

POSITIVE ACTION FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN  
Call for Proposals  
Guidance Notes and Frequently Asked Questions  
(Updated July 2017)

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## Introduction

Across the globe, adolescent girls and young women have a significantly higher risk of HIV infection than their male counterparts, with HIV prevalence almost seven times higher in some parts of the world<sup>1</sup>.

Positive Action for Girls and Women (PAGW) is committed to tackling key behavioural and structural barriers that may increase adolescent girls' and young women's vulnerability to HIV. ViiV Healthcare has committed £2 million per year over five years (2015-2020) to fund a range of community-based grants and broader strategic partnerships.

The PAGW's small grants programme seeks to fund community-led interventions that address the following topics:

- sexual violence
- harmful practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM)
- early and forced marriage
- sexual and reproductive health and rights for underserved and vulnerable girls

## PAGW Topic Areas and Values

The PAGW established the following topic areas and core values which form the focus of its funding priorities.

### Objectives – Topic Areas

Applications to the PAGW should focus on reducing HIV vulnerability for women and girls by targeting their objectives to one or more of the following **topic areas**.

*Please note: trying to address all topic areas in your application will not improve the likelihood of success and in fact may weaken your submission. Focused initiatives that demonstrate real impact in one or two topic areas are most frequently the strongest proposals.*

- 1) Sexual Violence:** Community interventions to contribute to ending rape, intimate partner violence and other forms of sexual violence
- 2) Harmful Practices that Increase Vulnerability to HIV:** Community interventions which work to end harmful practices that are increasing adolescent girls' and young women's vulnerability to HIV. For example, female genital mutilation and harmful initiation practices.
- 3) Early and Forced Marriage:** Community interventions which contribute to the ending of child marriage and/or relationships of power imbalance.
- 4) Supporting Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights for Under-served/Vulnerable AGYW:** Improve knowledge of, and access to, appropriate sexual and reproductive health and rights information and services for under-served groups. This includes HIV+ adolescent girls, internally displaced populations, orphans, sex workers.

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<sup>1</sup> UNAIDS. The Gap Report. Available at: [http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaids\\_publication/2014/UNAIDS\\_Gap\\_report\\_en.pdf](http://www.unaids.org/sites/default/files/en/media/unaids/contentassets/documents/unaids_publication/2014/UNAIDS_Gap_report_en.pdf)

## Approaches

Applications should ensure the methodology taken to achieve their objectives is aligned to one or more of the following approaches:

- **Generating Demand:** Projects that generate demand for SRH, family planning and HIV services
- **Advocacy:** Projects that include advocacy to affect change in local, national or international policies and/or promote the funding and adoption of good practice. Projects may focus on giving a voice to affected people not often heard by decision-makers by focusing on a problem and demonstrating successes and/or sharing experiences and good practice.
- **Promoting Knowledge and Enforcement of Laws and Policies:** Engaging local communities to protect and promote the rights of girls and young women.
- **Integration:** Projects that optimise health impacts for girls and women through an integrated approach to education, prevention and care in SRH and HIV services, through linkages with clinics, government officials and/or other community-based organisations.

## Values

- **Community Focused:** Projects that are designed to tackle the needs of the specific community(ies) targeted and are owned by those communities.
- **Girl-Centred Approaches:** Projects targeting girls that are shaped by the girls of the community
- **Eradicating Stigma and Discrimination:** Projects that address and combat the stigma and discrimination attached to HIV and AIDS that present a barrier to accessing HIV and SRH services, including facility level discrimination, community-level stigma and self-stigma
- **Demonstrating Impact (Monitoring and Evaluation):** Projects that are committed to measuring and evaluating the impact produced in the community(ies) in which the project is focused
- **Sustainability:** Projects that demonstrate sustainability beyond the life of the grant and/or models that are replicable and scalable by other organisations.

## Eligibility

Before starting your application, please read the following section carefully to ensure that your organisation and proposal meet the PAGW's funding eligibility requirements. **Applications that do not fulfil all of the following criteria will not be considered for funding.**

### Community and HIV/AIDS Focus

The PAGW aims to alleviate the impact of HIV and AIDS on women's and girls' health by supporting interventions that engage affected communities, developing their capacity to participate and lead. Your organisation must therefore represent, or be working with or for, communities affected by HIV.

