TERMS OF REFERENCE

Executive Director

Women's Fund India (WFI) aka South Asia Women Foundation India (SAWF IN)

Position	Executive Director (open only to Indian nationals)
Organisation	WFI aka SAWF IN
Location	New Delhi, India (with regular travel)
Remuneration	CTC ₹33 Lakhs per annum (all inclusive)
Reporting To	Board of Directors, WFI
Type of Role	Full-time

1. About Women's Fund India

What are Women's Funds?

Women's funds emerged as a mechanism to ensure that resources are made available and reach marginalised, dispossessed women and gender non-binary people-led collectives and organisations, for the priorities they identify and the claims they make. Their primary purpose is to provide financial support to women and trans*[1]-led organisations working to advance the leadership and empowerment of these constituencies.

Women's funds develop and expand local philanthropy for women's rights and feminist organisations. They have been at the forefront of advocacy on the human, economic, and social rights of women and girls for decades. Currently, 47 women's funds worldwide work under the umbrella of Prospera, the International Network of Women's Funds, supporting grassroots-led efforts towards sustainable and inclusive social change in over 170 countries.

Genesis and History

Launched in 2015, Women's Fund India (WFI) is a brand of South Asia Women Foundation India (SAWF IN). It has emerged from the work in India undertaken by the then South Asia Women's Fund, now Women's Fund Asia.

WFI is committed to resource justice and to ensuring more and better quality resources flow to women and trans* led initiatives to end inequality and discrimination. It is part of the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds.

In implementing its mandate of resourcing women-led and feminist groups, movements and organisations for gender equality, it has mobilised INR 10 crores and worked with a network of 80 organisations as well as individuals to strengthen action for gender equality.

[1] For SAWF IN, trans* refers to a wide range of gender identities. This umbrella term includes but is not restricted to agender, genderfluid and gender nonconforming identities.

Vision and Mission

WFI envisions a world where women, girls, trans and gender non-binary persons realise their rights and freedoms to equality and non-discrimination, without any bias or obstacles. Its mission is to mobilise domestic and other resources to support movements and initiatives led by women, girls, trans and gender non-binary persons towards the realisation of their human rights.

In summary, WFI takes on the following roles to support gender justice:

- Resource Mobiliser
- Influencer of resources
- Grant-maker, and
- Convener of critical spaces for philanthropists and implementing partners

Mandate and Programmatic Focus

WFI is mandated to:

- Advance philanthropy for gender equality and expand the reach and access of women-led CSOs and feminist groups to financial and non-financial resources, including from newer sources, to ensure the sustainability of programmes for gender equality.
- Enhance access to resources for strengthening leadership of women in all their diversities, particularly in the realm of claim-making, through grant-making strategies.
- Mobilise primarily financial but also non-financial resources from individuals and corporate entities in India to support under-resourced women and trans people-led groups engaged in claiming equality.
- Catalyse shifts in philanthropy with existing donors, corporations and foundations in India so that more and better resources can be galvanised for gender equality- through research, donor engagement and convening within the funding ecosystem.

WFI currently pursues a twin strategy: strengthening CSOs to claim resources, and galvanising the funding ecosystem to lean into resourcing gender equality with intent and flexibility. Support to women-led initiatives takes the following forms:

- Fellowships
- Organisational and programme strengthening grants
- Accompaniment and institutional building support
- Convening safe spaces for collaborative engagement and strategy building

WFI mobilises resources from a range of funders — including legacy, corporate and family foundations, other funds, bilateral funders, CSR resources and HNIs — while also influencing broader funding flows towards gender equality work in India. It undertakes critical convening for partners to learn, challenge and collaborate, and convenes national philanthropists to advance social justice philanthropy.

WFI is an active member of the Asia-Pacific chapter of the Prospera Network, working closely with national, regional and global women's funds for resource justice and gender equality.

2. Role Overview

The Executive Director (ED) is the steward of the organisational mandate of resource justice — both in terms of mobilising resources and ensuring access to resources for implementation of programmes, initiatives and projects across a cross-section of issues highlighted by the multiple movements for gender equality.

Given the role of women's funds vis a vis women's rights movements, the ED is expected to be a core resource mobiliser to advance a value-based approach to ensuring financial resources to strengthen the claims, priorities and programmes being undertaken by women's rights groups and organisations for realising gender equality.

The ED will work with the team to lead and navigate legacy foundations, bilateral funders, private investors and HNIs to harness resources for feminist and women's rights movements in India; in solidarity with the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds and other allies.

