



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government

OPEN CONSULTATION

Consultation on Future Funding for Equality and Inclusion Grant Programme

We are seeking your views on equality and inclusion funding.

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Ministerial foreword

As a Government, we are working towards a more equal Wales, a country which ensures level access to services, tackling inequalities and seeking fairer outcomes for all our citizens.

These aims have never been more important. The gap between the richest and the poorest in our society continues to widen, and there are many extremist voices exploiting social media to promote their agendas of intolerance and hatred for other people. COVID-19 has had an enormous impact on all of us, but disproportionately so on those who are socially or economically excluded as well

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as some specific groups. We are doing all we can to support individuals and communities through this pandemic.

We must continue to support those who remain at greatest risk of discrimination and unfair treatment. These include disabled people, Black, Asian and ethnic minorities, Gypsy, Roma and Travellers, refugees and asylum seekers and LGBT+ people.

Our Equality and Inclusion Fund has long been at the heart of our work in this area, providing support for and through representative organisations with expertise in aspects of equality and inclusion. At the same time, we have supported distinct service provision for some key groups. We have provided significant investment in this way and intend to continue doing so, but it is not enough to stand still.

We must periodically examine whether or not this approach is working and whether or not we need to do things differently. I am especially keen to explore options for great collaboration, to provide the greatest benefit to everyone who is disadvantaged or experiences discrimination, and show that equality is for all.

It remains essential to make the best possible use of budgets to deliver our objectives, and bring hope for a changing society. This is why this consultation is so important. We need the advice and guidance of those in the field, those who provide services, and individuals and communities who are either receiving those services or need them, to tell us what, if anything needs to change.

I encourage all those with an interest in promoting equality and human rights in Wales to consider the proposals here carefully and respond to this consultation.

Jane Hutt MS

Deputy Minister and Chief Whip

Introduction: where we are now

The Welsh Government's current Equality and Inclusion (E&I) Funding

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Programme was launched in July 2016. The programme was developed to support our Equality Objectives 2016-20 and protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.

What are protected characteristics?

It is against the law (the Equality Act 2010) to discriminate against someone because of age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

These are called protected characteristics.

The total programme budget is £1.6million for 2020-21. At present the programme consists of a grant for four representative organisations and three Inclusion Projects as follows:

Grants for representative bodies and the current lead agency for each

- All Wales Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Engagement Programme (EYST)
- LGBT Equality in Wales (Stonewall Cymru)
- Driving Forward Disability Rights in Wales (Disability Wales)
- All Wales Gender Equality Project (Women's Equality Network (WEN) Wales)

Inclusion projects (contracted services) and lead agencies

- Travelling Ahead, supporting Gypsies, Roma and Travellers (TGP Cymru)
- The Asylum Rights Programme (The Welsh Refugee Council, partnered with EYST, TGP Cymru, Bawso, and Asylum Justice)
- The All Wales Hate Crime Report and Support Centre (Victim Support Cymru)

Following grant bidding and procurement processes, the programme began on 1 April 2017, initially for a 3 year period. This was extended and is now due to conclude on 30 September 2021.

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Changes since 2017

There have been many changes affecting this programme since it began in 2017, especially during 2020. This includes global and national events as well as changes within Wales, the work of the Welsh Government and progress with the programme itself.

Some of the main changes include:

