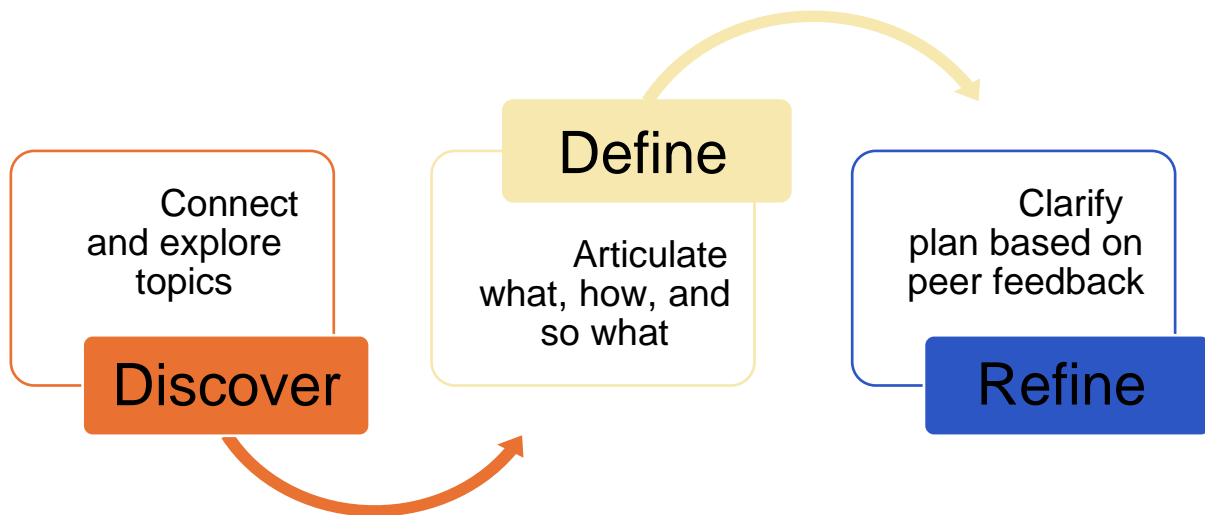




THE COLLABORATION LAB GUIDELINES: DISCOVER, DEFINE, REFINE PHASES



When the Advisory Committee set out to co-create a process for supporting women’s funds to work together, they understood that collaboration takes time, requires trust, and needs resources. By sequencing the process into three phases—Discover, Define, and Refine—they envisioned a process to build trust, develop a plan, and focus on what it means to act. The Collaboration Labs created a process for the women’s funds to connect, discover, and dream. Through the thoughtful selection of facilitators and documenters, it was also a space to learn, be bold, and be creative about the issues and how to work together.

ASSEMBLING THE TEAM OF FACILITATORS AND DOCUMENTERS

Facilitators and documenters are vital for crafting spaces conducive to collaboration, learning, and transformative change. Their role transcends mere logistics management to significantly shape the collective experience, ensuring it is inclusive, equitable, and aligned with shared values. The thoughtful recruitment, orientation, and engagement of these professionals, who are proficient in their fields and deeply committed to core values, are crucial for ensuring every participant feels heard and valued. This approach cultivates trust and meaningful connections within collaborative groups, establishing the foundation needed to address complex challenges and advance systemic change.

The process of seeking, hiring, and orienting facilitators and documenters for the Collaboration Labs was intentionally designed to reflect the feminist principles of equity, inclusion, and transformational change. This thoughtful preparation and ongoing engagement enabled the facilitation team to spark strategic thinking, foster connections, and inspire meaningful collaborations within the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds.

Guidance

- Start the selection process for facilitators by first establishing clear criteria that focus on a thorough knowledge of the relevant issues, fields, or topics, along with the capabilities to foster inclusive and supportive environments for collaboration. Consider the following guiding questions:
 - What specific skills and experiences are essential for facilitators and documenters in this context?
 - How do location and language influence diverse representation and meaningful engagement across different regions and thematic areas?
 - How should the recruitment process adhere to universal compensation standards to fairly recognize the value of labor and expertise while promoting equity?
- Once facilitators and documenters are selected, engage them in joint orientation and planning sessions to develop a shared vision and framework for the process. Use this opportunity to address the following:
 - What are our expectations from this collaboration?
 - How does each phase of the process contribute to the overarching goals?
- Organize regular meetings before, during, and after each phase for all facilitators and documenters. These meetings are essential to ensure alignment, address emerging needs, integrate learning, and foster mutual support and collaboration within the team.
- Schedule regular one-on-one meetings with facilitators, documenters, and staff team members to provide timely feedback, troubleshoot issues, and offer customized support to the collaboration groups.

