

**Reconstruction
Women's Fund**



2021.
Annual
Report



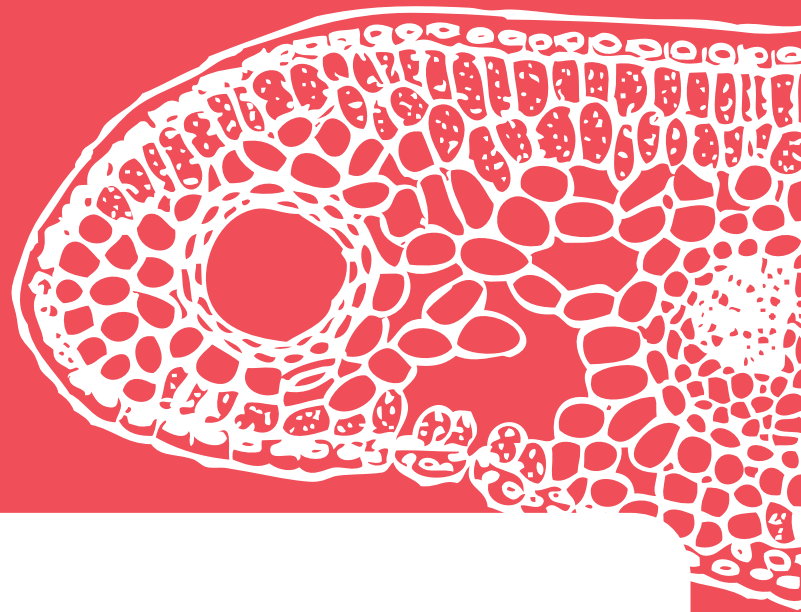
2020 in Review



In several ways, this year was more difficult than the previous one. Although we all hoped to breathe more easily and be more carefree; disbelief, fear, and exhaustion continue along with the violations of human rights that have marked this year as well. Yet, this year has also brought us unexpected initiatives, actions, and inspirations: we refuse to keep quiet, people are awakening, solidarity is growing stronger, and feminist, environmental and labour movements have made a significant mark. With our responsive programmes and targeted activities, we reacted resolutely, swiftly, and successfully to make impact and foster change. The focus this year was on supporting the preservation of the feminist movement and strengthening the capacity of activists and organizations that bravely fight against nationalism, racism, militarism and all forms of discrimination and violence against women.

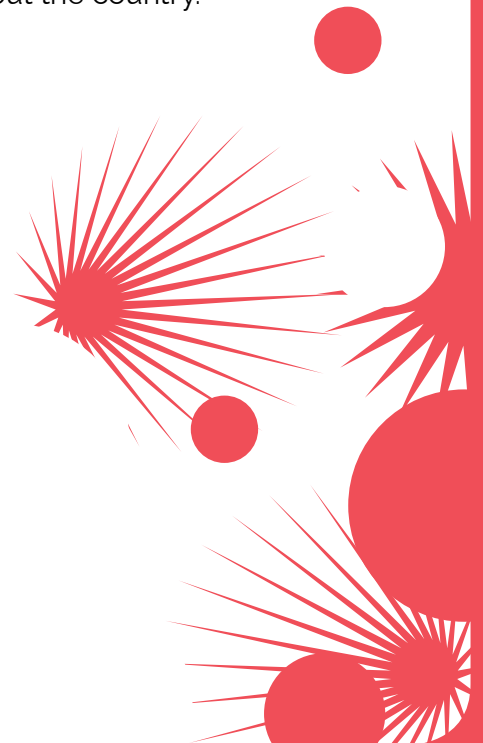
We are proud of the fact that the Fund is getting stronger, growing intelligently, and expanding its network of associates. We've strengthened the collective capacity for knowledge management of the Fund through the creation and establishment of archives projects funded by RWF. We are most proud of the fact that our grant budget has increased by more than 50% in the last two years. And as of 2022, we will raise the amount of grants for Special Focus to RSD 450,000! We will also involve the wider community and the diaspora in cooperation via various forms of support.

What did we accomplish in 2021?



