



Department  
for Education

# **Safeguarding VCS Grants 2016-18**

**Frequently Asked Questions**  
**Date: July 2016**

**Version 2 – Questions 40 – 53 from page 9 onwards added on 19 July**

## Introduction

1. This Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document should be read in conjunction with the Safeguarding VCS grants specifications and the accompanying application form.
2. If you have further questions which relate to clarification of the process which are not covered here, please email:  
[Enquiries.SAFEGUARDING@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries.SAFEGUARDING@education.gsi.gov.uk)
3. Please take the time to read the FAQ and the Safeguarding VCS grants specifications and accompanying application form to see if your question is covered before submitting a query.
4. Responses to common questions and requests for clarification will be published as a list of revised Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) on <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>
5. We are not able to respond to individual enquiries. We are not able to respond to queries by phone. Please note that we are unable to respond to specific enquiries about the nature of your proposal/s as this is a competitive bidding process.
6. The enquiry email box will close on **noon Thursday, 14 July 2016** and all responses will be posted on <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder> by **5pm on Tuesday, 19 July 2016**.

## **Eligibility**

### **Q1: What type of organisations can apply?**

We welcome bids from individual organisations and from partnerships and consortia.

There must be a lead and accountable body for the partnership or consortium. This must be clear in the application form. This body will be responsible and accountable to the Department for the management of grant monies.

Given the focus and nature of the Safeguarding VCS Grants 2016-18, we require the sole bidding organisation or lead body (as applicable) to be a voluntary, community or social enterprise (VCSE) organisation. The Cabinet Office defines these as:

“Non-governmental organisations that are value-driven and which principally reinvest their surpluses to further social, environmental or cultural objectives.”

Organisations which are not VCSE may be included within the membership of a partnership or consortium. However, they may not be the sole bidder or the lead bidder.

### **Q2: Can an organisation be part of a consortium bid as well as leading on another consortium bid?**

Yes.

### **Q3: How do I apply?**

A full specification, application form and further guidance can be found on <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>.

### **Q4: How do I know if I meet the criteria set out in the specification?**

In order to maintain the fairness and integrity of the process we are not able to offer additional tips or meetings to discuss the specification or any other aspects of the VCS Safeguarding grants procurement activity. We recommend reviewing the invitation to bid letter specification and declaration form to check that you meet the relevant criteria.

### **Q5: How much grant funding is available under this grant process and what are the minimum and maximum amounts?**

There is no minimum or maximum level of grant funding. We expect the majority of awards for grant funding to be between £100k and up to a maximum of £250k for each financial year, apportioned accordingly. We are not seeking to fund small scale projects aimed at meeting local delivery needs.

**Q6: Does the indicative grant amount of £100- 250k cover organisations who bid for more than one grant i.e. two grants in different areas?**

No. The indicative grant amount relates to individual grants – not organisations and it is only an indicative amount.

**Q7: Can my organisation make more than one bid for funding?**

Yes. We will accept more than one bid from the same organisation. Each bid must be for funding under one or more of the three safeguarding priorities:

- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM);
- Radicalisation;
- Domestic abuse, drug and alcohol misuse.

If you are submitting bids under one or more safeguarding priorities, you must complete a separate application form for each priority area.

**Q8: I have a local project can I apply?**

We are not seeking to fund local activity unless it is of national significance. By national significance we mean projects that are replicable and scalable and address an issue or meet a need that is likely to be encountered in more than one locality and where national action is needed, or action is needed to ensure equality of opportunity or access for particular groups.

**Q9: Do all the partners have to be from the voluntary and community sector?**

No. The lead body or a sole organisation does have to be from the voluntary, community or social enterprise sector. Partner organisations can be other organisations including private organisations. Applications must be made on a 'not for profit' basis.

**Q10: Is a university eligible to apply for this funding as a lead or sole applicant?**

Yes. We consider universities to be non-governmental organisations and so they can bid as sole or lead bidder as well as part of a partnership or consortium.

