



Ending Violence Against Women and Girls **Local Change Fund 2026-2027**

Guidance Notes

**Applications open Wednesday 7 January 2026 and close
Wednesday 4 February 2026 at 5 pm**

Projects must be delivered between 01/04/2026 and 31/03/2027

<https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/services/sponsorship-grants-bursaries/grant-aid/>

1. Introduction

The Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) Strategic Framework was launched by the Executive in September 2024. It brings together a whole of society and whole of government response to address this issue which impacts the lives of far too many women and girls across our society. The focus of this strategy is on prevention. This recognises that tackling the underlying causes of violence, abuse and harm towards women and girls and stopping it before it starts is vital.

The Strategy supports those organisations working to prevent and challenge the attitudes, behaviours and culture that can lead to violence against women and girls. It will deliver real change for those who suffer harm and abuse across our society every day.

For further information about the EVAWG Strategic Framework, and to access the full documents, please visit: <https://www.executiveoffice-ni.gov.uk/topics/ending-violence-against-women-and-girls>

1.1 Purpose of Grant Programme

This guidance relates to **Strand 1** of the **Change Fund**. Funding from the Executive Office (TEO) will enable Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to support community groups in their respective local government district.

The EVAWG Change Fund aims to equip community groups to prevent violence against women and girls. This means ways to mobilise grassroots action and maximise the impact of community-led initiatives contributing to the Prevention outcomes of the EVAWG Strategic Framework.

The **Change Fund** will help to mobilise grassroots action, support innovative delivery and maximise the impact of community-led initiatives contributing to the **Prevention outcomes of the EVAWG Strategic Framework**. These are:

Outcome 1: Changed attitudes, behaviours, and culture – Everyone in society understands what violence against women and girls is, including its root causes, and plays an active role in preventing it

Outcome 2: Healthy, respectful relationships – Everyone in society is equipped and empowered to enjoy healthy, respectful relationships

Outcome 3: Women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere – Organisations and institutions across government and society embed the prevention of violence against women and girls in all that they do, so that women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere

All projects supported by the Change Fund **must include a focus on Outcome 1** and specifically demonstrate how project proposals will increase awareness and understanding of what violence against women and girls is, including its root causes.

In addition to Outcome 1, applicants can also demonstrate how their project proposals contribute to Outcomes 2 and/or 3. Note that projects will not necessarily score higher if multiple outcomes are selected and/or have a higher budget, the assessment process will focus on the quality, proportionate impact, and investment effectiveness (including value for money) of the proposal – these can be considered high or low regardless of a project's budget or its focus on one or more outcomes.

1.2 Grant Award

Strand 1 of the EVAWG Change Fund is administered and supported by the Council and will provide grant funding up to a maximum of £25,000 to successful community groups operating within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area. The minimum grant awarded will be £1,000. Funding can be applied for within three tiers of support:

- Tier 1: grants between £1,000 and £5,000
- Tier 2: grants between £5,001 and £15,000
- Tier 3: grants between £15,001 and up to £25,000

At this time the indicative budget for the EVAWG Change Fund is £101,000.

All applications will be assessed against set criteria. This is a competitive process, and awards are subject to funds available to Council.

Applicants can only apply to one tier.

Delivery of successful projects and all grant funding must be incurred in full during the 2026-27 financial year (1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027).

1.3 Who can apply?

Community and Voluntary Sector (CVS) organisations currently delivering services within the Fermanagh and Omagh District Council area may apply for funding. These are understood as:

- *“not-for-profit organisations that support a wide range of social, environmental and economic outcomes and rely to a large extent on voluntary contributions through their boards of trustees, formal volunteering and donations. The sector spans a very diverse range of organisations in terms of scale and focus of operations and interests. Volunteers define and drive this sector, but organisations will also all have some sort of formal structure or constitution. They are self-governing and independent from government or the private sector. They have social objectives and work to benefit the community. They may operate a social enterprise or community business but any profits will be re-invested for community benefit”.*

Department for Communities

Voluntary and Community Sector Infrastructure Support Framework

Draft Framework: Proposals for Consultation November 2023¹

Some of these organisations may be registered charities. It may also include, for example, arts, faith, youth and sporting organisations. The eligibility of these and other organisations/groupings will be considered against the broad definition set out above, including its emphasis on ‘*not-for-profit*’, ‘*formal structure or constitution*’ and that ‘*they have social objectives and work to benefit the community*’. Belonging to or being affiliated with larger organisations does not exclude individual branches from applying.

