



Shahla Garayeva Scholarship Program

2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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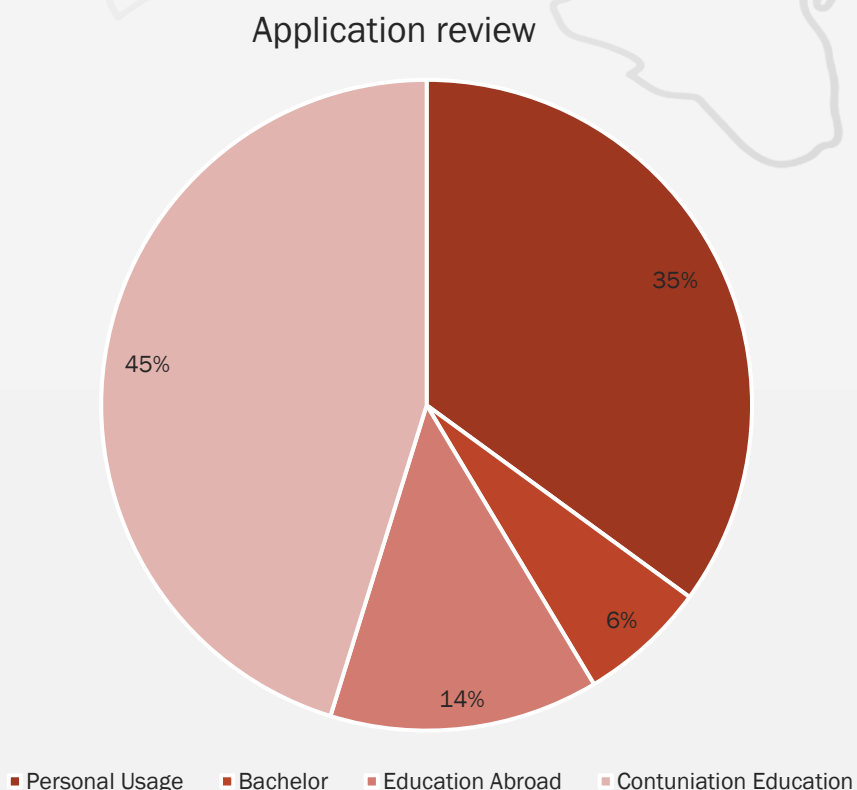
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SGSP Call for Applications 2020

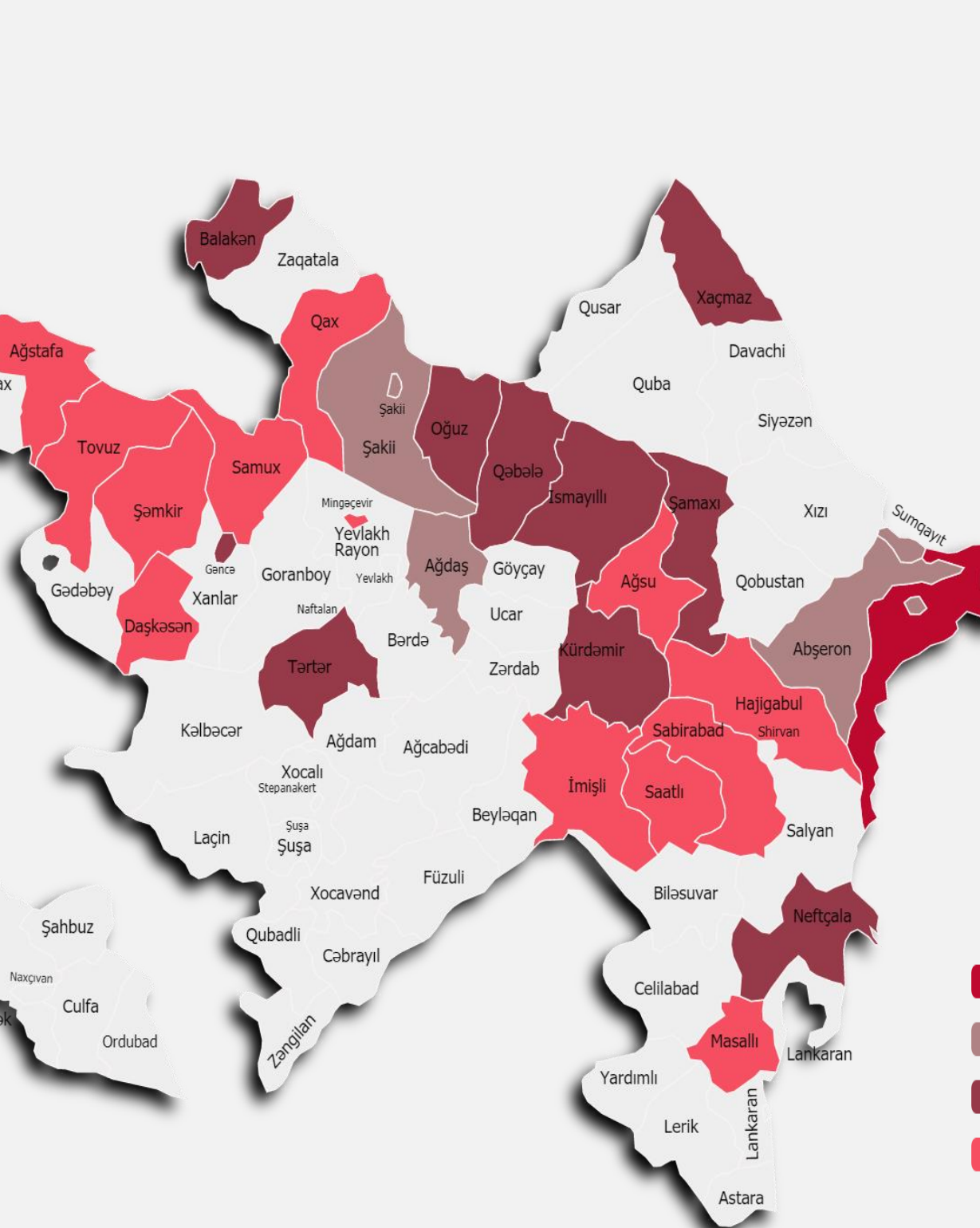
The Call for Application was open from 30 January 2020 to 10 May 2020. During this period of time, we have received 172 applications in total, whereas 15 male applicants were disqualified at the very first stage of selection process (one of the eligibility requirement to apply to SGSP is to be female resident in Azerbaijan).