**Q11: Are local authorities and councils eligible to apply for this funding? Are local government departments eligible to apply for the funding?**

Local authorities and councils are local governmental organisations and so they cannot bid as sole or lead bidder, this also applies to individual or groups of departments within a local authority or a council. Local Authorities, councils, local government departments or local authority controlled entities can form part of a partnership or consortium bid led by another organisation which is eligible to bid.

**Q12: Is this funding open to NHS Trusts?**

No. NHS Trusts are governmental organisations and so they cannot bid as sole or lead bidder. They can form part of a partnership or consortium bid led by another organisation which is eligible to bid.

**Q13: Would a Local Safeguarding Children Board be able to apply for this funding?**

Local Safeguarding Children Boards are statutory organisations established by the local authority and so they cannot bid as sole or lead bidder. They can form part of a partnership or consortium bid led by another organisation which is eligible to bid.

**Q14: Can an eligible lead body sub-contract private sector providers to deliver some services?**

The whole application needs to be on a not-for-profit basis. For the purposes of the DfE VCS grant, subcontracting is permissible and does not in itself have to be on a not for profit basis. Within this context, it is for the applicant to determine the most effective and efficient means to meet its grant objectives, achieving value for money. It must enter into a formal agreement, subcontract, with any subcontractor. The contract must include the obligations included in the Grant Agreement. The applicant remains responsible for the appropriate delivery of the grant regardless of any subcontracting arrangements.

**Activities**

**Q15: What can be funded from a grant?**

This Grant can only be used for revenue funding (i.e. paying for staff costs, overhead and administrative costs, and project costs). We will not fund any capital purchases. There are also some restrictions associated with expenditure on Advertising, Marketing and Communications – guidance on what is permissible to fund is set out in the application notes.

**Q16: Could you advise whether [X] type of project or proposal may be eligible for this funding?**

We are not able to advise on specific projects or proposals due to the competitive nature of the application process. All applications will be assessed according to the criteria outlined in the application form and accompanying documents.

**Q17: Should I submit an application under Safeguarding VCS Grants 2016-18 if I am waiting to hear whether I have been successful with an Expression of Interest to the Department for Education's Social Care Innovation Programme?**

If you feel that you have a suitable proposal(s) for the Safeguarding VCS Grants 2016-18 you should still submit it even if it is the same as the one submitted to the Children's Social Care Innovation Programme. If you, subsequently, hear that your Innovation Programme Expression of Interest has been successful you can withdraw your VCS application.

## **Finance**

### **Q18: Can my organisation reclaim irrecoverable VAT?**

Grant related activities are generally classified as outside the scope of VAT by HMRC, so organisations cannot generally either charge VAT on the services for which they are grant funded, or recover from HMRC the cost of any VAT they incur in the process of providing these services. Any such VAT costs are thus 'irrecoverable' from HMRC – however, you will be able to recover these costs from DfE as part of your overall grant claim. You must clearly identify any irrecoverable VAT in your application form.

As a funding recipient, please be aware that it is your responsibility to ensure you are not inadvertently making a VATable business supply of goods or services. HMRC can rule that an organisation is providing a business supply, even when this supply is grant funded – it will depend on factors such as the kinds of goods or services being provided, the terms of the funding agreement, and the benefit received by the body making the grant funding payments. If you are unsure whether you might be making a VATable business supply under the terms of the grant funding agreement, you will need to seek advice directly from HMRC.

### **Q19: I don't know if my organisation has received State Aid. Funding of what sort of activities counts as State Aid?**

State aid refers to forms of financial support from a public body (or a publically funded body) given to organisations engaged in economic activity on a selective basis, which has the potential to distort competition and affect trade between member states. More information on State Aid is available from the [GOV.UK website](http://GOV.UK).

### **Q20: How will rules on State Aid affect my application?**

We consider it unlikely that the funding to be provided under this grant scheme would be considered State Aid. However, applicants should form their own view, taking advice if necessary, as to whether any funding they have received is State Aid. Furthermore, if your organisation has received State Aid from any public body in the previous three financial years you must let us know on the application form.