Practice

Facilitation and documentation are not just logistical roles; they are integral to shaping the collective experience. Centering feminist principles in these roles means valuing facilitation as a political and relational practice—one that actively fosters trust, accountability, and shared leadership. By prioritizing deep listening, co-learning, and adaptability, facilitators and documenters help create spaces where power can be redistributed, voices amplified, and collaborative strategies strengthened. This deliberate approach in seeking, hiring, and orienting facilitators and documenters for the Collaboration Labs ensures that the facilitation methods transcend mere exchanges; they cultivate lived experiences of equity and transformation in practice.

ENSURING EQUITABLE PARTICIPATION

Language justice, time justice, and accessibility are commitments to radical inclusion. They are about creating spaces where people can communicate authentically and genuinely by reducing barriers to their full participation. They disrupt power dynamics by leveling the platform to ensure everyone can exercise their full participation and authentic self-expression.

The ability to bring together a diverse group of people who speak different languages, have different accessibility needs, and work in various time zones requires intentionality around making the space welcoming to every participant. We worked to make sure that the timing of meetings was reasonable for most, if not all, participants, that everyone could contribute freely in a language they understood and were confident speaking in, and that they had access to all the information.

Initially, we offered translation and simultaneous interpretation in three languages. Over time, we added three more languages. Meetings were scheduled at the times that could best accommodate different time zones. In cases where that was not possible, we worked with facilitators to offer the same session at different times. While we asked the women's funds about accommodations for accessibility, none of the participants needed that support.

Guidance

- Identify the language needs of participants.
- Ask them, and others in their contacts to recommend interpreters they have worked with, with a priority on interpreters who understand the technical language of the collaboration topic.
- Build a broad pool of interpreters so that you have a number to draw upon during times of high demand. Schedule sessions in advance to ensure the availability of interpreters.
- Ask participants and the facilitation team for feedback on the interpreters.
- Translate documents into the languages offered.
- When scheduling online sessions, be mindful of the people at the extreme ends of the time zones. Work on finding the most accommodating time to ensure they are included.
- Accessibility often requires specialized knowledge. Ask participants about accessibility needs. Partner with organizations that have expertise to provide appropriate accommodations.

Practice

At the heart of language justice is the principle that all languages must be valued, honored, and heard by facilitating conversation among people who do not speak the same language. Rather than privileging one language over others, language justice respects the diversity of languages. In doing so, we reimagine the exercise of power through language. The approach of centering equity as the core of justice is also applied to time and accessibility. We move toward justice by lowering barriers that privilege any language, time, or ability over another.

DISCOVER PHASE

The challenge of securing resources positions organizations in competition with each other often. This crowds out opportunities to share their common challenges and work together to co-create solutions. Overcoming that competitive stance requires intention, and if you can confirm that all collaboration groups will receive funding will remove a major barrier to collaboration. A facilitation team that understands this community and works intentionally to create a space for connection is essential. Allocating time for connection and bringing different people in different roles also opens up new possibilities.

In the Discover Phase, the facilitation teams held open spaces for connecting and exploring. These open spaces supported the women's fund participants in getting to know each other by inviting contributions from diverse geographical regions, scopes, and scales. Fenomenal Funds organized the sessions based on themes that surfaced from a survey of the women's funds and an analysis of the Resilience Grants. The women's funds could sample any number of themes as they explored what was most relevant for them in the current moment. Coming out of this phase, the women's funds had to commit to a topic and identify their collaborators. This proved to be a challenge because many of the topics felt relevant and timely, leading to a request for participation in two Collaboration Groups.

Guidance

- Use a survey to ask the participants what they are interested in exploring. Analyze their responses and group them into themes. Use those themes to set up an initial schedule.
- Orient the participants so they can understand the intention for the space and the offerings. During this initial orientation, share the timeline of the Collaboration Lab process, highlighting a few key milestones while remaining open to adjustments in the timeline as needed.
- Introduce the facilitators to build confidence in the process.
- Share a clear schedule to make it possible for everyone to participate.
- Give participants the freedom to choose the number of topics they will explore during the Discover Phase.
- Encourage participants to develop an internal process to decide which space they will prioritize because many of the topics may be relevant and offer opportunities to address ongoing concerns.
- Once groups have selected a focus, have the facilitators engage them to articulate their chosen focus and share the reasons behind their selection.
- Share the written plan with the grant review committee to ensure that all groups focus on the topics defined by the funding parameters, while also obtaining questions and offerings¹ from the committee. This collaborative feedback should be shared with the collaboration groups for consideration, ensuring alignment and responsiveness to diverse insights and expectations.