The applicant's purpose in applying for the scholarship program varied based on the demonstrated need. As shown in the chart below, most of the girls applied to either further continue their studies or to personal usage for various purposes:



Regional Division of the Applicants

In total, we have reviewed 157 application. Most of the applicants were from Baku (83), two of them presented their application from abroad, and the rest were from the different regions of Azerbaijan.



The SGSP Mentorship Program

Since last year, together with the scholarship grant program we have been providing our young girls with mentors aiming to provide structured mentoring program capable of assisting mentees in their academic life and ideas, defining career goals and plans, and supporting relevant education/skills development needs.

Mentorship program provides new development opportunities for our scholarship winners. Along with career and educational development girls can get real-life advice from experienced mentors. Communicating with professional from different background and expertise improves mentees communication skills and provides larger and a more valuable network for them.

When looking for a mentor we are looking for the people who enjoy giving back and having an impact on other's lives. This year we confirmed six mentors from received nine applications. Most of our mentors enjoying the experience and are open to learn from their mentees as well. This is an opportunity for them to have access to the next rising talents and be a part in their progress.

*Konul Aliyeva
The Coordinator of the SGSP
Mentorship Program*

RIPL (Rondine International Peace Lab)

founded in 2017, is the alumni network of over 200 professionals from different parts of the world who have successfully completed an international fellowship program at the Rondine Cittadella della Pace Association. RIPL has as its main power in the growing international network of professionals who have undergone a personal and professional transformation and have the potential of becoming leaders who are eager to change the world. In its values, RIPL, highly promotes women participation not only in the peace processes, but also in the community life by educating and giving them necessary instruments. RIPL considers gender equality as an indispensable requirement for the development of the society.

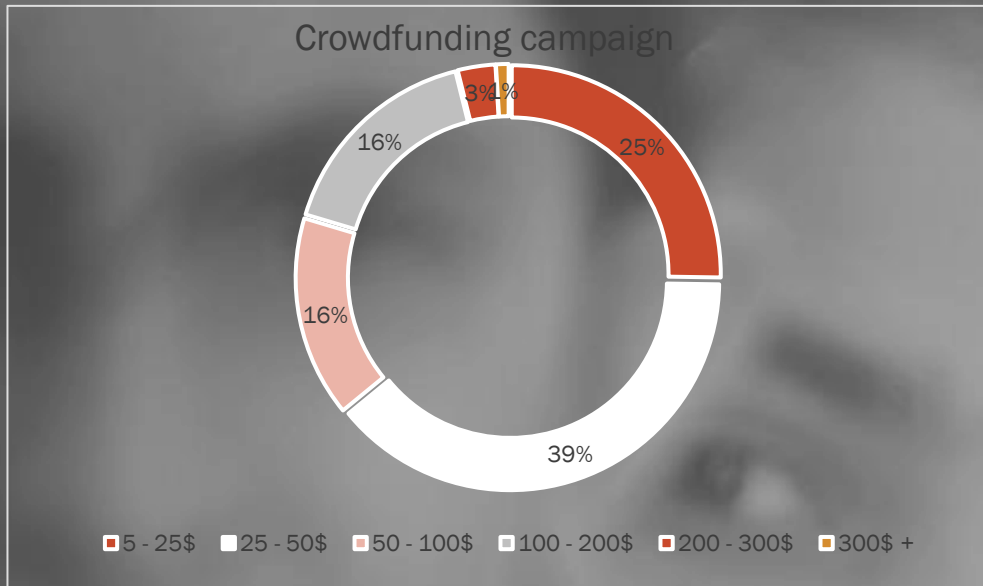
This year, thanks to the collaboration with RIPL, our scholarship program does not only provide financial support to the recipients but also entails training program aimed at raising awareness about gender equality, domestic violence, and women's empowerment.

