

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP STRENGTHENING WOMEN'S RESILIENCE TO ORGANIZED ENVIRONMENTAL CRIME

CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

Deadline: 14 June 2024

About the Women's Fellowship

Environmental crime is estimated to be the third most lucrative criminal economy in the world, generating more than US\$250 billion annually. Although it is often considered to be 'victimless', it has a significant impact on communities living near or in ecologically important areas, with women disproportionately affected due to persisting structural inequalities. Despite this, the gender dimensions of environmental crime remain under-researched, as evidenced by the lack of gender-disaggregated data. Women are also often under-represented in environmental policy-making and law enforcement, resulting in policies that fail to address issues unique to women or to make use of their specific knowledge and expertise.

Recognizing this problem, the Resilience Fund has launched a call for individual proposals that address an aspect of environmental crime that takes into account the gendered dimensions of illicit natural resource economies. These grants are aimed at women leaders working locally to protect the environment and address community needs arising from illicit natural resource economies, particularly by developing women's resilience. By championing the voices of women working to protect the environment, we can ensure a more inclusive approach that promotes gender equality. Ways of building women's resilience to environmental crime include facilitating women's networks at the local level to address gender-based violence and discrimination, establishing institutional mechanisms to protect women environmental defenders, and developing community resilience to withstand, adapt to and recover from adversity and threats.

Five individual proposals that address different contexts of environmental crime will be selected and supported through the following mechanisms:

- **Grants:** This Fellowship aims to directly address the lack of financial support for initiatives targeting gender-inclusive projects that address environmental crime by providing grants of £12 000 to women leaders actively working to reduce environmental crime by empowering local women.
- **Capacity building:** The grantees will have access to tailored capacity-building sessions. The Resilience Fund will provide each grantee with a mentor to support them in navigating the challenges unique to their context and projects and to help them with opportunities to raise the profile of their work.

- **Networking and collaboration:** In October 2024, the Resilience Fund will invite grantees to Vienna, Austria, to participate in global policy-making forums and attend the 12th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. The Fund will facilitate dialogues and meetings with grantees to identify ways to work together to prioritize gender issues and develop innovative strategies to protect their environments. They will also be invited to join the Resilience Fund Community Platform, which will give them access to funding opportunities, global dialogues and multilateral engagement after the grant ends.

Who should apply?

This Fellowship is specifically designed for women working on environmental projects that have a clear link to environmental organized crime or the illicit trade in natural resources. Applicants should have a background in one of the following fields: journalism and media; activism, advocacy and community mobilization; creative arts; community leadership; academia; or community-based human rights.

The following examples of possible projects illustrate how civil society actors from different sectors are actively responding to the specific challenges that women face. This list is not exhaustive and priority will be given to innovative strategies that go beyond these examples.

- Victim support services and alternative economic opportunities to counter sex trafficking in the illegal mining and logging industries.
- Village-level committees to address gender-based violence against men from local communities involved in extractive industries.
- Strategies to improve the safety of women environmental defenders.
- Facilitating the participation of women in conservation initiatives.
- Facilitating the participation of women in natural resource management at local and national levels.
- Initiatives that promote gender-responsive legal frameworks and improve women's access to justice in environmental matters.
- Fostering inclusive community engagement to ensure that women's voices are heard in community decision-making processes related to environmental management and crime prevention.
- Grassroots campaigns and journalistic investigations for accountability and reform to tackle the illegal trade in natural resources, corruption and related gender-based violence.

Selection criteria

The Resilience Fund invites applications from women of all ethnic backgrounds, ages, religions or other defining characteristics who are actively working in communities affected by environmental crime. Applicants must have full or professional working proficiency in English.

Applicants will be shortlisted for interviews based on the following four criteria:

Criterion 1: Contextual relevance

- The connection of the applicant's background in gender-inclusive projects related to environmental crimes or illicit economies involving natural resources.
- The applicant's ability to articulate how these illicit economies contribute to women's vulnerability.
- The applicant's work and experience in addressing the challenges faced by women in communities affected by environmental crimes.

Criterion 2: Problem identification

- The extent to which the applicant's problem statement aligns with the call for applications on addressing the impact of environmental crime on women from local communities.
- The applicant's understanding of how environmental crime can increase women's vulnerability to organized crime in relation to the particular problem identified in the proposal.