Consortium/Partnership applications

Consortium / partnership applications should identify an agreed lead partner to be responsible for all elements of programme delivery, submission of grant claims and compliance with monitoring &

¹ <https://www.communities-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/consultations/communities/dfc-voluntary-community-sector-infrastructure-support-framework-consultation.pdf>

evaluation requirements. These applications should include detail on all partners involved, their role in delivering the project and evidence of relevant previous programme delivery. **Consortium / partnership applications can be made to Tiers 2 & 3 only.**

Grassroots organisations

The term 'grassroots organisations' is used in this document to refer to CVS organisations whose primary operations and beneficiaries are at local level, meaning within the specific local council area to which they are making an application to the EVAWG Change Fund.

1.4 Who is not eligible to apply?

The following are not deemed eligible to apply to the Change Fund.

- Organisations and individuals who would not be considered as CVS organisations as described in previously. The assessment process will provide adjudication as required.
- Political parties.
- Any other organisation or project proposals that Council and/or TEO may from time to time deem to be ineligible, including incompatibility with the vision, principles and outcomes of the Strategic Framework for Ending Violence Against Women and Girls; or that support to a project/organisation risks contravening legislative requirements and Executive priorities in respect of employment, health and safety, discrimination, equality of opportunity, and promotion of good relations.

1.5 What types of projects can be funded?

All proposals must demonstrate that the activity will equip community groups to address violence against women and girls. There must be a clear linkage between proposed activities (and associated expenditure) and the EVAWG prevention outcomes: changing attitudes; behaviour and culture; healthy, respectful relationships; women and girls feel safe and are safe everywhere.

The Change Fund encourages and seeks to support innovation by local groups. Project proposals are anticipated to be varied and might enable groups to, for example, test new approaches, explore different ideas and ways of working, catalyse new or wider collaborations. There is no prescriptive listing of project activity; all applicants must demonstrate a good understanding of the

issue. The table below outlines some indicative activities that may be presented for funding.

Tier	Funding Available	Description	How the grant is awarded
1	Funding £1,000- £5,000	Proposals might be for one-off events, projects, workshops or small clusters of activity aimed at awareness raising and aligned with all or some of the prevention outcomes in the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework 1, 2 and 3. (Outcome 1 is mandatory)	Funding is paid retrospectively on successful completion of the project and submission of funding claim.
2	Funding £5,001- £15,000	Proposals might include expansion/enhancement of activities described in Tier 1, as well as planned programmes of activity, longer running initiatives, educational courses aligned with all or some of the prevention outcomes in the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework 1, 2 and 3. (Outcome 1 is mandatory)	There is no advance payment of funding. Payment is made on 100% vouching of project spend. Failure to deliver the project in full as stated in the Letter of Offer may result in a reduction in the funding awarded.
3	Funding £15,001 - £25,000	Proposals might be for planned programmes of activity, longer running initiatives, educational course aligned with some or all of the prevention outcomes in the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Framework 1, 2 and 3. (Outcome 1 is mandatory). Awards may also be for activities described in Tiers 1 and 2. and Proposals must demonstrate an aspect of mentoring or significant collaboration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By 'mentoring' we mean where a more experienced organisation with better developed capacity will assist another less experienced organisation or organisations in developing the skills and knowledge to perform more effectively. This may include sharing resources and networks. This is with a view to building the capacity of the mentored organisation. • Collaboration is defined as working with organisation(s) of a similar level/capacity and can include working with both voluntary and statutory organisations. 	

1.6 What is eligible expenditure?

Examples of eligible expenditure might include event costs; design and publishing; filming/photography/animations, website and other digital content development (if directly supporting project activities); marketing and development and/or delivery and/or attendance at relevant training* and resources; research; facilitation costs; counselling and related support services; refreshments capped at 20% of the funding award, small items of the equipment (under £1,000) essential to delivery of the project; venue hire, development and delivery of relevant performances and creative initiatives.

**Training must be provided by an accredited/affiliated training organisation that specialises in this area. Further clarification can be sought from the Council.*

Other potential eligible expenditure includes proportionate administrative/staff costs and/or running costs directly and necessarily incurred in the delivery of the proposed activity and agreed in the Letter of Offer to the applicant. **This applies to Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects only.**

These examples are indicative only and not an exhaustive list. Projects and associated costs/expenditure will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

If the applicant organisation reclaims VAT, only the net amount can be funded – the Council will fund net costs if you are VAT registered and gross costs if you are not VAT registered.

