**Funder
Safeguarding
Collaborative**

Safeguarding in the UK

How can philanthropy contribute to keeping people and communities safe?

What is Funder Safeguarding Collaborative?

The Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) is a global network of philanthropic organisations committed to ensuring safety and wellbeing are at the heart of every organisation.

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 network of trusts and foundations working together to promote organisational practices that keep people safe from harm.

In April 2024, FSC launched its Strategic Plan 2024–2027, with goals around knowledge generation, influence and implementation. As the only philanthropic network specialising in safeguarding, FSC is in a unique position to identify, share and support funders to implement practices that make their organisations, and the work they fund, safer.

Introduction

Safeguarding is a critical challenge in the UK, requiring coordinated efforts from communities, voluntary sector organisations and government agencies. Funders play a vital role through providing funding, promoting good practice and offering support to organisations in building safe cultures and practices.

FSC believes that in order to be effective, safeguarding measures must consider the social, economic, and legal context in which organisations are operating. We have therefore undertaken a landscape study to understand how safeguarding is understood and practised by funders in UK.

This report gives a broad overview of safeguarding and emerging trends in philanthropy in the UK. It highlights the need and opportunities to influence and strengthen funder safeguarding practice. The findings will inform our strategic plan and the safeguarding support we provide to trusts and foundation in the UK.

The findings are based on desk-based analysis, insights from FSC members and a small number of interviews with external agencies. We are grateful to everyone who has given their time and expertise.

A note on scope

In the UK, organisations which offer grant funding differ significantly in terms of constitution, legal identity and funding activity. In this report we use the term 'funder' in its broad sense to reflect the full range of bodies, including (but not limited to) charitable trusts, corporate foundations, intermediary grant-makers and public bodies who engage in grant giving. While the report looks at funding across the UK, it should be noted estimates from Grant Making UK suggest that 85% of grant-makers are based in England and Wales, with 13% in Scotland and the remaining 2% in Northern Ireland.

Safeguarding in the UK

This section sets the scene by providing an understanding of 'safeguarding' across the UK. It provides a high-level summary of the scale of abuse and an overview of the legal obligations to keep people safe.

Definition

There is no single universal definition of safeguarding in the UK. There is a broad understanding that safeguarding relates to the proactive prevention of harm and the proportionate steps that should be taken to respond to individuals who are experiencing or at risk of harm.

Scale of harm and abuse

Estimating the scale of harm and abuse in UK society is challenging, as it often goes unreported. Although some insight can be gained from statutory services data, many people who experience abuse never receive support from statutory services. Consequently, population-level data may be more informative:

CHILD ABUSE

20.7% of the population aged 18 to 74 years in England and Wales have experienced abuse before the age of 16 years.[1]

DOMESTIC ABUSE

6.6% of women (1.6 million) and **3%** of men (712,000) in England and Wales aged 16 years and over experience domestic abuse.[2]

ELDER ABUSE

22% of people (2.7 million) have personal experience of abuse as an older person or know someone who has been abused in the UK.[3]

SEXUAL ASSAULT

27% of women and **5.7%** of men in England and Wales aged 16 to 74 have experienced sexual assault at least once since the age of 16.[4]

ONLINE HARMS

66% of UK adults have witnessed harmful content online.[5] Among 12- to 15-year-olds in the UK, 81% faced at least one harmful online incident in the past year, including offensive language, spam, unwelcome friend requests, and bullying/trolling.[6]

WORKPLACE-RELATED STRESS

In 2023/24, an estimated **16.4 million** working days were lost due to self-reported illness caused or made worse by work-related stress, depression, or anxiety across Great Britain.[7]

It is important to note that harm is not equally distributed across society. Socially excluded and marginalised groups are more likely to experience harm and abuse. For example, studies show that rates of abuse are likely to be much higher for the very youngest, for disabled people (especially those with sensory impairments) and those in highly precarious circumstances (e.g. those with no legal right to be in the country).