Violence against women and girls is a complex social problem. It is a consequence of gender inequalities deeply rooted in the patriarchal norms and unbalanced power relations and it is a mechanism through which gender inequalities are established and maintained. Exposure to various forms of harm and life in fear prevents women to fully realize their own potentials, reducing their wellbeing, but also reducing their contribution to the development of the society. Therefore, prevention and elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, is, from both humanistic and development list perspectives, the responsibility of the whole society.

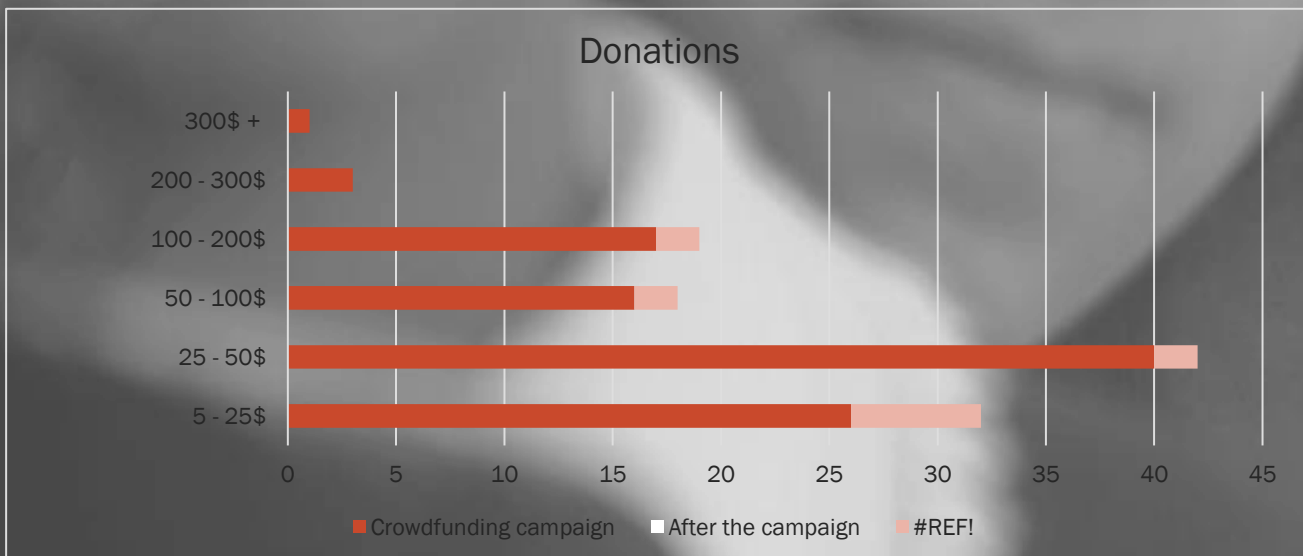
The Crowdfunding Campaign 2020

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The two-month long campaign allowed us to collect, in total, ~~\$4872.86~~ to fund the studies of young female students from Azerbaijan. the chart below indicates the distribution of donations by the amounts received by our individual supporters:



This year's collaboration with *RIPL (Rondine International Peace Lab)* has allowed us to accept donations even after the crowdfunding campaign. Hence, the total budget for the year of 2020 has advanced to **\$5400**



SELECTION PROCESS

The selection process of the scholarship recipients took place in three stages: 1) *Initial review*; 2) *External review*; 3) *Interview*. Each stage of the selection process is described below.

Initial review.

During this stage, the SGSP project team reviewed the **157 applications** by assigning them into three categories: highest need, moderate need, lowest need. The criteria used for determining the level of grade were based on an applicant's social and economic indicators as demonstrated in the application. After the initial review of all applications, the SGSP project team identified **63 applicants** who advanced to the second stage.

External review.

