



# County of Los Angeles CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICE

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SACHI A. HAMAI  
Chief Executive Officer

February 27, 2019

To: Supervisor Janice Hahn, Chair  
Supervisor Hilda L. Solis  
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas  
Supervisor Sheila Kuehl  
Supervisor Kathryn Barger

From: Sachi A. Hamai  
Chief Executive Officer

Board of Supervisors  
HILDA L. SOLIS  
First District  
MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS  
Second District  
SHEILA KUEHL  
Third District  
JANICE HAHN  
Fourth District  
KATHRYN BARGER  
Fifth District

## FIRST ANNUAL REPORT ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COUNTY'S WOMEN AND GIRLS INITIATIVE (ITEM NO. 9, AGENDA OF DECEMBER 13, 2016)

On December 13, 2016, the Board of Supervisors unanimously adopted a motion by Supervisors Kuehl and Solis establishing the Los Angeles County Initiative on Women and Girls (WGI). The WGI is tasked with: examining the systemic issues that lead to inequitable gender outcomes; and recommending changes to improve the quality of life for women and girls in the County. Over the course of five years, the WGI will conduct:

1. A Countywide study of the unique ways in which women and girls are impacted by the policies, programs, services, collaborations, and other actions undertaken by the County;
2. A thorough assessment of the County's recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, testing, evaluation, and other Human Resources policies to ascertain any disparate impacts they may have on women; and
3. A thorough assessment of the County's abilities and deficits in ensuring gender equity, including an analysis of each department's programmatic impacts, positive and negative, on women and girls in the County.

The motion calls for written reports to the Board. This memorandum serves as a further response to efforts noted in previous progress reports. The *Women and Girls Initiative Annual Report* (Attachment I) details efforts underway aimed at improving the lives of

women and girls in Los Angeles County. This is the first written annual report for the period of December 2016 through December 2018.

## Report Overview

The first annual report consists of the following sections:

- **Board Memorandum**  
Summarizes progress in each of the eight WGI focus areas.
- **Attachment I, *Women and Girls Initiative Report***  
Reports on progress made in the eight WGI focus areas outlined in the motion, as listed in Table 1. The report also details findings and recommendations aligned with the WGI Strategic Framework.
- **Attachment II, *WGI Strategic Framework***  
Summarizes the WGI Governing Council's strategic priorities, goals, and objectives.
- **Attachment III, *Guide to Promoting Gender Equity in Recruitment and Hiring***  
Provides best practices for a gender free hiring process.
- **Attachment IV, *Community Conversations Summaries***  
Summarizes feedback from five WGI-hosted community meetings.

If you have any questions or need additional information, you may contact Fesia Davenport at (213) 974-1186, or your staff may contact Abbe Land at (213) 974-4532 or via email at [aland@ceo.lacounty.gov](mailto:aland@ceo.lacounty.gov).

SAH:JJ:FAD  
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## Attachments

c: Executive Office, Board of Supervisors  
County Counsel

# ANNUAL REPORT



December 2016 - December 2018

## OVERVIEW

In response to a motion adopted by your Board on December 13, 2016 establishing the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI), this first annual written report details the progress of the WGI. In the motion, the Board directed the Women and Girls Initiative Governing Council (WGI GC) to submit an annual written report and this report covers the period of December 2016 through December 2018.

The WGI is a five-year Countywide initiative with a mandate to apply a gender lens: 1) when the County participates with other entities in consortiums, agreements, grants, contracts, partnerships, and cross-jurisdictional work; 2) when the County acts as an employer; and 3) when the County acts as a provider of services.

## **FUNDAMENTAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND ESSENTIAL ATTRIBUTES OF THE COUNTY'S WOMEN AND GIRLS INITIATIVE**

### *WGI Governing Council*

The WGI GC consists of 15 members, three from each Supervisorial District, as follows:

<b>First District</b>	<b>Second District</b>	<b>Third District</b>	<b>Fourth District</b>	<b>Fifth District</b>
Jan Perry (resigned)	Araceli Campos (Chair)	Kafi Blumenfield	Carmen Estrada-Schaye	Meghan Ginley (resigned)  Chanel Boutakidis (resigned)
Katherine Spillar	Anita DeFrantz	Wendy Greuel	Perla Hernandez- Trumkul  Leticia Mendoza (resigned)	Alice Petrossian
Beatriz Stotzer	Sharon Shelton (Vice Chair)	Jai Lee Wong	Jane Templin	Angela Underwood- Jacobs

### *Staffing and Structure*

The motion directed the Chief Executive Officer to establish sufficient staffing for the WGI including, at a minimum, an Executive Director, a Research Director, a Community Engagement/Outreach Director, and an Administrative Manager. The Chief Executive Officer and the Executive Officer of the Board were also encouraged to assign staff from their offices to assist the work of the WGI. A Senior Secretary III recently joined the WGI to help further the work of the initiative.

## Fundamental Responsibilities

In the motion, the Board identified eight focus areas for the WGI:

<b>WGI Focus Area #1</b>	Provide quarterly written status reports to the Board. Present an annual written and oral report to the Board on the WGI progress, including recommendations for actions that may be undertaken.
<b>WGI Focus Area #2</b>	Develop a Mission Statement or Set of Guiding Principles to shape the work of the WGI GC.
<b>WGI Focus Area #3</b>	Establish committees or working groups to focus on key issues. These committees may include members who are not on the Council, outside experts, advocates and community members, as well as County Department Heads, County Executives, County employees, and other experts.
<b>WGI Focus Area #4</b>	Conduct a Countywide study of the unique ways in which women and girls are impacted by the policies, programs, services, collaborations, and other actions undertaken by the County.
<b>WGI Focus Area #5</b>	Conduct a thorough assessment of the County's recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, testing, evaluation, and other Human Resources (HR) policies to ascertain any disparate impacts they may have on women. Evaluation must include an in-depth analysis of each Department's workforce gender data in order to identify opportunities for immediate and long-term improvements in County workforce gender parity.
<b>WGI Focus Area #6</b>	Conduct a thorough assessment of the County's abilities and deficits in ensuring gender equity, including an analysis of each Department's programmatic impacts, positive and negative, on women and girls in the County.
<b>WGI Focus Area #7</b>	Initiate and gather research concerning women and girls in the County, including: conduct surveys of community members, County employees and others; identify gaps in research; and collect and analyze the data obtained.
<b>WGI Focus Area #8</b>	Engage in extensive community outreach that is culturally and linguistically competent, including consulting community groups with established best practices in community engagement; hold at least two Town Hall meetings in each Supervisorial District to gather relevant information as identified by the WGI GC; and take any additional action to ensure the most robust community participation.

### **WGI Focus Area #1: Reports to the Board**

The motion requires the provision of quarterly written status reports to the Board, including recommendations for actions that may be undertaken. Because of internal staffing transitions and ramp-up time needed, several quarterly status reports over the first two years were consolidated.

### **WGI Focus Area #2: Develop a Mission Statement or Guiding Principles to shape the WGI GC's work**

In August 2018, the WGI GC adopted the following mission statement:

*The mission of the Women and Girls Initiative is to establish Los Angeles County as a leader in creating opportunities and improving outcomes for women and girls. We apply a gender lens when the County acts as an employer, a service provider and as a partner to: enhance equity and justice, increase leadership opportunities and capacity and create innovative pathways and partnerships.*

In October 2018, the WGI GC adopted a 'living' Strategic Framework to advance the mission and shape the work of the WGI (Attachment II). The WGI Strategic Framework is driven by the potential challenges raised in the motion. Specific goals and objectives were determined based on data, input from community conversations, and experience of the WGI GC members and staff team, in collaboration with the Board.

The five strategic priority areas are:

<b>Strategic Priority #1</b>	Create an equitable workplace where all people regardless of gender and age have equal opportunities for employment, advancement and leadership within the County of Los Angeles' workforce.
<b>Strategic Priority #2</b>	Ensure economic mobility for women and girls of Los Angeles County by increasing their assets and income throughout their lifespan.
<b>Strategic Priority #3</b>	All County services for women and girls are designed with a gender and age lens to ensure accessibility, responsive to needs and provide for well-being throughout their lifetime.
<b>Strategic Priority #4</b>	Empower the next generation of leadership by preparing women and girls for success in their chosen careers and communities.
<b>Strategic Priority #5</b>	Design County internal and external partnerships to increase opportunities and improve outcomes for women and girls throughout Los Angeles County.

### **WGI Focus Area #3: Establish Committees or Working Groups**

In October 2018, the WGI established five ad hoc committees aligned with the WGI Strategic Framework priorities. The year-long ad hoc committees will develop recommendations on:



- Increasing the recruitment and retention of women in Los Angeles County Sheriff's and Fire Departments;
- Addressing Los Angeles County fees and fines detrimental to women's economic stability through possible collaborations with fee-imposing County departments;
- Identifying and connecting County Commissions that have a focus on the WGI Strategic Framework priorities;
- Redefining economic mobility in order to advance necessary work to improve the economic well-being of women and girls in Los Angeles County; and
- Developing a framework of how to apply a gender justice lens when disseminating funds through public and private grant making in Los Angeles County.

In addition, the WGI GC established an ad hoc committee to plan events and activities leading up to and in commemoration of the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Women's Suffrage, in coordination with the Los Angeles County Commission for Women and other key stakeholders.

#### *Engagement with County Departments*

The WGI took advantage of several opportunities to raise awareness of the initiative among County employees and the general public. For example, the WGI was featured in the October 2017 *County DIGEST*. The WGI also participated in the Department of Public Work's Women's Leadership Conference in 2017 and 2018. In both years, the Women's Leadership Conference was attended by over 900 people from across the County workforce as well as the public. The conference featured a WGI panel discussion in 2017 and a WGI welcome and opening remarks in 2018.

The WGI is working in collaboration with the CEO, the Worker Education and Resource Center (WERC), and other County departments to provide women a pathway to crafts and trades employment in the County. The program will provide participants with the experience they need to become journeyed and secure permanent employment with the County. We anticipate implementing a pilot program with the Department of Public Works and the Internal Services Department by the end of the year.

