



AMCF Women's Giving Circle

General FAQs

Please review some of the most popular questions we receive. If your question is not addressed, please reach out to: givingcircles@amuslimcf.org

We would be happy to provide more information or to schedule a short video or phone call. This page is a living document which we will continue to update based on your feedback.

Who Can Join the AMCF Women's Giving Circle?

Although we accept donations from anyone who supports our cause, membership privileges are limited to women residing in the US who donate and join via the Grapevine platform.

Who can become a voting member?

Individuals who donate or pledge \$420 or more for the giving cycle become voting members. Pledges can be paid at \$35/month for a 12 month period. All donations must be made via Grapevine. (**voting members who joined prior to the 2024 Giving Cycle may continue to give via different platforms*)

What is the difference between a member and a voting member?

Members are individuals who donate \$5 or more during a giving cycle. Female members are eligible to nominate one nonprofit during a giving cycle.

Individuals who donate or pledge \$420 during a giving cycle are considered voting members. Voting members are eligible to vote on nominees to determine the three grantees that will receive funding from the giving circle cycle. Pledges can be fulfilled at \$35/month over 12 months. Only female voting members are eligible to vote.

What is a "giving circle cycle"?

The interval of time in which funds are collected. The cycle begins January 1st and ends December 30th annually.

When can I join a "giving circle cycle"?

Membership opens January 1st and closes when the open nomination period for the current cycle closes (Approximately September 1st). Only members of the current cycle are eligible to nominate nonprofits, and to vote.

Are there restrictions on who can vote?

Yes, only female voting members may vote on the nominated nonprofits. Voting members must establish an account on Grapevine in order to vote. While voting members may nominate a nonprofit, they may not participate in Decision Day or other discussions that include the nonprofit that they nominated.

What happens to the funds collected in the Women's Giving Circle?

Funds are collected to be distributed at the end of each cycle to three grantees as chosen by our members. Each year, members are encouraged to fill out a nomination form to nominate a nonprofit of their choice. The nomination period takes place around September each year. Nominated organizations are sent an application to complete in order to provide more information about the organization. AMCF's Leadership Team reviews all applications and requests any additional information that may be needed, including financial information. Excerpts from the information provided will be used to highlight the nominees on AMCF's social media platforms and on the AMCF website.

Voting members have the opportunity to attend our virtual "Decision Day" event. At Decision Day, the five finalists will give a short 3-5 minute pitch, and will be available for Q&A from attendees. Voting members will vote offline for their top three nonprofits. The three grantees will be announced at AMCF's Annual Symposium & Muslim Philanthropy Awards. The ceremony is held annually at the end of November.

Funds collected during the giving circle cycle will then be distributed to the finalists within 4 weeks of the conclusion of the award ceremony as follows: 1st place 50%, 2nd place 30%, and 3rd place 20%. Funds are recommended to be received in the form of an endowment but may also be received in the form of an unrestricted grant. *(An administrative fee is deducted from the funds received in each cycle. This fee allows AMCF the capacity to engage in community development, education and outreach related to philanthropy and the giving circle).*

Recipients of funding are required to provide four quarterly reports as well as a final report within 13 months of receiving funding.

Timeline for the 2025 AMCF Muslim Women's Giving Circle Cycle

**Subject to Change*

- January 1st - Cycle opens for new members.
- August 1st - Nomination period opens for members to nominate.
- September 2nd - Nomination period closes.
 - Members joining after September 2nd are not eligible to nominate or vote in this cycle.
 - Upon nomination by a member, a nonprofit organization is notified and requested to complete an application.
- September 15th - Nominee application period closes.
- October 10th - Initial voting period by voting members.
- October 16th - Initial voting period closes.

- October 30th - Decision Day
 - Final round of voting opens to determine top 3 nominees by voting members.
- November 6th - Final round of voting closes.
- November 22nd - AMCF Annual Symposium & Award Ceremony
 - Public announcement of three grantees
- December 30th - Funds received in the form of an endowment or through a grant.
- April 1st - 1st Quarter reporting dues

Which organizations may be nominated for funding by the AMWGC?

Nonprofit organizations eligible for consideration must align with the following criteria:

- Nominees must be a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization based in the U.S.
 - Programming must primarily occur within the U.S.
 - Organizations with a fiscal sponsor that is a 501(c)3 nonprofit based in the U.S. may be nominated.
- Organizations must be in good standing with state and federal agencies.
- Preference for organizations led by Muslim women and/or serving Muslim women.
- Preference for organizations that are serving underserved populations.
- Preference for organizations that are serving a need that no other organization serves.
- Previous awardees may be re-nominated after 2 funding cycles have passed.
- Previous nominees may be re-nominated.
- AMCF and its affiliates may NOT be nominated.
- Individuals may nominate the organization they are affiliated with.
- Organizations must be eligible to receive funding per the current guidelines of the US Treasury Department.

May an organization with a fiscal sponsor be nominated?

- Yes, organizations with a fiscal sponsor may be nominated.
- Additional information will be requested including information on the fiscal sponsor and documentation on the relationship between the fiscal sponsor and the organization.

May I nominate an organization conducting operations overseas?

- No, nominations of nonprofits that primarily conduct operations overseas may not be nominated.

Who determines if an organization is in “good fiscal standing”?

- AMCF reviews each nominee on the basis of general guidelines from Candid and Charity Navigator, which include that administrative expenses should not exceed 30%, and best practice is for a lower rate. In addition, the IRS maintains records through the receipt of an organization's 990 form to ensure they remain in good standing and it is available for review as a public record.

Who determines if a nonprofit is aligned with “generally accepted Islamic morals and guidelines?”

- Members of the AMCF Women’s Giving Circle nominate the charities. Through the application and review process, which includes an oral presentation, voting members and the AMCF leadership team will determine the best fit for the recipients of funds collected.

Are there any restrictions on the number of organizations that may be nominated?

- There is no limit to the total number of organizations that may be nominated each cycle.
- Each member may only nominate one organization.
- Decision Day participants are limited to five (5) finalists.
- Depending on the number of nominations received, there will be a preliminary vote

How is the Funding Distributed to Grantees?

- AMCF recommends that grantees receive funding in the form of an AMCF managed endowment for their organization. This option allows grantees to begin building a sustainable base for their operations, and provides an option for the grantee to have donors contribute to the endowment on an ongoing basis as well.
- Grantees have the option of receiving funding in the form of an unrestricted grants, with funding to be distributed by December 30, 2025

Who are the Members of the AMWGC Leadership Team?

- The AMWGC leadership team is composed of AMCF staff and volunteers. Members interested in joining the AMWGC Leadership Circle should reach out to givingcircles@amuslimcf.org.

Role of the AMWGC Leadership Circle

- Leadership Circle members are volunteers who provide advice and guidance for a period of a one-year renewable term to the Women’s Giving Circle.
- Volunteers are recommended by current members of the AMWGC Leadership Team, and are representative of the diverse community of American Muslim Women.
- Members make the final recommendations regarding any issues that arise with the Leadership Circle. Recommendations may be made based on advice received from the AMCF Board, as well as from legal, accounting, or governmental agencies.

Question Not Answered?

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