



# State of Children's Rights Report 2024

## Application Criteria – Engagement 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 babies', 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 our members and supporters to develop our approach for the project. Between October – December 2023, we conducted a series of interviews with 11 organisations to support early planning around methodologies and resources. Since February 2024, we have been working closely with five organisations as part of a 'Development Phase' engaging with babies, children and young people and providing feedback on our draft facilitator and child-friendly resources, which will be used to support this next phase.

We are now looking to recruit **12 organisations** at for the 'Engagement Phase', to engage babies, children and young people and share their stories and experiences of their rights to inform our State of Children's Rights report.

This is an exciting opportunity for babies, 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 expression and experiences, we hope to make a powerful case for changing the hearts and minds of decision-makers.

Whilst the funding for this 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 supporters and are committed to working transparently to select the Partner organisations in a way that aligns with our values. This paper outlines what this 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 this phase involve?

We are looking to recruit **12 organisations** who will:

- Identify a group of up to eight children and young people who are interested in taking part;
- Plan and deliver a 'story-gathering session' (or sessions) with the help of Together's children and young people's pack and facilitator pack (developed in the previous phase) to support children and young people to explore and share their experiences of their rights. These sessions can be online or in-person;
- Share findings from your story-gathering session with Together to inform our State of Children's Rights Report 2024 and other work;
- Gather feedback from children, young people and supporting adults following the session(s) to help us understand how the sessions and resources worked for future projects;
- Where required, 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). Together is committed to supporting this process where budget and organisational capacity allow.

The Engagement Phase will run from April-July 2024. After this, we hope to launch the final report in September 2024. Organisations that have applied or taken part in the earlier development phase may re-apply for the Engagement Phase. All applications will be judged on their merits, taking into account the need to support a diverse range of babies, children and young people to take part.

## What will Together do with findings from the engagement?

Together is keen to ensure that the stories and experiences that children and young people share during the engagement sessions are included in our 2024 State of Children's Rights Report where the relevant consent has been given. However, depending on the level and nature of responses, we cannot guarantee that each and every submission will be included in the final report.

Together will keep supporting organisations updated as to whether we are able to include children and young people's stories in the final report or if they will be used to help Together in another way. Where children and young people have submitted their stories independently of an organisation and contact details have been provided, then Together will update the child, young person or parent/carer directly as appropriate.

Together will use any feedback from children, young people and supporting adults to inform future methodologies for future projects.

## 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 babies, children and young people with a range of views and experiences, particularly those whose rights are most at risk or are 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.

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 babies, 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 resource pack for facilitators and separate pack for children and young people. 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 babies, 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 Friday 19<sup>th</sup> of July 2024.

Each Partner organisation will be expected to submit to Together:

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

Together is committed to offering a small amount of funding to Partner organisations as a contribution towards Participation Worker time. We are also committed to remuneration for children and young people, reimbursing refreshments and to support accessibility resources insofar as our limited budget allows.

We understand that positive relationships between staff and babies (plus parents/carers), 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 to inform the State of Children's Rights Report 2024;
- Adapting activities and resources where required to meet the needs and preferences of young participants, with support from Together insofar as possible within the limited budget for the project and organisational capacity;
- acting as the key point of contact with both children and young people and Together staff;
- gathering feedback and suggestions from children, young people and staff on the on the experience as a whole.

### Support for babies, 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. We recognise that all participants are unique and will have different ways of processing information and expressing themselves. As the people who know the needs of your young participants, you may identify the need to adapt existing resources and activities, or prepare further versions in alternative formats. While we hope Partner organisations will be able to take the lead of this, Together is committed to supporting this process where budget and organisational capacity allow.

### **Selection criteria**

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

- Diversity of experiences of babies, children and young people involved. Ability to work with babies, children and young people whose rights are most at risk and/or seldom heard groups 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 timescales involved.
- Capacity of the applicant organisation to engage in the engagement 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 a collaborative, partnership 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 babies, children and young people. Consideration will also be taken of the methods of engagement members would seek 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.

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