With the adoption of the Purposeful Aging Los Angeles (PALA) report, the WGI will lend its expertise to PALA's Civic Engagement and Employment workgroup. The WGI will also serve on PALA's implementation workgroups for: Communication and Information; Community Support and Health Services; and Housing.

#### **WGI Focus Area #4: Conduct a Countywide study of ways in which women and girls are impacted by actions undertaken by the County**

In July 2017, the WGI surveyed 15 County departments regarding the services and programs that are provided to women and girls, as well as those services and programs in which women and girls are the primary clients or customers. Departments were also asked to provide numbers of participants in each program, disaggregated by age and gender, as well as information about the needs they have and challenges they face in serving this population.

The WGI will use the results from the survey to further the goals of the WGI Strategic Framework.

**WGI Focus Area #5: Conduct a thorough assessment of the County's recruitment, hiring, retention, promotion, testing, evaluation, and other HR policies to ascertain any disparate impacts they may have on women**

The focus of the WGI's work in this area has been applying a gender lens when the County acts as an employer, with highlights as follows:

#### *Gender Implicit Bias Training*

In spring 2018, the WGI and Department of Human Resources (DHR) collaborated in receiving a grant for Mental Health Services Act training dollars for gender implicit bias training for all County employees. The WGI and DHR launched the training through the County's Learning Net in December 2018.

The WGI and DHR co-hosted the most well-attended DIALogue Series event to-date on September 26, 2018 entitled, *#GenderBias: Advocating for Equity, Leading the Change* to kick off the gender implicit bias training. Over 500 County employees attended the event which featured community and County leaders. Post event survey results show that 96 percent of survey respondents rated the overall quality of the event as good to excellent.

#### *Addressing Gendered Language in County Recruitment*

In partnership with DHR, the WGI provided extensive research and finalized a guidebook, *Guide to Promoting Gender Equity in Recruitment and Hiring*, (Attachment III) which uses research and best practices to educate DHR and departmental HR staff about possible gender biases in employment processes. The guidebook also serves as the basis for a training module on gender free hiring that the WGI developed. The WGI also assisted DHR with securing a Productivity Investment Fund grant for *Textio* software that will assist in creating gender free job postings. Through the use of *Textio*, job postings should attract a broader, more diverse, and qualified applicant pool.

#### *Gender Disproportionate Employment*

The WGI completed the initial data collection on gender-concentrated classifications within the County workforce, i.e., where one gender occupies 80 percent or more of the positions. This includes an examination of all classifications under the 20 Equal Employment Opportunity categories and individual classifications. The WGI will identify potential root causes of gender disproportionate employment and make recommendations based on documented best practices for closing gaps in employment and pay. This research will also serve as the basis for a comparable worth study the WGI intends to conduct.

**WGI Focus Area #6: Conduct a thorough assessment of the County's abilities and deficits in ensuring gender equity**

The WGI staff regularly meets with departments to share information about the WGI's mandate and identify opportunities for inter-departmental collaboration to better assess the County's abilities and potential challenges in ensuring gender equity.



### *WGI Department Working Group*

In October 2017, the WGI created the WGI Department Working Group (the Working Group). Representatives from over 20 departments and initiatives gathered to share the work being done by each department to meet the needs of women and girls. The Working Group will convene semi-annually moving forward and will continue to serve as a forum for departments to share information, exchange best practices, and to collaborate to address common challenges.

### *Employee Climate Survey*

In 2019, the WGI will distribute an *Employee Climate Survey* developed in consultation with DHR and County Counsel to assess employee satisfaction and gender equity perceptions in the workplace. The WGI will make recommendations concerning improved gender equity and enhancing supportive environments for female employees based on analysis of data gathered from the survey.

### **WGI Focus Area #7: Initiate and gather research concerning women and girls in the County**

The WGI has begun an ambitious research agenda to inform the WGI GC ad hoc committees, as follows:

- *Increasing the recruitment and retention of women in Los Angeles County Sheriff's and Fire Departments*

The WGI engaged in background research on women in public safety and to-date has examined recruitment, retention, and gender bias settlements reached concerning sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination claims.

The WGI also assisted the County Fire Department with the creation and administration of the first summit and survey entitled, *A Reason to Include and Support Everyone (ARISE)*. The ARISE survey aimed to assess the employment satisfaction and challenges of being a female firefighter or lifeguard in Los Angeles County. The WGI also has issued several data requests to the Fire and Sheriff's Departments to do additional research.

- *Redefining economic mobility to improve the economic well-being of women and girls in Los Angeles County*

The WGI prepared a research primer concerning economic mobility which will support the WGI GC's efforts to create a unified definition of economic mobility within the County. The WGI has also begun efforts to catalog and assess current public, non-governmental organizations and private efforts to promote economic mobility among women and girls. The WGI has compiled best practice survey instruments for consideration by the WGI GC in creating the first "Los Angeles County Women's Economic Mobility Census."

The WGI was also named in several Board motions, as follows:

*Equity for Women in the Workplace (January 16, 2018)*

The WGI worked closely with the DHR to produce a report in response to the Board's January 16, 2018 motion entitled, *Equity for Women in the Workplace*. The motion focuses on the County's family, parental, and medical leave policies; scheduling practices for hourly workers; flexible workplace policies; access to child care; and access to sponsorship or mentoring programs. DHR, in collaboration with the WGI, submitted the preliminary response in June 2018. The final report will be submitted later this year. The WGI will assist in providing information that specifically addresses: the availability and need for mentorship programs; the understanding and use of family-friendly work policies; and employee satisfaction with current County climate, policies, and procedures. This information should help shape the Board's decision making regarding potential improvements to family-friendly policies for County employees, particularly female employees.

*Curbing the Impact of High-Cost Loan Products (October 16, 2018)*

The WGI is working closely with the Department of Consumer and Business Affairs (DCBA) to produce a report in response to the Board's October 16, 2018 motion entitled, *Curbing the Impact of High-Cost Loan Products*. The Board directed the DCBA to collaborate with the WGI and other departments to address predatory loans that are detrimental to women's economic stability.

*Improving the County's Community Business Enterprise Contracting Program (October 16, 2018)*

The WGI is working closely with DCBA to produce a report in response to the Board's October 16, 2018 motion entitled, *Improving the County's Community Business Enterprise Contracting Program*. The Board instructed the Director of DCBA to consult with the WGI Executive Director and other department directors to submit a written report to the Board regarding inclusive contracting processes and programs.

*Establishing a Jail-Based Job Center at Century Regional Detention Facility (October 16, 2018)*

The WGI is working closely with the Department of Workforce Development, Aging and Community Services (WDACS) to produce a report in response to the Board's October 16, 2018 motion entitled, *Establishing a Jail-Based Job Center at Century Regional Detention Facility*. The Board directed WDACS, in partnership with the Sheriff and other relevant departments, to submit a proposal for transitioning and implementing a Jail-Based Job Center model at Mira Loma Detention Center.

*Supporting the Growth of the Los Angeles County Film and Digital Media Industry (October 30, 2018)*

The WGI is working closely with the Film Office of the Chief Executive Office's Economic Development Division on the October 30, 2018 Board motion entitled, *Supporting the Growth of the Los Angeles County Film and Digital Media Industry*. The WGI's role is to ensure that

a gender lens is included in the discussions surrounding workforce development in support of emerging film and digital media companies.

#### *Sidewalk Vending Assessment and Recommendations (November 7, 2018)*

The WGI is working closely with DCBA to produce a report in response to the Board's November 7, 2018 motion entitled, *Sidewalk Vending Assessment and Recommendations (SB 946)*. The Board instructed DCBA to collaborate with WGI and other departments to address sidewalk vending which is a means of earning a living for many women.

#### *Future Research*

The WGI GC ad hoc committees will determine what additional data is needed to further the work of the committees and to further the work of the WGI in accordance with the WGI Strategic Framework.

### **WGI Focus Area #8: Engage in extensive community outreach**

#### *Community Conversations*

In the spring of 2018, the WGI hosted five Community Conversations across Los Angeles County. In partnership with all five Supervisorial offices, the WGI convened diverse community stakeholders, including organizational leaders of all backgrounds, as well as youth representatives in each Supervisorial District. Events were held in East Los Angeles, Willowbrook, San Fernando Valley, East Whittier, and Antelope Valley. More than 300 community members, including grassroots leaders and representatives from 64 community-based organizations, and youth representatives came together for facilitated discussions regarding community needs and opportunities. Attendees provided recommendations on how the County can better meet the needs of women and girls. The information from the conversations was used to inform the WGI Strategic Framework. A full summary of the conversations is attached (Attachment IV) and can also be viewed at: <https://www.lacounty.gov/wg-reports>

#### *Engagement with Girls*

The WGI partnered with the Los Angeles Metropolitan Transportation Authority to plan the March 29, 2019 Girls Summit for over 500 girls in the seventh through twelfth grades from area schools. The summit will highlight opportunities in areas of the transportation industry where women are traditionally under-represented.

#### *WGI Public Service Announcement*

The WGI, in collaboration with the Office of Countywide Communications, created a public service announcement (PSA) about the WGI to encourage ongoing community input involvement with the WGI. The PSA is available for viewing at: <https://www.lacounty.gov/wgi>

#### *WGI Social Media*

The WGI continues to work with the Office of Countywide Communications to enhance the WGI website and has greatly increased the WGI's social media presence on Facebook,

Twitter, and Instagram. The WGI's listserv, social media, and website provide regular updates on the WGI's progress, highlights the work of the WGI GC members, educates subscribers on women's issues, and shares information about upcoming community engagement opportunities. The WGI's listserv has doubled to almost 5,000, which helps drive people to the WGI GC meetings, as well as WGI-supported efforts. The WGI's social media continues to connect the WGI with the community as well as share information that is in alignment with the WGI Strategic Framework.

## **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

In general, the WGI is pleased to report the enthusiasm with which so many departments and community stakeholders embraced the work outlined in the motion. Over 25 departments have participated in the WGI meetings and are responsive to requests for information. Many departments have appointed one or more liaisons to the WGI. The departments are in the process of identifying areas aligned with the WGI Strategic Framework and agree to apply a gender lens to their work. The WGI looks forward to continued work with these and all departments. Over 5,000 community stakeholders also have engaged with the WGI through meetings, community conversations, and social media.

