

Gender-Lens Philanthropy: A practical guide for Canadian foundations

Philanthropic Foundations Canada

September 2019



ABOUT PFC

Established in 1999, Philanthropic Foundations Canada (PFC) is a national member association of grantmaking foundations, charitable organizations and corporate giving programs. PFC seeks to promote the growth and development of effective and responsible foundations and organized philanthropy in Canada through provision of membership services, resources and advocacy. To learn more, visit: <https://pfc.ca/>

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Author: Juniper Glass, Lumiere Consulting

Research associate: Payton Bennett, Lumiere Consulting

Graphic designer: Yael Landau

FOREWORD

What does it mean to a foundation to apply a “gender lens” to their work? Why might this be important to learn about even if your foundation does not specifically fund women and girls? PFC is engaging in a learning journey with its members on gender-lens philanthropy. There is growing momentum and expressed interest from PFC members to increase their engagement in gender-related issues, mainly for better impact. But how do you do it? What tools are available to help foundations in this journey? This gender-lens granting guide is part of a series of learning tools and resources to support foundations to learn about and apply a gender lens in their work. Gender is a key piece in the diversity, equity and inclusion puzzle, and as Canada becomes increasingly diverse, the issues of gender equity, on one hand, and diversity and inclusion more broadly, on the other hand, are becoming increasingly important as more foundations think about the impact of their grantmaking and doing its part in working towards equity in all forms, including gender. PFC is looking forward to working with PFC members and other actors in Canadian philanthropic sector in the future and is happy to support continued learning and collaboration towards gender equity.




**GENDER IS GOING TO BE A CORE
PHILANTHROPIC COMPETENCY IN
THE 21ST CENTURY.**

-Damon Hewitt, Director, Executives Alliance



TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
GENDER-LENS PHILANTHROPY IN CANADA	3
WHAT IS GENDER-LENS PHILANTHROPY?	5
GETTING GENDER ON THE AGENDA IN YOUR FOUNDATION	9
KEY STRATEGIES FOR FOUNDATIONS TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUITY	13
1. Grant to initiatives focused on women, girls and gender equity	15
2. Apply a gender lens to granting practices	24
3. Increase equity in internal operations and governance	34
4. Use gender-lens investment practices	36
RESOURCES	43



ACKNOWLEDGING THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER, AND THE POWER RELATIONSHIPS THAT UNDERPIN IT, [IS] AN IMPORTANT ASPECT OF ANY FOUNDATION'S WORK.

IN THE ABSENCE OF THAT LENS, IT IS DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE IF YOU ARE REACHING AND ENGAGING WITH PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES EFFECTIVELY.

- GrantCraft and Mama Cash, Funding for Inclusion: Women and Girls in the Equation

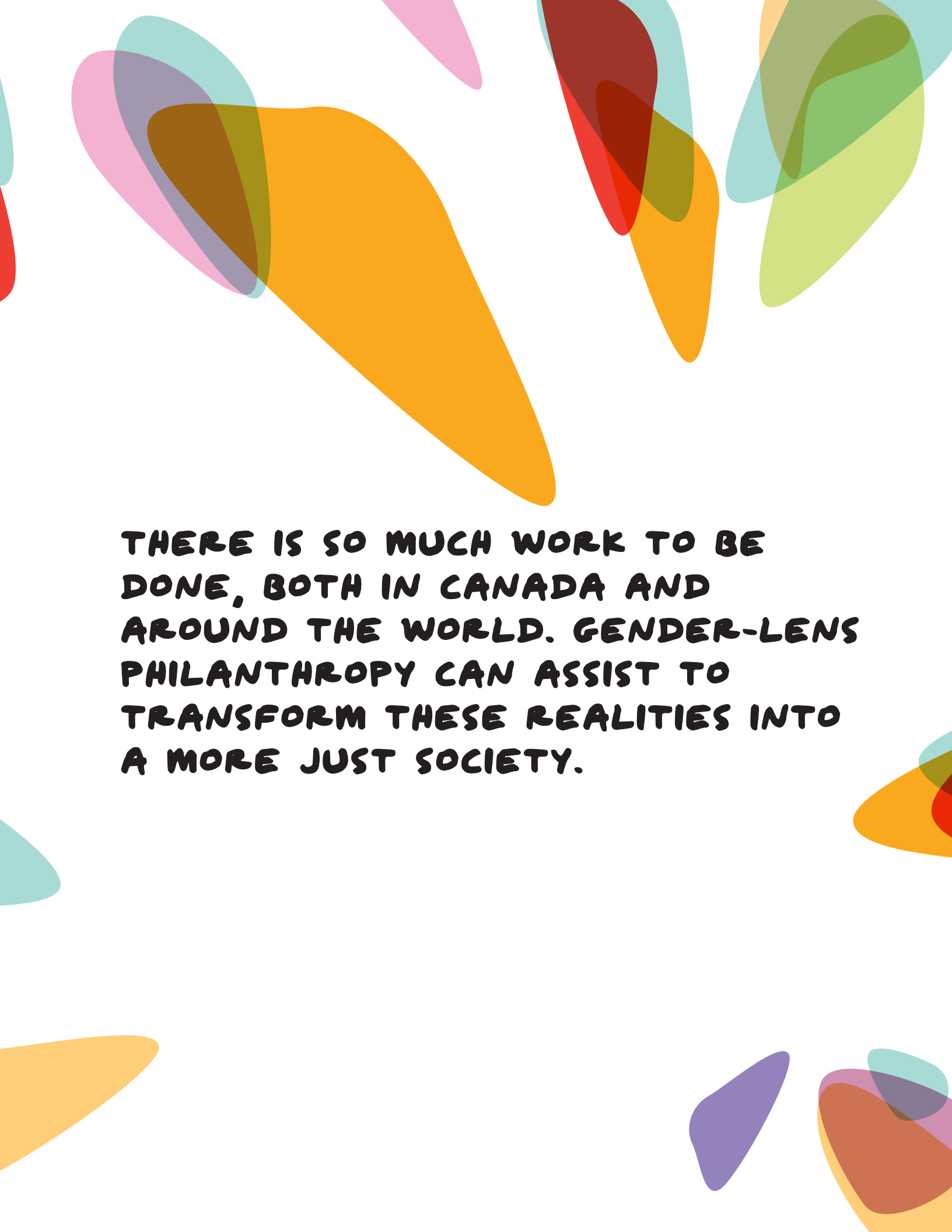


Introduction to this Guide

A gender lens is one tool in the toolbox of foundations that strive to be effective in their support for organizations and initiatives working towards positive social change. Most societies have assumptions related to gender. Men and women, girls and boys are expected to act in certain ways, and this has led to restrictions and inequity.

This guide is intended to help foundations increase the impact of their grantmaking by increasing the awareness of gender as an important factor throughout the organization and the granting process. There are many ways to apply a gender lens in philanthropy. This guide points to several opportunities and tools, some of which will work for a given foundation, and others will not.

The important thing is to start where you are, take steps and gain inspiration as the practice of gender-lens philanthropy grows in Canada and the philanthropic field increases its contribution to gender equity in Canada and globally.

The background of the page is white and decorated with several large, overlapping, abstract shapes in various colors. These shapes include shades of orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, and red. Some shapes are solid, while others are semi-transparent, creating a layered effect. The shapes are scattered across the page, with a large orange shape in the upper left, a green and blue shape in the upper right, and a purple shape in the lower right.

**THERE IS SO MUCH WORK TO BE
DONE, BOTH IN CANADA AND
AROUND THE WORLD. GENDER-LENS
PHILANTHROPY CAN ASSIST TO
TRANSFORM THESE REALITIES INTO
A MORE JUST SOCIETY.**

