



# Guidelines for the European Women's Lobby Relationships with Funders

## Introduction

These Guidelines aim to foster ethical partnerships between the European Women's Lobby (EWL) and the funding community, which includes foundations, corporations, institutions, and other entities (collectively referred to as 'funders,' 'donors,' 'sponsors,' or 'funding organizations'). The primary goal is to ensure that these collaborations support the EWL's [mission](#) of advancing women's rights and gender equality across Europe.

By following these Guidelines, the EWL strives to secure funding while maintaining its core principles and values. These guidelines provide a framework for assessing and engaging with potential funders in alignment with the [EWL's strategic framework](#) and ethical standards. Each partnership decision is made individually, based on the criteria outlined in these Guidelines, and all potential partnerships are subject to a thorough screening and due diligence process.

## General guidelines for the EWL relations with the Funding Community

The evaluation of prospective funding partners centers on a comprehensive assessment of their human rights records and the impact of their mission, products, services, or activities on women's human rights. This evaluation includes, but is not limited to, the following considerations:

- **Alignment with EWL's Mission and Values:** Do the funder's mission, vision, or values align with or conflict those of the EWL?
- **Consistency with EWL's Positions:** Do the funder's positions and actions support or conflict with the EWL's positions on critical issues?
- **Historical and Current Practices:** Has the funder engaged in practices or upheld principles that oppose women's human rights and gender equality, or have they been implicated in significant environmental degradation?
- **Commitment to Human Rights:** Is the funder known for opposing human rights, particularly women's rights, or have they had a problematic human rights record? If so, are they making credible efforts to rectify past violations?
- **Compliance with International Standards:** Does the funder demonstrate a commitment to respecting the rights outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work as established by the International Labour Organization?



Given that the EWL lacks the resources for primary research into the human rights records of potential funders, it relies on secondary sources and publicly available information. This research includes:

- Press releases from advocacy organizations
- Official statements or press releases from the funders
- Reports from reliable news outlets
- Publications from recognized monitoring bodies or human rights organizations
- Listings of companies noted for exemplary or poor practices
- Legal judgments and rulings involving the funder

Given the complexities of secondary research and the need for accurate, verifiable information, the fundraising personnel, with support from the EWL Secretariat, Funding and Finance Committee (FFCom), and Executive Committee (ExCo), are encouraged to utilize additional verification methods. This includes conducting thorough internet searches using relevant keywords alongside the funder's name, such as "human rights," "women's rights," and "equal opportunity." A valuable resource in this regard is the website maintained by Amnesty International and the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre: <https://www.business-humanrights.org/en/>. This, along with other reliable sources can provide crucial insights into the practices of individual companies, helping to ensure that EWL's funding partnerships are ethically sound.

Through this approach, the EWL seeks to establish partnerships that not only advance women's rights and gender equality but also uphold the highest standards of integrity and ethical responsibility which would endanger its reputation.

### **Criteria for the EWL in the Fundraising Process**

The EWL is committed to establishing transparent, ethical, and mutually beneficial partnerships with the funding community. These relationships must be easily recognizable to the public, ensuring full transparency regarding the scope, nature, and identity of the funding organizations. Transparency is essential for maintaining public trust in EWL's integrity and avoiding any negative perception that the EWL or its members are influenced by funding organizations' interests in fulfilling their mission or awarding contracts which would endanger its reputation. When evaluating multiple partnership offers, the EWL must remain neutral and unbiased.

The EWL seeks to achieve several key objectives through its relationships with the funding organizations. These include securing co-funding for EWL activities, generating additional income, and providing financial support for all EWL members. Additionally, the EWL aims to increase awareness and visibility of its work and objectives, ensure the long-term and regular allocation of funds to aid in budget planning, and establish and deepen valuable contacts within the funding community.



By adhering to the following guidelines, the EWL ensures that its partnerships with funding organizations are transparent, ethical, and aligned with its mission to advance women's rights and gender equality across Europe:

### **I. Guidelines for Engaging with Funding organizations**

When considering potential partnerships, the EWL evaluates the below presented criteria to ensure alignment with its mission and strategic objectives.

The EWL must avoid endorsing any funding organizations known to violate women's rights, human rights, or who is responsible for significant environmental degradation. The Funding organization's mission and guidelines must align with the EWL's mission, positions, and strategic objectives. The decision to enter a partnership should be guided by the following questions:

- **Priority:** Does the engagement significantly contribute to achieving the EWL priority objective?
- **Partner Fit:** Does the partner maintain EWL's independence to pursue its mission and align with its values and positions?
- **Capacity:** Do both the EWL and the partner have the resources needed to support the partnership and achieve its goals?
- **Proprietorship:** Will this partnership impact EWL's ownership of its content or material?

Once an equal partnership is established, it is recommended to organize and conduct an inaugural joint event. This occasion allows both the Funding organization and the EWL to present themselves and their collective objectives to the community. The presence of notable individuals or VIPs at the event can greatly amplify media attention and public engagement.

Additionally, the following processes should be implemented to maintain a strong relationship with the Funding organization:

- Include the Funding organization in the annual reports, press releases and briefing distribution list to ensure they receive updates directly from the association rather than through the media.
- Keep the Funding organization informed about the latest developments via newsletters or emails.
- Schedule regular personal meetings and extend invitations to events.
- Foster strong relations by maintaining a dedicated point of contact within the EWL.

### **II. Contractual Agreements as a Foundation for Partnership**



A formal contractual agreement is a prerequisite for any partnership. This agreement ensures that all parties clearly understand the terms, responsibilities, and expectations of the collaboration, thereby safeguarding the integrity and mission of the EWL.

### **III. Types of Partnerships**

The EWL may engage in various types of partnerships, including collaborative activities, fee-for-service and subcontractor relationships, and business partnerships. For any given project, it is recommended to establish a primary partnership for each specific project.

### **IV. Role of the Fundraising Person(s) and Final Decision on Partnerships**

To establish and maintain successful partnerships, it is crucial that one individual within the EWL is responsible for coordinating these efforts. This person should possess:

1. Knowledge of financial and economic matters, particularly in marketing and contracts.
2. Strong interpersonal and communication skills.
3. Experience in fundraising.
4. Sufficient time to dedicate to these efforts.

At the EWL, this role is filled by the Fundraising Person(s) in close collaboration with, and under the responsibility of, the Secretary General and the Executive Committee, particularly the Treasurer. **The Executive Committee makes the final decision on partnerships, while the Secretary General holds the authority to contractually engage the organization.**