

Partnership Policy

Policy

Purpose and Scope

To implement its activities, the Women's University in Africa (WUA) works in partnership with stakeholder organisations including the private sector, non-governmental organisations, Ministries and governmental agencies, Affiliates, Fellows, Alumni, Expert community and a wide range of other higher education stakeholders at global, regional and national levels.

Partnerships contribute to WUA's mission and goals. Through partnerships, WUA can leverage resources, expertise, and competencies; partnerships can assist WUA in the promotion of its ideals and values, and strengthen the visibility and impact of its actions.

To make sure that partnerships achieve their stated objectives, WUA needs to carry out due diligence in the selection of partners. Partnerships need to be set up strategically and managed carefully.

WUA has elaborated this policy framework to guide the development of WUA's future partnerships.

The purpose of this Policy framework is to outline the basis on which the University will choose partners and develop strategic partnerships that serve its needs.

In the future, under the framework of this Policy, additional and more specific guidelines may be prepared as needed.

Principles

The main and foremost principles for engaging in a partnership are to:

- enable the University to meet its strategic goals;
- to increase the University's capacity to implement existing or develop new activities, projects, programmes and services;
- to gain access to financial or human resources otherwise unavailable to the University.

Partnerships should be considered and developed in ways to ensure that they:

- respond to the strategic goals defined jointly between the partners;
- are based on mutual trust, confidence and respect, openness and exchange;

- operate as ‘enabling’ mechanisms that bring about a multiplier effect and are complementary;
- result in workload sharing, and act as catalysts for new opportunities.

In addition they are to:

- serve the needs of the partners;
- serve the needs of the respective target groups;
- serve the needs of its membership
- help increase visibility of the partners;
- bring specific expertise, knowledge and skills to a project;
- increase the opportunities to raise additional funding for specific activities and project.

Selection criteria

Criteria for WUA endorsement or agreement to collaborate with partners on external activities or outputs include the below:

- Is the activity aligned with **WUA’s strategic goals**?
- Is there **sufficient capacity** within the University to support it? If so, does it warrant the opportunity costs? What other activity should be deprioritized if necessary to enable WUA to engage?
- Has WUA been invited to engage **early in the planning process**? (*Note: Requests for WUA to engage late in a process, e.g., to endorse a final statement, without opportunity to provide revisions, etc. should generally be declined, except in special cases where all below criteria are met and management agree to engage.*)
- Does the activity **add unique value to WUA**?
- Is the activity aligned with **WUA’s principles of diversity and inclusion**? i.e., does the activity engage participants from all regions and in a gender inclusive way? Can WUA ensure it does so? Does it attempt to engage important stakeholders in other sectors?
- Is there a **strategic reason** to engage (e.g., demand from a key stakeholder for advice that WUA can provide, funding opportunity in line with WUA’s mission, forging a new and potentially fruitful strategic partnership, etc.)?

Requests from external entities will be assessed by the University following these criteria. All criteria must be met, as agreed by management and council where necessary.

Setting up a partnership may require both a long term and a short-term vision. The long-term vision ensures sustainability of a long-term partnership. The shorter term allows to define projects, specific activities and to set clear deadlines.

Partners must be selected carefully, after due diligence has been undertaken to minimize risks and ensure that the principles listed above can be met. Before entering into a partnership, the issues raised in this policy will be carefully addressed in a proposal submitted to the Affiliate Committee for approval.

Policy

All partnerships are to be based on a written agreement. The aim of such an agreement is to protect the parties involved, to set up a fair and mutually beneficial relationship and to clarify roles and responsibilities.

The written agreement (the document itself) enables partners to structure joint projects/events/initiatives in a way that is most suitable to all parties; it allows for defining objectives and goals, benefits and risks, profits and losses that are to be shared, along with the responsibilities and rights of each partner.

WUA partnership agreements can adopt several forms and structures (including the memorandum of understanding (MoU); a signed letter of agreement; a contract etc.).

That should include at least the discussion of the following:

- Aim/Purpose
- Rationale for choice of partner(s) and for entering into the partnership
- Objectives
- Area(s) of focus and activities
- Partnership modalities
- Monitoring and evaluation process
- Financial considerations
- Funds management
- Expected outcomes
- Duration, including project time frame, renewal and termination clauses
- Risks