

Sustainability Tips

Girl Scout Gold Award projects are not “one shot”—they create lasting change. You can ensure a lasting project by setting clear timelines, collaborating with community organizations, building alliances with adults and mentors, and keeping good records. Sustainability often involves influencing others to pitch in. Here are some examples of sustainable projects.

Your documentation should be tailored to your individual project. These are just examples that will help you develop a unique sustainability plan for your project.

Example #1

Community issue: Food waste from school lunches poses a danger to the environment.

Root cause: No community composting or recycling program.

Take action: Create a food-waste composting program for the school.

Making the solution sustainable:

- ❖ Work with school officials to find biodegradable plates and cups to use in the cafeteria.
- ❖ Work with town/state food waste officials to ensure the system is in place.
- ❖ Implement a plan in your school to separate their cafeteria waste into composting, recycling, and trash bins. (Farmers can use the compost to fertilize crops, improve the quality of the soil, decrease soil runoff, and so on.)
- ❖ Get a commitment from school administrators to carry on when your project is complete.

Making your project bigger (national and/or global link): Recruit students at schools in the area to develop the program for their schools and/or contact local and state officials about adopting the program.

Global link: Find out how people in other parts of the world deal with food waste in schools. What kinds of programs do they have in place? How can you learn from this?

Documentation to include with your report:

- ❖ Responsibility Transfer Form—a signed document in which the person or organization accepting responsibility for maintaining your project
- ❖ Supplemental Materials—could include guidelines and business processes for starting a similar project, lessons learned, and recommendations for potential corporate sponsors and/or grants
- ❖ Recommended Timeline—recommended start and end dates to guide others who might attempt a similar project

Example #2

Community issue: Teen suicide.

Root cause: Lack of awareness and prevention.

Take action: Establish an awareness and prevention program.

Making the solution sustainable:

- ❖ Produce a short video that can be used in other communities with an online brochure outlining the steps to an awareness and prevention program.
- ❖ Share the video and online brochure with schools and community organizations.

Making your project bigger (national and/or global link): Share the program with local youth groups, health/human services agencies, community centers, church/synagogue/mosque community centers, or school district.

Documentation to include with your report:

- ❖ Supplemental Materials—could include a link to the finished video and a copy of the brochure
- ❖ Education and Awareness Campaign Summary—a detailed plan for driving traffic to your project’s online presence, distributing the brochure, etc.