

Policy:**Member and Supporter Policy****First approved:** 25 August 2021**Date revised:****Next revision:****Lead/Second** Isla Kitching/Juliet Harris

Together (Scottish Alliance for Children's Rights) works with individual and not for profit members as well as supporters.

Individual Member definition

Individual members are any individuals who are interested in following, supporting and engaging with Together's work.

Individual members must:

- Agree to sign up and commit to Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work & the responsibilities of membership.
- Agree to act in accordance with the principles enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and broader human rights treaties.

Not for Profit Member definition

As Together is first and foremost an NGO alliance, Together Members must be not for profit organisations. Members must be:

- Be a registered Scottish charity with OSCR.
- Be based and/or operate in Scotland.

*Academic institutions can be members under the university's charity number. According to our current Memorandum and Articles of Association, these bodies can pay separate membership fees and have separate voting rights.

Not for profit Members must:

- Agree to sign up and commit to Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work & the responsibilities of membership.
- Base their work on the principles enshrined by in UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties.
- Fulfil formal application procedures and be approved as member through Together's Board of Trustees.

Supporter definition

Supporters are entities which do not meet the criteria for Membership, but which are interested in being involved with Together. Supporters must be:

- Informal coalitions that have no legal status.
- OR organisations or groups unable to pay (or negotiate to minimum of 50% of) the annual membership fee.
- OR public bodies.
- OR For-profit organisations.
- OR a group which for any other reason makes membership unfeasible or inappropriate.

Supporters must:

- Be based and/or operate in Scotland.
- Agree to sign up and commit to Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work & the responsibilities of being a supporter.
- Base their work on the principles enshrined by in UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties.
- Fulfilled formal application procedures and been approved as a supporter through Together's Board of Trustees

It is clearly outlined on Together's website that non-NGO entities should get in touch with Membership Outreach Assistant (MOA) to find out how they can work with the organisation. The MOA will respond to such enquiries with information about the supporter status including benefits and eligibility requirements.

Organisations, groups or coalitions who communicate to Together their inability to pay the membership fee will also be asked if they would like to become supporters.

At least once a year, supporters and individuals are encouraged to make a donation towards Together's work.

Responsibilities of Together Members and Supporters

Responsibilities of Together members (not for profit and individual)

- Sign up and commit to Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work and to base their work according to the principles enshrined in the UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties.
- Take measures to raise awareness of children and young people's human rights among colleagues, supporters and partner organisations and bodies.
- Make efforts to put children and young people's human rights at the heart of everything they do and share knowledge and experience to help partners and other organisations do the same.
- Share developments in the sector, expertise in the form of reports or resources, information about upcoming events etc. with Together to advertise in fortnightly e-newsletter.

- Not for profit organisations contribute to the financial sustainability and independence of Together by paying an annual membership fee of £100¹.
- Promote Together's work and amplify Together's messages, resources, blogs, consultation responses etc.
- Not knowingly or negligently act in a way that could discredit Together or bring it into disrepute.

Responsibilities of Together Supporters

- Sign up and commit to Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work and to base their work according to the principles enshrined in the UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties.
- Take measures to raise awareness of children and young people's human rights among supporters and partner organisations and bodies.
- Make efforts to put children and young people's human rights at the heart of everything they do and share knowledge and experience to help partners and other organisations do the same.
- Not knowingly or negligently act in a way that could discredit Together or bring it into disrepute.

Assessment procedure for incoming applicants

Joining procedure for individual members

1. Individuals interested in membership must fill in an application form on the Together website. The application form requests:
 - contact details
 - a commitment to the responsibilities of being a member, Together's vision and mission, values, anti-racism work and to act compatibly with the UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties. The application form notes that failure to act in accordance with these principles may result in the termination of membership.
2. Together receives the application form and checks the adequacy of the application (for example for missing information).
3. If the form is complete and the individual has agreed to the terms of membership, their application is automatically approved. Together sends an email to the applicant welcoming them to Together.
4. At board meetings, the board receives a list of all new individual members who have joined over the past quarter.

¹ For not-for-profit members who become members after either August or November board meetings they will be invoiced for £50, half the annual membership fee when they join.