During 2021, we devoted most of our time to preserve the basic activities of women's groups, as well as to ensure the safety and security of women activists throughout Serbia:

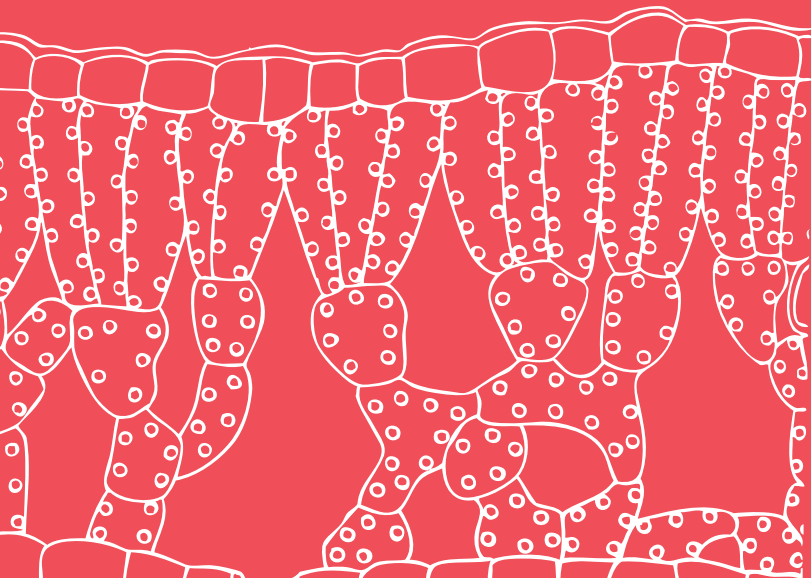
- We gained new partners and strengthened relationships with existing groups
- We organized the first online *fun (d) raising* campaign with the diaspora. All diaspora contributions are intended for scholarships in 2022. **THE MOST SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN IN THE HISTORY OF THE FUND!**
- We increased digital visibility and presence on the website with articles meticulously curated for the series: *Sources of Epistemology: Critical life, Focus on Focus*. We established new category *Why do we donate?* and we've translated a number of key articles for the category *Feminist Textbook*.
- We learned from the associates from the initiative *Six Funders Global Fund for Community Foundations* and from the *Edge Network*.
- We contributed an article entitled "Feminist Philanthropy in Serbia: a view from the in-between" published by the *Woman's Fund Armenia*.
- We participated in the #ShiftThePower initiative with an article on feminist philanthropy.
- We attended two online conferences: the Global Summit Conference and the Peace and Security Funders Group conference
- We participated in the research *Center for Grantmaking Research* from Amsterdam.
- We hosted associates from the *Women's Fund Armenia*.
- We consciously reduced the number of online meetings and encouraged telephone communication, and when we were able, we went to visit groups throughout the country.



How did we work on ourselves?

- We successfully switched to online work through the Salesforce platform.
- We began creating the Fund's archives.
- We established stronger sustainability of the Fund through the creation of a reserve fund.
- We completed the evaluation process of the General Support Program and developed a strategy for strengthening the program up to 2024.
- We completed the fundraising strategy to 2024 with the support of the *Trag Foundation* and consultant Tanja Bjelanović
- We instituted an online donation button on our website.
- We completed our Theory of Change through a year-round collaborative process with other women's funds and with the support of the *Prospera* International Network of Women's Funds.
- We strengthened our capacities through participation in various types of education: we have improved data recording, we have undergone training on developing financial resilience, and we participated in webinars on resource mobilization through *Prospera* network of women's funds.
- We participated in the exchange of information and strategies with domestic and foreign allied organizations in the context of responding to the current crisis.
- We actively participate in the Global Philanthropy Project on Responses to Anti-Gender Ideology, as well as in the MEL Community Steering Committee of the *Prospera* network.

We continue with new meaningful initiatives in 2022.





Year in numbers

NUMBER OF GRANTS:

60

NUMBER OF TOWNS:

19

NUMBER OF SCHOLARSHIPS AWARDED:

12

NUMBER OF ONLINE MEETINGS:

**SLIGHTLY LESS THAN
∞**

Support overview

In 2021, we also provided flexible support to enable groups to act autonomously. In times of deep crisis, we deemed it especially important to support groups to preserve the continuity of their essential activities and to do what they exist for.

