

# Community with a Purpose

smart growth  
dig deep lift the field  
catalyze change  
make it sustainable

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**Women Donors Network's (WDN) mission is to advance a just, equitable, and sustainable world by leveraging the wealth, power, and community of progressive women donors. We are a community of women with a purpose – together we connect, learn, and take action to further our shared vision of a better world.**

**WDN builds a thriving and inclusive community, develops individual women donors to be their most powerful selves, supports the field with bedrock funding, incubates high-impact initiatives that create long-lasting change, and funds a healthy infrastructure to support the depth and breadth of our work.**

## IMPACT AREAS

WDN's work is organized around three overarching goals that shape our programs and inform our collective giving. We believe that the inclusion and empowerment of people who have historically been marginalized in society – women, people of color, low-income communities, and people across sexual orientations and gender identities – is a key strategy for progress in all of the areas outlined below.



**Participation and Representation for All** – All people should have equal access to the power of the vote. The political leaders who represent us at all levels should reflect the people they serve and the full talent and lived experiences that America has to offer. We need to ensure the full participation of all citizens in electing our leaders and holding them accountable.



**Opportunity for All** – Everyone should be able to live an economically secure, peaceful, and productive life. We must work to build a more balanced economy that removes obstacles for people struggling to make ends meet, and ensure that all people enjoy basic human rights and freedom from discrimination, violence, and oppression.



**A Safe and Sustainable Future for All** – Policies and practices should promote a healthy and sustainable environment for current and future generations. We should support environmental justice efforts so that all communities are equally protected from environmental harm.

## 2015-2020 STRATEGIC PRINCIPLES AND GOALS

WDN's work is informed by several guiding principles that cut across each of the specific goals outlined in this document:

- **Structural Change** – We believe that the challenges we face as a society are systemic in nature, and thus so must be our solutions.
- **Intersectional Approach** – We address issues of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation throughout our work, both individually and collectively.
- **Women's Leadership** – Stronger women's voices and the confidence to exercise power are central to WDN's social change vision.
- **Partnership** – We build partnerships with a diverse group of allies, across race, class, gender identity, and sexual orientation. We work to leverage our unique access to resources, influence, and connections in support of the broader progressive movement.
- **Reach** – By expanding our reach, broadening our network, and inspiring wealthy, progressive women to give strategically, we will expand our impact.

## GOAL 1 SMART GROWTH: BUILD A THRIVING, INCLUSIVE COMMUNITY

1

### **We are committed to the growth and diversity of our membership.**

- Increase the size of our network to expand our reach, power, and impact, with a goal of building a membership that is more than double our current size by 2020, and with a particular focus on recruiting more younger women and women of color.
- Work to strengthen the bonds of our community as we grow in size and diversity, including sharing stories and finding more points of connection and collaboration.
- Ensure cross-class opportunities to network, build relationships, and collaborate with a range of diverse leaders.
- Continue to build a culture of acceptance and respect within WDN.

## GOAL 2 DIG DEEP: GROW INDIVIDUAL CAPACITY FOR VALUES-ALIGNED ACTION

2

### **What makes WDN unique is reflected in our motto – community with a purpose.**

- Equip progressive women donors with the knowledge, skills, tools, and confidence to live, give, and act in alignment with their values.
- Understand and own our privilege across all its different axes – race, class, gender, and sexual orientation – for the purpose of becoming an ever-stronger ally.
- Develop our leadership as women philanthropists, give more, and be more strategic in our giving.
- Work to align our investments with our values, and use our power as investors to effect progressive change in the private sector.

## GOAL 3 LIFT THE FIELD: INVEST BEDROCK MONEY THAT SUPPORTS MOVEMENTS

3

### **Through individual and collective action, we make progress on issues that are shaping the future.**

- Provide high-quality educational programs and collective grantmaking opportunities through WDN Donor Circles to advance progressive change on the important issues of the day.
- Elevate grantmaking strategies that include core funding, venture funding, and funding the “expensive homework” like research and data gathering as requested by organizations in the field.
- Promote increased funding for structural change and movement-building, highlighting the importance of women’s leadership, as well as class and racial justice, in partnership with other philanthropic leaders.
- Structure our initiatives to address unmet needs or big sweeping issues, such as reducing economic inequality or promoting truly representative democracy, for multiple years.
- Recognize the importance of the larger global community, and provide forums for members who are committed to international funding and activism.

## GOAL 4 CATALYZE CHANGE: INCUBATE HIGH-LEVERAGE INITIATIVES

4

### **We help fill critical gaps by catalyzing innovative strategic action.**

- Engage WDN members in the development of strategic initiatives, valuing their unique input and expertise.
- Fund backbone infrastructure that adds critical value to the field and benefits multiple organizations.
- Convene and catalyze innovative strategic action within the broader progressive movement.
- Build strong relationships with other funders and organizations in the field so that we continue to have our “finger on the pulse” of the most cutting-edge needs.

## GOAL 5 MAKE IT SUSTAINABLE: FUND OUR WORK FOR ENDURING IMPACT

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### **We are building an effective infrastructure to achieve our ambitious goals and make a difference.**

- Align our progressive values with our financial structure and develop a long-term plan for sustainability.
- Maximize our investments, using evaluation to learn what is working and what is not.
- Maintain high standards of transparency, stewardship, and fiscal management while ensuring member privacy and offering anonymity where desired.
- Accelerate and amplify our impact through strategic communications.

