What is safeguarding?

Foundation Scotland defines safeguarding as the steps an organisation or group takes to prevent physical, emotional, sexual or financial harm to the individuals and communities they work with. This includes making sure that the appropriate policies, practices and procedures are put in place.

Why do we ask about safeguarding?

Foundation Scotland is committed to strengthening Scotland's communities and creating a lasting impact. If people are harmed as a result of funding we distribute, our ability to achieve change is undermined. We, therefore, ask about safeguarding so that we can be confident that the organisations and groups we fund are taking reasonable steps to safeguard and protect people from harm, particularly when working with children and groups of adults who may be more vulnerable to harm'.

In addition, we hope that discussing safeguarding will help registered charities meet their regulatory requirements as our approach is based on the expectations set out by the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). For community groups, we hope it will help strengthen their work by ensuring that safety is at the heart of everything they do.

What does Foundation Scotland expect?

We expect all organisations and community groups applying for funding through the Foundation to carefully consider how they keep themselves and the communities they work with safe. However, the types of safeguarding measures you put in place will depend on the nature of your work and the specific needs of those you are working with.

Foundation Scotland enables funding to a diverse range of organisations and groups, and consequently, we aim to take a proportional approach to safeguarding. The types of checks that we conduct vary based on your level of interaction with individuals who may be more vulnerable to abuse or exploitation. This includes:

- Children: anyone under the age of 18
- Adults at risk of harm (or 'protected adult')
- Anyone over the age of 16 who is unable to safeguard their own well-being, property, rights or other interests, are at risk of harm, and because they are affected by disability, mental disorder, illness or physical or mental infirmity, are more vulnerable to being harmed (Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007).

We do not consider that age, disability, or mental or physical ill health automatically mean that an individual is 'vulnerable' or at risk'. However, projects that deliver support or services to these groups are more likely to encounter individuals who may be more vulnerable to harm due to their personal circumstances, and we therefore expect a higher level of safeguarding to be in place.

For the purposes of this guidance, we will use the term 'adults who may be more vulnerable to harm' while recognising that people affected by disability, or mental or physical ill health may never meet the statutory threshold for an 'adult at risk'.

To assist anyone interested in applying to Foundation Scotland, we have set out the checks that we will conduct as part of our assessment and grant management (Appendix A). If you have direct or indirect contact with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm, we will check that key safeguards are in place. Guidance on the key safeguards that you should consider is included at the end of this document (Appendix B).

Do I have to report safeguarding incidents to Foundation Scotland?

As a condition of funding, we require grantee partners to notify us of serious safeguarding incidents. You should not be worried about this – we simply ask you to inform us so we can seek reassurance that appropriate steps are being taken to ensure everyone's safety.

We only require you to inform us of **serious incidents** where:

- There is an allegation of abuse or mistreatment against a member of staff or volunteer involved in work funded through Foundation Scotland or against a member of your leadership team or trustees.
- For registered charities, 'serious incidents' will normally be those you deem significant enough to require a 'serious incident report' to the regulator.

We do not require you to notify us about minor breaches of safeguarding procedures or allegations of abuse or mistreatment involving individuals outside your organisation (e.g. family members, peer-on-peer abuse).

Before contacting us, always ensure the safety of everyone involved first – informing Foundation Scotland should never be the first priority. However, we do ask that you report to us as soon as possible. This should normally be within 10 working days after establishing that the allegation is credible and requires further investigation and/or referral to the authorities or regulator.

You should notify your usual contact at Foundation Scotland or our safeguarding lead: helen@foundationscotland.org.uk

When reporting an incident, please provide us with:

- A brief overview of the safeguarding incident, **excluding the names or any identifying details of those involved**
- A summary of the actions taken, including whether the incident has been reported to the authorities or regulators
- Any learning and actions planned to prevent similar incidents in the future

Upon receiving the report, the matter will be discussed with the Designated Safeguarding Lead in Foundation Scotland. If further information is required, we may contact you to discuss further to gain a better understanding of the actions taken. Please note this will not automatically affect your funding.

