

The Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland: background, funder contributions and breakdown of grants made



The Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland supports action to realise and defend rights, and tackle immediate rights issues affecting people's daily lives.

Funding:

- Enables organisations working in Scotland to **close the gap between policy and practice**, and the lived experience of people whose **rights are most at risk**.
- Helps unlock the power of people, communities and organisations to name and claim their rights and **hold duty bearers to account**.
- Creates conditions for a **strong human rights sector** in Scotland.

The Fund takes a participatory approach, reflecting the [PANEL principles](#) of Human Rights. A combination of people with lived and learned expertise are part of guiding the Fund and making decisions about where money is spent. This combination of expertise will also help understand the learning that comes from the Fund, and how this can be used to further support human rights in Scotland.

The Fund is independent of government and is open to non-statutory organisations working in Scotland. It is supported by a group of funders that includes: [AB Charitable Trust](#), [The Baring Foundation](#), [The Binks Trust](#), [Cattanach](#), [Corra Foundation](#), [Indigo Trust](#), [The Robertson Trust](#), and [William Grant Foundation](#).

The Fund is hosted by Corra Foundation.

The story of the Fund

From 2019 onwards, a small group of Scottish funders became increasingly interested in human rights and their role in social change in Scotland. This led to discussions and activities to explore and advocate for a greater focus on human rights in Scotland.

Engagement with third sector organisations, civil society activists, and academics were a crucial part of shaping the Fund. Third sector organisations also made important contributions to the work undertaken by Social Change Initiative (SCI) in 2022 to explore needs, options and opportunities for human rights funding in Scotland. This SCI consultation was commissioned by a group of funders (Baring Foundation, Corra Foundation, The Robertson Trust and Elevate Great) and helped build the funder collaboration behind the Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland.

You can read more about this preparatory work here:

- Short article on human rights in Scotland, August 2020, [Build forward better: why funding human rights matters](#)
- Podcast conversation, *A funder's journey to investing in human rights*, November 2020, [A funder's journey to investing in human rights](#)
- Report *Bold and fearless: Towards an independent human rights funding agenda for Scotland*, March 2021, [Towards an independent human rights funding agenda for Scotland](#)
- Short article on the Social Change Initiative commission, September 2022, [Independent human rights funding in Scotland](#)

The funders supporting the Fund

The funders originally involved in Fund at its launch at the beginning of 2024 were:

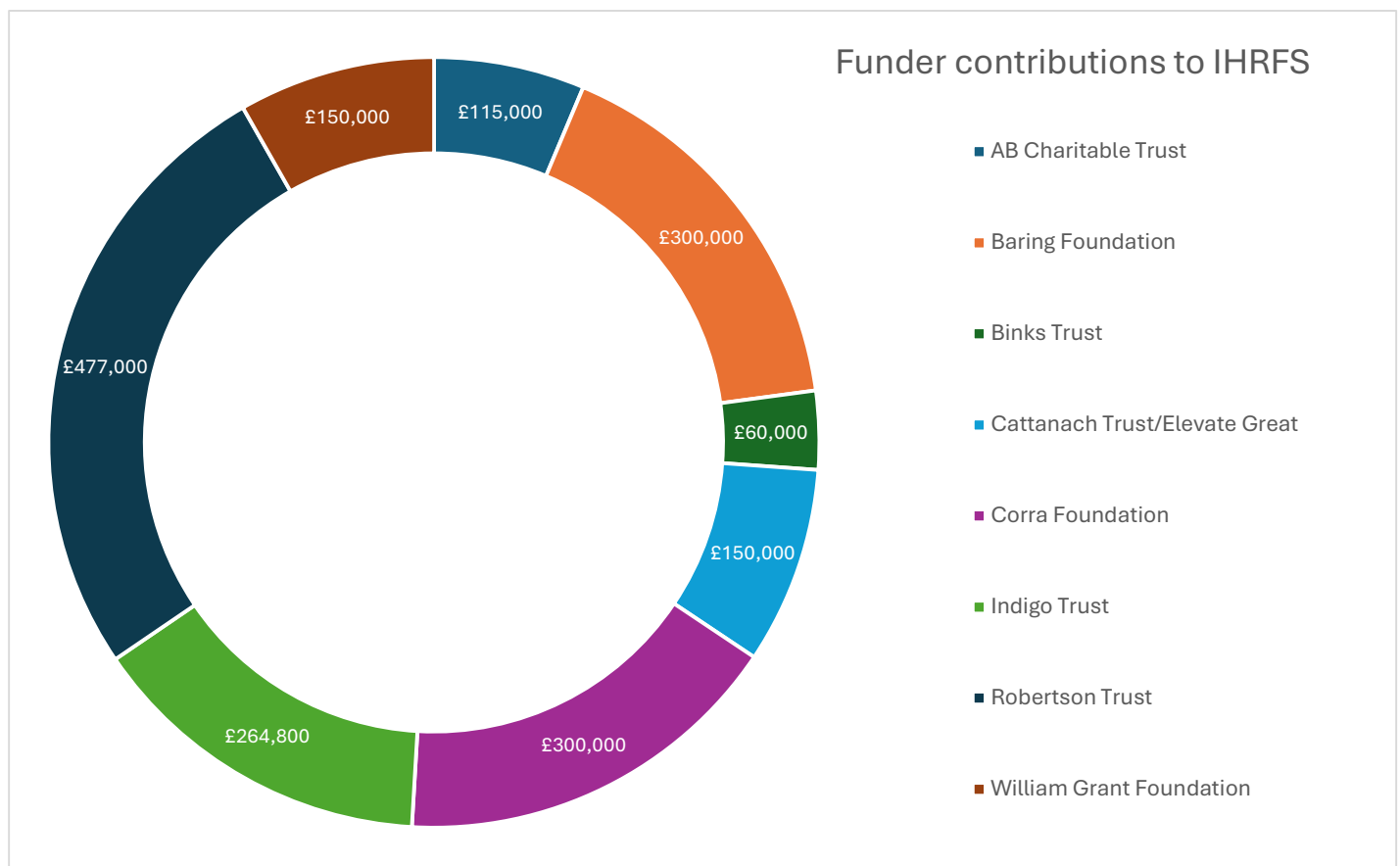
- [AB Charitable Trust](#),
- [The Baring Foundation](#),
- [The Binks Trust](#),
- [Elevate Great \(formerly The Cattnach Trust\)](#)
- [Corra Foundation](#), which also hosts the Fund,