### **Q21: What do Efficiency Controls mean for my application?**

Bidders should be aware that there are government restrictions on what grant

funding can be used for in relation to all paid-for communications, marketing and consultancy activities. This means that controls apply to most communications activity including (but not limited to):

- Printing and publications;
- Events;
- Public relations activities;
- The creation and/ or use of Digital services; and
- Engagement of consultants.

This means that funding for these areas may need to be cleared by the Department or in some cases by the Cabinet Office. The application form provides further information on these funding restrictions and further guidance can also be accessed at the GOV.UK [Website](#)

**Q22: Is it possible for a consortium partner who is not the lead to hold the grant?**

No, we expect the lead consortium member to hold the grant and to be responsible to the DfE and to the other consortium members. The financial information requested at (Section Six question 6c) of the application form must be supplied in relation to the lead consortium member.

**Completing the Application Form**

**Q23: How can I obtain a copy of the application form?**

The application form can be downloaded from the Contracts Finder website <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder>

You should open and complete the application form using a free programme called Adobe Reader. If you do not have this programme or need the latest version you can get this for free by visiting <http://get.adobe.com/uk/reader/> and following the instructions on the Adobe website.

If you have any problems with downloading the materials then please email: [Enquiries.SAFEGUARDING@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries.SAFEGUARDING@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**Q24: The application form is in PDF – how do I enter my details on the form?**

The PDF version of the application form has been designed so that the relevant fields can be completed.

**Q25: Given the limited characters allowed (approximate word limits) can you please confirm whether it is permitted to cross reference between sections to save repetition?**

Yes. You may cross reference between questions.

**Q26: Where there is a restrictive limit to the number of characters (approximate word limits) for parts of the application form, can I use acronyms and write it out in full at the end?**

Acronyms are fine so long as you explain what the acronym is the first time you use it.

**Q27: Can we include diagrams and charts in the application form?**

No. The application form does not allow diagrams or charts, however when submitting your additional financial information you can include diagrams or charts in the email attachment [Note- that we cannot accept emails larger than 24MB. If you have large attachments, please zip or compress your files before sending].

**Q28: Would you consider a cross-safeguarding priority/ies bid?**

You need to submit your application under one of the three safeguarding priorities. But you are asked to indicate in the narrative of your application form if your proposal also contributes to any of the other priority areas.

**Q29: Do proposals have to meet all the areas you describe in the assessment and scoring section in the application form? For example, can the proposal focus on just one of the areas described in the assessment and scoring section under the questions?**

Yes. In order to maximise your overall score, you should try to cover the areas listed in the 'assessment and scoring' sections.

**Q30: Are we able to apply for funding for more than one project under the same safeguarding priority? For example, we have a number of projects that fit very well with the Safeguarding priority: Domestic abuse, drug and alcohol misuse so would we therefore be able to make a number of separate applications under that area?**

Yes, you are able to apply for funding for more than one project under the same safeguarding priority. Each project would require a separate application form.

**Q31: Do I have to send paper copies?**

No. We will not accept paper copies (hard copies) of your completed application form. This is an electronic application process. All documents are available on line at the Contracts Finder website <https://www.gov.uk/contracts-finder> and you can download from there.

Your proposal must be sent to the relevant application DfE mailbox [Safeguarding.VCS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Safeguarding.VCS@education.gsi.gov.uk) by **noon on Friday 29 July 2016**.



**Q32: How do I email my completed application form?**

Send your application form by opening a new email message in your preferred email programme, attach your final application form and send it to [Safeguarding.VCS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Safeguarding.VCS@education.gsi.gov.uk) alternatively, you can use the 'submit' button on the form. You will know when your email has reached the DfE because you will receive an automatic email from the relevant DfE application mailbox.