¹ The term "offerings" is intentionally used instead of "suggestions" or "recommendations" to reflect the non-hierarchical relationship between the Advisory Committee and the participants in this process.

Practice

Understand what the needs and priorities of the participants are. Create the right framework to support the process of discovery. Remain responsive to emerging needs. Adapt as the process unfolds, and trust it. Not everything will be perfect, but if you create a space that responds to the needs of the participating organizations, they will respond with great enthusiasm.

DEFINE PHASE

Entering a collaboration with other organizations based on a clear plan detailing how the collective wants to work together enables the group to succeed. When roles and responsibilities, decision-making, resource management, and conflict resolution are clearly defined, the group has the tools in place to work through the typical challenges that arise when organizations work together.

The Define Phase supported the women's funds to dig deeper into their topic of focus and decide what they wanted to co-create and how they would do it. The overall guidance was for each group to define their road map for the collaboration: What specifically would they focus on? How would the work be done? And what did success look like for the collective? The facilitation team held the process, space, and responsibility for giving back to the women's funds what they were hearing, while also challenging them about what was possible. They also pulled together the group's plan based on the discussion.

Guidance

- Define an overall template for the plan. Engage the facilitation team to understand its components and consider approaches to defining them.
- Task the facilitation team with the responsibility to document, synthesize, and reflect back to the group what they are hearing, so that it can inform the collaboration plan.
- Share information with the group about what the peer reviewers of their plans will be looking for in the review process.
- Bring in graphic illustrators so that the visual representation also supports the group's reflection on their road map and adjust it accordingly.
- Encourage the group to not only think about what they will focus on and how they will engage but support them to also think about the small details, such as how they will make decisions, how they will resolve conflict, and what support they will need to do the work.
- Be ready for questions. Remain open to adapting some components.
- Set a clear timeline for the process, and allow for the differences among the groups in pace, approach, and style.
- Check in with the facilitators regularly. Reflect and learn from what they share.

Practice

Set up the Collaboration Group for success by investing the time and resources in supporting them to plan for what they want to do; it will make all the difference. The process must pay attention to the essentials: strong connections and relationships, a plan and openness to adapt as things change, agreed-upon arrangements of how to share power and responsibility, and clarity in how the work is facilitated, how decisions are made, and how leadership for the whole is exercised.

REFINE PHASE

The benefit of a peer review process is that it offers insights and reflections from a place of constructive support. It also draws from the knowledge of the ecosystem—who else has engaged with the topic, and how might they be a valuable resource for some of the issues that might arise? Knowing and trusting that the offerings come from an intention to support opens up receptivity. In the end, the benefit is not just for the group that is receiving the offering but the broader community, which will also get to learn. Even more important is the self-determination that allows each group to decide if, when, and how to use those offerings.

At the end of the Define Phase, the Advisory Committee reviewed the 13 collaboration plans submitted by the women's funds. The Advisory Committee shared their reflections, based on individual reviews and collective discussions, as offerings to the women's funds. Each group decided how and if they would engage the offering from the Advisory Committee. Some used the Refine Phase to reflect on the offerings and make adjustments to their plan based on the feedback. Others used the time to plan for the implementation phase, while others decided that they needed the space for other demands and would pick up the next stage when they received their grants. What was clear was that the groups valued the work that the Advisory Committee had put into reviewing the proposals and offering their insights.

Guidance

- Create clear guidance for the Advisory Committee's review of the plans.
- Facilitate a process to discuss the observations, insights, and offerings.
- Synthesize their feedback and share it with the groups.
- Give the opportunity to the Collaboration Groups to consider the offerings and how they want to respond to them.
- Synthesize lessons and insights from the process.

Practice

Giving each group the autonomy to decide *if and when* they would engage the offerings from the Advisory Committee respects and honors their self-determination, as well as wisdom.

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WOMEN'S FUNDS SURVEY TO IDENTIFY COLLABORATION TOPICS

* Indicates a required question

1. 1. Name of the women's fund *

WHAT THREE THEMES ARE YOU, AS A WOMEN'S FUND, MOST INTERESTED IN?

