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| **OWSD COUNTRY NETWORKS GUIDELINES**  *OWSD Country Networks for countries in the Global North* |
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*August 2020*

# GUIDELINES AND SUPPORT FOR OWSD COUNTRY NETWORKS

## 1. Introduction

These guidelines have been developed for individuals interested in supporting the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD) through the establishment of a country network in the Global North. For the purposes of this document any country not included in the list of developing countries shared on the [OWSD website](https://owsd.net/sites/default/files/OWSD%20138%20Countries%20-%20Global%20South.pdf) will be considered in the Global North category.

The broad goal of the OWSD Country Networks is to promote in-country activities and policies that improve the participation, access, visibility, and recognition of women from the Global South in science and technology.

**Background to OWSD**

## 2. What is the Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World (OWSD)?

OWSD is an international organization committed to promoting women’s access to science and technology, and increasing their participation in decision-making processes for the development of their countries and in the international scientific community.

## 3. OWSD Objectives

1. Increasing the participation of women in developing countries in scientific and technological research, teaching and leadership;
2. Promoting the recognition of the scientific and technological achievements of women scientists and technologists in developing countries;
3. Promoting collaboration and communication among women scientists and technologists in developing countries and with the international scientific community as a whole;
4. Increasing access of women in developing countries to the socio-economic benefits of science and technology;
5. Promoting participation of women scientists and technologists in the development of their country: and
6. Increasing understanding of the role of science and technology in supporting women's development activities.

## 4. OWSD Membership

OWSD membership has two categories:

a. **Full Members**:

* **Women** scientists from [developing countries](https://owsd.net/sites/default/files/OWSD%20139%20Developing%20countries%20in%20the%20South.pdf) who have completed **a master’s degree or higher** in [scientific subjects](https://owsd.net/sites/default/files/OWSD_Scientific_Fields_March2021_2.pdf) and who are committed to the objectives of OWSD.
* This is the only category with voting rights for electing members of the OWSD executive board, and members of national chapter executive committees.

b. **Affiliate Members**:

* **Women** scientists from [developing countries](https://owsd.net/sites/default/files/OWSD%20139%20Developing%20countries%20in%20the%20South.pdf) who have completed a **bachelor’s degree (or equivalent**) in [scientific subjects](https://owsd.net/sites/default/files/OWSD_Scientific_Fields_March2021_2.pdf)and who are committed to the objectives of OWSD.
* Affiliate members can advance to become Full Members upon completion of a master’s or doctoral degree (or equivalent) and submission of the relevant certificate to the OWSD Secretariat.

Individuals who wish to support OWSD, but are not eligible for membership can become:

c. **Friends of OWSD:**

* **Women and men** from developed and developing countries with at least an undergraduate degree (or equivalent experience) across all disciplines (including the natural sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities), who are committed to promoting the objectives of OWSD and who are not eligible for the Affiliate or Full membership categories.
* Friends of OWSD are encouraged to engage with OWSD and its members through support activities (mentoring, fundraising, networking, promoting). They can maintain their online profile on www.owsd.net for visibility and communication purposes.
* Friends of OWSD cannot be elected to a National Chapter Executive Committee or OWSD Executive Board. Friends may be invited to participate in selected national chapter events and activities, at the discretion of the national chapter members.

Individuals who wish to become Members or Friends must apply online through the OWSD website, submitting all required documentation. Applications will be approved online by OWSD Headquarters and national chapters will be able to access new members in their countries directly through the OWSD website. Applications for OWSD membership must always go through the OWSD website to be approved: [www.owsd.net](http://www.owsd.net).

Membership of the Country Network shall consist of all registered OWSD members who are Resident and/or National of that country. Country Networks have the right to make specific events for Full/Affiliate members only and/or 'by invitation only'.

**Establishing an OWSD Country Network**

## 5. What is an OWSD Country Network?

An OWSD Country Network is constituted by a group of OWSD members or friends that fully support the objectives and activities of OWSD, and aim to:

* Enhance and promote the participation of women from the Global South in science;
* Promote the visibility of women in science from developing countries in the Global North;
* Support women in science from developing countries (OWSD members) living in the country.