Expressed in numbers, our support looked like this:

**GENERAL SUPPORT:
16 GRANTS**

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
20.610.994 RSD**

**SPECIAL FOCUS:
37 GRANTS**

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
9.510.068 RSD**

**ŽARANA PAPIĆ
SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM:
12 STIPENDS**

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
934.420 RSD**

**URGENT GRANTS:
7 GRANTS**

**AMOUNT AWARDED:
778.229 RSD**

What have we supported?

We have supported activities in the following towns:

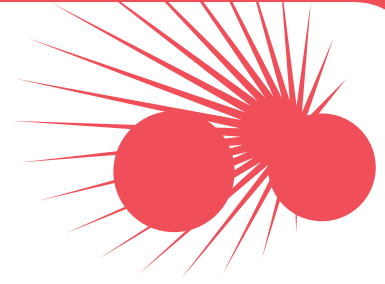
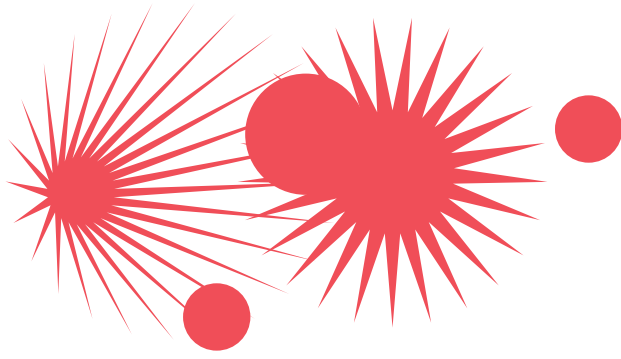
Ada, Aleksinac, Belgrade, Čičevac, Kraljevo, Kruševac, Leskovac, Markovac, Mošorin, Niš, Novi Sad, Pirot, Subotica, Svilajnac, Temska, Topli Do, Užice, Vlasotinca, Zrenjanin

61% of the funds were allocated for activities outside Belgrade.

4 projects had a regional / international character.

We supported:

- **Stability and basic work of groups** through institutional support
- **Specialized services** intended for women and marginalized groups including psychosocial, legal, and other support including personal assistance for people with disabilities
- **Production, sharing and preservation of feminist and other knowledge** (publications, research, informal education programs, workshops, memorialization of feminist and anti-war resistance, self-education)
- **Networking of feminist and other progressive organizations and individuals** (festivals, network meetings)
- **Artistic-activist actions** (production of documentaries, artistic interventions in public spaces, plays)
- **Media content** (podcasts, websites, TV and radio campaigns, internet campaigns)
- **Strengthening group capacity** (strategic empowerment, technical capacities, organizational capacities)
- **Collective care activities** within the collectives we support



Groups say

What are the biggest successes?

"The possibility of using a higher level of service [personal assistance for persons with disabilities] than the minimum standard defined by the state, and the criteria under which the City, based on the decision on the number of users, will fund all-day service."

Centre Living Upright, Novi Sad

"During 2021, we provided direct support to the largest number of users so far (524), and of them 92 underwent surgery at the regional hospital, and indirectly through the media (TV and radio, newspapers and magazines, electronic media and social networks) to a huge number of citizens throughout the country, many of whom are certainly with problems, or are closely connected, as relatives or friends to women who are at risk or are already ill."

Counseling for women with disabilities suffering from breast cancer "Jefimija", Uzice

"Out of 20 published texts, 17 are reviews of books written by women authors. The authors are from Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina. The goal of the project has been accomplished, because it undoubtedly included the books and authors from the region that are not in



the center of attention of the *mainstream* media and of portals dealing mainly with *nationally* established literary figures."

Workers' Commune Links Belgrade Project KundK (Book and Criticism)

"On the occasion of the 80th anniversary of the shooting in Kraljevo (in October 1941, members of the Wehrmacht shot close to 2,500 male and female citizens of Kraljevo - A/N), we initiated a campaign for painting murals / graffiti dedicated to innocent victims. This time, we decided to focus on the real victims, a few women who were killed, because in previous decades it has been common practice to talk about the victims in general."

