Creating a GWI National Member Federation or Association
About GWI

• International umbrella organisation
• Nearly 100 years old, founded 1919
• 60 national member federations and associations
• Over 23’000 members on all continents
• Consultative status with United Nations ECOSOC and official relations with UNESCO and ILO
GWI’s vision is for
100% of girls and women in the world to achieve education beyond primary school.

GWI’s mission is to
Advocate for women’s rights, equality and empowerment through access to quality secondary, tertiary and continuing education and training up to the highest levels.
GWI History

• In 1918 Dean Virginia Gildersleeve, Professor Caroline Spurgeon and Rose Sidgewick conceived the idea of a worldwide organisation uniting graduate women.

• They were convinced that by fostering friendship and understanding, women graduates could help prevent another catastrophe such as the World War.

• In 1919 The International Federation of University Women (IFUW) was founded.

• On 27 April 2015 IFUW changed name to Graduate Women International after being voted in by the General Assembly.
Why education?

The right to education is a human right which enables the enjoyment of other human rights.

Equal access to education for all people is an essential element of economic growth. Increasing women’s access to all levels of education enlarges a country’s labour force, engages untapped talents, and as a result, increases GDP.

Education empowers girls and women, it improves their living conditions and benefits the communities in which they live.
Why become a member?

Influence policy and legislation on girls’ and women’s lifelong education and empowerment, through GWI’s ECOSOC status and official relations with UNESCO and the ILO

Have access to an international network of graduate women

Participate in regional and global GWI conferences, workshops and events

Have the opportunity to run joint projects on girls’ and women’s lifelong education and empowerment

Exclusive access to GWI policy briefings, publications, and member only information and advocacy tools

Become a GWI Champion and profile your work on girls’ and women’s education

As member you can...
Steps to creating a national member federation/association

1) Research
2) Recruit founding members
3) Hold informal meetings
4) Create a name, vision & mission
5) Draft constitution
6) Organise structure and governance
7) Establish priorities, benefits and programming
8) Raise awareness
9) Recruit members
1. Research – evaluate your environment

Are there already graduate women’s or similar associations in your country?

What are the needs for girls’ and women’s education in your country?

What specific gaps in girls’ or women’s education/training could you focus on and bring women together to work on?
2. Recruit founding members

a) Create a contact list of graduate women using your network via email, LinkedIn and other social media

b) Send out a communication to the contact list with information on the concept to create an association of graduate women

c) Invite graduate women to share their ideas for the association by email

d) Invite graduate women to an informal meeting to discuss the association
3. Hold informal meetings

a) Bring together graduate women who are interested in creating the association

b) Discuss how the association could benefit members. e.g. network, seminars, advocacy, training

c) Discuss the needs for the association and what you hope to achieve together on girls’ and women’s lifelong education

d) Identify a suitable platform/venue for future informal meetings and activities e.g. university campus.

e) Discuss GWI’s mission and the advantages of being a member

f) Establish how to govern and ensure funding for the organisation e.g. Board roles and membership fees

g) Invite potential new members e.g. recent graduates, postgraduate students

h) Discuss goals, objectives and expectations
4. Create a name, vision and mission

a) Create a name that distinguishes you e.g. Graduate Women Fiji

b) Define your vision e.g. 100% of girls transition from primary to secondary school

c) Create a mission statement that will be the focus of all your activities

d) Establish 2 or 3 goals that support your mission
5. Draft constitution

Prepare the association’s constitution. GWI can provide guidelines.

Your constitution must **define** your association’s mission, structure, governance, membership, membership dues and operations.

Ensure the content is compliant with any national legislation or requirements for your association’s constitution and management.

Your constitution should be aligned with GWI’s vision, mission and membership criteria.

Send your constitution to GWI with your membership application.
6a. Organise structure and governance

**Board Members**

- Presidents, Secretary and several Vice Presidents
- The size depends on the nature and scope of your mission and goals and activities
- Must uphold and live the values of your organisation
- Communicative, transparent, open, democratic, encourage and empowers members

**Committees**

- Members and Committee Chair
- Report to the Board the activities undertaken
- Problem-solving
- Receive support from the Board
6b. Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chair and Coordinator for International Relations (CIR)</th>
<th>Create elections to vote for these positions in your early meetings*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small committees</td>
<td>Create committees to get tasks done, e.g. constitution, projects, member recruitment, communications, advocacy, member benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create an email or electronic network</td>
<td>To link members, discuss priorities and plan activities and projects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 members</td>
<td>A minimum of 20 members are required for GWI national association/federation membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elect Board Members</td>
<td>Once you have at least 20 members hold an election to establish your Board.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* When you start your association you may not have enough members to hold elections for board roles. Therefore you can assign roles temporarily and must hold elections later once you have at least 20 members.
7a. Establish priorities and programming

- Undertake a member survey to ask what benefits they would like to receive from the association and plan the membership benefit programme. E.g. seminars, newsletters, networking events.
- Ask prospective members what altruistic activity they would like to do to improve girls’ or women’s education.
- Begin with 1 project that can have visible results in a short period.
- Develop a strategic plan with goals, roles, timelines and budgets, taking into account members’ needs and priorities.
- Establish working groups and develop member and stakeholder communications and fundraising events to support the project.
7b. Benefits

Members need to see benefits to stay involved and value the association
7c. Build relationships

Share a main point of contact, send pictures and the names of staff/volunteers. Hold regular events.
7d. Know your members

A person cannot be motivated if they are too busy avoiding dissatisfaction.
7e. Define projects

- Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound (SMART) objectives
- Start small
- Engage members in activities e.g. to mentor students or school girls
- Monitor and evaluate project outcomes
8a. Raise awareness

- Active social media
- Regular events
- Website, e-newsletter and publications
- Spread information and network
- Raise visibility and expand membership
8b. Some tools you can use

- Website
- Social media (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+)
- Newsletters and blogs
- Flyers and posters
- Meetings and events
- Media outreach
- Alliances
- Alumni forums and publications
8c. Regular communications

Engage your members, share information and let members know they are valued.
9. Recruit members

Any graduate woman with an approved qualification from a university or tertiary institution

All women accepted for a Masters or Doctoral programme at a recognised tertiary institution

Graduate women from professions such as medicine, engineering, business and media

Women who are not currently professionally active

Groups that actively address social and economic problems

Recent graduate women who would like to build their network and develop their professional skills
Useful tools

• For online surveys – Survey Monkey
  https://www.surveymonkey.com/
• E-newsletters - http://mailchimp.com/
• Social media -
  https://www.facebook.com
  https://twitter.com/
  https://www.linkedin.com/
• Constitution guidelines – request from GWI
• Mission and vision -
  http://www.graduatewomen.org/
Form local branches

- Once established with successful member activities and projects, consider creating new branches.
- Reach out to graduate women in other cities and provinces.
- Support local branches to create their own governance structure and programmes in line with the national association’s constitution.
Sign up to the Update

www.graduatewomen.org
Questions?

Caroline Staffell: cs@graduatewomen.org

Graduate Women International
10, rue du Lac, CH-1207 Geneva, Switzerland
Tel: (+41 22) 731 23 80; Fax: (+41 22) 738 04 40
Website: www.graduatewomen.org
Email: gwi@graduatewomen.org