

## MONEY EARNING AND FUND RAISING GUIDELINES

Helping girls earn and manage money is an integral part of the Girl Scout Leadership Experience. When girls participate in money earning activities they learn important skills such as goal setting, decision making, money management, people skills, and business ethics.

Your Girl Scout group (troop, service unit, etc.) is responsible for planning and financing its own activities. This puts girls in charge (with support from troop leaders and GSMISTS registered volunteers), giving them the opportunity to cooperatively set goals, manage a budget, spend responsibly, and maintain records, as well as develop social, marketing, and entrepreneurial skills.

The Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program are the two best opportunities for girls to earn troop funds. Troops must participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in order to participate in additional money earning or fund raising. Consideration will be given to troops that formed after these opportunities have passed. Troops who participate in the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program usually do not need to participate in additional money earning or fund raising unless they are planning trips or other travel.

### Helping Girls Reach Their Financial Goals

It is great for girls to have opportunities such as the Girl Scout Cookie Program to earn funds as part of their Girl Scout Leadership Experience. Part of the role of troop leaders and other GSMISTS registered volunteers is to help the girls balance money earning with opportunities to enjoy other activities that have less emphasis on earning and spending money. It is important the girls have a clear plan and purpose for their proceeds from the Girl Scout Cookie Program, Fall Product Program, and other money earning activities. An important aspect of the Entrepreneurship Pillar is facilitating girl-led financial planning, which include the following steps:

1. **Set goals.** What do girls want to do during the year that requires money? In addition to earning money, what skills do they hope to build? What leadership opportunities present themselves?
2. **Create a budget.** Use a budget worksheet that includes both expenses (the cost of supplies, admission to events, travel, and so on) and available income (the troop's account balance, projected cookie and fall product proceeds, and so on).
3. **Determine how much additional money the group needs to earn.** Subtract expenses from available income to determine how much additional money your troop needs to earn.
4. **Make a plan.** The troop can brainstorm and make decisions about its financial plans. Will the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program - if approached

proactively and energetically - earn enough money to meet the troop's goals? If not, what additional money earning might offset the difference in anticipated expense and anticipated income? Will more than one money earning activity be necessary to achieve the group's financial goals? In this planning stage, engage the girls through the Girl Scout processes (girl-led, learning by doing, and cooperative learning) and consider the value of any potential activity. Have them weigh feasibility, implementation, and safety factors.

5. **Write it out.** Once the group has decided on its financial plan, put the plan in writing. The group should also have a written agreement that discusses girl responsibilities, how money earning funds will be distributed, etc. See the Money Earning and Fund Raising Group Agreement section below.

### **Money Earning**

*Money earning activities are those girls implement in order to supplement monies raised through the Girl Scout Product Programs - the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program.* Other money earning activities are arranged by troops and service units and can include raking leaves, shoveling snow, walking pets, service-a-thons, etc. The funds earned through money earning are to be used for Girl Scout mission-based activities and must be retained by the troop or service unit, not by individuals. These funds must be accounted for through the required annual financial reporting.

### **Money Earning Progression by Grade Level**

As with all Girl Scout activities, girls progress in their entrepreneurial skills as they get older. More information and examples of the abilities of girls at each grade level can be found in [Volunteer Essentials](#).

### **Money Earning Timeframes**

Girls may not participate in other money earning activities during the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program seasons. Check the GSMISTS Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program calendars for exact dates.

- Fall Product Program typically takes place mid-September-October.
- Girl Scout Cookie Program typically takes place January-March.

The only money earning activity that may take place during either of these timeframes are returnable bottle/can drives.

### **Pre-Approved Money Earning Activities**

Troops may participate in the following pre-approved money earning activities without additional permission:

- Offer services such as washing windows, raking leaves, or shoveling snow.
- Create and sell a book about your Girl Scout adventures, a comic book about how to build a robot, a cookbook, etc.
- Collect pop cans and other returnables.
- Hold a car wash.

- Provide a community meal such as a spaghetti dinner or pancake breakfast.
- Offer tutoring services.
- Host a party for younger children focusing on activities the girls learned in Girl Scouts such as building a robot, hiking, fishing, etc. The event could also include other activities such as clowning or magic tricks.
- Lead Girl Scout games or do face painting at a community event.
- Hold yard sales and/or garage sales.
- Collect cell phones for refurbishment.
- Babysit during special Girl Scout events or community activities.  
[Community-Babysitting-Event-as-a-Money-Earning-Project.pdf](#)
- Collect used ink cartridges and return for money.
- Offer gift-wrapping services during the holidays.
- Make and sell baked goods.
- Create handmade crafts to sell, such as homemade cards at craft shows or special events.
- Restaurants may offer “celebrity server” opportunities where girls may help clear tables and the restaurant donates a portion of monies to the troop.

