AAUW Gender Equity Fund of Illinois

(revised 1-30-24)

The AAUW Gender Equity Fund of Illinois (GEF) is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization formed in 1997 to support AAUW Illinois projects and IL AAUW Branch projects. The AAUW GEF of Illinois purpose is exclusively educational and charitable. It receives and distributes contributions from individuals, corporations, and AAUW Illinois for programs and projects that further education and equity for all women and girls in the communities served by AAUW Illinois branches.

GEF has two purposes. The GEF may be used to fund state or branch projects or activities as approved by the Board. It may also serve as a pass-through fund, enabling branches to collect tax-deductible donations from individuals and corporations, and from grants and endowments, without having to establish themselves as a separate non-profit entity.

Most branches are 501(c)4 organizations and cannot receive tax-deductible donations.

The GEF is governed by a Board of Directors (BOD). This BOD is independent of the AAUW-IL organization since the AAUW GEF of IL stands as a separate entity.

**AAUW Gender Equity Fund of Illinois Board**

President: Donna Jean Simon
Secretary: Nann Hilyard
Treasurer: Ruth Holst
Director: Andrea Danis
Director: Laura Desmarais
Director:  Carolyn Schjelderup

Director: Jennifer Urish

**How does GEF help with fund raising?**Many donors, both individuals and corporations, require tax-deductibility.  Using GEF provides that tax-deductibility.  GEF acknowledges all donations of $250 or more.  It is the responsibility of project and scholarship organizers to acknowledge donations of less than $250.

**Who can use the GEF?**

The GEF may be used only for AAUW IL state or branch projects. These projects must support the AAUW mission. For example, the project could support fundraising or direct donations for local scholarships.

**Is your Project Eligible to Use the GEF?**

To be eligible, a project must satisfy the following:

* The GEF supports projects that promote education and equity for all women and girls and support the AAUW Mission.
* Projects that seek to influence legislation, support candidates for office, benefit solely AAUW members or individuals are specifically excluded.
* The project has a minimum project budget of $1000.

**What are the Criteria for a Project to use the GEF?**

The GEF Board of Directors will consider each project separately, according to the following criteria:

* Goal or purpose of the project
* Description of the project (including why a tax-deductible fund will help)
* Who will benefit
* Proposed budget outlining anticipated revenue and expenses
* Project budget of $1000 or more
* Number of members and community partners involved
* Projected outcomes
* Fully completed application form

 **Branch Responsibilities**

1. When GEF acts as a pass-through fund, it does so as the 501(c)(3) agent for all entities using GEF.
2. GEF is not responsible for the accounting for the individual projects or scholarships that use the fund. Each branch is responsible for its own accounting.
3. Branches are expected to maintain accurate records of donations received.
4. In the event that branch accounting does not reconcile with GEF records, the treasurer of the project and the GEF treasurer will reconcile their records to correct the difference.
5. Donations made to a Branch project through GEF are tax deductible for the donors. The Branch must alert GEF when a donation is expected to be sent directly.
6. The GEF will send acknowledgement letters to donors of $250 or more. The project is responsible for sending acknowledgement letters to donors of less than $250.

**What Services Does GEF Provide To Its Users?**

GEF is responsible for:

* Depositing and tracking all tax-deductible donations
* Audit and tax reporting as applicable
* Issuing tax letters to donors of $250 or more

**Application Process**

Once an eligible branch project has decided to use the GEF, the project director must complete the **AAUW** **GEF Application Form** located …. This form provides the detailed information the GEF Board of Directors needs to determine the acceptability of the project.

Be sure to read the application form carefully and follow the directions when applying. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Project applications must be received a minimum of 60 days prior to the scheduled project commencement date.

**What Happens When a Project is Accepted by the GEF?**

Once a project is approved by the GEF Board of Directors,

* the project director will receive notification of acceptance.
* a Letter of Agreement will be signed and submitted.
* the timeline for the project will be confirmed