### **Findings**

Through discussions with various Departments, the WGI identified a number of priority areas where critical data disaggregated by gender is incomplete or is missing altogether. The WGI will lead efforts to systematize data collection through a gender lens across the County.

There is a lack of existing measurements within the County for variables concerning economic mobility for women and girls and how existing efforts work synergistically to address gendered barriers. The WGI will work to create instruments and an implementation strategy to collect the necessary economic indicators.

While the County does a great job of recruiting women into the County workforce (the majority of County employees are female), the presence of gender disproportionate employment suggests that the County has not sufficiently applied a gender lens to its recruitment and application procedures in certain job classifications.

Many community stakeholders identify through gender and a variety of intersections and seek additional conversations around issues of gender identity. Community stakeholders would like the County to meet them where they are geographically, making outreach important for long-term interaction.

### **Recommendations**

Over the last two years, the WGI has had the opportunity to hear from many stakeholders, conduct research, and begin substantive issue-oriented work. The recommendations below reflect input to date and are aligned with the WGI Strategic Framework priorities. Many, but not all, of the recommendations require vetting, a proposed implementation plan, and/or a resource assessment. In future reports, the WGI will return with vetted final recommendations.

- *Strategic Priority #1: Create an equitable workplace where all people regardless of gender and age have equal opportunities for employment, advancement and leadership within the County of Los Angeles' workforce:*
  - Require universal data collection on employment statistics disaggregated by gender, i.e., hiring, promotion and separation, and require departments to prepare annual reports of this data in a standardized template to the Chief Executive Office (CEO);
  - Require gender and age-bias training for all County employees;
  - Ensure department directors' annual Management Appraisal and Performance Plan goals include a minimum of one goal to improve gender equity;
  - Require all department HR directors to receive training on implementation of the *Guide to Promoting Gender Equity in Recruitment and Hiring*;
  - Implement an annual departmental report card, developed by the WGI, that tracks key indicators of gender equity;
  - Develop opportunities to showcase and recognize department best practices for promoting and elevating gender equity, i.e., creation of a *Gender Equity Newsletter* or *Gender Equity Award* to highlight departments that do a stellar job at closing gender gaps in hiring, compensating, retaining, promoting, etc.; and
  - Support efforts to create regional working groups to focus on recruitment, training, and retention opportunities specific to careers with low percentages of women (e.g., public safety careers).
  
- *Strategic Priority #2: Ensure economic mobility for women and girls of Los Angeles County by increasing their assets and income throughout their lifespan:*
  - Ensure the *Guide to Promoting Gender Equity in Recruitment and Hiring* is distributed to all County contractors and included in all County Internal Services Department contracting bid packages. Additionally, require the guidebook be accessible at WorkSource Centers and available to other County partners;
  - Direct the Chief Information Officer to work with the WGI to systematize data collection with a gender lens for all County activities where the County is a partner or employer to outside entities including: service provision partnerships, grant making, contracting and subcontracting; and
  - Direct the Los Angeles County Economic Development Division to develop an annual report on the Local and Targeted Worker Hire Program outcomes that includes gender and age.
  
- *Strategic Priority #3: All County services for women and girls are designed with a gender and age lens to ensure accessibility, responsive to needs and provide for well-being throughout their lifetime:*
  - Require data collection of all County service provision programs disaggregated by gender and age. Require County departments to prepare an annual report to the CEO on programs and services that impact women and girls; and
  - Direct each Department to partner with the WGI to develop Department-specific gender mainstreaming training.

- *Strategic Priority #4: Empower the next generation of leadership by preparing women and girls for success in their chosen careers and communities:*
  - Direct a WGI-hosted convening that includes the Departments of Library, Parks and Recreation, Los Angeles County Office of Education, and the Arts Commission, as well as directors of all County museums, to develop comprehensive recommendations to enhance County science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics opportunities for young women and girls; and
  - Direct the Center for Strategic Partnerships, in conjunction with the WGI, to convene regular discussions with private and County grant makers or contractors supporting gender justice. Stakeholders will share best practices and develop recommendations to ensure women and girls have opportunities for success in accordance with the Board's Justice Reform priority.
  
- *Strategic Priority #5: Design County internal and external partnerships to increase opportunities and improve outcomes for women and girls throughout Los Angeles County:*
  - Require County Commissions' annual report templates to include discussion of activities to improve the lives of women and girls;
  - Direct the WGI to convene with diverse gender justice leaders, at least annually, to discuss and develop recommendations to ensure women and girls have opportunities for success; and
  - Support the launch of a Countywide Women and Girls Civic Engagement Initiative as part of the County's celebration of 100 years of women's suffrage.



LOS ANGELES COUNTY

WOMEN  
GIRLS

INITIATIVE

# Strategic Framework 2018-2021





## MISSION

The mission of the Women and Girls Initiative is to establish Los Angeles County as a leader in creating opportunities and improving outcomes for all women and girls. We apply a gender lens when the County acts as an employer, a service provider and as a partner to: enhance equity and justice, increase leadership opportunities and capacity and create innovative pathways and partnerships.

## VISION

Los Angeles County is a place where all women and girls are empowered to reach their full potential.

### Guiding Principles and Purpose of Strategic Framework

In creating the WGI mission and vision, the Governing Council was clear that when we reference Women and Girls, we mean and advocate for all **Women and Girls**: older women, LGBTQ+, immigrants, women and girls of color, veterans, homeless, all religions, all ethnicities, all disabilities, and in all stages of life. The WGI is here to raise the voice of marginalized women and girls, create access to needed services, programs and work to lift low income Women and Girls so that they all have opportunities for success. The overarching goal of the WGI work is to provide Countywide sustainability for gender equity and economic advancement by adopting best practices to drive permanent gender-sensitive culture shifts in hiring and retention policies, service delivery and how the County does business with partners to impact how the County serves its Women and Girls.

The WGI Strategic Framework is designed to address issues raised in the 2016 Board motion that created the WGI. Specifically, the motion directed the WGI to use a gender lens in three important areas: the County as an employer, the County as a provider of services, and the County as a participant. Specific goals and objectives were determined based on data, community convenings, experience of Governing Council members and/or previous issues raised in the County. The Governing Council will periodically make recommendations for Board consideration that will address each strategic priority during the time span of the Strategic Framework. The Governing Council will provide an annual review and/or updates to this Strategic Framework with consideration of accountability and advocacy at all legislative levels.

The WGI has identified several priority areas served by County services and existing County programs. In such areas, the WGI will conduct gap analyses and organizational scans to determine where it is appropriate for the WGI to collaborate on existing work, initiate recommendations for new studies and/or the creation of new programs as well as create templates for centralized data collection disaggregated by gender. Such priority areas include: aging women, women's access to financial institutions, and violence against women to name a few.

### Clarifying Definitions

**Gender Equity\***: When women and men, girls and boys, have equal rights, life prospects and opportunities and the power to shape their own lives and contribute to society.

**Gender Justice**: Tracking and ending gender-based inequalities that limit the economic mobility of Women and Girls and are reinforced in families, communities, private and government sectors.

**Gender Lens**: Decisions are made with particular attention to gender imbalances, intersectionality, multiple biases, perspectives, experiences and existing legislation.

**Intersectionality**: The interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

\* Although we use *gender equity* in alignment with the County's various equity initiatives, it is important to note that our work will promote *gender equality*, which refers to equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities for Women and Girls. By incorporating gender equality, we consider fairness along with the interests, treatment, needs, priorities and diversity of Women and Girls.



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

<p><b>1. Create an equitable workplace where all people regardless of gender and age have equal opportunities for employment, advancement and leadership within the County of Los Angeles' workforce.</b></p>	<p><b>1. <i>Ensure operational pathways for equity in recruitment, hiring, compensation and promotions</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Coordinate with County departments to implement the current best practices in gender equity in employment.</li> <li>B. Develop new best practices, where needed.</li> <li>C. Make recommendations concerning recruitment, hiring and retention policies to maximize opportunities for women within the County workforce.</li> <li>D. Establish metrics for success to track and report on County equity measures in employment.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2. <i>Increase number of women in jobs of low representation</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Effect gender parity in employment across the County workforce.</li> <li>B. Develop policies and programs to promote gender equity in the trades.</li> <li>C. Develop training programs to prepare Women and Girls for County employment.</li> <li>D. Evaluate processes and develop pathways to increase the number of women in the Sheriff, Fire and other departments as appropriate.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3. <i>Create work environments that support women throughout their careers</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Create report cards to promote supportive work environments.</li> <li>B. Develop recommendations for Board of Supervisors on affordable and flexible child and adult care options.</li> <li>C. Create an education reimbursement program that encourages professional development for the advancement of women.</li> <li>D. Create operational pathways that include current best practices in gender and age-bias training.</li> <li>E. Monitor County's Equity Oversight Panel (CEOP) program to verify utilization and effectiveness.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2. Ensure economic mobility for Women and Girls of Los Angeles County by increasing their assets and income throughout their lifespan.</b></p>	<p><b>1. <i>Increase number of women-owned businesses applying for County contracts</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Remove barriers and create opportunities to help women navigate regulatory requirements for County contracting opportunities.</li> <li>B. Create pilot outreach/marketing campaigns using a gender lens that specifically aims to inform women about County contracting opportunities.</li> <li>C. Increase number of women of color who qualify for prime procurement contracts and ensure companies are owned and operated by women.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>2. <i>Encourage women's entrepreneurship to advance gender equity in Los Angeles County's private sector workplaces</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Develop strategies to encourage more women-owned businesses in Los Angeles County.</li> <li>B. Identify sectors where women-owned businesses are underrepresented.</li> <li>C. Ensure age equity in workplaces.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3. <i>Ensure more women are employed by the County in construction and trades</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Ensure Project Labor Agreements in all County construction projects have gender-based language and are enforced.</li> <li>B. Create pipeline opportunities for women to enter construction and trades.</li> </ul>

