms	7
How to ensure that your Silver Award Project is a Take Action Project	10
Measurability	11
Sustainability	11
Step 1: Identify an issue you care about	14
Step 2: Build your team	16
Step 3: Explore your community	18
Step 4: Pick your Silver Award project	20
Girl Scout Property Projects.....	20
Step 5: Develop your project	22
National/Global Connection	22
Finding a Project Advisor	23
Funding your Silver Award Project.....	23
Step 6: Make a plan and put it into action	26
Step 7: Reflect, share your story, and celebrate!	27
Charts, Forms, and Resources	29
Issues chart	29
Community contact list	30
Make a plan	31
Track your hours	32
Project advisor email template.....	33
Silver Award project examples	34
Additional Silver Award tips and reminders.....	36
Help with digital forms.....	38



Silver Award Basics

Have you ever looked around your neighborhood or school and wondered how you could make a change for the better? Going for the Girl Scout Silver Award – the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn – gives you the chance to show that you are a leader who is organized, determined, and dedicated to improving your community. It recognizes personal **leadership** and effort as well as a Girl Scout’s **measurable** and **sustainable** impact on a community that is important to her.




The Girl Scout Silver Award project should benefit a girl’s community, which can include her school, Girl Scout council, city or town, or global community, and can be earned as an individual or as part of a group (up to 4 girls). Earning the award puts you among an exceptional group of girls who have used their knowledge and leadership skills to make a difference in the world.

The Benefits of Earning the Silver Award

1. The Girl Scout Silver Award is recognized as the highest award a Girl Scout Cadette can earn. It is a national award with national standards, awarded by your council on behalf of Girl Scouts of the USA.
2. You are recognized as a community leader if you have earned the Girl Scout Silver Award as an individual or as part of a group.
3. When completing your college entrance forms this is an additional way to demonstrate your leadership qualities.
4. Although you don’t have to do the Girl Scout Silver Award before pursuing the Girl Scout Gold Award, completing the Girl Scout Silver Award will help develop your skills and abilities that will allow you to successfully earn the Girl Scout Gold Award. (It also helps with your Gold Award pre-requisites as you will only need to do one Journey instead of two if you earn your Silver Award)

5. You'll find yourself supported by the community in many ways while on your quest for leadership. Being a Girl Scout will open many doors.
6. Having your friends and family members pitch in to help with your project can be fun! It can be a positive time spent working together.
7. Younger girls will look up to you when you earn this award.
8. Learning to work closely with a group to accomplish your goal for the community can be a lesson in cooperation, leadership, and compromise.
9. You will create change in the world around you.

Silver Award Pre-Requisites

	You're in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade
	You're a registered Girl Scout Cadette
	<p>You have completed a Cadette Journey</p> <p>Completing a Cadette Journey helps you build skills as you learn to show leadership through the Discover, Connect, and Take Action keys. Specifically, the Take Action project is important because it gives you a predetermined topic and is “practice” for when you do a Take Action project on your own with a project you choose (your Silver Award Project). However, the Journey’s Take Action Project cannot be combined with the Silver Award Project.</p>

Girl Scout Highest Awards are not cumulative. This means you do not need to earn one Highest Award to pursue another. Additionally, girls do not need to participate in product sales to earn their Silver Award, unless the girls need to do an additional money-earning activity or solicit for in-kind donations. If either of those are needed to fund the project, then participation in the two most recent product sales is required. Please see the Additional Money-Earning and In-Kind Donations section for details (page 21 - 23). (Note: A girl or group may not solicit for monetary donations for their Silver Award project.)

Silver Award Steps

- ① Identify an issue you care about
- ② Build your Girl Scout Silver Award team or decide to go solo
- ③ Explore your community
- ④ Pick your Silver Award project
- ⑤ Develop your project
- ⑥ Make a plan and put it into motion
- ⑦ Reflect, share your story, and celebrate!

Time Commitment

To earn the Silver Award, each Girl Scout working on the project should plan to complete a minimum of **50 hours** of planning, leadership, implementation, and reflection. While the hours suggested are a guide, in some cases girls successfully complete their projects in less than 50 hours, but in many cases, girls spend more than 50 hours.

You can start by planning the time in chunks, dividing it up by the steps. As a Girl Scout, you are committed to doing your very best with each step, but how much time per step is different for every Girl Scout, so the hours aren't a rule. Remember, too, that the hours include the fun and challenges you'll share with your Silver Award team. Each step you take toward making a difference in the world around you gives you a great chance to learn and grow, and that will make your award project an amazing one!

Prospective girls may choose to plan out their hours to ensure they will be met and easily achieved by dividing up the steps.

The following count toward your 50 hours:

- Planning and research (about 8 hours can be counted before your project has been approved)
- Leadership
- Implementation
- Reflection

The following do not count toward your 50 hours:

- Travel time
- Time spent preparing your Project Proposal Form and your Final Report
- Time spent on additional money-earning activities (fundraising) that exceeds 15% of your total hours
- Time spent volunteering at an existing event or organization
- Volunteers' time (i.e. you may not count the hours of people helping you with your project toward your hours)

Team Size

The **maximum** number of Girl Scouts on a Silver Award team is **FOUR**. Girls may also pursue solo projects as long as they are not the same as another Silver Award project.

Deadlines

The **Project Proposal Form** is due no later than **August 1st** of the year a girl completes 8th grade.

The Silver Award project must be completed, and the **Final Report** must be submitted, by **September 30th** of the year a girl completes 8th grade. This is a GSUSA deadline and exceptions cannot be made to this deadline. Please plan accordingly.

It is highly recommended that you do not wait until those deadlines and instead submit your Project Proposal Form and Final Report much earlier than that if possible. Please keep in mind that it may take up to **three weeks** for your forms to be reviewed by the Silver Award Committee. Please consider that turnaround time and remember that your Project Proposal Form must be approved before you carry out your project. Please keep in mind that the committee is comprised of volunteers. Be considerate of their time and do not request for your form to be reviewed outside of the timeframe that is given.

Forms

Obtaining Forms & Reports

Project Proposal Forms and Final Reports can be found on the [GSSJC Silver Award page](#) or the [GSSJC Forms and Documents page](#). Project Proposal Forms and Final Reports should be downloaded, completed, and saved as an editable PDF with digital signatures. Submissions should be emailed as an attachment to silveraward@sigs.org. (Please see page 37 for form and digital signature help). Scanned, photographed, printed copies, and links to the forms will not be accepted.

Project Proposal Form

The Girl Scout Silver Award Project Proposal Form helps you stay on track to complete a project that meets Silver Award guidelines. Once you have developed a plan for your project, you are required to complete and submit the [F-485 Silver Award Project Proposal Form](#) (**one per girl**) to silveraward@sigs.org for approval. Please title your form by your “Last Name, First Name”. **If you are working in a Project Team, all Project Proposal Forms MUST be submitted at the same time in the same email.** It is required to submit a Project Proposal Form and obtain approval **before** you carry out your project.

Additional Money-Earning Activities or Soliciting Donations (F-30A or F-32A)

Most Silver Award Projects can be accomplished without having to do an additional money-earning activity or soliciting for in-kind donations. However, if either of these are needed to fund your project, permission from Council is required first. A F-30A (Solicitation/Contribution Request Form) or F-32A (Request for Permission to Undertake Money-Earning Activity) for your team must be submitted to Council at the same time as the Project Proposal Form(s). Please keep in mind that solicitation for monetary donations will not be considered for Silver Award projects, but girls may submit an application to solicit in-kind donations (i.e. supplies from a company for their project). Approval from Council must be granted before an additional money-earning activity can be carried out or donation request can be made. These forms can be found on the [GSSJC Forms and Documents page](#).