2. Our first thematic priority is Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- Strategy: approaches and practices for fulfilling a mission guided by goals, programs, evaluation
- Knowledge: approaches and tools to develop, curate, apply knowledge, and share ideas
- People: the well-being, compensation, and capabilities of the board, leadership, and staff
- Money: mobilizing and sustaining a diverse resource base; reserves; and managing resources
- Management: administrative systems, policies, operations, and infrastructure
- Engagement: relationships that support and sustain work, including with feminist movements, funders, women's funds
- Finance and Administration
- Influence: efforts to influence larger systems for gender justice advancement; understanding shifts in social, political, and economic landscape that affect our work
- None

3. Our second thematic priority is

⌵ Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- Strategy: approaches and practices for fulfilling a mission guided by goals, programs, evaluation
- Knowledge: approaches and tools to develop, curate, apply knowledge, and share ideas
- People: the well-being, compensation, and capabilities of the board, leadership, and staff
- Money: mobilizing and sustaining a diverse resource base; reserves; and managing resources
- Management: administrative systems, policies, operations, and infrastructure
- Engagement: relationships that support and sustain work, including with feminist movements, funders, women's funds
- Finance and Administration
- Influence: efforts to influence larger systems for gender justice advancement; understanding shifts in social, political, and economic landscape that affect our work
- None

4. Our third thematic priority is

⌵ Dropdown

Mark only one oval.

- Strategy: approaches and practices for fulfilling a mission guided by goals, programs, evaluation
- Knowledge: approaches and tools to develop, curate, apply knowledge, and share ideas
- People: the well-being, compensation, and capabilities of the board, leadership, and staff
- Money: mobilizing and sustaining a diverse resource base; reserves; and managing resources
- Management: administrative systems, policies, operations, and infrastructure
- Engagement: relationships that support and sustain work, including with feminist movements, funders, women's funds
- Finance and Administration
- Influence: efforts to influence larger systems for gender justice advancement; understanding shifts in social, political, and economic landscape that affect our work
- None

5. Given your priorities, what is/are the specific issue(s) that you would like to explore further and why? *

6. Do you have a group of women's funds you plan to collaborate with? If yes, add the women's funds' names here. *

LEARNING FROM COLLABORATION

Given that the Collaboration Grants focus on

- co-creating shared resources and strategies;
- addressing challenges and re-imagining practices, systems, and approaches that limit what is possible and mobilizing; and
- resourcing feminist movements in complementary and supportive ways;

we would like to hear your views on the learning agenda for the Collaboration Grants process.

7. Can you identify three learning-related areas you would like to focus on after emerging from the Collaboration Grants process? *

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WOMEN'S FUNDS PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

To create an environment conducive to mutual respect and collective inquiry, we ask that all participants in the discovery spaces do the following:

Before the Meeting

- You will receive the Zoom link to the discovery space once you register.
- We understand that unexpected circumstances arise, and you may need to cancel your registration. If you need to cancel, you can email us at womensfunds@fenomenalfunds.org or contact the facilitators in advance of the meeting date.
- We value diversity and language justice. Fenomenal Funds will provide simultaneous interpretation where needed. We will be flexible in accommodating any additional needs of participants. Please inform us at womensfunds@fenomenalfunds.org or contact the facilitators in advance about your needs so that we have sufficient time to support your participation.

During the Meeting

- **Arrive on time, stay for the full session, and fully participate in the spaces you registered.**
- **Send only one representative from your organization to each discovery space** so that all the organizations can participate in the discussion equally. If you feel that you need to send more than one person to the space—for example, there are key decisions that need the perspective of the Executive Director and your colleague—please talk to your facilitator(s) and seek agreement with your group mates in advance.
- **Make your decision to stay in only one group by the third round of the meeting.** This timing is so that all Collaboration Groups will have sufficient time to thoroughly discuss and confirm their collaborative partners and the focus of their collaboration.
- **Respect others' rights to hold opinions and beliefs that differ from yours.** Challenge or criticize the idea, not the person. Listen carefully to what others are saying, even when you disagree with what is being said. The comments you make (asking for clarification, sharing critiques, expanding on a point, etc.) should reflect that you have paid attention to what the speaker has said. Allow everyone the chance to talk. If you have much to say, try to hold back a bit; if you are hesitant to speak, look for opportunities to contribute to the discussion. Respect confidentiality: share the message, not the messenger.
- **Complete an online evaluation and reflection questionnaire** at the end of each session.

