



## **Strategic Plan Messaging Guide for Branch and State Leaders**

### **Elevator Pitch**

An elevator pitch is a short, persuasive statement that quickly summarizes AAUW's organization's mission and work. It is designed to pique someone's interest so they want to learn more – it is not a replacement of the mission statement.

*AAUW empowers women and girls by championing their success in higher education and pushing for bold policy solutions to create lasting change.*

### **Umbrella Messaging**

Umbrella messaging encompasses the core values and mission of AAUW — providing a foundation for all subsequent messaging and communications. Combined with specific sub-messaging tailored to different audiences, umbrella messaging ensures that the themes and values remain consistent, even when customized for relevance.

- AAUW empowers women and girls by championing success in education through grantmaking, fellowships, and advocacy for supportive policies at the local and national level that drive opportunity and prosperity.
- AAUW provides critical funding and support to advance equity in education and improve the lives of women and girls both in the U.S. and internationally.
- For more than 140 years, AAUW has led the fight for gender equity in higher education and beyond. With a strong record of advocacy and action, AAUW continues to break barriers and defend the rights of women in education and the workplace.
- Since its inception, AAUW has fought for policies supporting women's success in higher education, and in this critical moment, we are doubling down on this work.
- Through our community of members, donors, and partners, AAUW builds a sustainable movement for gender equity that empowers women today and for generations to come.

### **Issue-Specific Messaging**

#### *Strategic Plan*

- AAUW was founded on the belief that women deserve access to higher education.
- Our strategic plan reaffirms this commitment, focusing on higher education as a key driver of equity, opportunity, and economic security for all women.
  - By centering AAUW's work on advancing women in higher education, we are positioning ourselves as a leader with a bold, focused strategy to create lasting change.

- This strategic plan strengthens AAUW’s ability to drive meaningful impact by aligning national and branch efforts, ensuring a unified approach.
  - Branch support and involvement have long been at the core of AAUW’s work and mission.
- Through bold advocacy, strong commitment to funding and supporting women scholars, and deeper community engagement, we will position AAUW as a leading voice in the fight for gender equity in higher education for generations to come.
- Together, we are championing equity, opening doors, and empowering women through education and inclusive policymaking. Now is the time to take action and strengthen AAUW’s collective impact.

### *Branch Alignment*

- At a time when education is under attack, working collectively is crucial to ensuring that AAUW can effectively defend and promote access, equity, and opportunity for all women and girls.
- AAUW’s strength lies in our collective power — our states, branches, and members are the heart of our grassroots movement.
- States and branches provide meaningful local support for women and girls, and for the policies that matter to their communities.
- Alignment between AAUW National and branches means a stronger, more unified voice in the fight for gender equity in education.
- The Five-Star Program provides a clear framework for branches to align with AAUW’s strategic priorities, reinforcing a cohesive and collective approach to advocacy, community engagement, and financial sustainability.
  - By meeting these standards, branches contribute to AAUW’s strength and boost our organization’s visibility and impact.
- When AAUW National and our branches work in alignment, we maximize our collective resources, influence, and success to break down barriers for women in education and beyond.

### *Meeting the Moment*

- Now is the time for AAUW to meet the moment, reaffirming our mission and leveraging our collective strength to protect and expand women’s access to and success in higher education.
- From funding cuts to diversity rollbacks, the barriers to accessing and thriving in higher education are growing, making AAUW’s mission more urgent than ever.
  - AAUW was founded on the belief that education is the key to gender equity, and now is the time to double down on that commitment.
- Our strategic plan ensures that AAUW is aligned and equipped to meet today’s challenges, creating a collective force for change that protects women’s educational and career opportunities.
- Higher education remains one of the strongest pathways to economic empowerment, yet the current policy shifts threaten to make it less accessible and inclusive.
  - AAUW is stepping up to defend a woman’s right to education that leads to financial independence and career success.
- The fight for gender equity in higher education demands a unified, strategic response, and AAUW is uniquely positioned to rise to the occasion.

- Our members and allies have been advocating for educational equity for more than a century. We have a deep history of making progress in this country, and we will continue to do so together.
  - Now is the time for action. We must once again mobilize and push back against dangerous policies limiting inclusion and equitable opportunities for women in the higher education space.

## **Audience-Specific Messaging**

### *Current Members*

- You are steadfast supporters of AAUW and our mission and vision, and we truly appreciate all of the work and commitment you have given to the organization over the years.
  - We could not have achieved what we have without your help and support.
- Through your advocacy, fundraising, and local branch communities, you are strengthening AAUW's reach and helping us continue our legacy of driving real, lasting change.
- At this time of chaos and attacks on higher education, we need our dedicated members now more than ever to help AAUW continue its commitment to supporting women in higher education.
  - Together, we can continue to provide grants and funding to women in higher education and advocate for policies that advance gender equity.
- By aligning our efforts at the branch and national levels, we are building a more unified, impactful movement — one that will continue to empower women for generations to come.
  - Our collective impact is stronger when we work together.
- Thank you for your continued dedication to AAUW's mission. Your efforts are critical, and we look forward to working alongside you to advance equity and opportunity for all women.