Approval and Feedback Letter

After submission of the Project Proposal Form, it takes two to three weeks to receive a response from Council. We are not able to accommodate expedited reviews so please plan your project timeline accordingly.

Please note that many projects do not receive approval the first time reviewed. To help this process run smoothly, please make sure your form is completed in full and submitted in the correct format with all required signatures. We have provided an optional Silver Award Project Proposal Checklist to help you pay particular attention to the most common reasons why a Project Proposal might be returned with feedback.

Due to the high volume of paperwork submitted, the Council CANNOT provide confirmation of submissions, but you should receive an autoreply from the Silver Award email account (NOTE: You will only receive this auto-reply with your first email). After the Silver Award Committee has reviewed the Project Proposal Form, an email will be sent via the email addresses (girl, parent, and troop/group leader) listed on the Project Proposal Form. You will either be told that your project idea was approved, or you may be asked for additional information and/or for revisions. Once your project has been approved, you are able to get started on your project.

Final Report

After you have completed your project, the [F-486 Silver Award Final Report](#) (**one per girl**) must be submitted to Council. Final Reports must be submitted via email to silveraward@sigs.org for approval. **Project Team members do not need to submit their final reports together in the same email, although it is preferred.** If desired, girls can choose to submit videos, photographs, flyers, or pamphlets which correspond with their project by providing a link to a cloud storage (e.g. Google Drive or Dropbox) in your Final Report email.

Final Approval Letter

After the Final Report has been received and reviewed, a final approval letter will be sent via the email addresses listed on the Final Report. Upon receiving your approval letter, you can purchase the Silver Award pin and/or patch at the Girl Scout Center Shop. While at the shop, be sure to pick up your complimentary Silver Award yard sign.

The time frame in which the approval letter is sent may vary based on the volume of reports being received. During the deadline period, submission volume increases which may result in longer reviewing periods for Final Reports. Please allow up to **three weeks** for your letter before contacting Council.



How to Ensure your Project is a Take Action Project

What Makes a Silver Award Project Rise Above?

You must ensure that your Silver Award project fulfills expectations of GSSJC/GSUSA by confirming it is a true take action project in lieu of a service project. Consider the difference:

Community Service	Take Action
A <u>short-term</u> (often one-time) effort that helps something or someone fulfill an <u>immediate need</u> .	A <u>long-term</u> project with <u>ongoing influence that continues beyond your involvement</u> .
Addresses the <u>result/outcome</u> of an issue.	Addresses the <u>root cause</u> of an issue.
Done <u>FOR</u> a community.	Done <u>WITH</u> a community.
<u>Joining</u> an existing effort to address an issue.	<u>Creating</u> a unique initiative to address an issue.
Working toward <u>a goal set by others</u> .	<u>Setting the goals and leading a team</u> to achieve them.
Done as part of an <u>existing team</u> (usually as a volunteer).	<u>Creating and leading your own team</u> of volunteers – this is GIRL LED!

Consider what words are being used when the project is being discussed/described:

Service projects might use these words: help, support, collect, give, feed, care/give, follow, contribute, maintain, aid, for.

Take Action projects might use these words: envision, design, develop, organize, create, manage, evaluate, team-build, invent, produce, appoint or with.

Take Action projects always attempt to identify the root cause of a problem instead of simply addressing the symptoms.

Problem/Issue: An on-going situation or need in the community that is negatively affecting people’s lives.

Root Cause: The origin of the problem/issue. Why is it happening? What causes the situation to exist? Problem/issues often have multiple root causes, but Silver Award projects address one root cause.

Examples of identifying the root cause of a problem:

Problem/Issue: Kids can’t walk to school safely because there aren’t any sidewalks.	Root cause: Lack of planning when the roads were built.
Problem/Issue: Children in homeless shelters often struggle in school.	Root cause: Lack of stability and family resources, both financial and emotional.

Take Action Projects Must Be Measurable and Sustainable

Measurable: The success of the project can be determined based on the number of people the project helped, the number of people who were involved, any reduction in the community’s need and other concrete numbers. Measurable projects enable a girl (or team of girls) to demonstrate her (or their) impact through data and other information. She can use numbers to say, “Here’s how I know I made a change.”

Sustainable: You must make arrangements (such as collaborating with community leaders or partnered organization) to ensure that the project creates lasting change and is not a one-time event. This will look different for different projects. The important piece is that you plan for sustainability!

“A sustainable project is one that lasts after the girl’s involvement ends. [One way] to create a sustainable project is by collaborating with community groups, civic associations, non-profit agencies, local government, and/or religious organizations to ensure the project lasts beyond the girl’s involvement.” -GSUSA

Make it Last

You will invest time and hard work into your Silver Award project, so you will want to make sure that it is sustainable, meaning it should keep going even after your involvement ends. After all, this is a chance to make a mark in the community! Remember to keep it simple – a clear, focused plan can often be more sustainable than taking on a huge project.

Consider the following.... If you think the kids at your local elementary school need more interesting activities to do at recess, you might plan a week of special activities. But what happens when that week is over? How about working with the school to plan team games that the fourth graders can do with the second graders. That way you are collaborating with the school and the school is instituting a program that will continue. You can even provide a lesson plan booklet that you can share electronically with the school so that they can reuse your ideas and/or add to it. Your Take Action project keeps going because the fourth graders can work with the second graders every year with the resources and knowledge your project provided.

A Take Action project picks up from where a short-term project leaves off. For example, the girls organizing the book or clothing drive service project could make it a Take Action project by also working with the community to create an annual book or clothing drive.

The chart below shows examples of Service projects vs. Take Action projects:

Service (one-time effort, has short term impact)	Take Action (Identifies the root cause; has long-term benefits and sustainable support)
Issue: An uninsured family's home is destroyed by a fire. Solution: Collect clothes, household goods and food for the family.	Organize community groups and/or community members to establish an ongoing clothes closet for families facing a crisis.
Issue: Racial tensions exist in the community. Solution: Organize a weekend diversity celebration.	Organize schools and places of worship to commit to a series of monthly seminars/meetings/workshops about racial tolerance and understanding other cultures.
Issue: Families are going hungry. Solution: Hold a food drive for families in need.	Create a booklet of easy-to-make recipes that includes ingredients the families regularly receive from food pantries. Then partner with pantries to distribute the booklet free of charge.

Donation drives

Donation drives can be a part of a Silver Award project but should not be the central focus. Girls may consider the following to supplement their drives: educating the public and/or an organization about a needed improvement in the community as well as incorporating a sustainability component to help the project endure after the drive items are used/disseminated. For example, a girl identifies that the animal shelter does not receive enough donations of food, towels, and bedding. She believes the solution is to bring awareness to the community about the shelter's needs. Part of her project includes a donation drive to bring that awareness to the community. However, to ensure that it is Take Action and has sustainability she creates a brochure and provides the shelter with the digital copy to continue to distribute after her involvement ends. (Note: A girl may not fundraise monetary donations for another organization).

Now that you understand the difference between a Service and Take Action project, it's time to start the steps of a Silver Award project!



Step 1: Identify an Issue You Care About

To solve a problem, an issue must first be identified. Look at what matters most to the individual(s) earning the Silver Award.

