



Frontier
Incubators

ASIA **WOMEN**
IMPACT FUND

Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration Toolkit

Supporting intermediaries to be
more inclusive of all genders.



Australian
Aid 

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About

Who Created The Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration (GLIA) Toolkit ?

The creation of the GLIA toolkit was a truly collaborative effort.

This toolkit is the result of a 12-month collaboration between the Sasakawa Peace Foundation's Asia Women Impact Fund, and Frontier Incubators.



The Sasakawa Peace Foundation (SPF) aims to promote prosperity and foster a healthy international society, contributing to the furtherance of world peace.



The Asia Women Impact Fund is an initiative launched by the Sasakawa Peace Foundation in 2017 to advance women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, gender lens investing and gender equality in the region.



Frontier Incubators is a capacity building program for incubators and accelerators with an impact focus working in Southeast Asia.



Australian Government
Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade



Frontier Incubators is part of the Scaling Frontier Innovation program, an initiative of the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, which supports social enterprises to scale their development impact in the Indo-Pacific region. The Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration (GLIA) Toolkit was delivered by a consortia of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation, ygap, Conveners.org and SecondMuse.



ygap is an International Development not-for-profit with an innovative approach to poverty alleviation.



Conveners.org recognises the transformative power that convening, when done right, has to positively change the world.



SecondMuse builds economies of the future in collaboration with visionary cities, countries, nonprofits and startups.

Pilot Program

The GLIA toolkit was extensively piloted by incubator and accelerator partners to refine, validate and contextualise the guidelines, frameworks and recommendations for Southeast Asia. They share their practical experiences of using the toolkit through real-world case studies that can be found throughout the GLIA toolkit.



Philippines
xchange.ph

xchange is an impact investor and incubator in early-stage social enterprises in the Philippines. Through their work, they aim to multiply the change that social enterprises achieve, by helping them reach sustainability and scale in the shortest possible time.



Cambodia
sheinvestments.com

SHE Investments is a social enterprise that designs and delivers the first and only gender-focused and culturally tailored business incubator and accelerator programs for women in Cambodia.



Myanmar
onow.org

ONOW runs an incubator for domestic migrant women in Myanmar. Their incubator is designed to quickly build basic skills in financial capabilities and digital literacy through a tech-enabled approach, and follows a cohort model for moving their entrepreneurs through ideation, market research, and business modelling.



Myanmar
phandeeyar.org

Phandeeyar aims to harness technology to accelerate change in Myanmar. Our team specifically work to accelerate the growth of startups in Myanmar, and expand the pool of tech and creative talents.



Indonesia
instellar.id

Instellar aims to accelerate social innovation in organisations, and work together towards scalable and sustainable social impact through incubation, advisory, and investment in mission-driven companies.



Cambodia
agiledg.com

Agile Development Group is a disability enterprise development agency that creates innovative solutions and economic opportunities for people with disabilities (PwDs) to increase their inclusion, freedom and independence.

Contents

Introduction

In this section, we discuss what this toolkit is all about, we explore the importance and benefits of considering gender within our work, and provide useful tips for how to get started.

WELCOME 02.

GENDER & SUSTAINABILITY 04.

HOW TO USE 10.

Organisation

In this section, we discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to three key areas of your organisation. These areas are important because they encompass how decisions are made and how work is done within your organisation.

BOARD 16.

TEAM 19.

CULTURE 22.

Program

In this section, we discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to the lifecycle of your accelerator or incubator program. Considering gender within all of these areas is important to ensure that you can not only attract the best gender diverse talent, but are also able to deliver your program(s) in the most effective way in order to ensure maximum likelihood of success for these entrepreneurs and their ventures, and therefore your program.

RECRUITMENT 28.

SELECTION 34.

PROGRAM DESIGN 36.

PROGRAM DELIVERY 39.

OTHER SUPPORT 44.

Ecosystem

In this section, we discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to the role that you play within your region's entrepreneurial ecosystem, and how you might use your unique position of power to influence positive, inclusive.

MENTORS 49.

FUNDERS/INVESTORS 51.

GOVERNMENT 53.

Appendix

CASE STUDIES 56.

FRAMEWORK 73.

EXAMPLES 84.

ABOUT 101.

RESEARCH 102.

EXERCISE SHEET 103.

References

REFERENCES 109.



Introduction

The Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration (GLIA) toolkit is an interactive resource, to guide accelerators and incubators (or ‘intermediaries’) through the journey of uncovering how our activities impact, and are experienced by, different gendered groups. This toolkit will equip us as intermediaries with the mindset, strategies, and frameworks to amend and improve both our organisation and program to increase accessibility and inclusivity of our work by all genders.

Welcome

Gender & Sustainability

How to Use

Welcome to the Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration toolkit.

The Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration (GLIA) toolkit is an interactive resource, to guide accelerators and incubators (or 'intermediaries') through the journey of uncovering how our activities impact, and are experienced by, different gendered groups. This toolkit will equip us as intermediaries with the mindset, strategies, and frameworks to amend and improve both our organisation and program to increase accessibility and inclusivity of our work by all genders.

As intermediaries, we work directly and deeply with entrepreneurs as well as the ecosystem that supports them. In doing so, we are in a unique position of power. We have the opportunity to drive and influence gender-equitable change by identifying and solving for disparities and gaps that exist between people of different genders. This can be done using two distinct approaches:



Watch our introduction video

PLAY VIDEO

01.

DIRECTLY

By creating equal access to our programs and organisations to all genders, and fostering an inclusive environment that responds to their needs and unlocks their skills, experience, and potential.

02.

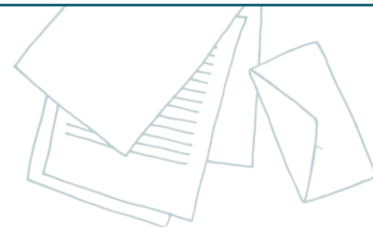
INDIRECTLY

By influencing the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem in our respective regions to consider gender within their activities, whether it's our government's policies or our investors' investment theses, to promote larger-scale change.



PRACTICAL TIP

By using a combination of both direct and indirect approaches, we will be able to increase participation of all genders within our work, helping us to better meet our desired business and impact outcomes, and unlocking greater potential for all entrepreneurs (see Gender and Sustainability section for further details).



The Gender Lens Incubation and Acceleration (GLIA) toolkit can help us as intermediaries to gain a better understanding of:



Our Organisation

How to make our organisational culture, structure and operations more inclusive to all genders.



Our Program

How to design our incubator and accelerator programs so that they benefit, and generate value from, people of all genders.



Our Ecosystem

How we can play a more active role in supporting and advocating for people of all genders in the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

While social entrepreneurship was the focus of the program in which this toolkit was developed, the resource is appropriate for any organisation running incubation or acceleration programs or acting as an intermediary for entrepreneurs. Much of the material is relevant to any organisation.

Gender and Sustainability

There are several important reasons to strive for gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity within our organisations, programs, and ecosystems. Intermediaries that are inclusive and diverse will be better equipped to attract and retain talent, design quality programs, innovate, respond to risk, and capitalise on new opportunities. The compounded effect of improving

resilience across these factors will result in significant additional benefits to our employees, entrepreneurs, investors, and ecosystem. Achieving gender equality also constitutes a fundamental human right, and is essential to achieving sustainable development, vibrant economies, and peaceful societies more broadly.

The impact of applying a gender lens to our organisations

Within our organisations, evidence shows that achieving gender equality, diversity and inclusivity can help us:

Better understand our customers

As an intermediary, it can help us to better understand our entrepreneurs and investors' evolving needs. This can help us to create and deliver better programs and services that support entrepreneurs of all genders, and in doing so, create a more diverse investment pipeline for our investors. Applying a gender lens to the product development process can also help design more effectively for a broader group of end customers.¹

Make better decisions

Different genders have different attitudes towards risk, so if our decision-makers (e.g. board and leadership team) are gender diverse across our organisation and programs, this can lead to a more balanced decision-making process.²

Perform better, financially^{3, 4}

Be more competitive and innovative

Different genders experience the world differently and therefore, have different views and ideas.⁵

Attract, select, and retain talent⁶

Attract more funding

Gender Lens Investing (GLI) mandated investments globally increased from \$100M to \$2.4 billion between 2014 and 2018.⁷

The impact of applying a gender lens to our programs

Within our programs, applying a gender lens can help us increase the accessibility of our programs to all genders, and it can also increase the effectiveness and value of the program(s) that we deliver. Through this, we can increase the gender diversity of the entrepreneurs

we serve and better support them, thus increasing their chances of achieving venture growth (impact and revenue) and sustainability. Within our programs, achieving gender equality, diversity and inclusivity can help us:

Increase innovation

Women remain an underrepresented group within the entrepreneurial space, yet women entrepreneurs are 5% more likely than men to be innovative in their businesses.⁸

Generate higher economic returns

Women-led startups that are venture-backed were also found to be less likely to fail, used less capital, and had 12 percent higher annual revenues than those led by men in a study conducted in the US in 2009.⁹

Investing in women also brings higher non-economic returns than investing in men, as women are more likely to reinvest their success into their children's education, health, and nutrition compared to male entrepreneurs.¹⁰

The impact of applying a gender lens to our ecosystems

We as intermediaries have a unique power and ability to influence other players in the ecosystem around us, who play a key role in supporting the success of entrepreneurs. We can influence these players to consider and implement gender-inclusive practices, which will compound and accelerate the positive impacts of our work. Within our ecosystems, achieving gender equality, diversity and inclusivity can help us:

Reduce income disparity

Research has shown that Asia and the Pacific could increase per capita income by 70% within approximately two generations by eliminating gender disparities in employment, including in the entrepreneurship space.¹¹

Increase social equity and contribute to sustainable development

Where inequalities between women and men exist, it is generally women who have less access to and control over resources, opportunities, and decision making.¹²

In spite of this evidence, and the understanding we now have of the critical role women play in economic, environmental, and social development, women remain overrepresented in informal and vulnerable employment, and sectors with low-profitability. They face financial barriers, as securing credit is more difficult, together with legal and policy barriers, and often discrimination. And yet, evidence shows that women's access to better education and employment opportunities is key to economic growth and sustainable development.

Increase resilience against both major financial and environmental crises

Increase resilience against both major financial and environmental crises: Economies characterised by high numbers of women entrepreneurs are more resilient to financial crises and experience economic slowdowns less frequently.¹³

GLOSSARY OF KEY TERMS

We acknowledge that words and concepts can mean different things to different people around the world. The definitions listed here have been created from a predominantly Western and privileged perspective and are intended as a starting point to reference and build on. We encourage the readers of this toolkit to define gender and the ideas surrounding it in a way that makes sense to you and the contexts that you live and work in. The following are examples that may or may not apply directly or indirectly to you and your work. You will likely have your own interpretation based on your culture, country, religion etc.

Gender

Definition

Refers to the socially constructed characteristics of women and men – such as norms, roles and relationships of and between groups of women and men. It varies from society to society and can be changed. The concept of gender includes five important elements: relational, hierarchical, historical, contextual and institutional. While most people are born either male or female, they are taught appropriate norms and behaviours – including how they should interact with others of the same or opposite sex within households, communities and work places. When individuals or groups do not “fit” established gender norms they often face stigma, discriminatory practices or social exclusion – all of which adversely affect health.¹⁴

Example

In some contexts, women are expected to dress, act, and speak a certain way. They are often expected to perform hours of unpaid labour (taking care of children and the elderly, cleaning, cooking, etc.). On the other hand, men are also expected to ‘be’ a certain way. In a lot of societies, they are expected to be strong, confident, and aggressive. This is important in the social entrepreneurship space because the social constructs and cultural beliefs associated with being a man or a woman can influence decision making. For example, an investor may decide to invest in a venture led by a man rather than a woman simply because he or she perceives him as more capable based on the characteristics associated with being a man in society (e.g. confidence).

Bias

Definition

Prejudice, preference, predisposition or inclination towards or against one thing, person or group relative to others, often based on prevailing stereotypes.¹⁵

These biases are often unconscious, they are learned, deeply ingrained and automatic. And they can influence behaviour. In the case of gender biases, they can influence judgment and lead to the unfair treatment of certain gender groups.

Example

A common example of gender bias in the entrepreneurship space is investors perceiving women as less capable entrepreneurs because of their role as mothers, carers, and homemakers within society. This can influence their decision of to whom funding is allocated.

Men can also experience bias. For example, a man who decides he wants to be the primary caretaker of his children and have a flexible work arrangement may not be perceived as equally competent and ambitious as his male colleagues.

Gender Equality

Definition

The practice of ensuring equal treatment of all people, no matter their gender.

It refers to the state of being equal, especially in status, rights, or opportunities. Equality between genders is seen as both a human rights issue and as a precondition for, and indicator of, sustainable, people-centred development. Equality does not equate with sameness.¹⁶

Example

All genders getting paid the same for performing the same work within your organisation, as well as getting access to the same career advancement opportunities. For entrepreneurs, it can be having equal opportunity to raise funding and build their enterprises, regardless of their gender.

Gender Equity

Definition

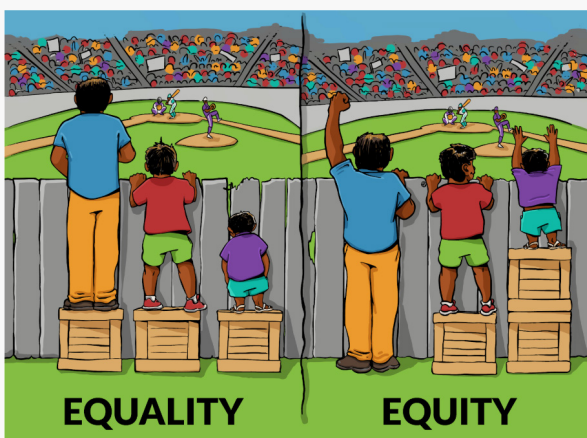
Fairness of treatment for all genders, according to their respective needs.

It can include initiatives that are different for different genders, but that allow for opportunities and benefits to be distributed fairly according to each gender's needs (as per picture below). In doing so, gender equity initiatives look to challenge a system where opportunities and rights are still not evenly and fairly distributed between all genders today.

Example

Although you may decide to exercise gender equality by treating all your staff and entrepreneurs the same, regardless of gender, this may still not lead to optimal outcomes given they may not all be starting from the same place and need the same help to get to the same outcome.

You may decide to provide equal access to an advanced finance workshop for all entrepreneurs to help them raise funding. However, it may be that women in your program have not had the same access to financial literacy training at school so you may need to offer beginner and intermediate courses as well.



Source: [Interaction Institute for Social Change¹⁷](#)

Artist: [Angus Maguire](#)

Gender Lens

Definition

The deliberate 'application' of a lens - seeing something through the eyes of a woman and then seeing the same thing through the eyes of a man.

By applying the lens, it reveals how your activities may be experienced by different gendered groups.

Applying a gender lens may reveal that your activities advantage certain gender groups, whilst disadvantaging others.

Example

For example, when recruiting entrepreneurs, are you using language, visuals, or channels that appeal to one gender more than another?

Applying a gender lens is being deliberate about asking these types of questions, then doing research to uncover what is causing these gender-related problems, and then developing strategies to address these to ensure that your program is accessible and inclusive of all genders.

Gender Lens Investing

Definition

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.

[Criterion Institute - Key Concepts in Gender](#)

Intermediary

Definition

In the social enterprise context, an intermediary is an incubator and/or accelerator providing time-limited programs that work with "cohorts" or "classes" of enterprises to provide mentorship and training. These programs often have a special emphasis on connecting early-stage enterprises with investment.

Example

Intermediaries have the power to disrupt negative power dynamics by applying a gender lens across their work. Intermediaries are in a very unique position as they support the enterprise while connecting them to the wider ecosystem. They can influence positive change across multiple players within the social entrepreneurship ecosystem.

Intersectionality

Definition

How other factors like ethnicity, socio-economic status, or religion can limit or compound the experiences of advantage or oppression for different gender groups.

Example

A female entrepreneur does not attract as much funding as a male entrepreneur. If that female is a woman of colour, has a form of disability, or is of a particular religion - this compounds the disadvantage that this female entrepreneur faces compared to their male counterpart.

Power Dynamics

Definition

Power is the capacity to control or influence the behaviour of others.

Gendered power dynamics are how people from different gendered groups interact with each other, where one gender has more power than the other.

Power is often very gendered and it is common for one gender to hold significant power over other gendered groups in a particular context.

Power dynamics play a key role in society, with those who hold the power often being the ones who make or heavily influence decisions.

Example

In the entrepreneurship space, investors and funders, often who are predominantly men, hold a lot of power. They can decide what enterprises and projects receive funding. However, the local entrepreneurs operating within broken systems are often better placed to know where the funding should be allocated as they have a deeper understanding of solutions to the local issues.

It is also important to consider the power dynamics that exist within communities and families (e.g. increasing income of a female in a home can lead to the man feeling disempowered resulting in increased domestic violence or familial tensions).

Privilege

Definition

The advantage, opportunity and/or benefit that a group has over another because of their identity.

This can be related to gender, wealth, race, caste, education levels, skin colour, class etc.

Example

In the social entrepreneurship space, intermediaries can 'privilege' some entrepreneurs if their application process is in English. This means that entrepreneurs that do not speak English cannot apply even if their venture is strong.

How to use this toolkit

This toolkit was created for intermediaries who want to apply a gender lens to their work. It aims to provide a mindset, framework, and blueprint, rather than a step-by-step guide; helping you to ask the right questions rather than giving you the right answers. We have done this intentionally, to create a space for you and your team to explore, innovate, and contextualise the content.



Watch our
introduction video

PLAY VIDEO



Things to consider when using the toolkit

01. LEAN APPROACH

Lean approach: for the best outcomes, we recommend using a lean and experimental approach for applying any of the strategies provided within this toolkit, or testing any other strategies you create to address gender-related issues.

02. TIME CONSIDERATION

Applying a gender lens requires deliberate effort to view the world through a different lens, and the result of its application often requires behavioural change, and both can take time.

03. CONSIDER EXTERNALITIES AND

UNINTENDED CONSEQUENCES

Interventions regarding gender are often fraught with unintended consequences. By taking an iterative approach you can catch any unintended negative consequences and adjust, before doing greater harm.

04. DEEP CONSIDERATION OF BIASES

It requires asking questions to better understand your own biases, those of others around you and those that may be triggered by the processes and systems you work with.

How should I get started?

You can decide what path you want to follow:



Take it Offline

Choose to read this toolkit from cover to cover.



Content Map

Select a specific area on the content map and jump straight into that section.



Self Diagnosis Tool

Use the self diagnosis tool on page 15 to identify specific opportunities for you to make your work more accessible and inclusive of all genders.



Interactive Toolkit

If data allows, use the online, interactive version of the toolkit.

We have included tips, frameworks, examples and case studies for you and your team throughout to support your gender lens application journey.

