**Eligibility Criteria and Guidelines for Accessing the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund**

This paper sets out the overall governance arrangements for the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund including the eligibility criteria.

**Background**

In November 2016, the United States and Chinese Taipei announced the intention to support the establishment of a Women and the Economy sub-fund under the APEC Support Fund (ASF). A non-paper proposing the establishment of a Women and the Economy sub‑fund was circulated for information to the PPWE.

The Budget Management Committee (BMC) also noted the establishment of the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund at its meeting on 25 February 2017 where the United States, as one of the initial donors, presented an information paper (2017/BMC/011) outlining the overall governance arrangements of this Sub‑Fund. The paper was also presented to the SOM Steering Committee on ECOTECH (SCE) Committee of the Whole (COW).

**Scope**

This sub-fund aims to institutionalize and provide ongoing support to advance APEC’s objectives of increasing women’s economic participation. It will support new and ongoing initiatives related to advancing women’s economic participation.

The sub-fund will support the priorities and mission of the PPWE, including integration of gender perspectives across the spectrum of APEC’s work, sectors, and working groups and in addressing the barriers to women’s economic participation outlined by the PPWE’s five key pillars outlined in its Strategic Plan and named in item (4) below.

**Criteria for Accessing the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund**

Any interested economy, within any APEC fora, may submit Concept Notes (CNs) which fall within the scope and eligibility criteria of the Women and the Economy sub-fund. To be considered eligible for the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund, CNs must:

1. Be endorsed by both the PPWE and the proposing forum, where that forum is not PPWE. It is strongly encouraged that projects be generated and led by the non-PPWE forum, to encourage cross-fora collaboration and integration of gender issues across APEC.
2. Deliver capacity building activities in and/or benefiting one or more APEC developing economies and with lessons applicable for APEC members more broadly.
3. Build capacity of individuals, local businesses, non-govermental organizations, business associations, civil society organizations, and/or government officials and institutions charged with implementing programs or policies impacting women’s economic participation.
4. Improve the enabling environment for trade and investment and economic participation for women by focusing on one or more of the PPWE’s five pillars impacting women’s economic participation:
   1. Access to capital
   2. Access to markets
   3. Skills, capacity building, and health
   4. Leadership, voice, and agency
   5. Innovation and technology
5. Include women and women’s perspectives in their design, implementation and evaluation.
6. Demonstrate an evidence-based case for implementation, using data from the Women and the Economy Dashboard or other internationally recognized data source, if an appropriate indicator is not included in the Dashboard.
7. Take a multi-stakeholder approach, either through partnership and/or participation, by providing clear evidence that relevant private stakeholders and/or civil society are included in the project planning and implementation, such as through funding and/or in-kind contributions and expertise.
8. Be otherwise assessed as eligible by the PPWE.

**Procedures to access the Sub-Fund:**

***Eligibility Check by the PPWE***

The PPWE will assess each CN seeking funding from the Women and the Economy sub-fund, for the purposes of determining eligibility.

The PPWE will use APEC’s Quality Criteria of *relevance, impact, effectiveness, sustainability*, and *efficiency* to assess each CN against the criteria detailed at Parts 2-7 above, after confirming that the CN has been endorsed by PPWE and the proposing forum, where relevant.

If the PPWE considers a CN ineligible for the Sub-Fund or otherwise requires further development, timely feedback will be provided to the Project Overseer.

***Endorsement and Scoring***

CNs originating from outside PPWE must first seek endorsement from the proposing forum, and secure a minimum of 2 co-sponsors, as per the Guidebook on APEC Projects. Once the proposing forum has endorsed the CN, and co‑sponsorship has been secured, the Project Overseer, through the APEC Secretariat Program Director for the proposing forum, will submit the CN to the PPWE Program Director by the PPWE Endorsement Deadline (for more information, contact the PPWE Program Director). Similarly, CNs originating within PPWE, must be submitted for endorsement no later than the PPWE Endorsement Deadline. All endorsement of CNs seeking access to the Women and the Economy sub-fund by PPWE is expected to occur intersessionally, coordinated through the PPWE Program Director.

The PPWE Program Director will then circulate the CNs to PPWE for endorsement. Any externally-generated CNs submitted to PPWE without the endorsement of the proposing forum, and required co‑sponsorship, will not be considered. Any CN, regardless of the proposing forum, will not be eligible for the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund, if the CN is not endorsed by PPWE.

CNs which have been endorsed by PPWE can then be assessed for eligibility. CNs that have been assessed by the PPWE as eligible for the sub-fund will be scored by PPWE, in line with APEC Project timelines and the Guidebook on APEC Projects. Following scoring, the Secretariat will calculate how many of the projects can be funded from the available Sub-Fund balance. It will then make recommendations to the Budget Management Committee (BMC) for approval as per the usual APEC project approvals.

***Developing the Full Project Proposal***

At the Project Proposal stage, PPWE will be given the opportunity to comment on all Project Proposals to be funded under the Women and the Economy sub-fund, including those proposed by fora other than PPWE. The draft Project Proposal will be submitted to PPWE through the PPWE Program Director and comments sought prior to its submission to the APEC Secretariat. The Project Proposal should incorporate collaboration with PPWE during project implementation and sharing of project outcomes, as appropriate.

**Administration of the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund**

The APEC Secretariat will be responsible for the administration of the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund. It will be subject to the procedures and timelines governing the APEC Support Fund, as set out in the Guidebook on APEC Projects and the APEC website. Refer to <http://www.apec.org/Projects/Applying-for-Funds.aspx>

The full operation of the Women and the Economy Sub-Fund is expected to take place in time for the first session of 2018 after the draft guidelines and eligibility criteria have been endorsed by the PPWE and the donors have completed funding arrangements with the APEC Secretariat.