- the UK voted to leave the European Union in 2016 and the long process which followed highlighted many issues in relation to equality and human rights, such as impacts on migrants and the implications for equality legislation
- the Covid-19 pandemic has disproportionately adversely affected some groups of people, including women, Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic, Disabled and Older People. Reports commissioned by the Welsh Government, led by Professor Emmanuel Ogbonna and Professor Debbie Foster, both of Cardiff University, have both demonstrated and deepened our understanding of these impacts. The Welsh Government has developed a repository to collate reports and information from many sources on the impact of COVID-19 on people with protected characteristics
- the "Me Too" and "Black Lives Matter" movements have highlighted sexual abuse and racial inequality at a global level, not least in the UK, generating transformations at all levels which are still progressing
- the Welsh Government has published a new Strategic Equality Plan for 2020-2024, with refreshed Equality Objectives
- Several other equality plans have been published or are being developed by the Welsh Government, including the Advancing Gender Equality in Wales Plan, 'Action on Disability: The Right to Independent Living' framework, the Race Equality Action Plan, and the LGBT+ Action Plan. Each of these plans sit below the overarching Strategic Equality Action Plan, but with more focussed objectives and specific actions tailored to their audiences
- all of these plans have highlighted the ways in which different aspects of inequality can combine to increase discrimination and disadvantage even more for some people. This effect is known as intersectionality
- the third sector in Wales has had to weather significant change in the last ten

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years. It has been seriously impacted by COVID-19, a decade of austerity, the loss of EU funding and other factors which have reduced funding streams and increased demand for services. These broader issues have substantial implications in relation to equality and inclusion, as so many third sector organisations and community groups support vulnerable people and work to promote equality across different aspects of Welsh life.

What stakeholders have told us about the current programme. Key messages and emerging themes

Funding period

There have been many requests to extend the length of funding, ideally to provide a 5 year programme and at least to avoid 1 or 2 year funding periods. Inception and recruitment at the start of a programme, and winding down at the end impact significantly on shorter programmes. Short funding periods lead to interruptions in delivery, increased staff turnover and poorer outcomes overall, even where funding is renewed year on year. Conversely we have also received feedback which indicates that the current system reduces opportunities for other organisations who are not selected to access funding, with suggestions that longer funding periods may exacerbate this.

Overall budget

Equality is recognised to be an issue across all Welsh Government Departments, which should also underpin all public spending in Wales. Nevertheless, this particular budget, although relatively modest, is considered to be crucial in demonstrating the Welsh Government's commitment to equality in general and empowering equality organisations to contribute to the Welsh Government's equality aims, not least in relation to the Well-being of Future Generations Act, which includes the goal of a more equal Wales.

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Core funding

There is felt to be a need for more sustainable funding for key representative equality organisations including core costs, using the principle of full-cost recovery for project funding which the Welsh Government supports through the Code of Practice for Funding the Third Sector. Many third sector organisations struggle to secure core funding since other funding is often project-specific.

Alignment with the Welsh Government's equality plans

Since the start of the current E&I funding programme in 2017 the Welsh Government has published a new Strategic Equality Plan (SEP), together with the Gender Equality Plan and Action on Disability, A Framework for Independent Living. There is a commitment to commence the Socio-Economic Duty in 2021. Work is also underway on the Race Equality Action Plan and an LGBT+ Action Plan for Wales, together with wider research which will inform our thinking as we look to strengthen and advance human rights in Wales. All of these will be complete and in place by the time the new funding programme starts. The need for closer links between our funding and strategic equality aims, including a focus on socio-economic inequality and intersectionality (see below for explanations of these terms), has been highlighted through all of the engagement with stakeholders.

What does “Intersectionality” mean?

This word means recognising the way in which power structures based on factors such as gender, race, sexuality, disability, class, age and faith interact with each other and create inequalities, discrimination and oppression.

Crucially, it is about understanding the way in which characteristics such as gender, race or class, can interact and produce unique and often multiple experience and disadvantage in specific situation.

For example, a Black woman might face discrimination from a business that is not distinctly due to her **race** (because the business does not discriminate

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against black men) nor distinctly due to her **gender** (because the business does not discriminate against white women), but due to a combination of the two factors.

What does “socio-economic inequality” mean?

This term recognises that inequality often relates to social and economic factors such as income, social class, occupation, education and where you live. These factors, perhaps most obviously poverty, can interact with other forms of inequality, to increase disadvantage and discrimination experienced by some people.

The Welsh Government is taking action to address these issues by commencing Part 1, Section 1 of the Equality Act 2010, **the Socio-economic Duty**.