**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

<p><b>2. Ensure economic mobility for Women and Girls of Los Angeles County by increasing their assets and income throughout their lifespan.</b></p>	<p><b>4. Collaborate with Purposeful Aging Los Angeles to have workforce development programs have an age lens and provide workforce education and training programs for older women that lead to decent paying jobs</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Advocate for required intersectional gender and age implicit bias training for all County employees.</li> <li>B. Create intersectional pathways to reduce the likelihood that the hiring process impedes or places barriers to the promotion of older women.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>5. Identify penalties/fees imposed by the County that have the unintended consequence of pushing women further into poverty</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Evaluate criminal justice imposed fees that are detrimental to women’s economic stability.</li> <li>B. Reduce/restructure fines and fees imposed by the County that have the unintended consequence of pushing women further into poverty.</li> <li>C. Monitor SB 10 bail reform implementation.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>6. Improve financial competency that leads to economic mobility for Women and Girls</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Increase access to banking and credit for women.</li> <li>B. Increase access to financial literacy education for Women and Girls.</li> <li>C. Reduce predatory lending to women.</li> <li>D. Address financial assets and opportunities for Women and Girls.</li> <li>E. Work with LACOE to have financial education and competency programs in schools.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>7. Promote awareness of gender and age equity in County departments that create workforce development programs</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Identify barriers for low-income Women and Girls to participate in workforce development programs.</li> <li>B. Identify best practices in the design and operation of workforce development centers to meet the needs of low-income women and older women.</li> <li>C. Educate youth about job opportunities in all sectors.</li> <li>D. County should track future employment trends.</li> <li>E. Identify successful programs and develop partnerships.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3. All County services for Women and Girls are designed with a gender and age lens to ensure accessibility, responsive to needs and provide for well-being throughout their lifetime.</b></p>	<p><b>1. All new services/programs are designed with an intersectional gender and age lens</b></p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Create training and tools for Countywide education in applying a gender lens to service provision.</li> <li>B. Recommend equitable distribution of health and social services with gender and age lenses regardless of economic status.</li> <li>C. Expand core mission definitions of service accessibility to include statements on flexible weekend and evening hours, safety, age, gender and stigma reduction.</li> <li>D. Include WGI as a key participant in developing Community Schools to design equitable delivery of services and preventative measures are including healthy relationships and reproductive health education.</li> <li>E. All service providers receive trauma-informed care and cultural competency training.</li> <li>F. Develop strategies to inform immigrant Women and Girls about available social services.</li> <li>G. County departments and external agencies providing services to older women have ageism implicit bias training.</li> </ul>



**STRATEGIC PRIORITY**

**GOALS & OBJECTIVES**

<p><b>3. All County services for Women and Girls are designed with a gender and age lens to ensure accessibility, responsive to needs and provide for well-being throughout their lifetime.</b></p>	<p><b>2. Provide gender-responsive services for all Women and Girls (and their children) involved with the criminal justice system</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Ensure pathways are created to make comprehensive services accessible for Women and Girls.</li> <li>B. Ensure reentry programs are designed with a gender and age lens.</li> <li>C. Ensure reentry services are family-friendly and encourage continuity of contact throughout incarceration.</li> <li>D. Collaborate with the Sheriff Civilian Oversight Commission to address violence and excessive force in the jails.</li> <li>E. Provide recommendations for facilities to meet the specific physical and emotional needs of older women inmates.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Reduce the disproportionate impact of violence on Women and Girls at all stages of life in the County of Los Angeles</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Partner with the Office of Violence Prevention, Department of Public Health and Department of Education to ensure solutions to reduce violence against Women and Girls are developed and implemented.</li> <li>B. Reduce gender-motivated violence among marginalized Women and Girls.</li> <li>C. Create operational pathways for the well-being and safety for girls in the foster care system.</li> <li>D. Support Countywide efforts that address sex and human trafficking.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4. Empower the next generation of leadership by preparing Women and Girls for success in their careers and communities.</b></p>	<p><b>1. Increase girls' participation in STEAM education and training programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Partner with County museums, libraries and the education community (K-college) to identify and close STEAM gap.</li> <li>B. Promote STEAM internships, apprenticeship, mentoring and job opportunities for Women and Girls. Increase civic participation.</li> </ul> <p><b>2. Increase girls' participation in County sports programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. 50/50 participation by 2021.</li> <li>B. 50/50 for coaches and administrators.</li> <li>C. 50/50 opportunities for school districts.</li> </ul> <p><b>3. Promote mentoring with County, non-profit and private sector</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Create best practices annual convening/event to recognize and highlight successful mentoring programs.</li> <li>B. Create a resource list of current programs.</li> <li>C. Partner with local high school/colleges.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5. Design County internal and external partnerships to increase opportunities and improve outcomes for Women and Girls throughout Los Angeles County.</b></p>	<p><b>1. Partners support County's goal for Women and Girls equity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Create County training or guidebook on hiring processes that promote gender equity.</li> <li>B. County training or guidebook on hiring processes designed to recruit and promote older women.</li> </ul>

<p><b>5. Design County internal and external partnerships to increase opportunities and improve outcomes for Women and Girls throughout Los Angeles County.</b></p>	<p><b>2. Advocate to other levels of government and a variety of partners to incorporate Women and Girls' equity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. WGI in partnership with appropriate Boards and Commissions convenes partners/contractors and others to solve community issues impacting Women and Girls.</li> <li>B. Increase the number of cities in LA County that specifically address Women and Girls' equity as a goal.</li> <li>C. Collaborate with wide variety of partners to educate on gender and age lens.</li> <li>D. Develop policy that promotes a bonus system for contractors who have implemented successful gender equity plans.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>3. Create working relationships and partnerships with County departments to achieve gender and age equity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A. Use a cross-functional approach to promote the use of gender and age lens throughout County departments.</li> </ul>

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# GUIDE TO PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY IN RECRUITMENT & HIRING



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&

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County  
**Human Resources**  
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## **WOMEN AND GIRLS INITIATIVE**

On December 13, 2016, the Board of Supervisors adopted a motion establishing the Los Angeles County Initiative on Women and Girls (WGI). Through partnership with County departments and public partners, the WGI aims to establish Los Angeles County as a leader in creating opportunities and improving outcomes for all women and girls. To support these efforts, the WGI will apply a gender lens when the County acts as an employer, a service provider, and as a partner to enhance equity and justice, increase leadership opportunities and capacity, and create innovative pathways and partnerships.



## **DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCES**

With more than 110,000 employees working across over 35 departments, Los Angeles County is the largest employer in Southern California. The Los Angeles County Department of Human Resources is dedicated to providing effective and efficient talent solutions to our County partners by recruiting, developing, and retaining exceptional and diverse talent for public service. The vision of the Department of Human Resources is to lead the way in HR excellence through innovation, collaboration, and customer service.

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# PROMOTING GENDER EQUITY IN RECRUITMENT AND HIRING

## I. PURPOSE

The Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors recognizes the significant impact of implicit bias on employee recruitment and selection, and other workplace practices that impact service delivery to County residents. As such, the Board has required that all County managers and employees be trained in recognizing and effectively reducing implicit bias in the workplace. In addition, the Board directed County departments and community partners to review and assess national best practices related to the development and implementation of implicit bias and cultural competency trainings. Accordingly, these guidelines and protocols serve as a model to increase the collective cultural competency of the County, community partners, and businesses that operate within the County, and to prevent actual and/or potential gender inequities that could result from the influence of implicit bias and systemic social and cultural conditioning.

Specifically, the purpose of this guide is to highlight the importance and value of incorporating gender-neutral language in all elements of recruitment and hiring as one means of reducing implicit bias. By being conscious of gender-related considerations and proactively applying a gender-neutral lens to recruitment and hiring materials and protocols, public and private employers within Los Angeles County can advance their efforts to attract and maintain the best talent, close gender gaps within the workforce, and make the delivery of all services within the County of Los Angeles inclusive and respectful of the diverse populations the County serves.

## II. LANGUAGE AND THE POTENTIAL FOR BIAS IN RECRUITMENT AND HIRING PROCESSES

Studies have shown that our minds create shortcuts to help us access information, navigate through the world and make decisions. It is human nature to categorize things, including people. “We create schemas, mental frameworks of beliefs, feelings and assumptions about people, groups, objects...We use these schemas to incorporate new information so that we do not have to treat all new information as through it is totally unfamiliar.”<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, these shortcuts can become sources of unintentional implicit bias, which may influence our ongoing attitudes, understanding, actions, and decisions about people who fit into stereotypes we unconsciously hold.<sup>2</sup> As we are typically unaware that we view the world through selective lenses, these biases may be incorrectly perceived as fact, rather than opinion.

There are several types of implicit bias that can affect recruitment and hiring practices in the workplace:

- **Confirmation bias:** The tendency to seek out information that conforms to one’s pre-existing views, and ignore information that goes against those views
- **In-group bias:** The tendency to favor members of your own group

- **Projection bias:** The thinking that others have the same priority, attitude or belief as you do
- **Selective perception bias:** The process of relying on our own perceptions while in-taking information, and ignoring information that contradicts our beliefs and expectations
- **Status quo bias:** A preference for the current state of affairs<sup>3</sup>

Implicit bias can have a detrimental effect on the hiring process because unconscious bias in the search process makes it difficult to recruit and attract the most qualified candidates. Adopting strategies to promote the awareness of implicit bias in all steps of the hiring processes provides opportunities to diversify the candidate pool and ultimately, our workforce. “There is no design-free world. Organizations must decide how to search for and select future employees. How they advertise open positions, where they post job openings, how they evaluate applicants, how they create short lists, how they interview candidates and how they make their final selections are all part of choice architecture.”<sup>4</sup>

#### Keys for Recruiting Women



As late as the 1970s only 5% of musicians performing in the top U.S. orchestras were women. By 2016, that number jumped to 35%. This was accomplished by implementing performance-based blind auditions, which increased the likelihood of females advancing past the first round of auditions by 50%, thereby increasing the opportunity for women to be selected.

This example shows why the design of hiring processes matter. It is important to consider potential built-in bias and design hiring processes that reduce the opportunity for bias. In the above example, female candidates were consistently ranked lower than male candidates, resulting in very few female hires. Removing evaluators’ knowledge of the gender of the candidates as they auditioned created more objective evaluations of female candidates. A simple change in process significantly increased the likelihood that females would be hired for male-dominated orchestra positions.

