



2024

ANNUAL REPORT

Girls Gearing Up
International Leadership Academy



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THE NEXT GENERATION OF FEMALE LEADERS

Girls Gearing Up (GGU) is dedicated to equipping the next generation of globally-minded female leaders with the skills, confidence, networks, and inspiration they need to not only unlock their own potential, but to also make a positive difference in the world around them. We support them year-round and over the course of several years with our:



Leadership Academies

Our Leadership Academies launch next-generation leaders, **bringing together girls from diverse backgrounds for learning, growth, and skill-building in a supportive environment.**



1:1 Mentoring Program

Our twelve-month 1:1 mentoring program **supports rising changemakers by connecting girls with female role models** who guide them in achieving their own individual goals and who connect girls to networks, resources, and internships.



Online Workshops

Our online workshops and events **foster global community** and continued development by providing year-round opportunities to connect, learn, explore new topics, and receive support.



OUR INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP ACADEMIES

The GGU Academies offer more than just a week of activities – they provide an unforgettable learning and connection experience for teen girls, empowering them with the confidence and leadership skills needed to thrive in an ever-changing world. Through interactive workshops on critical topics such as design thinking, financial literacy, and project management, our participants gain hands-on skills that prepare them to face the challenges ahead.

But what makes our Academies truly unique is the rich diversity of voices, perspectives, and experiences. Each day is shaped by spontaneous conversations over meals, thought-provoking discussions on global issues, and the deep connections formed between girls from different corners of the world. The week places a strong focus on celebrating individuality while embracing the shared values that unite us all.

As we reflect on the past impactful years, it's clear that our in-person Academies are more than just an educational program. They're a space where girls can explore their true potential, forge lifelong friendships, and understand their role in a global movement for a more just, sustainable, and compassionate world.

Together, these young women embraced diversity, practiced public speaking, explored sustainability, and developed action plans to make a positive impact. It's safe to say we all left with renewed hope, optimism, and a commitment to "be the change."

GERMANY

- 39 Participants
- 21 Countries represented



MALAWI

- 28 Participants
- 2 Countries represented



INDIA

- 24 Participants
- 1 Country represented





WHAT GGU PARENTS SAY

“My daughter recently attended GGU Academy, and she described it as the **best experience of her life**. She met so many inspiring girls and mentors from all over the world, forming friendships that will last a lifetime. **The environment was incredibly supportive, and the encouragement she received from everyone in the group significantly boosted her confidence.** The academy not only provided her with valuable skills but also fostered a global community where positivity and mutual support were at the forefront. I’m truly grateful for the growth and inspiration she gained from this experience.”

Ewa, Germany

“It was the second time my daughter attended GGU. No need to say that she was very impatient to go again. She definitely **saw life differently afterwards, accepting that failure is part of the path of success is a great breakthrough.** Her confidence level has increased tremendously both times.”

Gillian, France

“She was more **mature, self-confident, more ready for challenges and more open** for new experiences.”

Nina, Germany

“GGU has helped my daughter be **independent and gain confidence in everything she does.** She is able to take on leadership opportunities when they arise.”

Chikon, Malawi

“Making **friends from other cultures, building confidence and self-belief.** Accordingly, she learned that it is not necessary to push one's own opinion, as this pushes people away from oneself.”

Inesa, Lithuania



OUR YEAR-LONG MENTORING PROGRAM

At Girls Gearing Up, we know there is incredible power in reaching out to pull each other up. This principle is central to our mission and is one of the reasons we're so proud of our year-round mentoring program. It's a wonderful example of our cross-generational sisterhood, where the exchange of ideas, support, and experiences creates growth for everyone involved.

Our twelve-month one-on-one mentoring program supports rising changemakers by connecting girls with female role models in their community or business area. Mentors guide their mentees in achieving their own individual goals and connect them to networks, resources, and internships. This program is game changing for many girls because as we know, you have to see it to be it!

Check it out! After a year of working together in our mentorship program, Audrey (GGU 2023/Ghana) and her mentor Felicia (Switzerland/Spain) were able to connect in person! In a twist of fate, they both moved to Washington DC in the fall of 2024. We love seeing our mentors and mentees continue to stay connected.



“

“Meeting in person was such a special moment. We not only connected over the shared challenges and growth opportunities of being away from home, but also introduced each other to our new “homes.”

- Felicia, Mentor



IN THE WORDS OF OUR MENTEES AND MENTORS

Ileana, 14, Germany



"My mentor has not only helped me educationally but also personally. She provided me with a safe space to talk and I am truly going to miss her when this is over."

Jenny – Mentor

"My favorite part was connecting with, and seeking to understand, the aspirations that a young person holds and helping them navigate some of the goals they wanted to achieve."



Tamanda, 16, Malawi



"My mentor has helped me with the university shortlist and finding an internship. My favorite part was learning how to balance my school life with my home life and taking care of my mental health."

Moe Moe – Mentor

"I am truly impressed by my mentee's proactive approach to personal development. It's evident that she is committed to her growth and learning, and her enthusiasm for exploring new ideas is commendable."