All eligible and approved expenditure must demonstrate value for money (VfM). Best value for money is defined² as the most advantageous combination of cost, quality and sustainability to meet customer requirements.

1.7 Alongside the Change Fund the Executive Office has funded eight organisations to deliver EVAWG activity on a regional basis. Applicants may wish to consider this when developing their project.

Barnardo's will support children and young people from refugee and those from separated and unaccompanied asylum-seeking backgrounds.

² <https://www.finance-ni.gov.uk/publications/ppn-0421-procurement-control-limits>

Nexus will deliver healthy and respectful relationships education for young people and provide training and support for a wide range of organisations and institutions and commitment to its EVAWG Pledge.

NSPCC will expand support for healthy relationships education and safeguarding.

Relate NI will deliver a community-based programme for young women to help challenge societal myths and norms perpetuating gender-based violence.

White Ribbon NI will expand delivery of its 'Listen, Learn, Lead' programme to more people, schools, workplace and community settings.

Women's Aid Federation NI will expand support and resources for Early Years practitioners via its 'Helping Hands' project; train post-primary teachers to respond to VAWG; and support young people to have healthy and respectful relationships.

Women's Resource and Development Agency (WRDA) will deliver its 'Raise Your Voice' project across council areas and help participants understand ways harassment and sexual violence impact on those it targets and how to develop approaches tackling this impact.

Youth Action NI will engage young people aged 14-25 to support them in building the confidence, knowledge and skills to make informed decisions about their lives and ways to address EVAWG within their wider community.

1.8 What is ineligible expenditure?

The following are examples of ineligible expenditure; general operating costs for organisations; trips/residential costs and associated events where these do not form part of a wider project or programme; equipment costs over £1,000 per individual item (includes purchase and/or hire of individual items); capital works; professional conferences / conventions; award ceremonies or industry events; presentations or gifts to individuals; loan repayments; activity that is party political in nature; retrospective expenditure; costs/activity not submitted and assessed in the application.

1.9 Procurement

This means buying goods and services. Council procurement guidelines and thresholds must be complied with where grant funding is used to buy goods or services (in full or as a contribution to these costs). Council procurement guidelines and thresholds will be detailed in a Letter of Offer to

successful applicants.

2.0 Submitting your application

Financial Assistance Programmes are operated through the online Electronic Grant Management System (Submit). Late applications will not be considered. The application form should be checked to ensure all sections are completed and all requested information attached/uploaded. It is recommended that applicants retain a copy of the application form for their own records and proof of submission. Completed application forms can be downloaded from the Council Grant System along with proof of submission. Submitting an application, does not guarantee funding. Submitted applications will be acknowledged automatically by email. Initial checks will be undertaken to ensure that the application is eligible for support from the Council.

If the application is considered eligible, it will be scored against the published criteria for The Change Fund and a recommendation will be made taking account of resources and competing demands.

3.0 The Application Form

The level of grant funding applicants chooses to apply for (Tier 1, 2 or 3) will determine how much information is needed for assessors to sufficiently consider project proposals. For example, a project proposal for Tier 1 support (e.g. £1,000) should require less information and associated evidence than a Tier 3 project (maximum of £25,000).

Part A Information about your organisation

This section of the application form gathers information about your organisation, including contact details and insight on the purpose and work of your organisation, which will enable the assessment process to check eligibility (CVS status). You'll also indicate here which Tier of grant support you're applying for (Tier 1, 2 or 3).

Applicants should also declare any Change Fund applications made to other council areas, as well as detailing (if known at the time of your application) any proposed partnerships/collaborations involving your organisation (in a paid/funded capacity or otherwise) that other organisations will be declaring in their applications to any council.

Part B Project proposal

This section of the application form gathers information about your project proposal – what you want to do and why. This is the part of the form where you must clearly and sufficiently demonstrate how your project supports the Prevention Outcomes (1, 2 and/or 3) of the EVAWG Strategic framework. Note that demonstrating a project's contribution to Outcome 1 is mandatory for all tiers of grant support applied for.

Applicants should apply for **one** Tier only –

- Tier 1: Grants between £1,000 and £5,000
- Tier 2: Grants between £5,001 and £15,000
- Tier 3: Grants between £15,001 and up to £25,000

In this section you will be asked to identify which Tier you will be applying to and state the name of the project and where it will be delivered. This will be the project name used in all future correspondence. You will also be asked to enter the project start and end date. All projects must be completed no later than 31 March 2027 and claims submitted within six-weeks of the chosen project end date.