- Do you find yourself reading articles about endangered species?
- Do you worry about where homeless children sleep at night?
- Do you wish that younger students had a cheerful place to stay after school while waiting for their parents to pick them up?

Consider using GSUSA’s Project Theme Chart for examples to identify an issue you care about:

Main Theme	Subcategories
Animals	animal safety, animal rights, pet care, animal adoption
Arts, Culture & Heritage	art, languages, historic preservation, cultural awareness, performing arts, visual arts, music
Children's Issues	child abuse, foster care, infant care, mentoring
Civic Engagement	politics, community development, voting, advocacy
Disaster Relief	fire, natural disasters, flooding, earthquake, tsunami
DEIA-RJ	diversity, equity, inclusion, access, racial justice
Education	literacy, career training, career pathways
Elderly Issues	elder care, senior centers, dementia, intergenerational relationships, life skills/technology support
Entrepreneurship	social entrepreneurship, business development
Environment & Sustainability	preserving outdoor spaces, pollution, alternative energy, clean water, farming, climate change

Physical Health	fitness, nutrition, hygiene, diseases, organ donation, global health, drug abuse
Mental Health	self-esteem, self-image, self-care, suicide prevention, body image/body positivity
Healthy relationships	bullying, conflict management, communication, domestic violence, rape prevention
Human Rights	human trafficking, girl and women's rights, immigration
Life Skills	Civic engagement, healthy living, communication, financial literacy, cultural arts, global citizenship, digital life skills, digital hygiene, digital leadership
Military/Veterans Affairs	veteran's assistance, veterans' issues
Outdoors	adventure opportunities, environmental stewardship
Poverty	hunger, homelessness, affordable housing, fair trade
Public Safety	traffic safety, policing, juvenile detention, detention centers
Sports	after school programs, school clubs, athletic programs
STEM	science, technology, engineering, math, robotics

Explore what connections can be made between the issues identified and those you see in your own community. You may choose to use the **Issues Chart** (located on page 27) to help you brainstorm ideas.



Step 2: Build Your Team

The Silver Award can be earned individually or with a small team. Either way, you will work with others in the community to complete the project.

- **Individual model:** Complete your project **solo**. This might be of interest to individually registered girls, girls in multi-level troops or girls who have different interests than others in their troop.
- **Project Team model:** Project Teams will consist of **2-4 Girl Scout Cadettes** (Girl Scouts within the same or different troops can be on a project together). Keeping the team small ensures that everyone can participate fully through playing an active role in choosing, planning and developing the team's project.

If an entire troop is working toward completing multiple Silver Award projects at one time, it is advised the troop/group leader walks girls through this Silver Award Project Guide to help them develop what topic they are interested in. Often girls have varying passions, allowing members from a troop to divide up based on interests will typically naturally form groups of 1-4 within the troop. If multiple teams within the troop would like to work with the same organization, submitted Project Proposal Forms should indicate how each team will have separate quality leadership opportunities. These projects **MUST** be different (address different issues and/or root causes of the issue) but may take place at the same organization. For example, an entire troop may be passionate about improving a community center. One team may work with a landscaping company to improve the exterior of the building, another may lead a team of volunteers that spruce up the interior design and a third team may help the staff develop a new filing system.

If working with a team, use the following tips to create a great experience:

- Respect different points of view and ways of work
- Contribute to the project—everyone needs to help out!
- Accept constructive suggestions

- Work together to create and develop a plan
- Resolve conflicts
- Be considerate and respectful of your fellow teammates
- Be a sister to every Girl Scout on your team

After the team has been built, hold the first meeting. Spend time getting acquainted, discussing what each member thinks makes a great team, how the team will work together and how often and where the team will meet. Once you have agreed upon the way this team will work write all of these on a large piece of paper and post that paper on the wall every time the team meets.



Step 3: Explore Your Community



Now that you have begun to think about issues that concern you, it's time to do some exploring to find out what your community's needs are.

Communities are groups of people who have something in common. You belong to many communities, like your school, debate team, neighborhood or church. Think about what communities you belong to.

GSSJC encourages girls to work with the community in which they live, worship, attend school, etc. However, if a girl has strong, ongoing ties in another community, she may wish to incorporate her project in that location.

After communities have been listed, they can be mapped. A [community map](#) is a drawing that shows the community's needs and resources, including contacts who might help you when the project is started. The key to making a community map is observation. Because a community is made up of people, you will be looking for what people need—that is, what will improve their lives, help them out or make them happier. To get started, you might try walking through your school, biking around your neighborhood or taking a bus ride through your town. During your travels, you'll naturally see different aspects of your community as you shop at stores, gather at your Girl Scout meeting place, go to school and so on.

You can also visit places (such as the library, town hall, or community center; or your church, synagogue, or mosque) where there are people and resources that can help identify community needs. You might even attend one or more town meetings to find out what concerns people in your area.

Continue to draw a map by writing down things seen that could be improved or places where special talents and skills could be used. Journeys may help girls with more ideas about spotting

community needs. When meeting people who might be able to help with the project, jot down their names and contact information on the **Community Contact List** (located on page 28).

The next step is to gain in-depth information about community issues by talking to people. As interviews are conducted, you will improve your communication skills, begin to see how time and talents can make an impact and build a network of contacts that you may need at a later time.

Start by talking to known people such as neighbors or teachers and ask them to introduce you to other people in the community such as business owners, neighbors, teachers, school officials, religious leaders, city council members, police officers or staff members at community centers.

Note: Always be safe when talking to new people. Discuss safety tips with troop/group volunteers or family, and always go with an adult such as a parent or troop/group Leader. Check out [GSSJC's Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) for more information about how to stay safe.

Prepare questions ahead of time so you can use your interview time wisely. Here are some question suggestions to get started:

- I'm interested in doing a project that will help the community. What are some of the issues affecting our community? Do you know about how people have tried to work on these issues in the past? What worked? What didn't work?

It is important at this step to get your project to be a true Take Action Project that involves **collaboration**. Be sure to ask what their needs are and how you can work with them to find solutions to their needs (not if you can do something for them).



Step 4: Pick Your Silver Award Project



Now that issues have been identified and communities have been explored, it's time for girls to choose a project based on what they've learned.

Before the project is chosen:

- Review the issues chart, community map and interview notes. If you are working with a team, this should be done as a group, of course. If you are working individually, you may choose to pull a few people together (such as your troop/group volunteer, friends, siblings, a teacher, etc.) to help you sort through all you have gathered.
- Choose a project based on what matters most to you or your group or where you think you can create positive change. If the decision is difficult, try writing a pro/con list for each choice.
- Many issues are big and complicated—and hard to fix! It might be a good idea to narrow the project's focus. Pick just one aspect of the issue, and then develop a solution to that specific problem. (Imagine focusing a camera lens in order to get a clear picture. The process of focusing an idea so that it's simple and clear is just like that.)

Girl Scout Property Projects

You may decide to benefit a Girl Scout property (i.e. Girl Scout camp) *if* the Girl Scout property is the most logical beneficiary of the project. However, please keep in mind that all Highest Awards projects should always be “what, how, then who” projects. Meaning that a girl should first decide what she would like to do to make the world a better place, and then decide how she'll tackle it and for whom.

If you find that the project can be carried out on a GSSJC property, you will also need to submit the [F-208 Request to Conduct a Project on GSSJC Property](#) in addition to the Silver Award Project Proposal Form to ensure your project meets all other guidelines. Submit this form to

silveraward@sigs.org. Please note that you do not need to have a GSSJC staff contact when you submit the form. One will be provided upon approval.

