



## Defining Sex Worker Rights Funding

**Sex worker rights funding** promotes work that affirms the below **values, activities,** and **rights:**

### Values

The following values are reflected in sex work-focused funding from a rights-based approach:

1. We recognize the agency of sex workers in developing strategies that best address their human rights and social justice concerns and seek to support those strategies through our funding.
2. We recognize that sex work is work and that sex workers are entitled to the same rights as other workers, including the right to self-organize.
3. We fund programs/initiatives that are led by current and former sex workers and create infrastructure to support their politically progressive leadership.
4. In contexts where feminist or other allies are creating vital space for sex worker rights organizing, we fund organizations that support the emergence and strengthening of sex worker leadership and ensure the meaningful input and inclusion of sex workers in setting the priorities regarding content, design, implementation, and evaluation of the programs/initiatives.
5. We seek to fund programs/initiatives that are led by or prioritize the needs of sex workers who are most impacted by oppression on the basis of race, ethnicity, caste, gender, gender identity, sexuality, national origin, age, nationality, migration status, disability, HIV status, criminalization history, and other identities.
6. We oppose the criminalization of, and all other forms of stigma and discrimination against, sex work and sex workers and other communities impacted by oppression. We fund programs/initiatives that address and reduce the harms of criminalization, stigma, and discrimination.
7. We commit to funding processes that are transparent and grounded in sex worker activists' priorities.
8. We commit to support advocacy for rights-based policies, laws, and practices that are based on evidence of what works, as analyzed from sex workers' perspectives.
9. We oppose all forms of exploitation of and violence against sex workers and recognize the distinction between sex work and human trafficking.

### Activities

We support the above values through funding and advocating for others to fund sex worker rights and sex worker organizing that fosters systemic change through a range of activities, including, but not limited to:

1. Political education and community organizing for sex workers to analyze and articulate their needs, concerns, and solutions.

2. Public education, including anti-stigma work both within the community and with other external duty bearers and allies. This enables a structural and interpersonal analysis for how violence and shame are internalized and constrain access to community and rights.
3. Legal and rights-focused education, outreach, and services to sex workers, including work to address the harmful impacts of the criminal legal system, and to defend and affirm the human rights of sex workers.
4. Building alliances between sex worker rights and other social justice movements to create mutually re-enforcing and shared political vision and action of this broader base to enact a more holistic vision of justice.
5. Documentation, monitoring, research, and fact-finding reporting to expose violence and discrimination against sex workers as well as evidence that builds the credibility of solutions proposed by sex workers and their allies.
6. Services and approaches that promote harm reduction, healing, justice, and safety planning that meet sex workers and activists where they are at and contribute to their increased resilience and success while doing no harm.
7. Organizing and tiered advocacy that is grounded in grassroots realities and lived experiences of sex workers, including labor organizing which addresses oppressive labor practices within sex work.
8. Security measures in situations of urgent and unexpected threats against sex worker rights activists and particularly timely and strategic advocacy opportunities in response to urgent and unexpected shifts
9. Legislative and policy advocacy that holds to account those who violate sex worker rights and proactively creates an enabling and empowering environment for sex workers to seek rights and services.
10. Work that seeks to transform cultures and social structures to affirm sex worker rights, safety, and self-determination and embed this struggle in the broader movements for rights and justice.
11. Cultural work, including using the arts, media and technology to promote sex worker rights, safety, and self-determination.
12. Leadership development, capacity building, and technical assistance programs to support the above work, particularly those programs which provide infrastructure for sex worker leadership.

## **Rights**

Sex worker rights funding supports activities that affirm the below list of rights, particularly from within an intersectional social justice lens.

We reaffirm that sex worker rights are human rights, with no exceptions, and our work will strengthen the recognition of rights of sex workers as core human rights, regardless of the present-day inclusion in existing legal frameworks.

The below list identifies key human rights elements that enjoy both legal recognition and broad consensus while other rights listed below that have been identified as important by sex worker activists are still contested and not part of the legal framework recognized by duty bearers.

The Sex Worker Donor Collaborative is highlighting this list as each right is of particular concern to sex workers and their allies. We understand and affirm that this is a subset of the comprehensive list enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and that these rights are universal and indivisible.

- Economic and Labor Rights
  - Right to work
  - Right to fair and safe conditions of work
  - Right to self-organize and unionize
  - Right to labor self-determination (including the rights to choose where, how, with whom, and what kinds of work one does)
  
- Right to Bodily Self-Determination
  - Freedom from discrimination and violence, including discrimination and violence on the basis of sex work involvement as well as race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexuality, national origin, age, nationality, migration status, disability, HIV status, criminalization history, and other identities.
  - Freedom from trafficking and coercion
  - Freedom from sexual violence
  - Freedom of sexual expression, activity, and orientation
  - Right to reproductive health
  - Freedom of gender expression and identity
  - Right to health and well-being
  - Right to privacy and confidentiality
  
- Expression and Information Rights
  - Freedom of assembly
  - Freedom to share information
  
- Rights to Migration
  - Freedom of movement and the ability to change where one lives and works