



Progress Report 4 April - September 2023

February 2024



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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INSPIRING SCOTLAND

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1. OVERVIEW

This is the fourth progress report of the Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights fund (E&HR). The fund covers a period of three years from October 2021 to September 2024, and this report reviews the six-month period of April to September 2023. It provides data on the activities, impact, and contribution to fund outcomes and highlights the key themes and challenges of the 48 E&HR funded organisations.

Summary of activity

During the fourth reporting period, organisations have continued to build on successful delivery from the previous years. Highlights include new initiatives that enhance existing work, or lead to spin-off projects and funding opportunities. After 18 months of delivery we are now seeing evidence of impact and difference made through more robust monitoring and evaluation systems. There is also evidence of increased collaboration and information sharing among the funded groups, with many taking advantage of portfolio connections to grow their networks and promote their services. A number of groups also report building on the success of their funded activity by responding to requests for input or support from other parts of the UK and internationally. One of the main areas of activity across the fund this period has been galvanising responses to the Human Right Bill consultation through awareness raising and consultation events

Systemic issues such as the cost of living crisis compounded the hardship experienced by many individuals, particularly within disabled and minority ethnic communities, and among women. Organisations themselves are finding resources very stretched due to increased demands and a challenging funding environment.



Equality and Human Rights funded organisations and Inspiring Scotland staff at portfolio networking day in May 2023.

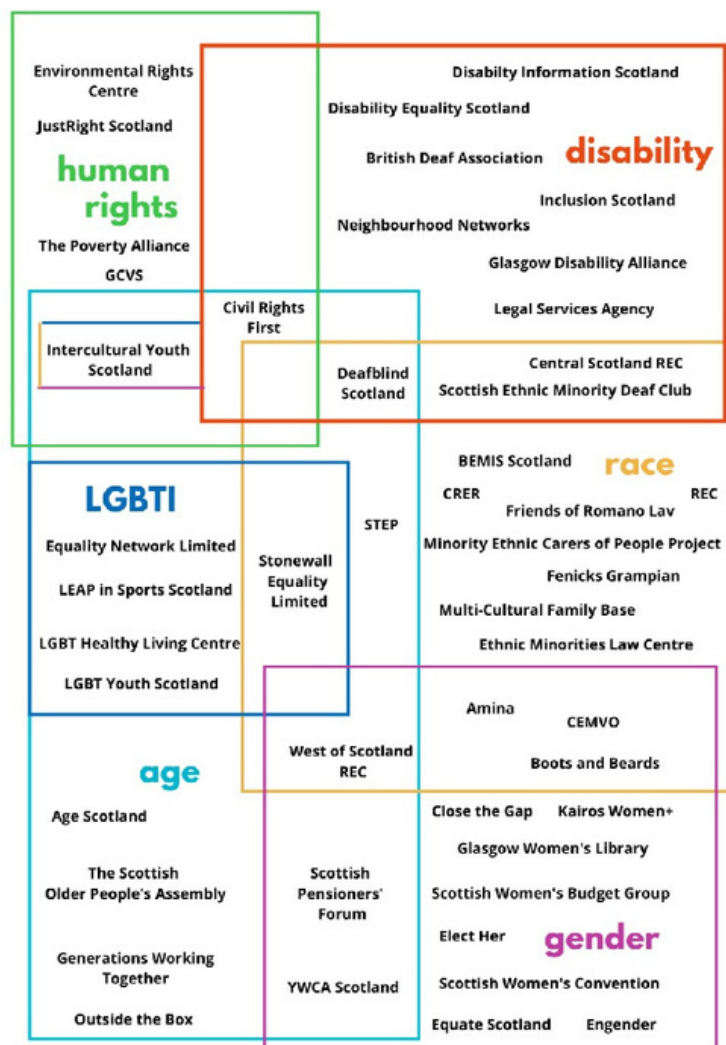
Background

The E&HR fund's aim is to support civil society organisations and partners to develop, embed and mainstream equality and human rights within policy and practice in Scotland, in line with the ambitions of the National Performance Framework and relevant Scottish Government strategies.

48 organisations are supported through the E&HR fund, aligning to seven Scottish Government policy areas within the Equality, Inclusion and Human Rights Directorate - age equality, disability equality, British Sign Language (BSL), gender equality, LGBTQI+, race equality and human rights. Intersectionality is a priority for the fund, and many groups continue to demonstrate how they support and champion the rights of people facing disadvantage due to multiple and interconnected inequalities. Further examples of intersectional work are presented in [Section 4](#) of this report.

The diagram below maps the funded groups across the policy areas.

Policy Areas



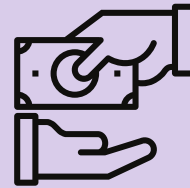
2. WHOLE FUND DATA

Funds distributed

Organisations are paid quarterly, following submission of finance forms showing expenditure for the payment period and forecast expenditure for project year. A breakdown of funds distributed over the funding period of October 2022-March 2023 is shown in the diagram below.



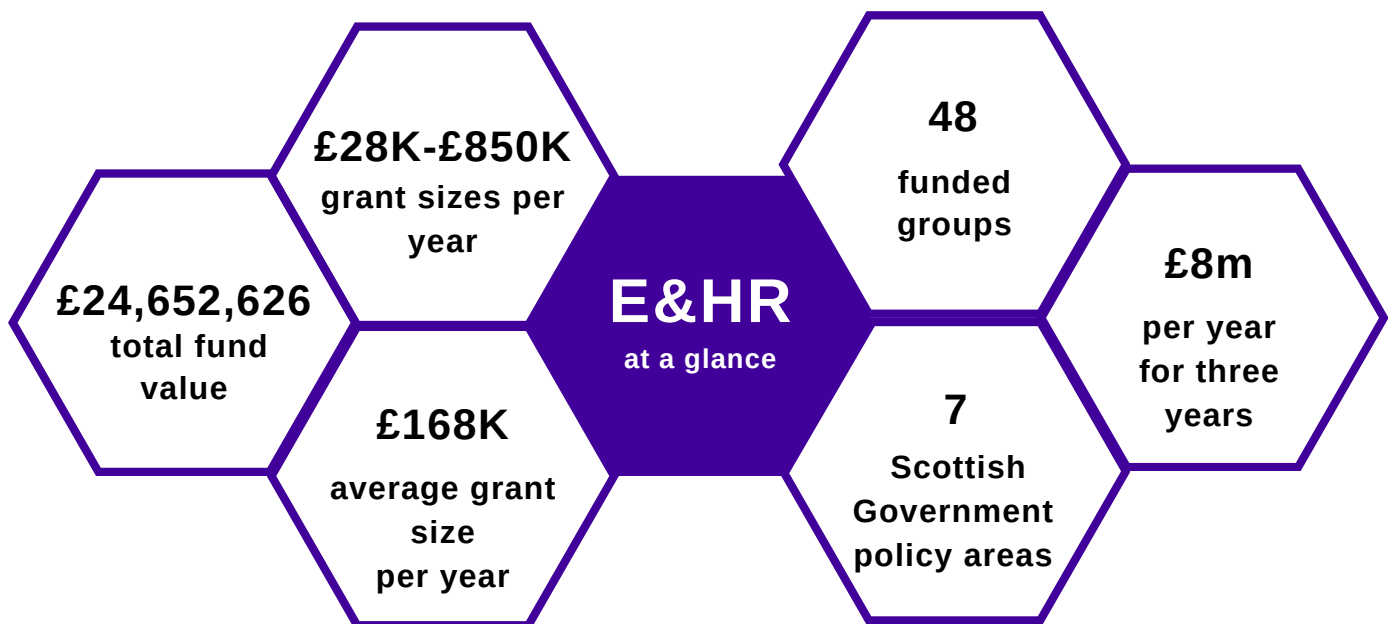
£4,129,007
Committed for this period
(Apr - Sep 23)



£16,287,542
Total distributed from
fund (Oct 21- Sep 23)

Equality and Human Rights fund 'at a glance'

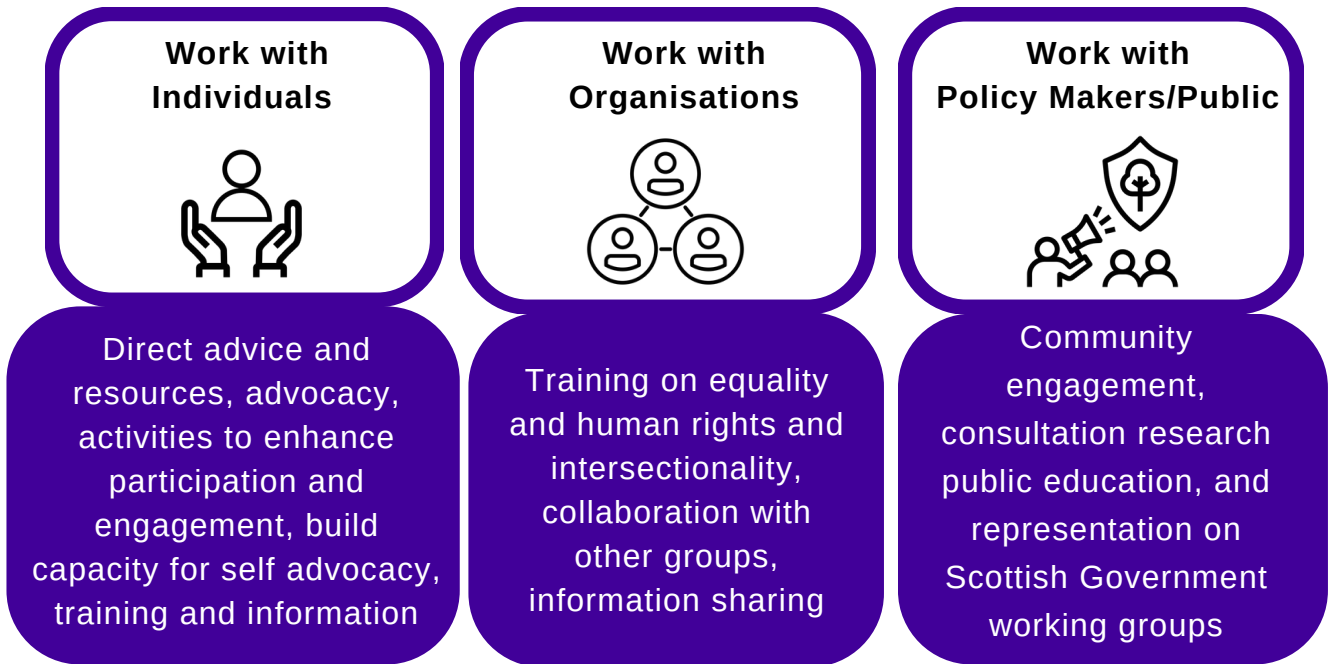
High level information about the the E&HR fund is presented in the image below.



Activity type

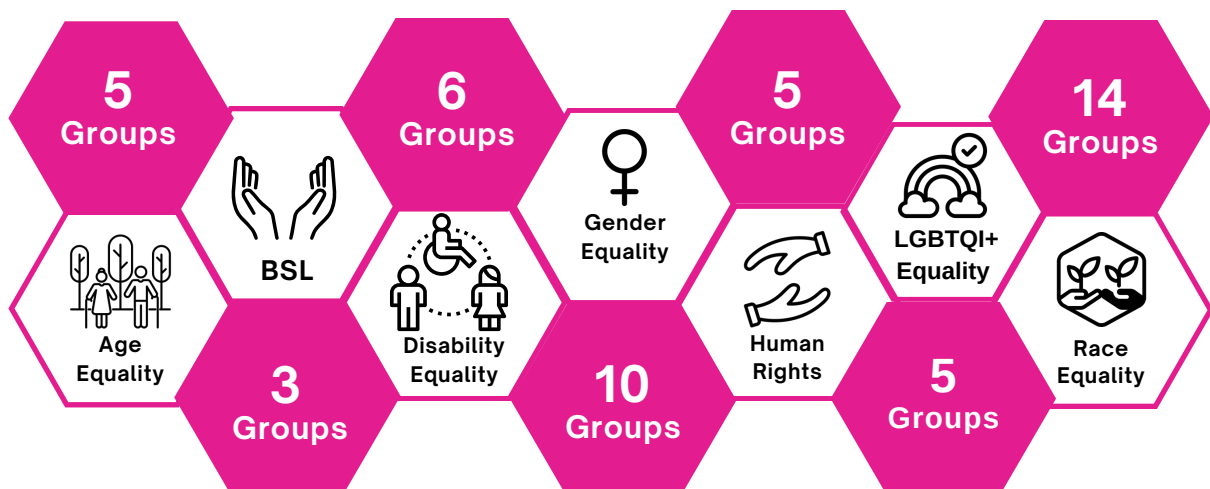
At an early stage in the fund, the Inspiring Scotland team undertook a mapping of all funded activity. The 48 funded organisations deliver a range of activities that can be broadly categorised into three types: direct service delivery to individuals who share protected characteristics, building the capacity of other organisations, and strategic work for local and national policy makers.

The presentation of this report is structured according to these three activity types.



