

Leading our own liberation

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



Contents

Leadership message	03
Impact by the numbers	04
Spaces for change	06
Nothing about us without us	07
Equipping advocates with tools for change	07
Centering the most impacted	08
Sustaining the movement	09
Creating shared spaces for change	10
Mainstreaming disability in feminist spaces	10
Making the case for investment at the intersection of gender and disability	13
Rights into action	16
Pushing global standards for inclusion in decision-making	16
Ending racial and gender discrimination in health care	17
Setting the standards to bring about real change	18
Financials	19
Thank you to our supporters!	20



Dear Friend,

We are writing to you at a time when the threats to our rights and to the rule of law worldwide are deeply devastating. Yet, we believe it is as important as ever to celebrate the transformative work, innovation, and impact of Women Enabled International. Progress isn't always linear, but our commitment is unwavering, and our community remains resilient.

Join us for a look back on last year's successes, which propel our work going forward and are a testament to our partners' tenacity.

2024 marked the launch of WEI's new [Strategic Plan](#) with a bold vision for an equal future and an updated mission that affirms the fact that we are an organization led by and composed of feminists with disabilities and allies.

With our new plan, WEI voiced the rallying cries "the future of disability rights is feminist," and "the future of gender equality is inclusive." WEI began to shift narratives, inviting activists, allies, and colleagues across sectors to join us in a new era of advancing rights and justice at the intersection of gender and disability.

This report documents WEI's energy, reach, and impact, and it highlights some of the key collaborations—AWID Forum—and strategic spaces—CoSP17—we engaged with to bring about the changes we seek in the world.

Through vigorous data collection and trend analysis, organizing and capacity strengthening, advocacy and bridge building, we galvanized disabled feminist leaders, clarified human rights standards, and advanced the rights of women, girls, and gender-diverse people with disabilities globally.

Reflecting on our collective impact has fortified our resolve to carry this work forward in the face of current threats to our lives and futures. We hope you share our pride in what we have accomplished as the only organization that works at the intersection of gender and disability on a global scale, and as an integral part of a wider movement worldwide. Together we resist!

On behalf of the WEI board and staff, we thank you for your continued support and solidarity.

In community,



Maryangel García-Ramos
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Catherine Hyde Townsend
BOARD PRESIDENT



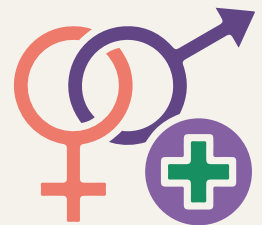
Impact by the numbers

WEI's transformative work has impact beyond our organization. During 2024 our organization expanded programs to support and train feminist disabled leaders across myriad advocacy and movement building initiatives. The numbers below are a snapshot of the broad scope and influence WEI has at the intersection of gender and disability.



100+ feminist disabled leaders received **financial, logistical, and organizational** support from WEI to participate in **16 global advocacy** forums (CoSP, CEDAW, CRPD, SVRI, AWID, and more).

In Fiji, 450 women and youth with and without disabilities accessed vital **SRHR and GBV services**, through our **Community-Based Health Officers Program**.



70 partners in this programme enhanced their ownership of this initiative through the **Our Bodies, Our Rights** training-of-trainers.



We partnered **across 5 regions** with governments, UN agencies, health providers, grassroots organizations, and activists.



At CoSP17 **40+ States, UN agencies, and leading organizations** joined us to declare: **The Future of Disability Rights is Feminist!**—showcasing our leadership in driving inclusive, intersectional change.

50 advocates, academics, and service providers deepened their knowledge of legal rights during **Validity Foundation training** (Gender & disability-based violence in institutions).





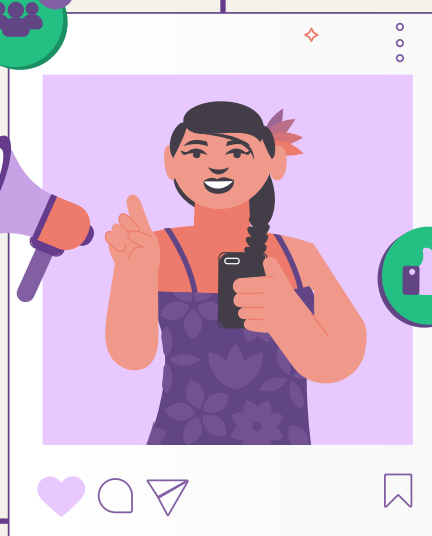
30 advocates, States, and UN staff learned about **inclusive advocacy** at the UNFPA event for **International Day of Persons with Disabilities**.



