Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

Safeguarding in Europe

How can philanthropy contribute to keeping people and communities safe?



What is Funder Safeguarding Collaborative?

Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) was created with the aim of strengthening the ability of philanthropic funders to prevent abuse and exploitation across their grant-making and operations.

FSC was founded in 2021 by Comic Relief, Global Fund for Children, The National Lottery Community Fund, Oak Foundation and Porticus, which came together with a shared commitment to creating a safer world.

From its origins as a small group of aligned funders, FSC has grown rapidly and is now a diverse global network of more than 130 philanthropic organisations that collectively manage an annual grant-making budget of over $9 billion. FSC members share an ambition to transform the role of funders in safeguarding by driving action that creates safer organisational cultures and practices to keep people safe from harm.

FSC aims to build a world where safety and wellbeing are at the heart of every organisation. As the only philanthropic-support organisation dedicated to safeguarding, FSC offers high-quality, specialised support tailored to the unique needs of its members. All knowledge and income generated through its work is reinvested into the network, helping transform grant-making practices for the better.

Safeguarding

The actions taken to prevent harm, abuse or exploitation and promote the welfare and wellbeing of anyone who comes into contact with the organisation.

Introduction

Safeguarding is a critical challenge in Europe and worldwide. Funders play a vital role through providing funding, promoting good practice and offering support to nonprofit organisations in building safe cultures and practices.

The Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) has undertaken a study to better understand how **safeguarding** is perceived and practised across Europe and to inform how FSC can support and influence funders' safeguarding efforts in the region.

This report gives a general overview of the current European philanthropic landscape. It examines the legal and regulatory frameworks relevant to safeguarding, and explores how European funders, and to a more limited extent their grantee partners, understand and approach safeguarding, including the factors that shape engagement and the role funders can play. The final sections identify emerging priorities for funders and draw out strategic implications for how FSC can support funders and engage across Europe.

This work supports FSC's 2024–2027 Strategic Plan in its commitment to facilitating learning and exchange among funders and strengthening the role of funders within the wider safeguarding ecosystem. It also builds on the safeguarding work already being led by FSC and its European members.

According to the **Philanthropy Europe Association** (Philea), foundations can be defined as independent separately constituted non-profit bodies, with no members or shareholders, their own established and reliable source of income, usually but not exclusively from an endowment, and their own governing board. They distribute their financial resources for public-benefit purposes, either by supporting associations, charities, and educational programmes or by operating their own programmes[1].

A note on scope

This report builds on desk research conducted by the FSC team and informed by insights gathered through 11 interviews with European FSC members, other European funders, a national philanthropic network, and safeguarding experts. The report explores safeguarding among European funders who support domestic and international initiatives. It aims to provide an overview of current approaches, experiences and emerging trends rather than a comprehensive assessment of the sector.

The philanthropic landscape section includes information from over 30 countries within the European Union, the European Economic Area, as well as a small number of countries outside those frameworks. A separate analysis was carried out on the **safeguarding landscape in the United Kingdom**.

Snapshot of the European philanthropic landscape



Key considerations for safeguarding in European philanthropy

01 EUROPE'S DIVERSITY MATTERS

Differences in legal frameworks, cultures, philanthropic traditions and foundation models mean that safeguarding approaches need to be flexible and adapted to national contexts.

Some foundations focus mainly on grant-making, while others also deliver programmes and services directly, creating different safeguarding risks and responsibilities.

02 SAFEGUARDING IS RELEVANT ACROSS A WIDE RANGE OF FUNDING AREAS

While often associated with work involving children and vulnerable adults, safeguarding is relevant wherever funding has the potential to affect people, communities, or those participating in funded activities.

03 CROSS-BORDER FUNDING CAN ADD COMPLEXITY

Foundations working across several countries may need to navigate different legal, regulatory and reporting requirements when addressing safeguarding.

04 NEW AND EVOLVING RISKS ARE EMERGING

Political polarisation, shrinking civic space, conflict, and rapid technological change, including AI and online harms, are creating new safeguarding challenges across Europe.

European philanthropy

Europe has a long and diverse philanthropic tradition, reflected today in a highly varied landscape of foundations. Differences in legal frameworks, welfare systems, philanthropic cultures and reporting practices mean that foundations operate within diverse national contexts, making it important to understand European philanthropy at both national and regional levels[2].