Funded organisations by policy area

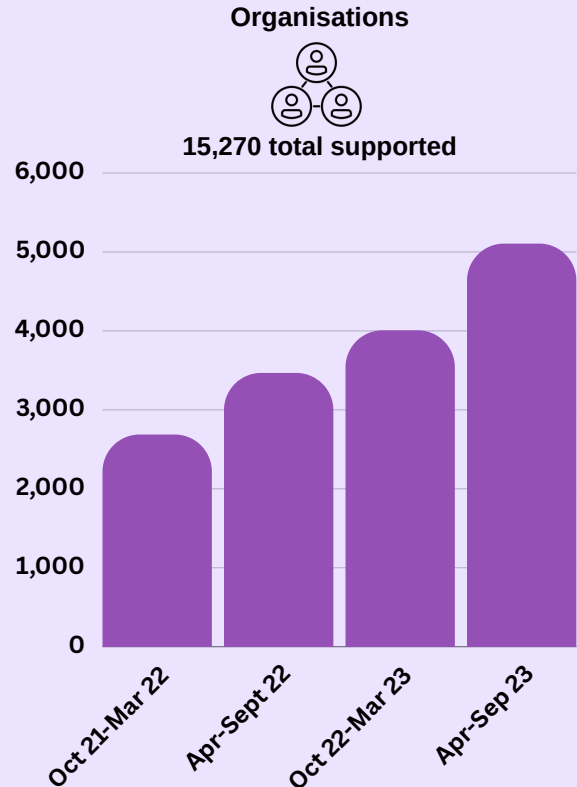
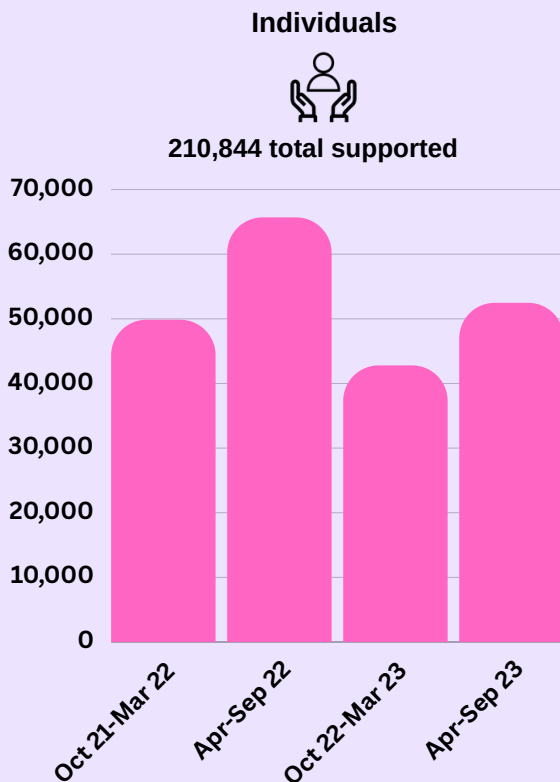
The 48 funded organisations are aligned to seven Scottish Government policy areas as illustrated in the following diagram, according to organisational focus on the relevant protected characteristics. Detail on organisations' activities and impact by policy area is presented in Section 7 of this report.



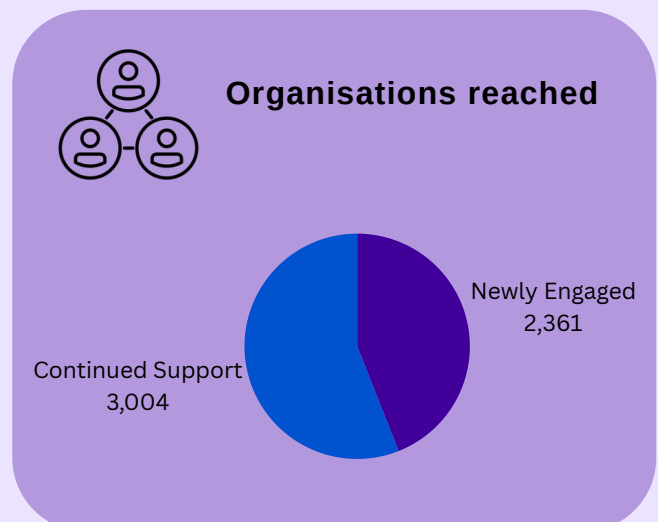
Numbers reached through fund activity

The graphs below illustrate the numbers reached since the establishment of the E&HR fund. In general, the number of individuals and organisations supported has remained stable, with a slight increase in the most recent period.

During the April-September 2023 reporting period, funded groups provided support to 52,481 individuals and 5,106 organisations. It is important to note that these figures do not include 'information sharing,' which includes high-volume activity such as social media and website hits, leading to inflated numbers. Since the fund's inception, a total of 210,844 individuals and 15,270 organizations have received support.

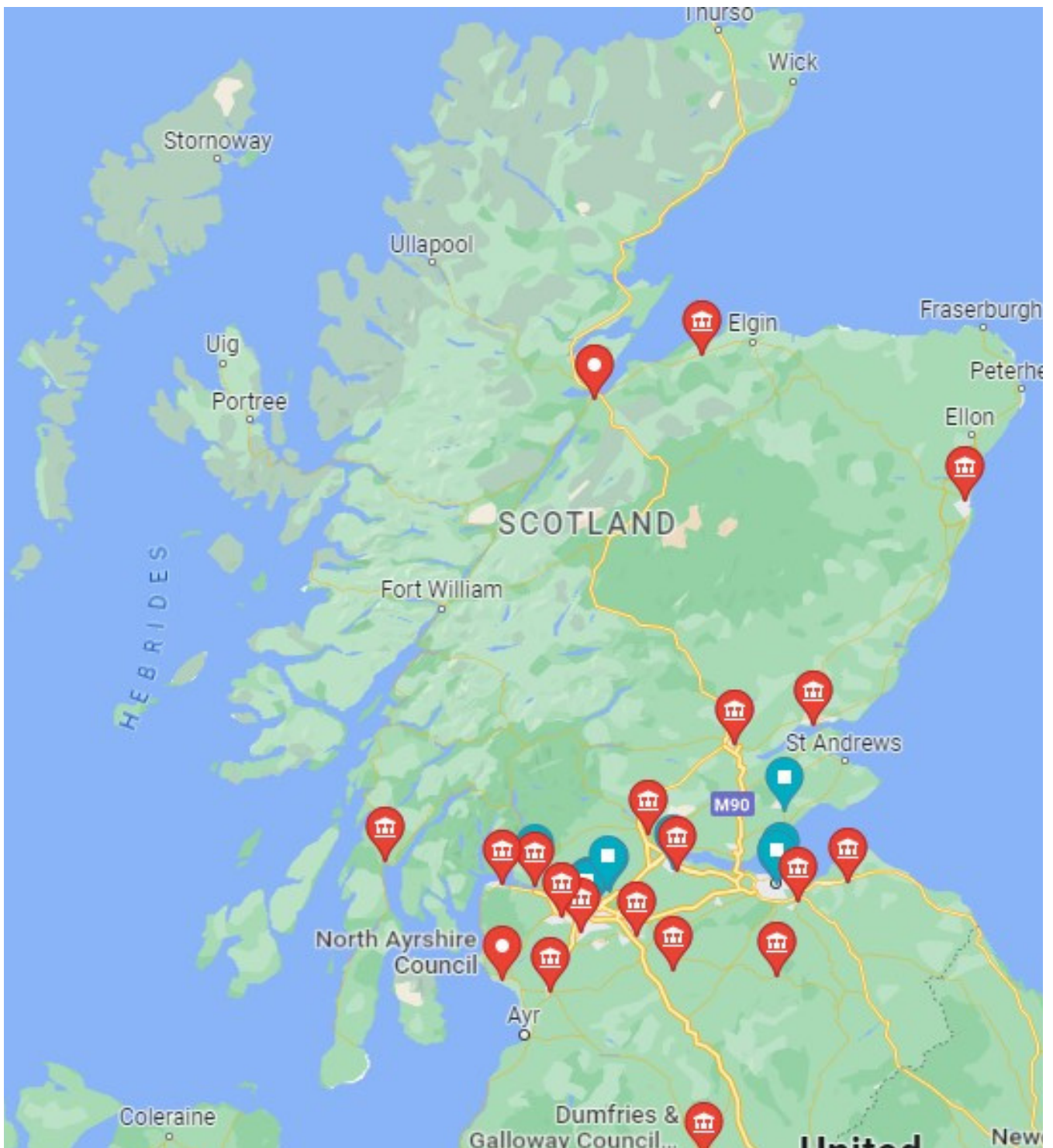


Organisations reported on the net number of new individuals and groups reached, as well as the number of people they continued to support from a previous reporting period.



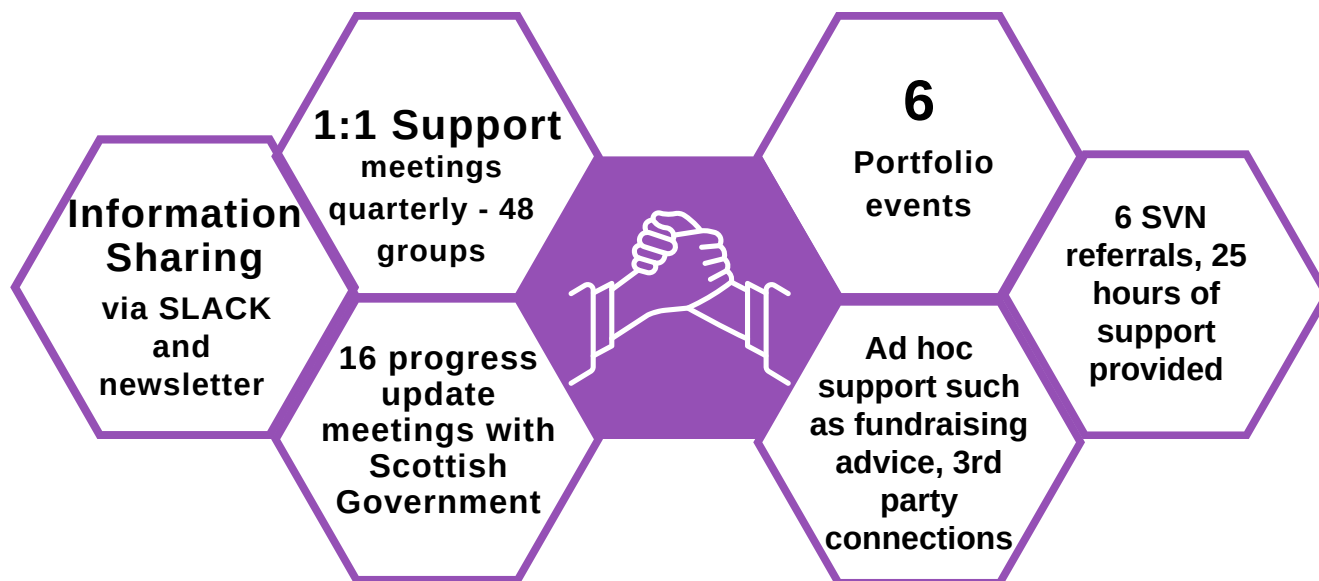
E&HR activity by local authority

The majority of the E&HR funded groups are national organisations, and 34 delivered national activity over the last six months. In addition, 20 organisations delivered geographically focused work. The map below shows the geographic spread of the funded work during the reporting period.



Inspiring Scotland support summary

A summary of the range of support provided to funded organisations is presented below.



1:1 Support

The Inspiring Scotland team has developed strong working relationships with the 48 partner organisations. We work closely with groups to report on spend, develop self-evaluation systems, discuss progress on delivery, and provide ad-hoc support such as fundraising advice. We met with each organisation at least twice during the reporting period.

Portfolio Events

In total, we held six portfolio events during the reporting period.

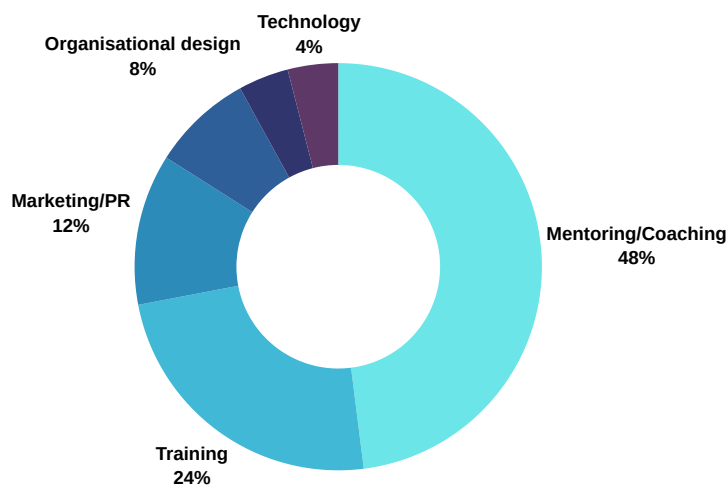
We facilitated two spotlight sessions on E&HR funded activity, one which featured the work of Elect Her and one presented jointly by MECOPP, STEP and Friends of Romano Lav about supporting the Gypsy/Roma/Traveller (GRT) communities. A total of 32 people, including Scottish Government colleagues, attended these.

In May we held a portfolio networking session on the theme of Intersectionality, which was attended by 65 people. The afternoon session focusing on supporting staff wellbeing, was attended by 35 people. Groups shared how they respond to stress caused by toxic social media and complex frontline support provision. Participants co-produced a staff wellbeing resource list following the session. Feedback on both sessions was extremely good.

We also coordinated two Gender Equality portfolio meetings of the 10 gender equality organisations and Scottish Government colleagues and the inaugural meeting of the 14 Race Equality organisations.

The Specialist Volunteer Network (SVN)

SVN is a network of over 500 professional volunteers facilitated by Inspiring Scotland who offer customised development support to charities. Support encompasses a range of services, including training, HR advice, financial, legal, and technological assistance, as well as strategy development. Throughout the reporting period, SVN offered 25 hours of pro-bono support to four organizations worth a total value of £4,700. A breakdown of support type is provided below. Furthermore, two groups from the E&HR portfolio are currently participating in the SVN Wood Mackenzie program, which provides intensive executive support for a specific development project. The total added value of the pro-bono Woodmac support is £12,200.



Hours provided per type of SVN Support

Scottish Government Engagement

The team frequently met with Scottish Government officials to keep them informed of our progress and share our findings. Additionally, we were always available to provide information and support whenever needed. In some cases, we conducted complex data analyses on short notice to meet their needs.

Impact of Inspiring Scotland Support

After two years of working with funded organisations, we are able to provide an analysis of the impact of our support. Groups have reported that Inspiring Scotland has improved networking and collaboration opportunities and increased their knowledge and skills.

The support we received from Inspiring Scotland – in funding, networking opportunities, and advice – allowed us to cement the Scottish Just Law Centre's position in the Scottish human rights landscape. We have created strong relationships with key co-grantees, which enable us to identify people at the intersections of society who are being forgotten and ignored, and how best to support them in an informed and holistic manner. We look forward to further establishing this in the next reporting period, and in the years to come.

Just Right Scotland

3. PEOPLE AND ACTIVITIES

Work with individuals

The diagram below shows a summary of the support provided to individuals during the reporting period. The numbers supported under 'advice and support' includes eight helplines. 'Information sharing' includes high-volume activity, such as social media, newsletters and website hits. 'Other' activities include meeting and raising awareness among MPs and MSPs, holding Scottish Parliament events, and supporting PhD students. Detailed data on progress during the reporting period is provided in the Policy Section (Section 7) of this report.