ACC "Hero Maricic", Kraljevo Heroines of Kraljevo Project

"During the very successful crowdfunding campaign, we collected a total of RSD 431,734.00, in online donations through the Donacije.rs platform and individual payments to our account, which made it possible for us to distribute 16 scholarships to girls, instead of 5."

Alternative Center for Girls, Kruševac



And what were the challenges?

"In recent months, attacks on WUC have intensified and here we list some of them: In the night between October 22 and October 23, 2021, unknown perpetrators used black spray to write the following on the front door of the Women in Black organization premise, in 18, Jug Bogdanova Street: **Whores in black, Ratko Mladic, five nationalist graffiti "Only unity saves Serbs."** On the night between November 28 and 29, 2021, the following graffiti in red spray appeared on the front door of the apartment where the Women in Black office is located: Stasha **Ustasha, Ratko Mladic, Ratko Mladic is a hero, Whores in black, Fuck antifa**, and four nationalist graffiti **"Only unity saves Serbs"**.

Women in Black, Belgrade

"Looking at the social context, one of the major challenges that the SOS Women's Center is facing is sustainability, networking at the national and international level, and positioning as an expert organization at

the local and wider national level, because lately, the space for action of women's NGOs has been curtailed. On one hand, there is a lack of adequate support from the state, and on the other hand, from UN agencies."

SOS Women's Centre, Novi Sad

"We had a lot of activities outside Novi Sad, in remote municipalities where, especially at the beginning of the year, the situation was difficult (especially in Vranje and Užice) and we had to seriously take care of the safety of both users and associates. We are proud that we have succeeded (and continue to succeed) in coping with the challenges of the pandemic and to keep the organization functional and ensure the continuity and quality of services and implement all activities, regardless of the circumstances on the ground"

...From Krug - Vojvodina, Novi Sad

Highlights

Indestructible knowledge!

We have supported the production, sharing and preservation of feminist-progressive knowledge by providing institutional support to groups such as **Center for Women's Studies**, **Women in Black** and **Incest Trauma Center**, as well as with smaller grants for various forms of recording and acquiring knowledge: **Roma Center for Women and Children "Daje"** published a book about 20 years of their work; **Rural Cultural Center Markovac** continued to build the Reading Room "Ekatarina Pavlović"; Subotica branch **Women's Studies and Research** published a book entitled "WomenAnti-fascists from Subotica: Members of Communist Youth, partisan movement, Women's Antifascist Front; another issue of the **Genero** magazine was published about feminist theory and cultural studies; we are also expecting soon to see *Healthcare System Survival Guide*, by **researchers Jelena Veljić and Marija Jakovljević**. Workshops were also a place of learning, just like peer education and sharing of information that is not easily accessible.

Loud margins!

We have continued to support groups that observe various levels of oppression and understand the connection between social, political, economic and cultural factors that contribute to it. **Members of BeFem** have worked with women in rural areas and small towns, recording their stories as video productions; groups from the **"Living Upright" Centre, From the circle - Vojvodina and ...members of the Nis circle** dealt with various forms of improving the lives of persons with disabilities; **Roma Association "Nada"**, **Roma Women's Center "Bibija"** and **Roma Center for Women and Children "Daje"**, as well as an informal art group led by **activist Sevdjulje Ramadani** dealt with the prevention of early marriages in Roma communities, actions against violence against women and direct support to Roma women in situations of violence, as well as with documenting the stories of Roma women refugees **who do not have personal documents**, **activists of the SOS Centre for Women and Children Victims of Violence in Vlasotince** visited both neglected elderly women in the nearby villages and migrants in reception centers near Vlasotince; **Push-Back-Mapping Collective**, as an international team, recorded push-backs across Europe and published them on their website, and created an application in which migrants themselves can report push-backs. A book is about to come out, by **Zoe Gudović**, published by **Labris**, about lesbian artists and members of Generation X, from the post-Yugoslav space.

