

Women in Refugee Law (WiRL)

A network to centre refugee women in international law, policy and practice

Steering Group Terms of Reference

Women in Refugee Law (WiRL) was set up in 2021 to bring together asylum seeking and refugee women, senior and early career scholars, practitioners, policymakers and activists working in this field around the globe. The purpose of the network is to re-centre the study of refugee women within refugee law, policy and practice. In particular, the initiative challenges the assumption that legal and policy changes in the last 30 years have displaced the need for continued research and advocacy efforts. It aims to safeguard advances and identify contemporary obstacles to the protection of women in refugee law, policy and practice.

WiRL's values are:

- Diversity – we are a diverse membership in respect to gender, sector, discipline and region
- Collaboration – we work collaboratively to advance the network's objectives
- Knowledge – the network has knowledge production and sharing at its centre

The broad objectives of the network are:

- Refocusing attention on the needs and experiences of refugee women in all their diversity.
- Providing a platform for refugee and asylum-claiming women to contribute to refugee policy and law.
- Ensuring that women's voices and interests are included in academic and policy discourse relating to refugee protection.
- Reviewing the state of protection in domestic jurisdictions, regionally and internationally.
- identifying unrecognised setbacks to adequate protection.
- Creating new knowledge to improve the quality of protection for refugee women.
- Highlighting gender diversity in refugee protection and incorporating the views of women and men.
- Creating opportunities for collaborative work to address new and persistent challenges.
- Supporting the development of young and early career scholars and practitioners, especially women
- Building an open and inclusive global network to take forward all of the above objectives.

The purpose of the Steering Group is to take forward these objectives.

Steering Group membership

- The Steering Group will have a minimum of 10 and a maximum of 16 members at all times, including WiRL's 1 or 2 conveners.
- Steering Group membership will be for a period of three years and will be renewable.
- Steering Group membership will reflect WiRL's global, cross-sector and interdisciplinary nature and include members with lived experience of claiming refugee protection. Name and biographies of Steering Group members will be shared on WiRL's webpage unless members opt-out.
- The Steering Group will be chaired and administered by WiRL's convenor(s).
- The Steering Group will meet on a twice-yearly basis.
- Steering Group meetings and communications will be mainly electronic.
- The quorum for decision making at Steering Group meetings will be five members.

Steering Group role and responsibilities

- Provide advice and direction to conveners to help the network achieve its objectives.
- Oversee specific areas of WiRL's development* in collaboration with the conveners
- Attend at least one Steering Group meeting per year (participation may be virtual).
- Respond promptly to any communication from the conveners requiring a response.
- Promote WiRL outside of Steering Group meetings.
- Propose and agree on new Steering Group members.
- Propose new WiRL members.
- Review and update these Terms of Reference as necessary.

* Particular portfolio activities will be the responsibility of individual Steering Group members on a rolling one-year basis, eg responsibility for WiRL's social media, communications, membership, fundraising.

September 2022