40 experts at the **Inter-American Human Rights Commission** expanded their knowledge on SRHR and disability.

2 major advocacy wins: After **2+ years** of sustained action, the **voices of women, girls, and gender-diverse people with disabilities** were included in **CEDAW and CERD General Recommendations**.

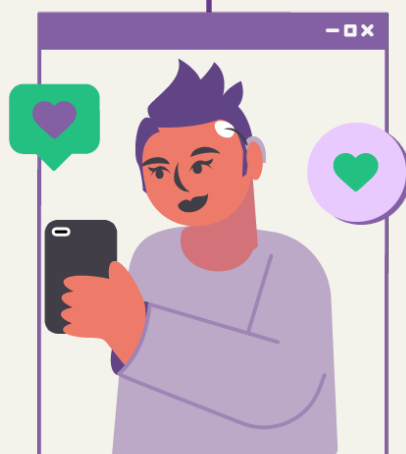
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Community growth: **6,000 newsletter readers**, with **7.4%** increase this year.

Powerful storytelling: **19 stories** from **5 countries** on the lived experiences of women and gender-diverse people with disabilities, generating **2,114 engagements**.

Knowledge & expertise: **+105% engagement**. **4,000+ users** from **190 countries** interacted **52,316 times**, downloading **toolkits, resources, guidance, and reports** on gender and disability.



Content strategy impact: Reached **30,872 people** via major online platforms.



Spaces for change

During 2024 we partnered with feminists with disabilities to jointly show up to different global advocacy and movement-building spaces.

2024

January

- » U.S. Gender and Disability Justice Alliance Inaugural Convening
- 📍 Washington, D.C., USA

June

- » 17th Conference of States Parties to the CRPD (CoSP17): The Future of Disability Rights is Feminist
- 📍 New York, USA

August

- » UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD Committee)
- 📍 Geneva, Switzerland

November

- » Spark Justice Convening
- 📍 Atlanta, USA

March

- » 68th Commission on the Status of Women (CSW68)
- 📍 New York, USA

July

- » Our Bodies, Our Rights Training
- 📍 Suva, Fiji

October

- » Ford Foundation: Free Futures
- 📍 New York, USA
- » CEDAW Committee Briefing
- 📍 Geneva, Switzerland
- » Sexual Violence Research Initiative Forum
- 📍 Cape Town, South Africa

December

- » AWID Forum
- 📍 Bangkok, Thailand





Nothing about us without us

Across the globe, women, girls, and gender-diverse people with disabilities are coming together, speaking out, and building powerful movements for justice. No longer sidelined or silenced, they are leading the charge to demand their rights and shape a world that values their voices, experiences, and dreams. In 2024, we witnessed not only growing momentum, but lasting strength: communities organizing in ways that are sustainable, rooted, and deeply connected. Here are some main initiatives driving this work:

Equipping advocates with tools for change

Through targeted outreach efforts, over **450 women and young people with and without disabilities in Fiji** received vital information and accessed essential services related to sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) and gender-based violence (GBV) – many for the **first time in their lives**, marking a critical step toward inclusion and empowerment. Across the Pacific, **70 advocates** strengthened their knowledge about SRHR and GBV and advocacy skills through Our Bodies, Our Rights training, enhancing their ability to lead change within their communities.

50 individuals deepened their understanding of legal rights and systems during the Validity Legal Capacity Training. In recognition of International Day of Persons with Disabilities,

**This is more than progress.
This is transformation driven
from within our community.**

WEI joined a high-level panel organized by the United Nations Population Fund for the launch of their report on violence against women with disabilities, which attracted **30 advocates, States, and UN staff**. WEI worked with partners to brief the Inter-American Human Rights Commission, as well as **40 people working on human rights in the Americas** to better understand SRHR from a disability perspective.

WEI also briefed the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee) about gender and disability stereotypes as they impact women with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. Together, these capacity strengthening initiatives are building a powerful, informed movement for disability and gender justice around the world.