Last year you were Reading

Critical topics:

VERONICA GAGO

#We_stop: About Political theory of Feminist strike

My hypothesis is that a protest as a process increases the intensity of disobedience, in various ways, through different types of protests, rallies, their very use, occupation of work spaces and neighborhoods. This diversity contains a new key to the very idea of *general strike*, which brings us to the following question: how the diversity of activities, under the auspices of the strike from a feminist perspective, reveals and sabotages forms of exploitation and mistreatment, which are no longer limited to the aspect defined as "labour".

Feminist Reader:

We have started a new category in which we translate key texts from feminist theory and literature.

SUSAN STRIKER

Transgender Studies – Queer Theory's Evil Twin

In the last decade, the field of transgender studies has been shaped in the shadow of queer theory. Sometimes taking a place with the queer family and offering criticism from within, and sometimes radically rejecting their own original community, making a stride towards a creation of their own home. Be that as it may, transgender studies follow their own developmental line and have the potential to tackle the growing challenges of critical rethinking of gender and sexuality, identity, embodiment and desire, in ways in which gay, lesbian and queer studies have not always been successful.

BRITNEY COOPER
Intersectionality

Intersectionality was the first, formative step that enabled the recognition of the black female subject within the legal structures of power, within which it was invisible and illegible until that moment, and therefore inadequate to obtain for herself any justice. Crenshaw's argument was that a *failure* to start from an intersectional framework, always leads to insufficient attention being paid to the experiences of black women's subordination.

SARA CAMBER
Notes Toward a Feminist Futurist Manifesto

History is often positioned against an idle, confused devotee of media and technology, who is looking ahead. I use a military metaphor on purpose. It is a long, protracted, frankly speaking, boring war, between technophobes and technophiles, and their alignment with what is truly academic and scientific, and what is, on the other hand, at best a kind of intellectualization that serves as an indirect justification for capital and progress.

DONNA HARAWAY
Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective

Only non-scientists, including a few indisputable philosophers, actually believe in and act (Goddess forbid!) according to the ideological doctrines of incorporeal scientific objectivity, otherwise carefully preserved in textbooks and literature promoting techno-science. Of course, my definition of the latter group is probably a reflection of some remnants of scientific chauvinism acquired through my own identification with historians of science and the fact that in my youth I spent too much time with a microscope in a kind of disciplinary pre-Oedipal and modernist poetic moment, in which cells, it seemed, were cells, and organisms were organisms.


ANNE FAUSTO STERLING
The Problem with Sex/Gender and Nature/Nurture

In light of my discussion of DST, I propose a new research direction in examining gender and sex differences. In the first place, we need to think more in the direction of individual differences versus group averages. This means examining individual development and accepting the idea that there are many different individual paths to a global outcome. Feminist social theory contains a handful of papers on the manifestation of gender and sex differences, many of which deal with the middle and late development of a child or adulthood. However, little is known about the early onset of the difference, and it is precisely its early onset that is used as evidence of the biological causality of the difference.



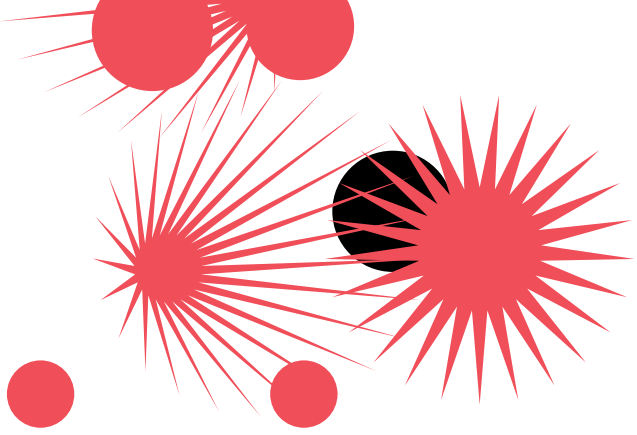
You have found out

During 2021, we have supported various initiatives and you will have an opportunity to read about some of them in the future, and on this occasion we would like to highlight the following:




We supported the work of **Svetozar Markovic Self-Education University** through a series of meetings dedicated to women workers, activists and theorists from the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century, as well as translations of their texts published in the "Small Self-Education Reader no. 6."

