

Partnership Agreement between Government and the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) in NI



What is the Partnership Agreement?

The Partnership Agreement between Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in Northern Ireland marks a significant step forward in strengthening collaboration. Developed through a co-design process by the Joint Forum, this Agreement replaces the 2011 Concordat and has been endorsed by the Northern Ireland Executive. This refreshed framework reflects a shared commitment to better outcomes for individuals and communities and recognises the VCS as a key partner in delivering services and supporting communities.

It has been developed by the Joint Forum which consists of VCS and public sector representatives and aims to ensure that there is an effective working relationship between Government and the Voluntary and Community sector in Northern Ireland.

In reaching this Partnership Agreement, the shared commitment of Government, at all levels, and the Voluntary and Community Sector is to work together as social partners to build a participative, peaceful, inclusive, just and equitable society in Northern Ireland.

Key Objectives of the Partnership Agreement



Shared Values and Ways of Working:

Aims to promote **Accountability** and shared responsibility, **Active Participation** which empowers all voices to shape decisions and outcomes, **Social Justice** and fairness for all, **Independence** supporting a strong, autonomous sector and effective **Collaboration** for the benefit of our society and a **Sustainable** future.



Fair Funding Principles:

Supporting long-term planning and stability for VCS organisations through funding relationships that are **collaborative, trusted and rooted in genuine partnership working**. These arrangements will be built on **fairness and proportionality, focused on delivering meaningful outcomes and impact**, and designed to be **responsive, agile and flexible** to meet the evolving needs of communities and organisations.*



Better Outcomes for Communities:

The Partnership Agreement is rooted in recognition of both sectors' distinct yet complementary roles in contributing to social, economic, environmental, and cultural outcomes for communities in Northern Ireland.

* These Principles should be read in conjunction with and do not override key accountability, financial and budget guidance, public sector budget periods or procurement policy and legislation that is in place.

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How to support the Partnership Agreement



ADOPT: the shared values, ways of working and fair funding principles and reflect the Partnership Agreement in new and refreshed funding arrangements and collaborative initiatives.



SHARE: this information across teams and business areas throughout your organisation.



STAY UPDATED: Find out more on the work of the Joint Forum between Government and the VCS to implement and evaluate the Agreement, including identifying examples of good practice. **(Sign up here to subscribe for updates.)**

developed by



Northern Ireland
Executive

www.northernireland.gov.uk

Read More

You can read more about the partnership agreement here **Partnership Agreement between Government and the VCS NI**

Next Steps

Through the Joint Forum, work will continue to support implementation of the Partnership Agreement and showcase examples of effective funding arrangements aligned with the fair funding principles.

Details of each department's representative on the Joint Forum Public Sector Group and members of the Voluntary and Community Sector Panel can be found on the Department for Communities' **website**.

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If you would like to receive information and news from DfC and our Voluntary and Community Division please scan the QR code to subscribe