Here is an example of an appropriate Silver Award project on a Girl Scout property:

A Girl Scout Cadette is concerned about childhood obesity and wants to start a fun nutrition and exercise program for kids. After doing research, she learns about a kid's fitness trail program that features active challenges along the way and recruits her school basketball team to help her plan a trail and build the elements. As a CIT at her summer camp, she realizes that there are lots of campers who could benefit from her program, and she works with the camp ranger to build the trail and camp chef to develop a cookbook for kids on healthy snacks and meals.

After the project is chosen, make sure everyone is clear about what you want to do and why. Good leaders always communicate with their team.

Consider answering these questions:

- What is the project?
- Why does it matter?
- Who will it benefit?
- Which leadership skills from yourself or your team might be used during the project?
- How will these skills help each girl understand who they are and what they can do?
- How will the Girl Scout Promise and Law be lived while earning your Girl Scout Silver Award?



Step 5: Develop Your Project

Before you start, the following questions will help you think through your project:

- What steps need to be taken to reach the goal?
- What special talents can each girl use to help make the project a success?
- What was learned during the Cadette Journey that will help ensure the Silver Award project runs smoothly?
- Is enough data available or is background information needed?
- Which groups or organizations can be worked with? Who can be asked for help?
- How can other people be involved?
- What supplies will be needed?
- Will money need to be earned or utilized? (If so, reference the additional money-earning and solicitation of in-kind donations section of this guide.)
- How much time is needed to finish the project? Is that timeline realistic?
- Will a contract need to be signed? (If so, brainstorm another site, as only the GSSJC CEO, or designee, can sign/approve a contract.)

National/Global Connection

Think about others who may have worked on the same problem in the past or check online to see how others around the globe deal with the issue. What can be learned from their approach? Consider how the project's reach may be extended into other communities. Are there ways to share with other communities who are facing the same issue? Can you make a plan that other people could use to replicate the project in their communities?

Eventually, when it is complete, your project will contribute to this national/global solution to the issue, and others may learn from your efforts as well.

Finding a Project Advisor

A project advisor is an expert who can answer specific questions about the issue that is being addressed through the project. An advisor might be found through the network created while the project was being researched. For example, if you are doing a literacy project then you might recruit a librarian or a reading teacher. If you are doing a gardening project then maybe a gardener, landscaper or a master naturalist. Often, the project advisor is an employee or volunteer at the organization you are collaborating with. If there is not a clear prospect for a project advisor, brainstorm possible options with your troop/group leader or other Girl Scout volunteer. **A project advisor is required and may not be a family member or troop leader.**

Keep in mind that your project advisor may not be familiar with what a Silver Award project entails. It's your job to help educate them. Explain to your project advisor what the Silver Award is, what type of projects are Silver Award eligible, how long it takes a Silver Award project to complete, what is the role of the project advisor, and how they can support you as you complete your Silver Award. You may use the Project Advisor Email Template (found on page 31) as a starting point and adjust to add your own thoughts and voice.

Funding your Silver Award Project

Additional money-earning and solicitation for in-kind donations is not common with the Silver Award. Often, time and talents are more important than money. For example, one girl was worried about food waste at her school. She could have raised money to buy compost bins. Instead, she used her advocacy skills to persuade school and town officials to set up a composting system. Be creative! You may realize you don't need that much money after all. However, if a girl or team has a need to pursue this avenue, they should carefully review the guidelines.

In addition to reviewing the guidelines below, the following should also be reviewed to make sure that you are following Council protocols:

- [Volunteer Essentials](#)
- [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#)
- [GSSJC Policies and Operating Procedures \(F-433\)](#)

There are three possible options for funding a Silver Award project:

- 1) Self-funding
- 2) Additional Money-Earning Activities
- 3) Solicitating for In-Kind Donations

Self-Funding

Self-funding includes a girl’s own money, money from family or friends, and/or troop funds. No Council prior approval or paperwork is needed. Keep in mind that personal donations to a Silver Award project are not eligible for tax receipts. Any personal donations accepted are between a girl and the donor (i.e. family or friend). Because donations to the Silver Award are between the girl and the donor, remember that Council cannot provide a copy of our 501c(3) letter or tax ID number.

Additional Money-Earning Activities

Additional money-earning activities (MEA) are approved, girl planned activities to earn money for the group (a Silver Award team is considered as a “group” in this sense). These are coordinated efforts to provide a product or service in exchange for money.

Important Notes:

- **The girl(s) must receive Council approval prior to the additional money-earning activity.**
- Additional Money-Earning Activity Forms:
 - **Request for Permission to Undertake MEA** [F-32A](#)
(To be submitted with the Project Proposal Form(s))
 - **MEA Project Evaluation** [F-32B](#)
(To be submitted after the MEA)
 - **Guidelines for MEA Projects** [F-32C](#)
 - **MEA FAQ** [F-32D](#)
- **In order to be eligible, the girl(s) must have participated in the last two product sales.**
- The girl(s)/parent/Troop/Group Leader may not fundraise for another organization.

Suggested money-earning activities:	NOT approved money-earning activities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pet sitting, dog washing or walking service • Car wash • Yard sale • Raking leaves, weeding gardens • Babysitting at local meetings • Delivery service • Birthday party service • Ironing or laundry service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Games of chance, raffles, casino nights • Receiving a percentage of sales from a business during a specific time frame • Any activities conducted on the Internet • Activities with income which exceeds the project’s needs • Raising money for another organization, including walk-a-thons, tele-a-thons, coupons or coupon booklets, home demonstration products, etc.

Suggested money-earning activities:	NOT approved money-earning activities:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of recyclable materials • Put on a play, fashion show, talent show, karaoke night, family dance, game night or costume party 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funds being retained by individuals as their property • Any money-earning activities conducted by a girl with outstanding debt to Council or aided by other girls/ adults with outstanding debt • Bake sales

In-Kind Donations

For Silver Award projects, only non-monetary support is allowed. Non-monetary in-kind donations refers to soliciting for supplies needed for your project (i.e. soliciting a hardware store for lumber). Soliciting for a gift card from a store for the supplies needed would also be appropriate.

Important Notes:

- **The girl(s) must receive Council approval prior to the solicitation.**
- In-kind Donation Forms:
 - **Contribution/Solicitation Request Form** [F-30A](#)
(To be submitted with the Project Proposal Form(s))
 - **Contribution/Solicitation Request Process**.....[F-30B](#)
(To be submitted after the MEA)
 - **Contribution/Solicitation FAQ**[F-30C](#)
- **In order to be eligible, the girl(s) must have participated in the last two product sales.**
- The girl(s)/parent/Troop/Group Leader may not use “Go Fund Me” or other crowd-sourcing platforms to raise money for their projects.
- The girl(s)/parent/Troop/Group Leader may NOT solicit for monetary donations.

Because GSSJC is a nonprofit organization, there are specific rules on how in-kind donations can be acquired. The IRS’s tax codes state that only adults may complete the “ask” for the donation. However, GSSJC encourages girls to be a part of the planning process through budgeting, composing ask scripts/inquiry letters, etc. Although adults may make the specific request for donations, girls can be present to answer questions, give a presentation, provide justification, etc. for why they need the supplies, and by doing so they will build valuable knowledge of finances and leadership!



Step 6: Make a Plan and Put it Into Action

It's time to get started! Your project needs to involve action by you and/or your team, from the planning stages all the way to earning the Girl Scout Silver Award.