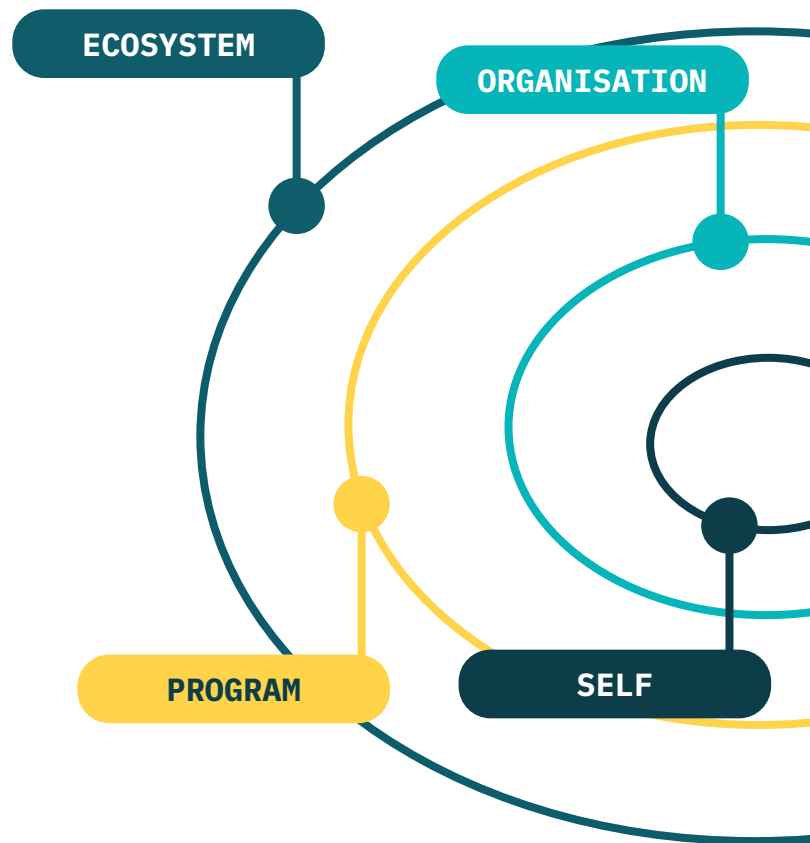
What this toolkit does:

In this toolkit, we explore three key areas where, as intermediaries, we can apply a gender lens to promote and drive gender-equitable change. These include our organisation, our program/s, and our engagement with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem.

This toolkit allows you to choose the issues you want to address within these areas, and select and implement strategies according to your context and available resources. The toolkit isn't designed to impose unrealistic conditions on you or your organisation but rather, to meet you where you are and provide realistic solutions for you to test and explore.

What this toolkit does not cover:

This toolkit does not look deeply into power, bias, and privilege and how it relates to you as an individual. The reason for this is not for its lack of importance. Being aware of your own power, privilege, and biases is a crucial part of being able to understand the negative power dynamics at play within your context and in developing the right mindset for you to apply a gender lens. This is however, not covered as part of this toolkit as other resources exist that provide an in-depth and thorough examination of these topics.



This toolkit was developed with the following considerations in mind:

Context is important

When we consider gender, it is very unlikely that there will be a one size fits all approach. Gender-related issues and challenges will vary depending on geography, culture, race, ethnicity, political stability, education levels, and more, so it is very important to contextualise the information in this toolkit, experiment, measure, and determine what works for you. It is also important to consider intersectionality and how different factors can compound the effects of disadvantage.

Diversity and inclusion is broader than gender

When thinking about how diversity can improve the business and social impact outcomes of your organisation and work, we encourage you to think about diversity and inclusion beyond gender and consider all the factors that make us unique, and can create a rich, innovative, and productive environment. In addition to gender, this includes factors like race, background, culture, personality, disability-level, religion, age, etc. Whilst acknowledging the importance of considering all of these factors, this toolkit will focus specifically on gender diversity and inclusion in order to fill a gap in the existing resources that are available for intermediaries, and to enable us to provide more targeted and practical strategies, frameworks, and examples.

Gender is not binary

Women and men are not the only two gender identities that exist, and with which people identify. This is reflected throughout this toolkit, where we provide strategies and frameworks that can be applied to consider the needs of all gender groups. However, most of our research, examples, and case studies will focus on the disparities and gaps that exist between men and women in the entrepreneurship space, given that women are still the major underrepresented group.

This is the first toolkit of its kind

It has been developed for intermediaries in the social impact space. As these ecosystems rapidly change, it is important to note that this toolkit is likely to be a 'Version 1' of several as we respond to the needs of the wider ecosystem as it evolves.

SELF DIAGNOSIS



SELF DIAGNOSIS TOOL

The objective of this tool is to help you as an intermediary get a snapshot of how you are currently considering gender when it comes to your organisation, program and ecosystem. It can help you identify specific opportunities to make your work more accessible and inclusive of all genders. It can also inform how you choose to approach the toolkit.

The objective of this tool is to help an intermediary understand some key elements within their organisation, program and ecosystem where power dynamics may exist that disadvantage some gendered groups. It is a first step and the intent is to use this to determine if you have considered or implemented particular thinking and actions. Following on from this, the GLIA toolkit can identify strategies to help establish some deeper work around applying a gender lens across your operations

Is this true for you?
YES **NO**
 This is true for us We're not there yet

If you answered NO, how would you best describe your current situation

Not started	In progress	Already in practice
We have never considered this or we have considered it but haven't had the capacity to address it	We have considered this and have started taking steps to address it	We are being deliberate and have established systems/processes/policies in place

In our organisation...

- All genders are equally represented in decision making positions.
- We have a culture that embraces gender diversity and inclusion.
- Our commitment to gender equality and diversity is clear to everyone both internally and externally.
- We have processes in place to ensure no one is discriminated against during our recruitment and selection processes (e.g. gender neutral position descriptions, gender diverse selection panel)
- Procedures and practices are in place to ensure our work environment is free of gender-based discrimination, violence, harassment.
- Our staff is provided with the skills and knowledge to recognise and address gender-related issues within their role.

Is this true for you?	YES	NO
1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered NO, how would you best describe your current situation		
Not started	In progress	Already in practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In our accelerator and/or incubator program...

Note: some of these statements may not apply to you if you are running a gender-specific program. However you can still consider them for other non-gender specific products/services your organisation delivers

- All genders are equally represented amongst the founders of the enterprises we support.
- Our marketing and communications are inclusive of all genders.
- We have processes in place to ensure no founder is discriminated against due to their gender during our application and selection processes.
- We have designed our curriculum to create equal value for all genders and be inclusive of all genders, including delivering gender-related sessions (e.g. gender-based violence, confidence training) where necessary.
- All genders are equally represented amongst our staff, facilitators and mentors. They are all provided with the skills and knowledge to recognise and address gender-related issues within their role.

Is this true for you?	YES	NO
7	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered NO, how would you best describe your current situation		
Not started	In progress	Already in practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In our engagements with the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem...

- We understand that power dynamics may influence the investor/entrepreneur relationship and play an active role to create more equitable decisions and create access to funding for all founders based on the merits of their venture and remove any bias in relation to the gender of the founder
- We are aware of how funders may have the ability to influence the work that we do as an intermediary, and use that knowledge to ensure we remove bias where possible to better inform our funding decisions.

Is this true for you?	YES	NO
12	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you answered NO, how would you best describe your current situation		
Not started	In progress	Already in practice
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

[ACCESS HERE](#)



Organisation

In this section, we will discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to three key areas of your organisation.



Board

Team

Culture

Organisation

In this section, we will discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to three key areas of your organisation: your board, your team, and your organisational culture. These areas are important because they encompass how decisions are made and how work is done within your organisation. Addressing gender within these areas, therefore, has the potential to create significant impact.

PURPOSE

To help establish an awareness and understanding of gender diversity, equality and inclusion at all levels of your organisation, and to take steps towards a more equal distribution of power amongst your employees.

OUTCOMES

- Equal and diverse gender representation on your Board, with established processes that are inclusive and consider the needs of all genders.
- A gender diverse team, where power is equally distributed between all gender groups.
- A culture where embracing, promoting, and leveraging gender diversity is 'how things are done'.

Board

Boards are committees that support governance and decision making in organisations. They have two main forms: boards of directors (which are formal, provide binding advice, and have fiduciary responsibilities) and advisory boards (which are informal groups selected by leadership that provide non-binding advice). Both can be valuable, however, you may not have either. If that's the case, consider how you can ensure that you get a diversity of thought from the individuals or groups of individuals you turn to for advice. These may be community leaders, personal mentors, etc.

Board Composition

Description

To meet your organisation's constantly evolving advisory, governance, management, risk, and fiduciary obligations, your board (whether advisory or management) should have a mix of skills, experience, and perspectives.

Why it Matters

Diverse representation ensures a range of experiences, attitudes, perspectives, skills, and frames of reference are brought to the table. This can make for more thought-provoking discussions, and enable your board to provide you with better support in terms of decisions, innovation, etc.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your Board lacks gender diversity.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Equal and diverse gender representation on the board.



REFLECTION

How do we attract and create a gender diverse board consisting of people who have the right profile of skills, experience, and backgrounds?

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a Gender Diversity Policy and include it in relevant Board documents.
[Example 1: Gender Policy](#)
2. Include the value of diversity and inclusion in the position descriptions and selection criteria for Board Candidates.
[Framework 1: Defining a value around gender](#)
3. Create a Board Matrix to identify where key skills, experience and background gaps are. Include contribution to diversity as a key requirement within the Board Matrix.
[Example 2: Board Composition Matrix](#)
4. Use quotas to mandate board composition.

EXERCISE SHEET

Board Processes

Description

The processes involved in organising and running your board include setting a time and location for board meetings, establishing procedures for discussions and decision-making, preparing the agenda, assigning the taking of minutes, etc. These processes enable your board to achieve its objectives in an effective manner.

Why it Matters

In addition to recruiting a gender diverse board, processes are needed to allow for the board to effectively leverage individual members' differing perspectives, skills, and experiences. Those processes need to take into account the needs of each member and address power imbalances, relating to gender and other factors, in order to create a well-functioning board that is greater than the sum of its parts.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your board processes can privilege certain genders and allow for power imbalances to occur.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Board processes that are inclusive and consider the needs of all genders, including board meetings that allow for all members to feel empowered to contribute, and where all voices are heard.



REFLECTION

How do we ensure that board processes do not privilege certain genders?
 How do we ensure power is balanced during board meetings? That all voices are heard?

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure the timing and location of your Board Meetings are considered carefully, and ensure meetings are equally accessible to all.
[Allow for virtual meetings and weekend meetings if conducive to contributing to inclusivity. Shorten Board Meetings to allow for discussions over email/chat and meet only to discuss those things that are not resolved.](#)
2. Ensure gender of Board Chair is altered regularly. Consider having two Board Chairpersons who alternate each Board Meeting.
3. Ensure that administrative duties/minute taking is rotated or delegated to a specific role.
4. Ensure that the Board Chair & Agenda invite all members to speak equally at all Board Meetings.
[Have a 'mantra' or statement at the start to invite all speakers and allow for calling out others: e.g. if we notice someone is not speaking, do we have the permission to invite them to contribute?](#)
5. Create an organisational code of conduct that clearly outlines the organisation's commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion, and outlines what constitutes appropriate versus inappropriate Board Member behaviour.
[Example 3: Organisational code of conduct](#)

EXERCISE SHEET

Team

Within accelerators and incubators, “team” refers to a group of people working together to manage the end to end lifecycle of the program(s) the organisation delivers.

The team can vary in size, depending on the organisation, and can include a mix of part-time and full-time employees, interns, as well as contract-specific roles (e.g. entrepreneur in residence). Team members can have different levels of seniority and decision making power. The team is also in charge of creating the right conditions for entrepreneurs to reach their full potential by obtaining and facilitating support from

ecosystem stakeholders (mentors, investors, expert, partnerships, etc.). Depending on the organisation’s business model, the team can also be engaged in managing other products and services (e.g. running a coworking space, performing consulting work). The composition of your team and your recruitment process are two key areas in which you can apply a gender lens to attract and retain the best diverse talent.

Team composition

Description

A team must have the right mix of skills, abilities, experience, and backgrounds in order to achieve an organisation’s vision, mission, and goals. Power in the form of decision making and leadership positions needs to be equally distributed amongst all genders within the organisation in order to achieve the greatest outcomes.

Why it Matters

Research has shown that diverse teams lead to improved organisational performance and financial success. Striving for a diverse team also sends a message to your employees, the entrepreneurs you support and the ecosystem in which you work - you can set an example. Having a gender diverse team can increase your insight into the needs and motivations of the entrepreneurs you’re supporting, and inform the development of your programs in order to attract and cater to all genders. It is especially important for your leadership team to be gender diverse, so that bias can be reduced when key decisions are being made.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your team lacks gender diversity or your team may be gender diverse, however, key decision-makers and leaders remain predominantly of one gender.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

A gender diverse team, where power is equally distributed between all gender groups.



REFLECTION

What is the gender makeup of our team?
 What is the gender makeup of our leadership team? What percentage of our key decision-makers are women? What percentage of people in leadership positions are women?
 Whose voices are heard in the decision-making process?



STRATEGIES

1. Develop a Gender Diversity Policy for your organisation and make it public.

[Example 1: Gender Policy](#)

2. Analyse your team's composition, including the distribution of gender amongst key decision-makers, and take into account whose voices are being heard in the decision-making process. Based on this analysis, put strategies in place to achieve a gender-balanced team. These can include using quotas to mandate a gender diverse team or adapting your team recruitment process.
3. Ensure monthly or quarterly reporting internally and externally looking at the gender makeup of the organisation in terms of staff numbers, gender makeup, and within those number of part-time vs full-time equivalents, and eventually salary distribution.

EXERCISE SHEET

Team recruitment

Description

Team recruitment involves your processes of sourcing and selecting new team members.

Why it Matters

Removing bias from your recruitment process allows for equal opportunities to be provided to all genders in terms of selection and progression, increasing the likelihood of you having and benefiting from a gender diverse team.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Unconscious bias is still present in a lot of recruitment practices. If the right processes are not put in place, bias can lead to discrimination against qualified people who identify with certain gender groups.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

An unbiased recruitment process to ensure gender parity in your team's hiring practices.



REFLECTION

How can we avoid bias when recruiting new team members? How are prospective staff marketed to, interviewed, and selected?

STRATEGIES

1. Include a statement of the value of diversity and inclusion in your position descriptions & selection criteria for staff member recruitment. Ensure your advertisements/position descriptions highlight accessibility for all genders.
[Example 4: Value statement in Job descriptions](#)
[Framework 2: writing gender-neutral, inclusive position descriptions](#)
2. Have clear quantitative metrics and qualitative metrics to ensure that bias is minimised and that the talent is recruited based on merit. This applies at all stages from when the position description is designed to when a candidate is selected through to regular performance reviews.
[Framework 3: Selection Criteria for Team Members](#)
3. Analyse your team's composition, including the distribution of gender and power, and use a deliberate approach to ensure there is diversity in the applicant talent pool, then recruit based on skills and ability.
4. Train staff who will be involved in your recruitment process on diversity awareness, recognising unconscious bias, inclusive job description writing, and inclusive recruitment.
[Example 5: Bias training](#)
5. To remove bias and make sure your processes are inclusive, perform blind selections: hide names, age, and any other identifying factors when shortlisting pre-interview stage. Strong selection criteria supports this practice.
[Framework 4: Running a Blind Selection Process](#)

EXERCISE SHEET

Culture

The culture of your organisation simply refers to the way things are done, and thought about, in your organisation.

It encompasses the values, beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes that guide people’s behaviours and contribute to the unique environment within your organisation. Each intermediary will have its own culture, in fact, even individual programs you deliver and specific cohorts can have unique cultures. The culture(s) in your organisation and your program/s can affect your ability to attract and retain effective teams, and thus can impact the program quality.

Applying a gender lens to your organisation’s values, policies, and practices, and establishing a gender committee to support ongoing efforts are key ways to foster an inclusive culture.

Values & Policies

Description

Your organisational values describe your organisation’s core principles. They underpin your organisation’s culture and inform the policies that are put in place. It is likely that if you’ve been operating for a while, your team and stakeholders will already have deeply-held values associated with your organisation, which may or may not align with your gender diversity goals.

Why it Matters

Values and policies underpin your organisation’s culture and signals your company’s serious commitment to addressing gender issues, which can help in attracting, hiring, retaining, and aligning a gender diverse team and board. It can also help in attracting diverse entrepreneurs, as well as stakeholders and supporters.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Whilst your organisation may recognise the value of gender diversity and inclusivity, it might not be recognised as a strategic priority, and may not be reflected across your organisation’s values and policies.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

To have gender diversity as one of your organisation’s top priorities and share that commitment with your team and stakeholders through your company’s values and policies.



REFLECTION

Do our company’s values and policies include our commitment to addressing gender issues?



STRATEGIES

1. Include a value around gender.
[Framework 1: Defining a value around gender](#)
2. Publicise your values on all marketing collateral.
Values should be on your website, social media platforms, and job advertisements.
3. Create contextualised policies around gender diversity, equity and inclusion. Have these accessible via your organisational code of conduct.
[Example 1: Gender Policy](#)
[Example 3: Organisational code of conduct](#)
4. Ensure all existing policies consider how they would apply to different genders.
E.g. 'maternity leave' may be better framed as 'parental leave' in order to be accessible to all genders.

EXERCISE SHEET

Culture in practice

Description

Your organisation's culture simply refers to the way things are done in and around your company. It includes your organisation's values and norms that guide people's behaviour, and is based on shared assumptions, beliefs, attitudes, and customs.

Why it Matters

Your company's culture is a large component of your diversity and inclusion effectiveness. If your culture does not support your gender diversity initiatives, then retaining diverse talent is going to be challenging. It will also make it difficult to realise the full benefits of any diversity effort, as some people may not be able to have their voices heard or contribute fully.



KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your organisational culture does not embrace gender diversity or foster inclusivity.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

A culture where embracing, promoting, and leveraging gender diversity is 'how things are done'.



REFLECTION

What might be some of the deep seated beliefs relating to gender that drive negative behaviour within our organisation?
 What can make our organisational culture more inclusive of different gender groups?

STRATEGIES

1. Provide awareness training for all team members so that they understand the organisation's commitment to fostering gender equality, diversity and inclusion. The training can also provide them with practical ways in which they can apply a gender lens to their work.

[Example 6: Awareness training](#)

2. Consider what can make your culture more inclusive.

[Framework 5: Checklist for creating an inclusive culture](#)

EXERCISE SHEET

Gender Committee

Description

A committee made up of diverse individuals from all parts and levels of your organisation that promotes conversations around, and provides recommendations on, initiatives relating to improving your gender practices.

Why it Matters

Ensuring that the conversation around gender diversity becomes part of your organisation's key priorities and that issues get identified and solved deliberately.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Gender continues to be a superficial conversation within your organisation.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Issues relating to gender are deliberately identified and addressed with support from the top of your organisation.



REFLECTION

Are issues around gender being considered deeply? Are all board members owning responsibility or are only one or two members looking at this? Do issues of gender and power get lost during crisis times? How can we make this part of the day-to-day rather than stand in isolation?

STRATEGIES

1. Create a committee or advisory board that has members from all levels of the organisation, who can address gender-related matters regularly and report this back to the organisation (Board, leadership and/or organisation-wide meetings)
2. If committees exist, ensure that there is one member of each committee considering gender when the committee is making decisions.
E.g. The finance committee should be trained around issues of gender and also have one team member who is responsible for looking at this for the committee.
3. Allocate resources and get the right gender experts to advise on this. Work together, not in isolation.

EXERCISE SHEET

CASE STUDY: XCHANGE, PHILIPPINES



xchange is an impact investor and incubator in early-stage social enterprises in the Philippines. Our mission is to assist in the emergence of the entrepreneurial impact ecosystem in the Philippines.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)

CASE STUDY: SHE (SUPPORT HER ENTERPRISE) INVESTMENTS, CAMBODIA



SHE Investments is a social enterprise that designs and delivers the first and only gender-focused and culturally tailored business incubator and accelerator programs for women in Cambodia. We support women with micro, small and growing businesses to scale, creating social and economic impact for communities. Our goal is a gender Genderthe cultural or societal expectations and stereotypes that dictate appropriate roles, behaviours, and actions associated with a particular gender.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)

CASE STUDY: OPPORTUNITIES NOW, MYANMAR



ONOW runs an incubator for domestic migrant women in Myanmar.

"We conducted a gender audit within our organisation, and analysed the gender split according to decision making versus non decision making positions, salaries and more. We realised that as an organisation we can do more to be gender equal, inclusive and diverse." – Zar Zar Oo, Finance Administrator at ONOW.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)



Program

In this section, we will discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to the lifecycle of your accelerator or incubator program.



