



**WIIS**

WOMEN IN  
INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY

# 2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Source: Latvian Foreign Ministry

*WIIS President and CEO Ariela Blätter at the Rīga Security Conference speaking on regional and collective security with moderator Patricia Nguyen, Liberian Brigadier General Geraldine Janet George, Ukrainian Olena Suslova, and Latvian Ambassador to the UN, Andrejs Pildegovičs (Left to Right).*

1250 Connecticut Ave. NW, Suite 700  
Washington DC, 20036  
[www.wiisglobal.org](http://www.wiisglobal.org)

# About WIIS

We're on a mission to achieve gender equality and promote leadership opportunities for women in the international peace and security sector. Founded in 1987, Women In International Security (WIIS – pronounced WISE) is a non-governmental organization dedicated to cultivating an inclusive and intersectional approach to the Women, Peace & Security agenda. We provide professional development opportunities, lead gender equality research projects and policy engagement initiatives, host important events, and nurture a community of powerful mentors, advocates, experts, and leaders.

WIIS has helped women secure representation at the highest levels of private and public service as security leaders, ambassadors, secretaries of state, special representatives, and defense ministers in the United States, the European Union, NATO, and Fortune 500 companies. Our network spans over 50 countries across six continents and includes over 15,000 members who are all committed to one ambitious goal: closing the gender equality gap worldwide.



# WIIS Vision & Mission



**37 years**

**THE FIRST WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP ORGANIZATION IN INTERNATIONAL SECURITY, WIIS CELEBRATED ITS 35-YEAR ANNIVERSARY IN 2023.**



## Vision

We envision a future in which all genders are treated equally and women are empowered as leaders to safeguard international peace and security.

## Mission

Our mission is to advance gender equality and leadership opportunities for women in the international peace and security field.

# MESSAGE FROM WIIS' PRESIDENT & CEO

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*2024 has been an important year for Women In International Security (WIIS) as we advanced our mission to promote inclusive leadership in global security. This Annual Report celebrates the progress we've made together, driven by the dedication and expertise of our global members and partners.*

*This year, WIIS expanded its impact with the launch of a new chapter in Latvia and a 50% growth in membership, amplifying diverse voices shaping the future of international security.*

*Members of our network have continued to shine on global stages—we were honored to celebrate with Ajna Jusic, who received the International Women of Courage Award from First Lady Jill Biden and Secretary of State Anthony J. Blinken at the White House.*

*At the start of the NATO 75th Anniversary Summit, WIIS hosted a pivotal discussion on women's leadership, having played a vital role*



*in shaping NATO's new Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Policy by holding civil society consultations. We also carried this message to major forums, including the Munich, Berlin, Warsaw, and Rīga Security Conferences, ensuring inclusive leadership is central to decision-making.*

*Together, we are proving that diversity is not just a value—it is the key to a more secure world.*

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ariela Blätter'.

**Ariela Blätter**  
**President & CEO**  
**WIIS**

# Our Team



**ARIELA BLÄTTER**  
PRESIDENT & CEO



**DR. KARIN JOHNSTON**  
DIRECTOR, RESEARCH



**DR. LAYLA HASHEMI**  
DIRECTOR, PROGRAMS  
AND PARTNERSHIPS  
JOINED JULY 2024



**NINA PLATEROTI**  
PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS  
COORDINATOR  
JOINED AUGUST 2024



**LARISSA ABAUNZA**  
DEPUTY RESEARCH  
PROGRAM MANAGER



**CLAIRE PAMERLEAU**  
PROGRAM ASSISTANT  
JOINED MAY 2024



**ROKSANA VERAHRAMI**  
SENIOR MANAGER FOR  
PROGRAMS AND PARTNERSHIPS  
UNTIL JULY 2024



**CAROLINE MOODY**  
PROGRAM ASSISTANT  
UNTIL AUGUST 2024

# Our Fellows



**DUILIA TURNER**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**JOAN JOHNSON-FREESE**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**BRENDA OPPERMANN**  
SENIOR FELLOW &  
LEGAL ADVISOR



**TAHINA MONTOYA**  
DEFENSE FELLOW



**ELLEN HARING**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**JANA WATTENBERG**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**LOREDANA  
TEODORESCU**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**DIORELLA ISLAS  
LIMINANA**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**ANA LAURA  
VELASCO UGALDE**  
FELLOW



