



State of Children's Rights Report 2024

Application Criteria - Development Phase

Introduction

Together is taking a whole new approach to its State of Children's Rights Report for 2024! While previous reports have focused on evidence submitted by organisations, our 2024 report will present children and young people's experiences of their rights **through their own words, artwork and other means of expression.**

Together has been working closely with a range of organisations to inform our approach for gathering children and young people's experiences. We have produced some draft resources for children, young people and supporting adults which we intend to use as a starting point that can be built upon. We have now secured a small amount of funding to work with **five organisations** as Partners to help us refine our approach before we launch the final range of resources in summer 2024.

This is an exciting opportunity for children and young people to be involved in work to embed their human rights across law, policy and practice. It follows children and young people from Scotland [submitting evidence](#) to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child about the issues of most importance to them. This resulted in the UN Committee making almost [200 recommendations](#) to the UK and Scottish Government. Our 2024 State of Children's Rights Report will be part of our [#RightsOnTrack campaign](#) – all about ensuring that the Scottish Government and other duty bearers put these recommendations into practice and act on other priority issues identified by children, young people and their supporters. By framing the report through children's own words and experiences, we hope to make a powerful case for changing the hearts and minds of decision-makers.

Whilst the funding for the development phase is limited, Together commits to work closely with Partners to allocate it in a way that can best support the involvement of a diverse range of children and young people.

We value the work of all of our members and are committed to working transparently to select the Partner organisations in a way that aligns with our values. This paper outlines what the development phase will involve and our key considerations in selecting the Partner organisations that we will be working with, which have been informed by discussions with a range of organisations prior to recruitment.

What will the development phase involve?

We are looking to recruit **five organisations** who will help us to:

- test an initial draft of a children and young people's pack;
- test an initial draft of a facilitator pack;
- provide feedback on the above drafts and suggestions for improvement;
- support the development of additional resources as required (this could be, for example, a version of the above resources in alternative formats or tailored towards a specific group of children and young people)

If your application is successful, you will be expected to:

- Identify a group of up to five children and young people who are interested in taking part;
- Plan and deliver a 'story-gathering session' (or sessions) with the help of our draft resources to support children and young people to explore and share their experiences. These sessions can be online or in-person;
- Gather feedback from children, young people and supporting adults following the session(s) to help us understand how the draft resources are working and any changes or alternative versions required;
- Where required, support Together to prepare additional resources insofar as the limited budget for the project allows (e.g. versions in alternative formats or tailored towards a specific group of children and young people)

The development phase will run from February-March 2024. After this, we hope to launch the final range of resources in summer 2024. We intend to start recruiting organisations for this later engagement phase in approximately March/April 2024. Organisations that have applied or taken part in the earlier development phase may re-apply for the later engagement phase. All applications will be judged on their merits, taking into account the need to support a diverse range of children and young people to take part.

What will Together do with findings from the development phase?

Together will use feedback from children, young people and supporting adults to update our draft resources. We will also use this feedback to help inform the development of additional resources where a need has been identified, insofar as the limited budget for the project allows.

Together is also keen to ensure that the stories and experiences that children and young people share during the development phase are included in our 2024 State of Children's Rights Report where the relevant consent has been given.

Principles of recruitment

1. Alignment with Together values

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) is committed to [bringing a courageous, collaborative, constructive and inclusive approach](#) to all our work. We are looking to partner with organisations who share our values and are keen and able to bring an enthusiastic, collaborative and flexible approach to inform, shape and implement the work.

Together welcomes applications from all organisations with a passion for furthering children's rights in Scotland. We welcome applications from members and non-members. Organisations that are not members of Together will be encouraged to join if their application is successful.

2. Diversity

For children's rights to be protected, respected and fulfilled, it is vital that we understand the views, experiences and impact of decisions on different communities of children and young people.

Particular care will therefore be taken to ensure that the organisations selected are able to support the involvement of a diverse group of children and young people with a range of views and experiences, particularly those whose voices are marginalised/less frequently heard.

We aim to prioritise diversity of experience such as babies and early years children, children in conflict with the law, children experiencing poverty, Gypsy/Traveller children, children from racialised groups, minoritised ethnic children, children with additional support needs including disabled children, Care Experienced children, asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant children, LGBTI+ children, children affected by parental imprisonment, children in armed forces families and young carers.