Recruitment

Selection

Program Design

Program Delivery

Other Support

Program

In this section, we will discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to the lifecycle of your accelerator or incubator program starting with the recruitment of entrepreneurs, followed by the selection of entrepreneurs, your program design and delivery, and ending on your post-program support. Considering gender within all of these areas is important to ensure that you can not only attract the best gender diverse talent, but are also able to deliver your program(s) in the most effective way in order to ensure maximum likelihood of success for these entrepreneurs and their ventures, and therefore your program.

PURPOSE

To help establish an awareness and understanding of gender diversity, equity and inclusion as it relates to your accelerator or incubator program, and to take steps towards making your program(s) more accessible and inclusive of all genders.

OUTCOMES

- Application and selection processes that attract and are fair to all entrepreneurs, regardless of their gender
- Program design, content and delivery that are accessible and inclusive of all genders
- Program stakeholders (mentors, facilitators) who are aware of their own gender biases, and can therefore seek to minimise them

Recruitment of entrepreneurs

Recruitment is the first step of an accelerator or incubator program lifecycle. It involves initiatives to try to find and attract the best entrepreneurs to apply for the program.

It can involve a mix of marketing and advertising activities, including events (e.g. information nights, pitch competitions, one on one coaching sessions) as well as the dissemination of marketing collateral through both online and offline channels (e.g. social networks, email newsletters, partner organisations). It typically also involves an application process, which allows for

interested entrepreneurs to signal their availability and interest for the program, and communicate why they should be selected.

Applying a gender lens to your recruitment process is important in order to attract a quality gender diverse applicant pool that you can select from.

Marketing and advertising

Description

Attracting the best entrepreneurs is a powerful and consistent source of competitive advantage for accelerators and incubators, enabling you to attract more funding, build a stronger brand, and achieve your impact goals.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your program fails to attract enough female/gender diverse applicants.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Gender diversity in the applicant pool for your program.



REFLECTION

How is our program advertised? What channels are we using? Are these accessible to entrepreneurs who identify with all genders? What is contained in our marketing collateral? Is the imagery and language used attractive to the female/gender diverse entrepreneurs we are hoping to communicate with? How does our organisation's website appear? Is there gender diversity in the stories that we are telling? Is there gender diversity in the leadership team within our organisation? Are our facilitators and mentors gender diverse?

Why it Matters

Having gender diversity across your cohorts is a key way to diversify your and your investors' portfolios. When running mixed-gender programs, it also enhances the cohort's learning experience by bringing a diversity of thought as well as insights into the needs of users and customers who identify with different gendered groups. In order to select a diverse cohort, you need to ensure gender diversity first exists in your applicant pool.

STRATEGIES

1. Review and revise your marketing and advertising collateral.
[Framework 9: Reviewing Program Marketing](#)
2. Channels: ensure that the channels used to advertise your program reach different gendered groups.
If women don't have access to the internet, digital marketing will not work. However, if they can see and readily access print media, this might work better. Adapting the language used for specific channels can also increase accessibility.
Roadshows and community events: partner with organisations that service these women is a fantastic way to create pipeline into your program and to enable cross-promotion.
3. Create an Advisory Board with some of your region's best female/gender diverse entrepreneurs. This Advisory Board can not only support curriculum development, but also attract other gender diverse entrepreneurs who see them as role models and know that they have access to the region's best to support them in building their ventures.
4. If you are trying to attract more female entrepreneurs, have highly experienced female facilitators and mentors that other female entrepreneurs can relate to.
5. If you are trying to attract more female entrepreneurs, create a program specifically for female entrepreneurs, that caters to their unique needs.
ygap runs a program called yher that is designed and delivered by females for female entrepreneurs. The reason it is an all-female program is not to exclude other genders, but to create a psychologically safe space where women feel comfortable to share their personal stories, and learn from one another.

EXERCISE SHEET

Entrepreneur pipeline

Description

As intermediaries, the key goal is to support entrepreneurs to reach their full potential. An important factor for success is that your talent pipeline for your program consists of a pool of entrepreneurs who are at the right stage and the right fit to take part in your program.

Why it Matters

Having a strong, gender diverse pipeline to advertise your program is an important first step to being able to recruit and select a gender diverse cohort.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your program talent pipeline lacks gender diversity.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

A gender diverse talent pipeline for your program.



REFLECTION

What is the current gender makeup of your program talent pipeline? Is it representative of the gender diversity you wish to have in your program?

STRATEGIES

1. Develop an understanding of where the entrepreneurs in your current talent pipeline, as well as those that have been through your program, were found or found your program. Based on those insights, proactively establish relationships with organisations or community groups that allow you to diversify your talent pool.
2. Be deliberate and explicit in your marketing documentation about your intention to ensure a gender diverse pipeline.
[Framework 9: Reviewing Program Marketing](#)
3. Target your marketing so different genders can both see and access information.
[Targeted marketing online is becoming a standard practice. Offline, for a more grassroots option, equip local retailers or other service providers that women \(for example\) tend to access to be able to provide this information to them.](#)
4. Ensure that when running bootcamps/recruitment all genders are represented equally.
[If you are seeking more female entrepreneurs, be deliberate about having a female team member recruit for this. 'You can't be what you can see' - it is more likely that emerging female entrepreneurs will develop trust and be more encouraged to apply for a program if they have female role models.](#)

EXERCISE SHEET

Creating access to your program for gender diverse entrepreneurs

Description

You specifically develop your content, structure and networks in order to support enterprises that are at a certain stage of growth. This allows you to maximise the value of your program for the entrepreneurs you support. Creating access for gender diverse entrepreneurs means ensuring that those entrepreneurs are ready and at the right stage to take part in your program.

Why it Matters

Although you want to have gender diversity in your program, this shouldn't come at the cost of compromising on the quality of the enterprises that get accepted. Accepting enterprises that are not ready can negatively impact the experience of the broader cohort as well as the experience of those enterprises' founders who won't be able to fully benefit from the pace and content of your program.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Entrepreneurs from certain gender groups (e.g. females) may not be as high quality compared to their counterparts when they apply for your program, so their applications get rejected during your selection phase.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Accepting more quality, gender diverse entrepreneurs into your programs.



REFLECTION

How is our current ecosystem supporting gender diverse entrepreneurs? Do all entrepreneurs have equal access to support, resources and participation, regardless of gender? Do all genders have an equal chance of a successful outcome in our ecosystem?

STRATEGIES

1. Perform an analysis of the reasons why the ventures founded by entrepreneurs from certain gender groups may not be at the same level as others. Is it that they don't have access to the same educational opportunities? Or to the same resources?
2. Have weighted criteria to deliberately assess each venture on their merits. Consider how you are assessing your ventures. Certain factors may rate higher than others and make your program more accessible.
3. Partner with an earlier stage or pre-accelerator program. This helps to identify and nurture ventures who are at an earlier stage to enable them to develop their venture to a level where they can be accepted into a later program.
4. Create a pre-program to attract capable entrepreneurs who have the ability but need support to get their venture to the stage where your program is suitable.

EXERCISE SHEET

Application Process

Description

The application process for your program allows you to ask applicants questions in order to determine which ventures will be most suited for your program. It also allows applicants to signal their availability and interest in your program. This is generally done via an online and/or printed application form.

Why it Matters

Ensuring your application process is accessible to all entrepreneurs, regardless of their gender, is an important part of creating a gender diverse applicant pool to select from.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your application process privileges certain gender groups over others.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

All entrepreneurs, regardless of their gender, have an equal opportunity to apply for your program.



REFLECTION

Is our application process preventing gender diverse entrepreneurs from applying to the program? Does our application form require access to technology? And if so, do all our target entrepreneurs have access to this?

STRATEGIES

1. Identify what the best form of application is for different genders within the community/region.
Provide tailored or a variety of modes of application if needed e.g. providing application forms at a local shop if this makes applying more accessible to female entrepreneurs.
2. Partner with alumni and community groups to activate different communities/groups who work with the gender(s) you are trying to attract.
3. Create space and advertise that your team is available to work with interested entrepreneurs to complete their application form, if required.
E.g. an office-hour type set up or during in-field visits
4. Explicitly state on your program advertisements that you are recruiting people of all genders and/or that the organisation is gender inclusive and/or open to applications from minorities etc. to promote the people you are trying to attract to act.¹⁸
5. Ensure your application form is accessible to all genders by reviewing language used, information requested, etc.

EXERCISE SHEET

Selection of entrepreneurs

Once interested entrepreneurs have applied for your program, your selection process begins. For most accelerators, this involves selecting a cohort of entrepreneurs to take part in their next program. For incubators, depending on the structure of the program, it can also be an ongoing process that happens throughout the year as individual ventures apply. The selection process tends to involve a series of events including reviewing online or printed applications, conducting interviews and doing a final selection event. Although the team is heavily involved in defining and applying the selection criteria, accelerators and incubators can also involve other stakeholders in the decision-making process (e.g. mentors, funders, partners).

Applying a gender lens to your selection process is important in order to ensure that your processes allow for all entrepreneurs, regardless of their gender, to have an equal opportunity to get selected.

Selection Process

Description

The process by which you select the ventures/entrepreneurs who will take part in your program. Although every intermediary designs their own selection process, it tends to involve a series of events including reviewing online or printed applications, conducting interviews and doing a final selection event. Selection criteria and a selection panel are often involved.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

A biased selection process where an entrepreneur from a certain gender group is much more likely to get selected than one from another gender group.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Unbiased selection process where all genders have an equal opportunity to be selected into your program.

Why it Matters

Achieving gender diversity in your applicant pool may not lead to a gender diverse cohort if your selection process advantages certain gender groups over others. It is important to become aware of, and mitigate, any unconscious biases that may be present when shortlisting and selecting entrepreneurs.



REFLECTION

Do our existing selection processes advantage certain gender groups? What may be some of our unconscious biases relating to gender and entrepreneurship? What are the assumptions of our selection panel relating to what makes a great entrepreneur?



STRATEGIES

1. Review your selection criteria and ensure that it does not favour one gender over another.
[Framework 6: Selection criteria for entrepreneurs](#)
2. Ensure there is gender diversity on your selection panel, and that everyone's voices can be heard and are listened to.
3. To remove bias and make sure processes are inclusive, perform blind selections: hide names, age and any other identifying factors when shortlisting pre-interview stage.
[Framework7: Running a Blind Selection Process for entrepreneurs](#)
4. Review your interview questions and processes to ensure it provides an equal opportunity for all genders to access and perform.
[Framework 8: Reviewing interview questions and processes](#)

EXERCISE SHEET

Program Design

The program is the accelerator or incubator's key product or service. Although it can vary in design, it tends to involve a mix of education, mentorship, networking and direct or indirect financing opportunities. How these components are delivered can also differ depending on the organisation, with programs varying in duration, structure and mode of delivery.

Ensuring all entrepreneurs, regardless of gender, have an equal opportunity to access and engage with your program, is key to your organisation's ability to impact the growth of your entrepreneurs and therefore to you achieving your business and social impact outcomes.

Program Location & Logistics

Description

Accelerator and incubator programs can vary in duration and in how they deliver value to, and what they expect from, their entrepreneurs. Yours might be six months in duration and primarily online, whilst others might include a mix of face-to-face and remote sessions over a 12 months period.

Why it Matters

Your program location and logistics can be key inhibiting factors for applicants from particular gendered groups. If we consider females, often it is the female who is the primary caregiver to young children as well as aging family members. A program that requires time away, evening sessions, overnight stay, significant travel, may prevent these females from applying.

In addition, founders from certain gendered groups may experience higher levels of discrimination and harassment and may have faced violence themselves. A location that requires travel at night or an overnight stay may create an environment that feels unsafe for them and prevent them from applying.

Costs to attend a program, either travel or participation costs, may prevent certain gendered groups from applying if, in their community, they do not own or control the financial decisions.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Your program's location and associated logistics make it inaccessible to certain gender groups.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Your program location and logistics do not privilege certain gendered groups. Your program location and logistics make it accessible for all applicants regardless of gender.



REFLECTION

Are the location and logistics of our program privileging some gendered groups over others? E.g. if we hold sessions in the evenings, are men favoured over women who may have primary care duties, and need to take care of their children and other family and community members at that time?



STRATEGIES

1. Be deliberate about understanding the competing demands on your entrepreneurs' time in your region that may affect their ability to engage with your program. You can do this by asking current and future entrepreneurs (e.g. hold events and ask attendees, use surveys, partner with relevant/pipeline organisations and collaborate with them to define needs). Re-design your program, or create alternative programs and structured support, to cater to these needs.

E.g. If many have young families, ensure the structure of your program allows for them to take care of their family duties as well as attend the program. This could include:

- Providing access to childcare or feeding facilities in the office
- Not scheduling events at a time that clashes with family duties (e.g cooking dinner and taking care of children after school) Case study: Phandeeyar .

2. Consider the location of your program, and what could make it more accessible to all entrepreneurs, regardless of gender.

E.g. you could consider having a roaming program that changes location within or between programs, or if internet is accessible, having an online program.

EXERCISE SHEET

Program content

Description

The content of your accelerator or incubator program can vary depending on your focus as an organisation, and the ventures and entrepreneurs you support. In general, it tends to include a mix of workshops, masterclasses and other resources. The content can be created and delivered by different stakeholders, including the accelerator team, mentors, subject matter experts, etc.

Why it Matters

For entrepreneurs to be effectively supported, content of your program must be able to be received and understood. Otherwise, the potential for the venture to build capacity through your program is diminished.

STRATEGIES

1. Work with your entrepreneurs to understand their level of technical ability so you can cater your program content accordingly.
[Test different examples to explain concepts, and see what are the ones that resonate with different entrepreneurs, allowing them to apply the content to their ventures.](#)
2. Ensure that robust templates and frameworks are available for entrepreneurs to work through at their own pace, and test them with the entrepreneurs to understand whether they are having the desired outcomes. Also, ensure program content and supporting materials are able to be used by all entrepreneurs (language and format).
3. Include content to address gender and power issues within the curriculum.
[Example 8: Curriculum content](#)

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Entrepreneurs from different gendered backgrounds may differ in the way that they are able to receive, learn and apply information. This could be due to a number of causes, one being that they did not get access to the same educational or venture support opportunities prior to entering the program, and therefore may have different needs when it comes to content (language, level of literacy, vocabulary, format, etc.).

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Your curriculum content is powerful and enabling for all participants regardless of gender.



REFLECTION

What level of education/support do entrepreneurs have when entering our program? Have we reviewed our curriculum to ensure it can be understood by all participants? Is there space for us to create parallel programs or different options or examples to enable better learning? Does our curriculum content privilege different gendered groups? Is the language used suitable?

EXERCISE SHEET

Program Delivery

The way a program gets delivered can vary from one accelerator or incubator to another, but tends to include a mix of content, mentorship and advice being delivered by people (experts, facilitators, mentors, etc.) using various formats (masterclasses, formal events, workshops, one on one sessions, etc.).

In addition to having a great program design, it is important to apply a gender lens to the delivery of your program to ensure that the way it is being delivered, as well as the people who are delivering it, are creating a safe space that is conducive to learning and performing for all entrepreneurs regardless of gender.

Content delivery

Description

Your program content can be delivered by different people (experts, facilitators, mentors, etc.) in different formats (masterclasses, formal events, workshops, one on one sessions, etc.) through different channels (online, face-to-face, etc).

Why it Matters

The way your program is delivered can greatly privilege some gender groups while disadvantaging others. It is important to create a safe and inclusive learning space for all entrepreneurs, to ensure everyone has an equal opportunity to engage with the content being delivered.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Certain ways of delivering content can negatively affect your entrepreneurs' ability to access, engage with and/or receive the information being communicated.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Your program delivery supports all founders, regardless of gender.



REFLECTION

Who is delivering our program content? Are they helping in creating an inclusive space? Are our facilitators diverse? How can we be more inclusive during program delivery? How can we ensure that all voices in the room are heard? And that everyone feels comfortable to contribute? Is there a perceived power dynamic between facilitators and entrepreneurs? Does delivery exclude certain founders?

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure there is diversity in the people who are delivering your program content.
E.g. if you have female entrepreneurs, ensure there are strong female facilitators who can not only deliver technical content, but also understand where the entrepreneur is coming from. This creates role models for the participants but also levels out power dynamics and provides a more comfortable environment e.g. a facilitator who is a mother advising a participant who is also a mother may be more effective than a single male facilitator advising a young mother.
2. Have support facilitators to help with language or other areas where additional technical support may be needed. Language plays a really critical role in not only privileging some genders but in creating negative power dynamics if not properly adapted to the context. Ensure language used is not sexist or biased.
3. Be deliberate about creating a safe learning environment where everyone feels comfortable to contribute, and all voices are heard.
E.g. Acknowledge where power lies in these spaces. In a room with mixed genders, be deliberate about creating spaces for all genders to speak and feel heard.

EXERCISE SHEET

Program Facilitators & Mentors

Description

Your facilitators and mentors play a critical role in your entrepreneurs' accelerator or incubator journey, by supporting them to get the best outcomes from your program for themselves and their ventures.

Why it Matters

The role of facilitators and mentors is to facilitate thought and ideas from those who are closest to the issue, the entrepreneurs. It is important for your facilitators and mentors to understand where their support role starts and ends, and for them to be aware of any power dynamics that may be at play.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Power dynamics between the facilitators, mentors and entrepreneurs in your program may prevent the best outcomes.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Your entrepreneurs are supported by your mentors and facilitators to deliver the best possible outcomes.



REFLECTION

Are there any real or perceived power dynamics at play with our facilitators or mentors, when they support our entrepreneurs?

STRATEGIES

1. Have a gender diverse pool of mentors and facilitators.
2. Create a clear mentor/mentee code of conduct that both parties sign up to. Consider power dynamics that may occur when matching different genders and ensure regular check-ins to ensure that negative power dynamics are identified (if any) and addressed.
[Example 7: Mentor/Mentee Code of conduct](#)
3. Have relevant training for mentors, facilitators and all other content deliverers, so they understand how they can create a safe environment that is conducive to learning for all entrepreneurs.
[Example 6: Awareness training \(can be adapted for mentoring\)](#)

EXERCISE SHEET

Pitch Events

Description

Accelerator/Incubator programs often hold 'pitch' events throughout or to mark the end of their programs. These can take different forms (one on one, the cohort pitching in front of an audience, etc.) and provide an opportunity for entrepreneurs to present their venture to key ecosystem stakeholders (investors, funders, government, mentors, other private sector organisations, etc.). The aim of these events is generally for (1) entrepreneurs to share their venture and ask for the support they require at that point in time (funding, access to customers, partnerships, mentorship etc.) as well as (2) for the intermediary to raise their brand awareness and showcase their work.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

In general, pitch events, and the word 'pitch' itself generate a feeling of competition which may not appeal to all genders, given that being competitive can often be associated with arrogance and aggression, characteristics that may be more socially acceptable for one gender.

The power in pitch events sits with the funder/investor. Funders will always favour a strong, powerful pitch. However, not all entrepreneurs are good public speakers, and a pitch does not always demonstrate the depth of value that a venture creates. In addition to this, it may be that in some cultures, women are discouraged from speaking in public, and therefore do not get the same opportunity to develop this skill.

It can also be easy for unconscious gender biases regarding who may be more likely to be a successful entrepreneur or leader in a particular industry to appear when watching someone pitch, and this can impact the judgement of the audience to favour certain entrepreneurs.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Inclusive events that allow all entrepreneurs to equally showcase the value of their venture, regardless of gender. And events where unconscious bias is minimised and the power is balanced in favour of the entrepreneurs and their ventures rather than the audience.

REFLECTION

1. Does the audience consist of diverse genders and relevant expertise?
2. Are the power dynamics between the audience and entrepreneurs acknowledged?
3. Does the event provide an equal platform for all the entrepreneurs pitching, regardless of gender?

Why it Matters

In any form of a pitch event, the power often sits with the audience who 'vote' for the best pitch and determine who they might fund/support/partner with. While they hold the 'power' in that they have the funding, connections or expertise that the ventures need, in most cases they will not have the depth of knowledge of the issues/ value created by the venture, and they will also have gender biases, which can result in them making unconscious judgements about an entrepreneur's ability to be successful. This can result in certain genders getting more support and funding than others (e.g. since the majority of investors are men, they tend to disproportionately favour as well as fund ventures that are led by men) therefore perpetuating the gender gaps in entrepreneurship.