We recognise that organisations supported by this funding will remain independent and autonomous. Nevertheless, they should share our core values in relation to equality and inclusion and be able to help meet our strategic aims and objectives, including the need to work with other organisations funded by this programme to build partnerships and develop intersectional solutions to inequality. We know that sometimes this will mean challenging Welsh Government to do more or change our own approach on particular issues

Valued services

Engagement has affirmed the value of some elements of the current programme, in particular the Inclusion projects which provide valued services to Gypsies, Roma and Travellers; refugees and asylum seekers; and victims of hate crimes. Officials also consider that these projects have worked well over the programme period, the need for the respective services is undiminished, and the outcomes are closely aligned with our Strategic Equality objectives and other equality plans.

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Grassroots engagement

Working with smaller, grassroots organisations has the potential to be transformative in developing equality plans and delivering actions that can make the most favourable impact for communities. It is suggested the Welsh Government makes funding available to ensure all voices are heard and more people can play an active part. This may mean commissioning larger organisations to administer and distribute funding to smaller, local groups, or requiring a consortia approach.

Links with community cohesion

There are close links between the Equality and Inclusion Programme and our Community Cohesion Programme which supports regional teams embedded in local authorities across Wales which work to promote good community relations. These links have been strengthened in recent years, with the main delivery bodies on each side collaborating more effectively and networking events helping to build relationships and improve communications. This is particularly beneficial in terms of linking national organisations funded through the E&I programme with local priorities and activity, since the Community Cohesion teams are embedded in local authorities and work regionally. There is, however, scope to improve these links further to benefit both programmes, for example by further strengthening the arrangements for sharing information and updates between the programmes.

Mentoring

Several of the organisations currently funded by the E&I programme have run mentoring schemes, aiming to provide development opportunities and, in the long term, increase diversity in Welsh public life. These schemes have been seen as a valuable part of the programme, but stakeholders have suggested that there would be greater value in having a single, more substantial mentoring scheme with a partnership across the programme, providing a wider range of potential placements for participants and reducing overall administration and

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costs.

What we propose to do

Introduce a 5 year programme to align more closely with the next Senedd term which is due to begin in May 2021.

Align Equality Funding objectives more closely to the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Objectives and related equality plans. Funding bids would need to demonstrate how activity would support these objectives. Organisations funded through the programme, while retaining their independence and autonomy, would need to share the Welsh Government's core values in relation to equality and human rights and be able to show how their actions will help with achieving our strategic aims and objectives.

Increase the focus on socio-economic inequality and intersectionality. This would mean paying more attention to inequalities that relate to differences in income, social class, occupation, education and where people live (socio-economic inequality), as well as the ways in which different aspects of inequality interact (intersectionality) This might result in a smaller proportion of the funding being committed in relation to single protected characteristics and more to collaborative work between strategic equality organisations.

Subject to the previous two principles, retain our focus on race, disability, gender and LGBT+ as the main protected characteristics to be supported through this funding. We will seek a balance between intersectional approaches and actions targeted towards specific groups. These approaches are not inherently in conflict with each other. In some circumstances, for example, it will be important to deliver specific actions in the Race Equality Action Plan or Disability Framework, while in others it will be equally important to strive for an inclusive and cross-cutting approach to equality, demonstrating that equality is for everyone.

Continue to fund services which have demonstrated their value and effectiveness. This could include whole existing contracts, such as the Hate Crime Reporting and Support Centre (which would be subject to re-procurement) but might also include elements of work which are presently grant

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funded, such as mentoring schemes.

Require collaborative working across the programme and strongly encourage applications from consortiums. In the current programme this type of working has seen substantial benefits as it brings organisations together to deliver on common goals and builds sustainable stakeholder relationships within the sector. This may have the additional benefit of enabling funding from this programme to reach some organisations who would not be in a position to lead a work stream but could make important contributions within a consortium.

Align the Community Cohesion and Equality Programmes more closely, to further enhance activity and the working relationships between the two programmes. For example, engagement with the cohesion teams and arranging and participating in combined networking events would be requirements for equality funding.