We understand that every organisation is different – we do not expect applicants to be able to reach *each and every* group whose rights are most at risk, but as part of our considerations we will aim to have as diverse a group as possible. All our work will be underpinned by a commitment to using a trauma-informed approach. We will seek to work with children and young people from across Scotland where possible and will aim to have a balance of children from urban, rural and island communities and both from within and outwith the central belt.

We welcome applications from organisations that support children and young people under the age of 18 and who operate in Scotland.

In order to ensure as many children and young people as possible have opportunities to be involved in shaping our approach, consideration will also be given to the different opportunities children and young people working with our members have to engage and influence the world around them.

Together will take into consideration the need to ensure a mixture of online and in-person story-gathering sessions so we can find out how well the draft resources are working in different contexts.

3. Other considerations

Anticipated resource commitment:

The work will be shaped by the children and young people involved. However it is anticipated that each of the Partner organisations will plan and deliver at least one 'story-gathering session' with the help of our draft resources. This session could be delivered through an existing structure/group that your organisation already has, rather than setting up and recruiting a 'new' group of children and young people.

The aim of the story-gathering session is to support children and young people to explore their experiences through different activities. Partner organisations will be expected to deliver these sessions and submit feedback and findings to Together by mid-March 2024.

Each Partner organisation will be expected to submit to Together:

- Children and young people's feedback on the resources and activities;
- Feedback from Partner organisation staff on the resources and activities;
- Children and young people's stories and experiences of their rights for inclusion in the 2024 State of Children's Rights Report where consent has been given for this.

A small amount of funding will be allocated to Partner organisations to support Participation Worker time, remuneration for children and young people, refreshments and to support accessibility resources.

We understand that positive relationships between staff and children and young people based on trust are essential to the success of any form of participation activity. As a result, we would expect one member of staff from each partner organisation to commit to being involved in this project to support the children and young people involved. Support offered by the staff member will include, but not be limited to:

- inviting children and young people to be involved;
- sending out and receiving consent forms;
- helping children and young people to understand documents and resources;
- planning and delivering story-gathering session(s) to be conducted either online or in-person;
- recording findings from the story-gathering session(s) and submitting this to Together for the State of Children's Rights Report 2024;
- gathering feedback and suggestions from children, young people and staff on the draft resources so Together can adapt these ahead of their final launch (this may include, for example, supporting Together to produce alternative versions where required and insofar as possible within the limited budget for the project);
- acting as the key point of contact with both children and young people and Together staff.

Support for children and young people involved:

Together will support work throughout the project by providing information and resources, as well as child-friendly information. All information provided to children and young people will be presented in an accessible way avoiding jargon, complicated words and all acronyms will be explained. Part of the development phase will involve exploring what alternative formats or versions of resources may be required – such as easy read [documents](#) or versions that are tailored towards a specific group of children and young people. We are eager to work with organisations who are able to support with this.

Selection criteria

We will use the five criteria below to select Partner organisations for the development phase:

- Diversity of experiences of children and young people involved. Ability to work with children whose rights are most at risk and/or seldom heard children and young people will be a priority when assessing applications.
- Children and young peoples' wish to be involved in the project, and their availability to be involved in work, particularly considering the short timescales involved.
- Capacity of the applicant organisation to engage in the development phase, and to fully support the children and young people involved throughout. Applicants will be required to provide their safeguarding policies and procedures, which will be assessed as part of the application process.
- Commitment of the applicant organisation to developing a model through a collaborative approach, exchanging their skills and knowledge with Together and other Partner organisations involved.
- Taking a holistic view, the balance of organisations involved and how they complement each other's work, we will seek to recruit a broad range of children and young people. Consideration will also be taken of the methods of engagement members would seek to use. We are aware that children and young people use multiple ways of engaging and sharing their views, including both creative and digital methods, and would like to know what methods you plan to use.

Each criterion above will be scored between 1 (inadequate) to 5 (exceptional).

All successful applicants will be expected to work in a way which aligns with Together's vision and values.

Applications will be considered by an independent child participation expert with support from Together.

For further information please contact: **Judi Martin, Policy Assistant,**
judi@togetherscotland.org.uk.

Please send completed applications to: **Judi Martin, Policy Assistant,**
judi@togetherscotland.org.uk.