STRATEGIES

1. Consider changing the name of the event.
If the pitch event doesn't resonate with all genders, consider changing it to a name that does e.g. 'showcase'. This can reduce the notion of competition and be perceived as an equal opportunity for all entrepreneurs.
2. Be deliberate about calling out the power dynamics at the event.
E.g. The organiser of the event can open the evening with a statement similar to "in social entrepreneurship - we need all these ventures to win. Tonight is not about how one is better than another, but how we can support all of these important ventures so they can thrive and collectively create the impact we wish to see". If it will resonate with the audience, calling out certain unconscious biases at the start of the event can help the audience be aware of when their judgement might be affected. This can be done in a light and playful way, or in a more serious manner depending on what is appropriate in the context.
3. Adapting the format of the event
E.g. If you have voting at the event, and this privileges a certain gender, it can be taken out and instead the audience can be asked to make offers of support and suggestions to the entrepreneurs, which can be followed up after the event. This way the event is designed to be one of the many steps for the investors/funders/other stakeholders to learn from the entrepreneurs (rather than making important decisions after one contact). You could also have a mid-program pitch event, and one at the end so that the audience has a chance to see the progress an entrepreneur has made. This can allow entrepreneurs to show what they're capable of and reduce bias against them. Simply running events as discussions rather than presentations (and arranging the room accordingly), can also change the dynamics. Another example could be to send the profiles of the ventures before the event for the audience to read through, but remove the gender of the entrepreneurs. This can allow investors and other stakeholders to assess a venture based on their ability to solve a problem, without gender biases impacting their judgement.
4. Take steps to ensure that all entrepreneurs are able to make the most out of the opportunity. In addition to presentation skills training, other types of training can include: confidence, imposter syndrome, improvisation training. Make entrepreneurs aware of the gender biases that the audience may have regarding their ability to build their venture so that they can address these either directly or indirectly in their presentations.

EXERCISE SHEET

Other Support

Applying a gender lens to all other types of support you provide your entrepreneurs is important to ensure that they all have access to an equal platform from which to launch and grow their enterprises, regardless of gender.

Other types of support can be provided to entrepreneurs and enterprises, in addition to the core program. This can include getting access to and value through alumni networks, further opportunities to access funding, relevant introductions, extending invitations to key events, and more. In addition to having a great core program, this additional support is often required to fill gaps in the existing ecosystem of support (funding, mentorship, etc.) and thereby increase enterprises' chance of success.

Creating Access to Funding for Enterprises

Description

Access to funding, be it through grants, loans or investments, is often a critical need for enterprises. As an Intermediary, you can play a significant role in creating access to funding for your enterprises either by providing funding directly or acting as a conduit for the enterprise to access funding from funders in your ecosystem.

Why it Matters

Access to funding is often a key step for an enterprise's ability to grow and scale.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

There is gender inequality in your entrepreneurs' ability to access and manage funding. For example, in many regions, women are not permitted to control finances or have access to bank accounts. They may not be able to make financial decisions and may lack the experience to manage money due to poor financial literacy.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

All your entrepreneurs have equal access to, and the ability to, manage funding to support their enterprises, regardless of their gender.



REFLECTION

Are decision making rights around money equal for all genders? Do all genders have equal authority to open bank accounts? Authorise transactions? Is financial literacy equal across different genders? How does tradition, culture, religion play a role in how finance relates to gender?

STRATEGIES

1. Use creative approaches to ensure that funds are accessible to entrepreneurs of all genders.
E.g. if a founder is not allowed to have a bank account yet needs funding to purchase equipment, as an intermediary you could provide funds directly to the supplier (instead of the entrepreneur) to enable the transaction to occur.
2. Provide additional support to founders with lower financial literacy to ensure that they are confident in presenting and requesting funding. Support can be either building their technical expertise or in developing high-level documents.
3. Work with and provide incentives to the key financial decision-makers in the families/communities of the entrepreneurs to create buy-in by them to support the founder in accessing funding to support their venture. Demonstrate the 'win-win' for the community or family.

EXERCISE SHEET

Alumni Management and Support

Description

Once entrepreneurs have completed the program (and become 'alumni'), intermediaries have the opportunity to continue to support the ventures. They can keep adding value to their alumni by directly filling (or partnering and advocating to fill) existing gaps in the support ecosystem

for later-stage ventures. This continued support can help ventures become successful as well as be an incentive for the ventures to report back on their impact and business performance and stay engaged to support subsequent cohorts of ventures.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Once entrepreneurs leave the program, regardless of how good the program was, they may encounter gender-related issues as they try to grow their ventures. These can impact the growth of the ventures directly (e.g. women-led ventures not getting access to growth funding, growth programs or key stakeholder support). Gender-related issues can also affect business performance and the impact the venture is trying to create (e.g. a team member experiencing gender-based violence, unintended consequences of empowering women along the supply chain). These can all greatly affect alumni's chances of growing successful ventures. It can also be challenging for alumni to measure and report back on their impact and business performance, however, this is essential for intermediaries to be able to measure the success of their program, obtain funding and convince those in power to support ventures they might not be supporting currently e.g. led by women and gender minorities.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

All entrepreneurs, regardless of gender, have access to an equal platform to launch, grow and scale their impact ventures.

Why it Matters

Addressing gender-related issues within the context of a specific program that aims to support enterprises at a particular stage of growth can be impactful, however, it cannot be done in isolation and as a one-off event. Negative power dynamics and gender bias exist in the broader ecosystem as well as in alumni's communities and homes. Playing a supporting and advocating role in disrupting these can greatly increase the chances of our alumni succeeding.



REFLECTION

What is the current support available for your alumni ventures within your ecosystem and region? Does the latter differ for men, women or gender minority-led ventures? What are gender-related issues that your alumni have or are facing as they continue to grow their ventures? What negative power dynamics are at play?

STRATEGIES

1. If you offer continued support for your alumni ventures (workshops, events, online resources, etc.) include topics that explore gender-related issues that could negatively impact the growth of their venture.
E.g. Raising venture capital money as a female-led venture, considering gender-related issues as you develop your supply chain, developing a gender diverse and inclusive culture as you grow your organisation.
2. Include gender metrics as part of your impact measurement framework to ensure that you collect gender-related data that will allow you to improve your program and support your alumni. It can also help you craft a convincing story on why it's important to support and invest in all genders. Use varied methods (phone call, site visit, anonymous survey) to collect the data you require to ensure that you provide your alumni with a series of safe communication options through which they can share sensitive information.
3. Engage your alumni as recruiters, facilitators, mentors and/or supporters for future cohorts.
E.g. Provide a platform for underrepresented genders to become role models within your ecosystem, and encourage a more diverse pool to start a venture.

EXERCISE SHEET

CASE STUDY: INSTELLAR, INDONESIA



Instellar aims to accelerate social innovation in organisations, and work together towards scalable and sustainable social impact through incubation, advisory, and investment in mission-driven companies. Our vision is a world where businesses are run with social responsibility and driven by purpose and impact.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)

CASE STUDY: AGILE DEVELOPMENT GROUP, CAMBODIA



Agile Development Group is a disability enterprise development agency that creates innovative solutions and economic opportunities for people with disabilities (PwDs) to increase their inclusion, freedom and independence. We believe that by merging design, innovation and enterprise together with PwDs we can create a more accessible world. The core focus of our work experience intersects entrepreneurship, disability, youth and women.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)



Ecosystem

In this section, we will discuss strategies for applying a gender lens to the role that you play within your region's entrepreneurial ecosystem, and how you might use your unique position of power to influence positive, inclusive change.

Mentors

Funders/Investors

Government



Ecosystem

An entrepreneurial ecosystem consists of the collection of structures, people and organisations that surround and support the growth of early and growth-stage ventures within your region. In this section, we will focus on funders, mentors, and government.

PURPOSE

To help establish an awareness and understanding of gender diversity, equity and inclusion as it relates to the broader entrepreneurial ecosystem, and to take steps to influence key players to become more accessible and inclusive of all genders.

OUTCOMES

- Mentors who provide equitable support to all genders
- Funders/investors who are aware of their own biases and distribute funding in an equitable way, recognising the value of gender equality
- Government that consider gender when creating policies and making funding decisions

Mentors

Description

Mentors can play a critical role in supporting enterprises to grow and scale their enterprise beyond the support that intermediaries provide via their accelerator/incubator program. Mentors are often successful entrepreneurs themselves and have walked the journey of the enterprises that the intermediary is supporting and bring a wealth of knowledge and expertise to support founders.

Why it matters

Mentors can provide deep, long-term support to help ventures succeed.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop an in-depth understanding of the founder's needs and their perception of working with different genders.
E.g. if the founder has experienced trauma, this may need to be considered when matching them with a mentor.
2. Ensure that the mentor pool is gender diverse to reflect the various needs of the founders and bring rich and varied expertise.
3. Provide training to Mentors to ensure that they understand the needs of their mentees and how different genders may need modified mentoring due to cultural/religious/personal needs.
Example 6: Awareness training (can be adapted for mentoring)
4. Create a Code of conduct for full transparency and accountability for both parties.
Example 7: Mentor/Mentee Code of conduct
5. Develop clear policies articulating what is and what is not acceptable in a mentor/mentee relationship.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Power dynamics can exist between the mentor and founder relationship especially when their gender differs, due to cultural and societal norms.

For example, a successful male mentor may not deeply understand the issues faced by a female entrepreneur in an emerging market and therefore may not be able to provide the most effective strategies.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

A strong mentorship program to support founders of all genders



REFLECTION

What is the cultural/societal norm of having a mentor and mentee relationship between people of different genders? What is the individual founder's needs with respect to a mentor? How do we attract mentors of different genders? How can we educate our current mentor pool in applying a gender lens to how they mentor and coach founders?

EXERCISE SHEET

Funders/Investors

Description

Funders play a key role within the ecosystem in enabling the growth of both intermediaries and early-stage entrepreneurial ventures, especially in their early years.

Many Impact investors (investors that seek both financial and impact returns) choose to play a role once an intermediary and enterprise is cash-flow positive.

Many do this as a way to reduce risk and uncertainty.

However, both philanthropic funders and impact investors can play a critical role in achieving gender equality and greater social impact.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Power is often held by those who control the money, instead of being held by those on the ground who know what work needs to be done. Funders can often prefer for their funding to be linked to specific activities or demands, which may not always be conducive to the best social impact or business outcomes.¹⁹

Some funders may hold an unconscious bias favouring male entrepreneurs due to cultural and societal norms, therefore, disadvantaging female entrepreneurs.

Broadly speaking, investment decisions lie predominantly with men due to the gender imbalance that exists in the corporate finance, investment and executive management space.

To date, female entrepreneurs have not been able to attract the same value of investment funding as their male counterparts both in the commercial and social impact spaces. Only 2.2% of the \$130billion total in venture capital money invested in 2018 went to women.²⁰

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Entrepreneurs and intermediaries are supported to deliver their best work, without being negatively influenced by funders.



Why it matters

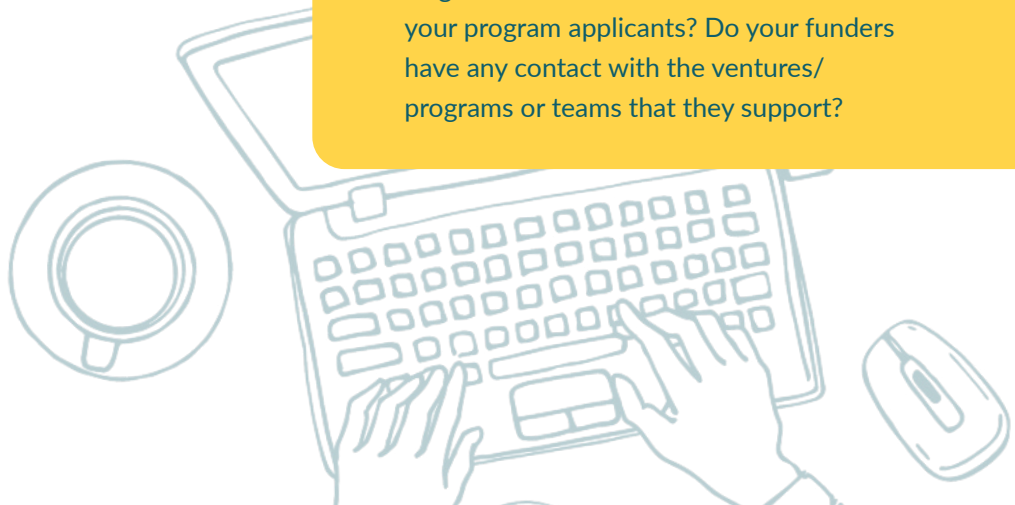
Financial sustainability is key for intermediaries and enterprises to survive. They work at the heart of the impact so know the best option for where the funds should be spent to generate the greatest social impact.

Funders can use their money to achieve gender inclusivity and equality.

Investors can use finance to achieve gender inclusivity and equality.

REFLECTION

How much influence do your funders have on your operations? How much of your funding is linked to specific activities and outcomes dictated by the funder? How much isn't? Do your funders in any way influence your pipeline? e.g. if you have investors - do the criteria in their due diligence affect the criteria used to assess your program applicants? Do your funders have any contact with the ventures/ programs or teams that they support?



STRATEGIES

1. Determine your investment thesis, and create a robust criteria and scorecard aligned with this thesis. Apply a gender lens to this criteria to work beyond quotas and see the value of directing funding to marginalised groups (e.g. funding more women-led ventures, by virtue, will support the creation of more employment for women thus increasing the income earned by a woman). Once developed, share these with funders.
[Example 9: Applying a gender lens to your investments](#)
2. Invite funders to meet ventures on the ground and face-to-face to help them to understand why particular criteria is needed and provided while other criteria is not (e.g. 12 month cash flow reserve may not be possible due to the stage of the enterprise and the purchasing power of the beneficiaries however this might not deem the venture unsuccessful).
3. Adopt a disciplined approach to measure against 'gender' metrics and report on them regularly to create an evidence base.

EXERCISE SHEET

Government

Description

Governments are very likely critical stakeholders within the social enterprise ecosystem.

In the best case, laws, regulations, funding and initiatives driven by Government can address key priorities to address social needs and support social enterprises.

However, in many regions, this is not the case and Governments can add significant obstacles to achieving social outcomes.

Why it matters

Policies can support or hinder the business outcomes of intermediaries and enterprises.

KEY PROBLEM(S)

Gender is not a key focus or consideration when creating policies and designing funding initiatives for the entrepreneurial ecosystem.

DESIRED OUTCOME(S)

Government has a gender strategy and applies a gender lens across policies and funding decisions, and government policies relating to social entrepreneurship consider improving gender equity through entrepreneurship.



REFLECTION

Does your Government (National or Local) influence how you operate as an intermediary? Does your Government apply a gender lens? Are there key players that can be influenced to support work around gender?



STRATEGIES

The best way to influence Government Policy or funding decisions **is to show the positive impact on the social outcomes or economy from the initiatives proposed.** In addition, the work needs to align with key Government priority areas.

1. Collect financial return and social impact return data to demonstrate the impact of the work for which you are seeking government support.
2. Use data relating to gender in order to influence policy and funding decisions that make the ecosystem more accessible and inclusive of all genders.
3. Gain support from partner organisations. Create a working group with other intermediaries and partner organisations to lobby for particular changes. The voice from a group of intermediaries/stakeholders will always be stronger than from a single organisation.

EXERCISE SHEET

CASE STUDY: PHANDEEYAR, MYANMAR



Phandeeяр aims to harness technology to accelerate change in Myanmar. Our team specifically work to accelerate the growth of startups in Myanmar, and expand the pool of tech and creative talents.

In order to attract more female mentors, we met with five women -focused organisations, and all the women we met with agreed to offer mentorship to the founders when they need it. We selected various women mentors from different industries and background so that our entrepreneurs would have access to a wide range of support.

[VIEW CASE STUDY](#)



xchange, Philippines

xchange is an impact investor and incubator in early-stage social enterprises in the Philippines. Our mission is to assist in the emergence of the entrepreneurial impact ecosystem in the Philippines. Through our work, we aim to multiply the change that social enterprises achieve, by helping them reach sustainability and scale in the shortest possible time.

Gender Lens Application Leads: Erika Tatad (Director) and Love Gregorie Perez (Director)

Why we decided to use the GLIA toolkit

A scan of the entrepreneurs and leadership teams of our portfolio companies showed us that five enterprises were founded or co-founded by women; and only one was founded by men with a specific focus on benefiting financially disadvantaged women. With regard to xchange's investment philosophy, process, and incubation, there is no explicit application of a gender lens. Further, while gender equity is likely to be addressed by social enterprises, there is no intentional application of a gender lens in how we assess an enterprise's impact model.

In 2018, we attended a workshop delivered by the Criterion Institute on gender lens investing. Since then, we have wanted to learn more about how to apply a

gender lens to our work but never really knew how or where to start. The GLIA toolkit provided us with an opportunity to learn about the gender lens application process, kickstart this process, and ultimately improve the way we do things.

Whilst reading through the toolkit, we realised that xchange needs an articulation of the values of diversity, inclusion, and gender, captured in a diversity statement. Since xchange is in the process of codifying its values and processes, the toolkit came at a perfect time to take stock of where we are vis-à-vis the gender lens agenda, determine where we want to make an impact, and chart our path forward.

How we applied the toolkit to our work

We read through the entire toolkit and identified medium-term goals to incorporate an explicit gender lens across our operations, processes and activities in the following areas:

- Composition, selection and management of our Board of Directors;
- Recruitment, composition and training of our team;
- Our organisational culture, values and processes;
- Our investment principles, processes and impact assessment
- Our incubation mentor program, impact measurement and enterprise operations
- Engaging with the broader ecosystem (Government, Funders, Mentors, etc.)

Within one year, our objective is for the entire xchange organisation to contribute to a diversity statement that clearly articulates xchange's values around gender equality, inclusivity, and diversity; how these values support our mission, vision, and ecosystem build; and how these values are critical to our aspirations for a Philippines that is happy, healthy, and free.

Our approach

We felt that in order for xchange to have the credibility to promote the application of a gender lens in our engagements with the broader ecosystem, we needed to look inward first. Specifically, we wanted to ensure that everyone within our organisation understands how to apply a gender lens to their respective work and engagements.

We started by identifying three main types of activities that we wanted to undertake



PRACTICAL TIP

What part of the toolkit did you use?

We reviewed the entire toolkit before selecting a specific area to focus on, and then used specific parts of the toolkit to inform the sessions we facilitated (e.g. sharing the glossary of key terms before the first brown bag lunch or using the reflection questions as a guide). Before the last lunch session, we shared the entire toolkit with the team, but as it is a long resource, not everyone was able to go through it.



AWARENESS AND KNOWLEDGE BUILDING

We hosted 3 internal “Brown Bag” lunches where we facilitated conversations around gender issues and their implications for our work. These were held during our team’s lunch hour, as we needed to ensure that the sessions would fit in with everyone’s schedules, and would provide a safe space for learning. The aim of these sessions were for the entire xchange team to be more aware of gender issues, and be mindful of how these relate to our work. The first lunch explored the concept of a gender lens, the second looked at how it relates to what we do at xchange, and the third looked out how we can incorporate this into our values. We gave our team pre-work (readings, videos, infographics, presentations) and sent them a survey after each lunch session.

INTERNAL DATA GATHERING AND REFLECTION

We used a journaling tool to encourage reflection, and for the team to document their processes and activities, but also capture their feelings, doubts, and insights relating to gender. The journal allowed us to get an understanding of current gaps in our processes and activities, that could benefit from the application of a gender lens. Team members’ could also volunteer to share parts of their journal with the team.

