

Concept Note for the side event at the CSW62

Title: **Beyond a Pretty Face: Tackling Gender Bias in Media Industries**

Zonta International in partnership with the International Association of Women in Radio and Television – USA Chapter will

Summary:

At the 4th World Conference on Women in 1995 a Platform for Action (PAF) was adopted to ensure that a gender perspective was reflected in all policies and programmes. Included in the PFA was a set of twelve strategic areas with objectives and actions deemed necessary for implementation of the platform. **Women and the Media** was identified as being a critical component for the platform as it was acknowledged that media, perhaps more than any other medium, influenced the way the public perceived women, and the way women viewed themselves.

The major areas of concern included the lack of representation by women in decision making positions in the media industry; the continued projection of negative and degrading images of women in media communications; the need for women to enhance their skill set, thus enabling them to combat negative portrayals of women and challenge the abuse of power in the industry; the promotion of balanced and diverse portrayals of women by the media; the promotion of the human rights of women and equality between the sexes; promotion of a balanced and non-stereotyped portrayal of women in the media; and the media's promotion of culturally sensitive dissemination of information on development and social issues.

Although in the last decade roles for women in media industries have become more varied and complex, there are still serious concerns regarding stereotypical depictions of women on television and in film, and the negative social norms that they enforce.

Actress Geena Davis, founder of the Geena Davis Institute on Gender in Media is quoted as saying "The fact is women are seriously under-represented across nearly all sectors of the globe. Not just on-screen, but for the most part we're simply not aware of the extent, and media images exert a powerful influence in creating and perpetuating our unconscious biases. However, media images can also have a very positive impact on our perceptions in the time it takes to make a movie. We can change what the future looks like. There are woefully few women CEOs in the World, but there can be lots of them in films. How do we encourage a lot more girls to pursue science, technology, and engineering careers? By casting droves of women in STEM, politics, law and other professions today in movies."

Now is the time for us to re-commit to the ideals expressed in the 1995 Platform for Action, and to make a conscious decision to seriously advocate for gender balanced representation in media industries.

Purpose of the event:

The purpose of this parallel event is to examine the progress that has been made on the Beijing Platform for Actions mandate regarding women and the media; and to help our audience understand how to identify gender bias in media, and how to advocate for balanced depictions of women in media industries.

Format and Content: After viewing a screening of a film short, a panel of media experts will evaluate it using pre-determined criteria; and will then participate in a moderated discussion regarding ways to combat gender bias in media industries.

Responsibilities:**Zonta International:**

1. Produce a flyer/invitation, with input from IAWRT, for general use to promote the event.
2. Produce any material to be supplied during the event.
3. Identify and invite presenters, with input from IAWRT, for the event.
4. Cover cost of microphones, etc. as they are elaborated to us from the Mission.
5. Promote the event through NGO channels.
6. Create RSVP link and receive RSVPs.
7. Propose a moderator.

International Association of Women in Radio and Television – USA Chapter

1. Confirm an IAWRT speaker.
2. Support Zonta International with logistics.
3. Send invitation to UN agencies, civil society and private sector, as appropriate.
4. Include the side event on IAWRT website.
5. Promote the event through IAWRT social media and NGO Channels.

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