Joining procedure for not-for-profit members

1. Organisations interested in membership must fill in an application form on the Together website. The application form requests:
 - contact details
 - information about the organisation
 - a commitment to the responsibilities of being a member, Together's vision and mission, values, anti-racism work and to act compatibly with the UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties. The application form notes that failure to act in accordance with these principles may result in the termination of membership.
2. Together receives the application form and checks the adequacy of the application (for example for missing information). Together sends an email to the applicant, thanking the organisation for applying, acknowledging that the form has been received and noting that their application will be considered at the next board meeting (mentioning the date of).
3. Organisational details are entered into the membership database, noting that membership is pending prior to board approval, and, if they gave consent to this, the prospective member is registered to Together's fortnightly e-newsletter.
4. Prior to the upcoming board meeting, the Trustees receive a list of the applications received for membership that quarter. Together staff conduct basic research into the background, values and reputation of these organisations. Trustees must consider whether organisations applying for membership have previously acted in a way which is compatible with Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work and the principles enshrined in the UNCRC and take steps to mitigate against any risk of the organisation's membership damaging Together's credibility.
5. The applications are approved/rejected at the board meeting.
6. Once approved by the board, organisations gain immediate access to the full benefits of membership. They receive a welcome email with the Together membership Welcome pack.
7. Approved organisations are invoiced by the Business Support Officer.
8. If the applicant is rejected, a written explanation outlining the reason for their rejection will be sent.

Joining procedure for supporters

1. Supporter status is raised as an option for groups approaching Together's staff team either because they are unable to pay membership or are not eligible for membership for another reason.
2. It is agreed between Together staff and a representative of the group that they will become supporters of Together.

3. Together shares an online application form asking them to submit:
 - contact details
 - information about the organisation
 - a commitment to the responsibilities of being a supporter, Together's vision and mission, values, anti-racism work and to act compatibly with the UNCRC and broader international human rights treaties. The application form notes that failure to act in accordance with these principles may result in the termination of their relationship with Together.
4. Together receives the application form and checks the adequacy of the application (for example for missing information). Together sends an email to the applicant, thanking them for applying, acknowledging that the form has been received and noting that their application will be considered at the next board meeting (mentioning the date of).
5. Organisational details are entered into the membership database, noting that being a supporter is pending prior to board approval, and the prospective supporter is registered to Together's fortnightly e-newsletter.
6. Prior to the upcoming board meeting, the Trustees receive a list of the applications received for becoming supporters that quarter. Together staff conduct basic research into the background, values and reputation of these groups. Trustees must consider whether groups applying to be supporters have previously acted in a way which is compatible with Together's vision, mission, values and the principles enshrined in the UNCRC and take steps to mitigate against any risk that the group's association with Together could damage the organisation's credibility.
7. The applications are approved/rejected at the board meeting.
8. Once approved by the board, these groups gain immediate access to the full benefits of being a supporter. They receive a welcome email and the Together Welcome pack.
9. If the applicant is rejected, a written explanation outlining the reason for their rejection will be sent.

Current members

Individuals and organisations who became Together members prior to April 2021 - when the registration forms were updated for new members and supporters - have not formally agreed to the organisation's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work, the responsibilities of membership/being a supporter and to act compatibly with the UNCRC and broader human rights treaties.

As such, all not for profit and individual members will be asked to complete a contact renewal form in which they sign up and agree to commit to Together's vision, mission, values, anti-racism work and the responsibilities of membership. In this form, they must accept that failure to do so may result in termination of their relationship with Together.

If, after at least one reminder, an organisation or individual does not agree to commit to Together’s vision, mission, values, anti-racism work and the responsibilities of membership, they will be unable to remain a member.

Entities which cannot remain members under the new member definition will be invited to become supporters. In the registration form to become a supporter, they will be asked to update their details and agree to Together’s vision, mission, values and the responsibilities of being a supporter.