VISIONING AND APPLICATION

We now want to develop a common vision around gender as an organisation and identify specific areas and actions to bring the values of gender equity, diversity, and inclusion to life through our daily operations. We will do this by holding a workshop with the whole organisation.

Challenges we encountered

The Awareness and Knowledge Building piece was originally supposed to be a workshop or learning session conducted by a gender lens expert. However, it was a challenge finding an expert to conduct workshops so we had to change the format to a self-study and discussion. Self-study was done through pre-work of reading articles and watching videos. The short timeframe in

between sessions made it challenging for everyone to complete the latter. During the sessions, some team members participated more actively than others, so to ensure everyone had a chance to speak and have their voices heard we asked each person to share an insight, like and wish at the end of the session before they could get ice cream.

What we’ve achieved so far

From the survey responses, we believe that the team now has a better understanding of what applying a gender lens means, as well as the concepts of gender equality, diversity, and inclusivity. Furthermore, as this is a continuing learning journey, it has encouraged them

to find and share their own resources with the team. While three brown bag lunches are not sufficient to fully understand the concepts and their applications, we can say that the process has been an important first step. Through the discussion, we’ve also been able to achieve

CASE STUDY

better alignment and appreciation of how individual work ties in with xchange's work. Through the brown bag lunches, the team felt inclusivity in action and one responded that there was a sense of belonging coming from the discussion as we got to know each other better

and were able to share our thoughts freely. In the last brown bag lunch we were also able to identify some core values that will serve as guidance on decision making, behaviour, and will serve as the underlying principles of policy.

THE LEARNINGS WE'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU

1. Take stock of where the organisation is currently at in order to have clarity on the organisation's needs and how applying a gender lens and using the toolkit will help address these; Be clear about objectives and what you want to get out of the process.
2. In deciding on where to start, we found it helpful to go through the entire toolkit first, even the sections that were not yet relevant to xchange's current needs, because it provided a more holistic perspective and helped identify medium-term goals.
3. Leadership should set the tone and provide context. Given that everyone is busy, it was important for leadership to say this is important and should be given time and attention.
4. Involve the entire team in the learning journey. Practice inclusivity and radical openness. Provide a safe space for learning, bonding, discovery, and sharing where everyone listens to each other. Everyone has something to say.
5. Get feedback on what worked, what didn't work, what can be improved.
6. Space conversations to be able to incorporate feedback, also so that team has time to do pre-work. Based on the surveys, the ideal frequency would be a session once a month.
7. Use the toolkit as a starting point to learn about applying a gender lens. Encourage your team to find their own external resources, and use those (especially videos) to bring concepts to life within your particular context.
8. Be flexible. Conversations may take a different direction from your original intention. Guiding questions can be used as prompts, but more relevant questions may surface during the conversation
9. Food (and especially ice cream!) can help with team bonding.
10. Dedicate resources – time, budget, space.
11. Commit to the process. Commitment and trust are important for open communication.
12. Be patient with the process. Concepts can be learned but full understanding and application will take time.



Instellar, Indonesia

Instellar aims to accelerate social innovation in organisations, and work together towards scalable and sustainable social impact through incubation, advisory, and investment in mission-driven companies. Our vision is a world where businesses are run with social responsibility and driven by purpose and impact.

Gender Lens Application Lead/s: Elvira Soufyani Rosanty, Senior Enterprise Development Officer

Why we decided to use the GLIA toolkit

We would like to see more diversity and inclusivity in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem in Indonesia. Through using and implementing the GLIA toolkit, we want to

explore the potential of nurturing female entrepreneurs and running a female-focused incubation program.

How we applied the toolkit to our work

We run an incubation program for early-stage social enterprises in Indonesia. Having run this program since 2014, we found that 49% of the incubated social enterprises are founded or co-founded by women. This is also in line with the reality on a larger scale where SMEs make up over 99% of businesses in Indonesia, and 60% of these businesses are run by women. The estimated number of women entrepreneurs in Indonesia has reached 30.6 million, and 53% of them are at the micro-business level. However, we found more men at growth-stage businesses. There are gaps between men and women entrepreneurs in terms of soft skills which affect their achievement in leading businesses. Men are

perceived as more confident, proactive, and better in negotiation skills.

We conducted a workshop for women entrepreneurs to enhance their negotiation skills. Through this workshop, we wanted to enable women to self-advocate, allow them to have the confidence to negotiate for what they want, not only in a workplace setting, but also in the household environment. The negotiation and communication strategy given to the participants could be applied to their real-life businesses and family environment, and helping them in creating new opportunities and leading from the front.

Our approach

We identified our priority within the organisation and decided that we were going to focus on the implementation of gender inclusivity in our incubation program. We did a small survey to our female alumni, and discovered that negotiation skills are one of the most essential soft skills that they are eager to learn. Throughout the workshop preparation, we sought partnerships with other organisations that were in line with our mission. We partnered with Women Will GBG Jakarta, which is a Google initiative to create economic opportunities for women to grow and succeed, and also Rimma.co, which is a digital media agency and community that supports young women to elevate their life. We believe that by partnering with the right organisations, we will be able to reach more women and increase the impact.

We ran a workshop titled “Woman Up! Negotiate and Turn a No into a Yes”.The workshop was done in conjunction with our annual event, ARISE, in order to get more exposure and build more awareness. During the promotion period, we used a visual design that was attractive to women. We also ensured that the application form was accessible by providing translations for each question, and requesting information that was easy for applicants to provide. We invited women experts to become workshop facilitators. One of them is a Manager from Maverick Indonesia, a communication consulting service, and another is the co-Founder of Indonesia Voice of Women.

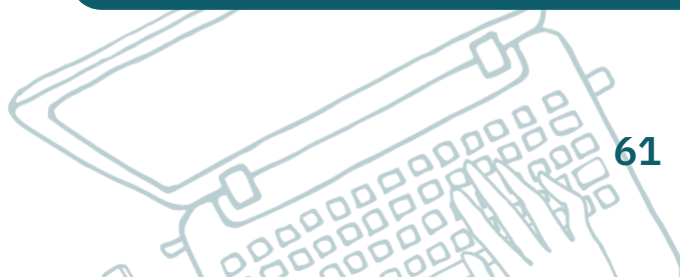
57 women registered, and 35 attended the workshop, both entrepreneurs and career women. The workshop itself focused on empowering women and getting them in the right mindset: that everything is negotiable. The participants gained insights into the principles of negotiation and persuasion, learned how to prepare for a negotiation and how to execute tactics to close the deal, as well as refine their personal negotiating styles. Along the way, participants gained a new appreciation for how negotiation skills can help them overcome a wide range of challenges – at work and in life.



PRACTICAL TIP

What part of the toolkit did you use?

We used the Program section (marketing and advertising, creating access, and application process) to ensure that our promotional activities were encouraging and channels used were accessible by women. We also partnered with organisations that are working with women, and used an application form that is accessible to women.





Challenges we encountered

At first, we were unsure of how to organise a soft skills workshop to support women, what kind of soft skills do women require the most, and who is the best person to facilitate such a workshop. Then we realised that we have a lot of women entrepreneurs in our program that can be our source of knowledge. So, we sent them a survey and found out that negotiation skills are important for them. Partnering with other organisations that focus on women also helped a lot in planning and executing the project. Our collaborating partners have built communities of women and have access to women experts that supported us during the workshop.



What we've achieved so far

This was our first workshop focused on women only participants, and we were impressed by the number of women who expressed interest in joining our workshop. During the promotion period, we did not limit our target audience to women who are entrepreneurs, we also included women in other careers. Thus, we also learned that soft skills training is appealing and applicable to all careers. 93% of the participants felt that their confidence level in negotiation has increased as a result of the workshop, and all the participants felt satisfied with the applicability and relevance of the workshop content. The workshop helped the participants not only increase their level of confidence in negotiating, but also allowed them to value their self-worth.

We are going to explore opportunities to carry out other soft skills training for women. We also would like to embed this training as a powerful addition to the regular workshops given to our incubation program participants, especially women. We plan on measuring our success by assessing our women alumni in 2-3 years' time and seeing whether their business has scaled, their confidence has increased, and how these soft skills training have helped them to get to the point where they are at.

THE LEARNINGS WE'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU

As a support organisation for social entrepreneurs, we have the opportunity to influence gender inclusivity in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem. By contextualising the toolkit to our work, we were able to define the areas that need to be more gender-inclusive, in our case, the incubation program itself. We learned about how marketing collateral, as well as our application process, can affect the gender diversity of selected participants. We also learned that applying a gender lens to create a more gender-inclusive program would require teamwork, both internally within our organisation but also in how we engage with and educate our external partners.

CASE STUDY



SHE (Support Her Enterprise) Investments, Cambodia.

SHE Investments is a social enterprise that designs and delivers the first and only gender-focused and culturally tailored business incubator and accelerator programs for women in Cambodia. We support women with micro, small and growing businesses to scale, creating social and economic impact for communities. Our goal is a gender balance in the Small - Medium Enterprise (SME) sector: more women running larger, sustainable, and impactful businesses.

Gender Lens Application Lead/s: Celia Boyd, Managing Director (and Lee Carlon, Strategy and Culture Advisor).

Why we decided to use the GLIA toolkit

We consider ourselves to be a feminist organisation and apply a gender lens to much of our work and our programming. However, we wanted the opportunity to take a step back and look at ourselves internally as an organisation. Using the toolkit gave us the chance to reflect on where we can improve in terms of applying a gender lens to our internal processes, engage our team in where they think we can improve and what our understanding of equality/equity is as a cross-cultural organisation.

How we applied the toolkit to our work

Our objective was to better understand how gender plays out in Cambodia, with a particular focus on getting everyone at SHE to feel more comfortable and confident in talking about gender equity and equality.

We planned to do this by using participatory approaches to understanding, learning and communicating how gender constructs impact individuals, communities, society and more specifically, the work that SHE does.

CASE STUDY



Our approach

To begin with, we wanted to get really clear on the problem we were trying to address. As SHE has grown significantly in 2019, we wanted to ensure all new and existing staff were comfortable and confident in communicating what it means to be a feminist organisation with a focus on gender equity. We decided the best way to do this was through the delivery of four organisation-wide conversations with a view to informing the development of an organisation gender audit. We want to know what areas across the organisation we should apply a stronger gender lens to.

We tested the concept by having one on one conversations with key staff to gain an understanding of their knowledge, interest and confidence levels. The conversations were varied, highlighting a need for a more consistent organisational 'voice' on what it is to be a feminist organisation.

We planned four 1hr workshops that explored the key concepts of equality, equity, inclusion, gender, sex, cultural norms and values around gender, and how we can apply these concepts to the work undertaken internally and externally at SHE.

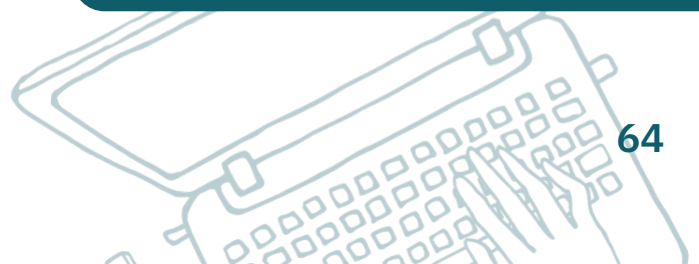
APPENDIX



PRACTICAL TIP

What part of the toolkit did you use?

We specifically looked at the organisation culture section of the toolkit, yet used the 'do it yourself' section to better enable us to develop our objective, identify issues, come up with a strategy and then implement the plan.



Challenges we encountered

As a feminist, women-led organisation, applying a gender lens to our work constituted something different to what would normally be expected. We already have a focus on ensuring women are seen as equal members of society. Undertaking the process though, has helped us to look more at intersectionality; What does Khmer feminism look like? How do men and non-binary folk play a part in our work? Which women are benefiting, or conversely, missing out, through our work.

Additionally, we started being too broad in our thinking. We did not get clear on the specific problem we wanted to explore as we were also undertaking a range of other organisation culture activities. The 'do it yourself' component of the toolkit helped us to be clearer about the specific objective, issues and strategies, and we couched this objective amongst our other organisation culture activities. A key learning was to not try and do everything, and start with a specific project.



What we've achieved so far

To date, we have conducted the initial scoping and testing of our gender objective and issue identification. We developed a strategy and action plan to conduct four workshops and have delivered two of four all staff conversations and have two more planned. These conversations are about getting everyone on the same page, having a unified voice about what gender equality means for SHE.

The initial conversations have challenged thinking on the difference between equal treatment, equal outcomes and social justice. Conversations about differences and gender equity have increased across the organisation, and there seems to be a genuine interest in exploring these concepts further.

THE LEARNINGS WE'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU

We have learnt that being open to new concepts and their application to SHE is really important. We could have gone into this process thinking that as a feminist, women-led organisation there is nothing more to do. We have used this process to critically analyse areas of our organisation to improve upon. We are asking more questions like; 'which women?' Or 'how do we engage participants' partners?', 'what does Khmer feminism look and feel like?'. There are always more, and better questions you can ask to influence organisational culture. Building culture takes time and courage, and strong leadership and a desire to be truly inclusive is required. And the results will be worth it.

**ONOW**
M y a n m a r

ONOW Myanmar Company Ltd, Myanmar

ONOW runs an incubator for domestic migrant women in Myanmar. Our incubator is designed to quickly build basic skills in financial capabilities and digital literacy through a tech-enabled approach, and follows a cohort model for moving our entrepreneurs through ideation, market research, and business modeling. We connect entrepreneurs with startup capital, then coach them throughout the first year of their new business.

Gender Lens Application Lead/s: Zar Zar Oo, Finance Administrator

Why we decided to use the GLIA toolkit

We are not an organisation that started with a gender perspective, but it quickly became apparent that this cross-cutting issue was impacting our work deeply. As a small social enterprise, we lacked the resources to employ a gender expert and were not sure where to start to address gender. This toolkit provided an ideal approach to implementing gender inclusivity across our organisation.

How we applied the toolkit to our work

We conducted a gender audit within our organisation, and analysed the gender split according to decision making versus non decision making positions, salaries and more. We realised that as an organisation we can do more to be gender equal, inclusive and diverse. We are hiring new coaches in November, and want to minimise gender bias in our hiring process. When we advertise the positions, we want applicants to know that all positions within our organisation are equally accessible by all genders.

Our approach

We worked with our Human Resource Assistant to experiment on our hiring process by looking at whether there would be a difference in diversity of genders who apply when including a picture with balanced genders or not including any pictures as part of our job posting.

We also want to experiment with running a semi-blind selecting process where we don't look at the candidates' gender, and only consider their qualifications that make them fit for the position. This can further reduce bias.

Challenges we encountered

The challenges that we have and keep encountering relate to the cultural and power dynamics within the Myanmar context. For example, women employees cannot go on a field trip alone as they believe it is dangerous. This can limit their ability to take on certain roles.

What we've achieved so far

We are currently testing our new Job Postings that have been edited to be more gender inclusive, so that we can see whether this will allow us to hire more gender diverse, skillful team members, compared to the old style of post.



PRACTICAL TIP

What part of the toolkit did you use?

We used the Team section of the toolkit (Composition, Recruitment), as well as the Program section (Marketing and Advertising to recruit entrepreneurs). We are, however, only at the start and there may never be an end point. I personally found the Glossary of key terms to be very helpful, because I am not very familiar with a lot of the terms relating to gender, including gender itself. We also used the content map to further explore different sections, and look at suggested strategies and frameworks. I am interested and excited to continue to use this toolkit within our organisation and see the results.

THE LEARNINGS WE'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU

Choose an individual within your organisation who can function as the primary gender specialist and ensure that a gender lens is applied. It is not necessary to try and solve every gender issue at once, but having a leader in the room who is explicitly responsible for helping others consider the issue helps the organisation change over time, which is a more sustainable approach. We chose our organisation's Human Resource Assistant for our organisation's journey because I think she is the one who communicates the most with staff and candidates. She also cares about gender inclusivity.



Agile Development Group, Cambodia.

Agile Development Group is a disability enterprise development agency that creates innovative solutions and economic opportunities for people with disabilities (PwDs) to increase their inclusion, freedom and independence. We believe that by merging design, innovation and enterprise together with PwDs we can create a more accessible world. The core focus of our work experience intersects entrepreneurship, disability, youth and women.

Gender Lens Application Lead/s: Kimberly Matsudaira, Business Development Manager.

Why we decided to use the GLIA toolkit

Agile's interest in utilising the GLIA toolkit stems from our desire to become pioneers in holistic program design for people with disabilities. By understanding the complexity and diversity of gender-based issues including disability, race, level of income, level of education, and cultural barriers we hope to create inclusive programs that tackle intersectional issues.

How we applied the toolkit to our work

Agile utilised the toolkit to determine how to create a more inclusive program for women with disabilities in regards to location, time and marketing in coordination with a grant program that was implemented at the same time. The grant program involves hosting three workshops and a final forum focusing on teaching ICT and decision making skills to women with physical disabilities in Phnom Penh. The workshops were a full day session (8AM - 5PM), with 10-15 participants per workshop that occurred in August, September and October. Through written surveys, informal interviews and testing imagery on Facebook, our team gained footing in learning of best practices for choosing event venues, preferred dates and times for events as well as ideal imagery in marketing for women with disabilities in Phnom Penh.



Our approach

After creating an action plan, our team developed a series of questions to be included in pre and post surveys, conducted before and after each roundtable. These questions focused on: venue location and accessibility, workshop length, number of breaks, workshop date and imagery that motivates women with disability to participate/become involved.

After utilising these questions for the first roundtable, we discovered that many of our participants didn't understand the questions related to the visuals and imagery that inspired them. We then decided it would be better to ask these questions in an informal interview group setting so that the meaning of the questions were clearer or could be verbally explained further. We conducted the informal group interview in the second roundtable, as well as left the questions about the accessibility of the time and location in the pre and post surveys (imagery/visual questions were subsequently removed). The second roundtable was also held at a different venue in Phnom Penh vs. the first roundtable

in order to survey the participant's perspective of the venue's accessibility.

Based on the results from the informal group interview (participants from the second roundtable expressed that they felt more motivated to join an event when seeing imagery of a woman with a visible disability), in collaboration with a local disabled people's organisation (DPO's), our team posted 2 Facebook posts advertising our third and final workshop for the grant program. Our goal was to test: (1) number of interactions from people with visible disabilities and (2) cross-check how many women who interacted with the post would attend the third roundtable. The first Facebook post featured a woman with no visible physical disability, while the 2nd Facebook post featured a woman with a visible physical disability. These posts were published 11 and 4 days prior to the roundtable date. For the third roundtable, the post and pre-surveys, as well as the informal group interview questions were also conducted.

Challenges we encountered

Our team utilised pre and post-surveys incorporating questions relating to the accessibility of location, time and marketing with tick boxes and open-ended questions. However, the participants either gave vague answers or did not end up answering the questions regarding what images/visuals inspires or motivates them. To remedy this, our team removed these open-ended questions from the surveys and asked them during the workshop in an informal group interview style.



PRACTICAL TIP

What part of the toolkit did you use?

Our team utilised the "Program" section of the toolkit, specifically the Recruitment of Entrepreneurs (marketing and advertising) and the Program Design section (program location and logistics).



What we've achieved so far

Through our survey and informal group interview questions, we were able to determine the following:

Many participants travelled 1 - 1.5 hours to attend workshops in Phnom Penh (due to traffic and distance). We provided an \$8 stipend to compensate for the cost of travel, however, this should be increased to \$10 to reflect the realistic distance they travelled. Sunday is the preferred day of the week to hold a workshop due to the fact that many of our participants work in factories on Saturday. For online social platforms, Facebook is the most utilised platform among our participants. For attracting and recruiting workshop participants (women with disabilities), Facebook is an ideal platform to use. Our participants felt more inspired seeing a person with a disability (in their entirety) visualised in advertisements and marketing. Although the poster with a visible physical disability in our Facebook post experiment received more interactions, follow up testing or informal interviews should be conducted to determine whether this is more desirable imagery that people with physical disabilities prefer in motivating them to attend events for people with disabilities.