### **III. POTENTIAL HIRING BIAS (AN INTERSECTIONAL REVIEW)**

There are several ways in which implicit or sometimes explicit bias has the potential to influence the hiring process:

- **Bias by Gender:** Resumes of candidates with male names are viewed as more competent and hireable and are offered higher starting salaries than candidates’ resumes that use female names. Further, in studies a “Brian” was more likely to be hired than a “Karen” with the same qualifications.<sup>5</sup>



- *Bias by Race*: Applicants with traditionally African-American names (i.e. Jamal and Lakisha) were required to send out 50% more resumes to get the same number of callbacks as applicants with traditionally Caucasian names (i.e. Emily and Greg).<sup>6</sup>
- *Bias by Sexual Orientation*: With identical resumes, applicants listed as being the treasurer of a gay student organization got 40% fewer requests for interviews than applicants listed as being the treasurer of an environmental student organization.<sup>7</sup>
- *Bias by Parental Status*: With identical resumes, non-mothers received twice as many call backs as mothers. There was no difference in the number of call backs between fathers and non-fathers. Studies reflect that gender bias in this category only applies to women.<sup>8</sup>

As the Dean of Harvard Kennedy School of Public Policy, Co-chair of Harvard's Business Insights Group and author of "*What Works: Gender Equality by Design*," Dr. Bohnet concludes, "Our minds are stubborn beasts that are hard to change, but it's not that hard to de-bias the application process."<sup>9</sup> Employers have an opportunity to close gender gaps in the workforce by adopting gender neutral recruitment and hiring practices as a way of reducing implicit bias.

#### **IV. WHAT DO WE MEAN BY GENDER-NEUTRAL RECRUITMENT AND HIRING PRACTICES?**

The way gender is programmed into basic language is associated with societal gender equality.<sup>10</sup> The English language is inherently a gender-neutral language, meaning it does not include masculine or feminine forms of words. However, research shows that English speakers still strongly associate certain jobs or nouns that describe job duties with men or women. As a result, gender stereotypes are incorporated in their mental representations of jobs. These gendered associations can lead to gender discrimination in who applies and who gets hired.

##### ➔ **Examples of obvious gender coding: fireman, craftsman and lineman**

**Problem:** The use of "man" in these job titles can and do discourage women from applying.

**County of Los Angeles uses instead: firefighter, crafts support, and power equipment technician**

The most visible aspect of recruitment that influences the makeup of a candidate pool is job postings. In job advertisements or postings, words are the primary tool for employers to communicate with potential employees, and academic research has shown that many common words used in job descriptions have male or female associations.<sup>11</sup> Creating a gender-neutral approach to recruitment and hiring is essential because language used to describe job opportunities matters most to potential applicants at this initial stage.<sup>12</sup> The concept of "gender coded" job listings refers to the use of male-skewing or female-skewing terms in job descriptions. Simply put, the words used in job descriptions could repel or attract candidates based on their gender. The



most qualified candidates may not apply to opportunities because they are “turned off” by the language used in the job posting.

➤ **Example of signal gender coding:** Elementary school ad seeking “a committed teacher with exceptional pedagogical and interpersonal skills to work in a supportive, collaborative work environment.”

**Problem:** “Supportive” and “collaborative” are traditionally associated with feminine traits and statistically will reduce the number of male applicants for the position.<sup>13</sup>

In both examples where gender coded language is obvious (fireman) and where gender coded language is a signal (supportive elementary school teacher), the results can be the same, the applicant pool may be heavily male or female, and the profession could continue to skew towards a specific gender concentration. In other words, men are drawn to jobs that are traditionally done by men, and women are drawn to jobs that are traditionally done by women.

## **V. WHY IS GENDER-NEUTRAL LANGUAGE IMPORTANT?**

Research shows that implementing a gender neutral approach to recruitment and hiring language **improves** the attraction of potential candidates and supports a more equitable subsequent hiring process because the employer is expanding the applicant pool to allow for a reflection of the diversity of experiences, talents and qualifications of the entire population. Research has shown that removing bias language from recruitment materials increases the number of applicants for a position,<sup>14</sup> reduces the time it takes to hire qualified candidates,<sup>15</sup> and leads to higher retention rates of employees.<sup>16</sup> Further, increasing gender diversity in the workforce is also good for business. Gender diverse companies in the private sector are 15% more likely to outperform those that are not gender diverse,<sup>17</sup> and private industry companies that have at least 30% female executives in their boardrooms make as much as 6% more profit than companies without women at the executive level.<sup>18</sup>

## **VI. ELEMENTS OF RECRUITMENT AND HIRING**

Within the recruitment and hiring processes, there are several sources of potential gender bias that can 1) reduce the number of men/women applying for a certain position or 2) harm an applicant’s chance of being selected for the position. These sources include the following documents or practices:

- A. Job Advertisements
- B. Positions Descriptions/ Requirements
- C. Resumes/Curriculum Vitae (CV)
- D. Letters of Recommendation
- E. Interviews

The following information provides guidelines to promote a more gender neutral approach for each of the processes listed above. The goal is to promote gender equity

across all professions within the County and its community partners, and to address common recruitment and hiring practices that are known to impact women's participation and success rates in obtaining jobs.

### A. Gender-Neutral Job Advertisements

A job advertisement or posting is the very first stage in the process of attracting talent. Hence, it is important that recruitment efforts do not exclude female or male candidates at the onset of the process. Research shows that job advertisements used in historically male-oriented sectors; such as technology, finance, science, and construction; showed a greater use of words with male connotations such as 'leader', 'competitive' and 'dominant'. The study also found that when more masculine wording was used in the advertisements, it was perceived by potential applicants that more men worked in that sector. Masculine wording also made this sector less appealing for women, making them less likely to apply for jobs.<sup>19</sup> According to research, 70% of job listings across all industries contain masculine words.<sup>20</sup>

#### Keys for Recruiting Women



Simple word choices can keep women, especially women of color, from applying. The term "the best of the best" is typically taken as a signal that the company is looking for males and that the work environment is ultra-competitive. For example, "competitive salary" can be problematic because women, who are less likely to negotiate, may take it as a signal that they'll have to haggle over pay. The phrase "we need a killer sales representative" may discourage females from applying. In all instances, women will be significantly less likely to apply for the job.<sup>18</sup>

The following best practices can be used to improve the language in job ads<sup>21</sup> and as a result, the outcomes:

**Recommendation 1: Use gender-neutral titles.** Male-oriented titles can inadvertently prevent women from clicking on a job in a list of search results. Avoid including words in titles like "hacker," "rock star," "superhero," "guru," and "ninja," and instead use neutral, descriptive titles like "engineer," "project manager," or "developer."

- Example: On average, on the job site Indeed, 800+ job listings include the word "ninja" intending to mean that the company is looking for an aggressive candidate and/or expert in the field. However, the Japanese origin of ninja was a man and suggests physical combat or prowess.<sup>22</sup>

**Recommendation 2: Check pronouns.** When describing the tasks of the ideal candidate, use "their," "the candidate," or "you."

- Example: "As Product Manager for XYZ, **you** will be responsible for setting the product vision and strategy."

**Recommendation 3: Avoid (or balance) the use of gender-charged words.** Analysis from augmented language tools found that the gender language bias in an organization’s job posting can predict the gender of the person hired. For example, the words “analyze” and “determine” are typically associated with male traits, while the words “collaborate” and “support” are associated with female traits.

Below are examples of gender-coded language often featured in job advertisements.

Feminine-Coded Words	Masculine-Coded Words
agree, commit, cooperate, depend, honest, interpersonal, loyal, support, together, understood	active, adventurous, challenge, confident, decision, driven, independent, lead, objective, opinion
Recommended Gender Neutral Words	
<b>collaborative, team, positive, goal oriented, motivated</b>	

The use of an augmented language tool can help eliminate problematic language and provide suggestions for more gender inclusive language in advertisements. For example, the following firefighter job advertisement was scored by the augmented writing software system Textio as an 18 out of 100 for gender inclusiveness:

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:** *Performs firefighting and rescue duties in all types of fires and in other emergency situations, and enforces the fire prevention code.*

Review by an augmented language tool returned a score of 64 out of 100 for gender inclusiveness by implementing the following changes:

**ESSENTIAL JOB FUNCTIONS:** *A job is a job, right? Not for us. We spend our time at work helping people in their greatest times of need. Are you like us? Are you passionate about helping others? Are you interested in being in the right place at the right time?*

*We want people like you to help us support the 10 million residents of the area we call home. Join our team. In this job, you will perform firefighting and rescue duties in all types of fire and emergency situations while following and ensuring our California Fire Prevention Code.*

Language programs created to analyze the impact of language on job applications have identified over 25,000 problematic phrases that have statistically been proven to bias applicant pools toward males/females. The table below provides the most frequently used male gendered language in job advertisements and should be avoided when posting County job advertisements.

Most frequent gender problematic terms:

Ambitious	Boastful	Foosball	Stock options
Analytical	Chairman	Ninja	Strong
Assertive	Competitive	Hierarchical	Takes risks
Autonomous	Salary	Rigid	Workforce
Best of the best	Dominate	Silicon Valley	

The use of language specifically designed to attract women has been implemented in industries that have traditionally had problems recruiting women with positive results. For example, the augmented language software system Textio has reported substantial use of its product by technology firms, including Netflix, Airbnb, Medium, and Pandora.<sup>23</sup> Below is a list of most common language for attracting female applicants to job advertisements.