Gender-lens Philanthropy in Canada

Growing interest

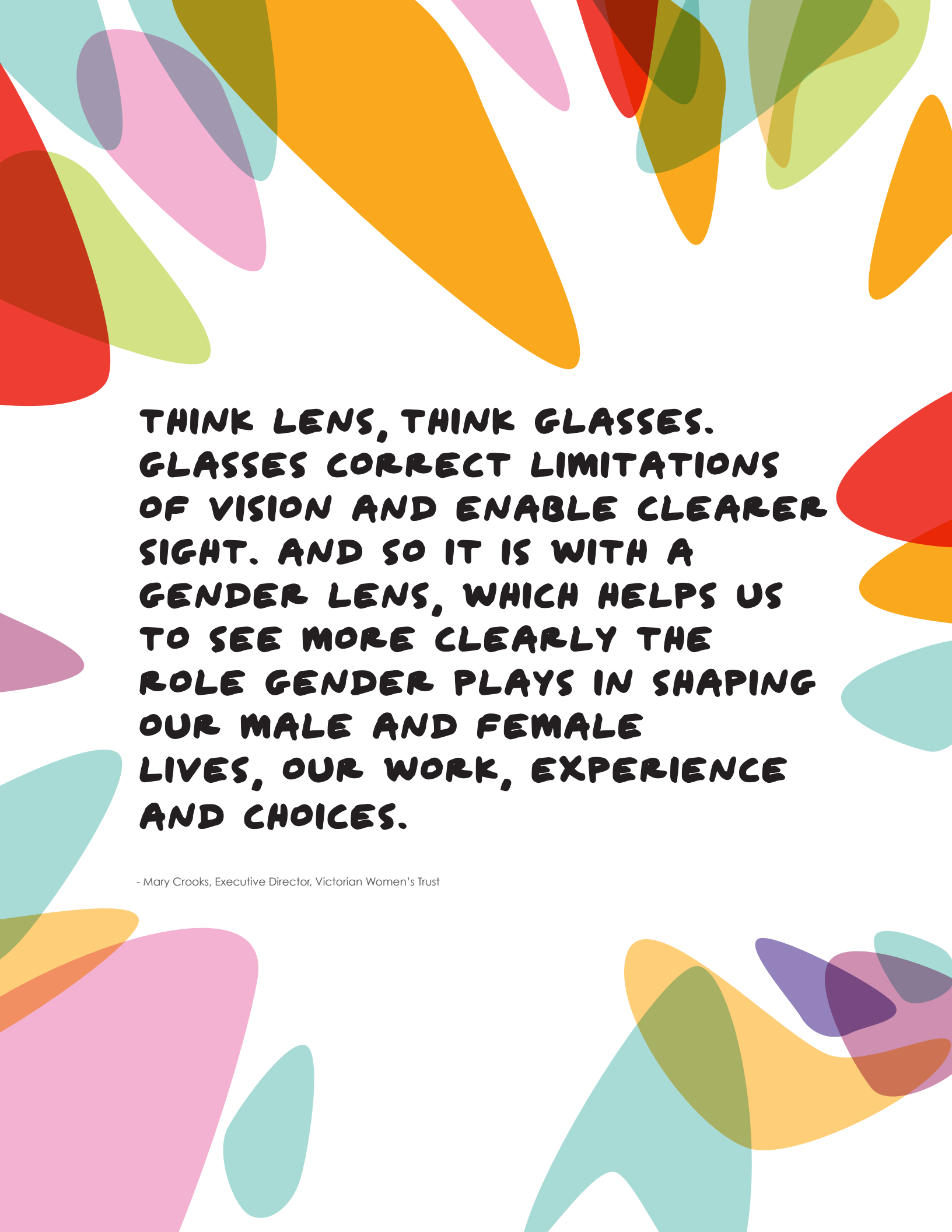
An increasing number of Canadian foundations appear to have gender equity in mind. In a small survey, PFC found that $\frac{2}{3}$ of members had an interest in gender-lens philanthropy, but $\frac{1}{3}$ did not. In those foundations where gender is being considered, there is a wide range of levels of implementation of a gender lens.

Current practices

By far, the most common gender-lens philanthropy practice among Canadian foundations is giving grants to projects and organizations that support girls and women. At the time of publication, no Canadian foundations had been identified that applied a gender lens to the investment of their endowments.

The following practices are currently in use by at least some foundations in Canada:

- give some grants to gender equity causes and women's organizations
- explicit granting program or priorities focused on women, girls and gender equality
- proactive outreach: seek out potential grantees and funds working towards gender equity
- provide general support (rather than highly restricted funds) for women's organizations
- discuss a gender lens with grantees and encourage them to integrate it into their programs
- questions integrated into grant application and reporting — for example, a question about the demographic breakdown (including gender) of the applicant organization's board, staff and participants; a request to grantees to include gender in evaluation and outcomes reporting

The background of the entire page is composed of various overlapping, organic shapes in a palette of red, orange, yellow, green, teal, and pink. These shapes are scattered across the page, creating a vibrant and modern aesthetic.

**THINK LENS, THINK GLASSES.
GLASSES CORRECT LIMITATIONS
OF VISION AND ENABLE CLEARER
SIGHT. AND SO IT IS WITH A
GENDER LENS, WHICH HELPS US
TO SEE MORE CLEARLY THE
ROLE GENDER PLAYS IN SHAPING
OUR MALE AND FEMALE
LIVES, OUR WORK, EXPERIENCE
AND CHOICES.**

- Mary Crooks, Executive Director, Victorian Women's Trust



What is Gender-lens Philanthropy?

Gender-lens philanthropy:

the practice of considering the influence of gender and the impacts on people of all genders at various stages of the philanthropic process.

Applying a gender lens in a foundation often involves two important components:

1. Granting to organizations that empower women and girls and work for gender equity
2. “Mainstreaming” a gender-aware approach throughout the organization, that is, adapting internal, grantmaking and investment practices to reduce gender bias and support gender equity

Useful Definitions¹

Equity

Taking into account the differences between people and the uneven playing field in order to fairly address all needs, rather than a one-size-fits-all approach.

Feminism

A range of theories and movements that aim to eliminate all forms of gender-based discrimination and inequity.

Gender

Relates to the characteristics – ranging from roles in society to physical appearance – that cultures attribute to the notions of “masculine” and “feminine.” Typically those characteristics are seen as feminine are less valued in society. Gender can include male, female, trans and gender non-conforming identities. Sex is biological while gender is socially constructed.

Gender Equity

Equal access to resources, power, and opportunity for men, women, boys, girls and trans and gender non-conforming people.

Gender Mainstreaming

Integrating a gender analysis throughout the strategy and operations of any program or organization.

Gender Analysis

Examining and applying awareness of the impact of gender equity and/or gender norms on a problem or issue and understanding the effects of a program or policy on people of different genders.

Why gender-lens philanthropy?

There are many reasons for foundations to consider including a gender lens in their work, both ethical and practical.

Equity

There has been increased demand for equity and inclusion in all sectors, including foundations. Considering and taking action on gender inequity is an important aspect of efforts to address “diversity, equity and inclusion” (DEI).

Call to action

The #MeToo movement has magnified the call for greater societal awareness and action to reduce gender inequity. All types of organizations, including private foundations, can contribute to the movement towards gender equity and violence prevention.

Gender affects all spheres of life.

Gender norms--for example, how we think a man and a woman should act--are so deeply ingrained in our culture that we often do not see them. These assumptions filter into all levels, including personal, organizational and societal, affecting the choices we make individually and in groups. Shining light on assumptions helps us make better choices.

Increase effectiveness as grantmakers.

Each issue we care about and want to impact has a gendered aspect, whether we are aware of it or not. Applying a gender lens, particularly one that takes into consideration the many interwoven aspects of equity including race, immigrant and Indigenous status, can improve our grantmaking. Words like “neutral,” “universal,” or “classic,” applied to a program or policy, often mask gender blind spots.

¹ Sources: *Feminist Movement Builder's Dictionary* by JASS; *Funding for Inclusion: Women and Girls in the Equation* by GrantCraft; *Gender Transformative Philanthropy* by Women's Funding Network and TrueChild.

Gender Norms

Socially constructed ideals, scripts, expectations for how to be a woman or a man, a girl or a boy.

Gender Transformative

Programs and policies that highlight, challenge and ultimately change restrictive norms of femininity and masculinity.

Grassroots

Small, local women's organizations and initiatives addressing gender-based issues occurring at the community level through a personal knowledge of the social issue

Intersectional Approach

Addressing different facets of inequity and privilege—including based on race, class, gender, religion, immigrant status, sexual orientation, disability, Indigenous heritage—as interacting in people's lives rather than compartmentalizing and treating each as independent of the others.

Much more to be done before equity is achieved.

Even today, there are major inequities based on gender in Canadian society. The facts² speak clearly:

- Women in Canada earn 28% less than men.
- Women are much more likely to live below the poverty line.
- Sexual assault is the only violent crime in Canada that is not declining.
- Half of all women in Canada have experienced at least one incident of physical or sexual violence since the age of 16.
- As Canadian girls approach adolescence, they experience a sharp decline in mental health and confidence as well as many forms of violence and negative stereotyping.

RESEARCH INDICATES THAT FUNDING OF MAINSTREAM PROGRAMS—PARTICULARLY THOSE THAT DO NOT CONSIDER GENDER DIFFERENCES— GENERALLY UNDER-SERVES WOMEN. THIS GENDER-NEUTRAL APPROACH DERIVES FROM A DESIRE NOT TO DISCRIMINATE ON THE BASIS OF GENDER, BUT PARADOXICALLY RESULTS IN WOMEN (AND CONSEQUENTLY THEIR CHILDREN) MISSING OUT.

- Molly Mead. 2001. *Gender Matters – Funding Effective Programs for Women and Girls*.

² The Facts. Canadian Women's Foundation. <https://www.canadianwomen.org/the-facts/>



Getting Gender on the Agenda in your Foundation

If gender equality and gender analysis are not yet a priority within your foundation, there are many ways to move it up on board and staff's radar. Here are some early steps to shine a light on gender in your foundation and bring others on board.

Network

Improve your understanding of the issues and the field by speaking with groups doing work to advance gender equity and transform gender norms. Ask current grantees questions about gender dimension of their work during meetings and site visits. Network with other donors and foundations that are active on gender issues and learn from their experience of implementing a gender lens.

Spark a conversation inside the foundation

Start talking about a gender lens within your foundation. Encouraging and offering opportunities for both members of the board and staff to gain more knowledge on gender analysis and equity will lay an excellent basis for future action. For example, circulate media articles, share this Guide, organize a meeting with another foundation that is active on gender equity, or invite a guest presenter to do a workshop on gender equity for your board and staff.

Build your knowledge

Read, listen and learn. Deepen your knowledge with findings from some of the latest research and practice guides. There are many online resources available to learn the basics about gender-based issues. Conferences and workshops can also facilitate learning in the company of peers. Ask local gender equity organizations and leaders to meet to learn their perspectives about key issues. See the resource section of this Guide for a few useful sources of information.