Through using the GLIA toolkit over the past six months, we have only begun to scratch the surface of the complex intersectionality of gender and disability in Phnom Penh. Moving forward, our team plans to continue to work with women with disabilities and DPO's to enforce/test our learnings from the project we ran, in order to create more inclusive programming for women with disabilities. We also plan to conduct a short design sprint in coordination with other women with disabilities to create accessible archetypes that will attract participants to any future workshops that Agile holds.



THE LEARNINGS WE'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU

When utilising this toolkit for your organisation, share and explain the toolkit with others in your organisation when implementing your project. For example, although a few of our team members were responsible for implementing the GLIA toolkit, when shared with other co-workers during our third roundtable event (even when discussing the toolkit briefly), these co-workers became more mindful about inclusive practices and provided feedback into improving the accessibility of the workshop at the end of the day. I'd also advise to reach out to others who are knowledgeable about gender equity, in which you can bounce ideas off of and receive feedback if you're attempting to apply a gender lens to your organisation.

Phandeeyar, Myanmar

Phandeeyar aims to harness technology to accelerate change in Myanmar. Our team specifically work to accelerate the growth of startups in Myanmar, and expand the pool of tech & creative talents.

Gender Lens Application Lead/s: Su Myat Htet, Senior Investment Associate.



Why we decided to use the GLIA toolkit

We wanted to enhance the number of women entrepreneurs in the ecosystem.

How we applied the toolkit to our work

We used the GLIA toolkit to try and get more female mentors engaged in our program, get more female participants to attend the meetups and events we run, and to try and attract more female candidates to apply for positions within our organisation. We want to establish a Gender Equal environment and inspire women to get more interested in technology.

Our approach

In order to attract more female mentors, we met with five women -ocused organisations, and all the women we met with agreed to offer mentorship to the founders when they need it. We selected various women mentors from different industries and background so that our entrepreneurs would have access to a wide range of support.

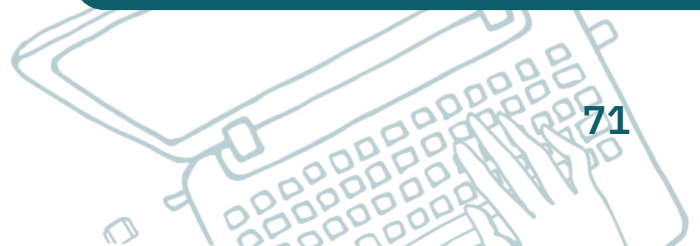
To attract more women entrepreneurs to attend our meetups and events, we developed a gender sensitive event promotion strategy that included gender sensitive language and visuals, and we also modified the channels we use to try and attract more women to register to our events. We did see an increase in the number of women who registered, however, we didn't achieve 50% as the number of men who registered also increased. We are also involving more female speakers and trainers to deliver our online training, in order to attract more, and better support, our female entrepreneurs.

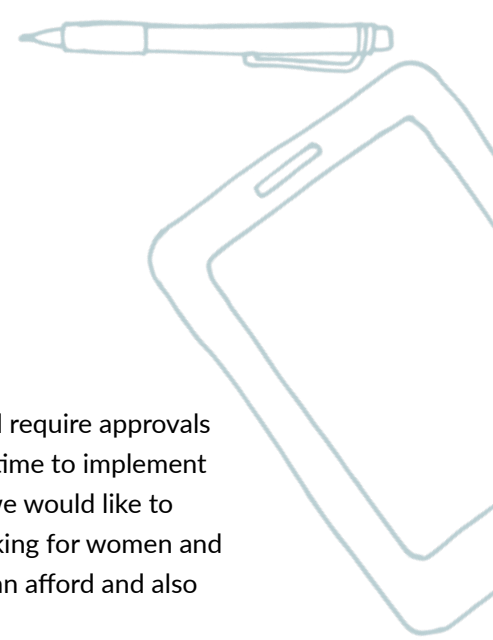


PRACTICAL TIP

What part of the toolkit did you use?

We used the Program and Organisations sections, but are trying to implement strategies from all parts of the toolkit.





Challenges we encountered

The key challenge for us is that some of the strategies suggested in the toolkit would require approvals and dedicated resources, which we don't currently have access to. So, it would take time to implement these strategies, even though we would like to implement them now. For example, we would like to have a balance of gender in our senior management team. However, we've been looking for women and local directors for the past four years but haven't met a suitable candidate that we can afford and also understands the work that we do.

What we've achieved so far

The first value we got from using the GLIA toolkit was achieved when reading about the need for gender equality, and learning about possible strategies we can test to achieve it through our organisation, program and in how we engage with the ecosystem. I got to train the other teams in the organisation on the topic, so we got to carry out this mission together and as an organisation, develop a common understanding of the importance of considering gender within our work.

We will be measuring the results of our mentorship strategy by counting how many women founders have matched with women mentors that we have onboarded, and how useful their mentoring exchange has been. We have reached out to more than 20 women mentors who are willing to help our women founders. We will be matching these women with the founders when they need it.

For the recruitment strategies we're testing to get more women candidates to apply for positions in our organisation, we will measure the percentage increase in quality women applicants.

THE LEARNINGS WE'D LIKE TO SHARE WITH YOU

We recommend not only implementing strategies, but also keeping track of them over time by putting metrics in place that you can measure to determine whether a strategy is working in helping you meet your objectives or not.

We also recommend involving everyone within your team and organisation. For example, at Phandeeyar, since we have different teams, with different missions and tasks, by sharing with them this knowledge and strategies, they can apply it to their respective area of work.

Finally, we suggest picking and choosing the sections of the toolkit that are most relevant to you at this stage in your organisation's journey, and making sure that you contextualise the content and use an experimentation mindset.

Framework 1: Defining value around gender

OBJECTIVE

Create a value around gender that clearly communicates your organisation's aspirations and commitment towards diversity and inclusivity.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

A clear value that expresses your organisation's aspirations relating to gender.

WHY IT MATTERS

Your values help build your organisational culture and express to the external world what is important to you as an organisation.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Values & Policies

FRAMEWORK

1. As an organisation, clarify what you mean by gender diversity, equality, inclusivity, and any other term that you intend to use in your value statement. You may or may not offer definitions for one or more of these terms in your value statement, but if not, you want to be clear about what your organisation means by these terms. This will provide a common language for everyone in your organisation to be able to discuss gender-related matters.
2. Create a short value statement that people can remember, and try to use positive words that resonate with people within and outside your organisation.
3. Test it with different people, of different education levels, to see if they understand what you mean by your value statement.

Examples

We are deliberate in valuing diversity, inclusion, gender equity and gender equality across all our operations.

Commitment to diversity in all staff, volunteers, and audiences, including full participation in programs, policy formulation, and decision-making. (Cornell University, Ibid.)

Diversity - Improve the representation of women and minorities at all levels of the organisation and integrate people with disabilities and Veterans by driving talent acquisition and management practices to achieve results

Inclusion - Create an inclusive work environment that fosters creativity, innovation, Work/Life Flexibility, and engagement with training and Employee Resource Groups.

Framework 2: Writing gender-neutral, inclusive position descriptions (Board and Team)

OBJECTIVE

Equal access to your organisation by all genders, in order to recruit a more gender diverse team/board.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Position descriptions that are well-balanced and do not appeal to any gender more than another.

WHY IT MATTERS

Position descriptions are one of the first impressions your company can make on a prospective applicant. You want to capture your company's culture and language, and be aware of how those may appeal to specific genders.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Board Recruitment
Team Recruitment

FRAMEWORK

1. Review your existing position descriptions and look out for the following:

Language

What words are commonly associated with certain gender traits within your ecosystem/country/culture? Are women perceived as collaborative and nurturing, whilst men are competitive or ambitious? How are other genders perceived? Can you use descriptors that don't appeal to any gender more than another?

What language do you use to convey your organisational culture? Does it highlight a culture that will appeal to any gender more than another within your context?

What pronouns are you currently using? Are they associated with a specific gender?

What language are your position descriptions written in? Does a certain language favour a particular gender group (e.g. English vs local languages). What is the level of literacy required to understand your position descriptions?

FRAMEWORK CONTINUATION

Requirements

What are your job requirements, and how many do you have? Are they deterring certain genders from applying? Which ones are essential? And which ones are just nice to have? Are some requirements more likely to have been acquired by one gender group versus others? (e.g. a certain level of education)

Can you add a statement that encourages people of all genders, and people who do not precisely match those requirements to apply?

Values, culture and policies

If you have defined values and an internal culture that promotes inclusion, diversity, and equality, are they currently featured in your position descriptions? If you don't, is that a detractor for people who identify with certain gender groups?

If you have specific policies that aim to promote equality, are they mentioned in your position descriptions?

E.g. Parental Leave for primary caregivers, flexible working hours to cater to other commitments

2. Test the revised position description/s with a diverse group of people, and make sure that it doesn't only appeal to one gender group more than another.

Framework 3: Selection Criteria for Team Members

OBJECTIVE

Remove bias from selection process in order to create equal access to your organisation by all genders, and recruit a more gender diverse team.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Strong, predetermined selection criteria that do not promote bias and help you fairly and effectively evaluate candidates with different but equal experiences.

WHY IT MATTERS

Even if you have awareness of your own biases, it can be very difficult for any person to be aware of and remove all of their biases when selecting a new team member. It is therefore important to shape the selection processes you rely on to minimise bias.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Team Recruitment

FRAMEWORK

- Review your existing selection processes and look out for the following:

How do you currently select new team members? Is there a set of criteria in place? If so, do these promote bias? Agree on the criteria in advance of seeing candidates. This helps you fairly and effectively evaluate candidates with different but equal experiences. Review & amend unnecessary criteria that can promote bias. To determine if a criterion promotes bias, ask yourself whether that criterion might be favouring one gender over another.

How do you prioritise the skills and abilities you are looking for? What do you value most? Is it past experience or certain personality traits that show potential? Prioritize the skills and abilities you are looking for before you interview.

How do you currently compare one candidate against another? Is there a clear process in place? Use data and facts to evaluate candidates in the same way. Create a standard evaluation system and metrics and train staff involved in the selection process to use them the same way.
- Test your new selection criteria and revise as needed.

Framework 4: Running a Blind Selection Process for team

OBJECTIVE

Remove bias from selection process in order to create equal access to your organisation by all genders and recruit a more gender diverse team.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Selection process that minimises bias.

WHY IT MATTERS

Even if you have awareness of your own biases, it can be difficult to completely remove bias when you select, as by its nature bias is unconscious. And as you know, bias can affect your judgement, and lead you to make decisions in favor of one gender over others. Adapting your selection process to remove items that can promote bias can therefore help to make better decisions.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Team Recruitment

FRAMEWORK

1. Review your existing selection processes and identify any elements that can give away a candidate's gender. To minimise bias, it is also helpful to remove other factors related to race and demographic information. Note that it can be challenging to run a completely blind selection process, but there are still ways to minimise bias during key stages of the selection process.

Does the college they studied at matter? Is educational attainment likely to be linked with one gender group over another?

Do their hobbies and interests matter?

Do you need to look at their online profiles? And if so, can you add this step later

in the process so that you minimise bias in your selection process?

- If you cannot make your interviews blind, how can you minimise bias in other ways?
- Have a diverse set of interviewers and a strong predefined set of selection criteria
- Use independent interviewers who understand what your work is but will hold less bias
- Invest in software that selects the best candidates based on answers to specific questions?

There are tools you can use to remove gender and other factors from your selection process.

2. Test your new blind selection process and revise as needed.

Framework 5: Checklist for creating an inclusive culture

OBJECTIVE

Create an inclusive culture.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

A culture that allows for all voices to be heard. One that embraces and promotes gender diversity.

WHY IT MATTERS

Creating a diverse workforce by increasing access to your organisation by all genders (amongst other diversity factors) isn't enough. You must also have an inclusive culture in order to retain and benefit from that diversity.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Culture in Practice

FRAMEWORK

1. Define what having an inclusive culture means to you as an organisation, and how it will allow you to achieve your vision, goals, and objectives.
2. Co-develop shared language for talking about gender diversity and inclusion with the people within your organisation and make sure everyone - from senior learners to junior staff - understand it (e.g. it's about valuing differences and making sure everyone's voices are being heard, and opinions considered. An environment where people feel empowered to bring their full selves to work.). This can be achieved through communications, formal training, etc.
3. Evaluate your current culture via meetings, anonymous tools, etc. and understand your current employee experience, before you start making changes. Look at daily interactions, not just big gestures. Employee surveys and focus groups candrill down on engagement and inclusion issues. Conduct a comprehensive assessment of your organisation's demographics and people processes to develop specific strategies to promote inclusiveness - recruitment to retention x engagement surveys.
4. Identify gaps, or issues. Link these gaps back to a business case for fixing them - how can it lead to better outcomes?



FRAMEWORK

5. Consider what could help in creating the culture you want - and establish strategies and metrics.
6. Test, get feedback, learn, and apply - Cultivating inclusion is an evolving process with constantly moving targets." You're never done." A company's goals and tactics must evolve along with the needs of current and potential talent.

Example of strategies that might help, depending on the identified gaps within your context:

- Gender or inclusion committee. Ensure there are people from all parts of the organisation.
- Provide a safe space for people to voice their concerns.
- A meditation or prayer room.
- Mother's room for pregnant or lactating women.
- Determine the moments of truth in the workplace where any individual can impact diversity and inclusion: meetings (meeting times and locations, meeting prep, create a productive space)

Framework 6: Selection Criteria for Entrepreneurs

OBJECTIVE

Remove bias from selection process in order to create equal access to your program by all genders, and recruit a more gender diverse cohort.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Strong, predetermined selection criteria that does not promote bias and helps you fairly and effectively evaluate applicants with different but equal experiences.

WHY IT MATTERS

Even if you have awareness of your own biases, it can be difficult to completely remove bias when you make the decision of which entrepreneurs to accept to your program. That's because bias is unconscious. Adapting your selection process to remove items that can promote bias can therefore help you and your team to make better selection decisions.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Selection Process

FRAMEWORK

1. Review your existing selection processes and look out for the following:

How do you currently select your cohort ventures? Is there a set of criteria in place? If so, do these promote bias?

Agree to criteria in advance of seeing applicants. This helps you fairly and effectively evaluate ventures. Disregard unnecessary criteria that can promote bias.

How do you prioritise the skills and abilities of the entrepreneurs, as well as characteristics of their ventures that you are looking for? What do you value most? Is it a strong team, traction, or certain factors that show potential?

Agree on and prioritize the elements you are looking for before you start the selection process interview.

How do you currently compare one applicant against another? Is there a strong process in place?

Use data and facts to evaluate applicants in the same way. Create a standard evaluation system and metrics and train staff involved in the selection process to use them the same way.

2. Test your new selection criteria and revise as needed.

Framework 7: Running a Blind Selection Process for Entrepreneurs

OBJECTIVE

Remove bias from selection process in order to create equal access to your organisation by all genders, and recruit a more gender diverse cohort.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Selection process that minimises bias.

WHY IT MATTERS

Bias can affect your judgement, and lead you to make decisions in favor of one person or group to the detriment of others.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Team Recruitment

FRAMEWORK

1. Review your existing selection processes and identify any elements that can give away the applicants' genders. To minimise bias, it is also helpful to remove other factors related to race and demographic information. Note that it can be challenging to run a completely blind selection process, but you can start by removing names and demographic information.

Do you need the name, photo, or a video pitch from the founders ?

Does the college they studied at matter? Is educational attainment likely to be linked with one gender group over another?

Do you need to look at their online profiles? And if so, when can you do this so that you minimise bias in your selection process?

If you cannot make your interviews blind, how can you minimise bias in other ways? Eg. have a diverse set of interviewers and a strong predefined set of selection criteria

There are tools you can use to remove gender and other factors from your selection process.

2. Test your new blind selection process and revise as needed.

Framework 8: Reviewing interview questions and processes

OBJECTIVE

Remove bias from the selection process

KEY OUTCOME/USES

A structured interview process that minimises bias

WHY IT MATTERS

It can be challenging to remove our own biases, even if and when we're aware of them. There are ways to minimise bias in the interview process.

REFERENCE BACK TO MAIN SECTION

Selection of entrepreneurs

FRAMEWORK

1. Review your existing interview process and identify the parts that may promote bias:

How much judgement is required from the interviewers? Are all interviewees asked the same questions?

How do we currently assess whether an answer is good or bad?

2. Revise your interview process to address the issues identified:

All applicants answer the exact same set of questions. This makes comparing applicants' answers easier, and levels out the playing field.

Capture answers in a consistent way across all interviews. This can be done via a rubric, taking

notes etc. Ensure that if you use a rating system you detail your reasoning for allocating a specific score.

Agree on in advance what a great, acceptable and poor answer to each question looks like.

Have individual interviews to avoid groupthink. Or have group interviews where each interviewer is required to share their thinking prior to sharing with the group.

Have diversity in the people who are interviewing the ventures.

3. Every time you make a change, test it and adapt as needed.

Framework 9: Reviewing Marketing Collateral

OBJECTIVE

Remove bias from recruitment process.

KEY OUTCOME/USES

Marketing collateral that appeals to all genders equally.

WHY IT MATTERS

Program marketing collateral, and the channels through which it is shared, generally form a key part of the recruitment process to attract the right type of entrepreneurs. However, your culture and the value of your program may not always be clear to those outside of your organisation. Explicitly calling out your commitment to gender diversity, equality and inclusion can act as a signal to encourage a more diverse pool of entrepreneurs to apply.

FRAMEWORK

Review images: ensure images of all genders and cultures are represented across your marketing and communications. Often, people are attracted to those that look like them because they identify with them. This is the notion of 'you can't be what you can't see'.

Stock images may not be representative of the entrepreneurs that you are trying to serve. Female applicants will be biased to seeking programs where women who are supported look like them.

Review language and copy: be explicit about your commitment to gender diversity, equality and inclusion.

Example wording:

- We encourage all men and women to apply (if other genders exist within your context, you can add it here too).
- Our organisation is committed to gender equality, diversity and inclusion. We offer dedicated facilities and support for young mothers.
- If you have any limitations that prevent you from applying, please give us a call to discuss. We want to create access for the best entrepreneurs and will do our best to cater for your challenges so you can participate.

Example 1: Company Policy

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example provides suggested wording around how an organisation can create a Policy around Gender.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

An explicit Policy highlights the organisation's commitment to gender from the top down and also ensures that it is considered and implemented throughout the organisation.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A policy ensures accountability. Without an explicit policy, people can talk about something or want something, but there is no mandate or commitment to follow through.

A policy also guides decision making through all levels of the organisation and through time.

COMPANY POLICY EXAMPLE(S)

Diversity and inclusion

DFAT recognises the importance of valuing diversity and promoting inclusion. We especially value the unique qualities, attributes, skills and experiences our employees bring to the workplace. Moreover, as the department that represents Australia to the world, it is important we reflect the diversity of the Australian population.

Diversity relates to sex, gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, sexual orientation, intersex status, religious beliefs, educational level, professional skills, work experience, socio-economic background, career obligations and/ or other factors that make us unique. An employee's family, carer and other responsibilities, and the need to balance these with work, also contributes to the diversity of our workforce. We take an intersectional approach to diversity and inclusion, and recognise people may identify with multiple diversity groups.

The objectives of the department's diversity and inclusion program are:

- to raise awareness and understanding of challenges and opportunities facing people on the basis of their diversity
- to remove barriers and ensure workplace equity
- to lead training and development of diversity and inclusion principles
- to draw on diversity and inclusion in undertaking our core business more effectively
- to help employees to balance work, personal, cultural and other responsibilities
- to support our staff diversity networks.

Source: <https://dfat.gov.au/careers/dfat-aps-careers/Pages/diversity-and-inclusion.aspx>

Example 2: Board Matrix

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

The Board Matrix below is an example of how a Board can identify key skills and gaps in its composition. This can help inform succession planning as well as board renewal.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

Included in the Board Matrix are items relating to gender expertise.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

By including this we can ensure that commitment to gender starts at the top of the organisation and that there is a recognition for the need of this expertise in all Governance and Leadership decision making.