As community engagement, participation and/or leadership are mandatory requirements for all PAGW grants, your application must also demonstrate how your

work will engage, involve or empower affected communities. Please consider these criteria when demonstrating why your organisation is best placed to deliver the project that you have proposed.

### Size and Period of Grant

Applicants may apply for funding of **£5,000 - £25,000** per year for **2 years**. In line with PAGW's focus on interventions rooted within the targeted community(ies) we particularly encourage and welcome smaller grants.

### Organisation Type

In order to be eligible for funding, organisations must be non-governmental and either not-for-profit or have a social purpose. Organisations typically considered for funding include: Registered Charitable/Non-Profit Organisations, Community Based Organisations (CBOs), Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Social Enterprises.

### New Project

Your project must consist of **new work** that has not been previously funded. It may, however, include projects transferred to a new location(s) and/or include the expansion of a recently tested model or pilot. It may not be a continuation of a previously funded activity/service in the same location.

### Geography

PAGW funding will be prioritised for projects based in resource-limited settings.

*Please be aware that we receive a large number of applications from Uganda and Kenya, therefore these are extremely competitive countries for funding.*

### Budget

Your application must include both:

- a summary budget, entered directly into the application form based on objectives; and
- a comprehensive budget accounting for all anticipated project spends, uploaded as an attachment.

This budget must adhere to the following criteria:

- **50% Rule:** The total grant amount requested cannot account for more than 50% of your organisation's annual income. Annual income is determined using your organisation's previous budget year. For example, if your organisation had an income of £25,000 in your previous budget year, you would be eligible to apply for a maximum of £25,000 per year.
- **85% In Country:** 85% of your project's budget must be spent in the country in which your project is focused and implemented.
- **Maximum 15% Overheads:** Overheads must account for no more than 15% of your total budget. Overheads are administrative expenses of your organisation that are required for its general operations and which cannot be definitively attributed to your PAGW project. Examples of overheads include, but are not limited to: rent, utility bills and printing costs. The salaries of individuals who are specifically employed to manage or support your PAGW project should not be included as we would consider these a distinct project cost; however, any salaries of general administrative employees will count towards your 15%.

*Please note that PAGW does not fund any large capital expenditures such as buildings and vehicles. If large capital expenditure is justified and approved, it will count towards the 15% overhead allowed for projects.*

*Please note that PAGW grant budgets cannot be used for ARV drug purchases.*

We request that all budgets are submitted Pound Sterling (£). **You must attach a comprehensive budget that includes both annual and total figures for your project in Pound Sterling to be considered for funding.**

### **Previous PAGW Applicant**

If you submit a PAGW application and it is not successful, you will not be eligible for funding at the next Board Meeting. Any applications submitted will be held until the following Board Meeting for consideration. For example, if your application is rejected at the February Board Meeting and you wish to submit a new application, it will not be considered until the October Board Meeting. *Please see the Review Process section of these Guidance Notes for more information.*

### **Multiple Positive Action Grants**

In addition to the PAGW, ViiV Healthcare supports community based organisations which serve key populations affected by HIV and AIDS through a number of additional programmes including the Positive Action for Children Fund (PACF) and the Positive Action for Men who have Sex with Men & Transgender Fund (PAMSM&T).

Organisations which have been awarded a PAGW grant are **not** eligible for a concurrent PACF grant. Similarly, organisations which have been awarded a PACF grant are **not** eligible for a concurrent PAGW grant.

*Please note that there are no restrictions on applying for a PAGW grant if you have already been awarded an MSM&T grant, subject to adherence to the 50% rule.*

### **Attachments**

Applications should be submitted with the following four attachments:

- list of your trustees with contact details
- proof of your organisation's registration
- copy of your latest audited accounts
- comprehensive budget

### **References**

References are required at application stage. References should have knowledge of your organisation's work and should include a named contact with phone number and email.