EUROPEAN PHILANTHROPY AT A GLANCE



175,203
Registered Public Benefit Foundations

€516 bn
Assets and Endowments

€76 bn
Annual Expenditure

Adapted from Philea, 2025 (philea.eu/philanthropy-in-europe/about-philanthropy). Data from 34 European countries.

Funding trends

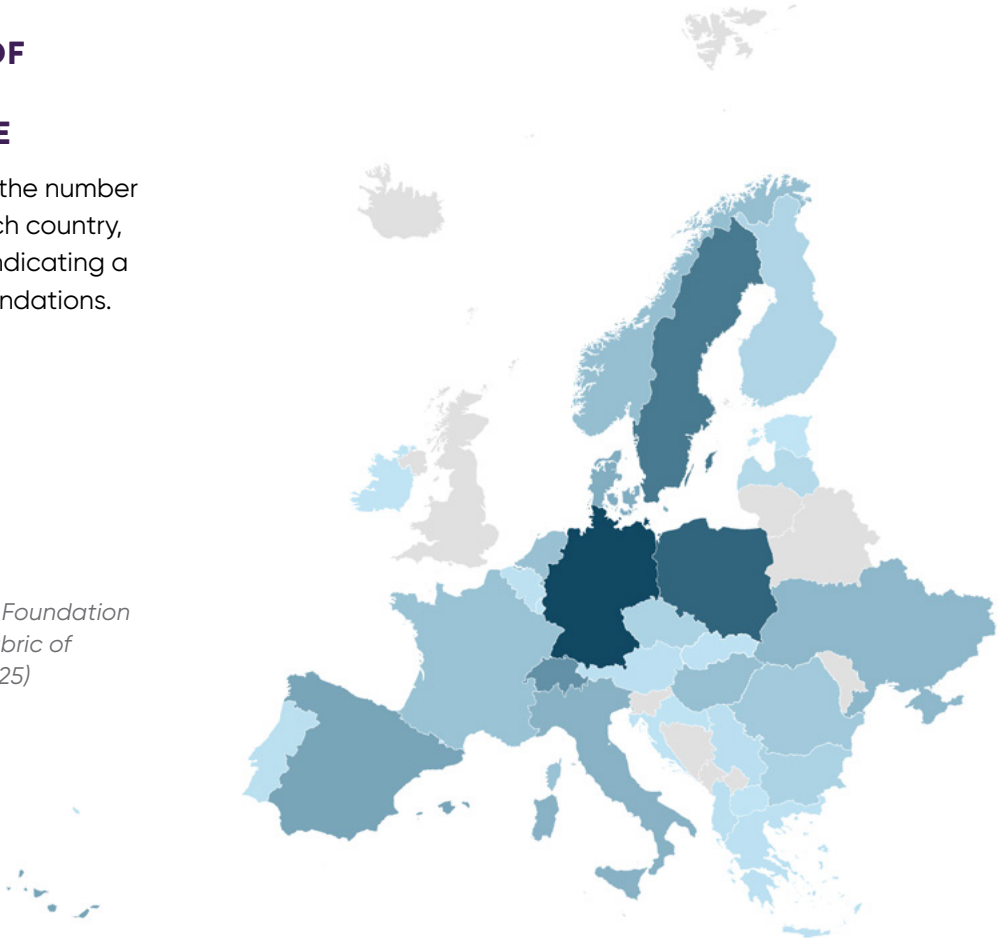
Although foundations are recognised as major contributors to charitable giving in Europe, the overall scale of their contribution is difficult to determine. Despite considerable variation in their size, structure and governance, common patterns emerge in their funding priorities. Foundations most frequently support public-benefit activities including in sectors related to environment, health, education, research, and culture.

Across Europe, foundation giving is mostly domestic, with resources directed toward partners within national borders. Europe also has a growing community foundation movement, mobilising local resources and supporting community-led responses to social challenges[3].

International and cross-border giving represents a smaller but growing component of European philanthropy and is concentrated particularly in countries with strong philanthropic traditions and significant philanthropic resources, including Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium and Sweden. It is often driven by a small number of large foundations. Cross-border philanthropy remains a significant challenge. Even within the EU single market, foundations cannot move, merge, or operate freely across borders in the way companies can. Engaging in activities abroad often requires establishing a local presence or meeting additional administrative requirements[4].

