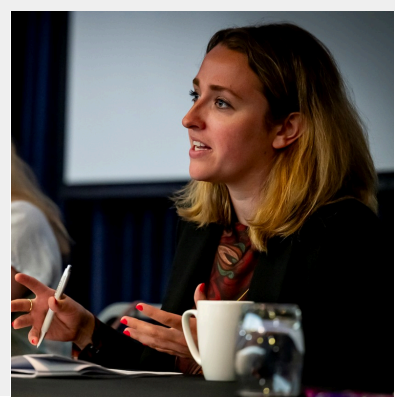




# Annual Report 2023-2024

Defending and  
promoting human rights  
across Scotland, for  
everyone, everywhere.





## The Human Rights Consortium Scotland is the civil society network to defend and promote human rights in Scotland.

Our vision is a Scotland where everyone's human rights - no matter who they are, where they are from, or their circumstances – are respected, protected and fulfilled.

### **We bring people together for a strong collective voice**

We are the key convener of Scottish civil society around human rights. We hold excellent events where people share expertise, insight and support. We enable joint submissions, projects, communications and research.

### **We amplify rights-holders' voices**

Many of our network members are groups or individuals who are often ignored, or tirelessly campaign for change that is desperately needed. We create platforms and opportunities for their voices to be heard.

### **We empower**

We create and commission accessible and highly valued resources, updates, research, news and connections. These enable our network members to use human rights for change.

### **We excel at working in partnership**

Everything we do is in collaboration with other organisations, in order to have maximum impact.

### **We influence in Scotland and across UK**

We collectively influence decision-makers in Scotland, and also bring Scottish civil voices to defend human rights at Westminster.

“The Human Rights Consortium Scotland are a crucial and deeply valued partner for us. Their depth and detail of understanding on not only the rights landscape in Scotland, but also the needs and priorities of rights holders makes them our go-to in the work we do to support rights incorporation in Scotland. Their staff are hugely knowledgeable and the activities they run are always hugely thought provoking.”

**Helen Flynn, Head of Policy,  
Research and Campaigns, Just Fair**

“The consultation guide from the Human Rights Consortium Scotland was invaluable for our network. It made the key issues and questions in the consultation understandable for people who maybe didn't have a background in human rights but still had valuable insights to share with the government on this legislation. Without this support many organisations and individuals would have struggled to understand the proposals and relevance to their particular area of interest.”

**Kimberley Somerside, former  
Policy Lead for Voluntary Health  
Scotland**

## Our impact this year

Engagement in Consortium activities, and our impact, has increased significantly this year.

### **We are the leading voice for a strong and effective Scottish Human Rights Bill**

We enabled organisations to respond to the Bill's public consultation by holding 13 explainer events for approx. 900 participants, speaking at 10+ more partner events about the Bill and publishing a Guide to responding. We facilitated 3 meetings of the Human Rights Bill Lived Experience Board on behalf of the Scottish Government – this is a group of 32 people from diverse backgrounds, giving their advice on what is vital for the Bill to make rights real. We sit on Bill advisory boards, and co-convene a Bill working group. The reports that we commissioned this year on Care Experienced people's rights, LGBTI+ rights, and devolution limits have directly informed Bill advocacy and development. We have led collective advocacy on the Bill, coordinating joint letters and media to ensure that strengthening human rights accountability through this Bill remains a Scottish Government priority.

### **We bring civil society together to drive improvements in access to justice**

We launched two joint reports with strong stakeholder engagement, producing 13 calls to action for the Scottish Government on human rights and justice. These reports, along with a short film and associated events, have been pivotal in advancing civil legal aid reform and ensuring that access to justice remains a key priority.

### **We are the go-to hub for human rights resources, communications, support and connections**

Over 700 Scottish civil society organisations directly engaged in our activities this year. Our network increased to over 220 organisations, with a further 200+ individuals. We held more than 40 events, with excellent feedback about their usefulness and accessibility. We revamped our website which includes podcasts, blogs, briefings and news. Our monthly e-newsletter increased to 750 subscribers. We communicate effectively through social media with over 3000 followers on X, and through articles in traditional media.

### **We amplify migrants' voices on human rights**

With funding from Paul Hamlyn Foundation, we worked in partnership with organisations such as GREC, Citizens Rights Project, and Migrant Voice to hold community conversations on migrants' human rights. We coordinated Scottish civil society resistance to regressive immigration law reforms. We held high-profile events with JustRight Scotland to ensure that civil society can be informed and active in supporting people in the asylum system.

### **We held the Government to account for fulfilling human rights obligations**

We coordinated joint evidence to UN monitoring of the UK's record on rights. Our written and oral evidence on ICCPR raised critical issues such as discrimination during COVID-19, gender recognition reform, and the rights of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. We are a co-chair of the Leadership Panel for SNAP2 – Scotland's National Action Plan on Human Rights.

### **We bring Scottish civil society voices to UK human rights debates**

We are steering group members of the UK ESCR Network, and UK Human Rights Act coalition. We coordinated Scottish participation in joint statements and briefings to MPs and peers. We are on the Project Advisory Board for the UK Civil Society Alliance.





## Our Annual Income and Supporters

Our annual income for 2023-24 was £181,599.

We are deeply grateful for the funding support we received from The Legal Education Foundation, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, AB Charitable Trust, Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, The Paristamen Charity, Craignish Trust, The Baring Foundation, Scottish Government and Corra Foundation. This funding has been essential in enabling us to continue our impactful work across Scotland.

## Board and Team Updates

This year, we said goodbye to some long-serving Board members, including Sandra Stuart and Rosalind Tyler-Greig. We also welcomed six new Board members, whose diverse expertise will help guide our future work.

Our Board now includes Aidan Collins (Chair), Lucy Mulvagh (Vice Chair), Sofi Taylor, Shruti Jain, Rebecca Zahn, Annamaria De Felice, Tessa Ferry, Paul Daly, Chris Walters, Gil Long, and Bruce Adamson.

We are developing to become a two-tier SCIO with our first member organisation elections of our Board in Autumn 2025.

Our staff team is small but has a big impact! We have 3.7 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff members, including a Director, Policy and Communications Lead, Communications and Events Officer, Human Rights Participation Officer, and Administrator. We are also grateful for the support from University of Edinburgh LLM student placements.

Through the dedication of our team, Board, and supporters, we continue to drive meaningful change and ensure that human rights remain a priority across Scotland.



# Will you join us?

If you want to work with others to defend and promote human rights in Scotland, join the Consortium!

Find out more on our website [www.hrcscotland.org](http://www.hrcscotland.org)

Or get in touch at [info@hrcscotland.org](mailto:info@hrcscotland.org)



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