### **Money Earning Parameters**

- If your troop would like to engage in an activity not on the Pre-Approved Money Earning Activities list above, the [Money Earning and Fund Raising Pre-Approval Application](#) form must be completed and submitted to GSMISTS Director of Fund Development at least four weeks before beginning (or publicizing) a money earning activity.
- Troops must have participated in BOTH the Girl Scout Cookie Program and Fall Product Program in order to engage in additional money earning. It is encouraged, not required, for 100% of troop members to have participated.
- Troops must follow GSMISTS [Volunteer Policies & Procedures](#), [Volunteer Essentials](#), and [Safety Activity Checkpoints](#) to ensure girl safety, including appropriate girl-to-adult ratios of approved Girl Scout volunteers.
- The money earning should have a purpose that helps develops skills girls are learning in Girl Scouts.
- Girls are involved in the development of the budget for the amount of money that is needed.
- Girls must be able to explain the reason they are earning money.
- Money earning should not exceed the amount the troop needs for their proposed activity(ies).
- The activity should be age appropriate.
- Participation is voluntary.
- Parents/guardians must give written permission to participate.
- Funds from money earning must be spend during the membership year they are earned. If funds are being raised for an activity in a future year, it must be pre-approved by GSMISTS.

- Local ordinances and health and safety laws related to involvement of children in money earning must be observed.
- Arrangements must be made for safeguarding money during money earning.

### **Money Earning May Not**

- Have girls asking for cash donations.
- Involve games of chance such as raffles, drawings, or silent auctions. The Internal Revenue Service does not allow girls to participate in these activities.
- Endorse “commercial products” (e.g., Thirty One, Tupperware, Candle Light, etc.).  
 “Commercial products” is any product sold at a retail location or that benefits a for-profit organization. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products. Girl Scouts does not allow product demonstration parties where the use of the Girl Scout trademark increases revenue for another business. Any business using the Girl Scout trademark must seek authorization from GSUSA.
- Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization (such as Relay for Life, March of Dimes, etc.) when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, you and your troop can support another organization through Take Action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals are able to participate in whatever events they choose as long as they are not wearing anything that officially identifies them as “Girl Scouts.”

### **Non-Girl-Scout Related Opportunities**

- Girls with regular jobs may choose to donate their earnings to their troop or Girl Scout Bronze, Silver, or Gold Award projects. They should not wear their Girl Scout uniform or act as a Girl Scout representative when they are working their regular job. Once the money is given to the troop, it becomes troop funds and belongs to the troop not the girl who donated it.

### **Money Earning and Fund Raising Group Agreement**

It is important to understand that all troop money belongs equally to girls registered in the troop. Periodically, there are Girl Scout activities such as longer trips, attending the National Girl Scout Convention, etc. which require numerous money earning and/or fund raising activities, which may occur over the course of multiple years. We strongly encourage each troop to use the [Money Earning and Fund Raising Activity Group Agreement](#) form at the start of a money earning and/or fund raising activity. It will help troops manage fund disbursement as it can be expected that all girls may not participate at the same level. In cases like this, it is important to plan in advance for the equitable distribution of funds using Fund Banding as required by the Internal Revenue Service.

Funds Banding refers to ranges or bands that determine equitable disbursement of funds earned during money earning and fundraising activities. Any funds deposited into a Girl Scout account are subject to the banding requirements of the IRS. For more information, see the

Internal Revenue Service Compliance and Troop Accounts information section of this document. Girls, with the guidance of their troop leaders and GSMISTS registered volunteers, should pre-determine banding ranges, prior to the start of any money earning or fund raising activities, based on appropriate effort, amount of revenue earned, or activity-related banding ideas. Fund Bands cannot be calculated dollar for dollar, hour for hour, or dollar for hour.

Examples of Fund Banding:

- Range of hours of participation = \$X (10-15 hours of participation = \$75 benefit to the girl)
- Range of revenue earned = \$X (\$100-\$150 earned = \$125 benefit to the girl)

### **Fund Raising**

Fund raising involves adults asking businesses, organizations, or individuals for money or in-kind contributions to support troop activities. Girls are not allowed to fund raise unless they are working on their Girl Scout Gold Award. Sponsors, such as local businesses and organizations, can help ensure that all girls in the community have an opportunity to participate in Girl Scouting. Periodically, troops and service units may plan activities that require larger than usual budgets (e.g., Destinations such as a trip to Juliette Gordon Low's home). In addition, community organizations, businesses, faith-based organizations, and individuals may become sponsors by providing group meeting places, providing activity materials, loaning equipment, or donating money. They may even volunteer their time and talent. Donations of goods and services are called "in-kind" contributions.