Criterion 3: Solution feasibility

- The clarity and feasibility of the strategic activities and intended outcomes to improve women's resilience and address the identified problem.
- The degree to which the plan involves engagement with other community members, highlighting collaborative approaches and partnerships.
- The description of a realistic budget plan, showing how funds will be used to achieve tangible improvements in women's resilience.

Criterion 4: Capacity to build community resilience

- The impact of the applicant's previous projects on building community resilience in contexts of organized crime.
- The applicant's ability to reflect on the challenges faced in previous initiatives and how these experiences inform the proposed project's approach and objectives.
- Demonstrated ability to lead community-based projects.

Scoring scale

Applicants will be scored on a scale of 1 to 4 against the four criteria above. The overall score will help determine the suitability of candidates to advance the goals of the Resilience Fellowship, as follows:

- Minimal alignment (1–4 points): Lacks depth, specificity or relevance.
- Partial alignment (5–8 points): Lacks comprehensive understanding or detailed planning.
- Satisfactory alignment (9–12 points): Demonstrates clear understanding and thoughtful planning.
- Strong alignment (13–16 points): Demonstrates deep understanding, detailed planning and an innovative approach.

Fellowship structure and benefits

The Fellowship is not designed as a standalone grant application process to develop individual projects, but rather as a support mechanism for collaborative processes with other committed individuals who are already developing creative perspectives on community resilience, gender mainstreaming and environmental crime through dialogue, commitment and action.

Each grantee will be awarded a total of £12 000, payable in three instalments of £4 000 each. The use of these funds should adhere strictly to the principles of professionalism, integrity and transparency, be consistent with the plan proposed in the application, comply with the terms and conditions of the grant agreement, and be used to engage in collaborative activities with other grantees.

The following timeline outlines the structure of the Fellowship, which is designed to ensure that grantees are engaged, supported and able to contribute effectively throughout the programme and beyond.

Initial phase: July 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grantees formalize their involvement by signing an agreement with the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime and meeting their designated Resilience Fund liaison to develop their project. Begin project work, using the Resilience Fund’s communication tools for regular updates, aligned with a predetermined reporting schedule.
Ongoing phase: August–January 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Participate in tailored mentorship sessions, as identified in collaboration with the liaison. Attend a retreat in Vienna to engage in global policy dialogue. Participate in Resilience Dialogues to share ideas and experiences with peers, and explore collaboration opportunities related to the theme. Attend targeted workshops aimed at fostering skill development and enhancing collaborative efforts among Fellows. Submit interim progress reports and financial documentation covering 50% of the budget; incorporate feedback from liaison and mentors to refine and amplify project outcomes.
Final phase: February–March 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize projects, preparing comprehensive reports and financial statements for the remaining budget allocation. Share projects, outcomes and learnings in a culminating meeting or public forum, contributing to the collective knowledge and impact. Receive feedback on overall performance and contributions to the Fellowship’s objectives.
Post-Fellowship engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Join the Resilience Fund Community Platform for ongoing peer support, mentorship and engagement opportunities. Continue to advocate for the principles and goals in combating organized crime, leveraging the network and experiences gained through the Fellowship.

How to apply

Candidates should submit an application through the [online form](#).

If you experience technical difficulties in uploading your application or if you have any questions, please contact: fellowship@globalinitiative.net. Applications received by email will be redirected to the online form.

Key dates

3 June 2024	Call for applications for the Women’s Fellowship opens, inviting candidates to apply.
14 June 2024	Call for applications closes and the Resilience Fund team begins reviewing all submitted applications.
27 June 2024	Shortlisted candidates are invited to online interviews.
2 July 2024	Final applications are reviewed by a committee and the status of applications is communicated to applicants. Unsuccessful applicants are notified by email.
8 July 2024	Selected candidates are informed of the next steps involved in the process. Unsuccessful candidates are notified by email.

About the Resilience Fund

The Resilience Fellowship is part of the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime's flagship [Resilience Fund](#), which provides grants and support to civil society individuals and organizations working to counter the effects of criminal governance and violence around the world. Established with a grant from the Government of Norway, the Resilience Fund is also supported by the governments of Germany, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States and New Zealand, and works in partnership with international organizations and NGOs worldwide.

This project is funded with UK aid from the UK government.