DISTRIBUTION OF FOUNDATIONS ACROSS EUROPE

The shading reflects the number of foundations in each country, with darker shades indicating a higher number of foundations.



Source: Public-Benefit Foundation Data in Europe: The Fabric of Giving 2025 (Philea, 2025)



Legal and regulatory frameworks for philanthropy

Europe's legal and regulatory landscape reflects different legal traditions, national histories and approaches to philanthropy. Countries vary in how foundations are established, governed, supervised and taxed. Foundations encompass a wide range of institutional models, including family, corporate, community and banking, and may not only provide funding to other organisations but also directly deliver programmes, manage cultural and educational institutions, support research, operate social services, convene stakeholders or mobilise resources for public-benefit purposes.

Despite these differences, most foundations are established for public-benefit purposes, are subject to registration and reporting requirements, and benefit from some form of preferential tax treatment. Regulatory oversight has increased significantly over the past two decades, driven in part by anti-money laundering, counter-terrorism financing and transparency requirements.

Socio-political factors influencing the European philanthropic sector

Across Europe, rising far-right influence, ongoing conflicts, climate pressures, widening inequalities, declining trust in institutions and geopolitical instability are creating increasing uncertainty for civil society and for philanthropy. These pressures are influencing the organisations and communities supported by philanthropy and the ways in which philanthropic actors operate.[5]

Civic space is shrinking in many European countries[6]. This is increasingly accompanied by a narrowing of philanthropic space, with some funders facing greater legal and regulatory scrutiny, reputational pressure, restrictions on advocacy, and challenges to their legitimacy. Furthermore, rapid technological change, including the expansion of artificial intelligence, surveillance technologies and online harms, is reshaping the risks facing civil society organisations and the communities they serve.

Shifts in government and philanthropic funding priorities are widening the gap between available funding and resources organisations need, especially those working on human rights. In many countries, reductions in public funding and international development budgets are increasing pressure on philanthropic resources to respond to growing needs.

In this context, funders working in the human rights and social justice space suggest investing in the ecosystems that sustain democratic participation and social change. This includes strengthening civic resilience, movement infrastructure, coalition-building, community organising, and collective intelligence, while placing greater emphasis on trust-based, flexible and coordinated funding approaches[7].

Safeguarding in Europe

Key considerations for understanding safeguarding in Europe

01 SAFEGUARDING REMAINS UNEVENLY UNDERSTOOD AND IMPLEMENTED ACROSS EUROPE

It is often seen as an externally driven concept introduced through international funders, humanitarian actors, or funding requirements.

02 EXISTING LEGAL AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS ALREADY ADDRESS MANY SAFEGUARDING-RELATED ISSUES

This includes child protection, workplace wellbeing, whistleblowing, data protection, and online safety.

03 MANY FOUNDATIONS ALREADY HAVE SAFEGUARDING-RELATED MEASURES IN PLACE

These include codes of conduct, complaints procedures, anti-harassment policies, and whistleblowing mechanisms, even if these are not labelled as safeguarding.

04 SOME FUNDERS TEND TO APPROACH SAFEGUARDING FROM A COMPLIANCE AND RISK MANAGEMENT PERSPECTIVE

This can overlook the importance of safeguarding as a broader organisational culture issue.