THE GIRLS GEARING UP EFFECT

Our proven concept encompasses four components

At Girls Gearing Up, we believe in the power of early, intentional investment in girls' leadership. Our proven concept is built on four interlocking pillars that guide every program we run.

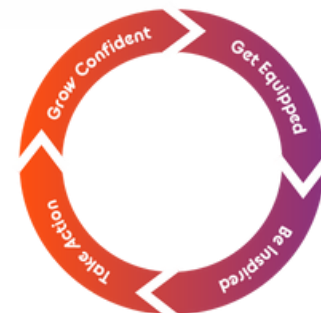
Grow Confident: We create safe, empowering environments where girls build self-awareness and learn to trust their voices.

Get Equipped: Through skill-building workshops and real-world experiences, girls develop the tools they need to lead.

Be Inspired: Exposure to diverse role models and peer networks broadens their perspective and ambition.

Take Action: We encourage girls to turn ideas into impact, applying what they've learned to drive change in their communities and beyond.

This framework isn't just aspirational - it's effective. As our statistics show, participants leave our programs more confident, better prepared, and more motivated to lead. Together, these four components create a powerful launchpad for the next generation of female changemakers.



After our 2024 Leadership Academy:

94%

of our participants believe that they have the **skills to be a good leader**.

91%

feel prepared to **stand up for their own values**.

94%

feel prepared to **make a change in their own communities**.

Six months later

92%

Feel more confident compared to before GGU

“The most important thing I gained from my time at GGU was confidence. I was able to be my real self while sticking true to my own values. It's helped me in so many ways.”



NEW COLLABORATIONS

GGU x Brammibals

We are deeply honored to have been chosen as **Brammibal's Charity of the Month in March 2024!** In celebration of Women's Month, Girls Gearing Up was selected to receive support at every Brammibal's location across Germany.

Throughout March, for every Brammibal's charity donut sold, 50 cents were donated to empower the next generation of female leaders. Thanks to this wonderful collaboration we were able to raise 3100 Euros and offer more scholarships to our international Leadership Academy for the upcoming summer.



Our Team is always learning



Our facilitators recently sharpened their skills with coach Juno Ziss, diving into active listening and solutions-focused leadership. We explored how listening deeply and asking the right questions helps us better empower the girls we serve. And then we passed these new skills on to the returners at our 2024 Leadership Academy! **We are grateful to collaborate with inspiring women in our field as we help each other grow!**



POWERFUL PARTNERSHIPS

GGU visit to Sherwin Williams



10 GGU alumnae across multiple cohorts had the exciting opportunity to visit the Sherwin-Williams plant in Dresden, where we explored firsthand the world of industrial coatings. The girls on our visit learned about the company's operations and sustainability efforts, gained insights from women thriving in a traditionally male-dominated industry, and were inspired by their stories.



We toured the facility, witnessed the production process up close, and even got hands-on experience in interactive workshops, experimenting with coatings and paint applications. **The visit was not only educational but also empowering, showing the next generation of leaders the many different possibilities that exist in STEM and manufacturing careers.**



A GLOBAL NETWORK OF CHANGEMAKERS

In 2024, our international network of changemakers continued to thrive as a vibrant, virtual community of young leaders connecting from across the globe.

Through regular online meetups, they shared knowledge, built friendships, and supported each other's growth. This year, we hosted a **hands-on 3D modeling workshop**, explored pathways in **law and legal careers**, and participated in a dynamic **"Let's Talk Future"** session organized by our Youth Advisory Board, where members shared insights into diverse career options. A heartfelt thank you goes to the incredible women in our network whose energy, leadership, and mentorship continue to inspire and empower us all.

JOIN OUR ONLINE
3D MODELING WORKSHOP!

WHEN?
JAN 11TH
SATURDAY

WHAT TO EXPECT?

- Hands On Tutorial: Learn the basics of 3D modeling using free beginner friendly tools.

Exploring Law & Legal Careers
Global Online Event

Joined by

 **Anna Mertinz**
Partner at KWR law firm
in Vienna, Austria

 **Aida Bekele**
Social impact consultant

 **GIRLS GEARING UP**

 **Let's Talk Future Weekend!**

Let's Talk Future Weekend (LTFW) is a project launched for the first time by the Girls Gearing Up Youth Advisory Board of 2024.

Through this project girls from all over the world can join an online meeting to listen to various professional women from different walks of life talk about their career and everything that comes with it!

Women from the fields of Music Arts & Fashion, Psychology and Medicine, Politics and Diplomacy will be joining us to speak about their personal experience, while also listening and answering to questions asked by the participants.

 **GIRLS GEARING UP**



"The Let's Talk Future Weekend was really the first time I've felt safe in a professional space. The wisdom and expertise of our speakers, I can confidently say, changed the trajectory of my life."

– **Neeti, India**



CHANGEMAKER SPOTLIGHTS

HANNAH



Hannah first joined GGU at our Berlin Leadership Academy in 2023, and she returned as a Peer Leader in 2024. She also joined our team as an intern a few months later, where she organized workshops, contributed to the preparation of our mentorship program, and represented GGU at Wir Alle für Frauenrechte!