Common language used to attract more female applicants:

Adaptable	Multitasking	Self-aware
Choose	Health	Socially responsible
Collaborate	Imaginative	Thoughtful
Creative	Intuitive	Trustworthy
Curious	Leans in	Up-to-date
Excellent	Plans for the future	Wellness program
Flexible schedule	Resilient	

**Recommendation 4:** Avoid superlatives. Excessive use of superlatives such as “expert,” “superior,” or “world class” can deter female candidates who are traditionally more collaborative than competitive in nature. Research also shows that women are less likely than men to brag about their accomplishments.<sup>24</sup> In addition, superlatives related to a candidate’s background can limit the pool of female applicants because there may be very few females currently in leading positions at “world class” firms.<sup>25</sup>

## B. Gender-Neutral Position Descriptions:

Eliminating the use of gendered language in position descriptions can also impact the number, experience, and diversity of an applicant pool. ZipRecruiter summarized this impact the following way:

When employers write job descriptions, the goal is that the person with the right skills and experience will read the job ad and apply. What we found was that many employers were lowering their chances at finding the right candidate and didn't even realize it. When gendered language is removed from the equation, companies are left with a higher chance of scoring the best candidate for the job. Job listings with gendered language attracted an average of 12 responses, while job listings with gender-neutral language attracted an average of 17 responses.<sup>26</sup>

Further research shows that women felt less personal investment, were more ostracized and had lower expectations of how long they will stay in a particular job when recruitment materials feature masculine language and masculine pronouns.<sup>27</sup> When considering job position listings, here are some additional best practices to follow to create gender-neutral postings:<sup>28</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** Focus on the quality, not quantity, of requirements. Identify which requirements are “nice to have” versus “must have” (i.e., minimum requirements) and eliminate any nonessential “nice to have” from the mandatory position requirements.



#### Keys for Recruiting Women

Studies have shown that many women won't apply for a job they do not 100% qualify for, whereas men will apply for a position they feel they're only 60% qualified for. The more qualifications or requirements you list, the more you reduce the likelihood of female applicants.<sup>29</sup>

**Recommendation 2:** Reconsider the major requirements for the position. Listing a specific college major as a requirement can limit the number of applicants to one gender in favor of the other. Glassdoor Economic Research found that choice of college major can vary by gender, and you may be limiting your candidate pool by unnecessarily requiring completion of a specific degree. Emphasizing physical requirements that are not common or are infrequent features of the job also limits the candidate pool.<sup>30</sup>

- Example: A standard clerical office job that requires applicants to “lift 50 lbs.” will result in fewer women applying for this job due to the physical requirement. Instead, the requirement should focus on the essential clerical duties such as entering data into a computer and answering telephone calls, and leave off a weight lifting requirement.
- Example: Specifically requiring a BS degree, when women are more likely to have a BA degree in a similar major, i.e., BA in Biology vs. BS in Biology will result in limiting your female applicant pool. Instead, the requirement should read: “bachelor’s degree in biology or bachelor’s degree in science” to maximize your applicant pool.

Employers that include the following additional policy statements in their position descriptions are viewed as more equitable and as having more favorable work environments to prospective employees (females in particular):<sup>31</sup>

- Express your commitment to equality and diversity. Candidates want to know they'll be welcome in the culture before they make the effort to apply. A simple statement toward the end of a job description lets candidates know that you intend to make the workplace a friendly one.
- Infuse well-defined value statements that promote diversity into your job descriptions, or list them out.

- Promote volunteer and employee activities that involve career building or mentorship opportunities.
- State your family-friendly benefits in position descriptions. Parental leave, flextime, and child care subsidies benefit families and your future base of employees.

The following is a checklist of questions to ask when writing position descriptions. Your answers to these questions will inform you of the presence of gendered language or gender bias in how your job vacancies are presented to the job seeking world.

1. Are all of the “required” criteria listed necessary for doing this job well?
2. Do the criteria allow candidates to demonstrate important life experiences that may not show up on traditional resumes?
3. Do any of the criteria reflect unnecessary assumptions or biases about the “kind of person” who usually does the job?
4. Do you include criteria such as “ability to work on diverse teams or with a diverse range of people?”
5. Could additional criteria be included that would open up possibilities for a broader range of excellent candidates?
6. Does any of the language in the description describe people rather than behaviors or subtly reflect stereotypes?<sup>32</sup>

### C. Gender Bias in Resume/Curriculum Vitae (CV) Evaluation

In Section III. Potential Hiring Bias (An Intersectional Review), we discussed ways in which implicit bias in resume review can help/hinder an applicant’s ability to be selected for an interview. Research finds that the same resume will receive different scores across gendered and racial lines. To further illustrate potential gender bias in resume reviews, Harvard conducted a series of selection studies where participants were asked to hire a candidate for a typically male task: performing a math problem, and a typically female task: a word assignment. Participants were paid based on the performance of the individual they hired. The researchers found that when participants were presented with one candidate at a time, they almost always selected males for the math task and females for the word task, even though they had sometimes performed lower than the candidate of the opposite gender. When participants evaluated candidates in groups comparatively, the gender gap completely vanished, and the participant chose the top performer.<sup>33</sup>

The following are good rules to follow concerning reviewing Resumes/CVs:<sup>34</sup>

**Recommendation 1:** Establish clear criteria before reviewing materials and have them available during reviews and apply them uniformly.



**Recommendation 2:** Create standard candidate information checklists—for all candidates.

Following these two rules will help reduce bias in the way criteria are considered and weighted by evaluators and ensures resume review is based on only essential qualities/qualifications to being successful in the advertised position.

#### D. Gender Bias in Reference Review

Even the most enthusiastic references often use gender-coded language in their evaluation of an individual, particularly when summarizing their work habits. Typically, when people recommend men for a given position, they are more action-oriented descriptors—ambitious, dominant, self-confident, and provide more references to individual accomplishments. By contrast, when people recommend women for a given position, they are more communal descriptors—affectionate, nurturing, and provide more references to personal life and team achievements.<sup>35</sup> Recommendations that feature more personal/affectionate language or reference personal situations are taken less seriously by those evaluating letters of recommendation.

**Recommendation 1:** To reduce gender bias introduced into the hiring process by outside references replace the requirement for letters of recommendation with references that employers can contact to access the relevant information for review.

**Recommendation 2:** It is important to screen reference materials for bias triggers by unaffiliated third parties that are out of control of the applicant. It is also important to flag potential triggers for ways bias may be activated, i.e., recommendations that lead to assumptions about social identity rather than professional qualification.<sup>36</sup>

- Example: A recommender is emphasizing that “Jennifer is a rising star within the company.” References to youth in recommendations for female applicants trigger bias against mothers in the workforce. Employers may overlook female applicants that they believe will take time off for family activities. Such bias does not exist for male applicants.
- Example of an evaluation that is received differently for male and female applicants: “One of Emily’s/Tim’s main attributes is her/his persistence and diligence, sometimes even ranging with obsession, with work.” Emily is perceived as shrill and her work ethic makes her difficult to work with; Tim is perceived to be a go-getter and his work ethic is valued.

#### E. Interview Process

To reduce gender bias in the interview process, the primary recommendation is to install a significant degree of structure before interviews, during interviews, and following interviews. Lack of formalized structure in the interview process can lead to a great deal of bias being introduced into the hiring process.

In a study across several traditionally gendered professions, sociologist Lauren Rivera found that interviewers commonly looked for someone like themselves in interviews. Concluding, “Replicating ourselves in hiring contributes to the prevalent gender segregations of jobs, with, for example, male bankers hiring male bankers and female teachers hiring female teachers.”<sup>37</sup> Further research found that a lack of structure in the interview process leads interviewers to grade candidates on their *perceptions* of the candidate rather than more objective measures.<sup>38</sup> The following rules will help reduce bias in interviews, gender bias in particular:

### ***Pre-Interview:***

**Recommendation 1:** Discussing implicit bias with the interview committee.<sup>39</sup> Providing hiring managers with training, like Los Angeles County’s implicit bias and cultural competency workshops, is invaluable in helping interviewers to see bias of which they may be unaware. A refresher update on this training may be a good way to begin pre-interview steps.



#### **Keys for Recruiting Women**

Not all implicit bias training incorporates gender; it is important that interviewers receive gender-specific implicit bias training. Gender bias training should also include an intersectional approach, as research shows candidates judged the most harshly are consistently African-American women.<sup>40</sup>

**Recommendation 2:** Providing the interview committee with recommended procedures and strategies for evaluating candidates.<sup>41</sup> Streamline the evaluation criteria and make procedures and scoring sheets clear to interviewers before interviews take place. Script the interview! Apply predetermined criteria to all levels of deliberation. Good process predetermines follow ups, who asks, and the order of the discussion.<sup>42</sup>

**Recommendation 3:** Provide questions in advance. Providing the questions to interviewees in advance assures you are not privileging specific response skill sets and that the committee is getting the best answers from all candidates.<sup>43</sup>

### ***Post Interview:***

**Recommendation 1:** Leave ample time for interview committee members to formulate their evaluations and deliberate on group decisions. When people feel rushed they tend to fall back on stereotypes and schemas to evaluate new information and make decisions. This increases bias in decision-making.<sup>44</sup>

**Recommendation 2:** Look for bias. After all interviews are conducted, it is recommended the panel of interviewers answer the questions listed below about their process.<sup>45</sup> If the team responds “no” to all questions, the interview process was conducted in a gender-neutral manner (these questions also consider intersectionality

of candidates, which is also important to evaluate). Should your team respond “yes” to these questions, the interview process should be further reviewed:

- Are women, men and gender non-conforming candidates subjected to different expectations?
- Have women, men and gender non-conforming candidate accomplishments been undervalued by attributing them to colleagues or their previous supervisors?
- Are assumptions about family responsibilities or structures influencing assessments of merit?

## **VII. CONCLUSION**

Language is the basis of our societal norms and cultural expectations. The language used to attract and recruit potential employees shape which experiences, talents and qualifications ultimately make up the workforce. By being mindful of the implicit bias and subtle cues associated with certain words in how jobs are presented to the public and by applying a gender-neutral lens to how the hiring process is conducted, employers within the County of Los Angeles, and across the nation, can attract and maintain the best talent.

The adoption of these best practices by public and private employers across Los Angeles County will improve the experiences of employees and clients alike, and further the County’s mission “to enrich lives through effective and caring service.”

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<sup>1</sup> Bohnet, Iris. Search Committee Training: Bias and Inclusive Strategies. PowerPoint presentation.

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<sup>3</sup> Bohnet, Iris. Search Committee Training: Bias and Inclusive Strategies. PowerPoint presentation.

