

IHO File No S1/1900

CIRCULAR LETTER 41/2026 17 July 2026

**EMPOWERING WOMEN IN HYDROGRAPHY (EWH)
UK GENDER BALANCE FUND – CALL FOR APPLICATIONS**

References:

- A. Letter from UKHO dated 7 May 2024 – United Kingdom support to the Empowering Women in Hydrography project.
- B. IHO CL 25/2024 – Empowering Women in Hydrography Project - UK improving Gender Balance Fund – Call for applications.
- C. IHO CL 30/2025 – Empowering Women in Hydrography Project - UK improving Gender Balance Fund – Call for applications

Dear Hydrographer,

- 1. Since 2024, the UK has supported the Empowering Women in Hydrography project through a dedicated Improving Gender Balance Fund, (Reference A). The fund was launched with an initial allocation of £100,000 to support activities aimed at improving gender balance across the hydrographic sector.
- 2. Following a successful number of initiatives, the fund remains well-resourced and is able to continue supporting future EWH activities. The fund is available to IHO Member States and other states and will provide financial support for women who are working to advance their careers, including their progression to leadership roles in the hydrographic sector.
- 3. The aims of the fund are to support:
 - The active participation by women from across the hydrographic community in the work of the IHO (e.g. IRCC, HSSC, IBSC, RHCs, Working Groups or Teams meetings);
 - Opportunities for women through exposure to wider events, organizations or project appointments in order to gain skills and experience;
 - The progress of more women to leadership positions across all IHO organs.
- 4. The Circular Letter indicated in reference C invited applications for the Gender Balance Fund. To date, this fund has supported 15 individuals globally with opportunities including IBSC Internship, attendance at RHC's, attendance at IHO Working Group meetings and various opportunities for training. Reports can be found here: [EWH Initiatives around the world.](#)

5. The UK continues this opportunity in 2026. The following general selection criteria will be used:
- Proposals must directly support the improvement of gender balance in hydrography.
 - Proposals should include a clear and measurable benefit. This may include how they support the progression of the applicant towards a leadership position or personal developments that will be gained.
 - A broad geographic distribution of applicants will be sought.
 - Proposals will be assessed by the UK upon receipt while keeping the IHO Secretariat informed, and applicants will be notified via email if their request has been approved.
6. The UK Gender Balance Fund will provide financial support for travel and accommodation for the participants. Any other associated expenses beyond these will be considered and should be outlined in the applicant's proposal.
7. Applicants will be expected to provide a short report on the completion of the activity, and this material may be included in broader EWH material to demonstrate the value of the investment.
8. Applicants for the funding opportunity should send the accompanying application form at Annex to ibte@ukho.gov.uk. Submissions must be supported by a signed statement from their nation's hydrographic office (or relevant organization where no hydrographic office currently exists).
9. The IHO Secretariat thanks the UKHO (United Kingdom) for its strong commitment to the EWH project. The IHO Secretariat would also like to encourage Member States to consider any future offers and further participation in the EWH project.

On behalf of the Secretary-General,
Yours sincerely,



Luigi Sinapi
Director

Annex: Application form (to be sent to ibte@ukho.gov.uk)

UK Gender Balance Fund Application Form

Applicant details	
First and last name	
Nationality	
Job title	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	

Present position of applicant and description of duties

Future aspirations and career goals of applicant

Requested support including a full description and itemised estimated costs of support

Describe the benefits to you that this support will provide including how it will support your development (Maximum 250 words)