

EMPOWER TO PLAN A POPULATION MATTERS' SMALL GRANTS PROGRAMME

GRANT GUIDELINES: NOVEMBER 2024

ABOUT POPULATION MATTERS

Population Matters is a UK-based environmental non-profit organisation working globally to create a sustainable future for both people and the planet. **Our vision is simple: a future with a good quality of life for all, a healthy and biodiverse environment, and a stable, sustainable population size.**

We campaign for ethical, voluntary, and positive solutions to encourage smaller families, reduce excessive consumption, and help us to live within our planet's natural limits. Our mission is to drive large-scale action by promoting choices that support a sustainable human population and foster environmental regeneration.

At the heart of our mission is **empowering women** with the knowledge and freedom to choose their family size. This ultimately leads to a reduction in birth rates, easing the pressure on natural resources, enhancing climate resilience, and protecting our planet and its ecosystems.

EMPOWER TO PLAN PROGRAMME

Empower to Plan (E2P) is our **small grants programme**, partnering with local organisations globally to back grassroots projects on family planning, sexual and reproductive health, gender equality, and environmental sustainability. E2P aims to amplify voices, promote choice, safeguard our natural world, and foster positive change right at the grassroots level.

GRANT DETAILS

1. Grant Amount

- i. We award grants of a maximum of £7,000 per application. Typical grant amounts fall within the range of £4,000 to £6,000.
- ii. We provide the full grant amount at the beginning of the funding period.

2. Number of grants:

- i. We award 3 grants under the Empower to Plan Programme each year.
- ii. We disburse grants in the following months:
 - July
 - October
 - February.

- iii. The application form includes the option to select, in order of preference, the month in which you would like us to disburse the grant to enable appropriate project planning, if your application is successful.
- iv. We will discuss the options with you if too many applicants have selected the same month, to ensure fairness and feasibility.
- v. We are open to considering other grant disbursement periods, which can be specified in the application form.

3. Grant Duration

- i. We typically support projects with durations between 4 and 12 months.
- ii. We can consider longer projects if they fall within the grant amount limit specified in [Point 1](#).

4. Thematic Focus

- i. We collaborate with organisations dedicated to enhancing the lives of girls and women and protecting the environment.
- ii. We support projects that incorporate two or more of the following thematic areas in their project design:
 - Sexual and reproductive health and education
 - Gender justice
 - Environmental justice
 - Family planning
 - Youth, girls', and women's empowerment
 - Environmental education and climate adaptation, resilience, and mitigation
 - Species and/or habitat conservation.
- iii. We encourage projects that adopt the Population/People, Health, and Environment (PHE) approach, which integrates these three key aspects for comprehensive impact.
- iv. Additionally, we recognise, support, and welcome applications from projects working with boys and men to achieve gender equality.

5. Types of Projects:

- i. We consider applications for various types of projects, including but not limited to:
 - a. Implementation of specific projects run by the organisation.
 - b. Scaling up of existing projects to reach a wider audience.
 - c. Seed funding for innovative solutions and/or new projects.
 - d. Covering operational costs of ongoing initiatives.

To read more about the past projects and organisations we have supported, visit:
<https://populationmatters.org/empower-to-plan-project-showcase/>.

6. Eligibility

Essential criteria:

- i. Organisations should align with Population Matters' mission and vision (<https://populationmatters.org/about-us/>) and share our commitment to human rights, women's empowerment, and global justice.
- ii. Organisations should incorporate two or more of the Empower to Plan thematic areas specified in our [Thematic Focus](#).
- iii. Organisations must be registered as a grassroot/non-profit/non-governmental/trust/civil society organisation/ community-based organisation in their country of operation.
- iv. Organisations should have an annual income between £5,000 and £250,000, with preference given to those at the lower end of this range.
- v. To receive funds, organisations must have an internationally registered bank account.
- vi. Organisations must be legally capable of receiving funds from an international organisation.
- vii. Organisations must be able to provide a set of annual and/or management accounts and, ideally, audited accounts, when requested.
- viii. Organisations must either possess or express a willingness to implement safeguarding, financial management, and anti-fraud, bribery, and corruption policies. Population Matters is happy to provide assistance to those organisations that do not currently have these policies in place.

Desirable Criteria:

- i. Organisations governed, directed, or led by members of the communities they serve.
- ii. Organisations led by and representing women and those with lived experience of the issues the organisation seeks to address.
- iii. Emerging and longstanding grassroots organisations, particularly those with little or no access to funding from larger donors.