05 AWARENESS, LOCAL EXPERTISE, AND ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY REMAIN KEY BARRIERS

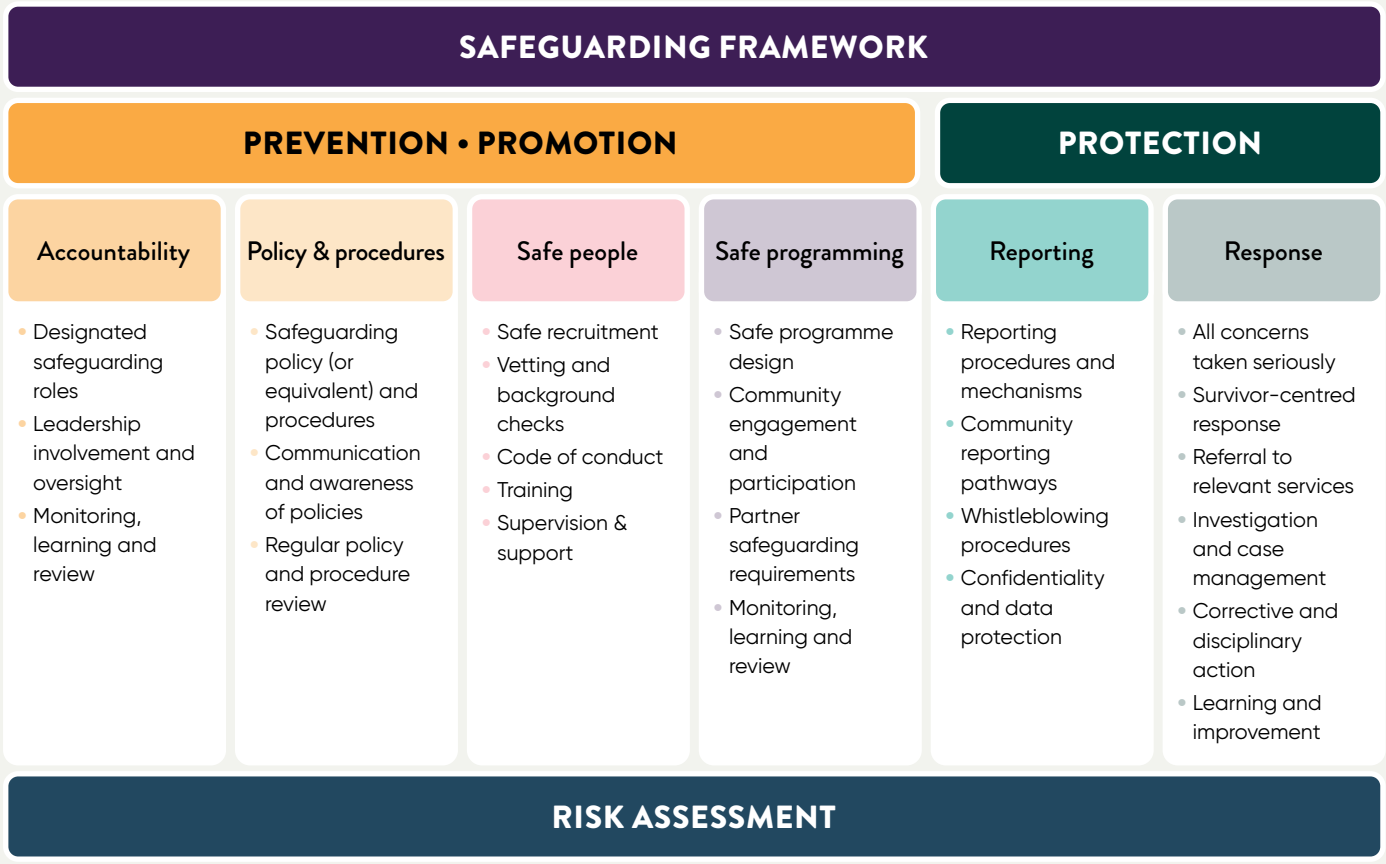
Peer learning, practical support and context-specific guidance can help overcome these barriers and strengthen engagement.

Safeguarding remains unevenly understood and implemented across Europe. The concept itself is not consistently recognised and is often reframed through the lens of child protection, workplace safety, or organisational ethics and compliance.

This is reinforced by the perception of safeguarding as an 'imported' Anglo-Saxon or humanitarian-sector concept, often introduced by international actors such as INGOs, multilateral agencies, international and UK funders. In many cases, nonprofit organisations have only engaged with safeguarding since it became a requirement linked to funding. This dynamic is particularly visible in humanitarian or adjacent contexts, such as Ukraine and parts of Central Europe, where external actors have introduced more standardised international safeguarding models. At the same time, broader shifts within European philanthropy are reshaping the conversation. Movements such as #MeToo have heightened awareness of issues like discrimination, harassment and abuse, prompting greater recognition of the need for organisational accountability.

More recently, sector-wide initiatives, such as Philea's *Philanthropy and Equality Framework*[8] and efforts by national philanthropic networks[9], reflect increasing attention to power, equity, inclusion and the ways organisations create safe and equitable environments.