Due to strict IRS reporting guidelines and standards, volunteers may **not** apply for grant funding of any kind. Generally, a grant requires a formal application to be submitted. If you are requested to complete more than a simple donation request form or to submit an IRS Tax Designation Letter, please contact GSMISTS Fund Development Dept.

Crowdfunding sites such as Kickstar, Go Fund Me, etc. including those provided by social media platforms such as Facebook, are **not allowed**.

### **Before Contacting a Potential Sponsor**

Before working with a potential sponsor, please contact GSMISTS Director of Fund Development. If you are asking only one or two potential sponsors, she will ask you to complete and submit a Donation Agreement form (for money or in-kind) so it can be reviewed before you make your ask. If you are planning to make multiple donation requests or will be asking for donations over \$500, you will be asked to complete the [Money Earning and Fund Raising Pre-Approval Application](#). GSMISTS may already be working with the business or organization on a council-wide donation and it is important that we work together. We can also give you guidance on the availability of some sponsors and other tips that could strengthen your ask. GSMISTS has relationships with many organizations and may also know of reasons not to connect with certain organizations.

When collaborating with other organizations, keep these guidelines in mind:

- Avoid Fund Raising for Other Organizations  
Girl Scouts are not allowed to solicit money on behalf of another organization when identifying themselves as Girl Scouts by wearing a uniform, a sash or vest, official pins, and so on. This includes participating in a walkathon or telethon while in uniform. However, you and your group can support another organization through Take Action projects. Girl Scouts as individuals are able to participate in whatever events they choose as long as they're not wearing anything that officially identifies them as "Girl Scouts"
- Steer Clear of Political Fundraisers  
When in an official Girl Scout capacity or in any way identifying yourselves as Girl Scouts, your group may not participate, directly or indirectly, in any political campaign or work on behalf of or in opposition to a candidate for public office. Letter-writing campaigns are not allowed, nor is participating in a political rally, circulating a petition, or carrying a political banner.
- Be Respectful When Collaborating with Religious Organizations  
Girl Scout groups must respect the opinions and practices of religious partners, but no girl should be required to take part in any religious observance or practice of the sponsoring group.
- Avoid Selling or Endorsing Commercial Products  
"Commercial products" is any product sold at a retail location or that benefits a for-profit organization. Since 1939, girls and volunteers have not been allowed to endorse, provide a testimonial for, or sell such products.

### **Financial Contributions**

Businesses and organizations may donate up to \$500 per year to GSMISTS to benefit individual troops or service units. Donations from up to four (4) businesses and organizations may be secured per year. In order for these contributions to reach your troop, you must complete the [Donation Agreement - Money](#) form and return it to GSMISTS Director of Fund Development. GSMISTS will ensure the sponsor receives a thank you letter meeting IRS requirements. The girls may also show their appreciation by sending thank you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project.

All donation checks must be made payable to: Girl Scouts of Michigan Shore to Shore (GSMISTS).

Financial contributions must be spent in the fiscal year in which they were received, unless pre-approved by GSMISTS.

In rare cases, the GSMISTS Chief Executive Officer may pre-approve contributions of more than \$500 up to a total of \$2,000 per year. Sums over \$500 are typically pre-approved only for extended troop travel. For pre-approval, please complete the [Money Earning and Fund Raising Pre-Approval Application](#) and submit it to GSMISTS Director of Fund Development.

### **In-Kind Contributions**

In-kind donations are goods or services, other than cash, that are to be used by troops for Girl Scout mission-based activities. Examples of in-kind gifts include:

- space for a meeting or event
- program supplies
- food
- camping equipment

In order to properly document an in-kind contribution, the [Donation Agreement – In-Kind](#) form should be submitted to GSMISTS Director of Fund Development. GSMISTS will ensure the sponsor receives a thank you letter meeting IRS requirements. The contribution can also be recognized locally by having the girls send thank-you cards, inviting the sponsor to a meeting or ceremony, or working together on a Take Action project.

### **Girl Scout Gold Award Projects**

Girls working on their Girl Scout Gold Award project may need additional funds to complete their projects. According to GSUSA's [Blue Book of Basic Documents](#) policy: Solicitation of Contributions (p. 20), girl members may not engage in any direct solicitation for money except for Girl Scout Seniors and Ambassadors who may solicit donations of cash or in-kind goods for Girl Scout Gold Award projects, provided they have secured prior written permission from GSMISTS Director of Fund Development. In addition, girls must abide by all GSMISTS policies and procedures with regard to Gold Award fund raising.