After the Meeting

- **Share information with your colleagues.** While one person from each organization will attend the session, it is important that you continue to bring the rest of your team along in the process. You can do this by verbally sharing the information with your team members during team meetings. We will also share our synthesis of the key points for the meetings so that others on your team can understand and share perspectives on emerging topics and considerations.

- **Give us feedback.** The design of the Collaboration Grant is about creating a new and imaginative process and a new way of co-creating. Please help us to learn and continually improve the process by giving us feedback, comments, and suggestions through one or both of the following methods:
 - Complete the **evaluation and reflection questionnaire** at the end of the session.
 - Email womensfunds@fenomenalfunds.org; feel free to copy your regional representatives in the Advisory Committee who are leading the process design.

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ADVISORY COMMITTEE REVIEW DISCUSSION GUIDE

THE COLLABORATION LAB PROCESS

The Collaboration Grants planning process takes place in three stages: Discover, Define, and Refine.

In the **Discover Phase**, the facilitation team will create open spaces for connecting and exploring. At this stage, the women's funds will reflect on their areas of interest. Sessions will be set up based on themes that surfaced from the women's funds surveys and the Resilience Grants analysis. In each space, the women's funds will share their topic of interest and why it's important to them. They will talk about what they bring to the process, as well as how they believe it will benefit their work and the feminist movements they support. Spaces will also help the women's funds to get to know each other more deeply, especially as they invite participation from the women's funds positioned across varying regions and scopes. Coming out of this phase, they should commit to a topic and identify the group of women's funds with which they will collaborate.

In the **Define Phase**, the women's funds dive more deeply into their topics of interest. They continue to strengthen relationships with the other members of their collaboration as they define their goal, process, plan, and what they hope to gain from the collaboration. A facilitator will support the women's funds to think strategically about their work and a documenter to document their dialogues. These recorded dialogues will be used to draft the plan. The women's funds will define what support they will need and what resources they require.

Each plan will be reviewed by the Advisory Committee, which will share feedback and identify areas for further reflection for the collaborations. The collaboratives can then use the peer feedback to **Refine** their plan and clarify their strategy. In this process, the women's funds will continue to benefit from the facilitators and documenters. All plans will be shared with the community of women's funds.

THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS

The Advisory Committee will lead the design of the Collaboration Grants process. They will work together to articulate the guiding principles, overall approach, and specifics of the process. During the three-phase planning process, the Advisory Committee will play a key role in reviewing the proposed topics and the plans that emerge. Based on their review, they will make funding recommendations for the Steering Committee.

The two major decision points are the end of the Discovery Phase and the end of the Define Phase. The decision-making process at each stage is outlined below.

1. Discovery Phase: Proposed Topic

At the end of the Discovery Phase, the women's funds will have formed their Collaboration Groups, decided on a topic, and articulated why the topic is important and its value-add to the group and the women's funds community overall.

The major decision at this stage of the process is whether the proposed topics fall within the parameters of the overall grant criteria and whether the group and their work proceed to the Define Phase. All groups that proceed to the Define Phase will be funded.

At this stage of the decision-making process, the Advisory Committee will do the following:

- Individually review all descriptions submitted by the Collaboration Groups. They will respond to a set of questions regarding each description and the collective group of topic descriptions.
- Meet as a group to discuss their comments and insights from their review, take each Collaboration Group in turn, and indicate whether they support funding for this group based on the key criteria.
- Discuss the full group of proposed topics to understand how the full set of emerging collaborations adds value to the community of women's funds.
- In-depth discussion on Collaboration Groups that raise questions or concerns.
- Make a collective decision on (a) groups that progress to the Define Phase and (b) groups that fall outside the parameters and cannot proceed as defined.

The key questions guiding the review of the topic descriptions include the following:

- **Topic and Rationale:** Does the topic solve a challenge, find solutions to a barrier, or take up an opportunity that supports the women's funds to fulfill their mission? Is their reasoning for selecting this topic clear and compelling?
- **Potential Value-Add:** Will the learning that emerges from the group benefit the women's funds in this group and potentially be useful for the women's funds community more broadly?

- **Relationships:** Does the group include women’s funds across geographies, scales, or interests? Does it create opportunities for women’s funds who do not normally work together to engage, or does it support women’s funds to deepen existing relationships through the specific challenge or opportunity that they will focus on in their collaboration?
- **Parameters:** Does the topic fall within the parameters of the Collaboration Grants? Does it meet the criteria?
- **Recommendation:** Does the Advisory Committee recommend that this group move forward to the Define Phase? Why or why not? What questions are there about what the group has proposed? Are there comments or offerings¹ for further consideration or clarification?
- **Overall:** What does the Advisory Committee find particularly exciting about what the Collaboration Groups contribute to the women’s funds community, both individually and collectively?

