

EQUALS PARTNERSHIP GOVERNANCE STATUTE

1. EQUALS MISSION AND VISION

The EQUALS Global Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age is a committed group of corporate leaders, governments, businesses, not-for-profit organizations, academic institutions, NGOs and community groups around the world dedicated to promoting gender balance in the technology sector.

Our mission

EQUALS empowers women and girls to become key drivers and active participants in the digital economy and society.

Our Vision

We envision a future where digital transformation for social change, education and business is driven by women and girls, bringing prosperity for all.

1.1. GOAL

The overall goal of EQUALS is to achieve Digital Gender Equality by 2035. The partnership will focus on thematic workstreams, each with a two-year timeframe. After each two-year timeframe, the Board will advise on other areas of interest based on evolving needs and feedback from the EQUALS membership.

1.2 VALUE PROPOSITION

EQUALS empowers women and girls to embrace digital technologies to create a better and more just world. Our work spans three domains: social change, education, and business. We back our values with collective tangible results, ensuring that our efforts lead to meaningful, long-term change.

- **Partnership for Action:**
EQUALS is a global coalition of public and private partners that spans the full spectrum of the digital ecosystem. We are united in addressing the gender digital divide, with a special emphasis on young women and girls.
- **Digital Empowerment:**
Through safe, sustainable solutions and inclusive approaches to harnessing benefits of emerging technologies like AI, we aim to empower 100 million women and girls to become active contributors to the digital economy within the next decade.
- **Digital Transformation:**
At the heart of EQUALS is the conviction that investing in all women's and girl's digital empowerment advances individual potential and propels global economic prosperity. Our advocacy, programmes, and solutions are anchored in measurable results that align with the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#), the [UN Global Digital Compact](#) and [Beijing +30 Review Process Outcomes](#).

2. SCOPE OF THE EQUALS PARTNERSHIP

2.1 SCOPE

The EQUALS partnership brings together a range of organisations with a common goal – to close the digital divide and achieve digital gender equality so that women and girls, everywhere can benefit from digital

technologies. EQUALS partners recognize that the scale and breadth of the challenge can only be addressed by a broad and strong alliance, working together, each bringing a different set of experiences, skills and capabilities. This contributes directly to achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, particularly SDGs 5, 4, 9 and 17.

- SDG 5.b: Enhance the use of enabling technology, in particular information and communication technology, to promote the empowerment of women.
- SDG 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
- SDG 8: Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
- SDG 9.c: Significantly increase access to information and communications technology and strive to provide universal and affordable access to the internet in least developed countries.
- SDG 17: Enhance the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development, complemented by multi-stakeholder partnerships that mobilize and share knowledge, expertise, technology and financial resources, to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals in all countries, in particular development countries.

2.2 ETHICS CHARTER

EQUALS partners are expected to sign up to and abide by the principles of the EQUALS Ethics Charter. Where partners are bound by their own organization's code of conduct, this should be stated and a link to that code provided for clarity.

2.3 MEMBERSHIP

2.3.1 ADMISSION

- i. Full membership as an EQUALS partner shall be granted to any organisation and/or entity working to promote and advance digital gender equality.
- ii. Any application to become an EQUALS partner shall include a letter of intent signed by the applicant's principal representative, alongside a letter of recommendation from an existing EQUALS partner.
- iii. All prospective partners shall adopt and comply with EQUALS' Policy on Conflict of Interest, as referenced in the EQUALS Ethics Charter.

2.3.2 PARTNER TERMS OF REFERENCE

All partners are expected to guarantee a minimum level of engagement which builds on three elements:

- 1) Participation in annual gatherings including the Annual Partners Meeting and the EQUALS in Tech Awards Ceremony.
- 2) Participation in at least one Workstream work.
- 3) Active contribution to the Partnership. All partners are expected to:
 - a Make a contribution (financial and/or in kind) to EQUALS.
 - b Promote EQUALS (including the EQUALS in Tech Awards) through traditional and digital communications channels; (e.g. on websites, events, interventions, media appearances), re-posting, sharing and retweeting EQUALS content.
 - c Abide by the EQUALS Ethics Charter.