<sup>4</sup> Bohnet, Iris. 2016. What Works: Gender Equality by Design. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>5</sup> MOSS-RACUSIN ET AL. 2015. “QUALITY OF EVIDENCE REVEALING SUBTLE GENDER BIASES IN SCIENCE IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER” PROCEEDINGS OF THE NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. 112(43): 13201–13206.

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<sup>7</sup> Tilcsik, Adras. 2011. "Pride and Prejudice: Employment Discrimination against Openly Gay Men in the United States" *American Journal of Sociology*. 117(2): 586-626

<sup>8</sup> CORRELL ET. AL. 2007. "GETTING A JOB: IS THERE A MOTHERHOOD PENALTY?" *AMERICAN JOURNAL OF SOCIOLOGY* 112(5).

<sup>9</sup> Bohnet, Iris. 2016. *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>10</sup> Sczesny et al. 2016. "Can Gender-Fair Language Reduce Gender Stereotyping and Discrimination?" *Frontlines in Psychology* 7(25).

<sup>11</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. "10 Ways to Remove Gender Bias from Job Descriptions" <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/10-ways-remove-gender-bias-job-listings/>

<sup>12</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. "10 Ways to Remove Gender Bias from Job Descriptions" <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/10-ways-remove-gender-bias-job-listings/>

<sup>13</sup> Bohnet, Iris. 2016. *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>14</sup> Florentine, Sharon. 2016. "How gender-neutral job postings decrease time to hire." *CIO*.

<sup>15</sup> Deloitte Talent Acquisition Factbook.

<sup>16</sup> Florentine, Sharon. 2016. "How gender-neutral job postings decrease time to hire." *CIO*.

<sup>17</sup> PHAIDON INTERNATIONAL. 2018. "HOW TO AVOID UNCONSCIOUS BIAS IN JOB ADS" <HTTPS://WWW.PHAIDONINTERNATIONAL.COM/HIRINGRESOURCES/HOW-TO-AVOID-UNCONSCIOUS-BIAS-IN-JOB-ADS-711828164012932>.

<sup>18</sup> HUFFINGTON POST. 2016. "COMPANIES WITH WOMEN LEADERS MAKE MORE PROFIT, SAYS NEW STUDY" [HTTPS://WWW.HUFFINGTONPOST.IN/2016/02/10/WOMEN-LEADERS-COMPANIES-S\\_N\\_9199298.HTML](HTTPS://WWW.HUFFINGTONPOST.IN/2016/02/10/WOMEN-LEADERS-COMPANIES-S_N_9199298.HTML).

<sup>19</sup> Gaucher, D. et al. 2011. "Evidence that gendered wording in job advertisements exists and sustains gender inequality." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 101(1):109-28.

<sup>20</sup> BROOKS, CHAD. 2016. "WANT MORE JOB APPLICANTS? USE GENDER-NEUTRAL WORDING" *BUSINESS NEWS DAILY*. <HTTPS://WWW.BUSINESSNEWS DAILY.COM/9434-GENDER-NEUTRAL-JOB-AD.HTML>.

<sup>21</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. 9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

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<sup>23</sup> Textio, [www.textio.com](http://www.textio.com)

<sup>24</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. 9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

<sup>25</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. 9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

<sup>26</sup> ZipRecruiter. 2016. "Big Data Doesn't Lie: Removing These Gendered Key Words" <https://www.ziprecruiter.com/blog/removing-gendered-keywords-gets-you-more-applicants/>

<sup>27</sup> Peressotti, Francesca et al. 2007. "The two faces of Gender-Fair Language" Università Degli Studi Padova.

<sup>28</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. "9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews". <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

<sup>29</sup> BROOKS, CHAD. 2016. "WANT MORE JOB APPLICANTS? USE GENDER-NEUTRAL WORDING" BUSINESS NEWS DAILY. [HTTPS://WWW.BUSINESSNEWSDAILY.COM/9434-GENDER-NEUTRAL-JOB-AD.HTML](https://www.businessnewsdaily.com/9434-gender-neutral-job-ad.html).

<sup>30</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. "9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews". <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

<sup>31</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. "9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews". <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

<sup>32</sup> Bohnet, Iris. 2016. What Works: Gender Equality by Design. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>33</sup> Bohnet, Iris. 2016. What Works: Gender Equality by Design. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pg 126-127.

<sup>34</sup> Glassdoor. 2017. 9 Ways to Reduce Gender Bias from Interviews. <https://www.glassdoor.com/employers/blog/9-ways-to-remove-gender-bias-from-interviews/>

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<sup>36</sup> Bohnet, Iris. 2016. *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>37</sup> In Bohnet, Iris. 2016. *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>38</sup> In Bohnet, Iris. 2016. *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>39</sup> Smith et al. 2013. "Interrupting the Usual: Successful Strategies for Hiring Diverse Faculty." *Journal of Higher Education* 75(2): 133-160.

<sup>40</sup> Rudder, Christian. 2014. *Dataclism: Who We Are (When We Think No One's Looking)*. New York: Crown Publishing.

<sup>41</sup> Smith et al. 2013. "Interrupting the Usual: Successful Strategies for Hiring Diverse Faculty." *Journal of Higher Education* 75(2): 133-160.

<sup>42</sup> Olberding, et al. 2014. *APA Newsletter, Feminism and Philosophy*.

<sup>43</sup> Olberding, et al. 2014. *APA Newsletter, Feminism and Philosophy*.

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**LOS ANGELES COUNTY WOMEN & GIRLS INITIATIVE**  
**Findings from the March 2018 Community Convenings**  
**March 30, 2018 - East Los Angeles**



In March 2018, the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) held five convenings, with one in each supervisorial district. The purpose of the convenings was to gather responses from community members to better understand specific needs of women and girls, the strengths and assets in their communities, and the potential roles of government and community-based organizations to address these needs.

On Friday, March 30, 2018, the first convening was held in **East Los Angeles in Supervisorial District 1**. A total number of 104 Participants attended, and 28 Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) were represented.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>1) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>women</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>	<b>2) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>girls</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>
<p><b>Programs/Services/Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This community needs more lighting near parks in order for women to feel safe with their children there in the evening and when walking home</li> <li>This community needs better grocery store options and more affordable farmers markets</li> <li>Homeless women need more support for hygiene needs</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase communication with the community</li> <li>Empower and educate community leaders about County services</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure alignment in equal opportunity practices</li> <li>Connect resources where possible</li> <li>Provide bilingual 911 dispatchers</li> <li>Offer teen jobs to all youth regardless of their parents' social-economic status</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase the promotion of sports and programs for girls at all age levels</li> <li>Increase the availability of sign language services</li> <li>Train CBOs that are respected in the community on the availability of County services</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment/Outreach/Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote the importance and impact of voting</li> <li>Increase availability and accessibility to mentorship programs</li> </ul>

<b>3) OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION: How could government and <i>community organizations</i> work together better to meet the needs of women and girls?</b>	
<p><b>Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer through CBOs affordable, quality childcare</li> <li>Work together on community-based safety issues</li> <li>Develop vocation workshops for K-12</li> <li>Offer leadership training</li> <li>Provide one-stop centers in every area of the County</li> </ul>	<p><b>Special Programs for Subpopulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase gender-based responses to dealing with domestic violence at the local level</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase intentional government engagement by working together to address social issues</li> <li>Work from a cultural diversity and inclusion perspective</li> </ul>



<b>4) COMMUNITY STRENGTHS &amp; ASSETS</b> <b>What are the strengths and assets in your community that could be better used to improve the lives of women and girls?</b>	<b>5) COMMUNITY UNMET NEEDS</b> <b>What organizations and services are missing in your community that government could help facilitate or provide to improve the lives of women and girls?</b>
<p><b>Community</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Residents are willing to make positive changes in the community</li> <li>There is a united group of resilient women and girls who attend as many community events as possible</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We have prominent female leaders in office at multiple levels of government</li> <li>East LA needs to host more townhalls to raise awareness of controversial topics like: access to daycare, housing, and cannabis science</li> <li>The Essie Justice Group is in East LA; they help connect women with their incarcerated loved ones</li> <li>The school district offers various linking services for community members</li> </ul>	<p><b>Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve the safety at affordable housing units</li> </ul> <p><b>Education/Schools/Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a better array of workshops to make community members aware of what is going on in education</li> <li>Provide strength-based programs that empower and uplift women and girls</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore how to use technology for women who want to work from home</li> <li>Provide paid internships and stipends for girls</li> <li>Increase building the technical and leadership skills of women and girls</li> </ul>

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In March 2018, the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) held five convenings, with one in each supervisorial district. The purpose of the convenings was to gather responses from community members to better understand specific needs of women and girls, the strengths and assets in their communities, and the potential roles of government and community-based organizations to address these needs.