Build a list of what needs to be done and how it can be completed, then figure out who will be doing what. Remember each girl must complete the required 50 hours of work (about eight hours of which will go toward planning). Also decide when each task needs to be finished. You may choose to use the **Make a Plan chart** (located on page 29) to write down all the information.

Once the steps are identified and the plan is set, complete the [Silver Award Project Proposal Form](#) and F-30A or F-32A (if appropriate) and submit them to GSSJC (silveraward@sigs.org).

Once you have received your approval email from silveraward@sigs.org, you can begin your project. You may choose to plan out your hours to ensure they will be met and easily achieved by dividing up the steps. It might be useful to track your hours via a **Time Log** (this can be located on page 30).

In Progress Tips:

- This is YOUR project – take the lead and carry out your plan
- Challenge yourself to try different ways to solve problems
- Take pictures along the way
- Be flexible with & appreciative of your team

Note: If you create any flyers, pamphlets, brochures, etc. related to your Silver Award project it is required to have the Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council and United Way logos. It is also important for you to identify that it's for your Silver Award project. You must also get these materials approved by the Silver Award Manager before distributing them. If you need the logos or are seeking approval, please email silveraward@sigs.org.



Step 7: Reflect, Share Your Story, and Celebrate!

Now celebrate your accomplishment! You took on the challenge and made a difference in your world – your completed project makes a difference. Take some time to reflect.

These questions may get you started:

- What did you discover about yourself?
- How did you connect with your local and global communities? Who do you know now that you didn't know before?
- How did that help you make your project better?
- What skills did you gain (such as public speaking, team building, advocacy, blogging, etc.) that help you as a person and a leader?
- What impact did your Take Action project have on your community? How will it go on past your involvement?
- How did you live the Girl Scout Promise and Law?

Demonstrating to an audience what has been learned sets the stage for even broader impact and is sometimes the best way for you to recognize what has been accomplished and to see how much you have grown. It will also help others get inspired to act!

Here are some ideas for how your story can be shared:

- Create a website or blog about what was learned and how your project will help the community.
- At a workshop for community members, present what was learned and what the project will do for the community. Or do a presentation for a group of younger Girl Scouts—this will definitely inspire them!
- Make a video about your project and post it online, if appropriate. Invite friends, community leaders, and people from organizations that are tackling a similar issue to watch and share the video with others.

- Write an essay or an article for a local or school newspaper.

Remember to thank everyone who helped you along the way – from people you interviewed and those who volunteered to help to your advisor. Not only is this good manners, but also an inspiration to people when they hear what you have done – and they'll be proud to know they helped make it happen.

Once your project has been completed, it is time to submit the Final Report. Once your report has been received and approved, you will then receive a congratulatory letter from the Council. This official letter can be used to purchase your Silver Award pin from the Girl Scout shop. While at the shop, be sure to pick up your complimentary Silver Award yard sign.

We strongly encourage you to have a special ceremony to celebrate your achievement. Your ceremony may be private, with family, with your troop, part of another meeting related to your interests, part of a larger ceremony (*i.e. bridging*), or a Council function. You may also inquire about renting a banner. The Girl Experience Department at the Houston Girl Scout Center has two Silver Award podium banners that feature the Silver Award logo available on loan. The use and return of each banner operate based on your honor as part of the Girl Scout community. If you are interested in using a banner, please contact the Silver Award Manager at silveraward@sigs.org.



Issues Chart

Note: The Issues Chart is an optional tool that is not required to be submitted to Council.

Issues that concern you	Why is it important to you?	How does this issue affect your community?

Community Contact List

Note: The Community Contact List is an optional tool that is not required to be submitted to Council.

Community Contact	Organization	Contact Information	How they can help

Project Advisor Email Template

This may be your project advisor's first time being involved with a Silver Award project so take the opportunity to educate them about Girl Scouts and the Silver Award. Below is a template to help you, though keep in mind that it's just a jumping-off point—be sure to add your own voice and thoughts! Consider laying out a communication strategy with your advisor from the get-go, based on what works best with your timeline and your advisor's schedule. Let your advisor know how, and how often, you plan to check in, and because they may have a busy schedule, it can also be helpful to suggest some specific dates in advance.

Dear [PROJECT ADVISOR NAME],

Thank you for volunteering to be my project advisor for my Girl Scout Silver Award project. I would like to share more with you about what the Silver Award means and what you can expect.

The Silver Award is the highest award that Cadette Girl Scouts can earn. In order to become a Silver Award Girl Scout, a girl identifies an issue that's important to her, then develops and carries out an innovative and sustainable solution with measurable impact.

I plan to earn my Silver Award by addressing [DESCRIPTION OF YOUR CHOSEN ISSUE, WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO YOU, AND HOW YOU'LL APPROACH IT].

Project advisors play an important role in this process. Although plans and ideas should be my own, I will appreciate any knowledge and advice you can offer along the way.

I would like to check in with you by [YOUR COMMUNICATION STRATEGY]. Please let me know if that makes sense to you.

If you'd like, you can learn more about the Silver Award at gssjc.org/silveraward

Thank you again for your time and support.

Sincerely,

[NAME]

Silver Award Project Examples

Project Example #1	
Problem	Children in the neighborhood are not safe while walking to and from school.
Root Cause	Lack of planning when the roads were built led to sidewalks not being created.
Solution with long-term impact	Create a petition asking that a sidewalk be build, get local residents to sign it, and present it to the city council; work with children/adults to plan alternate routes to and from school that are safer – local police precincts may even supply low-crime routes home to explore incorporating more safety options into the project!
Making the solution sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girl impacts her community on a tangible scale that will make a difference and allow her to build advocacy skills. • Once sidewalk is built, it will be in place for years, offering a safe route for future generations.

Project Example #2	
Problem	Children in homeless shelters often struggle in school.
Root Cause	Lack of stability and family resources, both financial and emotional.
Solution with long-term impact	Work with a local homeless shelter and school to establish an ongoing tutoring program that matches student volunteers with children in the shelter. Girls can also work with the people in the neighborhood to spread the word about the cause – community members build a passion for the cause and will continue the efforts started by the project.
Making the solution sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the school and shelter to find adult staff members who will continue to coordinate the program. • Establish a transition tradition, such as an end-of-school-year party, where potential new student

	<p>volunteers can meet current volunteers and people in the homeless shelter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education provided to the children will have a lasting impact on their life.
--	--

Project Example #3	
Problem	The neighborhood is overrun with feral cats and the local shelters are at capacity from taking in these homeless cats (and other animals), which is taxing on their staff and material supplies.
Root Cause	Lack of education for the public about spaying/neutering pets as well as not feeding non-domesticated animals.
Solution with long-term impact	Advocate for correct care of pets (spaying/neutering) as well as how the general public can help control feral populations; do this by educating the public at community/City Council meetings and creating pamphlets to hand out at information booths. Ask the community to support the over-populated shelters with blankets, food, and other supplies – as well as organize a “pass it on” system for community members to continue this annually. Volunteer with local shelter to help care for abundance of animals.
Making the solution sustainable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Girls impact their community on a tangible scale that will make a difference and allow them to build advocacy skills. • Establish a transition tradition, where potential new community volunteers can meet current volunteers and people in the animal shelter. • Over time, the feral populations will decrease, making the community safer for domesticated pets – and local shelters will become less populated with unplanned kittens.