Conduct an internal gender or GBA+ audit

Assessing your current granting programs, communications and investments can signal areas to improve. Conduct a gender-based analysis plus (GBA+) review that intertwines gender with other elements of equity, such as accessibility and effectiveness of your granting for youth, racialized and Indigenous people. Such a review can be implemented by knowledgeable staff members or external partners such as consultants or women's organizations.

Research how your current priority issues areas interact with gender

If your foundation has prioritized certain issue areas, such as the environment, health or poverty reduction, explore how gender may interact with these issues. Even topics that seem far away from gender have a gendered component to them.

Responses to Commonly Used Arguments

When introducing a gender lens into any organization, many questions can arise. Here are responses to some common ones. The aim is to turn the question from an argument against a gender lens into a learning opportunity for deepening the knowledge of staff, board and stakeholders about how applying a gender lens can improve everyone's work.

“Hasn't gender equality already been achieved?”

It's true that great strides have been made in acknowledging the importance of gender equality, but women, girls, and trans people still regularly confront life-threatening violence, discrimination, and poverty – even in countries with laws that protect women's rights. Women, girls, and trans people struggle to receive fair wages, enjoy safe working conditions, inherit property, and own land. They rarely enjoy equal access with male peers to education, public spaces, the media, and [participation] in social, political, and economic decision-making.

“We do not discriminate: We don't want to privilege one group over another.”

Are you sure that the needs you see are those of all members of that community, or are you only listening to the most powerful members? A solid gender analysis and a commitment to engaging with women and girls in the community makes it less likely that you will marginalize or exclude women and girls – intentionally or unintentionally.

“What about men and boys?”

The beauty of gender analysis is that it frames questions about the relative situations of people of all genders – including men and boys! Balancing the equation means working with women to address the historical disadvantages and discrimination they face, as well as working with men on issues of privilege and power, in order to ensure a fairer and more equal society.

“We work on hard-core issues, not social matters like gender.”

So-called hard-core issues, such as trade, energy, science, conflict, arms, and international relations, are also gender issues. Who sets the agenda, who decides on priorities, who benefits, and who picks up the social and economic costs?

“We have women among senior staff, so we don't need gender experts, do we?”

Being a woman gives you the experience of being a woman, but it does not make you a gender expert who is able to analyse the gender dimensions of issues, contexts, and power relationships.

“Gender is just a fad...”

When power relations based on gender are transformed, and inclusive, equitable, and just societies, communities, and households are the norm, we can file gender under “fads.”

Excerpted from: Mama Cash and Grantcraft. 2012. *Funding for Inclusion*.
<https://www.mamacash.org/media/publications/grantcraft-guide-funding-for-inclusion.pdf>





Key Strategies for Foundations to Support Gender Equity

When using a gender lens to improve your foundation's work and its impact, there is no one action to undertake. Instead there is a range of possibilities for taking action, at multiple levels of the organization. For example, "international institutions doing gender transformative work often begin with internal work (board and staff training, adding it to funding priorities), move to working with funder peers (donor education), and finally move out to work with grantees (materials and websites, white papers and other external communication)."³

³ Women's Funding Network and TrueChild, 2014, *Gender Transformative Philanthropy: The Next Phase in Feminist Philanthropy?* https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599e3a20be659497eb249098/t/59df1dfa51a584856092ae63/1507794439151/___wfn+feminist+philanthropy.pdf

This guide explores four areas in which some basic changes by your foundation could have a meaningful impact.

1 Grant to initiatives that support women, girls and gender equity

Where we dedicate our grants can make a big difference to gender equity.

2 Apply a gender lens to granting practices

How we develop and implement our granting programs can influence grantees and other partners' use of a gender lens as well as increase the overall effectiveness of grants in any issue area.

3 Increase equity in internal operations and governance

What we do inside the foundation demonstrates our commitment, helps us “walk the talk,” and deepens our knowledge of equity issues.

4 Use gender-lens investment practices

The ripple effects of our endowment investments can positively or negatively impact gender equity.

OVERCOMING GENDER INEQUALITY WILL NOT RESULT FROM SPECIFIC ISOLATED PROGRAMS, BUT FROM A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH THAT INVOLVES MULTIPLE SECTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS.

- The World Bank Group⁴

⁴ *Gender at Work: A Companion to the World Development Report on Jobs*, by the World Bank Group, 2014. http://www.worldbank.org/content/dam/Worldbank/document/Gender/GenderAtWork_web.pdf

1 Grant to initiatives focused on women, girls and gender equity

What are the key issue areas and practices for strong gender equity grantmaking? This section presents information on where the money goes (and where it could go) to advance gender equity and feminist funding principles.

Key issues

There are any areas in which philanthropic support can benefit women and girls around the world and in Canada. According to research funded and published by The Oak Foundation, there are several “underlying human rights issues that prevent women from realizing their full potential.” Therefore an integrated approach is needed to reduce inequity through strengthening the many building blocks of empowerment, including “access to equitable and safe employment, voice in society and policy influence, access to and control over reproductive health and family formation, and childcare.”⁵

Major issue areas recommended for grantmakers to support girls, women and gender equity include⁶:

- Education access and support for success
- Leadership: in the community, business, political and public sectors
- Economic security: employment, pay equity, finance and access to childcare
- Health: research and services
- Sexual and reproductive health and rights
- Gender-based violence: prevention and support for survivors
- Shifting gender norms: education and engagement of men and boys
- Intersecting equity issues: advancing women's status through work for the rights and wellbeing of people with disabilities, racialized, Indigenous, religious minority, newcomer and LGBTQ communities

⁵ Oak Foundation, International Center for Research on Women, Dalberg Global Development Advisors, and Witter Ventures 2014. The Business Case for Women's Economic Empowerment: An Integrated Approach. http://dalberg.com/documents/Business_Case_for_Womens_Economic_Empowerment.pdf

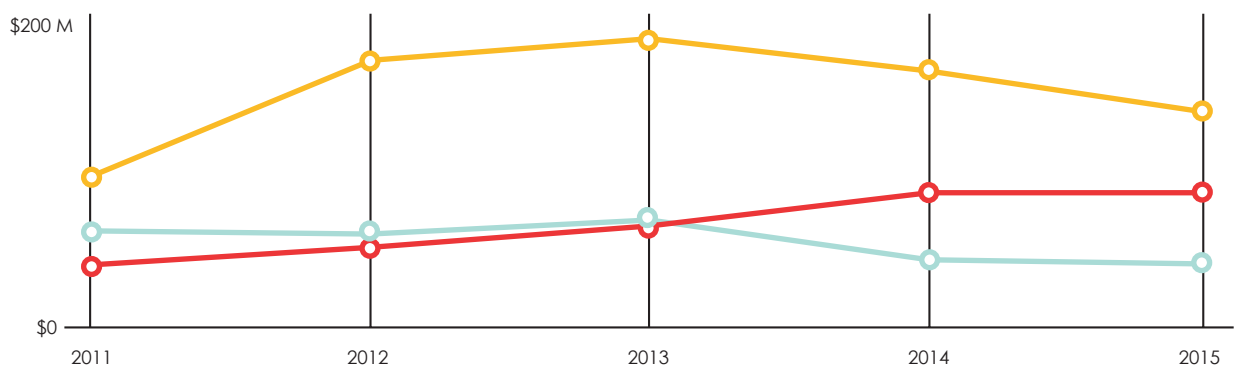
⁶ *Starting the Conversation: Using Gender Lens in Your Grantmaking* by Philanthropy NY. *The Global State of Feminist Organizing* by FRIDA. *Advancing Human Rights: The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking* by Human Rights Funders Network.

Where does the funding go?

There has been a surge in philanthropic interest over the last decade in investing in women and girls. While it is challenging to track this global field, made up of so many issues and donors, we can gather some insights into who and what have been the recipients of philanthropic support.

Human rights funders around the world tend to dedicate their grants related to gender equity to support three main outcomes: sexual and reproductive rights, freedom from violence, and equality rights and freedom from discrimination.

Human rights funders's grants to women and girls, 2011–2015



Source: *Advancing Human Rights: The State of Global Foundation Grantmaking* by Human Rights Funders Network. <https://humanrightsfunding.org/>

- Sexual and Reproductive Rights
- Equality Rights and Freedom from Discrimination
- Freedom from Violence

Women-led grassroots and advocacy organizations tend to receive only a small proportion of gender equity-related grants



<1%

proportion of women's rights organizations that receive donations from corporate funders⁷

0.7%

amount of global human rights funding that went to Indigenous women's organizations, less than one-third of their proportion in the population⁸

⁷ *New Actors, New Money, New Conversations: A Mapping of Recent Initiatives for Women and Girls* by AWID. 2013. <https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/changing-systems-changing-lives>

⁸ *A Call to Action: Insights into the Status of Funding for Indigenous Women's Groups*. A Joint AWID-FIMI-IFIP Report. 2016. <https://www.awid.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/a-call-to-action-status-of-funding-for-indigenous-women.1-94.pdf>

INDIVIDUAL SOLUTIONS OR SYSTEMIC SOLUTIONS?