**KITTY PILGRIM**  
SENIOR FELLOW



**ANTONIETA RICO**  
SENIOR FELLOW

# Our Board



**PAMELA AALL**  
CHAIR



**CHANTAL DE JONGE  
OUDRAAT**  
SECRETARY



**VIRGINIA HAUFLER**  
TREASURER



**HILARY ANDERSON**  
BOARD MEMBER



**NADIA CREVECOEUR**  
BOARD MEMBER



**MIN KYRIANNIS**  
BOARD MEMBER



**ALISTAIR MILLAR**  
BOARD MEMBER



**MARGUERITE BENSON**  
BOARD MEMBER



**NAUREEN CHOWDHURY  
FINK**  
BOARD MEMBER



**ELLEN BOMASANG**  
BOARD MEMBER



**DEEPA OLLAPALLY**  
BOARD MEMBER  
STEPPED DOWN APRIL  
2024

# REGIONAL & COLLECTIVE SECURITY

## NATO Washington Summit

In July 2024, WIIS and Our Secure Future hosted a private breakfast event at the start of the 75th NATO summit, celebrating Women’s Leadership at NATO.

### NATO BREAKFAST KICKS OFF SUMMIT

Our distinguished speakers included Irene Fellin, Special Representative for WPS at NATO, Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta, Ambassador-at-Large for the Secretary’s Office of Global Women’s Issues at the US Department of State and Jessica Lewis, then Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs at the US Department of State. The discussion highlighted the obstacles to and importance of women’s leadership in security alliances and their contributions to WPS initiatives.

WIIS President & CEO Ariela Blätter represented WIIS at the NATO Summit’s Public Forum and the State Department and White House official events.



The Ambassador of Spain to the US, Ms. Ángeles Moreno Bau



WIIS President and CEO, Ariela Blätter, alongside panelists Irene Fellin, Dr. Geeta Rao Gupta, and Jessica Lewis

### IMPACT NEW NATO POLICY ON WPS & WIIS POLICY BRIEF

WIIS helped create the new NATO WPS Policy by leading a civil society consultation for the Special Advisor to the Secretary General of NATO on WPS, Irene Fellin.



NATO WPS Advisor Irene Fellin speaking at the NATO Washington Public Forum.

New WIIS Policy Brief: “Realizing NATO’s Women, Peace and Security Commitment in Practice” Katharine Wright & Diana Morais





# REGIONAL & COLLECTIVE SECURITY

## WIIS at International Security Conferences

WIIS representatives also spoke at the **Munich, Berlin, Warsaw, and Rīga** Security Conferences.

### RĪGA SECURITY CONFERENCE 2024



Source: Latvian Foreign Ministry

WIIS President and CEO Ariela Blätter, spoke at the **Rīga Security Conference** in Latvia. She had the honor of meeting with leaders such as **H.E. Baiba Braže, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia**, as well as **Siemtje Möller, Parliamentary State Secretary at the German Federal Ministry of Defense**.

Ariela was honored to be hosted by the **newly established WIIS chapter in Latvia**.

Left: Ariela Blätter and H.E. Baiba Braže, Latvia  
Right: Ariela Blätter and Siemtje Möller, Germany

### MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE 2024



Source: WIIS Germany

**Secretary Clinton** spoke at the **WIIS Women's Breakfast** at the 2024 Munich Security Conference—hosted here by **Chair of WIIS Germany, Silvia Petig**.

### BERLIN SECURITY CONFERENCE 2024



Source: Berlin Security Conference

**Dr. Nicoletta Pirozzi**, VP of WIIS Italy (Rome Chapter), speaking at the Berlin Security Conference.

## EMBASSY PEACE & SECURITY ROUNDTABLES

With generous support from the Embassy of Liechtenstein, WIIS facilitated a series of expert roundtables exploring the gender dimensions of key security challenges.

### Launching “1325 @ 25”

This event featured **Under Secretary Dr. Bonnie Jenkins** of the US Department of State, **Dr. Carolyn Washington** of Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security, **Dr. Shirley Graham** of the Elliott School of International Affairs, and **Dr. Marisa Ensor** of Georgetown University. They assessed the WPS agenda’s future.