### **Language**

The PAGW will consider applications submitted in English or French only.

## **Technical Assistance**

In 2011, the Positive Action for Children Fund (PACF) established its **Technical Assistance Programme (TA)**. Technical Assistance, through the transfer of knowledge, processes and skills, aims to strengthen community capacity in the response to HIV and AIDS by equipping CBOs with the necessary technical expertise, organisational capacity, individual skills and programmatic alignment to optimise investments in and performance of health systems.

Through PACF's TA programme, grantees are supported to address technical and organisational capacity gaps that may be hindering performance, and in so doing develop more effective programmes, build strengthened institutional capacity and in turn deliver better health outcomes.

### Types of Support

PACF's TA Programme focuses on four key areas of capacity building:

- *organisational capacity*
- *technical capacity*
- *partnerships & networks*
- *monitoring, evaluation and dissemination*

Together it aims to provide a comprehensive structure of development that targets both hard and soft skills, including both technical ability and partnering capability, to strengthen an organisation's ability to achieve their objectives and build sustainable skills.

### Applying For Technical Assistance

This year, PAGW applicants will have the opportunity to apply for TA, with a particular focus on **organisational capacity and partnerships & networks**. When completing your online application you will be prompted to indicate whether you wish to apply for TA. Please refer to the *PACF Concept Note Application Guide* for further information on how to complete your TA application.

#### Please note:

- Your application for TA is considered separately from your application for funding – applying for TA has **no impact** on the likelihood of securing funding
- You **cannot** request TA part-way through implementing your project – all TA applications are considered at the same time as your initial funding application.

### Being Selected For Technical Assistance

Due to a limited number of places on the TA Programme, only a select number of applications will be accepted for TA support. Your application for TA will be assessed by the following criteria:

- Logistical considerations (geography, available TA Providers, timing of application)
- Number of TA applications
- Availability of funds
- Capacity of applying organisation (relative to other applying organisations)
- Need for technical assistance in the context of the proposed project (relative to other applying organisations)
- Potential to benefit from TA support
- Clarity and specificity of need stated in application request

You will be informed whether your application for TA has been successful at the same time as receiving the outcome of your project application.

## How To Apply

All applications must be submitted via the Positive Action online community:  
<https://positiveaction.force.com/pacf/login>.

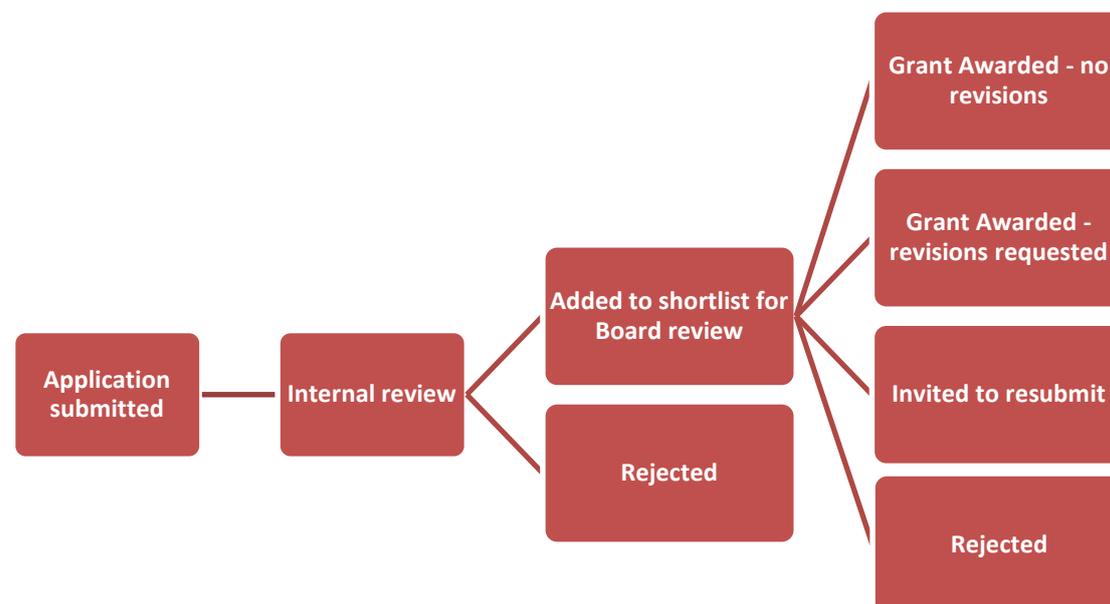
Applications submitted in any other format will not be considered.