Many philanthropic funders prefer supporting service delivery or individual empowerment of girls and women. Among European foundations, for example, nearly half of grants intended to benefit women and girls were in the area of human services (45%) and only 21% were dedicated to human rights. "While the importance of funding human services is undoubted, there is also the need to go beyond traditional methods of advancing women's empowerment and rights such as micro-credit... as these approaches tend to view the individual as the driver of change. Funding innovative and transformative approaches means recognizing that individual problems are related to systemic ones and that collective action is needed to realize broader economic, social and political rights."⁹

MOST CORPORATE INVESTMENTS TODAY FOCUS ON THE 'ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT' OF WOMEN EXCLUSIVELY, WITHOUT EXAMINING OR INVESTING IN OTHER ASPECTS OF EMPOWERMENT, SUCH AS LEGAL RIGHTS, HARMFUL NORMS AND PRACTICES, OR WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP. AND THOSE INVESTMENTS TEND TO FOCUS ON BUILDING INDIVIDUAL EMPOWERMENT, RATHER THAN ON TACKLING SYSTEMIC BARRIERS TO GENDER EQUALITY.

- Racheal Meiers, Business for Social Responsibility

⁹ - AWID, *Untapped Potential: Innovative Research Study on European Foundations Funding for Women and Girls* is launched. <https://www.awid.org/news-and-analysis/innovative-research-study-european-foundations-funding-women-and-girls-launched>

Key practices

The following are practices that gender equity movements and organizations have identified as helpful when philanthropic funders make grants to support their work.

Give grants to a range of initiatives and strategies for change

Gender inequity is a complex phenomenon. Advancing gender equity requires many different types of action at different levels in the system. Foundations can consider the variety in their granting portfolio to ensure that multiple strategies are receiving support, such as:

- Direct services (housing, economic security, support for survivors of violence, etc)
- Empowerment programs (leadership, education, etc)
- Systems change (public policy, institutions, laws, social movements, etc)
- Influence culture (transform beliefs and attitudes about gender, shifting culture in institutions, engaging men & boys, etc)

Focus on women and girls facing multiple barriers

Women have varying access to privilege and power. Grantmakers can consider the question: “which girls and women?” when deciding where to provide their financial support. Furthermore, it is important that women with lived experience, such as survivors of violence, are viewed and respected as experts and leaders rather than as powerless victims.

- Grants to organizations whose leadership reflects the communities they serve
- Grants for initiatives that engage and improve the rights and wellbeing of low-income, newcomer and refugee, rural, racialized, Indigenous, queer and trans women and those living with disabilities

Fund operational costs and capacity building

Many women's organizations, both in Canada and around the world, struggle with low administrative and operational capacity, primarily because of lack of resources. Foundations help tackle this challenge in a number of ways, including:

- Provide multi-year and operational grants
- Fund the convening of gender equity groups that provides safe, productive places for them to share, strategize, and plan
- Offer grantees partnership, introductions and accompaniment when useful for the grantee
- Fund training and networking opportunities for grantees, and connect them to opportunities to build skills and capacity

Support women-led grassroots and advocacy organizations

Research on funding for gender equity has found that the current spotlight on women and girls by international institutions and donors has had relatively little impact on improving funding for the vast majority of women's organizations globally:

- “The ‘leaves’—individual women and girls—are receiving growing attention without support for ‘the roots’—the sustained, collective action by feminists and women's rights activists and organizations that has been at the centre of women's rights advances throughout history.”¹⁰
- Most women's organizations are significantly under-resourced, especially given the enormous societal challenges they aim to address. A global survey of 740 women's organizations found that their median annual revenues were just USD \$20,000.¹¹
- Only 0.3% of women's rights organizations receive funding from corporate donors directly¹²

Yet women's rights organizations and movements are vitally important to advancing gender equity. Grassroots women's rights initiatives have been at the core of most advances towards gender equity in the past 100 years because of their unique characteristics:¹³

- Directly engage the women most affected
- Staff often have first-hand experience with the issues being addressed
- On-the-ground knowledge leads to more creative and impactful solutions
- Strong relationships with community; high levels of trust and collaboration
- Highly cost efficient: Every \$1 granted to policy and civic engagement initiatives yields a return of \$115 in benefit¹⁴

10 *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality* by AWID. 2013. <https://www.awid.org/publications/watering-leaves-starving-roots>

11 *Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality* by AWID.

12 *New Actors, New Money, New Conversations: A Mapping of Recent Initiatives for Women and Girls* by AWID. 2013

13 *Empowering Women at the Grassroots* by Marissa Wesely & Dina Dublon, Stanford Social Innovation Review. 2015; *Celebrate International Women's Day with Grassroots Partnerships* by Daniel Lee; *Doing It Right, Doing It Well. Building the Capacity of Women's Funds and Their Partners to Assess Results and Impacts* by AWID

14 *Leveraging Limited Dollars: How Grantmakers Achieve Tangible Results By Funding Policy And Community Engagement* by National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy. <https://www.ncrp.org/publication/leveraging-limited-dollars>

Contribute to women's funds¹⁵

Women's funds constitute a growing movement around the world. In Canada, elsewhere in the Global North, and in the Global South, women's funds are increasing their grantmaking as well as collaboration and recognition as important players in the movement towards gender equity (see *Resources* section for Canadian and international networks of women's funds).

Women's funds are useful partners for foundations because they:

- embed feminist values in their philanthropic practices
- are well-networked in the field
- support cohesion in the women's rights field
- prioritize grants and capacity building for grassroots women's rights organizations

FUNDING WOMEN'S RIGHTS ORGANIZATIONS TACKLING THE STRUCTURAL CAUSES OF WOMEN'S ECONOMIC INEQUALITY IS A WISE INVESTMENT... THESE ORGANIZATIONS FUNCTION AS AN IMPORTANT DEMOCRATIC TOOL, RAISING THE CONCERNS AND EXPERIENCES OF THE MOST MARGINALIZED WOMEN.

- Brittany Lambert and Kate McInturff. *Making Women Count: The Unequal Economics of Women's Work*, Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives¹⁶

¹⁵ Why fund women's funds by Mama Cash; Women's Funds by Prospera.

¹⁶ Brittany Lambert and Kate McInturff. 2016. *Making Women Count: The Unequal Economics of Women's Work*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives.

Women's rights organizations – what do they do?

Women's organizations are heterogeneous, playing diverse roles in their communities, countries, and regions. Following are some examples of the kinds of activities on which they focus:

- Mobilize and organize to raise women's voices
- Build feminist and self-led movements of young women, older women, Indigenous women, women with disabilities, women living with HIV, rural women, women workers, women in business, women in science, women researchers, and others
- Build activism and leadership among women of all ages
- Raise awareness of different women's needs, interests, and rights and of key issues in gender equality, including reflection on masculinities
- Put issues such as gender-based violence on the political and public agenda
- Advocate for gender-sensitive legislation, policy, and governance that responds to the specific needs of women and girls
- Monitor the implementation of relevant laws, policies, programmes, and international agreements
- Hold governance institutions accountable to their commitments by serving as a "watch dog"
- Encourage and support women political candidates and supporting women who have been elected to public office at the local, national, and regional levels
- Build alliances with women elected officials
- Provide expert advice and briefings for parliament, government ministries, and service sectors
- Engage in national and international networking and advocacy – for example, on compliance with international women's human rights standards

Source: Mama Cash and Grantcraft. 2012. Funding for Inclusion: women and girls in the equation. <https://www.mamacash.org/media/publications/grantcraft-guide-funding-for-inclusion.pdf>

GENDER EQUITY FUNDING IN CANADA

- Women's rights employees are among the least-paid among Canadian non-profits¹⁷
- Non-profit organizations focused on gender equity have been heavily impacted by unstable government funding regarding women's rights.
- Philanthropic funding appears to make up a very small proportion of the budgets of organizations working towards gender equity.
- Women's movements in Canada were greatly impacted by government funding cuts during the last 15 years. Many national research, policy and advocacy groups focused on women's health and gender equity were closed or highly cut back. Although some governments are increasing funding again, many women's organizations continue to struggle to rebuild capacity.

17 Lambert, Brittany, and Kate McInturff. 2016. *Making Women Count: The Unequal Economics of Women's Work*. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. https://www.policyalternatives.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/publications/National%20Office/2016/03/Making_Women_Count2016.pdf

GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE PHILANTHROPY

An increasing number of international institutional donors are devoting their attention and grants towards “gender transformative” approaches. This means that they fund projects that highlight, challenge and ultimately change rigid norms regarding masculinity and femininity. The reason is that restrictive gender norms are often a root cause of inequity. Because these norms are so strongly embedded in individual, family, community, organizational and societal cultures, intentional work to expose and uproot them is often necessary.

In addition, proponents of gender transformative philanthropy suggest that “a strict focus on funding for women and girls may inadvertently hinder philanthropic effectiveness in addressing problems that directly affect this constituency—such as partner violence or teen pregnancy—where ignoring men and boys has obvious limitations. A gender transformative analysis readily includes gay, transgender and even intersex individuals, because it sees gender as not a strict binary but a broad spectrum along which each of us falls according to how we align with expected feminine or masculine norms.”¹⁸

Feminist Funding Practices

Establish long term relationships with grantees: Create trust to allow the organization to explore new strategies... Acknowledge the power dynamic inherent in funding, and get to know the people doing the work.