There are increasing numbers of people known to pose a risk of harm. For example, over 100,000 individuals are barred from working with children or adults across the UK.[8,9]

Legal frameworks

The UK has three criminal justice systems: in England and Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland. All three have multiple offences related to harm, including specific offences relating to children or adults with care and support needs. Criminal law protects the whole population, and new criminal offences have been created around issues such as child cruelty, forced marriage, stalking, harassment, child exploitation, offensive weapon use, and intimate imagery (both so-called revenge porn and 'upskirting').

Across all jurisdictions, local authorities have the primary duty to investigate concerns and lead action to protect children and adults with care and support needs who are at risk of harm, abuse or neglect.

Law and regulation aimed at strengthening collaboration between agencies have contributed to increased referrals to local authorities. However, this has occurred at the same time as a significant fall in local authority funding. To manage demand, local authorities, especially children's services, have changed their thresholds, affecting the help available.[10]

With local authorities now accepting fewer referrals, voluntary organisations are left to manage higher levels of risk, with limited scope for support from statutory agencies.

Common law has established that all organisations have a duty of care towards their workers and others who interact with them. A breach of this duty through negligence in safeguarding can lead to liability for any resulting harm. An organisation may also be held responsible for harm arising from the actions of its employees or volunteers. Whether these duties arise depends on specific circumstances of the situation.

There are also legal obligations on organisations to protect their staff from sexual harassment, bullying, discrimination and work-related stress.[11]

Regulatory duties

Today, all charities in the UK must have an approach to safeguarding. The Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Scottish Charity Regulator, OSCR, have moved from a focus on children and those delivering regulated activities to broader requirements which encompass all beneficiaries, staff, volunteers, and others in contact with the charity. Both regulators have powers to investigate charities, issue official warnings or formal directions, and suspend charity trustees for misconduct or mismanagement.[12] The Charity Commission for Northern Ireland has similar powers and has issued alerts requiring Trustees to ensure safeguarding policies are in place,[13] but it has not issued specific safeguarding guidance for charities to date.

There are specific statutory regimes for services that intentionally work with particular groups (e.g. children, young people, adults at risk). For example, there are specific safeguarding standards, expectations and statutory guidance for voluntary organisations working in education, health and social care or with children more broadly. These can apply to funders engaged in non-traditional funding approaches which involve direct contact with such groups (e.g. participatory grant-making with children).

Implications for FSC

Although FSC does not provide legal advice, the training and support we provide help ensure funders have an up-to-date understanding of their legal and regulatory obligations.

We will continue to maintain an accurate and comprehensive understanding of law and regulation related to safeguarding in the UK and provide regular opportunities to disseminate this knowledge to our members.

The role we play is even more significant given the increase in direct interactions between funders and the communities they serve.

This means that FSC members are likely to need a more in-depth understanding of effective safeguarding measures, including building their skills in making referrals to statutory agencies. Equally, it is important that funders understand the challenges their grantee partners face when engaging with statutory protection systems, including when statutory services do not act. We will explore with members how to further embed these themes in our training and learning forums in order to develop awareness and skills in line with emerging needs.

Trends in UK safeguarding policy and practice

This section provides an overview of the ways that UK policy and practice have evolved and highlights the implications of these trends for trusts and foundations in the UK.

From child protection to safe culture and 'low level' concerns

The Children Act 2004 (England and Wales) included an obligation for public bodies to have 'safeguarding arrangements'. This marked a shift from reacting to harm ('child protection') to a broader appreciation that organisations need to deter and be hostile to abuse. This focus on creating safer organisations has become increasingly prominent in UK safeguarding practice.

Linked to this, there is an increased focus on managing 'low-level concerns' by notifying a 'Designated Safeguarding Lead' of inappropriate conduct or behaviour that is inconsistent with an organisation's code of conduct. Although these behaviours may not meet the threshold for statutory action, addressing them helps organisations deter and prevent abuse occurring.