Please refer to the *PACF Concept Note Application Guide* accessible via the Positive Action online community for further information on how to complete your application using the online system.

## Review Process

The PAGW now accepts applications on a rolling basis. Applications are open all year round and will continuously be reviewed internally, with the PAGW Board reviewing shortlisted periodically throughout the year. Board meeting dates will be published on the Positive Action online community.

**Table 1: Application Journey**



At the Internal Review stage your application may be rejected or shortlisted for Board Review. If your application proceeds to Board Review, you will be notified of one of four outcomes:

- **Grant Awarded – no revisions:** application approved with no revisions.
- **Grant Awarded – revisions requested:** application approved subject to minor revisions. You will receive further communications that outline the revisions required and invite you to revise your online application. Your grant will be awarded once the revisions are approved by PAGW.
- **Invited to Resubmit:** application not approved but recognised to have potential. You will be requested to review your application in light of the Board’s comments and resubmit your application for consideration at the next Board Meeting.
- **Rejected:** application not approved. Rejected applicants wishing to submit a new project application will not be considered eligible for funding at the next Board Meeting. Any applications submitted will be held until the following Board Meeting for consideration. For example, if your application is rejected at the February Board Meeting and you wish to submit a new application, it will not be considered until the October Board Meeting.

Please note that PAGW is under no obligation to award grants and retains sole discretion to reject or accept individual applications.

All final awards approved by the Board are conditional and subject to contract. Changes may be requested by the Board and successful completion of Positive Action's due diligence validation process is mandatory. No commitment to provide funds is made at the point at which a grant is awarded and the grant may be withdrawn at a later date if specified criteria are subsequently not complied with.

## Monitoring and Evaluation

The PAGW wishes to see that all funds dispersed will be clearly accounted for. If your application is successful, you will be expected to report on your progress through:

- **quarterly phone calls (at minimum)** with your Grant Manager;
- **six monthly written report** providing a summary of programmes and activities;
- **annual financial report** for the preceding year;
- **data against your selected indicators:**

Every grant we award is a partnership and we hope that if you are successful, we can work with, support and coach you to maximise the impact of your grant.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### Applications

#### What constitutes a strong project application?

A PAGW project needs to be:

- New work, not the continuation of a previously funded activity
- Aligned to at least one of the PAGW topic areas
- Aligned to the PAGW values
- Appropriate interventions aligned to identified needs in the area, showing clear understanding of community context
- Clear objectives and activities with achievable and measurable targets
- Achievable and measurable within the period of funding requested
- Incorporating community engagement, participation and/or leadership
- Sustainable
- Capacity and capability to deliver project (subject to potential TA support)
- Identifiable as a discrete programme of work alongside or within any larger programme your organisation runs - it should have a name that can be used by the implementer and the funder to describe the project.

#### Can we apply for part or co-funding?

Yes - provided the project is new and the other source of funding is named in the application, the PAGW will consider applications for part-funding.

Where the PAGW is being asked to co-fund, please make clear what specific aspect of the project you are requesting funds for.

#### Who should I designate as lead contact?

The PAGW requests that the lead contact be the person responsible for delivery of the project at a country level wherever possible. We believe that building capacity includes managing grants and funders and therefore will require clear explanation when the proposed primary contact for a project is not in-country.

#### What is PAGW's definition of 'girls and young women'?

We will support projects that are primarily targeted at supporting girls and young women aged 10 - 24.

### Attachments

#### My last financial years audited accounts are unavailable / I don't have audited accounts / I have a project audit but not an organisational audit.