Based on these principles, funding is likely to include a combination of the following main elements.

Procured services

Some elements of the current programme provide clear services which, if they ceased, would have a detrimental impact on their respective clients.

This includes the projects supporting victims of hate crime; refugees and asylum seekers; and Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities. These services would need to be procured or re-procured through an open competitive process for continuation when the existing contracts end in October 2021.

As indicated above, there may be other services within the wider programme which might be procured in future. A cross-cutting mentoring scheme might, for example, be one such additional service.

We may also commission organisations to distribute grants to smaller, local organisations to enable them to contribute to achieving our equality objectives.

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Grant-funded activity

Other activity funded under the current programme could be re-designed on the basis of the principles set out above and opened up on a competitive grant basis for organisations to support Welsh Government's equality objectives. This would include striking a balance between continuing support for specific protected characteristics, intersectional approaches and delivery of specific projects arising from the equality action plans. Funding criteria would be designed accordingly.

Consultation questions

Question 1

Do you consider that this document summarises the main issues that should be considered in relation to this funding programme? Please outline any issues which you feel are missing or need further attention?

Question 2

Do you support the proposal for a longer, 5-year programme? If not, please briefly outline your reasons.

Question 3

Would you support Welsh Government providing core funding for some strategic equality organisations? If not, please briefly outline your reasons.

Question 4

Do you support the continuation of existing services for particular groups? Are there other services which you think should be provided in future? If not, please

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briefly outline your reasons.

Question 5

What should be the balance between procured services, core funding and grant-funded projects? How would you split the budget (currently £1.6million) between these areas?

Question 6

Do you agree that this funding should align with the objectives set out in the Welsh Government's Strategic Equality Action Plan 2020-2024?

Question 7

Do you think that some of the funding should be set aside to support wider equality action and collaborative working between equality organisations?

Question 8

Do you agree that this funding should align with our specific equality plans such as the Gender Equality, Race Equality and LGBT+ Action Plans?

Question 9

We would like to know your views on the effects that these proposals would have on the Welsh language, specifically on opportunities for people to use Welsh and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than English. What effects do you think there would be? How could positive effects be increased, or negative effects be mitigated?

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Question 10

Please also explain how you believe the proposed policy approach could be formulated or changed so as to have positive effects or increased positive effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language, and no adverse effects on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language and on treating the Welsh language no less favourably than the English language.

Question 11

We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them.

How to respond

Submit your comments by **16 April 2021**, in any of the following ways:

- complete our [online form](#)
- download, complete our [response form](#) and email EandIFutureFundingConsultation@gov.wales
- download, complete our [response form](#) and post to:

The Equality Team
Welsh Government
Merthyr Tydfil
CF48 1UZ

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Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please **tell us**.

For further details about the information the Welsh Government holds and its use, or if you want to exercise your rights under the GDPR, please see contact details below:

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Welsh Government
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

E-mail: data.protectionofficer@gov.wales

Information Commissioner’s Office

Information Commissioner’s Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545 745 or 0303 123 1113

Website: ico.org.uk

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UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR)

The Welsh Government will be data controller for any personal data you provide as part of your response to the consultation. Welsh Ministers have statutory powers they will rely on to process this personal data which will enable them to make informed decisions about how they exercise their public functions. Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about or planning future consultations. Where the Welsh Government undertakes further analysis of consultation responses then this work may be commissioned to be carried out by an accredited third party (e.g. a research organisation or a consultancy company). Any such work will only be undertaken under contract. Welsh Government's standard terms and conditions for such contracts set out strict requirements for the processing and safekeeping of personal data. In order to show that the consultation was carried out properly, the Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full. Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then redact them before publishing.

You should also be aware of our responsibilities under Freedom of Information legislation. If your details are published as part of the consultation response then these published reports will be retained indefinitely. Any of your data held otherwise by Welsh Government will be kept for no more than three years.

The lawful basis of processing information in this data collection exercise is our public task; that is, exercising our official authority to undertake the core role and functions of the Welsh Government.

Further information and related documents

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