Funders should have a holistic approach to safeguarding which focuses on promoting safer organisational cultures rather than simply preventing the most serious forms of harm and abuse.

Challenging the binary between 'child' and 'adult' safeguarding

Historically, the UK legal framework has been focused on the protection of children and, latterly, adults with care and support needs. However, the binary split between 'child' and 'adult' safeguarding is starting to be eroded, with a focus on 'transitional safeguarding' which moves beyond an age-based model.

Funders will need to ensure that the organisations they fund have policies and procedures that go beyond age boundaries. For example, child-focused organisations should ensure that they are capable of managing risks to adults connected to their work (e.g. harm experienced by parents, carers and grandparents of children they work with), and those working with adults are capable of managing risks to children connected to those they work with (e.g. children or grandchildren).

Growth of contextual safeguarding

There is growing interest in contextual safeguarding and recognition of risks outside the home. This approach challenges organisations to consider the contexts in which they work and whether these spaces present risks, rather than simply focusing on risks associated with individuals and/or their behaviours. In addition, it pushes organisations to consider the cultural context of the community and the organisation and the impact of social norms that promote safety, as well as those that are harmful or undermine safety.

While contextual safeguarding approaches primarily emerged from concern around extra-familial harm with young people, the approach encourages a contextually aware and culturally competent approach to risk and safeguarding across organisations. Adopting a more contextual approach means that safeguarding within charities (including policies and procedures, training and practice) and funders should more explicitly consider structures and systems of working to support safety within and beyond the organisation.

Towards 'trauma informed' and 'person-centred' practice

Three interconnected, but individually distinct, concepts have become increasingly part of the professional safeguarding practices in the UK. These are:

- recognition of the importance of listening to those who experience harm and increasing their **voice, influence and control** over decisions that affect them

- **trauma-aware and informed practice** which recognises that safeguarding systems should avoid re-traumatising individuals

- **person-centred approaches** that ensure that responses to harm are empathy-driven and that the rights and wishes of those experiencing harm are at the centre of all prevention and response measures.

This shift challenges funders to consider the impact of their practices on the organisations and communities they serve, particularly when working directly with individuals with lived experience of trauma or other challenging circumstances. A trauma informed grant-making community of practice has been established to support funders to embed this within their work.[14]

Emergent 'radical' safeguarding paradigms

There is an emerging critique that highlights the ways that safeguarding and referral to statutory agencies can cause harm to the most marginalised people; including people of colour. A 'radical' notion of safeguarding attempts to look at the root cause of harm, the cultures and structures that underpin this harm, and support practitioners in fostering alternative and resistant practices.[15]

Funders who fund traditionally under-supported and marginalised groups may find those organisations contest traditional models of safeguarding. Funders should consider how they understand different perspectives and build flexibility into their approaches while retaining good practice expectations.

Radicalisation, extremism and terrorism

The UK Government has increasingly stated that preventing people from being drawn into terrorism is a safeguarding obligation.[16] This is reflected in the statutory Prevent Duty requiring public bodies to have "due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism".[17] The duty is delegated to voluntary organisations which are funded or commissioned by statutory bodies to provide services and is also reflected in charity regulator guidance.

It is important to note that this framing is contested, with several campaign groups expressing concern about the use of the concept. Advocates have pointed out similarities between coercive controlling behaviours and the profile of those likely to be engaged in extremist activity, who often have wider support needs.

Prevent is now fairly embedded within most statutory institutions' approach to safeguarding, including the expectations from charity regulators. It is an area that continues to evolve and is subject to much debate, but it is important that funders are aware of these duties and recognise the links to the overall safeguarding approach within their own organisations and those of their grantee partners.