Additional Silver Award Tips and Reminders

- The [Silver Award Project Proposal Form](#) and [Final Report](#) can be found on the [GSSJC Silver Award Website](#).
- Please remember to download the forms and save it to your computer before you start typing into it. **Note: Silver Award forms are living documents and change regularly. Do not save these documents to your computer until you are ready to fill them out and submit. Old versions of the Silver Award forms will not be accepted.**
- Each girl on the team needs to submit their own Project Proposal and Final Report forms in her own words. Girls must name their Project Proposal and Final Report forms by their “Last Name, First Name.” **Note: If working in a Project Team, all Project Proposal Forms must be submitted together in the same email. However, Final Report forms do not need to be submitted together.**
- If the girl(s) would like to do an additional money-earning activity or solicit for in-kind donations, then a F-30A or F-32A must all be submitted at the same time as the Project Proposal Form for approval before the activity or solicitation is made.
- **All forms must be emailed as an attachment in editable PDF format.** Scanned, mailed or links to the documents CANNOT be accepted. The reason for paperless submissions is to be more environmentally friendly, speed up turnaround times, and to accurately transfer data within Silver Award tracking sheets.

Help with Digital Forms – WINDOWS

(**Note:** These directions were made when using Chrome as the browser. Form images below may not be up-to-date.)

Step 1: Access the Silver Award Project Proposal Form (or Final Report)

Silver Award Project Proposal Form:

<https://www.gssjc.org/content/dam/gssjc/documents/about-girl-scouts/higher-awards/F-485SilverAwardProjectProposalForm.pdf>

Final Report Form:

<https://www.gssjc.org/content/dam/gssjc/documents/about-girl-scouts/higher-awards/F-486SilverAwardFinalReport.pdf>

1 / 3

Girl Scout Silver Award Intent Form
Girl Scouts of San Jacinto Council

Send your completed form to: silveraward@sjgs.org
Forms must be submitted as an editable PDF and include Adobe digital signatures.
Scanned, photographed or printed copies will not be accepted.

Girl Contact Information

Name: _____ Date submitted: _____
Address: _____
City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____
Grade: _____ School: _____
Girl email: _____ Phone: _____
Parent/Guardian email: _____

Troop/Group Number: _____ Troop/Group Advisor: _____

Step 2: Download the Form

Download the form by clicking the down arrow on the upper top right.

Save As

This PC > Desktop

Folder

Name Date modified Type

This PC
3D Objects
Desktop
Documents
Downloads
Music
Pictures
Videos
Windows (C:)

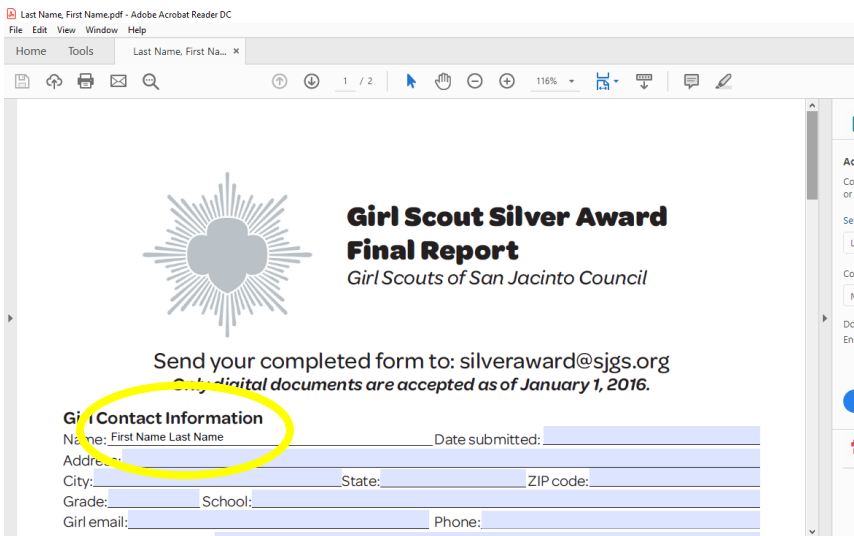
File name: Last Name, First Name

Save as type: Adobe Acrobat Document

Save Cancel

Step 3: Save the Form

Choose where you would like to save the form (i.e. your Desktop) and what you would like to name it (we recommend Last Name, First Name of the girl whose Project Proposal Form it is). Then click "Save".

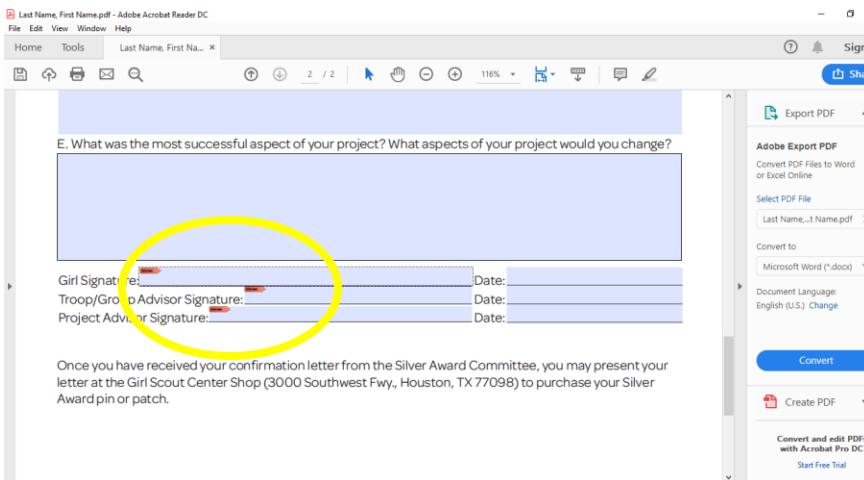


Step 4: Open the Form and begin typing in it

Go to your Desktop (or wherever you chose to save the form) and open up the form.

You can now click in any of the blue fields to insert text.

Remember to “save” if you close it and want to return to it later.



Step 5: Digital Signatures

Once you have completed the form, it’s time to obtain signatures. You will see a red flag where signatures are needed.

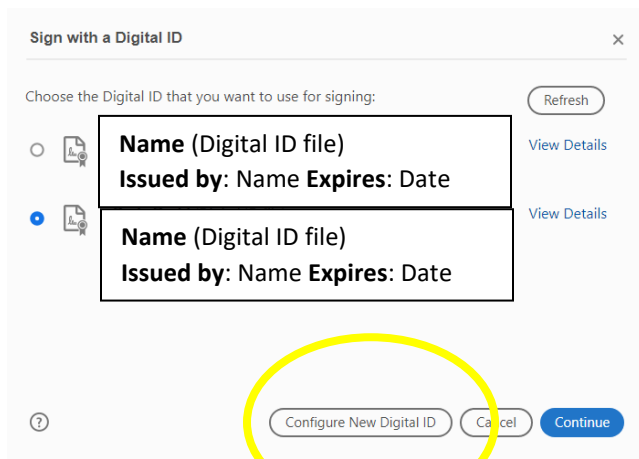
When you click the red flag you will be prompted with a window that says “Sign with Digital ID”

TIP: Make sure you have the most updated version of Adobe. Some computers require a specific version to make the editable forms fully functional (and/or for the digital signature to work properly) - **Acrobat Reader DC**. This version is available at get.adobe.com/reader as a free upgrade or download.

If you already have an ID configured, you can click “Continue” and follow prompts.

If you do not, you can “Configure a New Digital ID”.

TIP: You can create multiple IDs on one computer, therefore you may consider working with the girls during a troop meeting on completing the girl and Troop Leader signatures, then email the form to the project advisor for hers.