Elect Her (photo by Anna Moffet)

Work with individuals analysis

The provision of direct support to people is a major feature of the fund, and 40 of the 48 organisations undertook some kind of engagement with individuals during this reporting period. An analysis of the support highlights the following:

- Seven organisations across five policy areas delivered direct advice to service users via helplines.
- Organisations worked flexibly to provide advice that responds to the needs of service users. So while 45% delivered one-to-one sessions, 29% provided group sessions. 28% provided online support via email, text and website. 29% also signposted to other agencies for further support.
- Individual support covered a broad range of topics. Over half (56%) of the groups provided advice or support on equality, inclusion and challenging discrimination, which shows the unique role of the funded groups. 43% helped people to access services.
- Mental health/wellbeing support was also a key feature during the reporting period. Organisations responded to the increased impact on service users' mental wellbeing brought about by cost of living challenges, COVID and other events. Activities included confidence building support and training, and general health, wellbeing and mental health support.

Amina Muslim Women's Resource Centre

'The Amina Hardship Fund (not funded through E&HR) has been helping people who are experiencing unforeseen circumstances and has given a total of £3,130 pounds from April-September to 25 women and their families. We had to source other support for 15 women who did not qualify for the fund by making use of local food banks and charity shops to meet immediate needs as our Hardship Fund can no longer sustain the level of demand. A lot of the clients who did not qualify were women with No Recourse to Public Funds.'

Work with individuals: examples

Age Scotland

The Age Scotland helpline handled 14,793 calls during this period, exceeding its target of 10,500. The helpline continued to see a high level of calls relating personal finances, resulting in 294 benefit checks and £801,591 in client financial gain.



Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity

SEMDC have continued to provide holistic 1:1 support and group workshops for members wishing to enter employment or access training/education. During the period, eight members were supported to attend a local Jobs Fair, which was a good demonstration of progress for members in itself and has also resulted in at least one member entering employment.



Boots and Beards

B&B provided a range of opportunities for people to be active and access the outdoors. This included 12 family walks attended by 194 people, 45 sports sessions involving 396 men and 639 women and 5 expeditions as part of the Duke of Edinburgh Award programme involving 28 young people. Activity to enhance social connection was also provided such as 3 'Chat & Chai' sessions attended by 21 women.

Work with individuals: examples

Legal Services Agency

LSA provided 125 disabled people with person centred legal advice on topics including welfare rights, rights to care, discrimination and housing.

They also made links with 31 additional orgs to ensure disabled people are able access support earlier.



Just Right Scotland

JRS ran outreach sessions on access to education for individuals of migrant backgrounds. The aim is to equip attendees with the knowledge of what rights they and their children have. Focus was also placed on what help and support is available to individuals throughout all stages of education. As many attendees had different immigration statuses, information was also provided on what grants/funds are available for those who are NRPF. The sessions also used multiple language interpreters to increase accessibility.

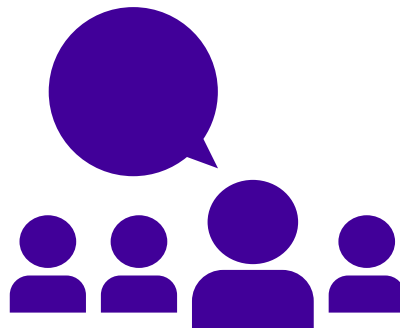
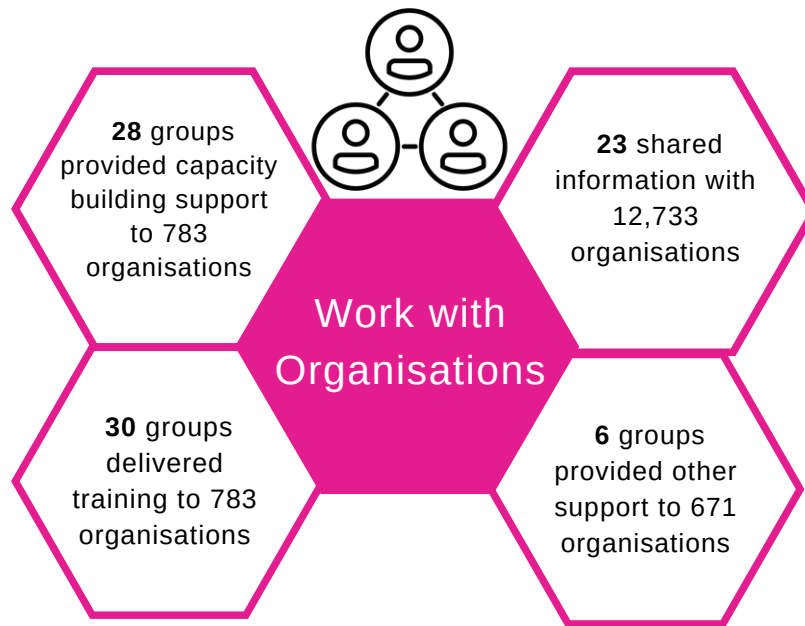


LGBT Health

The LGBT+ Helpline Scotland responded to 1,221 requests for support. 56% of contacts were made by phone, 27% Livechat and 17% email. The highest support-topics were: Sexuality, Romantic/Sexual Relationships, Coming Out, Our Services and Loneliness and Isolation. 36% of callers sought emotional support, 33% information, and 33% a mix of both emotional and information. With some staff and volunteer turnover, LGBT Health has recruited, maintained and trained a team of six sessional staff and 17 volunteers in this period.

Work with organisations

The graphic below shows the number of organisations funded groups worked with during the reporting period. 'Information sharing' includes high-volume activity such as social media work, and disseminating newsletters to organisations. 'Other' activities includes collaboration or research with with other organisations on discrete project work.



29% of funded groups supported other organisations to develop knowledge or capacity on human rights approaches.

39% of funded groups supported other organisations develop capacity on equality and inclusion and engaging marginalised communities

Work with organisations: examples



Disability Equality Scotland

DES has grown its membership by 11.4% over the past year, and delivered three webinars: Building Regs and Disability, a Fair and Just Scotland and Cost of Living.

DES also continues to administer and distribute Access Panel Grants.

Equality Network

EN provided continuous support and guidance to Trans Pride Scotland for their event in Dundee in August. Committee members met with EN to discuss securing a venue, arranging permission for a march with the local authorities and police, and received advice on how to promote the event on social media to attain maximum attendance. EN also provided support to groups organising Pride events in Stornoway, Lochaber, and Oban.

CEMVO Scotland

CEMVO ran six training sessions to organisations on human rights (one), anti-racism (three), anti racism in recruitment (one) and challenging racism from a white perspective.

They provided direct capacity building support to 13 new organisations, including three in-depth sessions on; workforce data, reviewing complaints procedures and embedding anti-racism and human rights into a research framework.



Work with organisations: examples

Scottish Women's Budget Group

SWBG have continued to provide training and support to local authority staff. As part of this, they undertook a review of all 32 local authorities' publicly available budgets information. They produced and published a report of their findings and delivered two training sessions for 22 councillors.

Glasgow Women's Library

GWL received two requests to share their Memory Box resource;

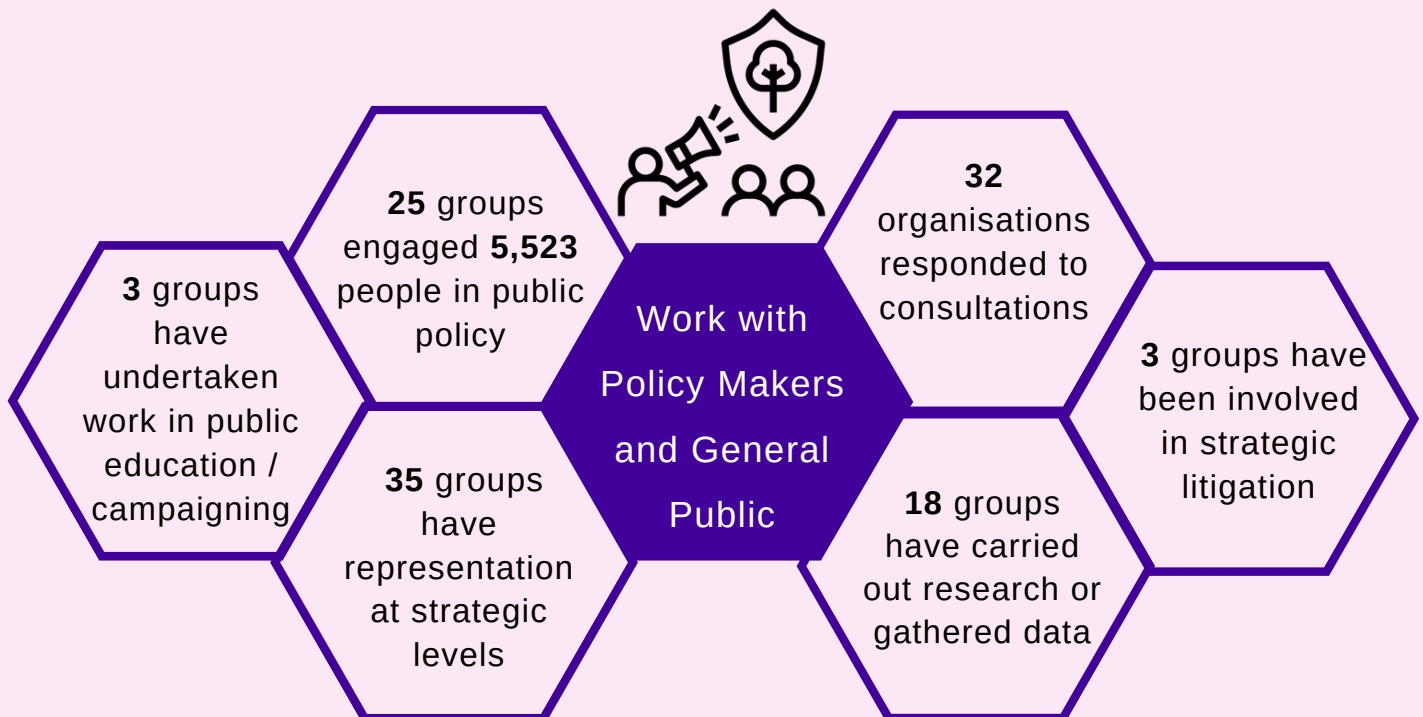
- An NHS group worker borrowed resources from the box to use in work with a group of older women in September 23
- The Black Country Living Museum borrowed materials for an exhibition about maternity and women's rights in September 23



Elect Her (photo by Tiu Makkonen)

Work with policy makers and general public

The image below provides a depiction of the strategic endeavors initiated by the portfolio to engage and inform both policy and the public. Organisations reported solely on the number of individuals engaged through facilitation, as this figure is the most reliable and informative metric within this scope of work.



Amplifying the voice of Lived Experience

The E&HR fund focuses on directly involving marginalised individuals who share protected characteristics. In the past six months, these groups have interacted with more than 5,000 people to gather insights for shaping public policy or legislation. Over the entire duration of the fund, approximately 18,000 individuals have been engaged in this process. This approach emphasises inclusive participation and input from those affected by policies to ensure a more comprehensive and equitable development of laws and regulations.

During the reporting period, 19 of the funded organisations engaged their communities in the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill Consultation.

Six organisations contributed to the Scottish Government's COVID enquiry, including engaging communities in 'Let's be Heard' platform.

Work with policy makers and the general public: examples

British Deaf Association

BDA Scotland contributed their expertise and lived experience as Deaf British Sign Language users to the draft BSL National Plan 2023 – 2029 Consultation. Over 384 Deaf BSL users shared their experiences regarding access to BSL in Scotland during 25 consultation events. This initiative is aimed at building capacity to influence policy. BDA Scotland collected feedback and data from members of Deaf clubs, Deaf staff, Deaf outreach workers, Deaf Roots & Pride (DRP), Transitions Youth Advisory Group (YAG) members, Parents Advisory Group (PAG) members, and members of the Deaf LGBTQIA+ community, as well as young people in schools across Scotland. As a result of this initiative, a community-wide response to the draft BSL National Plan consultation was submitted to the Scottish Government.

Just Right Scotland

JRS legal cases aim to both benefit clients and to raise awareness of discrimination issues and challenge structural norms. One of our current cases involves litigating a novel claim under the Equality Act, requiring reasonable adjustments for disabled individuals in educational settings. Such claims are infrequent, and in addition to seeking a remedy for the client, this case has the potential to draw attention to the requirement for reasonable adjustments. Also given the client's disabilities, the court process itself should be adjusted to ensure fairness.

Engender

Engender coordinated a letter to the First Minister calling for the creation of an expert working group on decriminalisation of abortion. This brought together 18 civil society organisations, including abortion rights groups, professional bodies and service providers. The letter also called for commitments regarding abortion the FM had made during his leadership campaign to be formalised in the Programme for Government. Following this, Engender coordinated a meeting between Civil Society orgs and the Minister for Public Health to discuss these commitments.

Work with policy makers and the general public: examples

Glasgow Disability Alliance

GDA's Social Care Expert Group brings together disabled people who use social care to share their lived experience. In this period they conducted a survey of over 100 members to update previous research in relation to social care. Findings are that since the beginning of the pandemic:

- More than half of respondents do not have the social care support they need to live the lives they want to live.
- Respondents reported using their PIP and DLA payments to subsidise bills like gas and electricity payments.
- Several respondents have stopped their social care because they can no longer afford the charges.
- The majority of respondents are concerned about rising care charges and how they will cope with other rising costs.

Coalition for Racial Equality and Rights

CRER has analysed data published under the 2021 Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) requirements to examine how ethnicity affects employment and progression in Scotland's public sector. It found that Just 2.8% of the public sector workforce in Scotland is made up of individuals from Minority Ethnic backgrounds, despite them accounting for over 5% of the working-age population. Additionally, CRER discovered that national-level systemic inequalities exist in recruitment, as BME applicants were half as likely to be successful candidates than their expected rate. The research also identified the inadequate collection/publishing of ethnicity data by many public bodies, despite their legal requirements under PSED. CRER published a report with recommendations to address systemic inequalities in recruitment, advance race equality in the workplace, and improve reporting quality under PSED.