"When I first joined GGU, I was skeptical about how much a week could change me. Two years later, I'm endlessly thankful for the growth it sparked, the push I needed to break out of my cocoon."

MARIAMA



Like Hannah, **Mariama joined our Berlin Leadership Academy in 2023 and returned in 2024 to participate as a Peer Leader.** She also took part in our mentorship program, during which she worked with her mentor to plan her further educational pathways as she adjusted to her new life in Berlin after a move!

"Being a peer leader at GGU taught me that leadership isn't just a title - it's about service, growth, and helping others succeed. I learned to adapt my style, be patient, lead by example, and grow alongside mentors and peers in a supportive community."



THE GGU YOUTH ADVISORY BOARD

Since 2021, the GGU Youth Advisory Board has been helping steer the direction of the organization while also implementing their own events.

The **2024 YAB** was hard at work organizing opportunities for continued engagement with the GGU community! They kicked off the year by publishing an **opportunity catalog** to highlight scholarships, competitions, workshops, events, internships, and volunteering opportunities for the GGU network. They also organized the first annual **“Let’s Talk Future” Weekend** to hear from professional women in diverse career fields and continued to produce the YAB’s podcast, **Experts in Experiences**.

2024 Youth Advisory Board:

Chair: Maya, Germany

Planning Secretary: Marga, Germany

Events Assistant: Tiya, Malawi

Social Media Manager: Ghina, Palestine

Vice Chair: Neeti, India

Event Coordinator: Apolline, France

Events Assistant: Leila, Italy

Podcast Manager: Caitlyn, India



*“Leading a team of inspiring young women on our youth advisory board renewed my hope for the future. **We are the next generation of leaders**, and I witnessed that potential come to life in every girl on the team. From planning events we were truly passionate about, to sharing countless meaningful moments, this experience was nothing short of magical. I couldn’t have wished for anything better.”*

- Maya, Chair of the YAB 2024



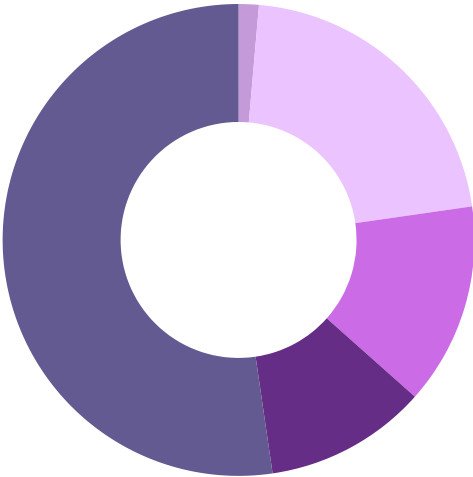
BUILDING FINANCIAL STABILITY

Fiscal Year: January 1 – December 31, 2024

In 2024, Girls Gearing Up continued to cultivate partnerships and build the network required to ensure the financial sustainability required to serve our GGU girls long term. We are pleased to be developing relationships with foundations and other partners who believe in our mission and share our commitment to expanding opportunities for girls. As we work toward creating a solid financial basis, we remain financially prudent and deeply conscious of our use of resources. One way we are able to generate modest income is through participant fees that cover basic costs for families for whom such fees are feasible.

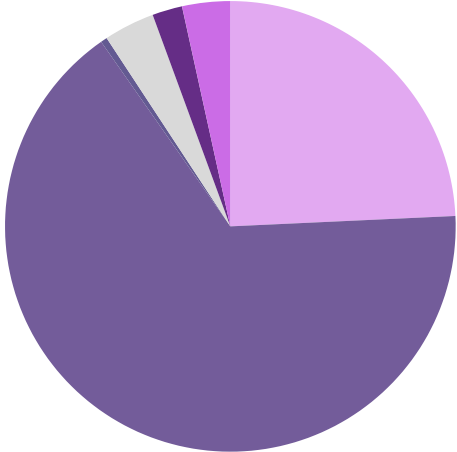
Total Income - ₹118,018

- Rotary clubs
- Participation fees
- Corporate sponsors
- Individual donors
- Foundations



Total Expenses - ₹91,714

- Employee (Jan 1-July 31, 2024)
- Project direct costs
- Insurance
- Bookkeeping & tax advisory
- Website & software
- Post
- Taxes



Cash balance Dec 31, 2024: ₹69,058

Thanks to the dedication of our mostly volunteer and freelance team, we delivered more online and in-person programs than ever before, reaching a record number of girls, while keeping administrative and overhead expenses to an absolute minimum. Through the generous support of partners, volunteers, and in-kind contributions, we continue to operate without costs for office space, printing, phone or internet services, and we incur no direct expenses for our mentoring program or online workshops.



THE FUTURE IS OURS TO SHAPE.

JOIN OUR MOVEMENT TO
EQUIP THE NEXT GENERATION OF
GLOBALLY-MINDED
FEMALE LEADERS!



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