The name of the network shall be “OWSD [Country] Network”: for example, “OWSD Italy Network”. The expanded version, “Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World [Country] Network”, can also be used, as well as any direct translations into the local language(s).

## 6. Why establish an OWSD Country Network?

Country Networks:

1. Evolve and develop strategies for mobilizing financial and human resources towards achieving OWSD's objectives.
2. Provide networking, advocacy and information-sharing between similar institutions and individuals for promoting increased participation of women from the Global South in science and technology professions. The Country Networks will work towards strengthening regional scientific and technological activities in the spirit of international collaboration.
3. Initiate relevant science-based activities that address OWSD’s mission working with all levels of society (grassroots, schools and universities).
4. Country Networks should be established by individual members or friends of OWSD, and in accordance with the legal requirements of the country, and working in collaboration with the OWSD Executive Board and the OWSD Headquarters in Trieste, Italy.

## 7. What is expected from an OWSD Country Network?

*OWSD Country Networks are expected to initiate and/or participate in some of the following activities:*

1. Initiate fundraising for both national-level activities and also OWSD’s activities in the Global South, for example research fellowships, National Chapters, and awards.
2. Initiate research projects in the areas of interest to OWSD with particular relevance to critical development concerns.
3. Oversee the strategic implementation and/or dissemination of the OWSD activities at the national level, for example increasing visibility of the achievements of OWSD fellows and scientists.
4. Develop advocacy programmes to increase awareness — among political, NGO, professional and civic circles — of the value of gender equity and female participation in science and technology, as well as the value of collaborating with, and recognizing the contributions of scientists in and from the Global South.
5. Support and welcome expatriated women scientists from the developing world working or studying in the Global North.
6. Encourage more scientists to become friends or members of OWSD, for example through open-day events and online campaigns.
7. Gather and disseminate information on equity issues in science in order to contribute to policy development.

*OWSD Country Networks are required to:*

1. Provide evidence of institutional support within the country e.g. office location and resources.
2. Submit annual, detailed narrative reports to the OWSD Secretariat and Executive Board.
3. Provide the OWSD Secretariat with regular updated information, for example about events and activities, or administrative issues such as updated contact information.
4. Nominate a contact person whose responsibilities will be to: field queries by email from local OWSD members and friends; write and publish regional information for the website; regularly disseminate OWSD information.

## 8. How does a group obtain the status of an OWSD Country Network?

*A group wishing to obtain the status of Country Network must first:*

1. Check the OWSD website (www.owsd.net) to confirm that there is no existing OWSD Country Network for the proposed country, then email [owsd@owsd.net](mailto:owsd@owsd.net) to inform us of your intention to establish a Network. If another group or individual is already working towards the same goal, we will put you in contact. Only one Country Network can be recognized per country, but each Network can establish local branches covering, for example, different states or universities within the country.
2. Ensure that the country has at least 20 OWSD members (resident and/or national); these must all be registered with the OWSD Secretariat at [www.owsd.net/user/register](http://www.owsd.net/user/register). OWSD members and friends in or from the country will automatically become members of the Network. If the country has less than 20 members, interested existing members can contact the Secretariat or the Executive Board Members for advice/ support in recruiting more members.
3. Complete and submit the OWSD Country Network application form to the OWSD Secretariat, at owsd@owsd.net. The application will be considered by the OWSD Executive Board, in order to confirm that the proposed Country Network meets the criteria (as stated in the application form). The application will then have to be officially approved by the OWSD President. For this reason **the application must be submitted in English**.
4. Elect, through votes from OWSD members and friends either resident in or citizen of the Country Network, an Executive Committee with at least a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. The term of office must not exceed 4 years for an elected ExCom and 2 years for a non-elected ExCom.
5. The Country Network must not charge membership fees; the Network can instead ask for contributions from members to support specific events and activities. Please note that all members are asked to provide a voluntary lifetime contribution through the OWSD website at the time of their application.
6. All Country Networks should have their own logo, which can be developed with the support of OWSD. Please liaise with the OWSD Secretariat to create a suitable logo; an idea, draft or proposal should be included with the application form. A temporary logo with the chapter's national flag can also be provided by the OWSD Secretariat on request. The current logos for existing national chapters can be viewed on each chapter’s [webpage](https://owsd.net/national-chapters/all-national-chapters) or in the OWSD Annual Report.