In practice, organisations working directly with children, in education or health, or supporting specific vulnerable groups, are more likely to have adopted elements of safeguarding, such as policies, codes of conduct, or basic rules for behaviour in meetings and shared spaces, without necessarily recognising them as part of a broader safeguarding framework. In fact, effective safeguarding requires a broader set of measures, including leadership oversight and accountability practices, safer recruitment and people management, programme safeguards, reporting mechanisms, and processes for responding to concerns (**see figure below**).



Despite these developments, significant gaps in awareness and understanding persist. According to funders, across continental Europe, safeguarding in grantee partner organisations remains largely funder-driven and experiences vary significantly depending on the context. In some countries, there has been limited understanding of, or interest in, safeguarding, with some organisations questioning its relevance, arguing that the responsibility for protecting people already lies with state actors, laws and regulations. As a result, awareness, understanding and implementation remain uneven across the region.

The sport sector

Growing concerns about abuse, exploitation, harassment and athlete welfare have driven the development of formal safeguarding frameworks across the sport sector. International initiatives, including the *International Safeguards for Children in Sport* and the *International Safeguards for Adults in Sport* by *Safe Sport International*, have helped establish common standards for sports organisations. These developments have been reinforced by requirements introduced by national sports bodies, federations and Olympic committees.

Italy's Legislative Decree No. 39/2021[10] introduces safeguarding requirements as part of wider sports governance reforms, with the Italian National Olympic Committee (CONI) and its Permanent Observatory on Safeguarding Policies playing a role in coordinating, promoting, and monitoring safeguarding across the sports sector. While safeguarding requirements have become more common across European sport, dedicated legislative provisions specifically addressing safeguarding in sport remain relatively uncommon.

Regulatory frameworks on safeguarding

Across Europe, safeguarding is typically embedded within a range of legal and regulatory frameworks rather than governed through standalone safeguarding legislation. This differs from contexts such as England and Wales, where the Charity Commission[11] has established detailed safeguarding expectations and guidance for charities and trustees. A small number of countries and sectors have developed more explicit safeguarding approaches.

CHILD PROTECTION

Most European countries have child protection laws which establish state duties to prevent harm, intervene in cases of abuse or neglect, and protect the best interests of the child, even though the systems and frameworks differ significantly across states[12]. These frameworks also have implications for organisations working with children, shaping expectations and, in some cases, legal requirements related to vetting and background checks of staff, reporting concerns and cooperation with child protection authorities. As a result, child protection legislation often serves as an important foundation for organisational safeguarding measures.

WORKPLACE-RELATED HARMS

Across Europe, employers have a duty under occupational safety and health legislation to protect the health and safety of workers. The methods by which employers fulfil this duty, particularly around the prevention and handling of workplace bullying and harassment, are not always regulated or specified by law.[13] However, in some countries, governments have introduced specific legal requirements, codes of conduct or other measures to help employers tackle workplace harassment or bullying, including sexual harassment. For example, in Spain, legislation requires employers to take measures to prevent sexual harassment and harassment on grounds of sex and to establish procedures for preventing such conduct and for handling reports[14].

Schutzkonzepte ('protection concepts')[15] are safeguarding frameworks used in Germany, Austria and increasingly, Switzerland, designed to prevent, identify, and respond to harm, especially violence, abuse, neglect and exploitation of children, young people and other vulnerable persons within organisational contexts. Responsibility for developing and implementing these lies with individual organisations as part of their duty of care and quality-management obligations.

DATA PROTECTION AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

Europe has a strong data and digital rights legal framework through major EU legislation such as the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Furthermore, online safety has become a priority, requiring platforms to ensure a high level of privacy and security for children. National and regional initiatives, including the Dutch Strategy for Children's Rights Online[16] and the European Commission's Better Internet for Kids (BIK+)[17] strategy reinforce this. Europe's growing focus on online harm is also increasingly extending into the artificial intelligence space, where the EU's new AI Act[18] introduces protections for children and other vulnerable groups.

WHISTLEBLOWING

The EU Whistleblower Directive 2019/1937[19] directs businesses and government organisations to provide a way for employees to report wrongdoing and to have systems in place to monitor and act on such reports and to protect individuals making reports from retaliation. Member states are implementing these requirements through national legislation, including provisions governing internal reporting channels and the persons or functions responsible for receiving and following up on reports. These frameworks support key elements of a safeguarding approach, including safe reporting, appropriate follow-up and protection from retaliation.