Centering the most impacted

Women Enabled International continued to lead and shape critical global conversations at the intersection of gender and disability. We created spaces for collective visioning and advocacy for the **advocates and activists who participated in WEI-sponsored events at the United Nations.**

Our side event at the Conference of the States Parties to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), **“The Future of Disability Rights is Feminist,”** had **more than 40 co-sponsors amongst States, UN agencies, and disability and feminist civil society and drew over 100 attendees,** introducing a new framework for disability justice and growing momentum for intersectional approaches to disability rights.

At the Spark Justice convening, 22 participants engaged in a powerful session, co-led by WEI staff members, amplifying feminist disability perspectives and deepening cross-movement collaboration.

During 2024 WEI ensured that **over 100 partners,** many of whom are women and gender-diverse people with disabilities, were able to meaningfully participate in **16 events across 5 countries** by providing critical support. This intentional investment removed barriers to access and amplified the voices of those most affected by the issues at the center of our advocacy.





Sustaining the movement

In 2024 Women Enabled International continued its work to strengthen the capacity of feminist disabled leadership in the The Collective of Latin American Women with Disabilities for Human Rights (LAC Collective) and the U.S. Gender and Disability Justice Alliance. LAC Collective dedicated their efforts to laying the groundwork for internal systems and infrastructure to support movement and advocacy work for the next two years. Our coordination of the U.S. Alliance reached new heights this year with the first-ever convening of its members in a hybrid (in-person and remote) retreat of its growing membership – **75 members across 26 states**. We brought together U.S. Alliance members from around the country to Washington, DC for **three days of learning, networking, advocacy and community building**. We **conducted advocacy on Capitol Hill**, **launched a storytelling initiative**, and created space for rest and socializing, which deepened the group's sense of connectedness.

This year's accomplishments included **filing two joint amicus briefs to the U.S. Supreme Court**: one to uphold the federal protections of the Emergency Medical Treatment and Labor Act and allow doctors to provide necessary abortions in

the case of medical emergencies, which Idaho's abortion ban currently criminalizes, and one advocating to protect the improved nationwide regulation of mifepristone, a drug used for medication abortion.

*"Reflecting on this convening with Women Enabled International and the **profound impact of this vital work**, it's evident that the **intersectionality** woven throughout was a driving force. The seamless accessibility provided a welcoming environment, but **it was the sense of community with fellow disabled activists that truly felt like coming home**. The shared joy, both as people of color and disabled individuals, became a revolutionary act of resistance, affirming the principle of '**nothing about us without us**.'"*

— Jesenia, US Alliance





Creating shared spaces for change

A core focus of WEI's work is on advocacy and capacity strengthening. This work helps ensure that disability is recognized and addressed as a cross-cutting issue by organizations, funders, events, convenings, grantmakers, and other key stakeholders and changemakers.

As we continue moving through this everchanging socioeconomic and political context, we remain committed to building coalitions, partnerships, and collaborations that spark new and innovative ways of working. Our impact in 2024 is proof that the path forward is together! Here are some highlights about this work:

Mainstreaming disability in feminist spaces

One of the key players in the feminist and women's rights space is the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), a global organization working to achieve gender justice and women's rights. AWID organizes a conference—the AWID Forum—once every few years to bring together feminist leaders and activists from around the world.

Last year we saw AWID's commitment to inclusion come to fruition! They were one of the first feminist organizations to sign on and pledge to implement the Feminist Accessibility Protocol in the AWID Forum. The 2024 Forum represented the culmination of **two years of joint work with AWID**, where **we led the Accessibility Committee**, and **worked alongside 8 disability rights organizations** to ensure the event was accessible to all.

Our participation at the AWID Forum also included (co) organizing **six different events and spaces**, attended by close to **200 people**. We also supported **four feminist disabled leaders from the Philippines, Nepal, Panama/Colombia, and Spain** to travel to and attend the forum.

Our powerful message during the Closing Plenary highlighted how **EVERYTHING IS A DISABILITY ISSUE** in front of over **2000+ activists, community organizers, funders, and human rights leaders**. Our message spread like waves throughout digital platforms, during the plenary, and in the following months.