2. Define Phase: Collaboration Plan

At the end of the Define Phase, each group that completes their process of working together will have an overall plan that guides how they engage their collaboration, a timeline for that engagement, and a budget.

The major decision in this phase is how much funding each group will receive. In addition, the Advisory Committee will share their offerings to each Collaboration Group for their consideration in developing their plan.

At this phase, the decision-making process of the Advisory Committee will do the following:

- Individually review all collaboration plans submitted by the Collaboration Groups. They will respond to a set of questions regarding each description and regarding the collective group of topic descriptions.
- Meet as a group to discuss their comments and insights from their review and take each Collaboration Group in turn to articulate the insights, what is exciting, questions, concerns, or offerings.
- Discuss the full group of proposed topics to understand how the full set of emerging collaborations adds value to the community of women’s funds.
- Discuss the proposed budget for each collaboration, considering questions related to the budget in relation to the approach and activities.
- Discuss the status of the overall budget. If the funding is equal to or lower than the funding available, the Advisory Committee can reach an agreement on their funding recommendations.
- If the total funding requested is over the amount of funding available, i.e., USD 3 million, start a process to engage the women’s funds in adjusting budgets downward. This will be an iterative process that may require two steps, as described below.

¹ The term "offerings" is intentionally used instead of "suggestions" or "recommendations" to reflect the non-hierarchical relationship between the Advisory Committee and the participants in this process.

KEY QUESTIONS GUIDING REVIEW OF THE NARRATIVE

Strategic Alignment

- How well does the proposed collaboration align with the intent and objectives of the Collaboration Grants?
- Does the proposed focus of the group fall within the defined grant parameters?
- Does the plan align with the principles?
- What are your overall impressions of the focus and design of the collaborations?

Approach

- Is the proposed approach adequately developed, well-integrated, and appropriate to the aims of the collaboration?
- Is the proposed plan, timeline, and milestones reasonable for the group's objectives?
- Are potential risks clearly identified and acknowledged?

Collaboration

- Based on the proposed plan, do you see opportunities for the group to deepen their relationships and collaboration?
- Has the group articulated how they will work together so that roles and expectations support the objectives of the collaboration?
- Does the group have the necessary support to achieve their goals? Are there other resources they need to consider?

Budget

- Is the budget narrative clear and complete?
- Do the line items support the planned activities?
- Are costs reasonable for the activities described? Are there any costs not included?

Defining Success

- Has the group articulated what success looks like in concrete ways?
- Does the outlined road map support them to move toward that success?
- Even if the defined outcomes(s) are not achieved, will the collaborative process have a value-add for the group and the community?

Overall

- What do you find particularly exciting about what they contribute to the women's funds community, both individually and collectively?

KEY QUESTIONS GUIDING REVIEW OF THE BUDGET

➤ Individual Budget Analysis

- What is your overall analysis, and what are your thoughts and impressions about the budget presented?
- Are all costs related to the activities included in the plan? Are they justified or explained in the budget narrative?
- Are allocations for administrative costs related to the administration of the funds and the coordination of the group included in the budget?
- Are costs reasonable? By reasonable, we mean the following: Are amounts for line items commensurate with your knowledge of costs for those items? Are they based on solid cost estimates? *Consider regional differences.*
- Is the overall budget appropriately sized? That means is the budget adequate for covering the plan, or has more funding been budgeted than what is required for covering the planned activities? In other words, is the budget over or under what is needed for the planned activities?

➤ Collective Budget Analysis

- What is the total amount of funding requested by the group of women's funds collaboratives?
- Is the total amount requested over, under, or within budget?
- If we are over budget and given the amount over budget, what is our next step?
 - Small amount over budget: Budget adjustment by each Collaboration Group
 - Medium amount over budget: Budget adjustment by each Collaboration Group, followed by a budget discussion with all groups
 - Large amount over budget: Budget adjustment by each Collaboration Group, followed by a budget discussion with all groups

➤ Final Recommendation

Based on both the distribution of funds and the total amount of funding, does the Advisory Committee recommend funding the proposed set of collaborations?