PSYCHOSOCIAL LABOUR PROVISIONS

In some countries, there are legal requirements within labour law that address psychosocial risks in the workplace. While the EU Framework Directive on Occupational Safety and Health (89/391/EEC) does not explicitly refer to these risks, several countries, such as the Netherlands[20] and Belgium[21] have incorporated them into national legal and regulatory frameworks. These frameworks can include measures such as anti-harassment policies, complaint mechanisms and codes of conduct, and, in some contexts, confidential advisers or trusted persons who provide support and advice on workplace harassment and other psychosocial concerns.

Ireland, the exception to the rule

Ireland represents an exception in Europe due to its explicit statutory child safeguarding requirements under the *Children First Act 2015*[22]. These obligations may apply to philanthropic organisations depending on the nature of their activities. While funders that do not directly provide 'relevant services' to children may fall outside the scope of these requirements, philanthropic organisations that do provide such services may be required to comply with specific child safeguarding obligations. These include assessing safeguarding risks, preparing a Child Safeguarding Statement, appointing a 'relevant' person, and having procedures for managing identified risks, safer recruitment, staff information and training, and reporting concerns.

Funder safeguarding practices

Safeguarding within European funder organisations remains at an early stage of development.

More formal safeguarding approaches are most commonly found in larger, often international funders and larger national funders that work in specific sectors such as child protection and development, human rights, education or sports[23]. Among domestic foundations that have adopted safeguarding measures, safeguarding is often more developed within internal policies and operations, with more limited integration into grant-making and the wider grant cycle.

At the same time, many European foundations have systems that support safeguarding objectives. Across the sector, it is common to find codes of conduct, ethics policies, whistleblowing and reporting channels, complaints mechanisms, anti-harassment measures, and commitments to human rights and non-discrimination[24]. Some foundations have also developed more explicit safeguarding policies. While these should not be seen as safeguarding frameworks in themselves, they offer an opportunity to engage funders by connecting safeguarding to practices and systems they already have in place.

Factors influencing funder engagement with safeguarding

Funders' engagement with safeguarding varies according to their level of awareness, understanding and organisational commitment. The interviews revealed that safeguarding risks are sometimes viewed as external issues, disconnected from a funder's own responsibilities.

As a result, responsibility for identifying and managing safeguarding risks is sometimes perceived to rest primarily with grantee partners. Underlying this is a broader assumption that organisations with positive social missions are unlikely to cause harm, reducing the perceived need for formal safeguarding measures.

Interviews also highlighted that where organisations operate within strong legal and regulatory frameworks, safeguarding can be viewed through a compliance and reputational risk lens rather than as a broader organisational culture issue. Its cross-cutting nature can make it difficult to determine clear ownership, coordinate efforts across departments, and translate into day-to-day practice. As a result, safeguarding can remain a low organisational priority without clear incentives, ownership, or leadership engagement.

Funders highlighted several factors that can help strengthen engagement. Peer learning, practical examples, and repeated exposure to safeguarding discussions were seen as important in building understanding and demonstrating relevance. Framing safeguarding within broader conversations on risk management, organisational effectiveness, ethics and accountability was also identified as a useful entry point.

Participants noted that not all funders have the expertise, systems or capacity to effectively integrate and support safeguarding. Where funders introduce safeguarding expectations, particularly for grantee partners, they may also need to invest in their own knowledge, resources, and ability to provide meaningful support and oversight.

FSC Member spotlight

“Over the past few years, our approach to safeguarding in Spain and Portugal has evolved from linking funding and supporting partners to comply with basic safeguarding requirements towards a more holistic strategy focused on organisational change and field-building.

Through the Heads, Hearts and Hands Programme, which supports Catholic organisations working with children in Spain and Portugal to build a stronger culture of protection and care, we have combined funding with tailored capacity strengthening, dedicated technical support, and collaboration with specialist organisations. This has helped partners move beyond compliance and begin embedding safeguarding as part of their organisational culture and practice.