**Q33: What happens if my attachments are over 24MB?**

You will need to ensure that all attachments do not exceed the maximum limit of 24MB as we cannot accept emails that are larger than that. If the total size is larger than 24MB please zip (compress) the files. Alternatively divide the attachments between a number of emails, clearly specifying your organisation name in the subject line and body of each email.

**Q34: How do I submit my financial documents?**

You will need to attach all your documents to the email (along with your completed application form).

**Q35: How do we signify areas within our bid that are commercially sensitive?**

Bidders should note that the Department is committed to open government and to meeting their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Accordingly, all information submitted to the Department may need to be disclosed in response to a request under the Act.

However, if you consider that any of the information included in your proposal is commercially sensitive and this information is pertinent to your application, please send a separate email to the relevant application mailbox with the subject line 'commercially sensitive' **by noon 14 July** setting out (in broad terms) what harm may result from disclosure if a request is received, and the time period applicable to that sensitivity. You should be aware that, even where you have indicated that information is commercially sensitive, we may still be required to disclose it under the Act if a request is received. Please also note that the receipt of any material marked 'confidential' or equivalent by the Department should not be taken to mean that we accept any duty of confidence by virtue of that marking. If a request is received, we may also be required to disclose details of unsuccessful proposals.

**Assessment Process****Q36: Who will assess the applications?**

Applications will be assessed by DfE officials from the relevant policy and programme and finance and commercial areas across the Department.

Officials from Other Government Departments may also be involved where we consider this relevant and appropriate.

**Q37: What are the assessors looking for?**

The application form sets out the criteria and the corresponding weightings that the DfE will be using when they assess bids. The Safeguarding VCS Grants 2016-18 Invitation to bid includes the specification of requirements which describes the three safeguarding priorities and desired projects.

**Q38: When will announcements about grant awards be made?**

We aim to announce the grant awards in September 2016.

**Q39: Feedback**

**Following the evaluation of all bids will unsuccessful applicants receive feedback on their proposals?**

Applicants will be able to request feedback once notified of the outcome of their application.

**Further questions**

If you have any further queries about the application process please email: [Enquiries.SAFEGUARDING@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Enquiries.SAFEGUARDING@education.gsi.gov.uk)

Final application forms must be sent to:  
[Safeguarding.VCS@education.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Safeguarding.VCS@education.gsi.gov.uk)

**Additional questions added below on 19 July 2016**

**Safeguarding priorities**

**Q40: On the FGM priority, does a proposal necessarily need to find synergy with all the traditional/ cultural practices (page 8, bullet 5 under the FGM priority) identified in the Invitation to bid specification document?**

We expect applicants to look at the detailed specifications and develop proposals that meet the requirements set out as closely as possible. It is not compulsory for applications to address other harmful practices also; they may focus exclusively on FGM.

**Q41: On the FGM priority, is there scope for proposals to focus on FGM within the wider context of education and prevention work around sexual violence and consent; can the scope also cover childhood sexual abuse?**

Q16 of the published FAQs applies – we cannot discuss or advise on specifics. We expect applicants to look at the detailed specifications and develop proposals that meet the requirements set out as closely as possible.

**Q42: On the domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse priority, can an application focus only on the domestic abuse aspect of this priority or does it necessarily need to cover drugs and alcohol misuse as well?**

As stated in page 9 of the Invitation to bid document, projects or applications can focus solely on domestic abuse. However, some applications may choose to cover all three, given the potential inter-dependence between the issues.

**Q43: On the domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse priority, can an organisation working with affected adults but with work impacting on children of such families be eligible to apply?**

As stated on page 8 of the Invitation to bid document under the domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse priority, projects can cover support and advice for children of alcoholics and/ or parents with drugs problem; involve the family and their children in planning support – early intervention for parents – looking at how both victims and potential perpetrators can get early support.