Configure a Digital ID for signing

A Digital ID is required to create a digital signature. The most secure Digital ID are issued by trusted Certificate authorities and are based on secure devices like smart card or token. Some are based on files.

You can also create a new Digital ID, but they provide a low level of identity assurance.

Select the type of Digital ID:

- Use a Signature Creation Device
Configure a smart card or token connected to your computer
- Use a Digital ID from a file
Import an existing Digital ID that you have obtained as a file
- Create a new Digital ID**
Create your self-signed Digital ID

Cancel Continue

Select the destination of the new Digital ID

Digital IDs are typically issued by trusted providers that assure the validity of the identity. Self-signed Digital ID may not provide the same level of assurance and may not be accepted in some use cases. Consult with your recipients if this is an acceptable form of authentication.

- Save to File**
Save the Digital ID to a file in your computer
- Save to Windows Certificate Store
Save the Digital ID to Windows Certificate Store to be shared with other applications

Back Continue

Create a self-signed Digital ID

Enter the identity information to be used for creating the self-signed Digital ID.

Digital IDs that are self-signed by individuals do not provide the assurance that the identity information is valid. For this reason they may not be accepted in some use cases.

Name: First Name Last Name

Organizational Unit: Enter Organizational Unit...

Organization Name: Enter Organization Name...

Email Address: silveraward@sigs.org

Country/Region: US - UNITED STATES

Key Algorithm: 2048-bit RSA

Use Digital ID for: Digital Signatures

Back Continue

Save the self-signed Digital ID to a file

Add a password to protect the private key of the Digital ID. You will need this password again to use the Digital ID for signing.

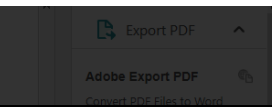
Save the Digital ID file in a known location so that you can copy or backup it.

Your Digital ID will be saved at the following location :
C:\Users\jmdodd\AppData\Roaming\Adobe\Acrobat\DI Browse

Apply a password to protect the Digital ID:
[Password Field]

Confirm the password:
[Confirm Password Field]

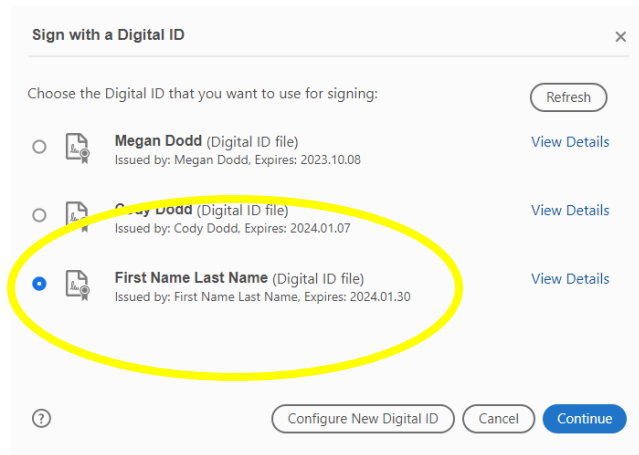
Back Save



Step 5: Digital Signatures

If you are configuring a new digital ID, continue to follow prompts:

- 1) Create a new Digital ID
- 2) Continue
- 3) Save to File
- 4) Continue
- 5) Fill in information, i.e.:
 - a. Girl Name
 - b. Leave Organization Unit & Name blank
 - c. Email address (girl or parent's email)
 - d. Country
 - e. The last two boxes will auto populate
- 6) Continue
- 7) Apply a password to protect the Digital ID

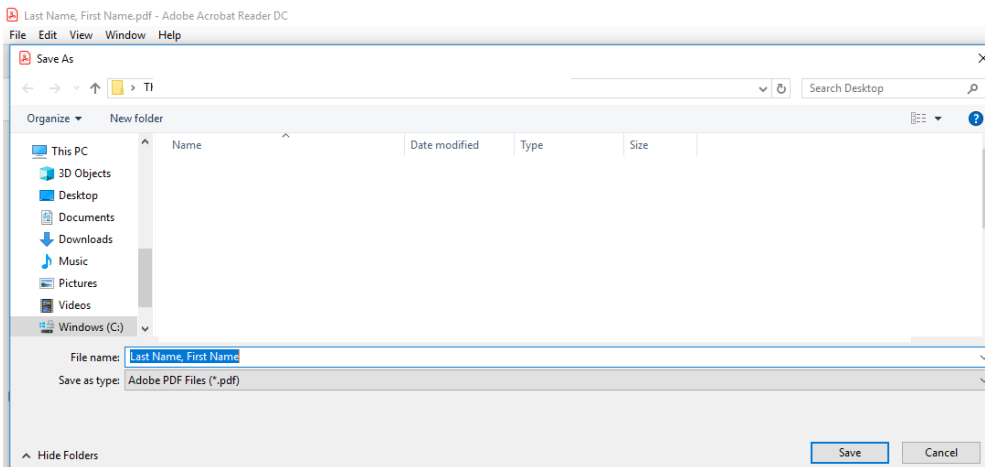
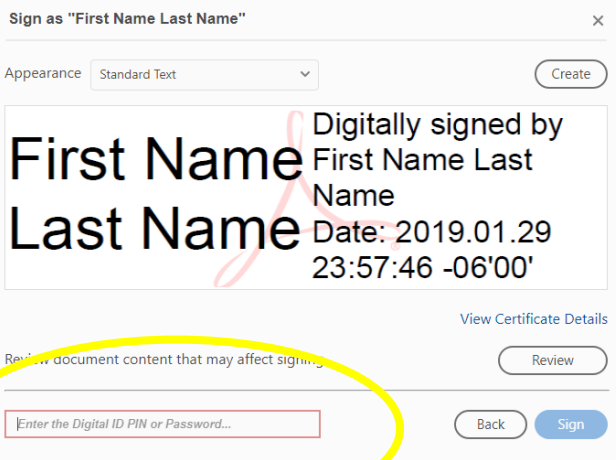


Step 5: Digital Signatures

Your digital signature has been created and now is ready to use!

To use your digital signature:

- 1) Select your Digital ID and then click Continue.
- 2) Type in your password
- 3) Click Sign
- 4) It will automatically prompt you to re-save your document – click Save



E. What was the most successful aspect of your project? What aspects of your project would you change?

[Redacted text area]

Girl Signature: First Name Last Name <small>Digitally signed by First Name Last Name Date: 2019.01.30 00:01:24 -0600</small>	Date:
Troop/Group Advisor Signature:	Date:
Project Advisor Signature:	Date:

Once you have received your confirmation letter from the Silver Award Committee, you may present your letter at the Girl Scout Center Shop (3000 Southwest Fwy., Houston, TX 77098) to purchase your Silver Award pin or patch.

Step 5: Digital Signatures

Your digital signature is now complete!
Each required signature will follow the same steps.

Convert

Create PDF

Convert and edit PDFs with Acrobat Pro DC
[Start Free Trial](#)

Help with Digital Forms – MACS

(**Note:** Safari is typically the default browser for Mac products and is depicted below for downloading and saving. If you use Chrome, use the Windows downloading and saving instructions and review Mac instructions for digital signatures. Form images below may not be up-to-date.)