Provide flexible general support funds: Covering operating expenses is a feminist act. Feminist workplaces cost more resources (childcare, healthcare, etc).

Value a range of advancements not just policy wins: Challenging patriarchy can be slow, and victories may happen over a long period of time. Assess the achievements of grantees in terms that include narrative explanations of advancements in the work... As Astraea Foundation says: “Social change is a journey as well as a destination.”

Take an intersectional or ecosystem approach to funding: As MamaCash says: “A gender perspective is not an additional burden, it is merely recognising how gender is already affecting our work... Using a gender lens is a way of thinking, rather than an extra task to do.”

Recognize, value and compensate invisibilized labor: Application and site visits are a lot of work; they come across as a net loss for groups that apply. [For example] give reimbursement for the labor of going through an application process. If you don’t get a grant, you get \$500 for applying. If [you host] a site visit, receive \$1,500.

Prioritize “self-led” groups whose leadership reflects constituencies they serve: In particular, prioritize groups that are led by women and trans people of color who reflect communities directly impacted by the conditions the group seeks to transform... Include a demographics chart to better understand the demographics of the group’s leadership.

Go beyond grantmaking: Use your power to influence others in philanthropy. Join your grantees in shifting power relationships by convening discussions, making statements with an institutional voice, encouraging the flow of more resources to best support communities.

Source: Grassroots Global Justice Alliance. 2018. *Feminist Funding Practices*. Prepared for EDGE Funders Alliance conference 2018.

¹⁸ Women’s Funding Network and TrueChild. 2014. *Gender Transformative Philanthropy: The Next Phase in Feminist Philanthropy?*

We are a small foundation. What can we do?

For individual donors, families and small foundations, applying a gender lens may sound like a lot of work, more than you can handle. Additionally, you may worry that by announcing to the world that your foundation is now interested in supporting gender equity, you will receive more applications than you can handle. The following are some ways that smaller foundations can make a contribution towards gender equity within your limited capacity.¹⁹

- **Start small:** Consider the gender dimension of an issue area you already have expertise through past granting. Ask grantees about the gender aspects of the issue and see if there are any ways their and your work could advance gender equity through current programs.
- **Start local:** Develop meaningful relationships and offer funding for one or more local women's organizations. Attend their events to network and learn about the field.
- **Go slow but steady:** It helps to view a gender lens is a way of thinking, rather than an extra task to do. There can be an initial investment of time at the beginning, but you can start slow such as attending webinars, workshops or having meetings with local people who know about the gender equity field. Continue the process of learning and networking, and introduce changes into your granting practices, at a pace that is sustainable for your foundation.
- **Work through intermediaries:** Intermediaries such as women's funds, community foundations and multi-service agencies working with women are a wealth of knowledge about gender issues. It is important to verify if your chosen organization aligns with gender equity values, such as an intersectional approach to inclusion and respecting the expertise of women with lived experience. Granting to one of these organizations can provide a "one stop shop" for foundations that do not have the capacity to develop relationships with multiple grantees but still want to contribute to gender equity.
- **Use precise granting criteria:** When implementing a gender equity granting stream, some foundations have found that they get more applications while others have seen a decrease due to the clarity of the foundation's goals and grant guidelines. In addition, greater internal clarity makes grant assessment more efficient.

¹⁹ Mama Cash and Grantcraft. 2012. *Funding for Inclusion: women and girls in the equation*. <https://www.mamacash.org/media/publications/grantcraft-guide-funding-for-inclusion.pdf>. And European Foundation Centre. 2015. *Grantmaking with a Gender Lens: Five practice case studies*. <https://efc.issuelab.org/resources/21549/21549.pdf>

2 Apply a gender lens to granting practices

Some fields, such as international development, have been promoting “gender mainstreaming” for decades.²⁰ Gender mainstreaming means weaving an awareness of gender issues, norms and differences throughout the work of an organization. Instead of keeping gender as a sideline issue, it is understood as a cross-cutting factor in society.

For philanthropy, this indicates that **grants to any type of initiative can benefit from a gender analysis and awareness**. For example, environment and sustainability initiatives, economic development, health care: all have a gendered aspect. Each social or environmental issue being addressed by your foundation could benefit from considering how gender affects it—and how gender equity is affected by the issue.

This section presents some questions and actions that foundations can apply at various phases of the granting cycle to incorporate a gender lens.

UNITED NATIONS DEFINITION OF GENDER MAINSTREAMING

“The process of assessing the implications for women and men of any planned action, including legislation, policies, or programmes, in all areas and at all levels. It is a strategy for making women’s as well as men’s concerns and experiences an integral dimension of the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes in all political, economic and societal spheres so that women and men benefit equally and inequality is not perpetuated.”²¹

WHEN FOUNDATIONS UNDERSTAND HOW MUCH THEY GAIN BY CONSIDERING MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES—ALL THE COMPLEX HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS, INCLUDING GENDER, THAT AFFECT INDIVIDUALS, FAMILIES, AND COMMUNITIES—THEN GENDER BECOMES JUST ONE PIECE OF THE BIG PICTURE. AND NOT SURPRISINGLY, THEIR FUNDING INITIATIVES BECOME MORE EFFECTIVE.

—Mary Ellen Capek and Molly Mead, *Effective Philanthropy*, 2006

²⁰ UN Women. *Intergovernmental mandates on gender mainstreaming*. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/intergovernmentalmandates.htm>

²¹ UN Women. *Intergovernmental mandates on gender mainstreaming*. <https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/intergovernmentalmandates.htm>

Apply a Gender-lens in the Granting Cycle





Grant phase: Granting Strategy

There are myriad ways to include a gender lens when determining the foundation's approach, priorities and with which partners to collaborate.

QUESTIONS

- What is the foundation's current level of knowledge of gender issues, equity and analysis?
- Where could the foundation access gender-related knowledge and expertise?
- Which grantees already apply a gender lens? What can be learned from them?
- How does gender interweave with the foundation's current priority issue areas?
- Would the foundation consider making gender equity a priority for granting? Would the foundation consider "gender mainstreaming"? That is, adding gender analysis to various areas of our work?
- Does the foundation make space for the people most affected by the issue to help design the granting strategy or program? Does the foundation allow for them to provide feedback on granting priorities in a meaningful way?

ACTIONS

- Seek out people and resources that can share their gender-related knowledge and expertise. Improve your understanding by speaking with groups doing work to improve gender equity and transform gender norms.
- Read, listen and learn: Deepen your knowledge with findings from some of the latest research and practice guides. For suggested resources, see the end of this Guide.
- Have an audit conducted of your foundation's policies, granting practices, website and materials. A gender audit could be combined with other layers of equity, such as inclusion of Indigenous and racialized people and perspectives, to uncover places an equity analysis could be added or an existing one made stronger.
- Develop and operationalize an explicit strategy for incorporating a gender lens.
- Create a gender equality stream or granting program.
- Prioritize grants to organizations and programs that demonstrate a gender analysis or impacts for girls and women, regardless of the issue area.
- Include the people most affected by the issue to help design the granting strategy and program. Compensate them for their knowledge and time.



Grant phase: Outreach and Application

Once the strategy is determined, ensure that the words gets out to potential grantees that have a gender equity focus and analysis and refine the application process to include gender-related content.

QUESTIONS

- Are gender equity and women's organizations on the foundation's mailing list? Do they know about grant opportunities, including smaller and grassroots organizations?
- Is the foundation proactive in promoting funding opportunities and getting to know gender equity and women's organizations?
- Does the foundation look for organizations that are deeply connected to the communities they serve?
- How would women and men, including those from different class and racial backgrounds, interpret the grant application process, forms and guidelines? What vocabulary is used?
- How accessible are the foundation's granting processes and forms for women's organizations, knowing that most face major resource and capacity constraints for fundraising?
- Does the application form include questions about the demographics of those supported by the proposed project? Who will benefit and how?
- Does the application form include a question about the representation of women on the executive and board of the organization?
- Do guidelines encourage grant-seekers to apply a gender lens to the design and implementation of projects or programs?
- Do application forms and guidelines for all granting streams include gender-related content, or just the gender-equity stream?

ACTIONS

- Review your application form and processes from a gender equity lens. An external audit or review can help to uncover blind spots.
- Add content related to gender impacts, representation of the people most affected by the issue, demographic diversity, and any intended impacts on shifting gender norms to funding guidelines.
- Add gender-related questions to grant assessment forms to aid those reviewing applications, such as:
 - Describe the demographics (gender, race, class, etc) of the people who will benefit from the project.
 - How many women/girls, men/boys will be involved in and benefit from the project?
 - How does this program address the specific needs of women and girls, and boys and men?
 - What are the expected outcomes for women and girls?

- How does the organization and project incorporate a gender analysis?
- How many women and men serve in the organization at the executive and board levels?
- Will traditional gender norms (how men and women, girls and boys are expected to act) be affected by the project? If so, how?
- How are the people most affected by the issue involved in the project?
- Be transparent: clearly explain the foundation's shift to include a gender lens to all applicants and current grantees.
- Consider providing information in grant guidelines about gender analysis, how it can support program improvement, and how gender is important to consider regardless of grantees' area of work.
- Suggest gender and gender norms as a frame of analysis for prospective and current grantees, but indicate that they are not penalized if they do not. This provides grantees time to learn and absorb a gender lens.



