

General information about the Women and Girls Fund (WGF)

Thank you for taking an interest in the **Women and Girls Fund (WGF)**. Everything you need to know about the type of grants under this fund is contained in these guidelines. Please read them carefully before you submit your application.

The Forum for Women Educationalists (FAWE) is the Secretariat responsible for responding to any of your queries regarding the application process and for providing information on the status of your applications.

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The Women and Girls Fund

The Scottish Government has commissioned Ecorys UK together with its partners, FAWE Malawi, FAWE Rwanda and FAWE Zambia, to undertake **the design, delivery and management** of a Women and Girls Fund (WGF) that will offer grants to Women and Girl-led Organisations (WGLOs) in the three countries. In line with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 5, the overall aim of the fund is to provide appropriately targeted direct funding to support women and girls/ women and girl-led organisations (WGLOs in Malawi, Zambia, and Rwanda, with the advancement of gender equality and the rights of women and girls as a principal objective. Gender equality is, therefore, the main objective of this programme and is fundamental to its design and expected results. While taking a participatory approach likely sectors include focusing on advocacy and/or core strengthening of women's rights organisations and/or movements across the partner countries.

The overarching objectives of the WGF are:

- To support women and Girls/WGLOs in Malawi, Rwanda and Zambia, to advance Gender Equality
- To establish a participatory funding mechanism to design and evaluate the fund.
- To capture learning of the participatory approach

Definition of terms and concepts – explaining the words we use

Women and Girl Led Organisation: Women and Girl-Led Organisations (WGLOs) are entities that are founded, managed, or predominantly influenced by women and girls. They focus on addressing issues that affect women and girls, providing essential services to, and advocating for women and girls' rights and empowerment. These organisations promote gender equality, and strive to raise awareness about the challenges faced by women and girls. By definition, therefore, WGLOs could include:

- Organisations founded by women and engaged in work on women empowerment and gender equality; and
- Organisations whose Boards are predominantly female but that may be headed by men.

Local WGLO: This would be a WGLO founded and governed locally, i.e., Established and registered in the country and governed by local leadership, with decision-making authority vested in local citizens. International WGLOs will not be eligible to apply, neither will INGOs that have local offices in country registered as local entities.

Emerging WGLOs: These are small, newly established organizations in the early stages of development. They usually have limited staff, budgets, and infrastructure. Their focus is often on establishing credibility, building networks, and securing initial funding.

Intermediate/Growing WGLOs: These organizations are in the process of scaling their operations. They may have a more stable funding base, a growing team, and a defined organizational structure. Their focus is often on expanding programs, increasing impact, and professionalizing their operations.

Mature WGLOs: These are well-established organizations with significant operational capacity, strong governance, and diversified funding sources. They typically have a track record of impact and are focused on sustaining their achievements, influencing policy, and leading in their sector.

Social Movements: These are loosely organised but sustained campaigns in support of a social goal, typically either the implementation or the prevention of a change in society's structure or values with a particular focus on gender.

Advocacy: This refers to efforts by individuals, groups, or organizations to influence decisions, policies, or practices in society to promote social justice, human rights, or the common good. Advocacy is actions intended to influence selected people, governments, private companies or other institutions in order to achieve a desired policy, practice, social, or political change that will benefit particular groups. Advocacy can seek to reform policies and institutions or get good policies implemented or alter power relations and bring about fundamental changes or protect or defend particular groups from adverse changes. It often involves raising awareness, engaging with policymakers, and mobilizing communities to bring about positive change. In the case of the WGF, the focus is on advocacy to promote gender equality and women empowerment in any thematic areas. The advocacy work can also be at any level national, local (District level, e.g., changes in by-laws) or at the community level (through work with traditional leaders)