A key learning has been that organisations cannot make this journey alone: peer learning, trusted relationships, access to expertise, and shared spaces for reflection have been essential. The creation of safeguarding hubs, communities of practice, academic collaborations and the promotion of a wider network of Catholic and non-Catholic actors has helped strengthen the safeguarding ecosystem in Spain and Portugal, enabling partners to learn from one another and gradually build a more collective, sustainable approach to protection and care.”

— Porticus Iberia

The role of funders in advancing safeguarding

Discussions with European FSC members highlighted the important role funders can play in advancing safeguarding across Europe. Where safeguarding remains largely funder-driven, funders can catalyse action by initiating conversations with grantees, embedding safeguarding into grant-making processes, supporting capacity strengthening, and creating spaces for peer learning and exchange. Larger foundations were seen as particularly well positioned to model good practice and influence sector norms.

At the same time, funders stressed that safeguarding approaches should be adapted to local legal, cultural and political contexts. Rather than relying solely on compliance requirements, funders can add value through practical support, resources and long-term investment that help organisations strengthen safeguarding over time and move it from a requirement to a shared responsibility.



Factors influencing grantee partner engagement with safeguarding

European funders highlighted several factors that can be barriers to grantee partners' engagement with safeguarding. These include lack of familiarity with safeguarding concepts, limited access to local expertise and practical support, and constraints on time, funding and organisational capacity, particularly among smaller and volunteer-led organisations working in an increasingly hostile context. In these scenarios, safeguarding may be perceived as an additional burden requiring dedicated expertise, staff time and financial investment, and efforts can be difficult to sustain without long-term funding.

Perceptions of risk can also influence engagement. Some funders noted that organisations are less likely to prioritise safeguarding when they do not see their work as involving direct interaction with people. This was mentioned, for example, in environmental programming, where safeguarding was sometimes considered less applicable because activities were not perceived to involve direct interaction with people.

Where there has been greater receptiveness among partners, effective uptake depends heavily on capacity, resources, and practical support, including funding, guidance and access to expertise.

Approaches such as needs assessments, peer learning and partnerships with more experienced organisations have proven effective in building understanding and demonstrating value. Emerging initiatives, such as Italy's first Sport Safeguarding Summit, illustrate the growing demand for learning and exchange on safeguarding issues.

FSC Member spotlight



“When we first started talking about safeguarding with grantees, one of the biggest challenges was to find an equivalent term to safeguarding in French, German and Italian, Switzerland's national languages. In addition, many Swiss associations were not very familiar with the concept of safeguarding, so we had to clearly explain what safeguarding means, how it differs from protection, and why it matters. Considering the lived experiences of our grantees' staff and beneficiaries (LGBTIQ+ people), we deliberately adopted a broader approach of safeguarding by incorporating the notions of safe space, well-being and non-discrimination.

As an initial step, we ask potential grantees to conduct a needs assessment at the organisational level. This helps introduce safeguarding in a practical way and demonstrate its value. It highlights both the internal benefits—such as having policies, trained staff, and protocols—and external benefits for the populations they serve.

Once the grant is approved, we provide capacity-building grants, so grantees can develop and implement safeguarding measures tailored to the needs of their organisations and beneficiaries. Our grantees now see safeguarding as an added value, both for their organisations and their beneficiaries.

For example, many communicate their commitment to safeguarding on their websites, therefore reassuring their target groups that they operate in a safe environment.

— LGBTI Youth Fund

Conclusion

Safeguarding remains an emerging and unevenly developed area of practice within European philanthropy.

While some organisations have policies, systems and practices that contribute to safeguarding, the measures are often fragmented across child protection, workplace wellbeing, ethics, compliance, risk management, and other organisational systems. As a result, safeguarding may be present in practice without being consistently recognised, defined, owned or integrated across funder organisations and especially grant-making.

Europe's diverse philanthropic landscape, strong legal and regulatory frameworks, and growing focus on accountability, equity, wellbeing, digital safety and organisational culture create opportunities to strengthen safeguarding across the sector.

Emerging challenges, including political polarisation, shrinking civic space, anti-rights movements, conflict and the rapid growth of digital technologies and artificial intelligence, are also reshaping the risks facing organisations and the communities they serve.

In this context, there is a growing need for greater awareness, shared learning, practical guidance and access to safeguarding expertise that reflects different European legal, cultural and philanthropic contexts. By supporting peer learning, developing contextually relevant resources, and fostering collaboration across funders and philanthropy networks, FSC is well positioned to help strengthen safeguarding practice across Europe.