Step 1: Access the Silver Award Project Proposal Form (or Final Report)

Silver Award Project Proposal Form:

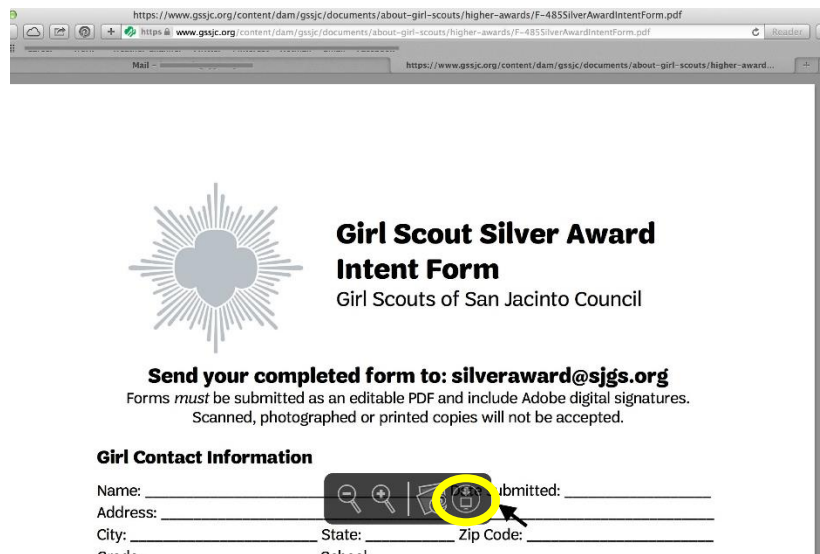
<https://www.gssjc.org/content/dam/gssjc/documents/about-girl-scouts/higher-awards/F-485SilverAwardProjectProposalForm.pdf>

Final Report Form:

<https://www.gssjc.org/content/dam/gssjc/documents/about-girl-scouts/higher-awards/F-486SilverAwardFinalReport.pdf>

Step 2: Download the Form

Hover your mouse until you get the menu at the bottom and click the download icon (on the far right).



Step 3: Save the Form

When you save, it will go directly to the downloads folder (if this is the default). To open the form, you will need to go to the downloads folder to work on it.

TIP: Open document, save to Desktop, then work on it.

Step 4: Open the Form and begin typing in it

- Go to your Desktop (or wherever you chose to save the form) and open the form.
- Typically, you will be able to see a cursor icon when hovering over the line – click and type.
- If you do not see this, follow these steps:
 - Go to Tools
 - Annotate
 - Text
 - This will allow you to draw text boxes that you can type into
- Remember to “save” if you close it and want to return to it later

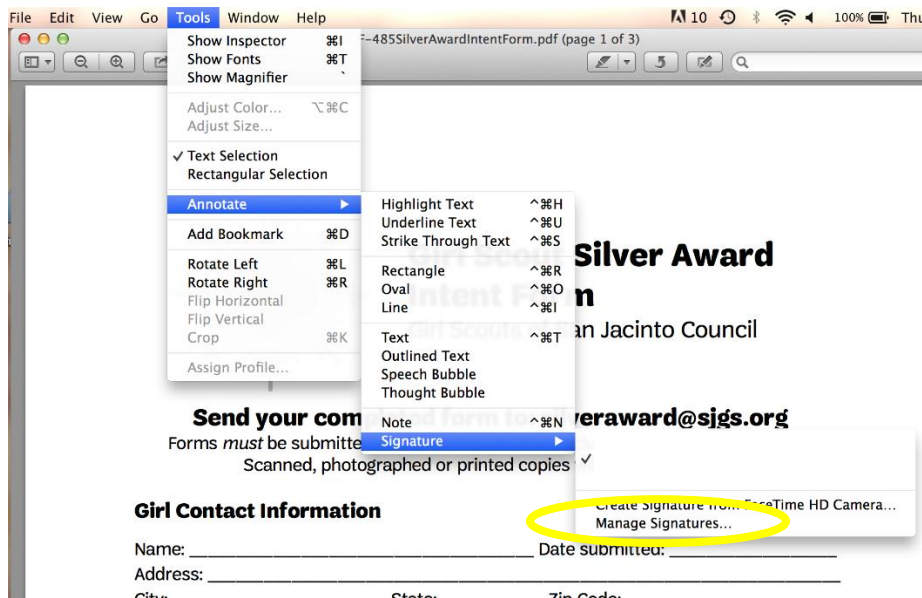
Step 5: Digital Signatures

Once you have completed the form, it’s time to obtain signatures.

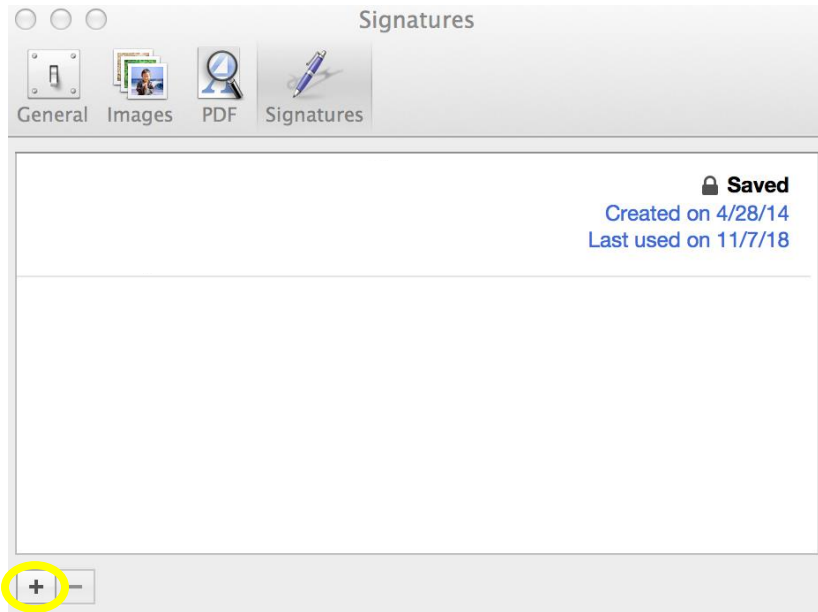
TIP: Make sure you have the most updated version of Adobe. Some computers require a specific version to make the editable forms fully functional (and/or for the digital signature to work properly) - **Acrobat Reader DC**. This version is available at get.adobe.com/reader as a free upgrade or download.

Follow these steps to create a digital signature if you have not used one before on a Mac:

- 1) Tools -> Annotate -> Signature (if you have previously created a signature, one will appear):



- a. Click Manage Signatures
- b. Click the plus sign



- b. Follow directions (and be sure to check box to asking you to save your signature)
- c. Click accept

Once you have a signature saved on a Mac, follow these steps to add it to a PDF:

- b. Go to Tools -> Annotate -> signature – you will see your saved signature
- c. Click the signature and it will import into your document
- d. Move and resize as appropriate (hovering over the corner will give you a resizing arrow)

Deadlines are met.

Girl signature: _____ Date: _____

Troop/Group Advisor Signature:  _____ Date: _____

Project Advisor Signature: _____ Date: _____

- g. Click off it and type in date (you may need to re-opt into the annotation through text option as detailed above after importing a signature)

Additional Tips & Reminders for Digital Forms

- Go to the Adobe website for additional tips:
<https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/signing-pdfs.html>

- Still not able to get digital signature to work?

We will accept a scanned copy of the form with handwritten signatures. However, we still need the form in editable PDF format (without signatures).

Therefore, you will be submitting two attachments:

1. Completed digital editable PDF form (without signatures)
2. Scanned copy of the completed form with handwritten signatures

(**NOTE:** If you submit only ONE scanned version of the form, this will NOT be accepted.)