Growth in online harms and expectations for accountability

Rapid technological development has introduced new challenges for safeguarding such as increased exposure to harmful content and cyberbullying through chat rooms and social media. The Online Safety Act 2023 introduced a novel regulatory regime for many online services, with stricter measures for safeguarding children in particular. This UK-wide regime requires specific providers to undertake a risk assessment of services and demonstrate that they are managing risks of online harms. There will be more substantial expectations to remove illegal content, strengthen terms and conditions and offer users the option to filter out harmful content.

This is an area that will continue to evolve. The regulator, Ofcom, issued a progress update on implementation of the Act in October 2024 and the UK Government has stated that it may strengthen requirements in future.[18]

Given the fast-moving nature of technology and the breadth of potential harm, it is important that funders and their grantees consider changes in their risk profile and the measures they have in place to prevent harm.

Increase in reports of non-recent abuse

There is growing awareness about what constitutes harmful or abusive behaviour. Conduct which may in the past have been overlooked, dismissed or tolerated is increasingly being reported by survivors.[19] Independent national Inquiries – such as the Independent Inquiry into Child Sex Abuse (ICCSA)[20] in England and Wales and the Scottish Child Sexual Abuse Review[21] – have highlighted the extent of past harm, failures to victims and survivors, and need for change.

IICSA recommended a state-backed reparation scheme for survivors of child sexual abuse who were let down by institutions, including with contributions from voluntary organisations.[22] However, in April 2025, the UK Government stated it was not planning to take forward such a scheme, although further action may still come in the forthcoming spending review. Scotland already has a specific scheme for those harmed in childcare arrangements.

Funders, and their grantees, should be clear on the actions they will take should they receive reports of historic abuse in relation to their organisation. Once the matter is concluded, learning should be identified and actioned. Calls for reparations for harm are only likely to grow and some trusts and foundations may be considering opting in or supporting action to address these historic injustices.

Implications for FSC

New safeguarding models outlined in this section illustrate the dynamic and evolving nature of harm and safeguarding responses.

We strongly encourage funders to adopt a culturally competent and nuanced approach to safeguarding, led by the risks of their work, and remain open to emerging harms and good practices. FSC plays an important role in monitoring these changes and helping funders to understand the implications for their practice.

The risks associated with evolving technology and online harms are likely to be a particular focus for funders and their grantee partners. The speed of change requires developments in policy and practice to be monitored and may require specialist technical guidance to support action to address the risks. FSC has commissioned a digital safeguarding advisor and will continue to listen to members' needs and identify the most suitable means for ongoing support in this area.

Trends in UK philanthropy and the implications for safeguarding

This section introduces how funders are giving grants and the key trends in their ways of working. While focused predominantly on their grant-making activity, it includes broader shifts in philanthropy and the implications for safeguarding.

Rising demand for grants affecting grant-making practices

There is some evidence that demand for funding from trusts and foundations has been rising. This could be in part due to the growth of charities at large, the growing professionalisation in the sector, and the falling levels of government funding to voluntary organisations in the UK.

The increased demand has led to several changes to grant-making practices. Many trusts and foundations have refocused their areas of work, with a greater focus on 'systemic change' rather than individual projects and choosing to 'spend down' to ensure money is released soon. Where there are changes to funding criteria and due diligence, any associated change to the safeguarding expectations must also be considered.

Greater focus on relationship building and trust

Many funders are adopting an increasingly relational or 'trust-based' approach to giving.[23] This includes having a greater focus on a cultivating longer-term, more collaborative relationships with grantee partners and offering them greater flexibility and autonomy over the way funds are used.

A shift towards trust-based grant-making often requires a review of grant management practices, including due diligence, contracting and monitoring. A trust-based approach should not, however, preclude funders from establishing expectations around safeguarding. Rather it challenges funders to review their approach by streamlining processes, becoming less prescriptive in their expectations and recognising the knowledge and expertise of partners in developing safeguarding systems that make sense within their specific organisation and operational context.