On Saturday, March 24, 2018, the first convening was held in the **Willowbrook unincorporated area in Supervisorial District 2**. A total number of 40 Participants attended, and 10 Community-Based Organizations were represented.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT	
1) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>women</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?	2) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>girls</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?
<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable childcare options should be increased, especially for single mothers</li> <li>Increase mental health services</li> <li>Provide health and social services on the weekend for people who cannot take a day off from work</li> <li>Provide safe and affordable housing for people that are transferring out of public assistance and other social services</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment/Outreach/Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a public awareness campaign around gender-based violence</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct community outreach about existing programs utilizing technology and social media</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Programs designed for them should have more accountable benchmarks</li> <li>Girls need access to free legal services</li> <li>Increase the availability of safe, affordable housing needs</li> <li>Increase access to healthy food</li> </ul> <p><b>Coordination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit educators, administrators, probation officers and other stakeholders to hold forums to encourage parents to get involved in their kids' lives</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Conduct a community needs assessment to find out what girls are seeking</li> <li>Change the language of "low income" and "victims" to something more positive</li> <li>Address implicit bias and cultural competency</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment/Outreach Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engage community leaders to build community networks of support</li> <li>Don't penalize a girl for having a father in the home</li> </ul>



**3) OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION: How could government and *community organizations* work together better to meet the needs of women and girls?**

<p><b>Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure communities have the resources they need to address gentrification; new jobs should be for those who have lived there</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create incentives for companies to bring jobs and training for women to South LA</li> </ul>	<p><b>Empowerment/Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give women the education and training they need to be prepared for the jobs of the future and make sure that the completion of those programs is tied to jobs</li> </ul>
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<p><b>4) COMMUNITY STRENGTHS &amp; ASSETS</b>          What are the strengths and assets in your community that could be better used to improve the lives of women and girls?</p>	<p><b>5) COMMUNITY UNMET NEEDS</b>          What organizations and services are missing in your community that government could help facilitate or provide to improve the lives of women and girls?</p>
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<p><b>Family Service/Community Centers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have non-profits that bring a lot of pilot programs; fund the pilots that work</li> <li>• Expo Center: do not take away the parking lot; we like it for sports usage on the weekend; we enjoy the family based programming and what they have for kids</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although the entrepreneurial spirit is very alive in South LA, there needs to be more support to ensure informal markets are not criminalized</li> </ul> <p><b>Existing Benefits</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The CD-Tech program at LATTC helps empower women</li> <li>• The cadet program has given many of our youth leadership skills</li> </ul>	<p><b>Health/Behavioral Health Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All services should include trauma-informed care</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better advertisement of existing programs; focus on making it more effective</li> </ul> <p><b>Programing and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase programing on financial empowerment</li> <li>• Increase mentorship opportunities</li> <li>• Host community forums for women and girls</li> <li>• Increase funding for organizations doing a good job with services</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transportation needs to be more affordable</li> </ul> <p><b>Specialized Programs for Subpopulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide culturally sensitive services</li> </ul>
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In March 2018, the Women and Girls Initiative (WGI) held five convenings, with one in each supervisorial district. The purpose of the convenings was to gather responses from community members to better understand specific needs of women and girls, the strengths and assets in their communities, and the potential roles of government and community-based organizations to address these needs.

On Saturday, March 3, 2018, the first convening was held in the **San Fernando Valley in Supervisorial District 3**. A total number of 89 Participants attended, and 18 Community-Based Organizations were represented.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>1) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>women</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>	<b>2) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>girls</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>
<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More counseling and mental health services should be at schools</li> <li>• Self-defense classes</li> <li>• Childhood programs to teach boys about emotions</li> <li>• Reinvest in successful programs</li> <li>• Encourage County and other employers to provide youth summer jobs</li> <li>• Examine existing policy for potential improvements</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment/Outreach/Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More outreach of existing programs (commercials, retail, grocery store, parks, libraries)</li> <li>• Encourage young girls to take on leadership positions</li> <li>• Talk to youth about sex trafficking</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with CBOs to provide “safe space” for meetings</li> <li>• Provide opportunities for women mentors to connect with other women</li> <li>• Host more meetings like this</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More girl-specific services</li> <li>• Focus on life skills like financial literacy</li> <li>• Focus on prevention</li> </ul> <p><b>Coordination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better coordination with County departments on what girl-centered services exist</li> </ul>

<b>3) OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION: How could government and <i>community organizations</i> work together better to meet the needs of women and girls?</b>	
<p><b>Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• More access to sports as a life skill and make sure it is affordable for families with multiple children</li> <li>• More workforce training</li> <li>• Hold current programs accountable</li> <li>• More outreach of existing programs</li> <li>• Rapid re-housing should be linked to services</li> </ul>	<p><b>Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we hold a boss that mistreats women accountable?</li> <li>• Educate girls early on how to defend themselves</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop more grants for girl-based programming</li> <li>• Streamline County services</li> <li>• Close the digital divide as it is no longer a luxury but a need</li> </ul>

<b>4) COMMUNITY STRENGTHS &amp; ASSETS</b> <b>What are the strengths and assets in your community that could be better used to improve the lives of women and girls?</b>	<b>5) COMMUNITY UNMET NEEDS</b> <b>What organizations and services are missing in your community that government could help facilitate or provide to improve the lives of women and girls?</b>
<p><b>Mental Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We have magnet schools with onsite counselors and mental health services</li> <li>• The County should better fund mental health services</li> </ul> <p><b>Domestic Violence/Sexual Harassment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Churches open doors to domestic violence victims</li> <li>• Use the MTA to do a sexual harassment campaign because a lot of it goes on there</li> </ul> <p><b>Sexual and Reproductive Health</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County should help fund free feminine hygiene products</li> <li>• More contraceptive education</li> </ul> <p><b>Family Service Centers/Care Coordination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family service centers link you to affordable housing and services (such as diapers for babies)</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Host a social media campaign that remind people that all women are beautiful</li> </ul>	<p><b>Health/Behavioral Health Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education programs related to impact of cannabis legalization</li> <li>• Educate parents on how to use non-violent alternatives for discipline</li> <li>• Teach men and boys about healthy relationships</li> <li>• Health education mindful of gender identity self-expression</li> <li>• More inclusive mental health services</li> </ul> <p><b>Training for Providers/First Responders</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teach trauma informed care to police officers, EMT, and first responders</li> <li>• Trainings on how to speak with adolescents</li> </ul> <p><b>Education/Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have social workers at schools</li> <li>• Create more empowerment programs in middle and high school</li> <li>• Increase early education opportunities</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce Development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase youth workforce training opportunities</li> <li>• Workforce development for women</li> <li>• Treat whole family/whole child at a one-stop shop</li> </ul> <p><b>Specialized Programs for Subpopulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Services for women in their first trimester of pregnancy</li> <li>• Programs for older adult women</li> <li>• Address needs in the LGBTQ community</li> </ul>



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On Thursday, March 22, 2018, the first convening was held in **East Whittier in Supervisorial District 4**. A total number of 43 Participants attended, and 10 Community-Based Organizations were represented.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>1) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>women</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>	<b>2) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>girls</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>
<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Offer life coach programming for young women and girls including but not limited to: financial literacy and computer literacy</li> <li>• Improve responsiveness and aftercare of mental health clients</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment/Outreach/Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate an age-lens for all policy development that includes young and retired women</li> <li>• All programming should incorporate an age-lens that includes young, working, ageing and retired women</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help young girls learn about the jobs of the future and how to get their foot in the door</li> <li>• Provide spaces for mentorship programs and support groups for women and girls</li> <li>• Increase life-skills programming</li> <li>• Improve outreach of existing County programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Government Partnerships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The County should work with schools to address the lack of counselors</li> </ul>

<b>3) OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION: How could government and <i>community organizations</i> work together better to meet the needs of women and girls?</b>	
<p><b>Outreach &amp; Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve advertising of County resources and existing programs</li> <li>• Community organization should do a better job of promoting each other's programs at their own locations</li> <li>• Work together on community outreach and creating a space to speak with community members</li> </ul> <p><b>Programs &amp; Subpopulations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Better spending of County funds on women and girls issues</li> <li>• Both should be sensitive to LGBTQ issues</li> <li>• Both should be culturally sensitive</li> </ul>	<p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Streamline/consolidate public service applications</li> <li>• Increase the use of technology to share information on resources, sharing success stories, and elevating issues</li> <li>• Integrate/incorporate youth voice in all policy work</li> </ul>

<b>4) COMMUNITY STRENGTHS &amp; ASSETS</b> <b>What are the strengths and assets in your community that could be better used to improve the lives of women and girls?</b>	<b>5) COMMUNITY UNMET NEEDS</b> <b>What organizations and services are missing in your community that government could help facilitate or provide to improve the lives of women and girls?</b>
<p><b>Family and Youth Programming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This community has many centers offering after school programming</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Needs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The County needs to strengthen community outreach</li> <li>Address the cultural gap</li> <li>Provide more family-oriented activities</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide more re-entry services like free legal services, parenting classes, support groups and job training to help them transition back home</li> <li>Women shelters should allow for a longer stay if they need it</li> </ul> <p><b>Health/Behavioral Health Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mental health services should focus on understanding trauma</li> <li>There is a need for a public awareness campaign to reduce the stigma of mental health</li> </ul> <p><b>Education/Schools</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Youth need more mentorship, college tours, and counseling</li> </ul> <p><b>Specialized Programs for Subpopulations</b></p> <p><b>Family Support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Childcare needs to be more affordable</li> <li>Affordable housing needs to be improved as well as transportation options</li> </ul>

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On Monday, March 5, 2018, the second of the five Countywide convenings was held in the **Antelope Valley in Supervisorial District 5**. A total number of 58 Participants attended, and 11 Community-Based Organizations were represented.

<b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENT</b>	
<b>1) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>women</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>	<b>2) What changes to the way that government serves/interacts with <i>girls</i> do you think would make the biggest immediate impact on their lives?</b>
<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Homeless shelters should be separated by gender</li> <li>Find more providers for community clinics for remote areas like the Antelope Valley</li> <li>Incorporate dental to medical services for families</li> <li>Create more jobs that appeal to women in the Antelope Valley</li> <li>Host more programs for girls</li> <li>Fix the affordability of health care and childcare</li> <li>Increase affordable housing opportunities all over Los Angeles, combined with rent control</li> </ul> <p><b>Empowerment/Outreach/Education</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Educate the undocumented community that they should not fear reporting a crime</li> </ul> <p><b>Community Engagement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Host more neighborhood watch groups in an effort to connect the community with public-safety officials</li> </ul>	<p><b>Programs and Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Child-care subsidies should be given directly to families</li> <li>Increase programming related to creating family bonds like community-gardens, cooking classes, and parenting classes</li> <li>Combine mental health services with self-care programming</li> <li>Encourage women to be part of a peer-to-peer group, such as “women tribes”</li> </ul> <p><b>Coordination</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Private and public facilities should begin to build on-site childcare spaces</li> </ul>

<b>3) OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION: How could government and <i>community organizations</i> work together better to meet the needs of women and girls?</b>	
<p><b>Programs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CBOs and government should work together to provide more seasonal youth jobs</li> <li>Subsidies for child care should come from all levels of government</li> </ul>	<p><b>Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase funding for and participation in Big Brother and Big Sister programs</li> </ul> <p><b>Systems Change</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve education as it is the root cause of poverty</li> <li>Expand statute of limitations for women who are victims of a crime</li> <li>Increase awareness of and number of open forums for the general public</li> </ul>



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