INDIVIDUAL BUDGET ADJUSTMENT STEPS

1. Calculate and state the overall amount of funding that needs to be reduced among the Collaboration Groups.
2. Based on the analysis, discuss and decide whether all groups need to consider the budget adjustment or whether they approach some groups first based on (a) access to resources; (b) the size of the group relative to the amount of the proposed budget; (c) the scope and scale of their initiative and planned activities; and (d) the analysis showing that group may have budgeted over their needs.
3. Define an overall range that each group should use as they consider their budget reduction.
4. Send each group a set of reflection questions that can guide their critical thinking on budget reduction. The idea of the questions is to support the women's funds to make strategic choices to reduce the budget amount and also make the necessary adjustments to their plans while maintaining its integrity.
5. Send all the women's funds a summary of the current situation, with specifics on the amount of funding that needs to be cut and the range of the cut that each group is being asked to consider. Provide support and a time frame for submitting the adjusted budget.
6. Meet with facilitators who will support the women's funds to ensure they can hold the process with care, thoughtfulness, and intention.
7. Review the budget and narrative once it is submitted.

Use the steps in the budget review process to revisit the adjusted budgets and reach a final decision on funding recommendations.

Discussions with Individual Groups

If it is helpful, members of the Advisory Committee and Fenomenal Funds team will meet with the Collaboration Group to share feedback and questions.

Collective Discussion on Larger Budget Cuts Steps

1. Once the women's funds submit the revised budget, review all budgets to see if the women's funds have made significant enough changes that reduce the overall budget amount to fall within the available resources.
2. If the reductions proposed by the women's funds do not fall within the needed cut, discuss the budget and plans of each Collaboration Group as a committee, identifying some potential options for achieving the desired budget cut.
3. Facilitate discussion with the women's funds Collaboration Groups to consider the options of how the community can reach collective agreements on budget amounts. Send discussion questions to the women's funds ahead of the discussion. Work with a skilled facilitator to support the process of engaging the community in ways that build relationships.
4. Listen to the input from the women's funds and carefully consider the implications of each option.
5. Based on the discussion and input from the women's funds, ask the women's funds Collaboration Groups to consider proposed cuts based on the collective agreement reached during the discussion.
6. Ask each Collaboration Group to make the final adjustment and make any activity adjustments based on their new budget.
7. Review the final plans and budget to ensure that the activities have been sized appropriately to the budget.
8. Finalize the grant amount recommendations based on the submission from the women's funds.

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DISCOVER PHASE: COLLABORATION TOPIC DESCRIPTION

In your narrative responses, please provide clear, descriptive answers for each of the following sections. Use the prompt questions below to shape your narrative.

1. Who are the women’s funds participating in this group?

Name of Women’s Fund	Geographic Location	Representative Name + Email

2. What is the overarching theme or set of themes that you are focusing on?
3. What is the specific topic that you have selected?
4. Provide a brief description of the issue you want to address and what you hope to achieve.
5. Tell us why your group believes that this is an important issue to focus on at this time.

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DEFINE & REFINE PHASE: COLLABORATION GRANTS PLAN

This call for applications is by invitation only.

Members of the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds are invited to submit a plan for their collaboration. The narrative should be presented in a Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF file. All plans and budgets should be submitted to **XX by XXXX**.

All submissions should be labeled with the same name across files to ensure documents can be matched—please use the following naming convention: XXXX

In your narrative responses, please provide clear, descriptive answers for each of the following sections. Use the prompt questions below to shape your narrative.

1. Title of the Collaboration

What is the name of your group?

2. Names of Women's Funds

Who are the women's funds participating in this group?

3. Proposition

What is the problem you are addressing or the opportunity that you are addressing as a collaborative? Describe the current situation as it affects women's funds (or the movements you support) and why it is important to focus on this now.

4. The Plan

Describe your (a) objectives (what you plan to achieve), (b) approach (how you will go about it), and (c) key activities (the actions you will take). Feel free to attach a visual summary as a road map that shows your estimated timeline and key milestones.

5. Learning and Sharing

Describe (a) what success looks like if your collaboration is successful; (b) what values/benefits your collaboration adds to the members of this group, the wider community, and, if relevant, to the movements you support; (c) what you hope to learn about collaboration as you engage in this process; (d) how you will document your process and capture the learnings and insights that emerge; and (e) how you will share your learning with the community of women's funds who are members of the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds.

6.Guiding Principles and Values

What are the key principles and values that will guide your work together? How will you operationalize them? How will you use them to guide your journey? How will you support the well-being of collaborative members?