Growth in funding to historically marginalised groups

Many funders are ceding decision-making powers to the communities they aim to serve, particularly to historically marginalised groups. This includes making efforts to address inequalities and support social change by supporting smaller, informal or un-constituted groups and grassroots movements, as well as funding to individuals.

Given historic underfunding, such groups and individuals may have less capacity and resources for governance, safeguarding and risk management. Funders will need to be mindful of the safeguarding knowledge and experience within grantee partners and may need to build in additional funding to address these gaps.

Growth in 'funder plus' approaches

'Funder plus' approaches are where the grant-maker supports partners beyond traditional project funding and either directly provides, or allows a budget line for, training, consultancy support and other forms of capacity building.

Where funders are providing direct support, this creates new duties of care in relation to health and safety, safeguarding and broader wellbeing. Funders will need to consider what is an appropriate approach to these risks and gain assurance that their team has the appropriate skills and knowledge, as well as policies, to underpin their work. When contracting third parties to provide support, they will need to seek assurance that appropriate safeguards and risk management systems are in place.

Greater expectation and activity on impact measurement

Many grant makers are seeking greater detail on the changes their funding brings about, with an increased focus on outcomes, impact measurement, evaluation and transparent reporting. These expectations affect the application process, may increase data collection and reporting obligations, and alter how grant makers aggregate and present data in their annual reports.

The desire to collect more robust data can bring funders (or those acting on their behalf) into more direct contact with beneficiaries, including children and adults with care and support needs. This challenges funders to ensure that they have embedded safe working practices across their organisation, including within their impact and evaluation functions. It also implies a duty of care in how funders present the impact of their work, with care needed around ensuring consent and protecting the dignity and privacy of individuals involved.

Shifts in fundraising strategy

The scale and types of fundraising activity among some grant makers has been changing. There has been an increase in public-facing fundraising events (including large-scale and regional or community-based events) and the emergence of 'funding circles' where there is direct contact between donors and funded individuals.

In addition to safer grant-making, funders will need to address potential risks associated with fundraising. This could include establishing processes for safe engagement with donors susceptible to harm and addressing potential risks in corporate partnerships for fundraising purposes as well as in fundraising campaigns, including via social media.

Implications for FSC

As grant-making practices shift and change, there is a need to support funders to understand and manage changes in risk across grant portfolios.

Importantly, this needs to be considered at the point that funding strategies are developed, and cover the design of grant-making processes and how support is delivered to partners. In addition to working with safeguarding leads, FSC has an important role in supporting trustees and senior leadership to understand potential risks and integrate these into their strategic plans, operating budgets and risk management frameworks.

In addition, FSC can support members by developing resources to assist them in understanding and managing safeguarding risk in non-traditional grant making activities.

In particular, this might include guidance on developing policies and practice in direct relationships (e.g. participatory grant making), integrating safeguarding in funding non-charitable organisations (e.g. individuals, co-operatives and community groups) and tools and tips for safely when engaging third party providers (e.g. providers of 'Funder Plus' support, evaluators, fundraisers and event managers).

Many funders are also interested in how to shape the wider 'ecosystem' of safeguarding in the UK and become protagonists for change themselves, either individually and/or with their partners. FSC could support members to set an ambition for what the UK needs for safeguarding (including from Government or delivery agencies) and the role funders play in this.

Support and practice guidance on safeguarding

This section provides an overview of the support and guidance that is available for funders to aid their work. In particular, it explores where funders and their grantee partners can access information, advice, training and guidance on safeguarding.

Limited but established infrastructure support

Since most funders are charitable trusts, they can often find information, advice and guidance from voluntary sector bodies. These typically offer advice on broader governance, employment and impact assessment. A few established organisations serve, support, or connect trusts and foundations specifically.

There are a growing number of funder networks, often focused on specific thematic programming areas or geography. There are also informal networks which have developed organically through personal connections or as a response to emergent collaboration or co-financing. The size and scope of activity varies significantly. Some networks offer capacity building but mostly it is peer-to-peer learning.