- d Provide at least an annual update of their work related to digital gender equality, to the EQUALS Technical Secretariat for communication and reporting purposes, on the impact and outcomes of ongoing activities aimed at closing the gender digital divide.

2.3.3 FREQUENCY OF MEMBERSHIP REVIEW

Membership of partners will be reviewed on a yearly basis, using the following criteria to assess engagement levels: attendance of partners during EQUALS-wide events, partnership and Workstream meetings; as well as feedback from the Workstream Leads.

2.3.4 TERMINATION OF MEMBERSHIP

Any organization may withdraw from their Workstream or the overall partnership by giving notice in writing to the EQUALS Technical Secretariat. Continuous failure to contribute to EQUALS on a regular basis, attend Workstream meetings, contribute to an EQUALS project and/or provide support for the EQUALS Technical Secretariat operational functions, for a period of 24 months will result in membership cancellation.

EQUALS GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

1. EQUALS BOARD OF PRINCIPALS

The EQUALS Board of Principals is composed of the principals from its co-founding organizations. This Board will be responsible for:

- Setting the highest-level strategic direction of EQUALS, ensuring that the EQUALS Partnership's mission, vision and goals are clearly defined and effectively pursued.
- The Board will convene to make the necessary strategic decisions to achieve the EQUALS mission and vision and adjust plans as necessary to align with evolving priorities.
- The Board has the authority to appoint and invite strategic advisors as needed, bringing in specialized expertise to address specific challenges and/or opportunities.
- All strategic decisions within the EQUALS partnership will be made by this Board, centralizing leadership and ensuring cohesive and informed governance.
- The Board will approve the themes related to the different workstreams.

2. EQUALS PROGRAMMES COMMITTEE

- The EQUALS Programmes Committee is composed of the Workstream leads, representatives of co-founding organizations and the EQUALS Technical Secretariat.
- The Programmes Committee will help operationalize the thematic Workstreams decided by the Board.

3. EQUALS PARTNERS ASSEMBLIES

- The EQUALS Partners' Assemblies is a high-level meeting with the principal representatives from all EQUALS partners.
- At each Assembly, the EQUALS Technical Secretariat will report on the implementation of the yearly EQUALS workplan, and the results achieved.
- The EQUALS partners will have the opportunity to meet, network, engage with and learn from each other, and give strategic feedback to the members of the EQUALS Board of Principals.

WORKING METHODS

EQUALS BOARD OF PRINCIPALS:

- The Board will meet twice a year to review progress, take decisions and give strategic guidance (at least one physical meeting should take place).
- This biannual gathering will provide a vital opportunity for the co-founders to review progress of the yearly workplan, strategize and adjust on future efforts.
- The Board will advocate regularly on their collective commitment towards gender equality in the digital age.
- The Board may wish to meet more often, based on specific topics.

EQUALS PROGRAMMES COMMITTEE:

- The Programmes Committee shall meet online, three times per year.
- The Committee will prepare and lead the implementation of a yearly workplan based on specific KPIs for each Workstream.
- Every member of the Programmes Committee may appoint a focal point to assist and represent them where relevant.

EQUALS WORKSTREAMS:

- EQUALS Workstreams themes will be decided by the EQUALS Board of Principals.
- Thematic workstreams will run for a two-year period. After each two-year timeframe, the Board will advise on other areas of interest based on evolving needs and feedback from the EQUALS membership.
- The themes of the Workstreams must be supported by at least 5 partners, to be considered by the Board. There will be a maximum of four Workstreams running at the same time.
- The Workstreams will be related to the SDGs and emerging trends. The Workstreams will be implemented through activities, events, projects and/or initiatives.
- The Workstreams members shall appoint a lead and meet regularly on an individual basis (for example bi-monthly), depending on the Workstream work plan and the availability of Workstream members. The meetings shall mainly take place remotely.
- Participation in the work of the Workstreams is open to any EQUALS partners, but not limited to only EQUALS partners. Ad hoc entities can be invited based on the interest on the theme and relevance to the mandate.