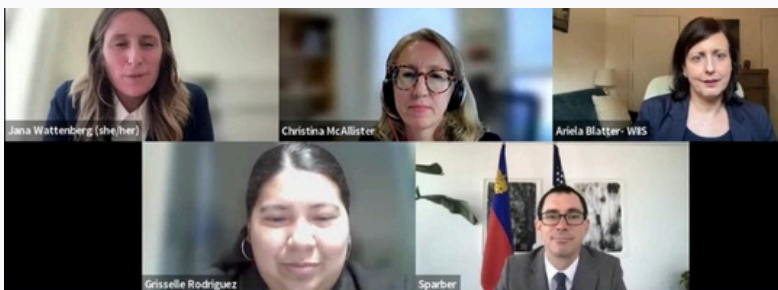
WIIS welcomed various US government agencies (USAID, US DoS, US DoJ), civil society networks, and non-profit organizations. Additionally, we were joined by a global audience, with individuals from Venezuela, Albania, Cyprus, and Poland live-streamed. The recording of this event can be accessed on Youtube.



[@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURITY907](https://www.youtube.com/@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURITY907)



From left to right: Dr. Shirley Graham, H.E. Ambassador Georg Sparber, Under Secretary Dr. Bonnie Jenkins, Dr. Carolyn Washington, Dr. Marisa Ensor, Ariela Blätter



### Event Recap: Gendered Harm II

*The Disproportionate Impact of Biological & Chemical Weapons on Women & Girls*

Top row (Left to Right): Dr. Jana Wattenberg (Moderator), Christina McAllister, Ariela Blätter  
Bottom row (Left to Right): Griselle Rodriguez, H.E. Ambassador Georg Sparber

### Gendered Harm II

The panelists (below) discussed the gendered impacts of chemical and biological weapons. Their concluding thoughts reflected the importance of looking at the gender- and sex-specific effects that occur at all stages of biological and chemical weapon development.

**Grisselle Rodríguez**, Permanent Mission of Panama before the UN and International Organizations, **Dr. Dana Perkins**, Office of the Assistant Secretary, US Department of HHS, and **Christina McAllister**, of the Partnerships in Proliferation Prevention Program, the Stimson Center, The recording can be accessed at the link below.



[@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURITY907](https://www.youtube.com/@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURITY907)

# EMBASSY PEACE & SECURITY ROUNDTABLES

## International Women’s Day 2024 (IWD)

### State Department Assistant Secretary of State Anne Witkowsky and the Global Fragility Act

With our partner, the Embassy of Liechtenstein, WIIS hosted **State Department Assistant Secretary of State Anne Witkowsky, Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations**, and an expert panel to evaluate approaches to integrating a gender perspective in the US Global Fragility Act’s 10-year country implementation plans to stabilize conflict-affected states. [WIIS’ December 2023 policy brief on Haiti](#), one of the selected GFA priority countries, provided tangible recommendations to reduce the deeply gendered impacts of violence in Haiti.



From left to right: Ariela Blätter and Anne Witkowsky. Not pictured: Dr. Gordon Peake, USIP, Jennifer Cooke, GWU, Dr. Tahina Montoya, WIIS Non-resident Fellow



An expert panelist during this discussion was **Dr. Tahina Montoya**, a Biden Administration appointee, a 2020/2022 WIIS Next Generation Symposium graduate, and a WIIS Global Defense Fellow. **Dr. Montoya has credited WIIS with helping her advance in her career.**



### IMPACT

#### White House Award

Also on IWD, we were delighted to attend the **International Women of Courage Award** ceremony at the the White House, where First Lady Jill Biden and Secretary of State Anthony J. Blinken presented the award to [Ajna Jusic](#) from our network. (pictured in the center).



Source: DoS



**IMPACT** ▶

## WIIS at the United Nations CSW 68



WIIS was prominent at the United Nations' 68th meeting of the Committee on the Status of Women in New York, co-hosting separate high-level events with the **United Kingdom, Italian Government, and the NGO coalition on the Status of Women** and others on integrating gender into military institutions, mediation, and financing the WPS Agenda respectively.



WIIS Global CEO & President Ariela Blätter at the United Kingdom CSW 68 ministerial event in New York. Thank you to the UK government and Ministry of Defence for hosting this important discussion.

## GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

### Strengthening Global Connections: WIIS Latvia

WIIS Global expanded this year with the creation of our newest Global Affiliate in Latvia, Women for Security, and growing global partnerships across Albania, Cyprus, Czechia, Iceland, Mozambique, Ukraine, and the Middle East.



#### LATVIA

Women for Security (WIIS Latvia), established in 2024, is the newest of our WIIS global affiliates.

## CHAPTERS & AFFILIATES

Throughout 2024, WIIS continued to enlarge its global reach. The WIIS Global network now consists of nearly 15,000 individuals in over 50 countries. Below are some highlights of the critical work of our global chapters and affiliates in informing regional and collective security.

### WIIS Poland: Warsaw Security Forum: Mentorship Program

During the 11th Warsaw Security Forum, WIIS Poland, together with Casimir Pulaski Foundation and Northrop Grumman, celebrated the success of the second year of the Young Female Leaders in Security Mentoring Program.



Source: WIIS Poland

### WIIS Horn of Africa: Navigating Stability: Quest for Peace in the Horn of Africa and Red Sea

Fauziya Abdi, President of WIIS Horn of Africa, participated in the Aswan Forum on two panels on peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa and the Red Sea and women in conflict.



### WIIS Italy: Engaging at the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality

A delegation of WIIS Italy, chaired by WIIS Italy's President Loredana Teodorescu, met Katrina Fotovat, the Principal Deputy Director for the Secretary of State's Office of Global Women's Issues in Rome at the U.S. Embassy, ahead of the G7 Ministerial Meeting on Gender Equality.



Source: WIIS Italy

### WISCOMP (WIIS India) Doing Mediation Differently: Converting Challenges into Opportunities

WISCOMP's mediation series featured a plenary talk by Neha Sanghrajka, UN Senior Conflict Sensitivity Advisor. She spoke about her experiences as a senior mediator in Kenya during the electoral crisis of 2007 and her role in the mediation process in Mozambique leading to the 2019 Maputo Accord.



Source: WISCOMP

# GLOBAL SPOTLIGHT

## Strengthening Global Connections: Gender & Nuclear Security



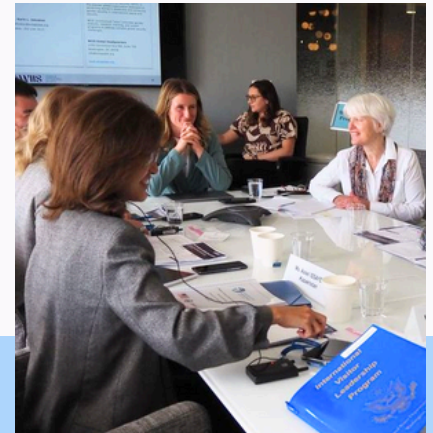
**IMPACT** ▶

### Meeting with Affiliates and Partners

This April, we hosted the **Ukrainian Black Sea Women in Nuclear Network (BSWN)** in our DC office, where they told us **WIIS' support led to opportunities for its members and sustainable funding for the Network.** In 2022, WIIS was the first organization to host a roundtable for and promote the Network, bringing the spotlight to these female nuclear safety professionals under threat.



In August, WIIS had the honor of meeting with a **US Department of State International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP) group from Kazakhstan** to discuss the role of gender in nuclear safety and security and how this differs in the US and Kazakhstan. Represented were government leaders from the Kazakhstan National Nuclear Center, the Department of Energy, and parliament.



WIIS Research Director Dr. Karin Johnston with the IVLP group

2024 was a strong year for collaboration with WIIS' International Affiliates in Washington, D.C. We welcomed to our office **Fauziya Abdi, President of WIIS Horn of Africa, Nana Brink, Deputy Chairwoman of WIIS Germany, and Aleksandra Gasztold, Secretary General of WIIS Poland.** We also had the great pleasure of meeting with **Irene Fellin, NATO Special Representative on WPS and founder of WIIS Italy, and Sigita Struberga, Head of the Board for Women for Security (WIIS Latvia).**



WIIS Poland Secretary General, Aleksandra Gasztold (Center)

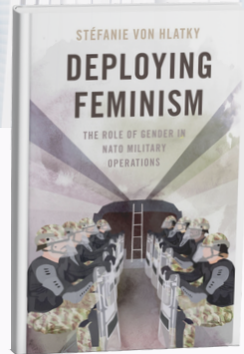


WIIS Germany Deputy Chairwoman Nana Brink (center)