Capacity building/development is an intervention that strengthens an organization's ability to fulfil its mission by promoting sound management, strong governance, and persistent rededication to achieving results. Furthermore, having the ability to fulfil a capacity building mission means that an organization has (a) sufficient numbers of staff who possess the necessary knowledge and skills, (b) appropriate and adequate technical and management systems, (c) suitable physical infrastructure, and (d) ample financial and other resources. Thus, capacity building is not limited to training personnel or the provision of technical assistance, but may include overhauling systems, remodelling physical infrastructure, recruiting new personnel, and improving the efficiency of the use of existing resource

Description of the types of grants under the WGF

The *Grants* are project or activity-based grant. The Overall Fund is Non-thematic and as such, the call does not prescribe a particular theme and is open to applications from organisations undertaking advocacy work in different sectors and cross-cutting issues, including **but not limited to** women in leadership, gender-based violence (GBV) labour/employment, health, agriculture, education, health, environment and natural resources, and governance. The types of grants under the WGF is

1. Advocacy, organisational capacity building and research grant

Under this call for proposals, applicants can submit applications to undertake advocacy projects combining various types of activities: (a) advocacy activities; (b) research activities; and, (c) activities aimed at organisational capacity development. Applicants must however demonstrate the centrality of the advocacy intervention in the proposal, with research and capacity development activities playing a reinforcing secondary role.

- **Centrality of advocacy work:** When completing the Concept Note, it is important to keep in mind that advocacy work is to be at the centre of the project.
- **Research activities:** Research to enhance the evidence needed to undertake the advocacy can and should be included as part of the proposal.
- **Capacity development activities:** If the applicant also seeks grants for capacity development activities, the application must be able to show how the proposed capacity development activities enhance organisational performance and benefit the implementation of the proposed Initiative. The WGLO should have undertaken an Organisational Assessment (An assessment template will be provided at proposal stage) and developed a capacity building action plan. Proposed capacity building activities should be from the developed action plan.

However, applicants are not bound to submit proposals combining the three types of activities. Applications seeking grants to carry out solely advocacy work will also be accepted, provided the applicant can prove that it has sufficient capacity to carry out the planned activities.

The advocacy grants can be used over a maximum period of two years though it is expected that smaller grants would be used within one year. At the end of the first year, extension or renewal of the agreement is subject to overall performance.

2. Research and evidence generation grant

A WGLO that would like to understand better an issue affecting the women and girls and would like to undertake research, can apply for this grant. WGLOs are encouraged to partner with local research institutions or academia when undertaking this research to ensure it is of the highest quality possible

The research grant can be used over a maximum period of one year though it is expected that smaller grants would be used within six months.

3. Organisational Capacity Development Grant

WGLOs wishing to build their capacity in a given area identified through the administration of the organisational assessment process can apply to receive funds from this grant. A WGLO that has experience in building the capacities of other WGLOs in areas of interest or that would like to build the capacities of WGLOs in an area noted as important for their advocacy work can apply for a grant to build capacity of WGLOs. Applicant must demonstrate that the capacity building proposed is based on a capacity assessment undertaken by the WGLOs

The capacity development grant can be used over a maximum period of one year though it is expected that smaller grants would be used within six months.

4. Swift/rapid Response Grants

The Swift Response Grant is a specialized funding mechanism designed to enable WGLOs to act promptly in addressing urgent advocacy issues. This grant provides rapid financial support to equip organizations with the resources needed to respond effectively to time-sensitive challenges, opportunities, or crises that require immediate action. It is intended to

bolster advocacy efforts that demand quick mobilization, strategic interventions, or critical engagement to influence policy, protect rights, or address emerging societal concerns.

The swift response grant can be used over a maximum period of six months though it is expected that smaller grants would be used within three months.

5. Social Movement grant

The Social Movement Grant is a dedicated fund designed to support grassroots and collective movements striving for social change, justice, and advocacy. This grant provides financial resources to empower movements in their efforts to address systemic issues, amplify marginalized voices, and foster sustainable community-driven solutions. It is intended to be accessed by movements with clear objectives, collective leadership, and a commitment to driving impactful change in their communities or broader societal contexts.

The social movement grant can be used over a maximum period of one year though it is expected that smaller grants would be used within six months.