



## MAIN GRANT GUIDELINES

The [African Women's Development Fund](#) (AWDF) is a grantmaking foundation that supports local, national and regional women's organisations working towards the empowerment of African women and the promotion and realisation of their rights. By specialising in grantmaking and focused, tailored movement-building programmes, we work to strengthen and support the work of African women's organisations.

By amplifying and celebrating African women's voices and achievements, the AWDF supports efforts that combat harmful stereotypes, and promote African women as active agents of change.

AWDF's work is guided by its five year strategic plan [Shaping the Future](#) (2017-2021). Under this plan, AWDF funds work focusing on three **themes**:

1. Body and Health Rights
2. Economic Security and Justice
3. Leadership, Participation and Peace

Within these themes we also have a particular focus on supporting the following three cross-cutting approaches:

- Using the arts, culture, sports and technology for activism and social change
- Supporting the leadership and concerns of women facing multiple discrimination (including women living with HIV, women with disabilities, economically marginalised women in both urban and rural areas, lesbians, bisexual and transgender women, young women (under age 25),

AWDF will prioritise programs that empower women with skills, information, sustainable livelihoods, opportunities to fulfil their potential, and the capacity to make transformative choices with the aim to promote women's leadership and development in Africa.

### Who can apply?

AWDF was founded to support the leadership and agency of African women in transforming society towards equality and justice. In that light, under its main grants programme, AWDF supports African women's organisations that meet the following criteria:

- Women-led, with a majority women staff and board
- A stated commitment to supporting women and/or advancing women's rights/ gender equality in their mission/vision
- Organisations registered in any African country, and working at the local, national, sub-regional or regional African levels. *(Note that AWDF is not able to transfer funds to organisations based in Sudan, South Sudan or Somalia. However AWDF is able to support organisations based in other African countries that are implementing initiatives in these countries).*

Organisations applying to AWDF for the first time, and past grantees who have not received a grant from AWDF in the past three years should send a reference letter, and the name and contact information for an additional referee who knows the organisation's work. Referees may be donors, other organisations – including grantees of AWDF.

*Political parties, religious institutions, government bodies, for-profit organisations and individuals are not eligible for funding either independently or as part of a consortium.*

### **What types of grant requests do we support?**

- AWDF will award grants to organisations working to advance progress in the thematic areas specified above. AWDF accepts requests for project funding however encourages applicants to incorporate adequate budget to cover core operating costs.
- AWDF also awards capacity building grants that focus on advancing organisational growth and development – for example strategic planning, developing fundraising and communications strategies, strengthening organisational governance systems and human resources management.

### **Activities to be considered for funding include:**

- Campaigns to advance specific women's rights agendas, law and policy change
- Training to build core social change and activist skills
- Action-research and knowledge production
- Alliance and movement-building activities
- Interventions to change public attitudes on key women's rights issues\
- Services to advance women's rights (including legal aid, violence support services, counselling and free medical services for HIV, cancers and other women's health concerns)
- Income generation activities that include a focus on increasing women's understanding of their rights and/or building their social and political leadership.

### **Activities not eligible for funding:**

- Party-political campaigning
- Activities aimed at proselytizing/religious conversion
- Scholarships
- Grants to individuals
- Construction and purchase of buildings and land

### **The AWDF will not support the following:**

- Organisations that aim to convert people to any religious belief
- Political parties or women's wings of political parties
- Individuals
- Government departments
- Scholarships and fellowships for academic studies
- Organisations that are not led by women

## **Application and decision-making timeline**

AWDF awards two cycles of grants (in the second and last quarter) each year. Applications can be sent in at any time, however the applications will be assessed for approval twice a year.

## **Grant sizes**

Grant sizes vary per call. Please refer to the maximum grant sizes indicated in the call for applications you are responding to. Organisations applying for grants of US \$20,000 and above will be required to provide audit report conducted by a reputable audit firm.

Note that AWDF will only consider grants amounts that are less than 50% of an organisation's annual income as evident in the latest annual audit statements.

## **What we look for in grant applications:**

- Applying organisations should preferably have been in existence for at least three years.
- Organisations have to produce evidence (relevant certificates) to show their legal existence
- Organisations should show how the funding proposal fits into the organisation's overall strategy for the area of work or community in which it is located.
- Organisations have to demonstrate how their work fits into either a local, national or regional strategy for the empowerment of African women.
- Applying organisations should have basic organisational systems and structures in place. For example a constitution, Strategic plan and financial reports.
- The organisation should have a clear evaluation plan for the project – including what you aim to achieve and to change, and measures to track progress
- Plans for sustainability including raising additional or further funding to keep the initiative going
- Organisation should be able to demonstrate that they can manage funds and account for them in a transparent manner.

## **How to apply**

Interested organisations should send in their proposals to the AWDF secretariat in Accra, Ghana, using the grant application form. Applications can be sent in English, French, or Portuguese, by email, or post. **Please note that we accept applications by email at [awdf@awdf.org](mailto:awdf@awdf.org) .**