Four of the SGSP supporters and a member of our partner organization (RIPL) indicated commitment to help with the selection of the scholarship recipients. At this stage, the supporters were asked to read through applicants' short answer essays and identify applicants who demonstrate a) *the highest need* and b) *a sense of purpose*. As a result of the external review, the SGSP project team determined **35 finalists** who made it through to the final stage.

Interview.

At this stage, the SGSP project team scheduled a phone or a Skype interview with each finalist to get to know them better and ask questions that were not on the application form. As SGSP is a needs-based scholarship, the project team aimed to probe finalists further on how the scholarship fund is relevant to their needs. Upon careful deliberation, **6 scholarship recipients** were selected at the end of a four-day interview process.

Laman Isgandarli

City/District: Baku city, Nizami district

Age: --

University: Azerbaijan State Academy for Physical Education and Sport

How does SGSP help you in reaching your educational goals? I am currently pursuing the physical education (volleyball) major as a sophomore. Finishing my degree with honors (red diploma) and continuing my education in the field of sport management are among my future goals and plans. There is a great need for sport managers in the Azerbaijani sports arena and I believe I can achieve my dreams by pursuing education in this field. By being awarded with the SGSP, I have made my first step and achieved my first success in this direction.

Fatima Karimova

City/District: Baku city, Khazar district

Age: 20

University: Western Caspian University

How does SGSP help you in reaching your educational goals? After graduating from secondary school №26 in 2018, I got admitted to the philology (Azerbaijani language and literature) major at the Western Caspian University. Currently, I am a sophomore at the university. I chose my major because of my interests and I want to study philology in depth. In the future, I am also planning to work in this area. Upon completing my bachelor's education, I would like to pursue getting a master's degree. I hope to increase my knowledge and acquire skills as much as I can on this journey...

Bilgeyis Rafizade

City/District: Baku city, Binagadi district

Age: 19

University: Azerbaijan State Economic University

How does SGSP help you in reaching your educational goals? A year ago, I graduated from a community college specialized in architecture. That same year I got admitted to the Azerbaijan State Economic University to pursue bachelor's degree in information technologies (IT). Along the way, being a family of five with two other sisters has presented its own financial challenges. I believe that there are very few women IT specialists in Azerbaijan and well-educated IT personnel are severely lacking. I want to take my place in the field of IT through self-improvement and by becoming a specialist in this area. Despite the obstacles on my way to reach these goals, SGSP has expressed a great deal of support and I will continue my journey with the help of the program...

Ulviyya Nazarova

City/District: Sumgayit city

Age: 20

University: Baku State University

How does SGSP help you in reaching your educational goals? As a senior majoring in geography education, I have been seriously contemplating about my future. Although I have tried to do my best to become a well-educated professional, being brought up by a single parent along with a sister and a brother has posed financial challenges for reaching certain goals. I plan to get master's education abroad and I have been working towards this goal tirelessly. After completing my education abroad, I see it as my moral duty to come back to Azerbaijan and pay it forward to others. Even though I have never met Shahla Garayeva, her life and her story have inspired me to follow in her footsteps. With the help of SGSP, I will be able to continue my education without any obstacles and move towards my future career goals more confidently.

Zhala Isizade

City/District: Baku city, Khatai district

Age: 19

University: Azerbaijan State Oil and Industry University

How does SGSP help you in reaching your educational goals? Due to the financial situation of my family, I have faced obstacles in continuing my education in the field of oil mechanics. I believe that an educated woman is one of the foundations of an educated society. Considering this, I hope to get a master's degree after I successfully graduate from my undergraduate program. The fact that my major is so multifaceted provides me with a wide range of options. I plan to continue my education in the field of oil-chemistry engineering. To achieve this, I have to work hard non-stop with great persistence. Winning a place in SGSP has been a tremendous motivation. From now on my biggest dream is to prove that I deserve this value. In future, I want to be able to help girls in need like myself and to throw out a lifeline to young girls.

Gulgaz Hajiyeva

City/District: Baku city, Sabunchu district

Age: 19

University: Azerbaijan University of Languages

How does SGSP help you in reaching your educational goals? After graduating from the Shusha district secondary school no. 6 and Khojaly city music school no. 2 (IDP community schools in exile) in 2018, I have enrolled in translation studies (Spanish major) at the Azerbaijan University of Languages. I believe that learning takes place not only within the walls of colleges but also during extra-curricular training sessions, seminars, social projects, etc. Currently, I am interning with the Office of the Digitization of the Education System within the Ministry of Education. I want to enhance my language skills and pursue education abroad upon successful graduation. Representing women's voices from Azerbaijan, I hope to showcase Azerbaijani history, culture, and nature around the world.