"The seven authors, whose texts we have published in this textbook, were very different, but what unites them is the love of freedom, equality and justice, as well as the readiness to fight and sacrifice for these ideals. They really lived their ideas and this is why their life stories are interesting and inspiring equally as their texts. Going back in time and studying the lives and works of these early women anarchists, socialists and trade unionists can be extremely important for contemporary generations. On the example of these women, who wrote, organized, agitated, revolted and prepared revolutions, we can see that every freedom we have today is the result of sacrificial, agonizing and often bloody struggle. It is important and necessary today to study the history of the struggle for workers' rights and the liberation of women in order to wake up from our lethargy, in order to understand that peaceful protests, petitions and outcries on social networks cannot change anything significant."



Volunteer Center of Vojvodina, a Novi Sad organization that, along with volunteerism, promotes numerous progressive practices and values, such as anti-fascism, fight against xenophobia, racism, nationalism, has recently been supported through the program Special focus and with this support organized a series of meetings of activists involved in support of people on the move. The meetings, which focused on the experiences of activists from Serbia and the region, were a space for exchanging field experiences, gathering and exchanging efficient practices, but also for joint reflection on the challenges that activists face personally and collectively.

"During our first meeting, we talked about the film *Midnight Traveler*, the experience of the director and his family in Serbia and along the route, as well as the experiences of the audience and their motives for participating in the meetings. The second meeting was about the current position of people on the move in the region, as well as the influence of the media on forming the opinions of the general population, and the topic of hate speech directed at people on the move and those who express solidarity with them; during the third meeting we discussed the situation on the ground in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, emphasizing the interaction of local people with people on the move and the reasons for lack of interaction, while the fourth meeting was dedicated to the position of women activists that support people on the move and criminalization of their solidarity."





We were pleased to support the project **“Marriage at a second glance”**, organized by Roma Association **“Nada”** from Aleksinac. The research conducted previously by the same Association, in which 165 Roma women from Aleksinac participated, states that *50 women entered the marital union when they were between 10 and 15 years old, and 100 women between the ages of 16 and 20. Only 15 Roma women got married after the age of 20. Out of 150 who became wives before coming of age, 18 women did not make this decision on their own, but were pressured by someone from the family. As many as 23 women gave birth to their first child before the age of 15, and 107 before the age of 20.* The Association emphasizes the disastrous consequences of forced / early marriages: from the potential position of severe poverty through exclusion from education, to the potential decline in the risk of domestic violence. Despite the widespread public awareness of the existence of this problem, little has been done systematically to bring an end to this problem. The Association of Roma Women “Nada” deals with this problem by fighting for every girl as much as they can, by sharing knowledge and information, talking to parents, working with the wider environment.

“These workshops, conducted in small groups and in an atmosphere of confidentiality, contributed to the coherence of the attending groups and the gradual opening of sensitive topics that follow the individual and group dynamics of the participants. From the very first meetings and silent sessions, towards the end of the project, the girls were more eager to engage in discussions, they analyzed examples from their environment, got closer as a group of participants, but also as a group of allies, now firmly united in believing in their rights and determination to preserve them.”

Highlights

We regularly reported on our competitions and activities through our website, Facebook, Instagram, shared news that made us happy, worried or motivated, shared reading and learning materials, highlighted the work of the groups we work with and marked important dates.

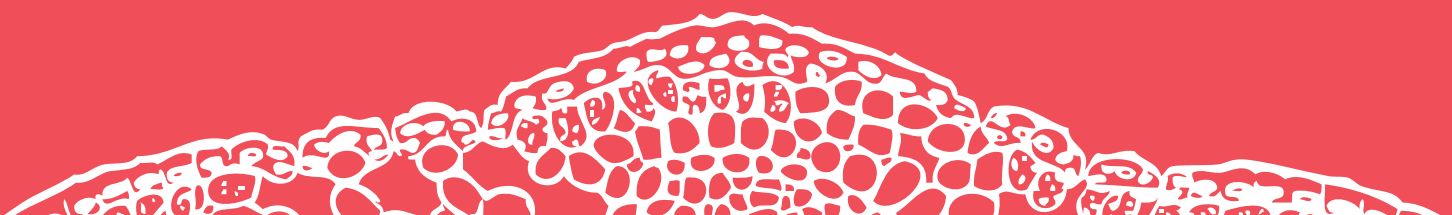
The first campaign with the diaspora

The program of local feminist philanthropy, which encourages individuals to get involved in supporting the women's movement in previous years, was mainly held through public events and numerous guest appearances with a lot of joy and madness! Although 2021 did not help us in this sense, the program was still active thanks to our individual donors. This year, for the first time, we stepped into working with the diaspora. We are overjoyed to have acquired new colleagues and we look forward to future visits and cooperation with *ours* all over the world!