Although a number of these organisations might provide some guidance or peer support on safeguarding, FSC is currently the only infrastructure body that explicitly offers ongoing safeguarding support aimed solely at funders.

Several safeguarding practitioner networks exist by sub sector

There are several formal membership bodies for individuals working within safeguarding. Most have grown from social work and social care, although some commercial organisations have also created a membership offer for designated safeguarding leads.

There are also semi-formal national networks for those working on safeguarding. These tend to be e-mail list style groups, perhaps with a LinkedIn group, and have a particular focus such as on a sub-sector (e.g. youth work), form of harm (e.g. child exploitation), aspect of safeguarding (e.g. safer recruitment) or for those in a specific role (e.g. lead trustees).

Many funders' designated safeguarding leads and those of their funded partners would be eligible for membership in these bodies. However, none are tailored to funder-specific needs.

Safeguarding standard frameworks, kitemarks and certification

Several safeguarding-specific standards frameworks exist for voluntary sector organisations.

Standards for public and quasi-public funders

The UK Government Grants Functional Standard makes no specific reference to safeguarding, however there are several elements related to risk and issue management.[28]

Multiple standards for working with children

There are established standards developed by charities aimed at organisations working with children and young people up to 25. In England, many local charities work with local safeguarding arrangements to review their work (commonly known as a Section 11 audit or self-assessment).

Few standards frameworks for working with adults at risk of harm

Standards for Safeguarding Adults exist in England.[29] Many of the statutory provisions for regulated services that may be used by adults with care and support needs are also framed as standards.[30]

Other standards

There are multiple standards frameworks for international NGOs and specific frameworks for sports and faith organisations.[31]

Some safeguarding standards frameworks have external verification that leads to certification. Standalone consultancies and less well-established organisations also offer certification. The validity and robustness of these frameworks are unclear.

Diverse safeguarding training and guidance but little specifically for funders

There is a rich ecosystem of safeguarding guidance and training in the UK. Most provision is delivered by dedicated national charities. Most of the available support is focused on children and, to a lesser degree, young people (aged 18–25). There are fewer resources on safeguarding for adults, and those which do exist are mostly geared towards adult social care rather than other providers who have contact with adults at risk.

In addition, each UK nation has different arrangements for local statutory safeguarding arrangements, including different ways of providing advice, information and training.

There is no one national framework for safeguarding training or standardised outcomes. Some providers offer 'levels' of training, but there is no common understanding about what learning outcomes are required for each level so it can vary considerably across providers depending on the geography, sector or context which the training focuses on. Training providers may use specific frameworks issued by statutory agencies in Wales,[24] Scotland,[25] and Northern Ireland,[26,27] but these are not tailored to the unique relationships and duties of care that funders hold.

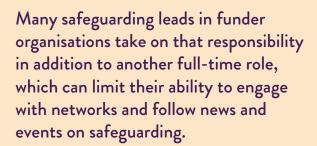## Few specialist media outlets focus on funders or grant making

Sector media such as Third Sector, Civil Society News (and their associated magazines), Third Force News (Scotland focus) and Charity Times often include news and features about funder activities. More niche publications, such as Alliance Magazine and Philanthropy Impact, cover broader philanthropy; these tend to be global in nature and provide longer features, analysis and opinion pieces.

News stories on law and policy about safeguarding are scattered across several specialist websites such as Community Care (focus on social care), Children and Young People Now (focus on youth work and children's social care) and Police Professional (wider public safety).

In addition, several safeguarding training and support providers and specialist law firms publish free newsletters. However, these are often targeted at more specific audiences and there are no news sources which focus specifically on safeguarding for funders.