The Committee



Formed by **8 disability rights organizations**



Met regularly for almost **2 years**



Attended **1 in-person meeting** in Bangkok to discuss and strategize around all things accessibility.



Conducted **1 accessibility audit** of the conference venue and related spaces, including hotels.



Worked on accessibility with a **broader understanding** of it, which included people with disabilities, but also the LGBTQI community, sex workers, people living with HIV, and people who use drugs

The work we do with organizations like AWID transforms how women and gender diverse people with disabilities show up to activism spaces. This way of working sets a precedent and the standard on how organizations make sure they are fully inclusive.

"Working with WEI on the Accessibility Committee for the AWID Forum was fantastic. WEI's constructive and practical input stemming from lived experiences and embodied knowledge helped us craft and, more importantly, implement measures for a more inclusive and accessible Forum. Can't wait to partner again."

— Jessica Whitbread
AWID, Membership and Constituency
Engagement Lead





Disability Justice! Our Rights!



WEI alongside partners like Pratima Gurung, WEI Board Member and Secretary of National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal (NIDWAN), and Amal Charif, an activist from Lebanon, organized the Disability Justice March at the AWID Forum!

Over 50 feminists with disabilities and allies showed up!

With the march we disrupted the main plenary space at the AWID Forum and ensured women and gender-diverse people with disabilities were seen and heard.

Our message was clear: Everything is a disability issue!

"What we did with the Women Enabled team in terms of raising our voices... That was really very important. And I think this kind of collective activism really binds us to collectively amplify our voices."

— Pratima Gurung , WEI Board Member

The work with AWID and with the organizations in the Accessibility Committee reinforced the undeniable power of collaboration. Together with our partners and participants, we explored innovative strategies, exchanged impactful ideas, and built stronger networks committed to advancing equity and inclusion in every corner of the world.

Working with partners like this shows what it means to be truly accessible and the work it takes to be inclusive!





Making the case for investment at the intersection of gender and disability

At WEI, we **leverage our unique position** as the first—and still only—global organization working at the intersection of gender and disability to **make the case** for greater and sustained investment at this intersection. To that end, we **shed light on the transformative impact** of—and the challenges faced by—organizations and activists pushing for gender and disability rights and justice.

During 2024, our focus was to create dialogue spaces that fostered direct conversations between funders and grant makers and activists and community organizers. We provided guidance to funders to promote better access to the resources and support feminist disabled leaders and their organizations need to sustain their activism.



WEI and UAF hosted a reception after a CSW68 side event on disability-inclusive feminist funding, which provided an opportunity for networking and relationship-building in a more informal setting.



Disability Justice mapping in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia

In collaboration with Urgent Action Fund for Feminist Activism (UAF), we co-created a private and safe space to reflect on the advocacy agendas and strategies of individual advocates and organizations working at the intersection of disability and gender justice in Lebanon, Palestine, Belarus, Tajikistan, and Poland.

The meeting, held during CSW68, was designed as an opportunity for funders, advocates, and community organizers from these countries to engage in meaningful dialogue on a series of proposed recommendations and next steps for building a path forward in creating intersectional, inclusive, and sustainable movements. **This was a space where activists and funders had the opportunity to (re)shape each other's approach to the work!**

Over 50+ attended to the session, with participants from **Ford Foundation, Human Rights Funders Network, Equality Fund and International Women's Fund.**

What you need to know to be a disability and gender-inclusive funder

Taking some of the learnings from the mapping session, we continued our work to influence key philanthropic actors with the soft launch of the report: [Activists from Strength: What You Need to Know to Be a Disability and Gender-Inclusive Funder.](#)

This cutting-edge report, done in collaboration with UAF, sparks a dialogue and discussion to strengthen inclusive, intersectional, and sustainable movements for gender and disability justice. The report identifies the key challenges disability rights activists experience in their work as well as recommendations for funders who are interested in supporting the movements at the intersection of gender and disability. Read the full [report here.](#)

Over 50 activists representing 40 organizations led by women and/or gender-diverse people—with and without disabilities working to advance rights at the intersection of gender and disability contributed to this initiative.

They are based and/or work in **10 different countries: Belarus, Hungary, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestine, Poland, Romania, Tajikistan, and Yemen.**





As the world continues to change, the work and support of important players—including those in feminist, disability and philanthropic spaces, but also corporations and other private organizations—will be key to hold the line to keep our rights and continue building a world that is inclusive of all.

