CALL FOR CONCEPT NOTES
Advancing Women's Empowerment Fund
AGENDA

• **Intro** to the Aspen Network of Development Entrepreneurs

• **Overview** of the Advancing Women’s Empowerment Fund

• **Navigating** the Call for Concept Notes

• **Words** of wisdom when submitting your Concept Note
ANDE OVERVIEW

ANDE members provide critical financial, educational, and business support services to small and growing businesses (SGBs) based on the conviction that SGBs will create jobs, stimulate long-term economic growth, and produce environmental and social benefits.

A global network of organizations that propel entrepreneurship in emerging markets

280+
ANDE members

200,000+
SGBs impacted

150+
countries
SMALL AND GROWING BUSINESSES (SGBS)

Seek growth capital from $20,000 to $2 million

5 – 250 employees

SGBs

LARGE FIRM

MICRO ENTERPRISE

Too large for microfinance

Too small for traditional commercial capital
ANDE’s **Advancing Women’s Empowerment Fund (AWEF)** seeks to close the financing gap for women-led SGBs in emerging markets through activities that pilot, test, or expand scalable solutions to unlocking investment capital for women entrepreneurs and generating learnings for broader uptake by the SGB sector.

### 2019
ANDE launched the ANDE Gender Equality Initiative

### 2020
ANDE awards 8 AWEF winners with projects in South and Southeast Asia

### 2021
ANDE launches a second round of AWEF focused on eastern, western, and southern Africa
ADVANCING WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT FUND

Eastern, western, and southern Africa

For the second round of AWEF, ANDE has partnered with USAID to channel more investment into the hands of women-led businesses in eastern, western, and southern Africa.

We will award a minimum of three projects with total budgets between USD $50,000-$150,000 from a total funding pool of USD $450K.
WOMEN-LED SGBS / BUSINESSES

Defined by ANDE for the Advancing Women’s Empowerment Fund as companies that have a woman in a leadership position with strategic decision-making authority and meet at least one of the following criteria, prioritizing companies founded and led by all-women teams:

- Founded and led by a team of at least 50% women
- Have a woman currently serving in a top leadership role (CEO or other C-Suite, Executive Director, etc.) for at least one year
- 51% or more women ownership of the business
ANDE seeks to fund projects that **pilot, test, or expand scalable solutions** to the financing gap for women-led SGBs in eastern, western, and southern Africa and create learnings for the wider SGB sector.

Submissions that fit the following categories are encouraged:

- **Gender transformative** approaches to delivering acceleration services including recruitment, selection, cohort and program design or other elements seen as constraints to the success of women entrepreneurs.
- **Supplemental services** delivered independently or in coordination with traditional accelerator programs including tailored consulting services, bespoke matchmaking, investment facilitation, mentorship or other approaches to address gender deficits in traditional acceleration.
- **Novel approaches** to catalyzing investment into the hands of women fund managers to address the systemic finance constraints which women entrepreneurs encounter.
- **Innovative methods** for sensitizing and influencing SGB support providers around the fundamental challenges (family life, social norms, talent opportunities) that women entrepreneurs face.
CONCEPT NOTE REQUIREMENTS

BASIC OVERVIEW
Timeline, partners, lead contact information, amount requested, brief project description

ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW
About your organization and why it’s well-suited to carry out the project

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION
• Description of project activities and goals
• How the approach will tackle the financing gap for women-led SGBs
• How the project fits into AWEF’s objectives
• Description of key learning question(s) and plans to answer them
• List of learning outputs

BUDGET
• Total proposed budget with a line-item breakout
Organization Type:  
**Eligible:** Non-profit entrepreneur support organizations, such as incubators, accelerators, investors, capacity development providers, non-governmental organizations, operating (non-grantmaking) foundations, and research and advisory service providers, are qualified to apply.

**Not Eligible:** Government donor agencies, donor finance institutions, grantmaking foundations, and for-profit entities are not qualified to apply.

Geography: SGB service providers with proposed projects in only the following eligible countries will be considered:

**Western Africa**  
Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte D'Ivoire, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Togo

**Eastern Africa**  
Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda

**Southern Africa**  
Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Swaziland, Zambia, and Zimbabwe
ELIGIBILITY

Finance:
ANDE will fund a minimum of three projects with at least one focused on each region (eastern, western, and southern Africa) for this round, from a total funding pool of USD $450,000.

Submissions should be for activities of up to 12 months with a minimum total request of $50,000 and a maximum total request of US $150,000.

Applicants must submit a subrecipient questionnaire and tax forms as part of their application.

Language:
Applications submitted in English are strongly preferred; however, we will also accept them in French.
**Number of Submissions:** Organizations may form a consortium and submit a joint concept note. An organization may submit or be involved in up to two concepts, however, can only be involved in one winning concept.

**Submission Format:** Applications may be submitted as a maximum 3-page written document, a 10-slide PowerPoint presentation, or a 3–5-minute video. Templates and guidance for each submission type can be found in the concept note request.

**Submitting your Proposal:** Applications should follow the templates provided and must be submitted via the form linked in the call for concept note.
Projects implemented or co-implemented by locally-headquartered organizations are highly encouraged.

Projects involving finance providers are also encouraged. Note, however, that for-profit organizations cannot be recipients of AWEF funding.

Projects that employ creative solutions to both supply and demand components of the gender financing gap are highly encouraged.

Applicants are encouraged to build on or learn from AWEF Round 1’s winning projects but should shy away from replicating their models.
**PHASE ONE: CONCEPT NOTE**
- **Monday, February 8, 2021**
  - Issuance Date
- **Tuesday, February 16, 2021**
  - Office hours for applicant questions
- **Wednesday, February 24, 2021**
  - Office hours for applicant questions
- **Monday, March 1, 2021**
  - Deadline to submit questions (as needed)
- **Friday, March 5, 2021**
  - Deadline To Submit Concept Note

**PHASE TWO: PROPOSAL**
- **Friday, March 19, 2021**
  - Shortlisted Applicants Are Notified To Submit Full Proposal
- **Friday, April 16, 2021**
  - Proposals Due
- **End of May 2021**
  - Winners Announced
APPLICANT RESOURCES  All can be found on the AWEF webpage

- Application Checklist (Request for Concept Notes and Compliance Forms)
- Concept Note Templates (Text, PowerPoint, Video)
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Office Hours Session 1: Tuesday, February 16th at 8AM ET
- Office Hours Session 2: Wednesday, February 24th at 8AM ET
- AWEF Overview Recording (soon to be added)
FROM THE ANDE TEAM TO YOU:

GOOD LUCK!

SEND QUESTIONS TO: ande.membership@aspeninstitute.org