# BOOK TALKS AT WIIS

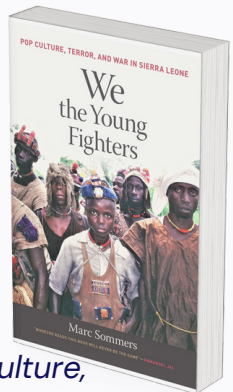
## **Deploying Feminism** [@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907](https://www.youtube.com/@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907)

WIIS hosted an in-person discussion on February 29th with Dr. Stéfanie von Hlatky on her book, *Deploying Feminism: The Role of Gender in NATO Military Operations*. The event explored how NATO's focus on operational effectiveness often sidelines WPS norms, using NATO's operations in Iraq, Kosovo, and the Baltics as examples. The discussion emphasized the need to prioritize gender equality in military planning.



## **We the Young Fighters** [@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907](https://www.youtube.com/@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907)

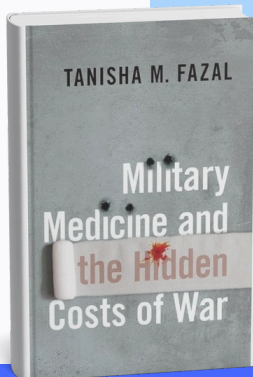
On February 6th, WIIS hosted a virtual discussion on conflict-related sexual violence (CRSV) with Dr. Marc Sommers, who discussed his book *We the Young Fighters: Pop Culture, Terror, and War in Sierra Leone*. The event explored the role of sexual violence in Sierra Leone's civil war and combatant motivations for CRSV in the Democratic Republic of Congo.



## **Military Medicine and the Hidden Costs of War**

WIIS hosted an in-person book talk on June 26th with Dr. Tanisha Fazal on *Military Medicine and the Hidden Costs of War*. The event explored critical issues of gender, the development of military medicine, and the challenges women face within today's military health system. Dr. Fazal traced the histories of US military medicine and veterans' benefits through the conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq, highlighting the human and financial costs of war and gender disparities in healthcare.

 [@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907](https://www.youtube.com/@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907)



## **Governing the Feminist Peace**

On October 28th, WIIS hosted an insightful discussion on *Governing the Feminist Peace: The Vitality and Failure of the Women, Peace and Security Agenda* by Laura Shepherd and Paul Kirby. Paul discussed the complexities of the WPS Agenda, focusing on its evolution, global impact, and the obstacles that hinder its full potential.

 [@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907](https://www.youtube.com/@WOMENININTERNATIONALSECURI907)



# PROGRAMS & PARTNERSHIPS

## Building Connections and Supporting Women's Leadership

Over the years, WIIS has developed and continues to refine its programming to better serve our members and meet their needs.



### WIISUp Wednesday

In 2024, WIIS launched our monthly "WIISUp Wednesday" **networking series for members**. These events offer an informal setting for our members to get to know each other and the WIIS team. In addition to networking, each WIISUp Wednesday includes discussion of a security topic. This year, we've focused on women's role in the labor market, the WPS Agenda, and women's leadership across elections worldwide.



### Professional Development

WIIS hosted a **resume workshop** for members. Participants learned tips on creating and polishing resumes, CVs, and federal resumes from Meg Wurm, Assistant Director, Career Development in Graduate Student Services at GW's Elliott School of International Affairs. The event engaged members **starting their careers**, as well as many **mid- and advanced-career professionals** looking to switch sectors.



### Membership Information Session

To help our global audience learn more about the benefits and opportunities provided through WIIS membership, our team hosted a **Membership Info-Session** to talk with prospective and current members about **career development**, the **future of women in security**, and **how our organization supports women** in these efforts!



### Member Blog Spotlight

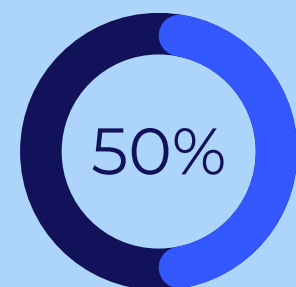
WIIS member Nkechika Ibe published a blog analyzing the creation of gender units and efforts to **implement the WPS Agenda in the Nigerian Police and Army**. Ibe highlights the need for a **gender-inclusive** approach in recruitment, promotions, and personnel development, which will create a more balanced and effective security sector in Nigeria. **Publishing with WIIS** is one of the benefits of being a member.