All applicants are required to answer 3 questions relating to the project proposal; applicants for Tier 3 must answer an additional question. The questions are listed below.

Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects

Question: What is your project and how will it support the Prevention Outcomes of the EVAWG Strategic Framework? Applicants should ensure that all projects include a focus on Prevention Outcome 1. In addition to Outcome 1, applicants can also demonstrate how their project proposals contribute to Outcomes 2 and/or 3.

Use these prompts to provide a comprehensive answer.

- Describe the project what is the activity to be delivered e.g. workshops, one off event, awareness campaign.
- Who are the target project participants and how have you identified them?
- How will you advertise the project?

- How will the project acknowledge funding from The Executive Office?
- What are the project outcomes and how do they contribute to Outcome 1: Changed attitudes, behaviours and cultures?
- How will the project increase awareness and understanding of what violence against women and girls is, including its root causes?
- How will your project equip community groups to prevent violence against women & girls and mobilise grassroots action? (800 word limit)

Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects

Question: Outline your organisation's capacity and ability to deliver the proposed project.

Applicants should demonstrate that they have the capacity, skills and experience necessary to deliver a grant funded project or that appropriate support is available to the group to complete the project.

Use these prompts to provide a comprehensive answer.

- What funded projects have you managed previously – provide some examples of projects and level of funding managed.
- What processes do you use to manage funds include; governance, account management and record keeping?
- Are there any partners involved in the project – what is their role, how have you identified them as a partner? Have they confirmed their willingness to be involved in the project?
- What are the potential risks for delivering this project – how have you identified them and what actions will you take to address them?
- What safeguarding procedures will be in place for the project? If relevant, provide detail on your organisations safeguarding arrangements. (300 word limit)

Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects

Question: Outline the investment effectiveness of the project proposal

Applicants should demonstrate the value for money of the proposed project.

Use these prompts to provide a comprehensive answer.

- What is the number of beneficiaries engaged over the duration of the project?
- Describe the benefits to be delivered by the project and how they align with EAWG Strategic Framework (300 word limit)

Tier 3 projects only

Question: Outline the impact of the mentoring or collaboration aspects of the project proposal.

Projects seeking Tier 3 funding **must** demonstrate an aspect of mentoring or significant collaboration and how it will enhance the project.

- By 'mentoring' we mean where a more experienced organisation with better developed capacity will assist another less experienced organisation or organisations in developing the skills and knowledge to perform more effectively. This may include sharing resources and networks. This is with a view to building the capacity of the mentored organisation.
- Collaboration is defined as working with organisation(s) of a similar level/capacity and can include working with both voluntary and statutory organisations.

Use these prompts to provide a comprehensive answer.

- Describe how mentoring/collaboration will strengthen project outcomes
- Explain the benefits to participants and the community.
- Outline how partners/mentors add expertise, resources, or credibility.
- Describe the long-term skills, networks, or capacity that will continue after the project ends.
- Explain what makes your mentoring/collaboration approach effective. (300 word limit)

Applicants should apply for **one** Tier only

- Tier 1: Grants between £1,000 and £5,000
- Tier 2: Grants between £5,001 and £15,000
- Tier 3: Grants between £15,001 and up to £25,000

The applicant should include 100% of all costs associated with the project including those you are not requesting funding for within this application.

The applicant must indicate the amount of funding required from Council ensuring they do not exceed the lower and upper thresholds as identified in the Guidance Notes. Applicants must also be aware that Council may fund less than the amount requested. Costs should be outlined for every item of expenditure even where Council is not providing the funding. Applicants should ensure costs are realistic and should get quotes where required – note there is no need to provide quotes with your application. You will be required to provide us with a breakdown of each activity (budget

heading). You should provide a breakdown of all activities e.g. Artists fees, £1,500 – 5 artists x £300 each. It is vital that the amount requested is within the eligible items of expenditure as highlighted for the programme and within the Council regulations. If applicants are not requesting 100% of the total cost of the project, they should provide evidence of any additional funding being received for the project including the organisation's own funding sources.

In line with current policy evaluation methods that have been introduced across the NI Executive, the Change Fund is employing a method known as Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA). You are best placed to tell us about the difference you think your project will make. The application form will allow you to start thinking about how to measure the impact of your project, and you can provide initial ideas of your project specific output measures. Do not worry if you are not familiar with OBA. If your project is awarded funding, you will receive further assistance in developing your report card and approach to data collection, monitoring and evaluation.

