

Principles of WWC (draft¹)

Preamble

The PIWWC's continued attendance at the UN's Commission on the Status of Women. In this context the PIWWC behaves like a regular women's NGO.

But gender inequality becomes a freedom of speech issue when women are prevented from empowered communication because they are women. In some cultures we have to face the normalisation of patriarchy, sexism and misogyny, which is a systemic restriction of women and their voices, especially their public voices.

Asking for freedom of expression, one of the PEN-Charter (Article 4), the PIWCC acknowledges, that violence against women is a form of censorship, whether state-sanctioned or conducted by non-state actors (including families and religious institutions). This Includes: access to education, Includes access and safety in the public sphere, whether in the physical or virtual worlds, Includes broad definition of publishing and being read.

PEN International wishes to expand its understanding of the unique challenges that face women writers because they are women, and to understand how PEN International could do more to work with and on behalf of women writers to address these challenges in the framework of its Charter.

The PIWWC attends to:

§ 1 Observing and Recording the following:

Violence against womens writers and its repercussions on freedom of expression,
Challenges that women writers face in the professional and commercial spheres,
Techniques used to harass, silence, and censor women writers in the digital sphere,

§ 2 Collecting Data and Statistics

For a high effective work as well as for any argumentation and helpful actions, the statistics for women writers around the world is also a basic work of PIWWC. The PIWWC counts, for example: the proportion of books published are by women authors, the percentage of critical reviews are about books by women authors, the gender of of the reviewer, the percentage of literary prizes and and how many literary prize money goes to women writers. They also do data-mining in how many womens writers are threatend and in prison because of their work.

¹ partially based on the MIRA-principles of PEN Slovenia as well as on the Report for PEN of Judy Wolfe

a) What the PIWWC stand for – goals, strategies, selfdescription and visions

b) Guidelines for PEN-Centres to build up their activities

§ 3 Create and conduct

Creating and conduct international campaigns and ideas as well as to help building up local campaigns and projects, for a more marked presence of women writers, intellectuals and publicists in various public institutions, at public meetings and decision-making sites, as well as to a thorough asserting of their right to freedom of expression and personal integrity.

§ 4 Promote Women in PEN

Active promotion of a proportional share of women writers and poets, literary critics, scientists and publicists in the PEN-Centres, the membership as well as in the boards and leadership, as well when it comes to protection and beneficitation.

§ 5 Cooperate and Network

Cooperation with incentives, communities and institutions that have diversity as well as womens (writers) rights on their agenda, as well as building up a network in between those in also a regional and international sphere.

§ 6 Support Womens Writers

PIWWC is building up a digital source of female speakers (for example: speakup.org; womens writers, publicist as well as scientist and give them a stage and the chance to be hired

Guidelines for a WWC in every PEN-Centre

1. Invite Womens Writers to the PEN. Build local understanding of barriers to women's participation and build local strategies to overcome or minimize those barriers
2. Put the issue „Rights of Womens Writers“ on the agenda of the centre
3. Invite and vote more women on the boards of the centre, and take care of a frequent rotation of the leadership
4. Choose/vote a Commissioner (male or female) for the topic Womens Writers. It has not be a women.
5. Build up a communication network with the others PEN-Centre-WWC-commissioners over the PIWWC-Network.
6. Discuss in your WiP, WfP as well as in the Translators-Committees, to evaluate the diversity and specific womens writers problems. Report specific problems of womens writers to each other.
7. Do research of the specific problems in your region, discuss it with the president, board and the other PIWWC-Members.

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8. Count Women. Everywhere: in the center, in the reviews, when it comes to prizes, verbal harrassment, on panels, in TV. Arguments are a question of statistics. The goal might be to build up an international statistic-overview by all the PEN-Centres

9. Make a List of Coordinators and Partnership-Organizations in your region, who have womens' rights and / or diversity in any manner on their agenda

10. Engage men in action. In any action.

11. Support Readings with Womens Writers and/or support Anthologies

12. Create „Days of Women's Literature“, weeks or months.

13. Search for Partners to bringt the topic to the public: Mediapartners, Politicians, Celebreties, Bloggers, Journalists, Writers of all gender

14. Found annual or every-second-year prizes for womens writers. Examples are the Slovenian MIRA or the German Liberaturpreis and Droste-Preis, the Baileys-Prize /Great Britain)

15. Conduct campaigns, competitions and mentoring across gender barriers. If your receive highly more responses from male writers, search for womens writers again.
Expand programs to develop women into creative writers and journalists, from beginner to advanced, encourage women to be interested in and writing about world and local affairs as well as issues of specific interest to women

16. Keep an eye on the Writers-in-Prison-Lists, wheather you support both gender equally.

17. Online-Harassments and Hate Speeach against womens writers are a global phenomenon to put down their voices. Do some monitoring on the local laws of your country, and how the laws deal with it. Advocate on regulating online-comments.

18. Read the centre-documents carefully which are used to describe the organization, its purpose, its activities, its results, also when it comes to your social media accounts or press releases. Try to apply a gender-sensitive set of neutral or gender-inclusive language

19. Keep the beneficiaries of any gratification (money, protection, campaigns) diverse and gender-equal. Or set up a fund specifically to protect writers who are women.

20. Ensure that white men are not simply replaced by white women: think in terms of region, race, ethnicity, sexual identity as well as gender, and celebrate also the diversity and also the ideas of equality.

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21. Motivate the media to write and review more books of women. Most of the media ignore them. If they still do, call for action and let the members build up a FemPenBlog about womens writers.

And: Be patient, do it step by step. We are not against men. We are for diversity.