#### IMPACT

### Increase in New Members

In 2024, WIIS increased new members by 50% over 2023. But our work is not finished. Have you joined yet? Have your family and friends joined? Click the button below to join our growing network and access our exclusive member benefits.

[Become a Member](#)





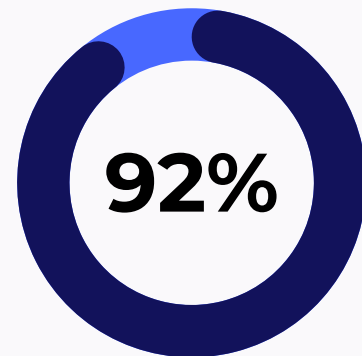
# MEASURING OUR IMPACT

## Strategic Communications

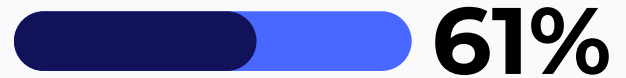
One of WIIS' goals for 2024 was to engage with the public about how our programs and initiatives drive meaningful change in advancing gender equality and inclusivity in international security. So, we made several changes, including redesigning and launching a new website, and deepening our commitment to use social media and track our progress. We are pleased that through targeted online engagement, we strengthened and diversified our global community on critical security issues.

**IMPACT** ▶

**INCREASE IN POST VIEWS**



**INCREASE IN POST REACTIONS**



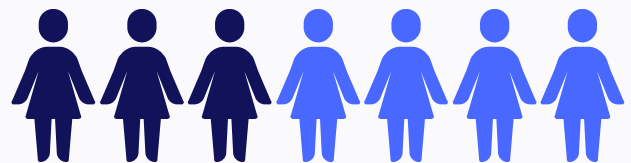
**TOP POSTS 2024**



LinkedIn



X (Twitter)



**NEARLY 40,000 SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOWERS**

# Support WIIS

Today's peace and security challenges are urgent and widespread. Civilians, particularly women, and girls, are experiencing atrocities during concurrent wars in Israel-Gaza, Ukraine, Myanmar, Sudan and elsewhere. Excluded from the "table," women's voices and leadership are needed more desperately than ever. Help elevate those voices now.

## By Donating to WIIS You Are:

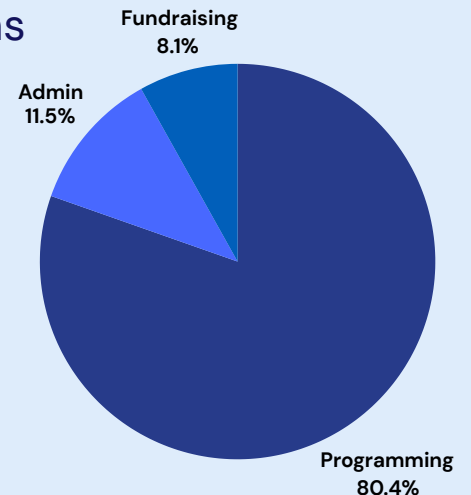
**1** Funding programs designed to address and bridge existing gender divides within the security community

**2** Supporting career development training, programs, and events that help advance women as peace and security leaders

**3** Investing in research that is critical to policy change and addresses the difficult obstacles to achieving global peace and security

**4** Giving to a **gold-star top-rated charity**, where 80 cents of every dollar goes to funding peace and security programs

Contributors like you are the heart of the WIIS community, and your sustained financial support is necessary for WIIS to continue our indispensable work. Thank you for your continued support of WIIS.



[Donate Today](#)

[Become a Member](#)

# Our Funders



WIIS extends sincere thanks to our generous funders for their continued support of our critical programming and research advancing truly inclusive collective security, women's leadership, and gender equality in international security.



**Thank you for your continued support of WIIS.**

## Contact Us

 [info@wiisglobal.org](mailto:info@wiisglobal.org)

## Visit Our Website

 [wiisglobal.org](http://wiisglobal.org)



**WIIS**

WOMEN IN  
INTERNATIONAL  
SECURITY