Strategic reach

We analysed the range and breadth of the policy influence work undertaken across the portfolio. The results of this analysis are represented below. This includes policy influence work and representation at strategic levels, such as government working groups, steering groups and programme boards.

- Funded groups produced a total of 65 responses to Scottish Government consultations. A number of these were Human Rights Bill and National Performance Framework consultations.
- 35 of the 48 funded organisations reported regularly participating in a working/advisory group
- Organisations participate in an estimated 100 working/advisory groups across local and national government
- There is contribution to at least 20 different cross-party groups
- Seven organisations are represented on the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill Advisory Board
- Two organisations are represented on the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls, and for groups presented learning to the NACWG
- At least 12 organisations directly engaged with elected representatives about issues relating to their communities. This includes the First Minister's Anti-Poverty Summit and other ministerial roundtables.



Elect Her (photo by Tiu Makkonen)

4. FUND IMPACT

Progress towards E&HR fund outcomes

In this 4th round of progress reporting there has been a tangible improvement in demonstrating impact of funded work.

The table below shows the percentage of the 48 organisations contributing to each of the eight fund outcomes, compared to the previous reporting period. It is interesting to note the increase in the number of groups demonstrating progress against outcome 7 & 8. This could be an indication of the strategic reach of the fund, and the ability for organisations to track their policy influence work over time due to the benefits of multi-year funding.

Outcome	Orgs meeting Oct 22-Mar 23	Orgs meeting Apr-Sep 23
1. People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them	64%	69%
2. People with protected characteristics have increased remedy where their rights have not been upheld	58%	52%
3. People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life	64%	77%
4. People with protected characteristics have increased influence in the decisions that affect them	50%	42%
5. Scottish Government has better access to data and depth of information about experiences of people with protected characteristics	35%	35%
6. Actors in civil society increasingly use Scotland's domestic and international equality and human rights framework to influence and affect change	27%	15%
7. The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice of public bodies	50%	63%
8. Public services increasingly embed equality and human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions	33%	52%

Examples of impact

The following are examples of the most impactful outcomes represented in the table above

Intercultural Youth Scotland

IYS use case studies to capture qualitative impact: Student K wanted to host a 'Culture Week' to enable her to take pride in and share her South Asian heritage at school. With support from the IYS Educator, K pitched the idea to senior leaders and worked with teachers to create activities in their subject area. The week was successful and students and staff expressed how enriching the event was in learning about and taking pride in cultures present in the school. K then applied for and was elected House Captain and led discussions with staff on student-led events that centred diversity. K has developed confidence to lead and support young peers and the school community. (Fund Outcome 3)



Cabinet Secretary Shirley-Anne Somerville visiting Boots & Beards

Inclusion Scotland

IS use a Policy Output Tracker to record the details of their policy work; records consultations, calls for evidence etc. that we might respond to. These are triaged against funded outcomes and disabled people's priorities and note impacts when they become evident.

One example of policy influence is the idea of 'disability competence' and the need for this at leadership and departmental levels across Scottish Government, which IS have been advocating for. The Programme for Government announced this would be part of the Immediate Priorities Plan for Disabled People.

(Fund Outcome 7)

Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project

MECOPP worked with the Scottish Government and COSLA on a series of events as part of the National Listening Exercise to inform the next National Action Plan for Gypsy/Travellers. Community feedback highlights growing confidence in this work.

"I am excited to see what happens with this, it's the first time I've seen a real difference in the lives of my people. I feel hopeful and feel privileged to be apart of this. MECOPP and the other officials that are involved have really shown that they mean business and are here to support us."

- Community Participant

Feedback from Scottish Government officers also demonstrates value in the approach:

"I found it a really useful session, hearing about the various issues, and ways forward...it is great to see that proactive engagement taking place on a 'joined-up' basis. I'm sure the event will be of interest to other planning authorities (Councils) across Scotland as they too, start work on their LDP and seek to engage with the community...Here's to continuing positive relations!"

- Scottish Government officer

(Fund outcomes 7 & 8)

The least represented fund outcome in the portfolio is FO6, Actors in civil society increasingly use Scotland's domestic and international equality and human rights framework to influence and effect change. However, the example below shows how one of the funded groups, The Poverty Alliance, is working towards this outcome.

The Poverty Alliance

People who attend Poverty Alliance Know Your Rights Workshops report increased understanding on how human rights can be used as an anti-poverty tool, and an increased confidence using the human rights framework through their action learning set group.

(Fund Outcome 6)

Spotlight on the cost of living crisis

The cost of living crisis has been an ongoing issue affecting marginalised communities, as highlighted in previous reports. Organisations have frequently expressed the difficulties faced by individuals they support in managing these additional challenges. In our latest report, we introduced a new section for organisations to share how they have adapted their work to continue addressing community needs. The following analysis outlines their responses.

Impact on people

Over half of the funded organisation described the impact the cost of living crisis continues to have on people they support. Disabled people, women, and minority ethnic people (and the intersections between these groups, such as minority ethnic women). Some of the impact descriptions are shown below.

Food security

Deafblind Scotland

Many are forced to choose between food and heating, leading to a surge in food bank referrals.

Glasgow Disability Alliance

It is common for us to hear from attendees that the lunch they have at a GDA event is the most, or only, food they eat that day. Therefore we are committed to making sure that disabled people are able to access quality food when they attend our meetings, learning courses and events. We offer any food left over to participants to take home and this is often greatly received.

Social isolation

Deafblind Scotland

One member has been compelled to cancel their only social group of the week due to the rising costs of petrol. As a result, they must prioritise using the Guide Communicator service for essential activities such as attending GP appointments and grocery shopping.

Scottish Older Peoples' Assembly

Older people living in rural, remote areas who do not have the funds to own a private vehicle or pay for taxis are often poorly served by public transport. This compounds loneliness and isolation which has a detrimental impact on both physical and mental health.

Organisational responses

Organisations have responded to the impact of the cost of living crisis in a number of ways. At least 35% of organisations have changed their services to better meet the increasing needs of their communities. This includes ensuring there is good quality free food provided at events, paying participants to take part or covering transport costs, and providing different options to participate, such as hybrid meetings. Several organisations have secured additional funding to address needs, such as the Friends of Romano Lav example below.

Friends of Romano Lav

Using data from their research, FORL secured two funds to support communities. They employed session staff to hand out support, whilst collecting data on community need and concerns directly relating to the cost of living crisis. One of the funds was shared with partner organisations to distribute cash and vouchers to a total of around 1,200 people. They also ran a baby supplies delivery service to 40 families over 14 weeks. Currently FORL are distributing the second wave of cash support to provide people with a bit of additional income to help with fuel or food payments.

Many groups are collecting information and data on the cost of living crisis' ongoing impact on communities. They are using this information to secure additional funding as with the FORL example above, or to as evidence to influence policy makers.

Engender

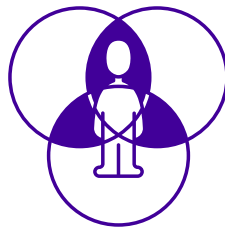
Engender has been actively engaged in poverty policy making spaces. They have found it challenging to integrate this work on top of existing activity, that it takes considerable resource to be across the complexity of poverty and social security research and policy making, in addition to understanding the many other areas they focus on. They have developed relationships with the anti-poverty civil society sector such as increasing campaigning outputs in support of Challenge Poverty Week. They also engage on various social security working groups and on the Minimum Income Guarantee Advisory Group. There continues to be weaknesses in gender competency in these spaces and so they often step in to fill this gap.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality is a key priority of the fund. We analysed the reports to identify good examples of how funded groups have supported or championed the rights of people experiencing disadvantage due to multiple inequalities, and described the specific interventions to overcome the intersecting barriers.

The examples below relate directly to the three E&HR fund activity types: support to individuals, support to organisations, and policy influencing work.

Intersectionality is the acknowledgement that everyone has their own unique experiences of discrimination and oppression and we must consider everything and anything that can marginalise people, such as gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and physical ability.



Intersectional approaches to supporting individuals

The example below provided by Boots and Beards highlights how a service has adapted to increase the participation of marginalised community members by addressing intersecting and complex issues.

Boots and Beards

Boots and Beard's Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Awards programme has historically had a lower participation rate among young South Asian women due to parental concerns, that often revolve around safety, security and mixing of sexes. To address these challenges, B&B adapted the DoE programme by providing separate female-only campsites supported by female staff. This has led to a notable increase in demand from young women. As a result, more young women are gaining the confidence to embark on positive life journeys and pursue opportunities that were once out of reach. This work acknowledges the intersectionality of disadvantage and actively dismantles the barriers that have hindered the holistic development of young South Asian women.

Intersectional approaches to supporting organisations

The following example, provided by Outside the Box, shows how providing support to small grassroots organisations to respond to unique and intersecting experiences can result in better outcomes for individuals.

Outside the Box

C is an older widower with severe health and mobility issues and an autistic adult child living at home with financial pressures. Other than medical appointments, she has not left home since the beginning of the pandemic. She was keen, with the support of OTB's Borders Buddies project, to be more socially active. OTB enquired about C joining the Caddonfoot Kurlers, a curling group in the Borders made up of 70-80 year olds. Initially, they were hesitant about how a new member would fit in, and how they would support her mobility and health issues. OTB worked with everyone and devised a plan. C attended as a trial initially, but felt welcomed and enjoyed getting out of the house to participate and socialise. C and now attends regularly with her OTB support buddy and is able to address any medical issues that may arise. Her confidence has grown, and she plans to attend the Kurlers' Christmas lunch at a local restaurant which will be her first meal out in over three years.



LEAP Sports Scotland

Intersectionality and work with policy makers

The majority of intersectionality examples provided by the funded organisations relate to their policy influence work. The example provided by Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland below shows how organisations are collaborating to raise awareness of and address the issue of discrimination due to multiple and intersecting disadvantage.

Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland and Minority Ethnic Carers of People Project

ERCS is working with MECOPP on participatory action research with the Gypsy/traveller Community to identify the range of environmental problems they face and the enablers and constraints to address them.

This project concerns a Gypsy/travellers site in Larkhall South Lanarkshire. Site residents had numerous concerns about the state of their immediate environment and the health and wellbeing implications. For example the playground was fenced off and not operational, construction refuse was left on-site and residents faced stigma from local workers. The site investigation identified even more potentially hazardous environmental conditions including multiple gas vents and historical refuse.

EHRC wrote a letter to South Lanarkshire Council on behalf of the Larkhall site residents, highlighting their concerns. The letter was brought to the attention of local MSP Christina McKelvie. The concerns of the Gypsy/traveller community often go ignored and this project begins to highlight the depth of environmental injustice they face and what is needed to address them.



Scottish Human Rights Bill Consultation

The Scottish Government Human Rights Bill consultation took place during this reporting period. Most organisations in the E&HR portfolio contributed to this; and their contributions can be categorised under headings similar to those used to assess activity within the E&HR fund in general: individuals, organisations, and policy makers. Examples of consultation types and methods are provided below.

Public awareness raising and supporting individuals/ the voice of lived experience in the consultation process

Poverty Alliance created plain language resources and facilitated discussion with people with experience of poverty on the bill to inform their organisational consultation response. They also ran two 'Know Your Rights' workshops with additional content on the bill and consultation, with the aim of encouraging individuals to respond to the consultation.

Equality Network provided an accessible version of parts of the Human Rights Bill consultation, to facilitate responses by LGBTQI+ people. They surveyed LGBTQI+ people on their experiences of the realisation of their key ICESCR rights. The 700 responses received informed the organisational response to the Human Rights Bill consultation.

Glasgow Disability Alliance ran in-depth information and capacity building sessions alongside consultation sessions with their Drivers for Change network to enable disabled people to confidently contribute their thoughts to this complex consultation.

LGBT Youth Scotland used the facilitators guide produced by Scottish Government and Together. Inhouse youth workers used their specialist knowledge to create a bespoke session plan that was used by youth groups across the country to engage with the process. This data was collated and analysed to produce themes that were recurring.

Supporting organisations to engage with the consultation

Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland prepared a template response to Part 5 of the Human Rights Bill consultation: Recognising the right to a healthy environment. Met with 13 organisations to support their awareness and delivered 6 workshops.

THRE developed an FAQ to the consultation response, including key points about the Bill, which questions from the consultation may be of interest to third sector organisations and signposting to more detailed guides from other organisations in the sector.

Engagement at a Scottish Government level

In addition to bringing the voice of lived experience to the Human Rights Bill consultations, the E&HR funded organisations are also actively engaged in direct advice and support with the HR Bill development.

For example, the following organisations are members of the Human Rights Bill Civil Society Working Group; Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland, Equality Network,

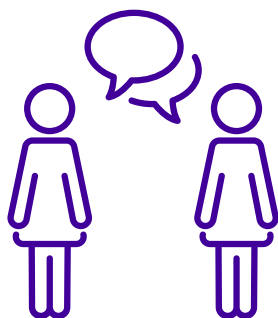
The following organisations are members of the Human Rights Bill Advisory Board; BEMIS, CRER, Equality Network, Inclusion Scotland, JustRight Scotland, Scottish Pensioner's Forum

The following organisations support members of the Human Rights Lived Experience panel; Deafblind Scotland, Environmental rights Centre for Scotland, Scottish Pensioner's Forum

Funded groups also contribute to other human rights spaces policy spaces. For example, CEMVO is represented on the Scottish Human Rights Action Plan (SNAP) Leadership Panel, who is responsible for monitoring and overseeing the implementation of SNAP 2

Disables People's Organisations worked with their members to submit detailed responses to the Humans Rights Bill consultation. The organisations also came together to advocate for their members and work with Scottish Government towards full incorporation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is a key priority for DPOs.

Deafblind Scotland supports individuals with sensory loss, particularly those who are deafblind, to engage with policy development by sharing their lived experience. These Ambassadors influence policy directly through representation on groups such as the Human Rights Bill Lived Experience Panel. In order to enhance understanding of the intersections between human rights and sensory loss, the Ambassadors deliver training to individuals and organisations. The training has a focus on the development of a theoretical framework for a sensory approach to human rights, as well as legal considerations.