BOARD MEMBER SKILLS MATRIX

Example of wording for Diversity & Inclusion expertise needed on the Board:

“Expertise and understanding in how to identify and implement practices to ensure deep contextualised diversity and inclusion across all facets of an organisation and their products and services”

[Example Board matrix \(below\)](#)

EYGAP Board Member Skills Matrix

Completing the Board Matrix:

The four areas to consider in director competence are:

1. Industry: Experience in and knowledge of the industry in which the organisation operates.
2. Technical: Technical/professional skills and specialist knowledge to assist with ongoing aspects of the board’s role.
3. Governance: The essential governance knowledge and understanding all directors should possess or develop if they are to be effective board members. Includes some specific technical competencies as applied at board level.
4. Behavioural: The attributes and competencies enabling individual board members to use their knowledge and skills to function well as team members and to interact with key stakeholders.

Rate: 1 - No experience, 2 - Some experience, 3 - Adequately skilled, 4 - Mastery of skill

BOARD MEMBER SKILLS MATRIX

Skills	Member 1	Member 2	Member 3	Member 4	Member 5	Member 6
Strategic Capability	4	4	4	4	3	3
General Board duties - experience	3	3	2	3	2	2
Executive experience	4	4	4	3	4	2
Audit, accounting and financial management	2	3	1	2	2	1
Legal	1	1	1	1	1	1
Governance/risk management	3	3	1	3	1	2
Fundraising and not-for-profit sector	3	3	3	4	3	3
Marketing/digital media/communications/media relations	3	3	3	3	2	3
Grants administration	1	2	3	4	4	1
Impact Investment	1	4	3	2	2	1
Business Acumen	4	4	3	3	3	3
Diversity - Gender	4	3	2	4	3	3
Diversity - Cultural	4	3	2	4	3	3
Diversity - Country experience	4	3	2	4	3	3
Alignment with the organisation's vision and values	4	4	4	4	4	4
People management and HR	4	4	3	3	3	3
Skill in building partnerships, managing stakeholders and collaboration	4	4	3	4	2	3
Emerging Market Experience	4	1	4	3	4	2
Startup Entrepreneurship Experience	3	3	4	3	4	3

Example 3: Organisational Code of Conduct

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example provides suggested wording around how an organisation can create a code of conduct that considers gender.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

A code of conduct highlights the organisation's commitment to gender from the top down and also ensures that it is considered and implemented throughout the organisation.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Having a well-structured, clear code of conduct is essential. It is a guide for consistent, fair and values-aligned decision making within the organisation, especially when it comes to dealing with issues related to ethics. Including gender into your code of conduct further ensures that everyone, both internally and externally, has a clear understanding of your organisation's commitment to gender equality, diversity and inclusion.

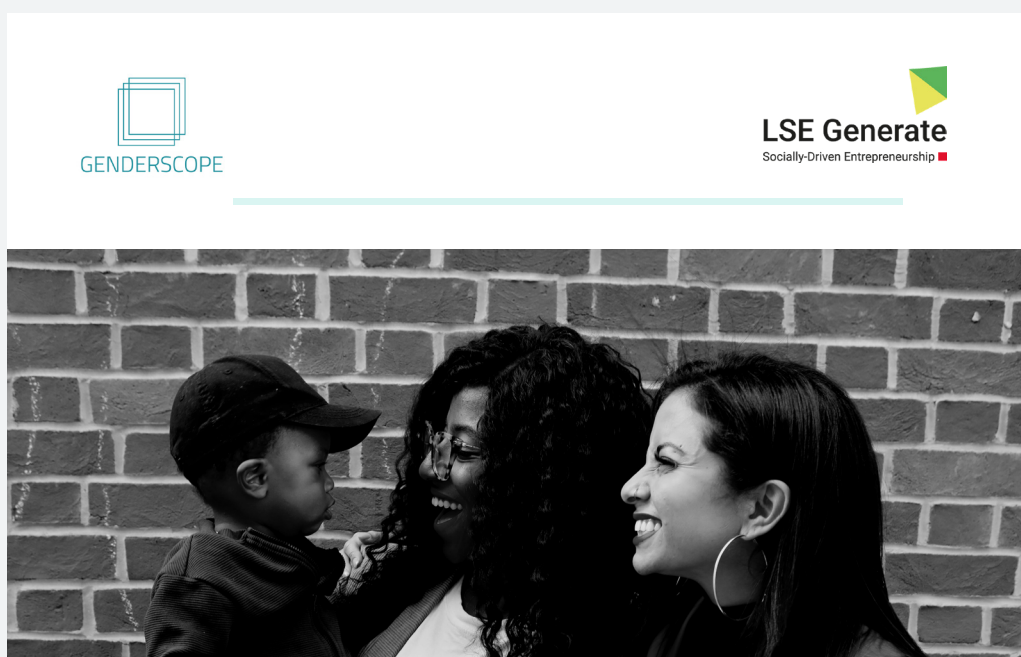
A code of conduct also protects the team and organisation against 'bad' or unwanted behaviour. This protects all genders and provides an equal platform from which to operate from.

Once you have created your code of conduct it is essential to communicate it so that both internally and externally, everyone is aware of the organisation's standard of conduct. It is also important to have regular reviews to ensure relevance and currency.

ORGANISATIONAL CODE OF CONDUCT EXAMPLE (S)

Example of gender sensitive code of conduct created by LSE Generate in partnership with Genderscope:

<https://info.lse.ac.uk/staff/divisions/research-and-innovation/assets/Documents/PDF/Generate-Official-Gender-Sensitive-Code-of-Conduct.pdf>



Example 4: Job Descriptions

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example provides suggested wording for a diversity statement that can be included in job descriptions.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

A diversity statement shares your organisation’s commitment to fostering gender diversity, equality and inclusion with potential job applicants.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Job descriptions, and the channels through which they are shared, generally form a key part of the recruitment process to attract the right talent. However, your culture and values may not always be clear to those outside of your organisation. Including a statement in your job descriptions can act as a signal to encourage a more diverse pool of people to apply.

JOB DESCRIPTION EXAMPLE(S)

Criterion Institute is committed to diversity and to equal opportunity employment. Criterion Institute does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, height, weight, physical or mental ability (including HIV status), veteran status, military obligations, or marital status.

Source: <https://criterioninstitute.org/engage/work-with-us>

The screenshot shows the Criterion Institute website. At the top, the logo 'CRITERION INSTITUTE' is on the left, and a navigation menu with 'ABOUT', 'OUR WORK', 'EXPLORE', and 'ENGAGE' is on the right. Below the navigation is a dark blue header with 'Work with us' on the left and a breadcrumb trail 'Home / Engage / Work with us' on the right. The main content area has a 'Hello!' greeting, followed by a paragraph: 'We appreciate your interest in Criterion! Currently, we do not have any open positions and we encourage you to check back and sign up to stay connected here – //criterioninstitute.org/engage/connect.' Below this is a paragraph of italicized text: 'Criterion Institute is committed to diversity and to equal opportunity employment. Criterion Institute does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, height, weight, physical or mental ability (including HIV status), veteran status, military obligations, or marital status. This policy applies to hiring, internal promotions, training, opportunities for advancement, and terminations and applies to all Criterion Institute’s employees, volunteers, members, clients, and contractors.' On the right side, there is a sidebar with three links: 'Donate', 'Volunteer', and 'Connect with Us', each with a horizontal line below it.

Example 5: Bias Training

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example suggests potential agenda items you could cover when running training with your team on how to run a fair, values-aligned recruitment and selection process of new staff to your organisation.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

This training highlights the organisation's commitment to achieving gender equality, diversity and inclusion right from the recruitment process of new staff. It can ensure everyone within the organisation who takes part in the recruitment and selection process for new staff understands how they can reduce bias in the process.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

If you are a small organisation, it is likely that you do not have a dedicated Human Resources team that takes care of recruitment and selection for your organisation. You may instead rely on your existing team to write position descriptions, advertise them through various channels and take candidates through the selection process (e.g. initial CV or application screening, interviews, etc.). If this is the case, it is important for your team to be aware of how they can integrate gender equality into all phases of recruitment and selection.

BIAS TRAINING EXAMPLE(S)

Below is an example of what a training agenda could include. Note: depending on time capacity, this could be divided into several smaller sessions.

Training agenda for recruitment

Topic	Desired outputs/outcomes	Example structure/content
Writing a job description	Job descriptions that appeal to all genders	How to write a gender accessible and inclusive position description
Creating job advertisements	Job advertisements that appeal to all genders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visuals • Focussing on skills and experience • Using gender neutral terms
Selecting the right recruitment channels	Recruitment channels that reach all genders	Ensuring that the advertisement and position descriptions are accessible to a gender diverse audience. Instead of only using the company website and online social channels, this can include newspapers, magazines, outdoor media, events, other companies' online groups, etc.
Selection process	A fair and unbiased selection process	<p>Minimising bias and increasing the chances of obtaining diversity from the selection process.</p> <p>Sometimes our biases are unconscious, so conducting awareness training to share common biases that are present in recruitment processes within your context. This can help people involved in the selection process more easily recognise when bias is affecting their judgement. For example, this could include rejecting a person's CV because they took a career gap to take parental leave or assumptions about a woman's capability to do a senior leadership role based on societal norms. It can also include defining clear selection criteria and running a blind selection process. You can also have the candidates perform tasks that showcase their skills.</p>
Conducting interviews	Fair and unbiased interview process	How to conduct interviews to minimise bias
Outsourcing part of the process	Outsourced process that is fair, unbiased and values-aligned	If you're outsourcing recruitment and/or selection to a recruitment agency, provide them with clear instructions in order to avoid discrimination and minimise bias in the writing of job advertisements and in the selection process. Also choose, if available, an agency that is aware of gender equality issues. You can also invite someone from the agency to come take part in your training.

Example 6: Awareness Training

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example suggests potential agenda items you could cover when running internal gender training with your team.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

Gender training highlights the organisation's commitment to achieving gender equality, diversity and inclusion. It can ensure everyone within the organisation understands the organisation's policies and code of conduct as well as has the tools to apply a gender lens to their own work and environment.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

Concepts around gender and applying a gender lens can be complex to understand. Training is critical to ensure that everyone has a clear understanding of the concepts and how the organisation intends to apply a gender lens to their work.

Being deliberate about applying a gender lens to what we do requires us to question and become aware of our own power, privilege and biases, and to uncover how these impact our work. This often requires a mindset shift. Training can support this process to ensure that your team and facilitators are not only considering gender because they have been told to, but that they truly understand how considering the needs of different genders in their work can help them and the organisation achieve desired outcomes.

AWARENESS TRAINING EXAMPLE(S)

Below is an example of what a training agenda could include. Note: depending on time capacity, this could be divided into several smaller sessions.

Training agenda for recruitment

Session

Understanding of gender and how gender relates to power, privilege and bias.

Desired outputs/outcomes

Understanding of key concepts and how they relate to them.

Desired outputs/outcomes

Concepts you can cover:

- Gender
- Power
- Privilege
- Unconscious bias
- Gender equality
- Gender equity
- Gender diversity
- Gender inclusion

Use examples that apply to your local context, and do not hesitate to translate key concepts into local languages.

Use helpful videos to illustrate the concepts. Examples include:

- Run like a girl
- The privilege walk

If time permits (or ahead of time) get them to do implicit bias tests <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/selectatest.html> or watch these videos
 FB Managing Unconscious Bias training <https://managingbias.fb.com/> (downloadable slides)
 Grovo Unconscious bias training <https://www.grovo.com/addressing-unconscious-bias>

Have everyone break into small groups and discuss examples of these concepts, or what they mean to them. At this point, it is interesting to see if definitions vary based on factors like age.

Share back with group.

AWARENESS TRAINING EXAMPLE(S)

Session

Applying a gender lens to our work - whole organisation

Desired outputs/outcomes

Understanding of how the organisation is being deliberate about considering gender in everything they do.

Desired outputs/outcomes

Leverage organisation section of the toolkit.

If you already have a policy, code of conduct or value statement relating to gender diversity, equality and inclusion, share these as well as the process of how you came up with them as an organisation.

If you haven't established anything, you can build on the last session and get the group to come up with common definitions of gender diversity, equality and inclusion. This can inform your value statement and start to build an inclusive culture.

Session

Applying a gender lens to our work - program

Desired outputs/outcomes

Understanding of how they can apply a gender lens to the design and delivery of their programs.

Desired outputs/outcomes

Leverage different sections of the toolkit, depending on who is in the room.

Have people sit in teams and identify gender-related issues within their line of work. On the back of this, have them set a gender objective. Have them brainstorm some strategies. Share with them relevant parts of the toolkit as it may provide helpful strategies, examples and case studies.

Have each person commit to 1 - 2 action items they can take forward (e.g. problems to investigate, research, strategies to try, etc.)

Example 7: Mentor/Mentee Code of Conduct

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example provides suggested wording for a mentor/mentee code of conduct, outlining a set of rules around what constitutes acceptable versus unacceptable behaviour in a mentor and mentee relationship.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

This code of conduct takes into account the power dynamics that exist between mentors and mentees, and explicitly states the organisation's commitment to gender diversity, equality and inclusion.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

There can be significant power dynamics between entrepreneurs and those supporting them, including mentors. When power dynamics are not addressed they can lead to negative relationship outcomes ranging from a mentee not receiving any value from their mentor to incidences of intimidation or assault. An intermediary can address these by putting a code of conduct in place, that both parties sign and agree to.

MENTOR/MENTEE CODE OF CONDUCT EXAMPLE(S)

All entrepreneurs and mentors should sign a [Code of Conduct](#) document before they start their relationship with one another.

In many cases, a three point approach works best:

- Discuss verbally in an open forum
- Have participants read and sign documents
- Reiterate regularly and deliberately and call out inappropriate behaviour as soon as it happens.
- Establish clear lines of reporting to help you address issues as they arise

Example 8: Curriculum Content

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example provides topics related to gender you can cover with your entrepreneurs as part of your curriculum, as well as tips on how you can make any content you deliver within your program gender inclusive.

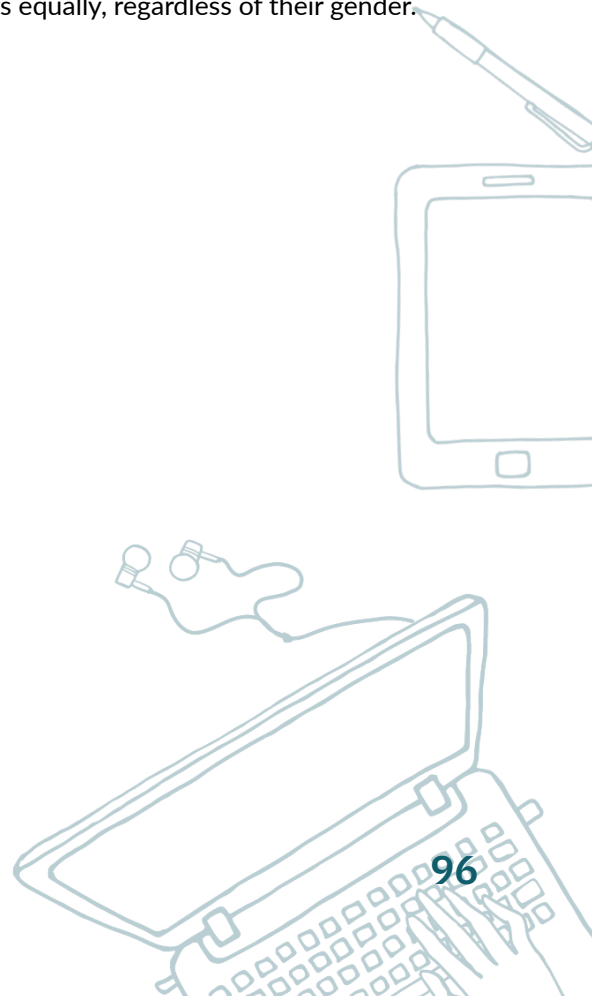
HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

Session topics are provided for workshops you could deliver that directly address gender in the context of your entrepreneurs and their ventures. The tips provided allow you to consider gender in how you design and deliver any content, regardless of the topic, to ensure it is valuable for all genders represented amongst the entrepreneurs in your program.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

It is important for entrepreneurs within your program to understand the power dynamics and gender biases that exist in the ecosystem and world around them. This helps them to design their products and services to be accessible and inclusive of all genders. It also enables them to more deliberately increase their own understanding of how existing power dynamics and biases can impact them personally or their venture.

Applying a gender lens to how you design and deliver content as part of your program can ensure that the value you are providing via your curriculum is being received by all entrepreneurs equally, regardless of their gender.



CURRICULUM CONTENT EXAMPLE(S)

1. Develop sessions within your curriculum. You can either do this by researching open content, or by getting an expert to develop and/or deliver these sessions within your local context.
 - a) Imposter syndrome
 - b) Confidence training
 - c) Raising investment
 - d) Negotiation skills
 - e) Human resources
 - f) Gender-based violence
 - g) Unconscious gender bias when creating products and services
2. Ensure a gender lens is applied throughout the whole curriculum in how sessions are designed and delivered.

Case-studies and examples

Ensure that case-studies and examples provided consider different genders.

Consider the impact on how the case study will resonate with different genders - e.g. if all case studies are of female founders, will this resonate with male founders and vice versa?

Consider which gender(S) are profiled in success stories and failure stories to ensure one gender is not profiled over another

Ensure examples are not offensive to different genders. Invite feedback and create a space so participants can let you know what is and is not appropriate in a safe environment

Content considers different levels of understanding

Consider the level of literacy and education of different genders and ensure the content is delivered at the levels required

Ensure support is available for those who have the ability but not yet the skills

Mode of involvement considers gender

Consider when there is group work or presentations if this is the most effective way for all genders to participate (e.g. in some cultures, women are not permitted to speak/ or question in front of men)

Offer a variety of opportunities to participate to ensure inclusion (e.g. small group sessions, confidential feedback options, providing input in writing as opposed to verbally reporting back)

Consider how teams are created to ensure it is appropriate for the culture and genders

Curriculum considers different genders in material

Referring to genders of CEOs, ensure all genders are used in how they are referenced (e.g. The CEO of this venture mentioned that she was...)

Language and delivery

Ensure there is space during the content delivery for the needs of different genders (E.g. female founders may need time to feed their young child, both genders may need time for religious prayers)

Consider different modes of delivery that might be more suitable for different genders (e.g. online may be more accessible for parents of young children)

Example 9: Applying a gender lens to your investments

WHAT IS THIS EXAMPLE?

This example provides different lenses through which you can evaluate investment decisions to ensure that gender is being considered.

HOW IS GENDER INCLUDED IN THIS EXAMPLE?

The different lenses explicitly consider gender.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

As intermediaries, we can use our power to advance gender equality through our investment decisions, all whilst making a financial return. We can also influence investors within our ecosystem to consider gender within their investment thesis.



APPLYING A GENDER LENS TO YOUR INVESTMENTS EXAMPLE(S)

The Criterion Institute apply **three distinct lenses** when analysing investment decisions. Each lens identifies ways in an investment can positively impact women and girls. (please refer to the link for the source and a more detailed explanation)

Gender equity in the workplace

Does the venture have policies and training in place to increase gender equity in the workplace?
What is the level of gender equity in the workplace?

Access to capital for women

Does the enterprise work to reduce the access to capital gender gap?
Can an investment be made to actively reduce the ‘access to capital’ gender gap?

Products and services that benefit women (reduce burden and/or empower women)

Does the enterprise design and sell products that benefit women? (e.g. reproductive, maternal health products, water wheels)

A variety of criteria may be included in your due diligence of enterprises when applying a gender lens to your investment decisions. Often these will align to your gender objective. Some examples are in the table below. Note: some or all may apply depending on the stage and/or maturity of the enterprise in which the investment is being made.

