

## AAUW Fellowships and Grants

It wasn't long after the founding of AAUW in 1881, that all members were asked to contribute \$1 per year, beyond the payment of their dues, to "enable gifted women to use their intellectual powers for the good of humanity." As a result, in 1888, AAUW awarded the very first fellowship to Ida Street, a pioneer in the field of early American Indian history, in the amount of \$350.

Through the years, International Fellowships and Research and Project grants were added to the list of opportunities. In 1958, the AAUW Educational Foundation was established as a 501(c)(3) corporation. A huge response by members resulted in a constant stream of restricted gifts to EF and the endowment grew and grew. In 2009, the Foundation became part of AAUW.

As of 2023, \$135 million has been awarded to over 13,000 women and nonprofit organizations around the world. Awardees are selected by AAUW Review Panels. In 2023/2024, 6.1 million was awarded to 277 awardees. This money comes from interest income from AAUW's \$21,000 million endowment that has been set up by AAUW members. The endowment principal is never spent.

This amazing endowment was created and has been supported by AAUW branches and states. Between 1907 and 2006, individual donors, branches and states could honor individuals, branches, states, and other entities with named units. Named units could be started with as little as \$5,000 and provided donors with the opportunity to build funds toward establishing a named fellowship or named grant.

To start a named fellowship or grant, the branch, individual, or state, submitted a form with the initial dollar minimum, along with the plan on how and when the rest of the money would be submitted to complete the fellowship/grant.

In 2002, requirements for a named fellowship/grant were as follows:

<u>Fellowship/Grant Type</u>	<u>Initial Minimum</u>	<u>Completion Level</u>	<u>Time Frame for Completion</u>
American/Fellowship	\$10,000	\$100,000	20 years
International Fellowship	\$10,000	\$100,000	20 years
Research & Projects Grant	\$5,000	\$35,000	15 years

In 2009, the named fellowships/grants program was ended. All named units not yet completed were urged to find funding to complete. In Missouri, the Elaine F. Richardson Fund was not yet complete, and Missouri members joined together to raise the funds to complete the grant. The Maryville named unit was also not complete and the Maryville branch, along with Northwestern University support, and city businesses and organizations finished the funding to honor a special AAUW Maryville member – Opal Eckert .

Today, Missouri has fourteen named units that every year help sponsor fellows and grantees. Although it is always hoped that Missouri women or organizations will receive the fellowships and grants that our state help sponsors, it cannot be guaranteed. It all depends on many things, including how many or, if any, Missouri people are applying and then receiving the awards.

Since the principal is never withdrawn from our endowment, it will continue to support women into perpetuity. AAUW members can be proud of this amazing achievement. This was a job well done. Our donations can now go to support the many other vital programs that help support our mission.