In addition, there are a number of public awareness-raising campaigns relevant to safeguarding (e.g. adults at risk of harm, child abuse, terrorism and extremism, and child online abuse and exploitation). The information provided to charities and funders within these campaigns varies significantly. There is no pan-charity, voluntary, or community sector awareness-raising activity for safeguarding akin to Volunteers Week or Charity Fraud Awareness Week.

Implications for FSC

Many safeguarding leads in funder organisations take on that responsibility in addition to another full-time role, which can limit their ability to engage with networks and follow news and events on safeguarding.

FSC is well placed to share news and resources from leading safeguarding agencies in the UK. In addition, FSC can build stronger connections with key agencies and voluntary sector networks to encourage them to contribute to FSC learning spaces and resources, as well as creating opportunities for them to participate and exchange learning directly with funders.

Conclusion

This study provides a snapshot of the safeguarding landscape and its implications for funders and grant-giving in the UK.

It provides important insights to guide FSC's work to inform and strengthen the safeguarding practice of funders in the UK. Based on these findings, we have identified key priorities for responding to the identified gaps and needs, grouped under our strategic priorities of knowledge generation, influence and implementation.

Knowledge generation

FSC is currently undertaking a research and co-creation project to develop Safeguarding Standards for Funders. By 2026, we will have a set of evidence-based standards that will enable us to develop a range of evidence-informed guidance, training and tools to support funders to embed best practice standards.

In addition, there is scope for FSC to build additional guidance based on the knowledge that already exists, and information on safeguarding activity and risks gathered through work with members. This might include guidance for safeguarding in grant-making strategy setting, safeguarding when closing grant-making programmes or ending relationships with partners, and safeguarding when funding individuals or supporting activism.

FSC should retain its focus on funders and avoid replicating products where there is existing high-quality guidance, such as on direct work with children or adults at risk of harm.

In addition, FSC could consider how it contributes to filling evidence gaps on safeguarding practices. There is the potential to work with funders to commission research to illuminate what practices both they and partners should undertake to achieve positive safeguarding impacts. This could include research to better understand trends, risks and gaps in safeguarding.

Influence

The specialist nature of our work means that there is an opportunity for FSC to play a more proactive role in advocating on behalf of funders and building connections with the wider safeguarding community. This could include maximising the network's influence with relevant agencies such as regulatory bodies, government agencies, fundraising institutions and other sector networks to gain access to their insight and promote greater collaboration.

In addition, FSC can advocate for and influence the role of funders in safeguarding through more proactive engagement in events and social media presence. This could include amplifying key messages with a focus on funders' needs or spotlighting positive practices to the wider sector.

Implementation

While there are dozens of other training providers, few – if any – meet grant-makers' specific needs. FSC continues to play a unique role in building grant-makers' capacity. FSC should maintain its focus on primary support to funders and better signpost to respected, alternative providers of safeguarding technical support to voluntary and charitable organisations. However, FSC could develop new products that support funders as they provide or commission safeguarding advice and support to funded partners.

The support that FSC provides will need to evolve to meet the changing needs of funders in the UK. As grant makers differentiate their portfolios of programmes, they will have increasingly diverse ranges of risks to manage. FSC will have a role in supporting funders' understanding of proportionality and risk management across different programmes with variable risk profiles within one individual organisation. In particular, FSC should map what types of activities funders deliver online, and develop and embed technical support in this area to ensure funders are equipped to manage risks and meet regulatory requirements.

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27 Note, issued by the now defunct Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership (2016) **Northern Ireland Adult Safeguarding Partnership Training Strategy 2016**

28 Cabinet Office (2024) **Government Functional Standard GovS 015: Grants**

29 Local Government Association (2017) **Safeguarding Standards for Adults**

30 See: **Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014**

31 E.g. NSPCC (20240 **Safeguarding Standards and Guidance for the Voluntary and Community Sector** ; Child Protection in Sport Unit (2018) **CSPU Standards**; UK Youth (2020) **Safe Spaces Framework**

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.

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Safer grant-making. Higher impact.