Benefits received by Not For Profit & Individual Members and Supporters

| Benefits | Not for profit Member | Supporter (statutory, for profit, non-formal organisation) | Individual Member |
|---|-----------------------|---|-------------------|
| Access to online resource library | X | X | X |
| Access to Together’s fortnightly e-newsletter | X | X | X |
| Provide evidence to inform consultation responses & reports to UN Committee on Rights of the Child. | X | X | X |
| Actively influence and support consultation responses, policy positions & contribute to reports to UN Committee on Rights of the Child. | X | | X |
| Access to children’s rights infographics | X | X | X |
| Access to member information sessions and events | X | For a limited fee | X |
| Together Welcome handbook | X | X | X |
| Featured with bio and logo on the Together website | X | | |
| Voting rights at board election | X | | |
| Ability to run for election as a trustee | X | | X |
| Opportunity to participate in the Membership Spotlight and have job vacancies promoted. | X | | |
| Opportunity to have children’s rights work and campaigns promoted | X | X | X |
| Support to build member capacity to inform policy and direct practice. | X | | |
| Bespoke support to organisations* | For a limited fee* | In occasional circumstances & at discretion of the director | |

*Subject to capacity, availability and strategic priorities.

Terminating membership

Resignation

Members and supporters may give notice of their resignation from Together at any time by written notice with reason for leaving.

Organisational members which cite difficulties paying the annual membership fee as a reason for ending their membership with Together should be approached and informed about the fee negotiation policy.

Resignation for any other reason is effective as of the date that Together that receives this written notice. At the next quarterly board meeting all membership and supporter withdrawals are notified to the Trustees.

Exclusion

Individual and not for profit members and supporters can all have their relationship with Together terminated.

Reasons for exclusions include: non-payment of the membership fee, bringing Together into disrepute, lack of commitment to responsibilities of being a member or supporter and failure to adhere to Together's mission, vision and values.

a. Non-payment of membership fee:

Organisations receive an invoice for the annual membership fee after they have been approved by the board and thereafter in February/March of each year.

1. This reason for exclusion relates to an organisation which has not paid its membership fee or had communication with Together to give a reason six months after first invoiced and which has received at least one reminder.
2. For organisations which receive an invoice for the full year in February/March, if no communication or payment is received by August 1st, a further email is sent with a 30-day deadline for response. This email states that membership will terminate on 31 August unless payment is received.
For organisations which receive their first invoice in May, August or November, after approval at a board meeting, if no payment is received by August 1st of the following year, a further email is sent with a 30-day deadline for response. This email states that membership will terminate on 31 August unless payment is received.
3. If the membership fee is not paid, the membership benefits are suspended, and the organisation is removed from mailing lists. Their contact information and data (with the exception of the organisation's name) is removed from Together's records.
4. The organisation will be presented as withdrawn at the following board meeting.

Being re-admitted as a member: any organisation that wishes to become a member again must make an application via the original procedure and be approved by the board of Trustees.

b. Bringing Together into disrepute, lack of commitment to Together's mission, vision, values, anti-racism work and/or acting incompatibly with the UNCRC and broader human rights treaties (Relevant to p11 of the MARTs)

1. If a member or supporter's behaviour or position is, or has the potential to be, detrimental to the interests or reputation of Together, this can be raised by Trustees at a board meeting. If a member has a concern about another member, they should raise this with the director of Together via the.

When both new members (individual & not for profit) and supporters register, they agree and commit to Together's mission, vision, values, anti-racism work and to acting in accordance with the principles enshrined in the UNCRC. They acknowledge that acting incompatibly with the above may constitute grounds for removal. Together can therefore use failure to act in line with these terms of membership to justify exclusion.

2. Exclusion of members (individual & not for profit) and supporters may be put forward by the Board of Trustees, after they have heard the defence of the party concerned and two thirds of Trustees present agree.
3. If exclusion is recommended by the board, the member (individual or not for profit) or supporter is informed and receives a written notice explaining the reason for exclusion. All membership benefits and rights can be suspended.
4. Within two weeks of expulsion, the member or supporter is able to appeal that decision. If Together's Director receives any such notice of appeal within that period (time being of the essence), the Trustees shall convene an EGM for a date no later than two months after the date of expulsion, and the organisation or individual concerned shall be entitled to make representations to the members at that EGM. Together may, at any such EGM, resolve by ordinary resolution that the organisation or individual concerned should be re-admitted to membership or being a supporter.

Being re-admitted as a member or supporter: If re-joining as a member (individual or not for profit) or supporter is desired, the organisation or individual must be able to demonstrate how they have taken steps to align with Together's values, mission, vision and anti-racism work. Re-admission remains at the discretion of the board.