- [The Robertson Trust](#), and
- [William Grant Foundation](#).

In early 2025, the Fund benefitted from additional investment from [The Indigo Trust](#) who joined the collaboration.

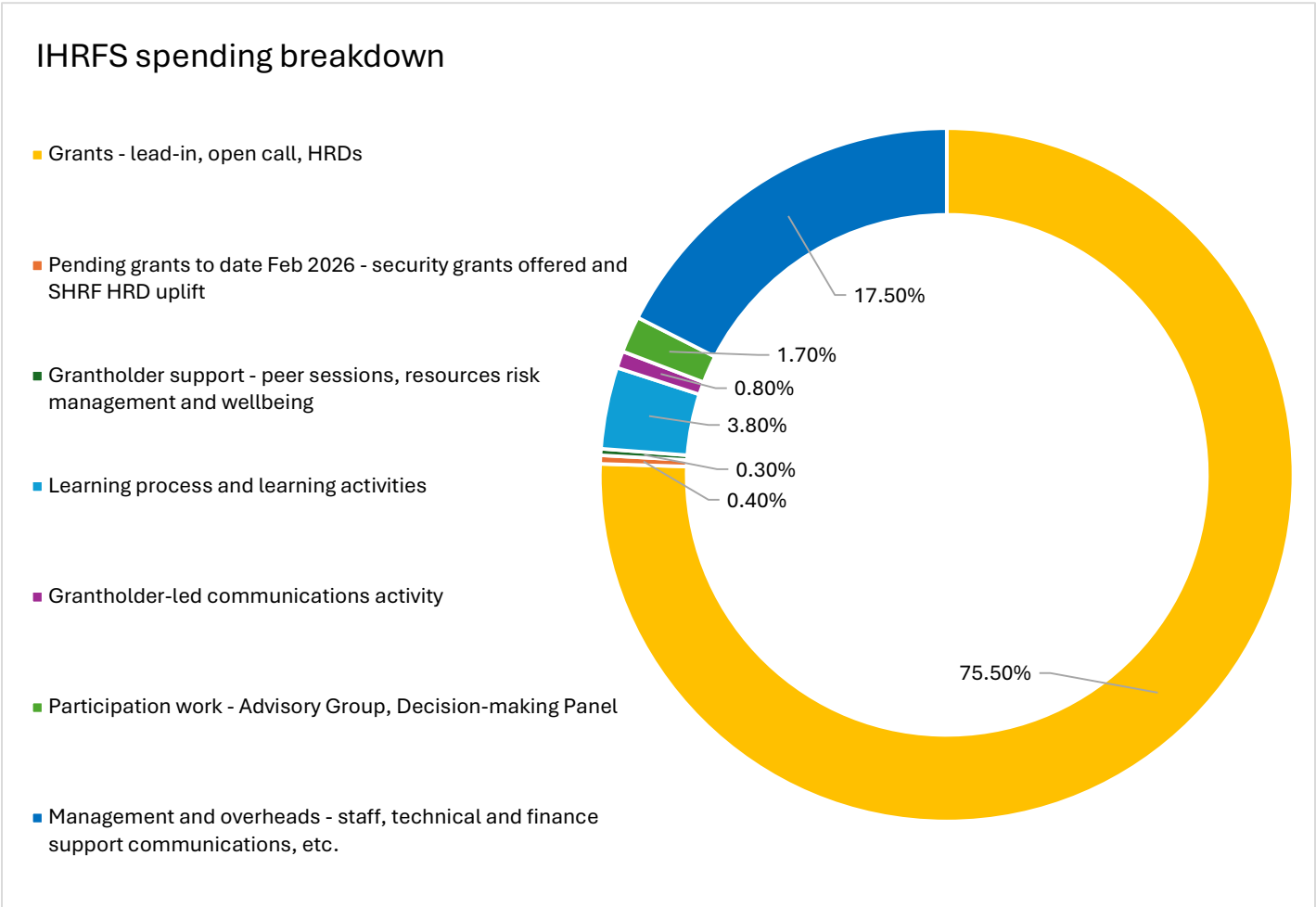


The following chart shows the different proportions of funder contributions to the IHRFS.



The collaborating funders have contributed £1,816,800 in total. Most of this has been awarded as grants, with the remainder supporting essential elements of the Fund’s work, including the learning process (externally led by Three Sisters Consultancy) and Fund management.

The chart below shows how spending is distributed across the Fund’s different areas of activity and work.



The grants the Fund has made

To date, the Fund has made three rounds of grants totalling £1,371,939: three lead-in grants, eight open call grants, and five human rights defenders grants.

Lead-in grants, March 2024

In early 2024, the Fund made three lead-in grants as part of the launch of the [Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland](#).

These grants followed funder discussion and were made by invitation to three organisations whose human rights work reflected a range of approaches to supporting people and communities to power social change and secure justice. Two organisations opted to send in three-year proposals and one a two-year proposal. The applications were reviewed by the Fund's Advisory Group (Bruce Adamson, Darryl Gaffney du Plooy, Elaine Webster, Julie Christie, Zaki El-Salahi and Zara Todd).

Grantholder	Grant period	Grant amount
Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland	March 2024-Dec 2026	£75,000
Making Rights Real	March 2024-Dec 2026	£75,000
Starcatchers	March 2024-Dec 2025	£50,000
Total lead-in grants		£200,000

Open Call grants, December 2024

The Fund launched an open call in June 2024 ([Fund launches to support human rights](#)). This led to seven grants in December 2024 ([New grants to defend human rights in Scotland](#)), followed by an eighth grant in January 2025 made possible by the Indigo Trust investment ([Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland: New Funder Joins](#)).