5. PARTNERSHIPS AND CONNECTIONS

Collaboration is an important aspect of the E&HR fund. Organisations reported working with public, third, and private sector bodies at national and local levels, to enhance services through referral processes, collaboration on policy influence work, and to reach out to new service users.

Collaboration among funded organisations continues to grow, and networking is a priority. In May this year we held our second E&HR networking event, which was attended by nearly all of the portfolio, and had positive feedback. We also facilitate quarterly meetings of the Gender Equality portfolio and of the Race Equality portfolio.

Glasgow Disability Alliance and Scottish Women's Budget Group

SWBG collaborated with GDA members to explore the cost of living crisis and how this impacts specifically on disabled women. They designed a survey which received 103 responses. Findings showed that disabled women continue to feel the strain of the COVID pandemic while simultaneously experiencing the unequal impact of the cost of living crisis.

- 74% said it has affected their mental health
- 56% said it has affected their physical health
- 22% said it has impacted on their ability to take their medication properly.

Women repeatedly talked about life getting smaller, and 'surviving vs living'. Additional costs include:

- Food costs: dietary requirements, pre-prepared meals/ingredients, take away/microwave meals.
- Energy costs: health conditions require heating on, charging equipment, etc.
- Transport costs: reliance on taxis due to public transport inaccessibility.
- Social Care costs.

GDA & SWBG held an event in July 2023 to update women on progress of the project and enable sharing of experiences through discussion groups and Photo Voice workshops. A briefing paper will be used as a campaign tool and the women were supported by GDA and SWBG to share this with Glasgow City Councillors and MSPs during their draft budget 2024 discussions.

6. SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES

We undertook an analysis of the unexpected outcomes and the current challenges reported. Some of the common themes are set out as follows:

Themes

- This round of reporting has seen positive evidence of impact and the difference made through monitoring and evaluation systems, leading to an improvement in the quality, particularly in reporting on outcomes. We are starting to be able to see that the support that Inspiring Scotland has provided around monitoring and evaluation is having an impact.
- Related to this, there is a notable increase in the number of organisations evidencing impact on the fund's longer term outcomes 7 *'The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice of public bodies* and 8, *Public services increasingly embed equality and human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions.'* This implies organisations' increased ability to measure the impact of their community engagement and policy influence work.
- We are also seeing ever increasing evidence of networking and collaboration work among the funded organisations. Many groups have reported that the networking event we held in May was extremely useful in kick-starting collaboration. Feedback on policy specific networking, such as with the Gender and Race Equality, has also been positive.
- The increased networking and collaboration has also helped help embed equality and human rights approaches within organisations and project work. For example, THRE and Environment Rights Centre for Scotland have worked with other E&HR funded groups on human rights approaches during the reporting period.

'The support that we received from Inspiring Scotland – in funding, networking opportunities, and advice – is allowing us to cement the Scottish Just Law Centres position in the Scottish human rights landscape. We have been able to create strong relationships with key co-grantees, which enable us to identify people at the intersections of society who are being forgotten and ignored, and how best to support them in an informed and holistic manner. We look forward to further establishing this in the next reporting period, and in the years to come.'

Just Right Scotland

Challenges

- As reported elsewhere, the cost living crisis continues to take its toll on people who share protected characteristics, particularly disabled people, women and people from minority ethnic communities. Poverty continues to be a policy focus for many groups such as CRER and Engender.
- Organisations also continue to report how the cost of living crisis impacts their own operations. This includes challenges to meet the increased demand for support services, or recruiting volunteers who now need to seek paid work. Many groups struggle to meet rising running costs, including staff wages and overheads. This is compounded by competitive funding climate and cuts in public finance sources.
- Organisations report challenges in managing communication channels and creating safe online spaces for communities as a result of continued negative public and media climate around trans equality in particular. This has also resulted in challenges in engaging community members in policy work due to an onset of apathy towards those in power and civil society.
- Some organisations have expressed concern about the direction of travel of public sector partners, including the impact of budget cuts, delays in confirming funding, and a perceived lack of transparency or ability to move at pace to roll out crucial policy developments. There are also concerns about the robustness of consultation analysis, particularly when these are carried out externally.
- On the other hand, requests from policy colleagues for lived experience representation or input whilst welcome, can often impact on planned work when requests come at short notice, or do not take account of the time, energy and resources required.

'We have carried out extensive research on ethnicity and poverty and have campaigned to make the issue of higher poverty levels BME people in Scotland a political priority. We have been pushing for attention and action, including the need for both local and national level anti child poverty strategies to include action specifically focussed on minority ethnic communities. We have created a BME poverty briefing with detailed analysis of the issue, and with ideas for specific action that the Scottish Government can take to address the unacceptable high levels of poverty faced by BME communities. We plan to publish and distribute this briefing, including sending to the First Minister, the minister for equalities and other politicians who attended the (First Minister's) anti-poverty summit.'

CRER

7. ACTIVITY AND IMPACT BY POLICY AREA

This next section provides more detail on the progress of the E&HR funded organisations by the Scottish Government policy area to which they align. The following pages provide a breakdown of activity and numbers reached, progress towards fund outcomes, and information on organisations' contributions to Scottish Government strategies and action plans. The activity examples and case studies help to illustrate progress throughout.

Human Rights

1. Civil Rights First
2. Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland
3. Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector
4. Just Right Scotland
5. The Poverty Alliance

Age Equality

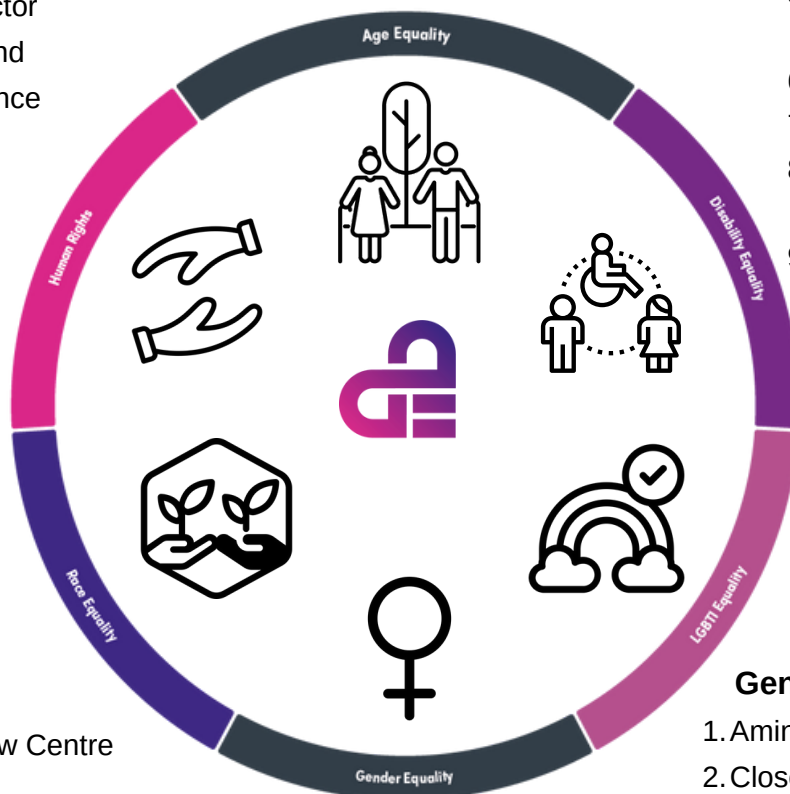
1. Age Scotland
2. Generations Working Together
3. Outside the Box
4. STUC Scottish Pensioners Forum
5. Scottish Older People's Assembly

Disability Equality

1. British Deaf Association (BSL)
2. Deafblind Scotland (BSL)
3. Disability Equality Scotland
4. Disability Information Scotland
5. Glasgow Disability Alliance
6. Inclusion Scotland
7. Legal Services Agency
8. Neighbourhood Networks
9. Scottish EM Deaf Charity (BSL)

Race Equality

1. BEMIS Scotland
2. Boots and Beards
3. CEMVO Scotland
4. CSREC
5. CRER
6. Ethnic Minorities Law Centre
7. Feniks
8. Friends of Romano Lav
9. GREC
10. Intercultural Youth Scotland
11. MECOPP
12. Multi Cultural Family Base
13. STEP
14. WSREC

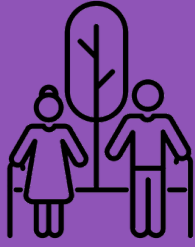


Gender Equality

1. Amina
2. Close the Gap
3. Equate Scotland
4. Elect Her
5. Engender
6. Glasgow Women's Library
7. Kairos Women+
8. Scottish Women's Budget Group
9. Scottish Women's Convention
10. YWCA Scotland

LGBTQI+ Equality

1. Equality Network Ltd
2. LEAP Sports Scotland
3. LGBT Healthy Living Centre
4. LGBT Youth Scotland
5. Stonewall Equality Ltd



Age Equality

The funded groups within the Age Equality policy area continue to work very much in partnership together, and with other groups within the wider E&HR portfolio. There is a growing number of examples of intersectional working. Age Equality groups worked with **14,144** people during the six months of funding, providing advice, training, and work to enhance participation.

Funded groups also worked with **7,782** organisations (some of this includes high volume activity such as information dissemination, for example newsletters, to a broad set of stakeholders). This has been a challenging period for all due to the cost of living crisis along with rising energy costs which is having a major impact on older people, these factors are also causing community venues to close their doors or reduce access which will directly result in isolation and loneliness

Age Equality Portfolio



Age Scotland
Generations Working Together
Outside the Box
STUC Scottish Pensioners Forum
Scottish Older People's Assembly


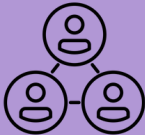



**Generations
Working
Together**



Activity Summary

The Age Equality organisations continue to undertake a wide range of activities that both support older people and ensure the collective voice of older people shapes the policy that most affects them.

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	Numbers worked with
 work with individuals	Providing advice	1	14,793
	Enhancing participation	3	2,563
	Building confidence	1	466
	Providing training	1	53
	Information sharing	2	165,000
 work with organisations	Training to organisations	3	218
	Organisational support	4	424
	Shared knowledge/information	3	9,403
	Other work with organisations	2	27
 Work with policy makers/ the public	Facilitated public engagement	2	1,526
	Participation in consultations	5	N/A
	Research	4	
	Representation at strategic levels	4	
	Other work with policy makers/public	4	

Age Scotland

Throughout the reporting period Age Scotland's helpline exceeded its target of 10,500 calls handling 14,793 calls. The helpline has continued to see a high level of calls relating to benefits checks and finances more generally which has resulted in 294 benefit checks leading to £801,591 in client financial gain in this period.

During this period, Age Scotland also sent out 7,155 information guides to 1,324 people, and 69,941 people accessed information via pages of the website.

Outcomes and Impact

Overall, the Age Equality organisations are working towards six of the Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

Outcome 1

People have greater awareness and understanding of their rights, and how to access them

Outside the Box

OTB collects key 'magic moments' from participants who attend activities. Evidence of impact from the East Lothian Training Session, includes the Third Sector Interface linking their service work and approach to human rights and equalities for older people.

Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

Scottish Older People's Assembly

SOPA conducted an online survey older people in Scotland in September 2023. The survey highlighted that SOPA's main strength was seen as bringing together a wide range of individuals to provide 'one voice' that can advocate local and national government on behalf of older people. One respondent commented, *'We can speak out. We are united in trying to make our voices heard at a local and Parliamentary level.'*

Outcome 4

People with protected characteristics have increased influence in decisions that affect them

Scottish Trades Union Congress

Evidence of impact includes from the Scottish Pensioners' Forum includes:

- The re-emergence of local groups across Scotland.
- Greater participation at outreach meetings and events.
- More support for our campaigns and demonstrations.

Outcome 5

The SG has better access to data and depth of information about people with protected characteristics

Age Scotland

Age Scotland attended seven Scottish Government policy consultations, using the insights from older people and helpline issues to help form their response.

The Head of Policy and Communications met with the Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees and discussed issues arising from Helpline data analysis.

Case Study

Generations Working Together

240 Reasons to Smile

The following case study showcases the work of Generations Working Together. By adopting robust evaluation systems, the project is able to demonstrate the value of intergenerational work and partnership.

GWT worked with Voluntary Action Orkney (VAO) to develop tools and techniques to start a project which would connect older people with younger people and break down social isolation and loneliness in both groups.

The project was facilitated by VAO's Adult Befriending Service, who worked with pupils from P6/7 Glaitness Primary School. The pupils planned an enterprise called '240 Reasons to Smile', which aimed to bring people together from different generations in purposeful activities which promoted respect between generations, contributed to more connected communities, build relationships, develop communication, and eliminate stereotypes. It was hoped that playing games together would develop skills in communication, improve patience and resilience, increase self-esteem and confidence and encourage compassion, respect and empathy.

The students made weekly visits to the Eunson Kloss supported accommodation centre in Kirkwall. During these visits the students would ask an older person to join them in an activity, such as board games, 'Kurling', Nerf guns or soft bowls.

A baseline assessment via questionnaire was carried out at the start of the project. Residents were then asked to complete the same questionnaire after attending the sessions. All Eunson Kloss residents who took part in the evaluation said they had enjoyed interacting with the pupils, who made them smile. They also said they felt less lonely and isolated since attending the group and their self confidence had increased.

Collaboration

Age Equality organisations have increased collaborative work with other organisations, both within the E&HR portfolio and externally. These numbers have increased since the previous reporting periods. Below are some examples of successful partnership working.

Outside the Box

OTB was approached by Third Sector Human Rights and Equalities (THRE) to produce a briefing about ageing as a protected characteristic, with a focus on the rights of older people. They held meetings with THRE and produced the briefing between April and September.

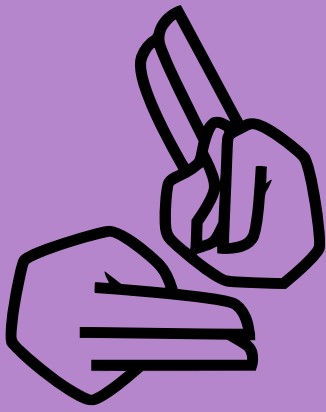
Scottish Older Peoples Forum

SOPA worked with Age Scotland on their Unforgotten Forces initiative, which is a consortium of armed forces and civilian charities working together to deliver high-quality and joined-up support that boosts the health and wellbeing of veterans in Scotland age 60 and older. SOPA contributed to an article in the Unforgotten Forces publication, and attended a veterans training session.