New category *Why do we donate?*

We have launched a new series of interviews and videos where we think out loud, talk and try to answer the question *Why do we donate?* and to understand why feminist philanthropy is our future. We talk to local initiatives and collectives, as well as international feminists from various fields who offer us a different perspective on philanthropy and its challenges.





**The traditional map
of the events of March 8**

RWF has made an online **map of events to be held throughout Serbia on March 8 2021**. Events from 15 cities in Serbia have been included, and we also presented the organization of women throughout the region. The map was forwarded to the local, regional and international network.

We would like to announce: 2022...

In 2022, RWF will work on rounding up the archive, strengthening the program and implementing a fundraising plan.

We are planning two campaigns: one for the Special Focus program in which we will raise funds for at least one grant in the first part of the year. The second campaign will focus on fundraising for Žarana Papić scholarships, in the second part of the year. We want to involve the wider community and the diaspora in both campaigns!

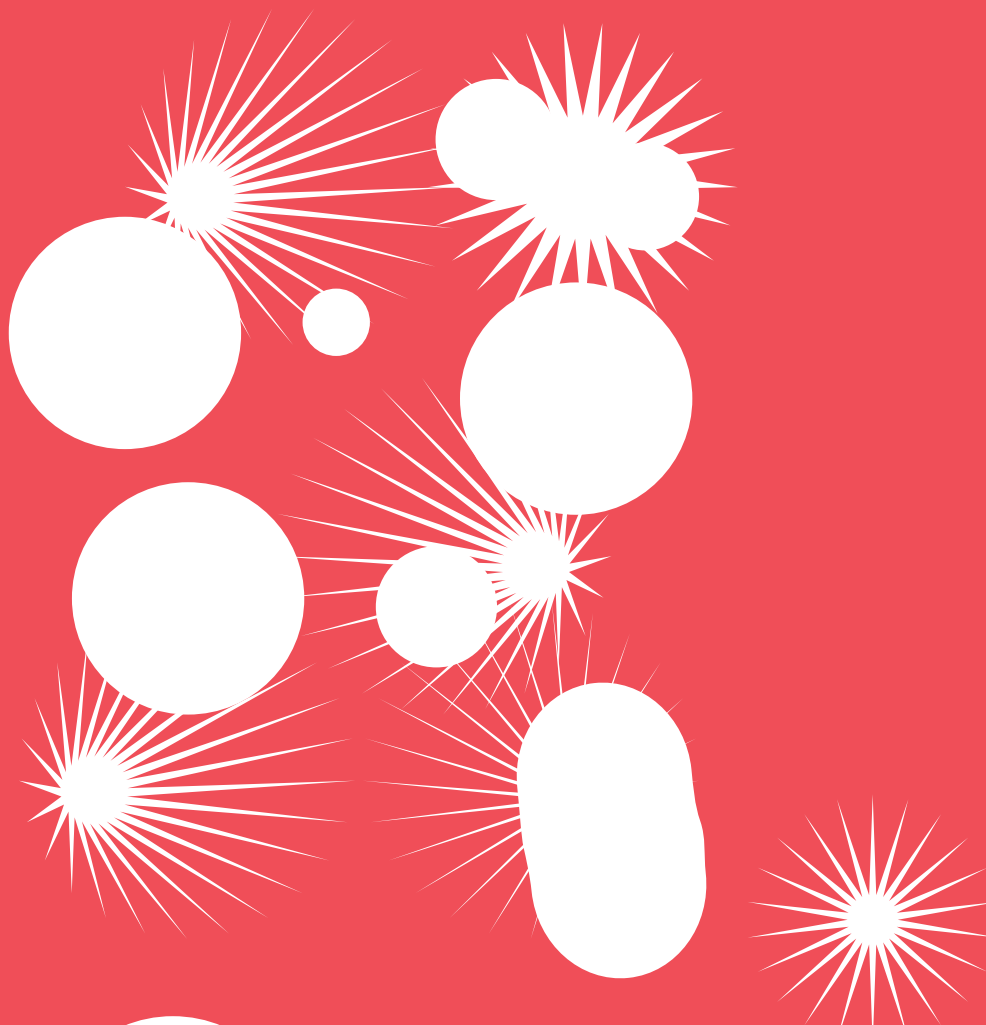
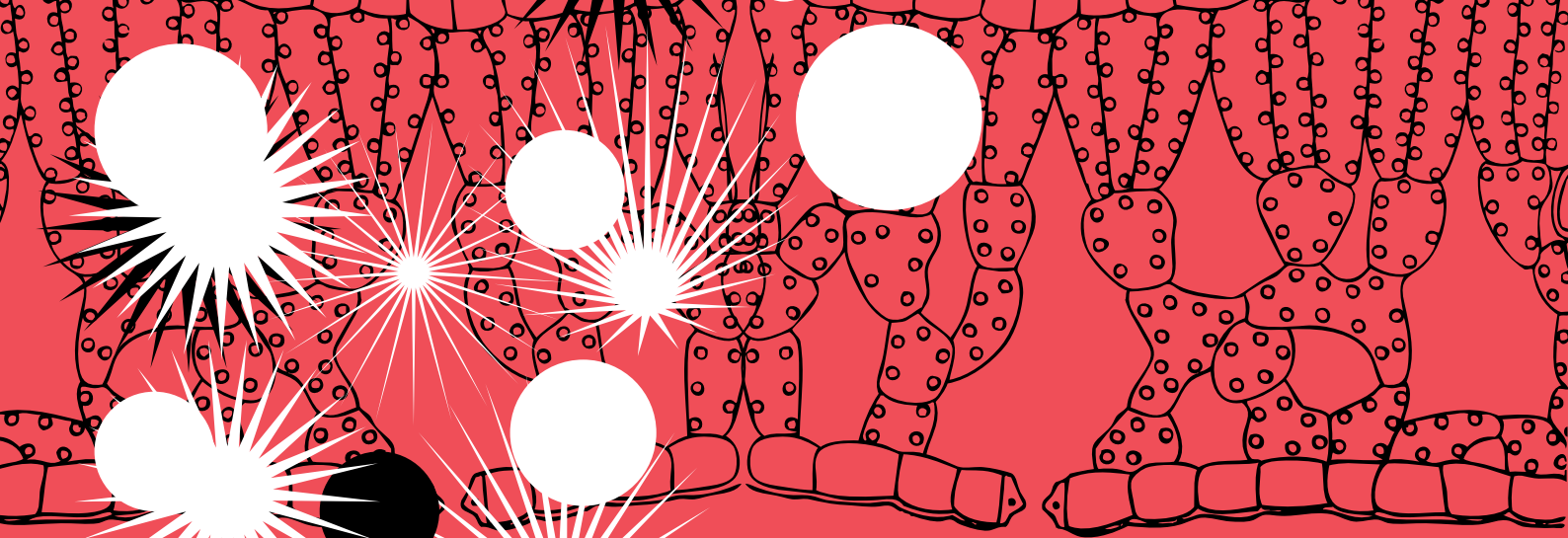
- We will publish a translation of the book *Zami* by Audrey Lord.

- In cooperation with the Urgent Action Fund, we will hold a regional meeting on hot topics for women activists, and it will be held live from May 5 to 8.

- We are crazy about live events! Mark June 25 in your calendar, because *Joy Madness* is coming back.

- We're going to Mexico to meet our friends from the *Prospera* network...

- We will hire a new person to work as a community coordinator. We are looking forward to having a new team member!



Reconstruction Women's Fund

Braće Baruh 6,
11000 Belgrade, Serbia
+381 11 2184 674
+381 64 644 1498
office@rwfund.org
www.rwfund.org