We require a set of audited accounts before funding will be disbursed. We will accept applications without audited accounts only if an explanation is provided with the reasons for non-submission, and accounts have been submitted with accompanying confirmation from director of organisation and chair of trustees that true reflection of company accounts.

#### What happens if I do not include the requested attachments?

Your Concept Note will not be considered if it does not include the requested attachments.

## Collaborations

### Can we apply in a partnership or consortium?

Yes - we encourage collaborations with two or more organisations working together. Smaller Community Based Organisations (CBOs) are encouraged to submit applications on behalf of consortia. Larger NGOs are encouraged to name smaller CBO implementing partners, and we particularly encourage you to develop new relationships that can enhance the capacity of smaller CBOs.

Collaborative projects should ensure they address community needs and make sense programmatically with clear roles and responsibilities.

One organisation must act as the lead agency and will have to submit as the lead organisation on behalf of all partners, detailing both/all organisations details within your proposal. The lead organisation must also be prepared to hold the budget and take responsibility for the finances, management, delivery, communication and reporting of the project.

## Current Positive Action Grantees/Extensions

### We already have a Positive Action-funded project from a different Positive Action Fund (e.g. PACF, PAMSM&T) - can I apply for another grant?

*For PACF:* No – organisations which have been awarded a PACF grant are not eligible to have a concurrent PAGW grant. You may only apply for a PACF grant once your PAGW project is within six months of its end date, assuming you do not apply for a PAGW project extension.

*For PAMSM&T:* Yes – there are no restrictions on applying for a PAGW grant if you have already been awarded an MSM&T grant.

### We already have a PAGW funded project - can I apply for another PAGW grant?

No – existing PAGW grantee recipients are not eligible to apply for additional PAGW grants as PAGW grantees cannot have multiple PAGW grants.

However, if your current grant is within its final 6 months you may either:

- (a) apply for a brand new project grant under the Call for Proposals, or
- (b) apply for an extension to your current project. *Please contact your grant manager for more information about extensions.*

Please keep in mind if you represent an international NGO and have multiple country offices, we treat each country office as a separate entity so long as the grant is managed from the applicant country directly.

## Budgets

### What format must my comprehensive budget take?

The budget template is available to download on the PAGW application form.

### My country's currency fluctuates significantly with Pound Sterling – how do I plan for currency fluctuations in my budget?

We request that all budgets are submitted in both local currency and Pound Sterling (at prevailing rate of exchange) when budget is submitted. We recognise that there can be significant currency fluctuations both positively or negatively for successful grantees over the course of a three year period. If there is a funding shortfall or

budget gain as a result of currency fluctuations, your contact in the Positive Action team will work with you to manage any funding gain or shortfall as a result of currency movements.

### **Will our financials be audited?**

Yes - Positive Action reserves the right to audit a project at any time. If sufficient evidence cannot be provided that funding is being used for the charitable purpose stated in your project proposal, we may terminate funding.

## **Review Process**

### **When will my application be considered by the Board?**

If your application progresses to Board Review it will be considered at the next scheduled Board Meeting. Please refer to the [Positive Action Online Community](#) homepage for specific cut-off dates for consideration at the next Board Meeting.

### **How will my Concept Note be assessed?**

Your Concept Note will be assessed for its adherence to the focus of the PAGW project criteria outlined in the guidance, with particular importance placed on its relevance to the topic areas prioritised for this call.

### **What is an 'eligibility check'?**

The eligibility check is a review conducted by the PAGW to ensure that organisations and projects are eligible for funding. Please refer to the eligibility section for further information on PAGW eligibility requirements.

### **What is a 'suitability check'?**

The suitability check is a review conducted by the PAGW to prioritise the strongest applications for recommendation to the Board. The PAGW looks for:

- Clear understanding of community context
- Appropriate interventions aligned to identified needs
- Clear objectives, activities and target outcomes
- Relevance of project to local setting
- Capacity and capability to deliver project
- Sustainability of project
- Strongest project in countries with multiple proposals
- A good spread of themes, focus areas and a balance of interventions

### **Who are the PAGW Board?**

The PAGW Board Members are global experts in the fields of HIV, SRH and women's rights. Please see the [PAGW webpage](#) for more details on the current Board members.