The Executive Director will steward WFI's vision of a gender-just and equitable world by strengthening resource flows to gender justice movements. This role will guide the organisation in mobilising resources, shifting power, and amplifying the leadership of women, girls, and gender-diverse communities.

They will anchor WFI's dual mandate: deepening trust-based, women's rights grant-making and fellowships, while influencing and expanding donor commitment to gender-just philanthropy. As a public voice for the organisation, they will engage with movements, donors, and philanthropic institutions to challenge inequities in funding flows and advance more inclusive, accountable, and justice-oriented philanthropy.

Prospera member funds share a commitment to feminist philanthropy, resource justice, and the strengthening of women's and trans*-led movements globally. The ED will work closely with Prospera - the international network of women's funds - to strategise and undertake allied and collaborative efforts for strengthening the social justice resource eco-system.

3. Key Responsibilities

3.1 Strategic Leadership & Organisational Stewardship

- Ensure WFI's strategy is deeply aligned with its vision, mission, and values.
- Lead the co-creation of the Strategic Plan (2026–2029) grounded in intersectional principles.
- Translate strategy into actionable, well-resourced plans with clear accountability.
- Foster an organisational culture rooted in equity, care, learning, and shared leadership.

3.2 Strengthening Women's Rights' Movements for Gender Equality & Transforming Philanthropy

- Lead across WFI's dual pillars: trust-based grant-making and fellowships; and shifting donor power toward gender-just funding.
- Ensure continuous learning from grant-making informs donor engagement strategies.
- Advance flexible, long-term, movement-centred funding approaches.

3.3 Resource Mobilisation

- Build and sustain values-aligned donor partnerships grounded in trust and transparency.
- Expand and diversify funding sources for gender equality movements and for WFI.
- Engage in national and global spaces to unlock more and better funding for gender justice.

3.4 Thought Leadership

- Shape narratives that shift philanthropy from charity toward solidarity and redistribution.
- Represent WFI in public and sectoral forums nationally and globally.
- Convene dialogues between movements, donors, and institutions.
- Produce and contribute to thought leadership advancing alternatives in philanthropy.
- Analyse philanthropic trends to identify opportunities for systemic change.

3.5 Building Partnerships & Ecosystem Engagement

- Build strong relationships with women's rights organisations and collectives, funders, donors, philanthropists and philanthropy influencers.
- Strengthen cross-movement and cross-sector solidarities.
- Position WFI as a key actor in the domestic philanthropy ecosystem.

3.6 Governance, Compliance & Organisational Health

- Ensure WFI operates within the regulatory and compliance landscape related to grant-making and fundraising.
- Maintain regular oversight of the financial and compliance health of the organisation.
- Ensure accountability to rights-based principles, partners, and communities.
- Provide oversight of staff at all levels in alignment with accountable leadership practices.

4. Candidate Profile

Experience

- Minimum 10 years of experience in the social sector, with at least 4 years in senior leadership.
- Significant experience in philanthropic engagement, resource mobilisation, or social impact leadership.
- Strong understanding of funding trends and resource mobilisation strategies.
- Experience working with or alongside grassroots and movement-based organisations.
- Track record of building equitable, trust-based donor relationships.

Values & Commitment

- A deeply committed leader with demonstrated engagement in gender justice and social movements.
- Alignment with the values of equity, intersectionality, anti-racism and solidarity.
- Understanding of and commitment to the poly-agendas of Indian women's movements for gender equality.

Skills & Competencies

- Skilled in strategic thinking, public engagement, and narrative building.
- An effective communicator and writer with the ability to influence diverse audiences.
- Ability to navigate complex multi-stakeholder environments across movements, philanthropy and governance.
- Demonstrated capacity for shared and distributed leadership.

5. How to Apply

WFI is committed to a transparent and inclusive recruitment process. We warmly welcome applications from women, trans* and gender non-binary persons, and from candidates from marginalised and underrepresented communities.

To apply, please submit the following:

- A current curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé
- A cover letter (no more than two pages) articulating your leadership philosophy and your vision for this role
- Two professional references (references will only be contacted with your permission)

Applications and enquiries should be directed to: - wfi.ed.recruitment@gmail.com by **20th November 2026.**

Women's Fund India is an equal opportunity organisation. We are committed to creating an inclusive, safe and respectful recruitment process for all applicants.

To know more about WFI, please visit https://sawfindia.org/