Five key safeguarding priorities for funders in Europe

This study has identified areas to promote and embed safeguarding within European philanthropy. Based on these findings, FSC has five identified key priorities for responding to the identified gaps and needs.

They highlight the areas funders consider most important for strengthening safeguarding across European philanthropy. Many also reflect wider global safeguarding challenges:

1 **Responding to emerging risks**
Political polarisation, shrinking civic space, anti-rights movements, and the growth of digital technologies and AI are creating new safeguarding challenges. Funders need to consider how safeguarding can respond to evolving risks while drawing on Europe's strong legal protections and frameworks for data protection, digital safety, and AI governance.

2 **Strengthening funder capacity**
There is a growing need to move beyond compliance and foster organisational cultures that prioritise safety, wellbeing and accountability. In Europe, this requires both supporting funders to strengthen their own safeguarding systems and building broader awareness and understanding of safeguarding across the sector.

3 **Supporting grantee partners**
As risks shift and change, and funding pressures increase across civil society, funders can play a key role in supporting safeguarding through financial and technical assistance. Funders can strengthen safeguarding by integrating it into grant requirements and partnership practices in a supportive and proportionate way.

4 **Improving evidence, learning, and shared approaches**
More evidence is needed on effective safeguarding approaches in European contexts that complements existing knowledge of what works in practices, including insights from *Safeguarding in Philanthropy: Safer Grant-Making for Greater Impact*. Additionally, increased peer learning, knowledge-sharing and greater coordination among funders can help reduce duplication and strengthen safeguarding practice across the sector.

5 **Influencing wider systems**
Funders can help shape policy, accountability and human rights frameworks, positioning safeguarding not only as an organisational responsibility but also as a broader commitment to equity, rights and social justice.

Role for FSC

Build a shared understanding of safeguarding. To strengthen safeguarding across European philanthropy, funders need a clearer understanding of what safeguarding is and how it contributes to effective organisations. FSC, together with sector champions, can help position safeguarding within broader conversations on organisational effectiveness, duty of care, ethics, risk management, and trust-based philanthropy, while showing how safeguarding builds on existing European legal, regulatory and accountability frameworks.

Engage philanthropic networks. Europe's network of philanthropic associations and sector convenings provides an opportunity to raise awareness of safeguarding and reach a wider audience. By partnering with members and engaging key European and national philanthropy networks, FSC can increase visibility, share practical examples, and promote safeguarding within broader philanthropic discussions.

Strengthen access to safeguarding knowledge across Europe. FSC can expand access to safeguarding knowledge by promoting existing resources, developing contextually relevant guidance, and facilitating shared learning across the sector. Building on resources such as *Do No Harm: A Safeguarding Roadmap for Community Foundations*, developed with the European Community Foundation Initiative, FSC can support the translation and contextualisation of key safeguarding principles, respond to emerging needs through targeted briefings and guidance, and continue exploring evolving topics such as AI and digital safeguarding.

Strengthen FSC's reach and impact. Engaging influential international and domestic funders can help drive broader uptake of safeguarding across Europe. Through their funding relationships, networks and leadership, these funders are well positioned to model good practice and shape sector norms and expectations.

Build sector champions through a network-led approach. FSC can expand its impact by working through existing members, philanthropy networks, and sector infrastructure organisations to build a community of safeguarding champions across Europe. Peer-to-peer engagement can be particularly effective in encouraging uptake, helping funders share experiences, demonstrate the value of safeguarding, and identify where more targeted collaboration could have the greatest impact.

Strengthen access to safeguarding expertise for grantee partners. FSC could explore adapting its Community of Practice model by connecting organisations with local safeguarding practitioners in Europe where demand is emerging. This should be informed by mapping existing expertise and focused on areas where genuine gaps and demand exist.

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Acknowledgements

FSC would like to thank all interview participants for generously sharing their time, expertise, and perspectives.

Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) supports grant-making organisations across the globe that want to ensure that their work and the work they fund keep people safe.

FSC provides funders with a unique community to learn and share about safeguarding practice and policy with their peers, along with practical and tailored assistance for funders to help them find the right solutions for their specific context. The collaborative also invests in member-led initiatives to help keep people safe and strengthen safeguarding globally.

Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

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