Funding partners have the opportunity to be on the forefront of innovative strategies that will help build a resilient and hopeful future. Join feminist and disability organizations that have been pioneers of this work for decades. Find out how to [take action here!](#)

"We have been able to realize that the gap in funding disability justice groups is not the lack of them, but often our non-intentionality in finding and resourcing them as funders. Once we started visibly funding disability justice groups, many collectives working on disability justice have made themselves visible to us and have been generous in being a resource to us even more than we are to them."

– Elsa Saade,
Senior Program Officer, UAF-FA





Rights into action

WEI and our partners achieved several major advocacy wins in 2024. We succeeded in influencing the work and recommendations of international human rights monitoring committees and equipping our partners with the knowledge, resources, and support they need to **translate human rights standards into improved realities on the ground**. Here are the main wins around this work:

Pushing global standards for inclusion in decision-making

In 2024, the **UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW Committee)** adopted a new international standard calling on governments to ensure equal and inclusive representation of women in all decision-making systems.

General Recommendation No. 40 (GR40) marks a breakthrough by explicitly recognizing the importance of full inclusion and parity in leadership—from politics to peacebuilding, climate response, education, and beyond.

Women Enabled International and our global partners from the **Generation Equality Action Coalition for Feminist Movements and Leadership** and the **Inclusive Generation Equality Collective** actively shaped these recommendations over 2+ years of unwavering advocacy. Through written and in-person testimony and multiple consultations, we ensured that **the rights and voices of women and gender-diverse people with disabilities were reflected in GR40**.

Key outcomes included:

- » Governments are now urged to guarantee **50:50 gender parity in leadership**, not as a temporary fix, but as a permanent principle of good governance.
- » Affirmation of the **legal capacity of women with disabilities to vote**, run for office, and access education and healthcare, including sexual and reproductive health.
- » Calls for dismantling barriers such as inaccessible polling places, lack of inclusive education, and harmful stereotypes.
- » **Precedent-setting recognition of intersectionality**—acknowledging how disability, age, race, and other factors compound discrimination.





Ending racial and gender discrimination in health care

In August 2024, the UN **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD Committee)** adopted a groundbreaking international standard calling for an end to racial discrimination in the enjoyment of the right to health. **General Recommendation No. 37 (GR37)** specifically addressed **how race, gender, disability, and other factors combine to create serious barriers** to healthcare access—and what governments must do to change that.

Too often, women and gender-diverse people with disabilities who are also part of racial or indigenous groups face **compounding discrimination in healthcare contexts**—from forced sterilization to denial of sexual and reproductive health services, to inaccessible facilities and biased mental health practices. GR37 calls out these injustices and affirms that bodily autonomy, informed consent, and access to care are fundamental rights.

WEI partnered with National Indigenous Disabled Women Association Nepal, *Mujeres con Capacidad de Soñar a Colores Collective* (Women with the Ability to Dream in Color), and Minority Rights Group to successfully push for standards that reflect the experiences of women with disabilities.

Key gains for our communities

» **Intersectionality as a legal principle:** Confirming that States must address the overlapping and compounding forms of discrimination people face—especially women and gender-diverse people with disabilities.

» **Protection in detention and mental health settings:** Calling for alternatives to detention and safeguards for those at higher risk of abuse, including people with disabilities.

» **Sexual and reproductive health rights:** Affirming the right to bodily autonomy, informed consent, access to abortion and contraception, and protection from harmful practices like female genital mutilation and forced sterilization.

» **Accessible healthcare systems:** Calling for care that is physically accessible, culturally respectful, linguistically inclusive, and sensitive to gender and disability.

GR37 further urges States to track data on healthcare inequality, ensure participation from marginalized communities in health policymaking, and create mechanisms to hold systems accountable when discrimination occurs.





Setting the standards to bring about real change

The standards set forth in such general recommendations are used to hold governments accountable, and activists use them to bring about the change they seek on the ground.

In 2024:

- » WEI **supported Disabled Women in Africa** to organize a new group of women with disabilities in Malawi to work collectively to implement CEDAW Committee and CRPD Committee (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) recommendations.
- » We also **supported the Ghana Federation of Disabled People's Women's Committee** to engage in advocacy before, during, and after the CRPD Committee's country review, which led to a number of pointed recommendations for the Ghanaian government to heed.