Gender Objective	Example of criteria that may be included in the due diligence criteria	Assessment
To ensure enterprises have a gender inclusive workplace	The enterprise has a gender mandate for their team, leadership and board that ensures gender diversity and inclusion	Rating: 5) has demonstrated, implemented and measured this
	The enterprise have gender equality policies and they are continuously implemented that ensure gender diversity and inclusion	4) has implemented this
	The enterprise has a gender diverse and gender inclusive workforce	3) Has designed but not implemented
		2) Has considered this
		Has not considered this.

APPLYING A GENDER LENS TO YOUR INVESTMENTS EXAMPLE(S)

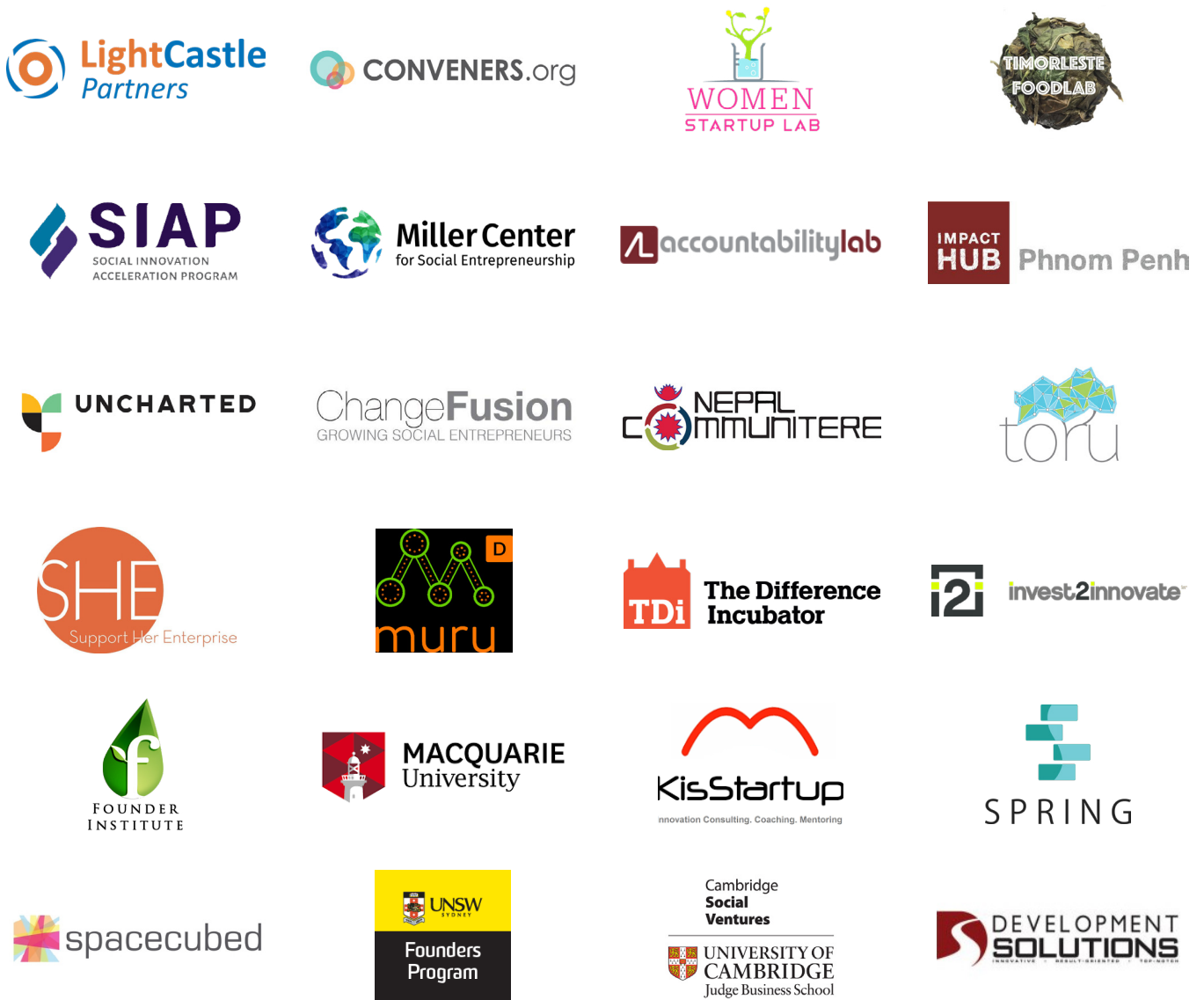
Gender Objective	Example of criteria that may be included in the due diligence criteria	Assessment
<p>To ensure that products and services benefit all genders</p>	<p>The enterprise have considered and designed their product and service with the different genders in the design team and for the genders of the consumers The product or service is of a benefit for women (and all genders)</p>	<p>Rating: 5) has demonstrated, implemented and measured this 4) has implemented this 3) Has designed but not implemented 2) Has considered this Has not considered this</p>
<p>That the enterprise creates employment for all genders</p>	<p>The enterprise is deliberate about creating access to employment for all genders The enterprise creates equal employment opportunity and provides equal benefits to employees of all genders</p>	<p>Rating: 5) has demonstrated, implemented and measured this 4) has implemented this 3) Has designed but not implemented 2) Has considered this 1) Has not considered this</p>

About

Initial Research

Prior to this, both online research and outreach into current practices in gender lens incubation and acceleration was conducted. The aim of this research was to uncover best practices in how intermediaries have applied a gender lens to their organisation, program, and ecosystem. Both the research and the pilot also aimed to understand the barriers intermediaries face when considering gender in how they operate, engage, and deliver their work.

We would like to thank the intermediaries within and outside of Southeast Asia who participated in the initial research conducted to develop the GLIA Toolkit. Their contributions have helped to make this guide as practical and relevant as possible for intermediaries like themselves, who are delivering incubator and accelerator programs in a variety of sectors and contexts.



Research

Research into current practices in gender lens incubation and acceleration was conducted as part of the development of this toolkit. The aim of this research was to uncover best practices in how intermediaries have applied a gender lens to their organisation, program, and ecosystem. A 7-month pilot was also conducted with intermediaries to test and provide feedback on the usability and functionality of the toolkit. Both the research and the pilot also aimed to understand the barriers intermediaries face when considering gender in how they operate, engage, and deliver their work.

Key contributors to the research:

1. Over 40 intermediaries were either surveyed or interviewed as part of our initial best practices research. The majority are operating within the Asia Pacific Region, with a few from the US. It included a mix of social impact specific intermediaries, as well as those focused on technology.
2. Six intermediaries from Southeast Asia were selected to take part in the pilot program.

Key findings from the initial best practices research:

Overall, our research revealed that:

1. Very few intermediaries are currently using a deliberate approach to applying a gender lens throughout all their work - in their organisation, program and in how they engage with their broader ecosystem.
2. A larger number of intermediaries have attempted to apply a gender lens to try and solve specific issues within their work, one of the most mentioned being to attract more female applicants in order to increase the gender diversity of their cohorts.
3. The intermediaries we interviewed cited a lack of role models, case studies, and research as being key barriers to deliberately applying a gender lens to their work. They mentioned that training resources, personal assistance through seminars and workshops, and examples of strategies used would be helpful for them to get started in, or strengthen their approach.

4. Female-only programs were more likely to have considered how their activities are experienced by female entrepreneurs than mixed-gender programs. They were more likely to have researched the specific needs of female entrepreneurs, and cater to the needs of female entrepreneurs as part of their organisation, program, and in how they're trying to influence their broader ecosystem.

Key findings from our pilot program:

1. By breaking it down into how it applies to an intermediary's organisation, program and ecosystem, as well as providing example strategies, this toolkit makes the process of applying a gender lens less intimidating.
2. There is no one way to use this toolkit. Whilst some intermediaries read the toolkit from cover to cover, others focussed on specific parts.
3. Intermediaries are able to use the toolkit to benefit their work. Case studies illustrating how the six intermediaries who participated in the pilot were able to apply the toolkit to their work, and what they were able to achieve, are included throughout.
4. Translation may be needed moving forward to make this toolkit accessible more widely.

The strategies that were shared with us by our research and pilot partners have been included as part of this toolkit, as examples.

This exercise sheet aims to provide a practical and valuable process to identify and address gender issues relating to all of the components contained within the GLIA toolkit, whether these relate to your organisation, program or ecosystem.

Although we've proposed strategies as part of this toolkit, the below process is meant as a guide to support you in making sure that the strategy you decide to implement is the right one for your context, and solves a real issue. It may be that the strategy required to solve a specific issue within your work isn't included within this toolkit. This isn't a problem, it is an opportunity for you to develop your own strategies as a team. This exercise sheet can also be used as a tool to facilitate a discussion.

Although it may be tempting to try and solve for all gender-related issues at once, and implement multiple strategies, we recommend being focused, and defining a specific project to start with. If you're still unsure as to how this toolkit or exercise sheet could apply to you and your work, we recommend you reading through the case studies available throughout the toolkit. The latter will provide you with examples of how other intermediaries have used the toolkit.

Project Plan template

1. IDENTIFYING THE GENDER ISSUE

What issue have you identified?

What are some factors that could be contributing to this?

What research can we do to explore these factors or identify new ones?

What are some of the research methods we can use to understand more?

What cause or causes of the issue has our research uncovered?

Cause we will focus on first:

2. SETTING A GENDER OBJECTIVE

By addressing this issue, what change would you like to see?

How will you get there? Will you set quotas, mandates and/or considerations?

Gender Objective:

3. SELECTING THE RIGHT STRATEGIES

Who should be involved in solving this issue?

What are some strategies that you can use as a team to solve this issue?

Of these, which strategies can you use with the resources available to you?

What small tests can you do to identify the best strategy, which will allow you to meet your goal?

Strategy we will focus on implementing first:

4. CREATING AN IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Implementation plan:

Checklist

- Clear gender objective/s
- Milestones and measurable indicators
- Strong support from your board and leadership team
- Adequate resourcing (money, time, people) to carry out implementation plan
- Accountability by all concerned

Step 1: Issue Identification

What problem are we trying to solve? What is causing this problem?

Before jumping into solution mode, we need to **first explore and identify the specific gender issues at play within our context** that are causing us to not have the gender equality, diversity, accessibility or inclusivity that we desire within our organisation, program and/or ecosystem. This is an important step to ensure that we are creating strategies that will allow us to reach our goals.

Once we believe that we have identified the gender-related issues that need to be addressed, we then need to conduct **further research** to understand what is the **root cause** of those issues. (Note - identifying gender-related issues can be complex and will continue to change due to the constantly evolving ecosystem. This is ok. What is important is that we create space to be deliberate and evolve to respond to what is needed).

To perform this research, select the method that will provide you with the best insights. If you want to better understand a select group of people's perceptions of a topic, you could run a small focus group. If you want to collect a large group's thoughts on a topic, you could send out a survey. If the latter is about a sensitive topic, you could make the survey anonymous to encourage participants to provide honest answers.

Example:

If I wanted to understand why our organisation's team lacks gender diversity, I might perform an analysis of our current team's composition, breaking it down into seniority levels, salaries, and more. I might also review our recruitment practices as well as our organisational culture, and interview current team members. I might also perform desktop research to understand whether this is a common issue, and what some common causes include. Through this process, I might find out that for our organisation, the root cause of the problem isn't our recruitment practices, it is our organisational culture that isn't inclusive of all genders. As a result of this, we are unable to retain female team members.



GUIDING Q'S

What issue have you identified?

What are some factors that could be contributing to this?

What research can we do to explore these factors or identify new ones?

What are some of the research methods we can use to understand more?

What cause or causes of the issue has our research uncovered?

What cause do we want to focus on and try and solve first?

Step 2 : Defining your Gender Objective

What are we trying to achieve? What is our goal?

This is an important step. As an intermediary, we can often find ourselves limited in time, staff and funding we can allocate to new efforts. Setting gender objectives upfront is key to being able to focus our energy and efforts towards achieving our gender-related goals effectively and efficiently. This does not mean that our objectives cannot change or be revised as we progress through our gender lens journey.

Examples of gender objectives can be:

1. Have a gender inclusive team
2. Achieve a 50/50 gender split at all levels of our organisation
3. Strive for gender equality through gender equity, diversity and inclusivity

Your gender objectives can be as specific as you would like to make them, and you can have specific ones for your organisation, program and ecosystem.

Once we have defined our gender objective(s), we need to ask ourselves how we're going to achieve these. Is it through setting a quota, having a mandate, having it as a consideration?

Example

My gender objective may be to increase gender diversity and equality within my team.

Examples of how I might achieve this gender objective:

- Set a quota: A 'Quota' defines a clear metric to achieve as part of the objective
e.g. achieve 50% gender split within my team
- Set a mandate: A 'Mandate' may not have a quantity or metric, but is a defining principle of operations e.g. ensure our senior management team contains women
- Have it as a consideration: A 'Consideration' is about how something might be thought about. It may or may not lead to any change e.g. when recruiting new team members, we will consider how gender inclusive our processes are
- None: I may decide that I won't have a quota, mandate or consideration, I will just test and implement strategies to achieve my objectives.

GUIDING Q'S

By addressing this issue, what change would you like to see?

How will you get there? Will you set quotas, mandates and/or considerations?

Step 3: Creating Strategies to solve the issue and achieve our gender objective

Once we have defined our gender objective, validated our gender-related issues and understood what is causing them, the next step is to create strategies for how we're going to address these in order to achieve our gender objective/s.

To do this, it is good to ideate as a team and get input from those directly impacted by these issues. If possible, one of the best ways is to speak to experts in the field. Gender experts, like the Criterion Institute, exist only to work in this space. These experts can provide valuable guidance around strategies that are bespoke to you and what will work within your context. We can also look at what other intermediaries, or similar organisations, have done to solve the same or similar issues. This can include the strategies suggested throughout this toolkit.

At this stage, any strategies we come up with should be treated as an experiment, as they still need to be tested within our specific contexts to see whether they work to achieve our desired outcomes.

When we have identified a possible strategy, we need to test its effectiveness in a lean way. To do this, it can be helpful to **reframe the strategy as a hypothesis** e.g. increasing the number of women on our Board will improve our organisation's decision-making ability. This

allows us to then set measures around what success looks like, to validate our hypothesis.

When selecting strategies, we also want to consider how difficult a strategy will be to implement. This can take into account:

- a. the time required, and
- b. the resources available to us (funding, human resources)

Although hiring 3 new female Board Members may help us meet our gender objective of having a 50% gender split on our Board, this may not be feasible right away. Adapting our recruitment and selection efforts may, for example, be a more appropriate strategy for our organisation at this time.



GUIDING Q'S

Who should be involved in solving this issue?

What are some strategies that you can use as a team to solve this issue?

Of these, which strategies can you use with the resources available to you?

What small tests can you do to identify the best strategy, which will allow you to meet your goal?

What strategy will you focus on implementing first?



Step 4: Creating an implementation plan

Once we have tested our strategies, the next step involves creating an implementation plan. The latter will allow us to achieve and measure the outcomes of our efforts, to ensure we achieve our gender objective/s. Depending on whether we are implementing one strategy, or implementing a gender lens across all of our work, different degrees of change management will be required.

Here are some tips for how to develop a strong implementation plan:

- Clear gender objective/s: ensure that this is clear and that your whole team understand this and agree with it.
- Milestones and measurable indicators: these are important as they will help to inform you of whether you are on the right track to achieving your gender objective/s, and what to do if you are not. Develop these with your team so everyone understands this.
- Strong support from your Board and leadership team : it is critical for everyone, especially key decision makers, to have a deep understanding and support you in this.
- Adequate resourcing (money, time, people) to carry out implementation plan: like with any initiative, it is important to be deliberate about allocating time and resources to making this happen.
- Accountability by all concerned: ensure all stakeholders are involved and 'own' and 'author' their involvement.



GUIDING Q'S

Is everyone within your team and organisation clear on your gender objective?

Are your key decision makers aligned with your goal?

If not, what additional information do they require?

What resources do you need to get started in implementing this strategy?

How can you track and measure whether this strategy is working or not?

Who is accountable for adapting the strategy (if needed) and seeing it through to reaching your gender objective?

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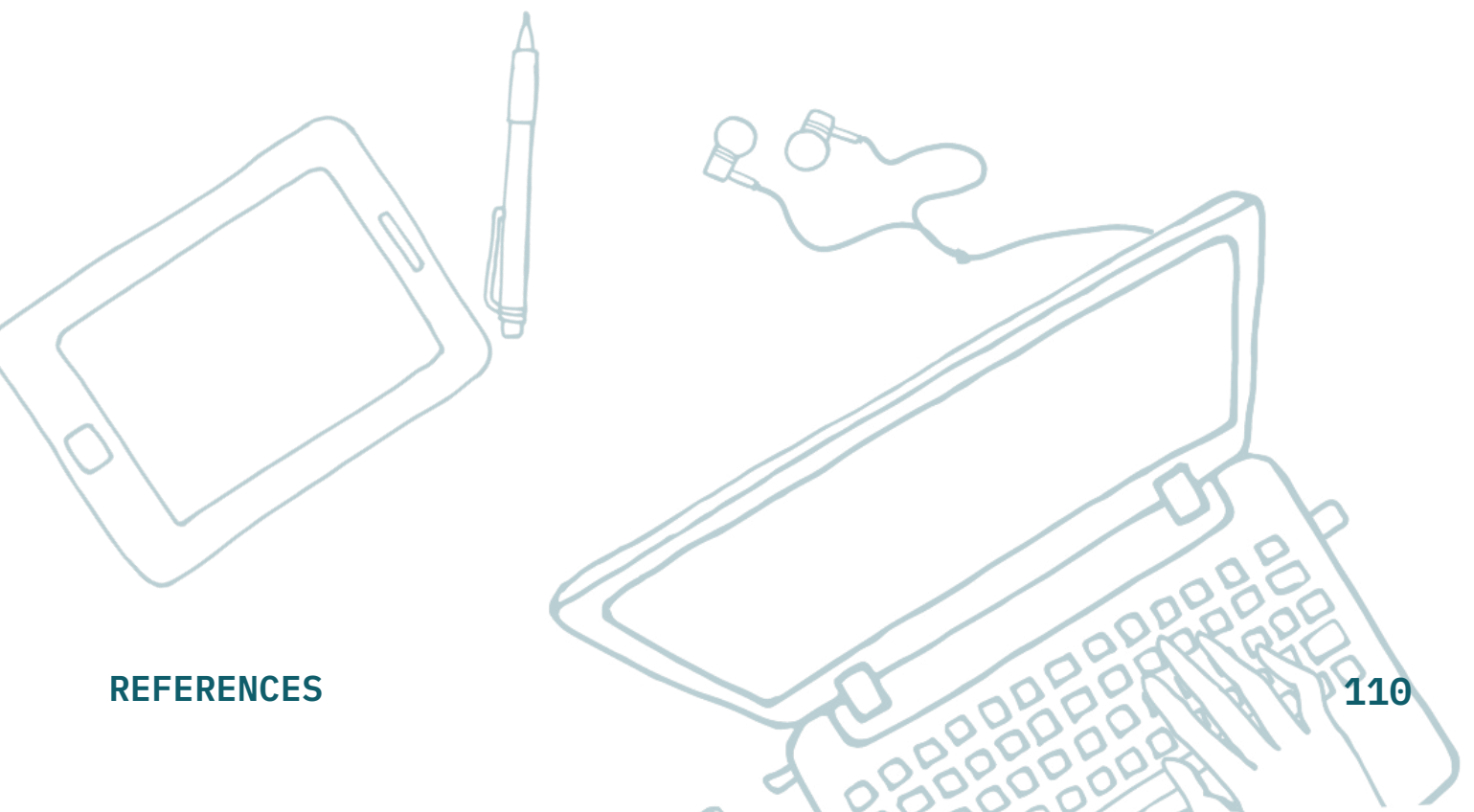
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Contact

If you have any questions or feedback regarding this toolkit, or any other type of enquiry, please email hello@frontierincubators.org



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