

NFWI Resolutions Process

Frequently asked questions



Submitting a resolution

When can we start researching a resolution for submission?

The NFWI sends out submission forms in early July, and they need to be completed and returned by early September. However, this does not mean that members cannot start researching their resolution before July – they can spend as long as they want deciding what their WI's resolution/s will be, the only constraint is that they must be submitted before the deadline at the beginning of September.

Does our federation need to approve the content of our WI's resolution?

All WIs can submit any resolution, as long as the WI has voted on and approved it for submission. Submission forms need to be seen and signed off by the federation Resolutions Adviser; however, this is only to say that she has seen the resolution and that it is strongly worded and viable. Federations are not able to prevent the submission of any resolutions based solely on the content.

Can I submit a resolution as an individual member?

No. Resolutions are submitted on behalf of a WI, and must be voted for and agreed by that WI. However, it is necessary to name a proposer from within that WI; this will be the person who will speak for the resolution at the Annual Meeting (if it makes it that far) and will remain the point of contact for it.

Who chooses the resolution shortlist?

The resolutions shortlist is decided at a meeting of federation representatives who vote for the resolutions they believe should be put on the shortlist. The NFWI does not control which resolutions are put on the shortlist, although the Public Affairs staff do support this process in an advisory capacity.

Can the NFWI change the resolution wording?

Resolutions are member-led, meaning that they are written by members and voted onto the shortlist by members. Any changes to a submitted resolution can only be made with the permission of the original proposer. The NFWI works with proposers to ensure wording is as strong as possible prior to the resolution being considered at the shortlist selection meeting. During the shortlist selection meeting, federation representatives will often agree to put a resolution onto the shortlist following a change in wording. At this point the NFWI public affairs team will work with the proposer to make the wording stronger or clearer.

Does the NFWI take legal advice on any proposed resolutions?

Once the shortlist is decided the NFWI sends the list to a solicitor who will check that all proposed resolutions meet the WI's charitable objectives as stated in its constitution. The solicitor will not check the grammar, or the strict wording of the resolution itself, just whether or not it meets those objectives.

Shortlist stage

How are the resolutions that are debated at the Annual Meeting chosen?

Once the resolution shortlist is published, all members can select the resolution that they support the most by completing the selection slip found in the November/December issue of WI Life. These results are considered by the Board of Trustees in early spring, and the Board then takes into account any developments since the resolutions were submitted and agrees the final resolution/s that will go to the AM.

Our WI can't meet during the shortlist selection stage – can I still make a selection?

Once the shortlist is published every member has the opportunity to make a selection individually. It is best if WIs can hold a meeting so that its members can learn more about each resolution, however, if this is not possible members can research the issues themselves and make their selection.

How are selections counted?

WIs and members send their selections to their federation, who tallies up all the results and then sends them on to the NFWI.

When does my selection need to arrive with my federation?

For the first time the NFWI has set an organisation-wide deadline for selections to be returned to federations. Previously these deadlines varied across federations. Your selection must be with your federation by 9th February 2018 in order to be counted. Please liaise with your WI secretary about arrangements for selections to be sent.

How many resolutions can be debated at the Annual Meeting?

Once all members have made their selection, the results are counted and the Board of Trustees of the NFWI looks at the results, and considers the external context before confirming how many to put to the Annual Meeting. In past years, when one resolution is a clear favourite among members then it has been put forward alone, but when two or more are closely tied, then multiple resolutions can be put forward.

Annual meeting

Why are we asked to vote again at the Annual Meeting when we've already submitted our selection slips?

At the shortlist stage, all members get to individually select the resolution they support the most and would like to see go to the Annual Meeting. At the Annual Meeting every WI gets to cast a vote as a WI. These two stages allow members to narrow down the shortlist with their individual selection, and then allow WIs to come together to debate whether or not they agree with the final resolution/s and cast a vote for it/them. The resolutions process is member led, and these two stages allow members to have a fair input into choosing the next WI mandate.

When two resolutions are chosen to go forward to the Annual Meeting, must my WI choose between them?

No. When two resolutions go forward to the AM, WIs should consider them both independently, not choose between them. This means that your WI should vote for or

against each one in turn. If both resolutions achieve a majority of votes 'for' at the AM, then the NFWI will pass the two resolutions and the NFWI will work on both issues.

How are Annual Meeting delegates expected to vote?

Delegates at the Annual Meeting represent a number of WIs. They are given a vote per WI that they are representing. Before the Annual Meeting they need to make contact with each of these WIs who will tell them which way they would like their vote to be cast. WIs can ask them to vote for the resolution, against the resolution, or they can give them discretion, meaning that the delegate can decide which way to vote depending on the debate at the meeting. Only votes cast for and against the resolutions will be counted, in accordance with the voting procedure set out in the NFWI Memorandum and Articles of Association. Abstaining means that a delegate would not cast a vote, and therefore this abstention would not be counted.