Grant phase: Assessment and Recommendation of Grants

QUESTIONS

- Is gender equity and analysis a criterion for assessment of applications? What weight is this given?
- Are grantees accounting for the needs of women and girls when designing projects? Are they considering other intersecting factors as well, such as race and ability?
- Are the people assessing applications within the foundation equipped to understand gender issues and analysis? If not, what could be done to strengthen their knowledge in this area?
- What needs to be done for the board (or those making final approval on grants) to be aware of the gender dimension of projects recommended for funding?

ACTIONS

- Adapt grant assessment forms to aid those reviewing applications to consider gender dimensions, such as:

About the applicant organization

- Does the organization have diverse women in leadership positions?
- Is the board and leadership representative of the community being served?
- How connected with the community does the organization appear to be?
- What level of gender analysis does the organization demonstrate? Do they seem open to learning and strengthening their gender analysis?

About the program or project

- What are the expected outcomes for women or girls?
- Does the project reflect the needs of women or girls in all main aspects of the proposed project or program? Have the applicants demonstrated a gender analysis, regardless of the issue area (e.g. an awareness of how the issue and project differentially affect men and women)?
- Are there opportunities for women or girls to have a voice and meaningful effective involvement in the project or program?
- Are the needs and interests of women and girls safeguarded in practical and effective ways – including child care, other caring roles and responsibilities, language and cultural sensitivities?
- During conversations or interviews with applicants:
 - Ask questions about gender equity, gender norms and how they affect the people they intend to engage in the project.
 - Clarify what they mean if they describe their programs with words such as “universal” or “neutral,” “for both men and women.” How are the differences taken into account?

**WHEN WE EXPECT ADDITIONAL THINGS
FROM GRANTEES, IT IS ALWAYS GOOD
TO OFFER THEM ADDITIONAL RESOURCES.**

- Women's Funding Network and TrueChild, *Gender Transformative Philanthropy*



Grant phase: Grantee Project Implementation

Once the funds have been awarded, foundations can continue to support grantees to do their work well, including incorporating a gender lens.

QUESTIONS

- Is there a satisfactory gender representation in the project management and governance?
- How involved are women and girls in the decision-making and implementation of the project?
- What gender equity-related practices are grantees using that could help the foundation or other grantees to improve their own work?
- Do grantees have all the resources they need to do their work well? And to address gender in their programs and initiatives?
- Do grantees have capacity challenges that the foundation could assist to address?

ACTIONS

- Fund the implementation of capacity building activities to assist grantees deepen their gender analysis and equity practice.
- If a project appears to be missing aspects of a gender lens, suggest skill building opportunities to support grantees. Provide information and financial resources for them to take part in third-party training.
- Fund grantees to conduct a meaningful gender-based needs assessment, for example, focus groups and interviews to learn the specifics of how gender norms are experienced among the populations they support.
- During site visits with a grantee, encourage the organization to invite women participants to attend the meeting and actively take part in the conversation.
- Use an approach of curiosity. Ask grantees questions such as:
 - Have women and girls had a voice and space in the initiative?
 - What have been the challenges and successes in including women and girls affected by the project?
 - How do traditional gender norms affect this community? How have they manifested and been addressed during the project?
 - How is the project taking account of the different needs, interests and circumstances of men and women?



Grant phase: Evaluation and Learning

QUESTIONS

- Do grantees have adequate resources for ongoing reflection and evaluation during the project?
- Are grantees and foundations measuring outcomes for different demographic groups, including women and girls, men and boys?
- Are grantees equipped to assess the systems change impacts of their work, or just the impacts on individual participants?
- Does data collection and analysis account for differences in gender (and race, class, sexuality, etc.)? This could apply to grantees' and foundations' data collection.
- Did the project achieve its goals regarding participation of women and men?
- What was learned about the experiences, needs and strengths of women, particularly marginalized women, during the project?
- For gender equity-focused projects: What was learned about impacting systems change related to gender inequity? What worked well? What practices could be shared?

ACTIONS

- Allow grantees to dedicate some grant funds to evaluation and reflection, if they choose.
- Learn about gender-based and systems change evaluation and refer grantees to sources of information on these approaches if useful.
- Disaggregate and analyze data based on gender, age, race, sexuality, and other axes of diversity, when appropriate. If these data are difficult to gather or analyse, consider funding the set-up such data systems.
- Make time and create opportunities to listen to and learn from grantees.
- Conduct peer-to-peer reviews with staff at other foundations. It can be useful to exchange time with other foundations where there is a high degree of trust to assess the gender inclusiveness of each others' programs or gender mainstreaming approach.



Grant phase: Communication and Dissemination

QUESTIONS

- Are gender equity initiatives being promoted and celebrated?
- Could the learning and outcomes of gender equity projects be useful to strengthen advocacy and policy development elsewhere? How could the foundation assist in dissemination? What networks could be harnessed?
- Could the project outcomes be of interest to other foundations and funders? How could the foundation assist to promote the work of grantees?
- Are there enough places for gender equity-focused and other grantee organizations to meet, share, and learn from each other's practices related to a gender lens?
- Are women and girl-friendly language and images being used in the foundation's communications?

ACTIONS

- Include the foundation's public communications in a gender audit. When producing external communications, remember that imagery and vocabulary can signal inclusiveness, or not.
- Share information with board members to build their interest and commitment to gender equity and the gender lens.
- Engage partners in conversations with partners about the importance of including a gender lens and supporting gender equity initiatives.
- Raise awareness among other funders by hosting a webinar or presentation on gender-lens granting. Organize a workshop at a funders conference (e.g. on the impact of gender norms).
- Support grantees to learn about each others' work towards gender equity, or to apply a gender lens. This could include funding convening, networking and knowledge exchange events in the field.

Making a Gender Lens Visible

How does a grant-making institution communicate its commitment to gender analysis — and to diversity and equity, more broadly — to the public and to potential grantees?

- ***In the foundation's website and annual report.***

The website is the first point of contact for many prospective grantees, and it communicates a lot about a foundation's values and priorities.

The annual report serves a similar function by highlighting past accomplishments that the foundation views as especially important. What policies and commitments do grantees see reflected in the mission statement and other text? What images represent the foundation and its grantees?

- ***In application forms and information to grantees.***

Grant guidelines and application requirements can attract and encourage grantees who share a foundation's values.

- ***In projects and evaluations.***

The most important evidence, of course, is in the actual grant making. Who receives grants, and for what projects? Do evaluations employ gender, race, and other analytic lenses?

- ***In site visits.***

A site visit is a good opportunity to observe a grantee organization and give helpful feedback.

- ***In public and professional meetings.***

A grant maker at a regional foundation said that she and her colleagues make it a regular practice to raise issues of race and gender in public meetings. They often present on those topics during grant makers' gatherings.

- ***In alliances.***

One way to learn more about using a gender lens and signal a commitment to women's issues is to collaborate on projects [with women's organizations or other funders.]

Source: Grantcraft. 2004. *Grant Making with a Gender Lens*.
<https://grantcraft.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/gender.pdf>

3 Increase equity in internal operations and governance

What we do inside the foundation helps us “walk the talk.” That is, our internal operations and decision-making demonstrate our commitment to the values and goals we espouse in our granting programs. Furthermore, the effort and learning that comes through shifting our own organizational culture and processes will deepen our knowledge of equity issues first hand. All of this makes us better partners for grantees.

Create processes to ensure diverse women in leadership staff and board positions

Like most sectors, the foundation sector in Canada could benefit from increased diversity in its teams. However, an important point is to ensure that positions held by women are meaningful and hold decision making power. Are women mainly in volunteer positions? Who is represented in decision-making processes? Does the foundation create leadership opportunities for the people its grantmaking program serves?

Develop an internal culture of inclusion (away from hierarchy and individualism toward collaboration and humility)

Increasing inclusion and equity does not mean just representation of diverse groups by numbers. It also means opening the culture of the foundation to collaborative styles of leadership, diverse input and creative solutions. Our mainstream work culture tends to emphasize competition and separation, but a commitment to improving gender and racial equity is an opportunity to adapt ways of working to be more participatory and holistic.

Include competence in gender analysis and other equity dimensions during team selection processes

When recruiting and selecting new volunteers, advisors, grant assessment professionals, staff or board members, prioritize candidates who demonstrate that they understand and care about gender and other aspects of equity. While not all team members need to be gender analysis experts, it helps to have strong competencies among some, and to ensure that others have a basic foundation of awareness of gender and intersecting equity issues.

Train board and staff members on applying a gender lens

Include gender as an area for ongoing learning and skill building. A formal or ad hoc group of staff and board members interested in gender-inclusive funding could provide a forum for learning, monitoring, and mutual support. The foundation can host workshops--solo or with other foundations, support team members to attend conferences, and provide time for staff to participate in webinars and online training. Presentations on gender equity issues and research on the gender dimensions of the projects the foundation supports can assist board members to expand their knowledge.

Ensure access

When holding events, organizing meetings and retreats, and communicating with partners, grantees and potential applicants, think through different ways to increase access for girls and women with diverse experiences. For example, the timing of meetings, the location and the offering of food and child care can make either create barriers or support participation of women.