Appendix A: Foundation's Scotland's safeguarding assessment criteria

Organisations that work directly with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm	
Description	• The main purpose of the organisation or group is to deliver support, activities or services to children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm • The funding request to Foundation Scotland involves support, activities or services to children or adults with who may be more vulnerable to harm
Examples	• Community groups delivering work for children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm (e.g. youth clubs, elderly lunch clubs, a development trust that delivers a dementia project) • Events/Galas/Festivals where the organisation is directly responsible for children or adults with who may be more vulnerable to harm • Parent Councils delivering out-of-hours activities on school premises (e.g. discos, trips).
Our safeguarding assessment	• We expect all organisations and groups in this category to have a safeguarding policy in place. • As part of the assessment, we will ask you to share your safeguarding policy. We will review this to ensure that key safeguards are in place. • If you do not have a policy or key safeguards are missing from your policy, we may ask to speak to you to understand how you ensure your work is safe. • Based on this discussion, we may ask you to develop a policy or strengthen your existing policy as a condition of funding. We will not release funding until a safeguarding policy is in place.
Monitoring	• For multi-year grants, we will integrate questions about safeguarding into our monitoring and ongoing contact with you. • As a condition of funding, you will be required to inform us of serious safeguarding incidents

Organisations that have indirect contact with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm	
Description	• The organisation or group delivers support, activities or services to children and/or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm, but another agency takes primary responsibility for their safety • The organisation or group delivers support, activities or services to members of the public and may have direct contact with children and/or adults with who may be more vulnerable to harm
Examples	• Activities delivered in a school, where individuals are expected to comply with the school's policies.

Organisations that have indirect contact with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm	
	• Community activities for the wider public (e.g. model railway group, knitting circle)
Our safeguarding assessment	• Although the level of risk is lower, we still encourage organisations or groups in this category to have a safeguarding policy in place as this helps ensure everyone's safety. • As part of the assessment, we will ask you to share your safeguarding policy and will review this to ensure that key safeguards are in place. • If you do not have a policy or key safeguards are missing from your policy, we may ask to speak to you to understand how you ensure your work is safe, particularly where there may be contact with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm • Based on this discussion, we may recommend that you develop or strengthen your safeguarding policy, but this will not be a condition of funding.
Monitoring	• We won't monitor your progress in developing procedures as part of our ongoing contact with you but may ask when you next apply. • As a condition of funding, you will be required to inform us of serious safeguarding incidents

Organisations that have limited or no contact with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm	
Description	• The organisation or group does not deliver a service or activities directly to members of the public. Unlikely to have direct contact with children and/or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm • Funding request is for a capital item
Examples	• Funding for the purchase of office equipment • Capital support for community centres or building repairs
Our safeguarding assessment	• Although the level of risk is lower, we still encourage organisations or groups in this category to have a safeguarding policy in place as this helps ensure everyone's safety. • We will not ask for a copy of your policy but will ask during our assessment process if you have one
Monitoring	• None

Appendix B: Key safeguards to consider

The safeguards set out below are areas that all organisations and groups should consider when developing their safeguarding approach. They are based on the minimum requirements set out by OSCR in Safeguarding Guidance: Keeping vulnerable beneficiaries safe. However, every organisation and group is different and you should always consider whether you need any additional measures to effectively manage the safeguarding risks associated with your work.

Key areas	Why this is important?	Key safeguards
Policies & procedures	Policies and procedures provide guidance to staff and volunteers on how to keep people safe and help ensure consistency across the organisation.	• You have a procedure in your policy that sets out your commitment to safeguarding and the measures you have in place. • Your policy is reviewed regularly, particularly where there are changes to your activities or ways of working. If you work with children or adults who may be more vulnerable to harm: • You have clear guidelines on expected behaviours for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries, particularly when interacting with children or adults at risk.
Reporting & responding to concerns	Harm and abuse can occur in any organisation. It is important that everyone knows who to talk to if they are worried about someone's safety and that there are clear steps which will be followed to ensure that action is taken to keep everyone safe.	• You have a procedure for staff, volunteers and beneficiaries to raise concerns • You ensure that everyone knows how to identify potential harm, what action to take and how to report it. • You ensure that all safeguarding concerns are taken seriously and responded to promptly, including making referrals to social services or other relevant agencies
Staff & volunteers	It is important that organisations check the suitability of staff and volunteers. In addition, if safeguarding is to be effective, everyone should understand their role in keeping people safe.	• You ensure that everyone is aware of the safeguarding policy and understands their responsibilities. If you work with children or adults with who may be more vulnerable to harm: • Have a rigorous recruitment and interview process • Undertake appropriate criminal record checks, depending on the role.

Key areas	Why this is important?	Key safeguards
Roles and responsibilities	Safeguarding is everyone's responsibility. However, to be effective, safeguarding must be promoted and supported by those in leadership positions including trustees.	• You have people with designated responsibilities for safeguarding • You have clear lines of accountability for dealing with safeguarding issues • Your trustees, directors or management committee understand, assess and manage potential risks, including safeguarding.