## 9. What is the role of the Host Institute?

1. Country Networks applicants must provide a physical address within a recognized institution where the administrative and financial affairs of the Country Network will be managed. The institution must have the resources and infrastructure to host and support the Country Network. No funds are foreseen by OWSD Headquarters.
2. According to UNESCO financial rules, the network **must not** hold a bank account in the name of OWSD. This is non-negotiable and any Networks found to have bank accounts in OWSD's name will be dismissed; therefore the host institute (or other affiliated organization) must responsibly host the funds which can be made available to the National chapter within their own bank accounts.
3. The host might also provide the following (but it is not obligatory):
   * Free venue space
   * Free office space
   * Regular funding
   * Occasional funding
   * Contacts with other scientific organisations
   * Administrative support
   * IT support (e.g. access to software, institutional email address)
4. The host institute shall retain no overhead costs from Country Network funds; all administrative support, together with office facilities and equipment, will be seen as a contribution in kind towards the Network and its activities.
5. The group of OWSD Members wishing to establish a Country Network must already indicate a Host Institute at the time of the submission of the Country Network Application Form, and provide the contact details of a reference person at the Institute. The Network must obtain a letter of commitment or written agreement from the Host Institute within 6 months of establishing the Country Network. In such document the Host Institute shall express availability to host the Network and state through which means it will provide support. In case a newly established Country Network fails to provide the OWSD Secretariat with a written commitment by the Host Institute within 6 months from the establishment of the Network, the Country Network and its Executive Committee will no longer be considered active Networks and will not be included on the OWSD website or recognised in OWSD reports. The host institute must be aware that Country Network Executive Committees are elected every four years; therefore, the agreement should be upheld regardless of the membership of the committee. This is especially important if the host institute is a workplace of one of the initial committee members.

## 10. What are OWSD's responsibilities to a Country Network?

Once an OWSD Country Network has been recognized by the Executive Board (acting on behalf of the General Assembly),

*The OWSD President will:*

1. Issue a formal letter of recognition to the OWSD Country Network.
2. Officially inform all OWSD members, all OWSD Country Networks and OWSD National Chapters of the location and contacts of the newly established Network (publication as news item on website).

*The OWSD Headquarters will:*

1. Provide the newly constituted OWSD Country Network with an information package and communications materials.
2. Provide the Country Network with credentials to access their own page on the OWSD website, publish information on their activities and access a full list of updated OWSD Friends and Members in or from the country at any time.
3. Facilitate contacts between the newly established OWSD Country Network and the relevant TWAS regional office.
4. Facilitate contacts between the newly established OWSD Country Network and the relevant national or regional science academy.
5. Facilitate contacts between the newly established OWSD Country Network the relevant UNESCO regional office.
6. Provide day-to-day support to the Country Network in their establishment process and programme of activities.

## 11. What is the role of OWSD members in a Country Network?

1. If an OWSD Country Network has not yet been established in the member’s country, she/he can initiate and/or encourage the formation of a Country Network. Support from the OWSD Headquarters can be given in this regard. Contact [owsd@owsd.net](mailto:info@owsd.net).
2. If an OWSD Country Network is established, OWSD members are encouraged to initiate, promote and participate in activities organized by the Country Network and possibly provide feedback to their national executive committees on the relevance and interest of activities and events.
3. All Full OWSD members and Friends can stand for election and vote for members of the national chapter executive committee during elections.

