Zonta International

History Fact Sheet

Membership

1919  Confederation of Zonta Clubs founded in Buffalo, New York, USA
1920  Zonta colors and emblem are adopted
      The first issue of The Zontian magazine is published. It is currently published twice a year.
1927  The first club outside the United States is formed in Toronto, Canada
1930  “Zonta International” name is adopted
1931  First European club is established in Vienna, Austria
1948  First Z club is established in Burbank, California, USA
      Through the Z and Golden Z Club program, Zontians work to bring Zonta International’s mission to empower women through service and advocacy to students around the world and to stimulate new and meaningful student-led service and advocacy projects.
1948  First Zonta club in Latin America is established in Santiago, Chile
1952  First Zonta club in Asia is established in Manila, Philippines
1965  First Zonta clubs are established in New Zealand
1966  First Zonta clubs are established in Australia
1970  First Zonta clubs are established in Africa
1987  Zonta International opens its world headquarters in Chicago, Illinois, USA
2012  First Zonta e-Club is established in Uruguay
      Through electronic (e-) clubs, Zonta International offers an up-to-date, alternative, not locally-based way to establish clubs and fulfill Zonta’s mission.
2014  “Empowering women through service and advocacy” theme adopted
2019  Zonta celebrates its 100th anniversary

Empowering women

1938  The Amelia Earhart Fellowship is established in honor of the famous Zontian, following her disappearance.
      Today, the fellowship of US$10,000 is awarded annually to up to 30 talented women pursuing Ph.D./doctoral degrees in aerospace-applied sciences or aerospace-applied engineering around the globe. Zonta has awarded nearly 1,600 fellowships, totaling more than US$10 million, to more than 1,100 women representing 73 countries.
1984  Zonta International Foundation is established.
      Since 1923, Zonta International has provided more than US$40.9 million to empower women and expand their access to education, health care, economic
opportunities and safe living conditions. Through donations to the Zonta International Foundation, Zonta improves women's lives, their children's lives and the communities in which they live and work.

1990  The Young Women in Public Affairs Award is established to encourage young women to continue their participation in public and political life.

The award recognizes young women, ages 16-19, who demonstrate superior leadership skills and a commitment to public service and civic causes. Since the program's inception, Zonta has given more than 800 awards totaling more than US$830,000 to more than 700 young women representing 56 countries.

1998  The Jane M. Klausman Women in Business Scholarship is established to encourage more women to pursue education and careers in business.

Zonta has given nearly 600 awards totaling more than US$1.3 million to more than 400 women representing 57 countries.

2019  Zonta International launches Women in Technology Scholarship pilot program to encourage women to pursue education, career opportunities and leadership roles in technology.

To create a world in which men and women have equal opportunities, women need to have an active role in technology and technological developments. For the launch of this pilot program, the Zonta International Foundation will award up to US$112,000 in scholarships: 32 district/region scholarships of US$2,000 each and six international scholarships of US$8,000 each.

Service and advocacy

1923  The first international project is funded to care for 115,000 orphan children and women in Smyrna, Turkey.

1962  Zonta International commits to first UN-partnered project in Jordan.


1983  Zonta International receives participatory status at the Council of Europe.

1986  Zonta International becomes the first non-governmental organization to support UNIFEM, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (later merged with other UN agencies to become UN Women in 2010).

1998  Zonta International Strategies to End Violence Against Women (ZISVAW) project is adopted as an ongoing program.

2012  Zonta Says NO to Violence Against Women annual campaign launches.

The campaign, which continues today, raises awareness of the global pandemic of women's rights violations and unites Zonta clubs worldwide in conducting impactful advocacy actions to fight violence against women and gender inequality.

2018  Zonta's commitment to end early marriage results in US$2 million contribution to the Ending Child Marriage project in partnership with UNICEF USA and UNFPA.

Zonta International commits to supporting the UNICEF/UNFPA Global Programme to Accelerate Action to End Child Marriage in 12 countries: Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nepal, Niger, Sierra Leone, Uganda, Yemen and Zambia.