### **What are the main reasons that a Concept Note is rejected?**

Based on previous calls for proposals, the Fund has identified a number of common reasons for unsuccessful applications:

- The application is ineligible or incomplete.
- Need is not clearly identified and/or is not evidenced by local data.  
Lack of consistency between need identified, objectives, activities proposed and anticipated impact.
- General and/or vague objectives. Objectives should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, time related). *e.g. to increase the percentage of births in facility x to 70% by 2017.*
- Project is too broad, with either too many objectives or trying to cover too many topic areas.

- Answers relating to impact are not measurable and do not explain how the programme activities would subsequently improve health outcomes and/or change behaviours.

### **Will I receive any specific feedback on my proposal?**

Due to the amount of applications received, we are unfortunately unable to provide unsuccessful applicants with any personalised feedback on their Concept Notes.

If you are invited to resubmit your application, you will receive specific comments on your proposal from which to revise your application.

### **When will successful grantees be announced?**

You will be updated on the outcome of your application following the Board Meeting at which it is considered. Please refer to the 'Review Process' section above for more information on Board Meeting dates.

### **If my application is successful, what are the next steps?**

If your application is successful, you will receive an email which contains a post-award guidance document. This document will contain information on:

- Contracting process
- Positive Action's due diligence checks – a process referred to as "validation"
- Reporting
- Technical Assistance

## **Technical Assistance (TA)**

### **Who can request TA?**

Any applicant applying for funding is eligible to apply for TA support as part of their application process. You will be prompted to indicate whether you wish to apply for TA as part of your application for project funding.

### **Who will provide the TA?**

PACF has established a list of TA Preferred Partners and will align a suitable Partner based on capacity needs, expertise, size of grant, geography and suitability.

### **How long is TA provided for?**

The duration of TA depends upon the nature of the capacity need requested. Standard TA interventions last for the duration of the approved, but in some cases support may be shorter or longer. The duration of the TA will be determined at the start of the intervention based on an analysis of need including discussions between the selected TA partner and supported grantee.

### **How will my request for TA be considered?**

Your application for TA will be considered alongside your application for project funding. As applications operate on a rolling basis, TA application reviews therefore also operate on a rolling basis. Please note however that if you are selected for TA support, your grant start date may be held to enable alignment with other grantees receiving TA support from the same TA partner.

### **How will I find out if my application for TA has been successful?**

You will receive notification on the outcome of your application for TA as part of your notification on outcome of your project application.

### **Do I have to pay for and/or take money from my budget to receive TA support?**

No – PACF’s TA Programme provides additional support to selected grantees at no extra costs to successful applicants.

## **Positive Action Online Community**

### **What should I use the Positive Action Online Community for?**

The Positive Action Online Community is the primary platform and mechanism for applying to PACF and PAGW, managing your active grants and engaging with the broader Positive Action community. Interested organisations and current PACF/PAGW grantees should regularly log into the system to ensure your information is up-to-date and to be updated on developments across the PACF/PAGW community.

### **I have forgotten my password – what should I do?**

Please click the ‘forgot your password?’ button to reset your password. You will receive an automated email with a link to follow.

### **I can’t log on to the Positive Action online community – what should I do?**

Please contact the PAGW mailbox ([positiveactionforgirls@viivhealthcare.com](mailto:positiveactionforgirls@viivhealthcare.com)).

### **What happens to my application after I have submitted it?**

You will receive an automatically generated email from the Positive Action online community once your completed application has been received.

## **Miscellaneous**

### **Can we submit a proposal outside this process?**

PAGW only accepts applications via our online community. We will not consider any unsolicited proposals.

### **What should I do if I have further questions?**

Please refer to the [PAGW webpage](#) and visit our discussion forums on the Positive Action online community to view commonly asked questions and answers. If you cannot find the answer to your question on these platforms, please contact the PAGW mailbox ([positiveactionforgirls@viivhealthcare.com](mailto:positiveactionforgirls@viivhealthcare.com)).