7.Potential Challenges

Any collaboration effort faces potential risks and challenges. Are there any major challenges that you anticipate? What measures are you putting in place to manage and limit their impacts on your collaboration?

8.Coordination

What are the defined roles and responsibilities of the women's funds in the group? How will the women's funds maintain deep engagement? How will you make decisions? Which women's fund will have the primary responsibility for coordinating the work?

9.Budget Narrative

Please complete the budget template, summarizing how grant funds will be used. The Excel budget template is attached. Please note that you must indicate how you plan to use the funds for the full period of implementation. Please share any narrative below to explain your budget. You have the flexibility to shift funds to other priorities at any time.

10.Fund Management

Describe your overall approach to managing the funds. Tell us how you will make decisions about the budget. If one women's fund receives the funds, describe how they will keep the other women's funds updated on the financials.

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DEFINE & REFINE PHASE: COLLABORATION GRANTS BUDGET GUIDELINES

As part of planning for the collaboration, the women's funds must develop, agree upon, and submit a budget with specifics on how the funds will be spent. Below, we share general guidelines that can inform the women's funds on preparing a budget appropriate for the size and scale of the collaboration that you have planned.

The Collaboration Grant budget should delineate the expenses anticipated for the activities you will undertake. That means thinking through each activity, what materials or support you will need, and what expenses each women's fund will incur, including communications.

Here are a few things to consider as you develop your budget:

1. When submitting your budget, please ensure it's clear and straightforward. Include a column for detailed explanations of each budget line to help us better understand your proposed expenditures.
2. Categorize your expenses in a way that aligns with your planned activities.
3. Once you have developed your budget, check to see if it aligns with your narrative. Someone should be able to look at your budget and understand what you propose to do.
4. All women's funds in the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds are invited to participate in a Collaboration Group. Ask for funding that will meet the needs of the work that you are proposing. Consider the number of women's funds in your group, the timeline for your planned activities, the actual costs of your activities, and your approach.
5. Include expenses for any external or technical support that you need for the process.

6. As a group, decide how you will manage the grant funds. This should be a collective decision that meets the needs of all women’s funds who are members of the group. Discuss your options openly and transparently. Talk specifically about any concerns.

Possible ways to manage the funds include:

- a. **Option 1:** The grant is awarded to one of the women’s funds. This organization manages payments on all related activities. The grant recipient is responsible for compiling the financial report. The Collaboration Group is responsible for compiling the narrative report. The group develops
 - i. a realistic budget based on the planned activities and administrative expenses;
 - ii. a clear decision-making process about the use of funds and how changes in budget allocations are agreed upon; and
 - iii. the process for regular check-ins on the budget for mutual accountability on the use of funds. All members of the collaboration will have access to regularly updated financials.
- b. **Option 2:** The grant is awarded to one of the women’s funds. The recipient women’s fund subgrants to the other women’s funds. The women’s fund that receives the grant is responsible for compiling the overall financial report.
 - i. The Collaboration Group assigns each of the women’s funds in the group the management of one grant component.
 - ii. The responsible women’s fund is granted a specific amount of the budget related to those activities.
 - iii. Each women’s fund is accountable to the group and must provide ongoing updates to peers. Each women’s fund must report to the primary grant recipient. The primary grant recipient is responsible for reporting.
- c. **Option 3:** Each group member receives a portion of the grant based on the plan and division of responsibilities as agreed upon by the collective.
 - i. The group develops a set of activities that support their collaboration process. Group members are assigned to manage specific components of the planned activities.
 - ii. Based on that determination, each women’s fund will receive the amount of funding that is related to the activities they will manage.
 - iii. Each women’s fund is still mutually accountable to other group members. Group members share regular updates on financials.
 - iv. Members of the group must still make collective decisions about any changes in the budget.
 - v. Each women’s fund will be responsible for reporting based on the activities they manage.

7. Grant funds **CANNOT** be used for the following:

- a. Grantmaking to women's rights and feminist organizations
- b. Individual fund's reserves—but could potentially be used to collectively develop a long-term strategy for building reserves (or similar activities)
- c. Individual capacity needs of women's funds. The main objective of the Collaboration Grant is to encourage collaboration across the women's funds of the Prospera International Network of Women's Funds. The Collaboration Groups are expected to pursue collective goals that would not be possible by working on the project's components in isolation from each other.

If you have any questions or need further clarification, please feel free to reach out to us by emailing womensfunds@fenomenalfunds.org. We will gladly schedule a call with your group to discuss any specific questions or to provide further clarification.

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