GENDER IN CANADIAN FOUNDATIONS' STAFF AND BOARDS

Foundations are hearing the call, like many other sectors in Canadian society, to improve their equity and inclusion. Gender equity is integral to DEI, but is sometimes forgotten. While representation of women within foundations and the nonprofit sector in general tends to be high, we know that there are gender imbalances in salaries and leadership positions, still favouring men. For example, women are paid less than men in the same roles in all management levels of charitable organizations.²²

Another aspect of becoming more diverse organizations is including diverse approaches and leadership styles. For example, rather than increasing gender equity on the board with an “add women and stir” approach, organizational culture likely needs to shift. To what extent are women's voices, priorities and ways of leading given space and power within the foundation?

Results of PFC survey on diversity, equity, and inclusion²³:

- Canadian foundations tend to be led by men.
- There are slightly more men than women on boards of Canadian foundations.
- Canadian foundations have small staff teams, with higher rates of women among staff.
- Canadian foundations tend to have more diversity among staff (in particular, more LGBTQ2S, racialized, immigrant and young people) than among board members.

INCREASED GIVING TO WOMEN AND GIRLS DOES NOT AUTOMATICALLY IMPLY HAVING A STRONG GENDER ANALYSIS, ANY MORE THAN GIVING TO COMMUNITIES OF COLOR AUTOMATICALLY MEANS A STRONG RACIAL JUSTICE ANALYSIS. WHILE THE GIVING IS CERTAINLY IMPORTANT, SO IS HAVING THE UNDERSTANDING.

-Women's Funding Network and TrueChild, *Gender Transformative Giving*

²² Charity Village. 2019. 2019 Canadian nonprofit sector salary and benefits study. <https://charityvillage.com/cms/knowledge-centre/sector-reports/2019-canadian-nonprofit-sector-salary-and-benefits-report>

²³ Philanthropic Foundations Canada. 2019. Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion in Canadian Philanthropy: Survey Results and Future Directions. <http://pfc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/diversity-equity-and-inclusion-in-canadian-philanthropy.pdf>

4 Use gender-lens investment practices

Gender-lens investing is the practice of investing for financial return while also considering the benefits to women and gender equity. The term was coined around 2009 and has become increasingly popular ever since²⁴, with more and more products and firms offering tools for foundations and other investors to move towards their gender equity goals while earning adequate returns.

Gender is neither a sector nor an asset class, but it cuts across these categories and goes beyond them. Asking good questions about gender equity is "critical to understanding a business's strategy and potential for success. [For example,] in the off-grid energy sector, gender questions help clarify if investees are seeing the full market opportunity or if they might be missing a substantial portion of their potential customer base."²⁵

Gender-lens investing: The incorporation of a gender analysis into the practice of investments and the systems of finance. This includes how value is assigned, how relationships are structured, and how processes work. A gender lens helps an investor highlight opportunity, illuminate risk, and understand strategy in a more nuanced way.

THE VALUE OF INVESTING IN COMPANIES THAT EXCEL AT INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

Multiple studies have been proven that inclusive companies with diverse leadership and staff, including high representation of women, perform better when compared to less diverse organizations.

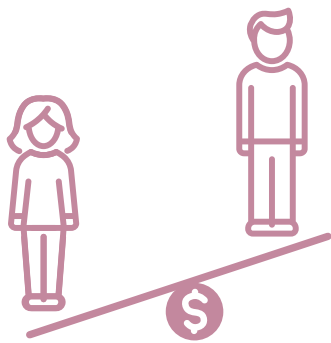
More diverse firms have:

- stronger financial returns
- Improved innovation
- better Corporate Social Responsibility performance
- less fraud
- better reputations²⁶

24 Alison Moodie. November 17, 2015. "Investments aren't gender-neutral when female entrepreneurs face a \$320bn credit gap." *The Guardian*. And Paul Sullivan. August 14, 2015. "With an Eye to Impact, Investing Through a 'Gender Lens.'" *The New York Times*.

25 Calvert Impact Capital. 2018. *Key Questions for Underwriting Gender Equity*. <https://www.calvertimpactcapital.org/storage/documents/calvert-gender-underwriting-framework.pdf>

26 Catalyst. 2018. *Quick Take: Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter*. <https://www.catalyst.org/research/why-diversity-and-inclusion-matter/>



**\$12 to
\$28 trillion**

estimated amount added to the global economy if women were fully economically empowered²⁷

**\$320
billion**

size of the credit gap for women launching and expanding business ventures around the world²⁸

2.2%

proportion of venture capital funding that went to women founders in 2018

Getting started

Here are some steps to explore gender-lens investing at your foundation:

- Learn about the many firms and tools that support investment strategies aimed at advancing gender equity. Learn about gender equity investment products currently available. (See examples in the Resources section.)
- Ask your current investment manager about gender lens investing.
- Inform to your investment manager that you would like gender to be a criterion for your investments and ask them what tools they might use

Ask for a review or independent audit of current investments, including gender impacts as a criterion

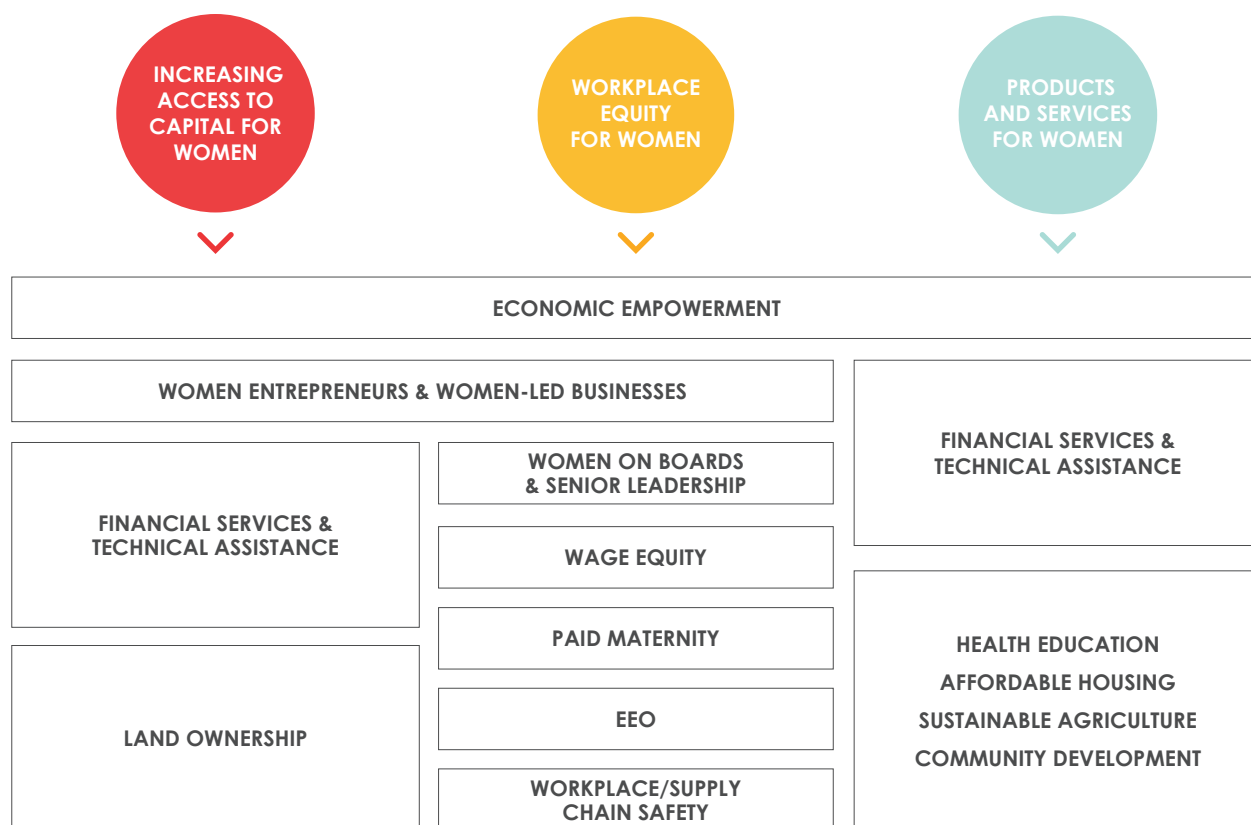
Areas of investment to increase gender equity

Investments can reduce gender inequity in three main ways: by closing the funding gap for female entrepreneurs, by improving equity in workplaces through emphasis on companies with high standards for gender equity, and by making important services more available for women and girls.

²⁷ McKinsey Global Institute, 2015. *How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth*. <https://www.mckinsey.com/featured-insights/employment-and-growth/how-advancing-womens-equality-can-add-12-trillion-to-global-growth>

²⁸ McKinsey Global Institute, 2015. *How advancing women's equality can add \$12 trillion to global growth*.

Investing for Positive Impact on Women: Integrating Gender into Total Portfolio Activation



Adapted from: Trillium Asset Management. 2015. *Investing for Positive Impact on Women: Integrating Gender into Total Portfolio Activation*. <https://trilliuminvest.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Investing-for-Positive-Impact-on-Women1.pdf>

Source: Criterion Institute and Croatan Institute analysis.

How investors can employ a gender lens



Source: Rally Assets. <https://rallyassets.com/>

Foundations and their investment firms can apply a gender lens through all phases of the investment process.