EQUALS PARTNERS ASSEMBLIES:

- EQUALS partners shall meet twice a year (at least one physical meeting).
- The meetings shall be opened to representatives of the EQUALS principals and chaired by one of the co-founders or workstream leads, on a rotational basis.
- The members of the EQUALS Board of Principals should take part in the EQUALS Partners Assemblies.

EQUALS TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT:

- The EQUALS Partnership, governance and event coordination, will be managed by the EQUALS Technical Secretariat,
- The EQUALS Technical Secretariat will organize the meetings related to the EQUALS Board of Principals, the EQUALS Programmes Committee and the EQUALS Partners Assemblies.
- It will prepare and support with the implementation of the yearly workplan based on the decisions taken by the EQUALS Board of Principals.
- It will prepare any necessary documents requested by the EQUALS Board of Principals.
- It will prepare and implement an EQUALS communications plan, based on the yearly EQUALS workplan.
- For proper functioning, the EQUALS Technical Secretariat requires a permanent and fully dedicated team of at least three P-staff (P4, P3 and P2).
- In addition, EQUALS partners will be encouraged to second a staff, provide pro-bono support and/or fund a Junior Professional Officer (JPO) to assist with the work of the EQUALS Technical Secretariat.

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND EVALUATION

- Every two years, the Board of Principals will review the governance structure and partnership objectives.
- All EQUALS partners shall inform the EQUALS Technical Secretariat through an online tool set up by the Secretariat, by 31 July of each calendar year of their respective contributions to the partnership. Such contributions can include but are not limited to actions undertaken to support and contribute to EQUALS Workstreams' projects and meetings and/or EQUALS overarching objectives and mission.
- The EQUALS Secretariat shall prepare and circulate an impact report reflecting on EQUALS's overall yearly achievements and progress in close alignment with the Leads of each Workstream based on the input as described above.

ACCOUNTABILITY

- All EQUALS Project Funding shall be managed on behalf of EQUALS by the relevant EQUALS project lead(s) due to the absence of an EQUALS legal entity.
- Project leads and workstream leads should support fundraising for the projects that they are leading and assist other project leads in fundraising.
- Project leads should coordinate with project partners as well as workstream leaders.
- Project leads should report at agreed intervals to the Workstream Leader about the progress of the project.

FUNDRAISING

- The Board of Principals should secure grant or seed funding to establish a stable financial base for the EQUALS Secretariat by organizing bilateral meetings.
- EQUALS Co-founders and partners shall leverage and share their fundraising expertise and recommend potential donors/investors.
- Organize a high-level fundraising event in conjunction with the EQUALS in Tech Awards.

¹ EQUALS Project: A project initiated by EQUALS at least three (3) EQUALS members, focused on an EQUALS workstream, and measured for impact for EQUALS, executed and implemented by EQUALS members.

² Project Lead: An EQUALS partner contributing under at least one workstream and active in the partnership for a minimum of (2) years.

ASSETS

- It is the intention of the Partnership that EQUALS Intellectual Property Assets are to follow the principles of openness, for instance, when and as possible intellectual property are to be held under CC non-commercial attribution.
- If a partner terminates its relationship with the Partnership, all the research publications and data collected for relevant projects will be available on the open-data platform. However, the EQUALS branding and associated communications would be retained by EQUALS Technical Secretariat, with ITU as the host.

COMMUNICATIONS AND DATA

- All EQUALS funded projects shall carry approved EQUALS branding and reflect EQUALS messaging.
- All EQUALS partners shall disseminate EQUALS products and deliverables in line with established EQUALS communications principles and branding management requirements.
- EQUALS will maintain an open data platform and intends that all data used in EQUALS project (as allowed for) will be deposited in this open access data sharing platform.