**Graduate Women International**
**Board of Directors Meeting**
**October 3, 2025**
**DRAFT Minutes**

Meeting called to order 3:33 pm CEST.

Present: Pat Patton, Gisele Scanlon, Shirley Gillett, Lynne Kent, Joy Hurst, Nataly Garcia, Meera Bondre, Ujwala Shinde, Saskia Voortman, Stacy Dry Lara
Minute taker: Joy Hurst

The use of recording meetings was discussed relative to supporting the generation of meeting minutes. No objection raised.

1. **Meet and Greet**: Each member of the Board was invited to share their understanding of their role, responsibilities, how they expect that role to intersect with others on the Board and their vision/strategic priorities for this triennium. All were asked to provide a written summary of their commentary for future reference and our strategic planning. Commentary was provided by the following:
   President, VP Marketing, VP Education, VP Advocacy (ill, so was not able to provide verbal commentary but will provide in writing), VP Fundraising, VP Legal & Governance, VP Membership, VP Project Development, Treasurer
2. **Board communication:** Brief discussion regarding the options for standardized GWI email addresses. One low-cost (no cost) would be to use the list server to create emails. The challenge is creating a tool which is not used by Board members. Advantages (continuity of information) and disadvantages discussed. No decision reached.

Board members can privately communicate with each other through board@gwi.graduatewomen.org When this email is used, the message will go to all Board members.

3. **35th Triennial GA and Conference Debrief**
   a. What went well

- Very impressed by the Zambia NFA, gracious hosts, venue was excellent, food excellent, transportation and tours great
- Smooth election and voting
- Excellent conference

b. What were some challenges noted and things that could be done differently

- Names of keynote speakers were not projected so difficult to know who they were
- Some of the GWI information came out very late which did not give NFA time for discussion
- There was not an opportunity for NFAs to have formal dialogue with each other (with the amendment passed re annual meeting, that will be an opportunity for NFA dialogue)
- Could have been better balance of cultural presentation and business time
- Disappointment that more GWI Board members did not attend
- Recognition and appreciation for what was done given the difficulty in finding a host NFA.
- Developing scripts for business session chairs could make the business meeting run more smoothly

4. **Location of the Next Triennial General Assembly**: The constitution indicates the announcement is made at the end of the triennium; however, this was not possible. President PP indicated that this is a priority and would like the announcement to be made within the first year of this triennium so that NFAs have adequate time to plan.
5. **Engagement of NFAs:** There was consensus that the Board needs to reach out to NFAs as soon as possible. The importance of personal touch was recognized. This information will help inform our strategic plan and improve NFA engagement. Strategies discussed. Potential of regional meetings. VP Membership shared work that has already been done in this regard (survey and analysis of responses). **Action:** This material will be circulated to the Board. Note title, ***Causes, symptoms and potential strategies to address retention, recruitment and advocacy of NFA members.***

Language is an issue within GWI, at least 3 major language groups, English, French and Spanish. VP Membership highlighted the Language Bridge groups (Spanish and French) that are occurring through the NFA-to-NFA Marketplace.

Note that the Pacific region met together in Lusaka and can easily be reconvened by VP Education. The European Women have scheduled meetings November 6-8, 2025.

President PP indicated that she would like all Board members to attend regional meetings called for the purpose of Board outreach so we all start at the same place in our understanding of NFA needs/perspectives. Tentatively, the work could be done in November/December 2025, which then would inform our January 2026 strategic planning work. More discussion needed re the details and how the work can be shared.

The meeting was extended for 15 minutes by consensus.

6. **Board of Officers meeting schedule:** Finding a workable time remains challenging. **Action:** President and Ex Dir will do some more thinking about this with the feedback from today and send out a list of options.
7. **Vacancies on Committees/New committees:** This issue was discussed, agreed by consensus that GWI headquarters will put out a call for expression of interest in the vacancies. The respective VPs will review responses and bring their recommendations to the full Board. Diversity in skills and perspective important to selection. **Action**: Ex Dir and President will draft call for expression of interest. Timeframe such that info will be available for Nov Board meeting.
8. **Heritage Wall**: Brief discussion regarding next steps, close or keep open as an annual appeal. In depth discussion deferred to the next Board meeting.
9. Next Meeting - TBD
10. The meeting was adjourned at 5:20 pm CEST.

Minute Taker: Joy Hurst