What was the result?

After our partner's advocacy, the CRPD Committee:

- » Expressed concern that women and girls with disabilities in Ghana—especially those with intellectual, psychosocial disabilities and albinism—face systemic exclusion, discrimination, and limited access to justice, education, healthcare, and political participation.
- » Urged the government to involve women and girls with disabilities through their representative organizations in all decision-making processes, address intersectional discrimination in law and practice, reform outdated legislation, ensure accessible and inclusive services (especially for survivors of violence and in sexual and reproductive health), support their rights to family life and parenthood, and actively promote their participation in public and political life.

These recommendations mark important progress because they center the voices and experiences of women and girls with disabilities and set clear expectations for structural reforms grounded in inclusion, dignity, and equality.

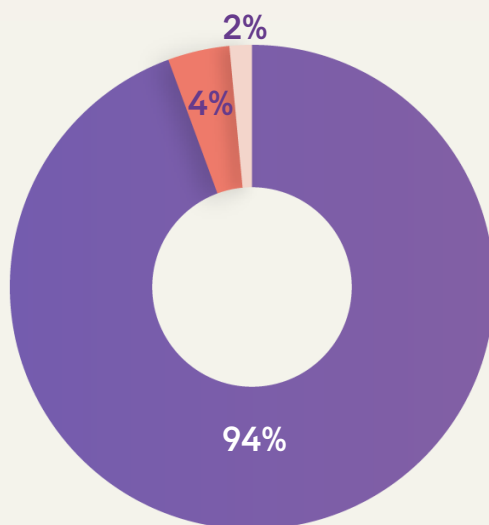




Financials

2024 was a year of growth, impact, and organizational strengthening. Successful fundraising supported a 30% increase in expenses over the previous year, supporting key hires, expansion of WEI's work with global partners, and budgeting for accessibility throughout our programming and operations. We were able to set aside 6 months of operating reserves and ended the year in a solid position of financial stability. Going forward, WEI will continue to prioritize financial resilience and mobilize resources to ensure the sustainability of our organization and our global movements.

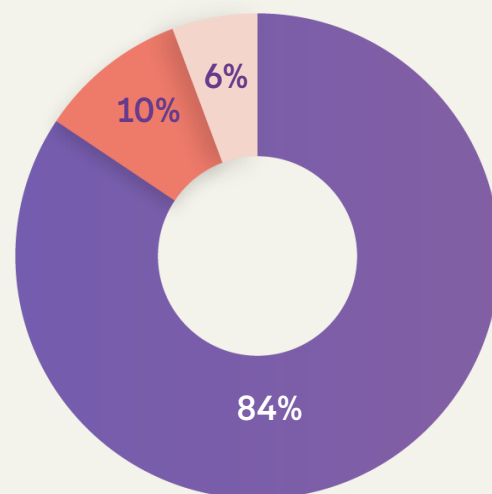
Income



Total \$6.599.510*

- 94% » Grants & Contributions
- 4% » Multilateral & Gov. Funding
- 2% » Interest & Other

Expenses



Total \$3.153.641

- 84% » Program
- 10% » Core Mission Support
- 6% » Development

*This year's income includes a one-time extraordinary gift that will fund infrastructure needs and strategic reserves not supported by other annual funding sources.



Thank you to our supporters!

Women Enabled International is deeply grateful to the following organizations for their steadfast support in 2024. Their investment reflects a shared understanding that disability is interconnected with every social justice issue, and their commitment has helped us hold the line as we continue to defend the rights of women, girls, and gender-diverse people with disabilities.

Channel Foundation • Disability Rights Fund • Equal Justice Works • Ford Foundation • Foundation for a Just Society • Goldman Sachs Philanthropy Fund • Gucci • Kering Foundation • The New York Women's Foundation • Open Society Foundations • PRBB Foundation • United Nations Population Fund • Urgent Action Fund • Wellspring Philanthropic Fund • The Wild Gifting Project • WITH Foundation

We are also humbled by the extraordinary generosity of our individual donors and by the strength and solidarity of disabled feminist activists worldwide, without whom our work would not be possible.