REVIEW AND SELECTION

7. Application Process:

- i. **Expressing interest:** If your organisation is interested in applying for the Empower to Plan Programme Grant, please express your interest by reaching out to Shweta Shirodkar, Empower to Plan Programme Coordinator, at shweta.shirodkar@populationmatters.org. When expressing interest, please provide information about your organisation and a brief overview of the work you do.
- ii. **Application form:** We will provide the Empower to Plan Grant Application Form to organisations that have expressed interest annually when applications open.

This form will include clear deadlines and guidelines to support the application process.

- iii. **Webinar support:** We may (depending on demand) also host a webinar to assist with the application process and answer any questions you may have once we receive a substantial number of expressions of interest. Giving you the best chance of success in applying for an Empower to Plan grant is our priority, and we are here to support you at every step.
- iv. **Language options:** Please get in touch with us if you require translation of our application documents or to request to apply in a language other than English.

8. Review and Selection Process:

- i. **Initial screening:** We will carry out an initial screening of applications to ensure they meet the eligibility criteria. We will shortlist up to 10 organisations for further comprehensive evaluation. Depending on the volume of applications, Population Matters retains the discretion to adjust the initial screening process to ensure an efficient and equitable selection procedure.
- ii. **Comprehensive Evaluation:** Shortlisted organisations enter the detailed review phase, involving discussions with the Empower to Plan Programme coordinator, so we can gain an in-depth understanding of the proposed project and initiate due diligence processes.
- iii. **Final Shortlist:** Following the detailed review, we will shortlist 3 organisations, which will receive funding from Population Matters. This selection is based on key criteria, such as the:
 - Overall application
 - Proposed budget
 - Geographical and project context
 - Project location/geography and any previous E2P engagement in the proposed project location
 - Thematic alignment
 - Monitoring and evaluation plans
 - Track record of past donors/partners, demonstrating successful collaborations and contributions to similar initiatives.
- iv. In the event that we receive fewer than 10 applications, we will take all applications to the comprehensive evaluation stage without the initial screening phase. We are committed to providing every applicant with a fair and thorough evaluation, regardless of the number of applications we receive.

9. Award notifications

- i. We will notify the 3 successful applicants within 1-2 months after the application deadline.

- ii. We will also provide feedback and guidance for unsuccessful applicants. We appreciate your commitment and the effort you've put into your applications, and we remain dedicated to supporting your work in various ways. In the event that other opportunities, such as collaboration with our communications, campaigns, or research teams, arise, we will ensure you are informed and included in the conversation. Your engagement with Population Matters is valued, and we look forward to exploring avenues where we can work together toward shared objectives.

SUCCESSFUL APPLICATIONS

1. Partnership agreement

- i. We will establish a partnership agreement for all grants, encompassing:
 - Definition of project scope and activities.
 - Specification of grant duration and details.
 - Monitoring, evaluation and reporting specifics.
 - Terms ensuring participant (beneficiary/service user) consent.
 - Guidelines for publicity and communication strategies.
 - Terms and conditions for indemnification in unforeseen circumstances.
- ii. We will provide a comprehensive explanation of each clause, with any areas of concern open to mutual discussion and resolution.

2. Specifics on monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

- i. We require successful applicants to provide **mid-point and final progress reports**: These reports include an update and an impact assessment. They should also include photos, videos, participant stories, and receipts to help us monitor progress and evaluate the impact of the Empower to Plan funded projects.

3. Crowdfunding and updates:

- i. When we make each grant, we publicise each Empower to Plan project through dedicated webpages and project launch emails sent to our 20,000-strong international mailing list.
- ii. In this way, we raise awareness about our partners' work, while also crowdfunding towards the cost of each grant.
- iii. We then continue to communicate project impact and news through website blogs and social media posts. For this reason, we require quality photos, materials, and stories from the start of the grant period.

4. Renewal of Grant Support

- i. Empower to Plan grants are **one-off awards and do not include extensions or the provision of repeat grants** as standard procedure.
- ii. In exceptional cases, we invite partners to apply for renewed support for a new and distinct project outline.

For any other queries or information, please contact Shweta Shirodkar, Empower to Plan Programme Coordinator, at shweta.shirodkar@populationmatters.org.