

Budgetary Guidelines

Women's Economic Empowerment and Digital Connectivity (WEE-Connect) Research Initiative

Applicants are requested to submit a project budget in the WEE-Connect template, along with a corresponding budget narrative. The following guidelines have been designed to help teams develop the most competitive budget proposals possible within the parameters of WEE-Connect's financial conditions, including compliance with our donor's rules and regulations.

General Considerations

Overall, WEE-Connect seeks budgets that present a clear financial request and high value for money. WEE-Connect also seeks budgets that are detailed, with costs thoroughly disaggregated and justified.

All applications should include budget notes in the column provided in the budget template, specifying the costs within the budget. For example, Travel Costs should include a breakdown of how many trips are planned, the estimated cost per trip, etc.

A separate budget narrative, not to exceed one page single spaced, should be prepared and shared along with the budget. This document should provide greater context to the major costs within the budget. For example, please provide context for the particular staffing structure proposed and justification for the number of international trips planned, etc. This document serves as an opportunity to present a financial argument for your particular circumstances, especially if your context requires deviation from the guidelines presented below. If specific costs are thoroughly explained in the budget template justification column, they do not need further explanation in the budget narrative.

Applicants should also include information on co-funding for the project in the budget narrative. The proposal should clearly explain the marginal contribution of the requested funds from WEE-Connect, and the total amount of co-funding should be included in the total project budget. Please only include costs committed.

Please provide costs in US dollars. Any anticipated currency exchange gains or losses should be accounted for in the budgeting process.

The following costs are considered ineligible expenses:

- Currency exchange losses
- Audit fees
- New technology or software development
- Advisory board fees or honorariums
- Expenses associated with policy development and research dissemination

Requests for the following expenses should meet the parameters stipulated below and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Additionally, the expenses should be thoroughly justified in the budget narrative.

- **PI salaries or stipends.** WEE-Connect is unable to support PI salaries or stipends in the event that research activities fall under the PI's day-to-day purview. PI salaries or stipends may be requested in cases where the PI does not have pre-existing financial support to pursue research.
- **Intervention costs.** WEE-Connect funds are earmarked for research purposes. As such, the Initiative urges teams to source costs associated with the implementation of an intervention externally. WEE-Connect may consider supporting intervention costs that do not fall under the day-to-day purview of the implementer. Any proposed intervention expenses should represent no more than 10% of the total project budget.
- **Staff development costs.** WEE-Connect will consider financial requests related to staff development, such as staff training, for staff that are from the study's country of focus. These requests should be clearly detailed and accompanied by a statement elaborating how the request is directly related to the project.

WEE-Connect considers the following distribution of funds competitive for non co-funded budgets. However, WEE-Connect does not employ funding caps (except for overhead) across categories and encourages projects that deviate from this schedule to fully justify their financial needs in the budget narrative. As such, the following distribution should be considered a framework for applicants' consideration, and is non-binding (excepting overhead).

- 30% for project personnel
- 45% for data collection
- 10% for travel
- 15% of direct project expenses for overhead

Budgets associated with proposals for secondary data analysis awards are an important exception to this distribution. Since these awards are designed to support the staff time needed to conduct analysis of existing datasets on gender and digital connectivity, it is expected that funds will primarily be allocated to project personnel.

Considerations by Budget Line

1. Project personnel

Please include wages associated with research staff, such as research managers and research associates. Please provide detailed information regarding the quantity and level of research staff, and the duration and nature of their engagement. Expenses associated with administrative costs, including finance, IT, operations, and legal expenses, should be covered by the overhead allotment, as described below.

2. Data collection

Please include all expenses associated with data collection staff, including enumerator training, daily wages, accommodation, subsistence, and transportation expenses. Also include in this section any costs associated with obtaining IRB approval, technical equipment, printing, communications, data purchase, and incentives for survey participants. Each line item should clearly state the unit type, quantity, and rate per unit. Specific costs should be explained in the budget template justification column. Please see more specific guidance by expense category below.

2.1 Training

Please disaggregate costs associated with enumerator training, such as trainer fees, venue, trainee subsistence, and transportation expenses.

2.2 Survey staff salaries

Please include all wages associated with the data collection team. Costs should be disaggregated by role (i.e. enumerator, supervisor, auditor) and by round of data collection (i.e. baseline, endline). Wages associated with research staff are not to be included in this category.

2.3 Survey staff travel, accommodation, and subsistence

Please include all additional expenses associated with the data collection team, such as accommodation, subsistence, and transportation. Costs should be disaggregated by role (i.e. enumerator, supervisor, auditor) and by round of data collection (i.e. baseline, endline).

2.4 Technical equipment rental and purchase

Costs should be disaggregated by item (i.e. computer, tablet, recorder). Please also consider the best value for money with regard to technical equipment. As an example, please consider renting rather than purchasing tablets for data collection in circumstances where this is feasible and economical.

2.5 Printing, communications, data purchase or subscription, participant incentives, and other data collection costs

Please disaggregate expenses associated with printing, communications, data purchase or subscription, and other expenses related to data collection. Where relevant, the quantity included should correspond to the study sample size. Each line item should be accompanied by a brief justification.

WEE-Connect permits and encourages reasonable participant incentives as a means to compensate respondents for their time participating in data collection. Costs associated with facilitating behavioral games as a means of data collection are also permissible. It should be clearly stated in the budget narrative that these expenses are associated with data collection, rather than the implementation of an intervention.

Please also include in this section any costs associated with obtaining IRB approval or research permits, including details regarding which IRB will be applied to.

WEE-Connect permits modest requests for journal application fees for PIs based in South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Sub-Saharan Africa. These funds are designed to support teams that would otherwise not have financing to support applications to top journals. Up to \$1200 can be requested for this purpose. The lead PI should be based at an institution headquartered in South Asia, Southeast Asia, or Sub-Saharan Africa, and a justification should be provided in the budget narrative explaining how these funds will enable the research team to pursue publication opportunities that would otherwise be inaccessible.

3. Travel

Please include in this section travel expenses associated with domestic or international travel for project personnel. Please disaggregate costs by category (i.e. flights, ground travel, accommodation, subsistence, etc). Travel expenses should represent the best value for money. For example, accommodation should be modest, and public transportation should be considered in lieu of private transportation in circumstances where this is safe, efficient, and feasible.

4. Overhead

A maximum rate of 15% overhead may be applied to direct project expenses. Overhead may be charged by the prime award recipient only. All expenses associated with administrative costs, including finance, IT, operations, and legal expenses, must be accounted for in this line.