Key questions and criteria²⁹

Major criteria, or screens, for selecting and monitoring investments can include:

- Gender incorporated into mission, strategy and operations (or clear commitment to do so)
- Gender equality integrated in the business' value chain (or clear commitment to do)
- Governance and leadership diversity
- Positive impact on women and their families

The areas to be assessed with a gender lens can include:

- design of products and services
- workplace equity
- marketing and advertising: strategies and messages
- production, manufacturing, and processing
- sales and after sales service
- management and reporting of progress toward gender equity goals
- for intermediaries: the investment process (origination, underwriting, monitoring of financial and impact outcomes)

The following questions can be applied to intermediaries (who provide financial services to businesses) as well as to individual companies:

Strategy

- How does gender factor into your investment strategy and operations?
- How is gender factored within your value chain? Or, for intermediaries: How is gender factored into your origination, underwriting, financial and impact monitoring?

Products and services

- What is the existing demographic profile of your clients?
- What is the potential opportunity to reach women clients? Does this open up an untapped client base?
- How do the products/services that you (or your borrowers) offer impact women?
- Are you (or your borrowers) incorporating specific needs/desires and preferences of women in product/service design?
- To what degree does your advertising/marketing messages challenge traditional gender roles?

²⁹ Calvert Impact Capital, 2018. *Key Questions for Underwriting Gender Equity*.

Workplace equity

- How important is gender diversity within your governance and leadership team?
- What is your current gender composition of: governance and advisory board, management team, staff?
- What type of professional development do you offer to your staff? Do you have formal workplace policies and procedures designed to equalize opportunities for your staff?
- What are realistic gender diversity milestones to set over time?

Reporting

- Does the firm have gender disaggregated metrics at the leadership and governance level?
- Does the firm have gender disaggregated metrics at the enterprise and end beneficiary level?
- Does the firm have sector specific metrics to understand the dynamics and impact of the intersection of gender and a specific sector (e.g. financial services, energy)?

IT TOOK 25 YEARS FOR THE FIRST \$1 BILLION TO BE INVESTED IN PUBLIC MARKET GENDER LENS INVESTMENTS. THE SECOND BILLION DOLLARS TOOK 12 MONTHS. GIVEN THE RAPID EXPANSION OF THE GLI ECOSYSTEM, THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT FOR THOSE COMMITTED TO BENDING THE ARC OF FINANCE FOR WOMEN AND GIRLS.

- Veris, *Gender Lens Investing: Bending the Arc of Finance for Women and Girls*

**WOMEN IN PHILANTHROPY ARE WISE TO
LOOK AT GENDER LENS INVESTING AS
A CLOSE COUSIN OF GENDER EQUALITY
PHILANTHROPY—ANOTHER IMPORTANT
WAY TO DEPLOY FUNDING FOR MAXIMUM
FEMALE EMPOWERMENT.**

- Kiersten Marek, Philanthropy Women



Resources

Gender equity in Canada

Beyond Appearances: Brief on the Main Issues Facing Girls in Canada, by Girls Action Foundation, Juniper Glass and Lee Tunstall. http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2016/cfc-swc/SW21-166-2013-eng.pdf

The Facts by Canadian Women's Foundation. A series of fact sheets on: Women and Poverty, Gender-based Violence, Barriers Girls Face, Sexual Assault and Harassment, Gender Wage Gap, and Inclusive Leadership. <https://www.canadianwomen.org/the-facts/>

The Gender Wage Gap: Division of Labour in the Charitable and Nonprofit Sector, by Imagine Canada. <http://www.imaginecanada.ca/blog/gender-wage-gap-division-labour-charitable-and-nonprofit-sector>

Quick Take: Why Diversity and Inclusion Matter, by Catalyst. 2018. <https://www.catalyst.org/research/why-diversity-and-inclusion-matter/>

Gender-lens grantmaking

Funding for Inclusion: Women and girls in the equation, by Mama Cash and Grantcraft. 2012. <https://www.mamacash.org/media/publications/grantcraft-guide-funding-for-inclusion.pdf>

Gender Transformative Giving The Next Phase in Feminist Philanthropy? By Women's Funding Network and TrueChild. https://static1.squarespace.com/static/599e3a20be659497eb249098/t/59df1dfa51a584856092ae63/1507794439151/___wfn+feminist+philanthropy.pdf

Grantmaking with a Gender Lens, by Grantcraft. 2004. <https://grantcraft.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2018/12/gender.pdf>

Grantmaking with a Gender Lens: Five practice case studies, by European Foundation Centre. 2015. <https://efc.issuelab.org/resources/21549/21549.pdf>

State of funding for gender equity and women's rights

Brave, Creative, Resilient: The global state of young feminist organizing. 2017. <https://youngfeministfund.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Global-State-of-Young-Feminist-Organizing.pdf>

Explained: Why invest in women's rights organizations and movements? by Nobel Women's Initiative and MATCH International Women's Fund. Video: <https://youtu.be/lkEzOWDzV7Y>

Investing well in the right places: Why fund women's funds, by Mama Cash. 2015. https://www.mamacash.org/media/publications/mama_cash-why_womens_funds_feb_2015_final.pdf

Watering the Leaves, Starving the Roots: The Status of Financing for Women's Rights Organizing and Gender Equality, by AWID. 2013. <https://www.awid.org/publications/watering-leaves-starving-roots>

Women's Foundations and Funds: A Landscape Study, by IUPUI Women's Philanthropy Institute. 2019. <https://scholarworks.iupui.edu/bitstream/handle/1805/19244/foundations-funds.pdf>

Gender-lens investing

The Gender Lens Investing Repository, by Global Impact Investing Network. An online library of information and resources on gender lens-investing. <https://thegiin.org/gender-lens-investing-repository>

Gender Lens Investing: A Primer for College and University Endowments, by Intentional Endowments Network. 2019. Excellent report applicable for foundation endowments as well. http://www.intentionalendowments.org/gender_lens_investing_primer

Implementing Grand Challenges Canada's Gender Strategy: A White Paper, by Joy Anderson (Criterion Institute) in collaboration with Grand Challenges Canada. 2017. This document contains a gender equality coding system to apply to projects under consideration for funding. https://www.grandchallenges.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/WHITE-PAPER_Implementing-GCCs-Gender-Strategy_6Oct2017_EN.pdf

Investing for Positive Impact on Women: Integrating Gender into Total Portfolio Activation, by Trillium Asset Management. 2015. <https://trilliuminvest.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Investing-for-Positive-Impact-on-Women1.pdf>

Key Questions for Underwriting Gender Equity, by Calvert Impact Capital. 2018. <https://www.calvertimpactcapital.org/storage/documents/calvert-gender-underwriting-framework.pdf>

Firms and products supporting gender-lens investing

On the PFC Gender-Lens Philanthropy Resources page of our site, we offer a list of firms and products supporting gender-lens investing. The firms and products have not been verified for quality. Ensure that you conduct due diligence to find the expertise that is right for you.

Training and capacity building

Online training on GBA+

Free online training on Gender-Based Analysis Plus) offered by the Department for Women and Gender Equality (formerly Status of Women Canada) https://cfc-swc.gc.ca/gba-acsc/course-cours/eng/mod00/mod00_01_01.html

Practice Guide to Auditing Gender Equality.

Canadian Audit & Accountability Foundation
<https://www.caaf-fcar.ca/en/gender-equality>

Canadian Women's Funds



<https://equalityfund.ca/>



<https://www.canadianwomen.org/>

International Women's Funds



www.prospera-inwf.org



<https://www.lfs-ayni-fimi.com/eng>



<https://www.mamacash.org/en/en-homepage>



Young Feminist Fund
<https://youngfeministfund.org/>

Consultants offering gender audits and training

On the PFC Gender-Lens Philanthropy Resources page of our site, we offer a public list of firms that offer gender audits, training and other services that may be useful for your foundation. The consultants have not been verified for quality. Ensure that you conduct due diligence to find the expertise that is right for you.

Philanthropic networks

European Foundation Centre - Gender Equality Thematic Network

<https://www.efc.be/thematic-networks/gender-equality/>

A peer network that aims to facilitate mutual learning and a better understanding of gender, and to promote the use of a gender lens throughout the work of foundations. The affinity group produces webinars and publications, organizes joint meetings with other thematic affinity groups in EFC, and ensures there are sessions related to gender equality at EFC events.

Women's Funding Network

<https://www.womensfundingnetwork.org/>

The largest philanthropic network in the world devoted to women and girls, with over 100 women's foundations and gender equity funders participating.

Gender Justice Initiative of EDGE Funders Alliance

<https://edgefunders.org/gender-justice-initiative/>

A collaborative group formed by civil society representatives and funders, who strategize on ways to promote the gender lens among funders and to ensure that the practices of systemic change philanthropy highlight gender equity.

Women Moving Millions

<http://www.womenmovingmillions.org/>

A global network of over 300 members, each of whom has given or pledged \$1 million or more to organizations or initiatives of their choosing that benefit women and girls.

Philanthropy Advancing Women's Human Rights

<https://www.pawhr.org/>

An initiative to mobilize funders to share knowledge, deepen networks, and expand resources for the women's rights field. Membership includes twelve private foundations and philanthropic advisors, who all support the goal of a better-connected and better-resourced ecosystem of organizations dedicated to women's human rights.



Philanthropic Foundations Canada | Fondations philanthropiques Canada
615 René-Lévesque Blvd. West, Suite 720, Montréal, Québec
T 514.866.5446 | www.pfc.ca