## 12. What is the role of the Country Network Executive Committee?

1. The group of OWSD members that work to establish the Country Network will usually act as the network’s first Executive Committee, formed of at least a Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, and Treasurer. Some chapters and networks choose to include additional roles, such as Events Coordinator, Communications Secretary, and Ordinary Members of the Committee.
2. This first, unelected Executive Committee can be in place for up to two years from the formal establishment of the network (the date of the approval letter from the OWSD President). Therefore, within two years of establishment, an election for all positions on the Country Network Executive Committee should be held. All Executive Committee members can be elected to the Committee for an additional two full terms (4 years each) from the date of election.
3. Country Network Executive Committee elections must be open for all Country Network Friends and members to vote (i.e. all registered and active OWSD members and friends who list the Country Network’s country as their country of residency or their country of nationality).
4. Country Networks should liaise with the OWSD Secretariat (owsd@owsd.net) to organize and host the election. If possible, the election should be held online, in order to include as many voters as possible: the OWSD Secretariat can provide an approved platform for this.
5. Only OWSD members (Full or Affiliate) and Friends of OWSD can be candidates for the National Chapter Executive Committee.
6. Once elected, committee members can only serve two terms (i.e. a member can only be re-elected to the committee once). A term should not exceed four years.
7. Country Network committee elections must take place at least once every 4 years.
8. Prior to elections, the working group/NC Executive Committee will draw up terms of reference for the committee (based on information provided in the NC application form) and terms of reference for each position on the Executive Committee to be elected. The OWSD Secretariat can provide templates.
9. Details of candidates for election must be made available to all NC members at least two weeks before election.

## 13. Disciplinary measures

a. A Country Network Executive Committee will be considered for dismissal by the OWSD Executive Board in the following cases:

* The Executive Committee fails to share with the OWSD Secretariat and Executive Board the signed declarations (see page 11 of this document).
* The Executive Committee does not follow these signed Declarations.
* The Executive Committee does not submit the requested Annual Report of activities to the OWSD Secretariat and Executive Board for two consecutive years. Six months prior to dismissal, the OWSD Secretariat and Executive Board will communicate with the NC Executive Committee that such action is about to be taken.
* The Executive Committee fails to share with the OWSD Secretariat and Executive Board any updates on the status of elections within 6 months after the date of expiration of the second term.
* The Country Network holds and manages a bank account in the name of OWSD.

b. Vice Presidents of the regions should alert the President and OWSD Secretariat of any Country Network at risk of dismissal as soon as they are aware of this. A preliminary formal letter should be sent by the OWSD Secretariat to the chapter on behalf of the OWSD President.

c. In the case of dismissal, the OWSD Secretariat will write to the OWSD President (in copy to all EB members) stating the reasons for dismissal and including the draft letter of dismissal to be approved and signed by the President. The OWSD Secretariat will then send the letter on behalf of the President to the Chair of the Country Network (in copy to the designated contact and all other ExCom members if their emails are available).

d. A Country Network will be considered ‘inactive’ and therefore not appear on the OWSD website or be counted among the OWSD national chapters if no Annual Report is submitted 6 months after the due deadline.

e. A Country Network will automatically be excluded from possible OWSD funding if the Executive Committee has failed to share with the OWSD Secretariat and Executive Board the Annual Report of activities the year before funding is announced.

f. Members of a dismissed Country Network Executive Committee will not be eligible to stand for election again.

e. Internal disputes should be resolved locally; the Vice President of the Region (or she may delegate the Regional Member) of the concerned Country Network may act as a mediator and provide the OWSD Executive Board with her insights.

# APPLICATION FORM – COUNTRY NETWORKS

**ORGANIZATION FOR WOMEN SCIENTISTS FOR THE DEVELOPING WORLD (OWSD)**

Eligibility

OWSD individual members are eligible to apply for OWSD Country Network status. This application form should be completed in all parts (typewritten in English) and returned to the OWSD Secretariat. Please ensure that ALL necessary attachments (proof of negotiation with host institute, draft logo) are also included.

Proposer

The proposer must be an individual member or friend of OWSD and also a member of the proposed Country Network Executive Committee.