**Q44: On the radicalisation priority, can a proposal seek to deliver the programme in schools, including targeting any specific Key Stage/s; specific audiences; geographical priority areas including potential interface with Prevent priority areas?**

Q16 of this FAQs applies – we cannot discuss or advise on specifics. It would, however, be acceptable to deliver the programme in (and with) schools. As stated in page 8 of the Invitation to Bid under the radicalisation priority, projects can work in partnership with children's services and other agencies and engage and work with families and communities.

Please note: State funded schools, including local authority maintained schools, parochial voluntary controlled primary schools, academies and free schools, are considered as governmental organisations. As a result they are not eligible to apply as sole or lead bidders for funding. They can apply as a partner or consortium member.

**Q45: How should applications be submitted if they are addressing more than one safeguarding priority? Do these need to be put in any priority order by the bidder?**

A separate application form needs to be completed when bidding against each priority. For example, you can bid under FGM, radicalisation and domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse but each will need an application form of its own. There is no need to prioritise between these three forms as each will be considered and assessed in line with the criteria outlined in the

application form and accompanying documentation. Please ensure that the proposals in each of your bids do not duplicate or overlap each other.

**Q46: Can you please clarify the position of applications that propose activities across the three safeguarding priority areas?**

Q28 of this FAQ (page 7) refers – we are not seeking cross-safeguarding bids. You should submit your application under one of the three safeguarding priorities but can indicate in the narrative of your form if your proposal also contributes to any of the other priority areas. We will consider and assess this in line with the criteria in the application form and accompanying documentation.

The bid evaluation team, made up of relevant policy and commercial experts, will assess bids where activities proposed might address more than one safeguarding priority.

**Q47: Are the DfE expecting programmes to work directly with children or could they include whole family support?**

As stated in page 8 of the Invitation to bid document (under the domestic abuse, drugs and alcohol misuse safeguarding priority), projects can involve the family and their children in planning support, for example, early intervention for parents and looking at how both victims and potential perpetrators can get early support.

**Q48: Is universal prevention within the scope of this Safeguarding VCS grant programme?**

The safeguarding VCS 2016-18 grant programme is focussed on safeguarding and protecting vulnerable children and young people from specific forms of abuse that require particular expertise or services, including engagement with communities who find it difficult to engage with statutory services. As such, this is more targeted than universal prevention.

**Eligibility**

**Q49: Can an organisation apply for this grant for delivery of services outside England?**

No. The safeguarding VCS grants 2016-18 are only applicable to England. The eligibility section in pages 3 and 9 of the accompanying application form and page 9 of the Invitation to bid document clearly state that: “the impact of the activity and any direct delivery of the services must be in England only”.

**Q50: Can programme activity cover different places within one local area or focus on a single borough? Or, is it expected to reach a cross-borough, regional or national geography?**

Q8 of this FAQ (page 3) refers – we are not seeking to fund local activity unless it is of national significance.

## **Finance and other**

### **Q51: Would you accept an independent examination of accounts for a charity/ VCS as supporting documentation instead of audited accounts?**

Where charities have a gross income of over £250,000 but not exceeding £1 million in the relevant financial year, and total assets not exceeding £3.26 million (legal requirement), their accounts must be subject to outside scrutiny. Trustees may choose either independent examination or audit by a registered auditor, unless the charity's governing document stipulates one or the other. More information on this is available here -

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/468103/CC15c.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/468103/CC15c.pdf)

If a charity or VCS meets this condition, then we would accept the accounts signed by an independent examiner as supporting financial documentation.

### **Q52: Can the Department for Education (DfE) be listed as a referee in the application form under Q2b)?**

The DfE can be listed as a referee if the relevant contract or grant with the Department was over the last three years. Bidders do not have to seek the permission of the Department prior to using the Department as a referee – though as a courtesy you could inform your named DfE contact that you are using them.

### **Q53: When will we know if we have been successful or if any other information is required?**

The proposed timetable set out in page 4 of the application form (which is a guide and subject to change depending on the quantity and quality of proposals received) identifies notification and due diligence checks in September – potentially 16 September and early September respectively.