4.0 How we will assess and score your application

Each application will be considered on its own merits. In order to deliver the programme's aim and general principles, applicants will need to demonstrate how their community development project meets the appropriate criteria. It is important to remember that the application will be assessed ONLY on the information provided in the application form and specifically in the box relating to the particular question asked. Any information that you do not include or that is contained in other parts of the application form will not be considered. Therefore, you MUST demonstrate how you meet the essential criteria as set out in these guidelines in the application.

The assessment process will focus on the quality, proportionate impact, and investment effectiveness (including value for money) of each proposal.

4.1 Eligibility assessment

Applications received by Council will be logged and undergo eligibility checks. If eligibility information is missing at this point, you will be contacted and given 5 days to submit the missing information. Failure to provide all necessary eligibility information and complete forms as required will mean your application will not go forward for assessment in the current funding call.

4.2 Scoring

Applications will be scored against the criteria for The Change Fund. Council will consider the scores of all applications above minimum threshold for the particular programme and will place these in ranked order. Depending on the amount of funding available applicants will be funded in order of their score, with higher scoring applications funded first. Applicants will be recommended for funding based on their score and a score and rank system will be implemented. Based on confirmed scores, and budget availability, you may be made an offer of grant funding. Note this will not necessarily be for the full amount or for all costs requested. Specific conditions may be applied to your offer of grant funding.

TIERS 1 AND 2		Percentage weighting
1.	How will your project support the Prevention Outcomes of the EVAWG Strategic framework? (Outcome 1 is mandatory)	60
2.	Ability to deliver the proposal to meet local needs	20
3.	Investment effectiveness (including Value for Money) of the proposal	20

TIER 3		Percentage weighting
1.	How will your project support the Prevention Outcomes of the EVAWG Strategic framework? (Outcome 1 is mandatory)	50
2.	The impact of the mentoring or collaboration aspects of the proposal	10
3.	Ability to deliver the proposal to meet local needs	20
4.	Investment effectiveness (including Value for Money) of the proposal	20

4.3 Letter of Offer

If your organisation is successful, you will be issued a Letter of Offer from Council. This will detail:

- general conditions of the grant
- any special conditions
- project budget and targets
- procurement requirements
- monitoring requirements
- stages which the grant will be paid (if relevant)

You must sign, date and return the Letter of Offer to confirm that you are accepting the grant. You can also decline to accept.

You will not be reimbursed for any project costs you pay or agree to pay before you have returned a signed Letter of Offer and it is received by Council.

Further information on Fermanagh and Omagh District Council Grant Aid Code of Practice can be found at:

<https://www.fermanaghomagh.com/app/uploads/2024/05/Grant-Aid-Code-of-Practice.pdf>

5.0 Monitoring and reporting

If your project receives grant support, you will be in receipt of public funding, and this must be accountable. Monitoring and reporting are an essential requirement for you in delivering your project. Outcomes Based Accountability (OBA) will be used to capture the progress and impact of your project. Assistance will be available to help you finalised your report card and approach to data collection, monitoring and evaluation.

If any information in the application, monitoring or supporting information is found to be untrue or misleading, we will withdraw any grant. If we have already paid part of a grant to your organisation, you must repay it. This will have implications for any future applications or requests for funding. We may also review grants made to your organisation in the past.

6.0 Marketing and promotion

Raising awareness of EVAWG and the prevention outcomes of the Strategic Framework is fundamental to helping to realise the vision of “a changed society where women and girls are free from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harm - including the attitudes, systems and structural inequalities that cause them”.

The EVAWG team in TEO will support Council staff to work alongside successful projects to help maximise their impact and reach. This can include promotional support and help with sharing stories of the difference your project is making. Additional guidance will issue to successful projects on the support available, which might, for example, include photography and filming. This guidance will include details on branding, logos and related requirements for all printed and other promotional materials developed by your project.

Your organisation’s involvement in the Change Fund, both as an applicant to the fund and/or recipient of grant support, provides access to a wider EVAWG network of CVS groups and other organisations working to end violence against women and girls. Further information will be offered to your organisation on ways it can connect with the insights shared across this network and become more involved with this growing EVAWG coalition.

	Ending Violence Against Women & Girls - Local Change Fund
Contact Information	<p>Applicants are encouraged to discuss project ideas with EVAWG Officers who are available to offer support during the application process.</p> <p>Carol Follis Mobile: 07712540263 Email: carol.follis@fermanaghomagh.com</p>