Country Network Executive Committee

All positions and membership (i.e. Chair, Treasurer) must be assumed by OWSD members or friends (registered with the OWSD Secretariat).

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| **1. PROPOSER** | | | |
| Name | Surname | | Title |
| Institutional affiliation | Job title | | Email |
| **2. HOST INSTITUTE** | |  | |
| Host institute address  (Must be a registered institution) | | Host contact person name  Host contact person phone  Host contact person email  Host institute website | |

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| **3. COUNTRY NETWORK EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE** |
| **Chair**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation               OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **Vice-Chair**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **Secretary**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **Treasurer**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **Please fill in details of any other members of the Executive Committee** |
| **Other**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **Other**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **Other**  Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    OWSD Membership ID number (find this by logging onto your [online profile](https://owsd.net/user/login)): |
| **3. COUNTRY NETWORK PRIMARY CONTACT PERSON (details to be displayed publicly on OWSD website)** |
| Name Surname Email Institutional affiliation    *N.B. You might choose to set up a shared email address, e.g. OWSD[Country Name]@gmail.com* |
| **4. PROPOSAL** |
| a. Rationale - this can include a description of why an OWSD country network is necessary in your country, what challenges and concerns you expect the network to address, and how your country can contribute to OWSD’s mission from the Global North. |
| b. Host institute - where the network will be based, why this is appropriate geographically and what resources will be available |
| c. Skills - description of the skills and experience that the proposed executive committee bring to the network. |
| d. Proposed activities - outline the activities the Country Network will undertake. |
| e. Fundraising strategy – how does the Country Network plan to fundraise for its own activities, and also raise funds for OWSD’s wider activities in the Global South? |
| e. Dissemination - how will the Country Network disseminate information about its activities among members? |
| f. OWSD Collaboration - what support would the network need from the OWSD Headquarters. Please note that OWSD currently has no designated funding for Country Networks and it is expected that each executive committee will fundraise (with support from OWSD). |

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| **DECLARATIONS** |
| **a. Please endorse the OWSD objectives below:**   * Increasing the participation of women in developing countries in scientific and technological research, teaching and leadership; * Promoting the recognition of the scientific and technological achievements of women scientists and technologists in developing countries; * Promoting collaboration and communication among women scientists and technologists in developing countries and with the international scientific community as a whole; * Increasing access of women in developing countries to the socio-economic benefits of science and technology; * Promoting participation of women scientists and technologists in the development of their country: and, * Increasing understanding of the role of science and technology in supporting women's development activities.   ***As Chair of the***       ***OWSD Country Network, and on behalf of its executive committee and members, I***       ***hereby endorse the OWSD objectives.***  **Signature**  **Date** |
| **b. Please endorse the OWSD Constitution (available on our** [**website**](https://owsd.net/about-owsd/mission-and-constitution)**).**  ***As Chair of the***       ***OWSD Country Network and on behalf of its executive committee and members, I***       ***hereby endorse the OWSD constitution.***  **Signature**  **Date** |
| **c. Please confirm that you have taken note of the Country Network Guidelines (pages 2-8 above), and that the network will follow these guidelines in practice. In particular:**  Members of the Country Network Executive Committee will each hold up to two terms of four years only, and will be voted in by an election available to all Country Network members.  The Country Network will not charge any membership fees (but can accept voluntary contributions from members relating to specific activities).  The Country Network will not hold its own bank account (but can have a budget line with the hosting institution).  The membership of the Country Network shall consist of all [registered](https://owsd.net/membership/membership) OWSD members and friends who are resident and/or national in that country.  ***As Chair of the***       ***OWSD Country Network, and on behalf of its executive committee and members, I***       ***hereby confirm that the Country Network will follow the OWSD Country Network Guidelines.***  **Signature**  **Date** |
| **6. ATTACHMENTS** |
| Proof of ongoing negotiation with host institute.  Draft or proposal for Country Network logo.  (If no logo is available please request here the OWSD temporary logo for your country.) |