



Guidance on how to complete the Concept Note Application Form – INNOVATION GRANTS

The What Works to Prevent Violence: Impact at Scale Programme (What Works 2) is pleased to announce an open call to apply for a **3-year innovation grant (2023-2025) to pilot innovative efforts to prevent violence against women and girls**. What Works 2 invites **concept notes** from southern-based women's led, women's right organizations, either as single organizations or in consortia with other organisations. **Concept notes must be received by 23.59 pm GMT on 2nd of September 2022.**

About this guidance

This document is designed to assist applicants working on prevention of violence against women and girls (VAWG), to assess their eligibility to apply for Innovation grants funding made by the What Works to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls(What Works 2 Programme) and to submit proposals in accordance with the required procedures.



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Glossary

DAC	Development Assistance Committee
EU	European Union
FCDO	Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
IAB	Independent Advisory Board
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
WRO	Women's Right Organisations
WW2	What Works 2 Programme
VAWG	Violence Against Women and Girls

1. Background information about the What Works programme and its objectives

Building on the success of its predecessor (<https://www.whatworks.co.za/>), which showed that violence against women and girls (VAWG) is preventable, What Works 2 is a seven-year UK aid funded programme to scale up evidence-based, practice-informed violence prevention approaches. Contributing progress towards the elimination of VAWG, What Works 2 seeks to achieve a measurable reduction in VAWG in development and humanitarian contexts, including for the most marginalised women and girls in all their diversity.

What Works 2 will allocate funding on behalf of Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) to address innovation initiatives to prevent VAWG, including in conflict and crises. The What Works 2 Programme seeks to expand the global knowledge and evidence base on what works to prevent VAWG and how to achieve this at scale. It also aims to support women's rights organisations (WROs) to be recognised as essential actors in VAWG prevention and improve access to funding to uphold the rights, agency and voices of women and girls in all their diversity.

2. What Works Innovation grants window specific focus

What Works 2 defines innovation as: ***The development and implementation of new or existing ideas with the transformative ability to contribute impact with potential for future scaling.***

We are interested in testing innovative approaches and developing promising collaborations to take VAWG prevention work in new directions. Innovation grants are intended to support the development and/or implementation of projects designed to achieve one or more of the following goals:

- Design and test ways to address drivers of violence that have previously been under explored;
- Design and test approaches to combat violence in populations, settings or sectors where little experience or rigorous evidence exists;
- Existing ideas/approaches on preventing VAWG that are being adapted for new populations, geographies, particularly focused on women and girls with disabilities and LBT persons;
- Approaches that test different combinations, intensities or duration of approaches to further reduce levels of VAWG and get us closer to 'zero' prevalence;
- Adaptations of existing methodologies (particularly for humanitarian contexts) from other sectors for VAWG prevention;

- New or adapted prevention delivery modalities and/or different combinations, e.g., moving from community mobilization to implementing prevention through digital spaces/online platforms.

In funding Window 1, What Works 2 will award innovation grants of up to GBP 500,000 each, for up to 3 years, to interventions in the Global South that are designed to achieve a measurable reduction in VAWG in development or humanitarian contexts.

i) Prioritizing WROs

What Works 2 aims to award innovation grants to southern-based, women-led, women’s rights organisations (WROs) working as programme implementors in the field of prevention of VAWG. This includes women peacebuilding organisations, women-led people with disabilities organisations, and lesbian, bisexual and transgender (LBT) organisations.

ii) Focus on marginalised women and girls, prevention of VAWG in conflict

What Works 2 Innovation Grants activities will focus on marginalized women and girls and those experiencing intersecting forms of discrimination. We particularly encourage proposals that work in the following areas:

- Prevention of violence against the most marginalized groups, particularly women and girls with disabilities and LBT persons.
- Prevention of VAWG in conflict and crisis, including non-partner sexual violence (this could include adapting evidence-based approaches from non-conflict settings).
- Prevention of violence against children and its links to violence against women to stop the transmission of violence across generations as a secondary outcome.

iii) Aligning with our Feminist Principles

What Works 2 is committed to the use of aspirational feminist grant making principles in the design, planning, implementation, and evaluation work of our programme. The grant making approach is underpinned by the following key commitments:

- Centre the voices and priorities of women and girls affected by violence in all our work through prioritising women-led feminist organisations in the grant-making process and ensuring accountability to them;
- Efforts will be made to fund projects that use an “intersectional analysis” in the co-design of projects to ensure What Works 2 programme is responding to women and girls in all their diversity;
- Engage in active listening and ongoing solidarity to build equitable and inclusive partnerships to develop trust.