Examples of intersectional working within the Age portfolio

Age Scotland

Age Scotland is part of the Scottish Government's strategic partnership group for Hate Crime, set up to coincide with new Hate Crime legislation. Age Scotland worked with the ethnic minority older peoples forum and the LGBTQI+ older people's network to capture their perspectives and ensure their views and experiences are reflected in these government outputs. This provided policy makers with vital perspective from older people on the intersection between age and other characteristics like race and sexuality, and how these can increase vulnerability in the context of hate crime. Through these conversations they also reflected the barriers to justice, and the suggestions from individuals to address these in the soon-to-be launched strategy and delivery plan.



British Sign Language

Over the reporting period, these three organisations have enhanced the inclusion of Deaf people in Scotland through both the provision of direct support to individuals and policy involvement.

Over the six months, 1,042 people have been provided with information, skills building opportunities and other vital services. In addition, the portfolio supported 69 other organisations through training and direct support.

BSL Portfolio



British Deaf Association
Deafblind Scotland
Scottish Ethnic Minority Charity



Activity Summary

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 work with individuals	Providing advice	3	592
	Enhancing participation	3	481
	Building confidence	2	91
	Providing training	2	169
	Other work with individuals	-	-
 work with organisations	No. of Orgs		
	Training to organisations	2	37
	Capacity building support	1	17
	Shared knowledge/information	2	184

BSL and policy influence work

As well as the provision of support to individuals and organisations, the BSL Portfolio is involved in a wide range of policy influencing. All three organisations were involved in the development of the latest BSL plan and the list below demonstrates their reach elsewhere.

BSL Justice Advisory Group
 Scottish Courts and Tribunal Services
 Deafness and Mental Health
 See Hear Strategy Advisory Group
 Cross-Party Group on Deafness
 Scottish Government Sensory Loss and Social Care Advisory Group
 Social Security Scotland Inclusive Communication Group
 Westminster All-Party-Group on Ushers Syndrome
 Scottish COVID Inquiry
 Scottish Advisory Group on Deafblindness
 National Care Service Social Covenant Panel
 Human Rights Bill Consultation

Outcomes and Impact

Between them, the BSL organisations are working towards Fund Outcomes 1-7. Below are some examples of how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

Outcome 1

People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them.

Deafblind Scotland

18 individuals have completed the Right to Dream human rights training for those with sensory loss and report that they feel better informed about their human rights and when those rights are not being upheld.

Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life.

SEMDC

SEMDC has observed that, following attendance at workshops, there have been an increase in the number of job applications submitted by members and they are accessing more and better employment.

Outcome 7

The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice.

BDA

Deaf BSL users are reporting that their access to local services has improved following BDA's facilitation of contact between the community and local Health Board.

Case Study

Scottish Ethnic Minority Deaf Charity

This example demonstrates the provision of holistic and responsive support to members and how this is contributing to enhanced employability and overall participation in public life.

“At SEMDC I have hope. My dream since a little boy is to drive a fast car. I’ve been coming to Driving Theory Classes, I hope they continue.” - S

For one member who has shown great commitment and determination to developing his skills and progressing towards work, a massive hurdle presented itself as he tried to achieve his provisional driver’s license. Coming from a war-torn country and no BSL himself, he is progressing with the support of the English classes provided at SEMDC and also is a regular attendee at the Driving Theory Classes. However, after seven unsuccessful attempts, he became quite despondent and highlighted the issues he was having to the Employment Officer. She noted there was an issue with the lack of appropriate communication support. The member worked well with a Deaf Relay Interpreter, yet the request to provide this as part of the test had been denied.

A SEMDC staff member stepped in and provided one-to-one coaching for a number of sessions. SEMDC paid for the member’s last test, and on his ninth attempt it was a resounding PASS. SEMDC have budgeted some additional funding support to the practical test with the knowledge that the ability to drive will enhance independence and confidence and ultimately employability.



Disability Equality

Over the reporting period, the six organisations have continued to deliver work that provides direct support to disabled individuals and ensures the voice of disabled people is shaping policy within a wide range of settings. 3,657 people have been provided with information, skills building opportunities and other vital services. In addition, the portfolio supported 185 other organisations through training and direct support.

Several key themes have emerged from the Disability Equality Portfolio over this reporting period.

- Systemic issues such as the cost of living crisis compound the hardship experienced by disabled people, particular in the wake of the pandemic.
- A lack of disability competence within public services.
- An human rights-based approach is becoming embedded within organisations.



**disability
information
scotland**

BSL Portfolio

**Disability Equality Scotland
Disability Information Scotland
Glasgow Disability Alliance
Inclusion Scotland
Legal Services Agency
Neighbourhood Networks**



Glasgow Disability Alliance
Confident Connected Contributing



Legal Services Agency
Doing the Right Thing,
the Right Way



**Inclusion
Scotland**

Disabled People's Organisation

Our voices ■ Our choices



**Neighbourhood
Networks**



Disability Equality Scotland
Working towards Equality, Inclusion and Participation for Disabled People in Scotland

Activity Summary

The Disability Equality portfolio organisations continue to undertake a wide range of activities that both support disabled individuals and ensure the collective voice of disabled people shape the policy that most affects them.

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 work with individuals	Providing advice	5	1,330
	Enhancing participation	3	266
	Building confidence	2	163
	Providing training	3	320
	Advocacy / Case work	2	135
	Information sharing	5	30,139
 work with organisations	Training to organisations	5	59
	Capacity building support	3	64
	Shared knowledge/information	5	442
	Other work with organisations	-	-



Key policy contributions:

- Disability Equality Immediate Priorities Plan
- Programme for Government
- Human Rights Bill
- National Care Service
- UK COVID Inquiry
- Scotland COVID Inquiry

Fund Outcomes

Across the Portfolio, the Disability Equality organisations are contributing to all eight of the Equality and Human Rights Fund outcomes. Below are some examples.

Outcome 1

People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them.

Glasgow Disability Alliance

97% of those participating in GDA's learning programmes report increased understanding and/or knowledge of their rights. "I learned so much in the Human Rights session. It was very complicated but the GDA team explained it so well."

Outcome 2

People with protected characteristics have increased remedy when their rights have not been upheld. (3 organisations)

Legal Services Agency

LSA's advice and action on behalf of their disabled clients often results in the provision of services or adjustments which had previously been withheld. "We assisted our client to obtain reimbursement of adaptations that had been made to the bathroom in her property. The contractors had failed to take into consideration our client's visual impairment".

Outcome 5

SG has better access to data and depth of information about the experiences of people with protected characteristics. (two organisations)

Disability Equality Scotland

DES have been informed by MSPs that the information they collate and share is informing parliamentary questions and parliamentary committees.

Unexpected outcome

Involvement in the COVID Inquiries has been significant for several organisations. As well as an additional opportunity for the representation of the voices of disabled people, this has resulted in other outcomes including the development of relationships with, and learning from, legal council.

Case Study

Inclusion Scotland

This case study highlights how Inclusion Scotland's input and influencing work at policy level has contributed to changes in policy, enhancing the lives of disabled people.

Inclusion Scotland has been campaigning for several years for the reopening of the Independent Living Fund (ILF) Scotland to new applicants. Since it was closed to new applicants in 2015, disabled people who meet the criteria for this important financial support have been denied it.

IS developed Parliamentary Questions and sought out and worked with a Member of the Scottish Parliament to ask these questions and obtain a Ministerial response just before the Programme for Government was announced. This was secured and questions were asked in Parliament.

Alongside this, and throughout this period, IS widely promoted the financial crisis disabled people continue to endure, its implications for human rights enjoyments, and made the case for both this ask (ILF) and other asks centred on ways to increase disabled people's income. We highlighted how children living in poverty in Scotland are more likely to be living in a disabled household (containing at least one disabled person). We highlighted how disabled people have greater longitudinal financial precarity and the implications of this, and the greater costs of being a disabled person, including charges for social care and higher energy costs.

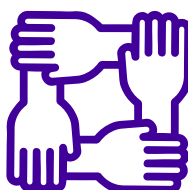
The reopening of the ILF in Scotland was announced in the Programme for Government.

Collaboration

Disability Equality organisations were asked to tell us about collaboration with other groups - both within the E&HR fund portfolio and externally. They are continuing to build on existing partnerships and develop new ones. Below are some examples of successful partnership working.

Disability Equality Scotland and Glasgow Disability Alliance

DES and GDA worked together to develop and run an online event on the impact on disabled people of Low Emission Zones (LEZ) being implemented across Scotland. This involved several planning meetings with Scottish Government and Transport Scotland, as well as engaging and supporting disabled people to attend, and supporting the delivery of the event on the day. The event was well attended, particularly by disabled people and carers in Glasgow where the LEZ scheme has been in force since June '23.



Legal Services Agency

LSA have started working closely with Scottish Council for Learning Disabilities which involves LSA holding a monthly outreach advice clinic at SCLD's premises. The opportunity to develop understanding of the areas of scope of both organisations ensures the provision of complimentary services in supporting disabled people and that appointments booked for outreach clinics are triaged appropriately.

Neighbourhood Networks and THRE

Neighbourhood Networks have started to work with THRE with a focus on developing governance from a human rights perspective. This had led to a full review of arrangements for involving members on the NN board of Trustees. It is anticipated this will lead to improved practice and more meaningful engagement with the Board.



Gender Equality

The progress reports have shown an excellent amount of strong partnership working between the Gender portfolio organisations with some inspiring examples of collaboration. They have met twice in this period both online and in person as part of the Gender portfolio group and have reported that they continue to find great value in participating in this group.

There continues to be a major focus on the cost of living crisis and how this affects women in Scotland and the report provides several clear examples of organisations directly supporting women who are struggling in the current financial climate.

It is widely reported that the gender organisations are finding resources very stretched at the moment due to an unprecedented demand for their work and some are also finding work with local authorities more slow paced than they would like.

Gender Equality Portfolio



Amina
Close the Gap
Equate Scotland
Elect Her
Engender



Glasgow Women's Library



Kairos Women+

Scottish Women's Budget Group






Scottish Women's Convention

YWCA Scotland



ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity summary April-September 2022

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 Work with individuals	Providing advice	3	2,767
	Enhancing participation	8	2,301
	Building confidence	4	2,119
	Providing training	6	410
	Information sharing	9	150,810
 Work with organisations	Training to organisations	7	69
	Organisational Support	6	100
	Shared knowledge/information	8	667
 Work with policy makers/ the public	Facilitated public engagement	4	1,433
	Participation in consultations	6	N/A
	Research	8	
	Representation at strategic levels	6	
	Public Education / Campaigning	6	

Activity examples

Equate has been engaged in a project supporting Ukrainian refugees resettling in Scotland to enter or return to tech careers. The programme, delivered in partnership with Capital City Partnership, The Royal Bank of Scotland (Natwest), and Code First Girls (CFG), has supported Ukrainian women with their digital and employability skills.

Kairos Women+

Kairos finalised the human rights participatory research and disseminated the report across Renfrewshire and wider Scotland. The report focusses on health and housing rights, and the intersection between these rights, for women in Scotland with a focus on Renfrewshire.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Between them, the Gender Equality organisations are working towards all eight of the Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

Outcome 1

People have greater awareness and understanding of their human rights, and how to access them

Amina

Client A was a victim of domestic abuse and was on a spousal visa. She did not know her options if she was to leave her husband i.e. visa status, property, financial support etc. Once she was fully informed via helpline and casework service, she was able to successfully apply for the Destitute Domestic Violence Concession Visa and able to access a solicitor herself for support.

Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

Young Women Lead Highland

Engaged with 24 young people's stories of social isolation in rural communities. With the development of their resource, they are hoping to use this resource connect to many others by opening a dialogue on what it means to be a young woman in a rural area.

The most interesting part of this project so far has been meeting and connecting with new people, and having honest and informative discussions surrounding our project.

YWL Highland Participant

Outcome 7

The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy & practice of public bodies

Engender

Published their joint research report, '*Trauma, abandonment, isolation*': *Experiences of pregnancy and maternity services in Scotland during COVID*, with the Health and Social Care Alliance. They brought together participants in the research with representatives from the Inquiry in a private meeting to highlight the findings. This empowered women to share their experiences of trauma and its lasting impact with decision makers.

Case Study

AMINA

We used the case study below as it provides an example of ongoing support and relationship building as well as working with other organisations.

HM - is the mother of an honour-based violence victim. HM was grieving her daughter's death, and feeling vulnerable. The Amina caseworker approached the situation with sensitivity so she was able to support HM fully.

They engaged in weekly calls over a year, which gave the mother an outlet to feel heard and understood. To show further support, the caseworker held a vigil for HM's daughter at the place of her death. HM was thankful for the consistent support and the efforts made by Amina to unite to highlight the importance of seeking justice and to raise awareness of the impact of abuse and how it leads to women being murdered.

Amina liaised with other organisations such as Million Women Rise and Karma Nirvana. HM was grateful for the support, and said, *'My daughter would have loved to know that she still has a voice from beyond the grave...it will make a difference – with all these organisations, including Amina uniting, it will make change happen'*. HM also said, *'I have felt understood, felt acknowledged and [the Amina Case Worker] has empathised with me.'*

HM continues to receive support with her mental health and moving forward whilst keeping her daughters' legacy alive.

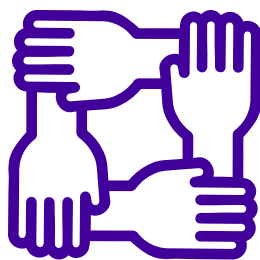
Gender Equality organisations were asked to tell us about collaboration with other groups both within the E&HR portfolio and externally. The instances of collaboration have increased since the previous reporting periods. Below are some examples of successful partnership working.

Engender & Close the Gap

Engender worked with Close the Gap to outline the need for improved gendered analysis within the National Strategy for Economic Transformation (NSET). This led to a detailed paper being produced on gendered gaps in NSET and a Summit between NSET leads and the Women's Sector.

Young Women's Movement & Close the Gap

Young Women's Movement continued to work with Kairos Women+ on their housing and health research. They delivered a training session around qualitative methods and focus groups, sharing insights about intersectionality and managing group dynamics. Five Kairos volunteers attended and fed back that they had found the session to be engaging and fun.