What Works 2 understands women-led, WROs to be organisations that:

- Have a deliberate mandate to protect and promote the rights of women and girls
- Have majority women at every level, including at the board level and across all decision-making levels
- Centre women and girls in all their diversity¹
- Acknowledge individual and structural gender inequality and gender norms as a core driver of VAWG

3. i) Who can apply

- Applicants are national or local level women led WROs from the Global South, who may choose to partner in consortia with other organisations (e.g., NGOs and SMEs).
- Applicants are project implementers in VAWG prevention including those working in conflict and crisis contexts and women peacebuilding organisations
- Applicants are willing to participate in the co-design of research in collaboration with the What Works 2 Research Consortium.
- Applicants are located within the three priority regions: sub-Saharan Africa, Asia, and Middle East and North Africa (MENA); Please see link to [OECD list of WW2 priority regions and countries](#).
- International NGOs (INGOs) are eligible as part of a consortia led by WROs

ii) Ineligible applicants:

- Funding organizations are not eligible, for example a women's fund
- Organisations are **only eligible to submit one concept note in each funding cycle.**

iii) Priority regions and/or countries

- The What Works 2 Programme will work across the three priority regions: sub-Saharan Africa; MENA and Asia (Central, South and Southeast Asia). See section 3.ii above for full list of regions and countries. The need for regional balance will be weighed against the presence of VAWG prevention interventions that can be scaled up or mainstreamed in keeping with the What Works 2 programme priorities.

¹ This includes centering women and girls facing multiple, intersecting forms of discrimination, for example women and girls with disabilities and LBT people

4. Selection criteria for What Works 2 innovation grants

We are seeking concept notes for innovations in VAWG prevention that demonstrate:

- Locally led solutions
- Potential for a clear runway to scale either by reach or proportion of population covered
- Proven experience of working adaptively and taking a continuous learning approach
- Intervention design incorporates flexibility and adaptability to change
- Intervention includes gender transformative components
- Explanation of the innovation and why / how is it innovative, and the key questions the project seeks to address
- Key questions and challenges that the VAWG prevention field is facing that the project aims to answer through evidence generation
- Testing of technological and digital solutions may be included as part of the approach but is not a requirement
- Proposals may also consider how they will test what different combinations, intensities or duration of approaches might further reduce levels of VAWG and advance the prevention field.

5. Eligibility criteria - Pre-screening eligibility checks

The What Works 2 Concept Note application form, has a number of pre-screening eligibility checks to ensure that only those organizations with sufficient experience, financial stability, demonstrable technical knowledge for delivering what is envisioned in this call for proposals will qualify for further consideration for the Full Proposal. The pre-screening section will comprise two sections / phases as follows:

- **Eligibility Checklist:** A checklist designed to ensure that WROs intending to apply for an Innovation Grant meet all the relevant criteria and have the required experience to deliver the programme's aims and objectives.

Checks include confirmation that the proposed activity will be located in WW2 priority regions; that lead WRO is women led and based in the Global South; that all project partners are based in three priority regions of sub-Saharan Africa, Asia and MENA; of organisational audit reports for the past three years; and of previous organisational experience of implementing VAWG projects over the last three years.

- **Mandatory requirements/pre-qualification criteria:** A checklist of more specific programme related questions and criteria to confirm details about your organisation and proposed activity.

These include confirmation that the proposed service / activity is part of the

key services / activities undertaken by your organization; that your organization is registered as required by national or local laws where the organization is based; that your organization has managed VAWG projects for at least three years; that your organization will be able and willing to participate in research and impact evaluation studies related to the proposed activity. The criteria will also check if applicant organization is currently under investigation for any fraud or any misconduct, noting this will not exclude an organization from applying. The criteria will further confirm whether applicant organizations have been subject to any investigations relating to sexual exploitation and abuse and if yes applicants will be asked to provide further details. This is particular important for any FCDO funded project to adhere to the [IASC Six Core Principles](#). Additional compliance and vetting checks will be carried out by the What Works 2 team during the initial screening stage.

- The contracting mechanism for the project grants will be an FCDO Accountable Grant Arrangement (AGA). The AGA template has been tailored to applicants receiving grants and includes reporting requirements and eligible costs for FCDO funding. As a final stage in the application process prior to signing the grant agreement, IRC, acting on behalf of FCDO as the fund manager, will conduct a due diligence assessment to identify any development needs and assign actions to mitigate against the risk to the FCDO funding. This is a collaborative review and analysis of the selected grantee's organizational, programmatic, financial, and operational capacity to implement the proposed project.