Example of intersectional working

Elect Her

Elect Her - Within the Scotland's Women GATHER event there were workshops specifically for women of colour and for disabled women, in acknowledgment that those groups of women face additional barriers in the democratic engagement. Their work in designing BSL resources also demonstrates their commitment to understanding that women with different disadvantages also require different streams of support.



Human Rights

The Human Rights portfolio have taken advantage of the networking opportunities provided by the wide scope of the E&HR fund and have been successful in creating relationships with other funded organisations. A number of projects have now come to fruition.

This reporting period saw intense work by the organisation on the Scottish Human Rights Bill consultation both in facilitating lived experience engagement and ensuring organisational knowledge was accurately reflected in responses.

Human Rights Portfolio



Civil Rights First
Environmental Rights Centre for
Scotland
Glasgow Council for the Voluntary
Sector
Just Right Scotland
The Poverty Alliance



ACTIVITY SUMMARY



Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland

ERCS's online petition on an enforceable human right to a healthy environment has been signed by 66 organisations and over 1814 individuals. This was sent to Mairi McAllan MSP on 12th October 2023.

THRE have been working to build their online presence and following. 1,179 people subscribe to main newsletters, in this reporting period THRE sent out six issues of their THRE Bulletin and 14 issues of the Equalities Updates news.

A new website went live on 31 May, and between then and the end of September had 16,196 unique visitors, with a total 46,515 page views. THRE have reached 1,571 followers on X and have launched an Instagram page. YouTube resources have been viewed a combined total of 656 times.

Just Right Scotland

JRS have begun the process of litigating a novel claim under the Equality Act, related to the requirement to provide reasonable adjustments for disabled people in education settings. These types of claims are very rare. In addition to the client requiring a remedy for breach of her rights, this case has the potential to draw attention to the requirement to make reasonable adjustments. JRS are also having to consider how the Court can make reasonable adjustments to the Court process itself to ensure fairness given the client's disabilities.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Below are a selection of examples showing how the Human Rights portfolio organisations are contributing to the outcomes of this fund.

1. People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them

86 people signed up to be a THRE Connector, an increase of 43 since the last reporting period. Connectors are the knowledge link between THRE and their organisation, and the people and organisations they work with.

2. People with protected characteristics have increased remedy where their rights have not been upheld

Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland launched their comprehensive free legal advice service in June 2021, and since then have had over 200 enquiries. The response to all enquiries is to offer an initial assessment and advice by phone and then, depending on the enquiry, follow up with advice letters and assist with representations including drafting and submitting complaints and appeals.

JustRight Scotland have had 12 active clients within the centre during this reporting period, some with multiple cases, in which public service providers are being actively challenged for failing to uphold our clients' rights. This shows how people have a greater awareness of their human rights, and by contacting us and having us act on their behalf they are attempting to access remedy.

3. People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

Poverty Alliance report that three new projects are being undertaken by another organisation as a result of action learning set work. Two are in partnership with Poverty Alliance and one with the Social Action Inquiry. These support the development of Roma young people, supporting them to know more about their rights, to get involved in social action, community work and to develop their research capabilities. This also closely links with action identified around youth participation in the action learning set portion of the project.

4. People with protected characteristics have increased influence in the decisions that affect them

A quote from a Civil Rights First client - *'the mixture of legal representation/advice as well as a holistic approach to dealing with matters is fantastic. If it wasn't for the support I doubt that we would have been able to carry on with claiming what we are eligible for. Something that has taken many years getting nowhere is now on route to having a positive outcome. Being able to fully participate in a maze of unknown procedures is extremely difficult especially when constant negative barriers are put in your way. However, having support to remove the negativity and barriers starts to put you on an equal footing.'*

6. Actors in civil society increasingly use Scotland's domestic and international equality and human rights framework to influence and effect change

A client of Civil Rights First sought assistance for her disabled, autistic son to enable him to attend college. Historically the client had approached the local authority repeatedly for her son to attend college and although a potential budget appeared to be in place, the local authority had obstructed any provision of support workers to enable the young person to access college. CRF provided advice to the client and organised a meeting with the local authority. Following successful negotiation at this meeting support was put in place for the young person to attend college

7. The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy & practice of public bodies

JustRight Scotland report that Scottish Government's analysis of consultation refers to JRS as a key stakeholder in the process. The supporting document similarly notes the direct response to consultation questions, as well as the response by JustCitizens, the lived experience panel supported by JustRight Scotland. Their response was submitted at the end of the last reporting period, and is now being directly referenced by the Scottish Government.

8. Public services increasingly embed equality & human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions

Quotes from THRE course participants *'I found the course gave me an opportunity to reflect on my practice and how I can change it, as well as how my service embeds human rights in its practice, policies and how we can improve or adapt them.'*

'I would like to look at our organisation's accountability in terms of clearly indicating how concerns and issues can be raised as I'm not sure if this is always completely clear.'

'In my work, I reviewed my policies and procedures and was able to change the language in my application forms, make it more accessible for people.'



Case Study

Poverty Alliance

This case study shows how human rights based learning and questioning (Outcome 1) leads to action within a rights based framework (Outcome 6)

In one Poverty Alliance Action Learning Set the question 'How can I support my organisation to move from dealing with the consequences of poverty to taking a human rights-based approach to address the causes of poverty?' was explored.

The set supported the presenter to explore the barriers to this that currently exist. The group identified key issues around burnout, differing understandings of the causes of poverty, a lack of targeted learning opportunities, and a feeling that challenging structures was the role of one person in the organisation rather than an organisational wide task.

Key actions that were identified in this process included building organisational capacity with a weekend away with specific training from an external facilitator; deepening community engagement by supporting a community conference; facilitating and incentivising volunteer learning.

Over the last several months the set member has taken sustained and substantial action towards these. Actions taken have included, but not been limited to, hosting a learning event with Darren McGarvey to support the wider community and volunteers to think differently about poverty, creating and sharing social media content about community development, planning a community conference, and planning a weekend away to support staff development.

We asked the human rights organisations to tell us about collaboration with other groups - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally. Below are examples of collaboration during this reporting period.

Environmental Rights Centre Scotland and MECOPP

ERCScotland have been working on participative action research in collaboration with MECOPP and are now seeking action on poor environmental conditions of Gypsy/Traveller static sites.

THRE and JustRight Scotland

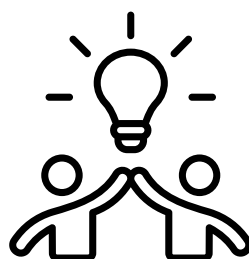
THRE and JRS worked together to develop and launch an innovative new six part email course - Equalities and Human Rights in the Digital Space.

Poverty Alliance and ERCS

Poverty Alliance and ERCS developed and delivered a workshop entitled 'How Advancing the Right to a Healthy Environment can Help Address the Causes of Poverty'. This explored how a strong right to a healthy environment can support anti-poverty work.

Poverty Alliance and Human Rights Consortium Scotland

Poverty Alliance delivered a joint event with Human Rights Consortium Scotland entitled 'It's All Rights: Poverty and the Scottish Human Rights Bill Consultation' This event was attended by 55 organisations.





LGBTQI+ Equality

The organisations continue to work hard to increase the visibility and amplify the voice of LGBTQI+ communities both in the public and policy sphere. Community engagement events and attendance at Prides have formed a significant part of the work during this period.

Organisations report challenges in managing communication channels and creating safe online spaces for communities as a result of continued negative public and media climate around trans equality in particular. This has also resulted in challenges in engaging community members in policy work due to an onset of apathy towards those in power and civil society. These wider challenges are reflected within the organisations, where many staff are impacted due to LGBTQI+ identities






LGBTQI+ Equality Portfolio

Equality Network Ltd
LEAP Sports Scotland
LGBT Healthy Living Centre
LGBT Youth Scotland
Stonewall Equality Ltd



ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity summary October 2022 - March 2023

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 Work with individuals	Providing advice	3	1,780
	Enhancing participation	3	205
	Building confidence	3	274
	Information sharing	2	30,000
 Work with organisations	No. of Orgs		
	Training to organisations	3	66
	Capacity building support	4	79
 Work with policy makers/ the public	Shared knowledge/information	3	1,170
	Facilitated direct engagement	4	
	Participation in consultations	4	
	Public education/campaign	4	
	Research	2	
	Representation at strategic levels	4	

LEAP Sports have held 17 individual support sessions with activists as part of the Equality in Sport network to empower and enable them to represent and influence through different sports structures and national consultations.

LGBT Youth Scotland have provided LGBTQI+ Awareness training to 1169 professionals across 40 third sector, public sector and private sector organisations.

The LGBT+ Helpline Scotland, run by **LGBT Health & Wellbeing** responded to 1,221 requests for support. Callers were signposted to a variety of services and information by trained volunteers.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Below are a selection of examples showing how LGBTQI+ organisations are contributing to the outcomes of this fund.

1. People have greater awareness of their human rights and how to access them

Equality Network published a survey on LGBTQI+ human rights that translated some of the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill consultation into more accessible language. The survey shared information on the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR), and the right to a healthy living environment. Almost 700 people responded in full and in so doing heard about their ICESCR rights.

3. People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

LGBT Health & Wellbeing supported 32 volunteers to contribute a total of 764 hours across 3 programmes. Feedback highlights what the volunteers take from their roles; *'Finally having a queer community in my life - feels so lovely to be surrounded by queer folk helping queer folk'*

'Being able to contribute to my community, feeling part of a team, feeling that I'm making a difference.'

Stonewall delivered a Workplace Conference and invited three alumni to participate in a panel to share their reflections on the Future Leaders Programme. The reflections shared highlighted the positive impact that the programme has had on their careers, with many expressing that the programme had provided them with the confidence to be authentically themselves in the workplaces, and that they have used activities from the programme to influence and impact projects in their workplaces.

4. People with protected characteristics have increased influence in the decisions that affect them

Feedback from one of the conversion practices survivors who Equality Network facilitated to meet with the UN Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity: *'I felt absolutely heard and received and respected. At the end he asked me to stay in touch and said that if I was at all unhappy with anything in his preliminary findings I could let him know... It was pretty intense and I feel a bit dazed and wiped out now but it was totally worth it. Thanks to both of you for giving me this opportunity. Every time I get to tell my story in a context where it is properly heard and respected it leaves me feeling stronger and more whole.'*

LEAP Sports set up consultation with 7 people to talk to organisation Z about their particular experiences in that sport. The organisation was able to use these experiences directly to create a better and more inclusive policy position than where they had started in their consultation. People involved in consultations have told us that they feel more empowered, more able to have their voice heard, and more appreciative of being involved in decision making processes.

5. Scottish Government has better access to data and depth of information about experiences of people with protected characteristics

LGBT Health & Wellbeing facilitated a panel of LGBTQI+ Refugee and Asylum seekers to share lived experience in housing and rights abuses. Attendees included NHS, third-sector, an MSP. Subsequently produced a report 'Experiences of LGBTQI+ Asylum seekers and refugees in Scotland' from the testimonies of 32 community members. This has been shared with the Refugee Integration Team, Equalities Unit, NHS partners, MPs and MSPs

LGBT Youth Scotland conducted two 'deep dive' research pieces on key topics; trans young people's experiences, education and health. The 'Our Life in Scotland for LGBTQI+ Young People – Health' report has been shared with the Mental Health Directorate at Scottish Government. New internal online platform allows research findings to be included in policy responses.

6. Actors in civil society increasingly use Scotland's domestic and international equality and human rights framework to influence and effect change

LEAP Sports met with UN Independent Expert (IE) in sexual orientation and gender identity and were able to make a strong case for attention on sport and physical activity and to discuss this in some detail with the IE. Some of this discussion was reflected in a subsequent and more recent statement specifically on sport. More information can be found [here](#).

7. The experience of people with protected characteristics is increasingly used to inform policy and practice of public bodies

The Equality Network report the following in regards to work around the Hate Crime Implementation Strategy: *'Our feedback as a member of the Scottish Government's Hate Crime Strategic Partnership Group is reflected in the terms of reference being developed for the new implementation group, of which we have been invited to be part. We have also been contacted multiple times by the Hate Crime and Public Order Act Team at the Scottish Government, to feed in further on implementation, on police training, and on guidance on section 15 of the Act. We have been invited to feed in directly to Police Scotland on related training, and have been asked to share our thoughts with the Minister for Equalities, Migration and Refugees. We have been invited to be part of the short-term Third-Party Reporting working group with Police Scotland.'*

LGBT Health & Wellbeing saw their work reflected in the New Dementia Strategy Draft commitment to LGBTQI+ people – the Scottish Government will ensure 'that culturally appropriate dementia information and services for people from marginalised communities, including those from ethnic minorities and LGBTQI+ communities, are available and accessible.'

8. Public services increasingly embed equality and human rights in their strategic planning and day-to-day functions

Feedback from an attendee at Stonewalls Allyship programme:

'I'm a Project Coordinator at a University in Scotland. I look after staff inclusion activities and support networks such as the LGBTQ+ network. I applied to the programme for two reasons: Firstly, trans inclusion and allyship were the two pieces that I was interested in – and the connections between these. Secondly, it sounded quite action focused rather than awareness focused. In the current climate it felt important to find out more about what I could do and take back to my organisation.

'The main thing I took away from the programme was the historical figures explainer that the facilitators took us through – as it showed trans people as people first (rather than only being trans). I also found the examples around how to challenge transphobia really clear and useful.

'Following the programme, I'm looking for a way to share these clear examples [of challenging transphobia] with others internally. I would recommend this programme for people who are leaders in their organisations or who have less awareness of trans inclusion. The programme was really action focused which was a big strength of the day.

LGBT Youth Scotland have focused on reaching rural communities, through outreach by the education manager. The Local Authority Orkney found there was a gap of delivery for their newly qualified teachers and due to the geography of the Orkney Islands there wasn't the opportunity to bring the staff together in person. The local authority had agreed that all secondary schools will go through the Charter but to ensure consistency of approach, the Education Charter Team delivered an online workshop to all NQT's. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive and there is a future session agreed for the following year.