6. Budget, Funding parameters and what can and cannot be funded

i) Completing Summary Budget Template

- Please use the Summary Budget Template provided with your application form. The template has the main summary budget headings required for your grant proposal. These are Project Activities, Capital Expenditure, Staff costs, Administration costs and Monitoring, Evaluation & Lesson Learning. Guidance on how to complete the budget is included with the template.
- Against each budget heading, please enter the annual estimated figures (for years 1, 2 and 3), which you be spending on your project. For example, for the first budget heading of capital expenditure – example only (column x, row x), please enter total estimated costs for each project year for the capital expenditure in row x, and the total for that cost across all project years will be calculated in column x. Please ensure that for each budget heading annual amount stated, that there are estimated detailed costs. The total budget costs for your application should not exceed GBP 500,000.
- Please note that a fuller detailed budget will be required if your application is shortlisted to the next stage of the application process.

ii) Funding parameters and what can and cannot be funded

The following expenditure items are explicitly ineligible across all expenditure cost categories. This list is not exhaustive and does not override activities which are deemed eligible and explicitly agreed as part of the grant arrangement.

The following costs are explicitly ineligible across all budget categories:

- Activities which may lead to civil unrest
- Activities which discriminate against any group on the basis of age, gender reassignment, disability, race, colour, ethnicity, sex and sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief
- Gifts
- Statutory fines, criminal fines, penalties and associated legal costs
- Payments for works or activities that are fully funded by other sources whether in cash or in kind, for example if premises are provided free of charge, FCDO will not contribute to a notional rent
- Activities in breach of EU legislation on State Aid
- Bad debts to related parties
- Payments for unfair dismissal and associated legal costs
- Replacement or refund of any funds lost to fraud, corruption, bribery, theft, terrorist financing or other misuse of funds
- Inflation or foreign exchange contingency
- Contingency or risk premium
- Costs incurred prior to a formal agreement being executed including those associated with preparing bid or grant proposals

Additional exclusions relating to specific expenditure cost categories are [detailed in this guidance](#) and are mandated in addition to the above general ineligible costs.

7. Two-stage application process

A two-stage application process will be used to open the process to a diverse pool while lessening the burden on applicants by keeping the first submission to a concept note.

The first stage is an online concept note and application form that requests basic FCDO eligibility information including confirmation that the lead applicant is a WRO based in the Global South. The concept note should provide a brief narrative that summarises the innovation prevention project including geographic scope, type of violence, settings and activities to be undertaken; technical expertise in the field of ending VAWG and in innovation; and organizational capacity in project and finance management.

The What Works 2 team will work in an interactive way with a small number of organisations selected from review of the concept note to submit a full proposal. Following approval from FCDO, the selected applicants will be offered a provisional award of funding, subject to

satisfactory completion of a due diligence assessment. If approved, grant funds would be available for a **project start from approximately April 2023**.

There is no formal resubmission process for the What Works 2. You should consider very carefully the feedback provided on any previous concept note or proposal before deciding whether to submit a new concept note for the same project in a future round. All concept notes will be considered in competition with others submitted to the same round.

8. Appraisal of concept notes & Selection Criteria

All concept notes will be checked for eligibility and validity. Only those that are considered to be eligible and valid will be assessed.

Eligible and valid concept notes will be appraised in relation to the key What Works 2 Programme objectives and more specifically proposals which address the What Works 2 Innovation Grant objectives as above and which answer the questions in the concept note application form.

Our assessment will be based on the information which is explicitly contained Within your concept note. You must not assume that we have any prior knowledge of your organisation/consortium or its work. However, if your proposed intervention is later considered suitable for funding we may take account of the management and performance of previous projects funded by FCDO or other donors when making final decisions.

9. Notification of outcome and next steps

Please read the concept note application guidelines alongside this request for concept notes. Complete the **online concept note** and application form [via this link](#) by 23.59 GMT on 02 September 2022. A Frequent Asked Questions document will be updated regularly on our website.

Webinar sessions providing information on emerging evidence on VAWG prevention, FCDO priorities and grant agreement and compliance will take place during week commencing 8 August 2022. Further information will be announced on the What Works 2 website and Twitter @WW2PreventVAWG.

All applicants will receive notification of the outcome of the appraisal of their concept note within 6 to 8 weeks of the closing date.

Please note that all decisions are final. There is no appeals process.

Those invited to submit full proposals will receive further specific guidance on the preparation of proposals. Full proposals will need to provide a more detailed description of the project plans with supporting documents including a fully completed project logframe (or logical framework), a detailed budget, a project organisation chart and delivery chain map, a project schedule/Gantt chart, and your most recent organisational accounts.

Questions regarding the concept note application can be submitted via email to:
WW2.info@rescue.org

10. Annexes to be completed as part of your application

- i. Pre- screening eligibility checklist
- ii. Concept Note Application Form
- iii. Budget template and guidance

END