Case Study

LGBT Health & Wellbeing

This case study highlights Fund Outcomes 3, 4 and 5. It shows how when people participate in research they can use their findings to influence policy makers, while providing the Scottish Government with quality data.

Older LGBTQI+ people have lived through periods when they were criminalised simply for being who they are. LGBTQI+ people experience higher levels of depression and anxiety directly linked to exclusion and oppression, making the need for social housing with others like them and/or 'with them' imperative, especially in older age. In direct contradiction to the myth of the 'pink pound' research shows that older LGBTQI+ people have difficulty securing affordable and safe housing. Added to the financial insecurity, more older LGBTQI+ people live alone than older straight people and their social support shrinks more, this can be partially explained by lack of children and estranged relationships with blood relatives over the life course.

The Age Action Group conducted a literature review and surveyed 183 LGBTQI+ people about housing and social care needs as they age. As a result the group published the report 'Fit for Purpose: report into the Housing and Social Care Needs of Older LGBTQI+ People in Scotland.'

The report included key findings in the areas of housing and social care including;

- Only 9% of the respondents have made any plans for future living arrangements if their level of independence decreases.
- 74% were worried about LGBTQI+ discrimination in care and 56% feared being forced back into the closet.
- Most wish to live in LGBTQI+ housing if supported living was ever required.
- Over 90% of respondents thought it was important to be connected to the wider LGBTQI+ community. The majority of respondents were worried that their family of choice would be excluded from life and care.
- When considering social care staff coming into one's own home, respondents placed great importance on acceptance of their LGBTQI+ status – with 96% of respondents saying acceptance was important or extremely important.

Fit for Purpose was launched in September and has been shared and discussed with Paul McLennan MSP, Minister for Housing. There was media coverage by BBC Scotland and the group have been invited to deliver a workshop at the Scottish Federation of Housing Associations conference on 22nd February in Glasgow. The report can be found [here](#).

CONTRIBUTION TO POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

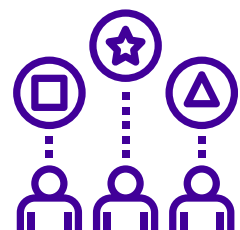
Examples of contributions to Scottish Government policies and strategies during the reporting period are provided below.

Following LEAP Sports input to the Scottish Government Inquiry into Female Participation in Sport and Physical Activity they were invited to the Health, Social Care and Sport Committee to give evidence about experiences of the LGBTQI+ community. Following a period of preparation including focus groups and community engagement, they attended the committee session. There was additional work done following a request from an MSP. The full correspondence can be found [here](#).

LGBT Health and Wellbeing and LGBT Youth Scotland worked together to write to, and meet with the Minister for Public Health and Women's Health, to discuss the Scottish Government's NHS Gender Identity Services: strategic action framework, and the importance of transforming gender identity services in Scotland to improve trans people's health and lives.

Others strategic contributions include...

- LGBTQI+ Cross Party Group.
- National Taskforce/Human Rights Leadership
- Universal Periodic Review of Human Rights
- Mental Health Strategy
- Suicide Prevention Strategy
- Self-Harm Strategy design group
- Hate Crime Strategy
- National Gender Identity Healthcare reference group
- NHS National Education for Scotland development group
- Non-Binary Equality Action Plan
- Equally Safe Strategy
- Dementia Strategy



COLLABORATION

We analysed LGBTQI+ portfolio collaboration with other organisations - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally.



LGBTQI+ organisations reported collaborating with 12 other E&HR groups during the reporting period.

LGBTQI+ organisations reported collaborating with at least 45 other external groups during the reporting period.



LGBT Youth Scotland have a strong partnership with Education Scotland and the General Teaching Council. The Education Scotland Improving Gender Balance and Equalities work has been completed and published, and also includes links to LGBT YS Life In Scotland Education report.

The Education Manger led a training session for more than 40 members of the CLD Standards Council. All 32 local authorities are currently linked in with work through the Charter or alongside the Education Manager.



Equality Network has supported local grassroots group including; Trans Pride Scotland, and with groups developing Pride events in Lochaber, Arran, Oban and Shetland, as well as Ayrshire LGBTQ, to support their development and sustainability.



LEAP Sports engaged in the delivery of a training workshop to Warner Bros / Discovery UK sports broadcast journalism team giving them the opportunity to discuss how to handle LGBTQI+ sports stories and content within media with 40 of their team.



Race Equality

14 organisations within the Race Equality portfolio continued to deliver a range of activities from service delivery to policy influencing. We are now seeing positive evidence of impact and the difference made through monitoring and evaluation systems, and also evidence of increased collaboration work among organisations within the E&HR portfolio, leveraging of E&HR fund to deliver additional outcomes.

The biggest issue affecting service delivery during the reporting period continues to be the impact of the cost of living crisis on minority ethnic communities. Responses to high poverty levels is made challenging by the lack of disaggregated data. The cost of living crisis has continued to impact both the demand for advice and support, and on staff within the funded organisations, where funding levels to support salaries have remained stagnant.

Some organisations have expressed concern about current challenges facing public sector partners, including the impact of budget cuts on third sector funding and delays in confirming funding.

Overall, the race equality organisations have provided support to **13,705** people, and **196** organisations.

Race Equality Portfolio



BEMIS Scotland
Boots & Beards



CEMVO
CRER
CSREC



Ethnic Minorities Law Centre

Feniks



Friends of Romano Lav

GREC

Intercultural Youth Scotland



MECOPP


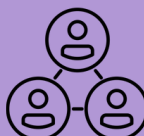
Multi-Cultural Family Base

STEP

WSREC



ACTIVITY SUMMARY

Activity type	Activity	No. of orgs delivering	No. of people
 Work with individuals	Providing advice	9	2,767
	Enhancing participation	11	2,301
	Building confidence	6	2,119
	Providing training	1	410
	Advocacy / Casework	7	1,218
	Information Sharing to individuals	7	150,810
	Other support to individuals	4	4,890
 Work with organisations	Training to organisations	8	69
	Capacity building support	6	100
	Shared knowledge/information	12	667
	Other work with organisations	4	27

Service Delivery Examples

FENIKS

Feniks has a monthly newsletter in Polish language for engagement and information sharing which goes out to over 600 email addresses with open rate of around 50%.

Boots and Beards

Boots and Beards identified a need for health and wellbeing activities for children with additional support needs within the community. Boots and Beards set up a WhatsApp carers support group which has grown from six to 40 members.

CSREC

86% of Language Cafe attendees reported more confidence in speaking English, 71% reported they use English everyday life. Language barriers is the number one barrier to participation for people from ethnic minorities.

OUTCOMES AND IMPACT

Between them, the Race Equality organisations are working towards all eight of the Fund Outcomes. Below are some examples how funded organisations are achieving impact specific to individual Fund Outcomes.

Outcome 3

People with protected characteristics have increased participation in public life

Friends of Romano Lav

FoRL held their own Memorial Day commemoration in Queens park at the memorial stone which they installed in 2019. The event was entirely organised and run by young Roma staff. The two catalysts who have been involved in further teaching opportunities delivered powerful speeches, linking what they had learned about human rights to the horrors of the Holocaust, and why human rights are so important.

Outcome 4

People with protected characteristics have increased influence in decisions that affect them

STEP

STEP demonstrated the impact of their Starter Sacks early years programme. 60% of staff reported:

- The Starter Sacks had improved family engagement in early learning and increased parental engagement in school life.
- Improved communication between families and education settings when both settled and travelling.

Outcome 7

The experience of people with PCs is increasingly used to inform the policy and practice of public bodies

BEMIS

BEMIS facilitated the development of the new The Race, Equality and Human Rights Network (Scotland)- officially launched in December 2023). During the period, 22 of the organisations contributed to development of the Hate Crime Strategy Implementation plan. Scottish Government teams have relayed their thanks and appreciation for this input via email and verbally at meetings.

Case Study

Grampian Regional Equality Council

The case study from GREC showcases the significance of community involvement in policy and decision-making

In early 2022, GREC collaborated with First Bus Aberdeen to assist asylum seekers in the city, a newly designated dispersal area. First Bus cooperated with GREC by introducing a weekly bus pass, providing free travel within city limits for asylum seekers facing financial constraints.

Following six months, GREC conducted surveys and focus groups to evaluate the initiative's impact, particularly in dispersal areas lacking essential services, such as immigration advice. Based on the findings, GREC proposed expanding the travel scheme for asylum seekers, and shared recommendations with local and national stakeholders, including the Scottish Government, MSPs, MPs, and third sector organisations like Maryhill Integration Network and Voices Network from BRC advocating for free transport. GREC, along with these organisations, engaged in discussions with the Transport Minister.

Insights from the Aberdeen bus project were also presented to the Scottish Parliament's Equalities, Human Rights, and Civil Justice Committee, with GREC facilitating the participation of individuals with lived experience of the asylum system. One of the individuals they supported also submitted a statement to the Committee that *'ensuring accessible and affordable transportation options is crucial for asylum seekers to attend appointments, interviews, and access essential services.'* In its final report, the Committee acknowledged the Aberdeen scheme and a pilot initiative in Glasgow, emphasising the need for a costed provision to extend the scheme to rural areas. They endorsed nationwide implementation within the current parliamentary session, and urged the Scottish Government to devise a plan for a Scotland-wide rollout, following the analysis of data from both the Aberdeen and Glasgow schemes.

COLLABORATION

We asked the Race Equality organisations to tell us about collaboration with other groups - both within the E&HR portfolio and externally. Overall, they have collaborated with **20** Equality organisations and **76** organisations out with the E&HR fund portfolio.

STEP

STEP continued to work with MECOPP & GREC to collaborate with the community health workers who make referrals to STEP where families need support to access education. The main collaborative initiative during this period was to tackle the barrier presented by the Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP) curriculum. STEP produced paper and web resources for families, distributing these via MECOPP and Article 12. STEP also works with GREC through the Grampian Education Group for Gypsy/Travellers. STEP has demonstrated how this collaboration adds value to its programmes particularly Starter Sacks early years programme, and their community consultations.

WSREC

WSREC supported 20 women service users to attend to the 'Scotland's Women Gather' event hosted by Elect Her at the Scottish Parliament on June 24th, 2023.

Also in collaboration with Boots and Beards, WSREC delivered family excursions and walking tours exclusively for women.

Council of Ethnic Minority Voluntary Organisations

CEMVO developed partnerships with civil servants within the National Care service and Hate Crime Strategy teams, evidenced in being asked to facilitate groups at their National Conference, develop workshops etc. They also collaborated with SHIMCA, an organisation that supports ethnic minorities in Inverness and surrounding areas, to ensure that ethnic minorities that live rurally have their voices and experiences heard in the COVID Inquiry.

Added value

An analysis of funded activity shows that the Equality and Human Rights fund has enabled organisations to leverage additional funding and deliver initiatives beyond their initial commitment. Examples of added value activity from the Race Equality portfolio are provided below.

MECOPP

As a result of a new partnership with Turn2Us, MECOPP made successful funding applications for seven community members/families. They are also the referral partner for Bute Advice Centre to distribute the Fairer Food and Fuel as a result of the report we produced for Argyll & Bute Council. This was built on the back of the small grant scheme (£150 award) we delivered to community members experiencing delays in being awarded COL support payment for utilities to 100 households.

STEP

Designed an art challenge webpage with information and resources to support individuals and teachers to take part. This includes three digital inspiration Padlets for young people and educators showing art techniques and examples of artwork and artists from traditionally nomadic cultures. STEP developed a sample lesson plan for educators to adapt and use in class. The 'My Journey' art challenge 2023 generated 1968 twitter impressions and 91 webpage views before the actual launch showing interest and engagement from followers (national/UK & beyond).

Ethnic Minorities Law Centre

EMLC was invited by Councillor Graham Campbell to speak at the Race and Justice Conference, held in Bristol. The subject was Access to Justice and the availability of services to people, on the back of this speech we provided training to Citizens Advice Bureau in Glasgow as well as to International Women's Group in Glasgow on Immigration and Domestic Violence. This was well received and further training has been arranged for Women's Aid Perth.

8. CONCLUSION

This is the fourth progress report of the three-year Scottish Government's Equality and Human Rights fund. Organisations have continued to build on successful delivery from the first 18 months. Highlights include the increasing evidence of networking and collaboration among funded organisations. In some cases, this has embedded human rights approaches and project work. During the reporting period, many groups took part in activity related to the Scottish Government's Human Rights Bill consultation, with 19 organisations seeking their community's views as part of their responses. Six of the funded groups were also involved with the Scottish Government's COVID Inquiry including responding to the 'Let's Be Heard' campaign.

This round of reporting has also seen positive evidence of impact and the difference made through monitoring and evaluation systems, leading to an improvement in the quality of reporting on outcomes.

The cost of living crisis continues to be the main challenge arising from progress reports, and funded groups have continued to collect data and evidence of its impact on the communities they support, who are struggling to manage increased costs of food and fuel. Organisations also report challenges in managing communication channels and creating safe online spaces for communities as a result of continued negative public and media climate around trans equality in particular.

The Equality and Human Rights fund at Inspiring Scotland team continue strong working partnerships with the portfolio. We have applied Inspiring Scotland's ethos of helping organisations to succeed, focusing on impact, and taking a collaborative approach to bringing together organisations to support and learn from each other. During the reporting period, we facilitated two 'spotlight sessions' featuring the work of funded groups, a portfolio-wide networking attended by 65 colleagues, two gender equality portfolio meetings, and the first race equality portfolio session.

Over the next 18 months, we will continue to build on these positive working relationships, encourage collaboration and partnerships, and gather evidence of the impact and reach of the 48 funded organisations.

About Inspiring Scotland

Inspiring Scotland is a registered Scottish charity with a mission is to inspire people, communities, organisations and government to work together to drive social change and transform lives. Our vision is that every person in Scotland can enjoy a happy, healthy life free from poverty or disadvantage.

We do this by raising funding from private individuals, trusts and foundations, Scottish Government and local authorities and investing in social funds addressing our strategic themes. These include improving the life chances for children and young people and supporting people who face barriers to inclusion because of discrimination and disadvantage to live flourishing lives.

Our aim is to amplify and strengthen the impact of organisations across civic society by helping them build their strength, resilience and reach

INSPIRING SCOTLAND

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and a registered Scottish charity, No. SC039605.**