These grants were awarded through an open application process. The open call's focus, criteria and application forms were developed with input from the Fund's Advisory Group. A lived experience panel of people with experience of barriers to enjoyment of their human rights and of using human rights-based approaches reviewed applications and, with the guidance of an external facilitator, made the final decisions on funding ([Reflections from a decision-making panel member, Participation and the Independent Human Rights Fund for Scotland](#)).

Grantholder or partnership	Grant period	Grant amount
Amnesty International Central & West Integration Network Refuweege	Dec 2024-March 2027	£77,341
Article 12 in Scotland	Feb 2025-Dec 2027	£150,000

Clan Childlaw Together	Dec 2024-Dec 2027	£147,253
Human Rights Consortium Scotland	Dec 2024-Dec 2027	£150,000
JustRight Scotland Grampian Regional Equality Council Romano Lav	Dec 2024-Sept 2027	£145,506
LGBT Youth Scotland Rock Trust	Dec 2024-June 2026	£66,679
Scottish Women's Aid Argyll & Bute Women's Aid	Dec 2024-Dec 2027	£150,000
Shelter Scotland Legal Services Agency	Dec 2024-Dec 2027	£120,160
Total open call grants		£1,006,939

Human Rights Defenders grants, June 2025

A small amount of residual funding following the open call enabled a series of five smaller grants to support work with human rights defenders.

These grants were shaped by Advisory Group guidance and a Corra-led sector consultation, which explored options for supporting human rights defenders and particularly in thematic areas that had received limited support through the open call. Following funder discussion, grants were offered to five organisations whose work centres on human rights defenders.

(The grants were initially for £30,000 and subsequently extended to £40,000 in December 2025; see below.)

Grantholder	Grant period	Grant amount
Children's Parliament	June 2025-June 2026	£40,000
Environmental Rights Centre for Scotland	June 2025-June 2026	£40,000
Glasgow Disability Alliance	June 2025-June 2026	£40,000
Making Rights Real	June 2025-June 2026	£40,000
Scottish Human Rights Defenders Fellowship at the University of Dundee	June 2025-June 2026	£5,000
Total human rights defenders grants		£165,000

Uplifts and additional support, December 2025

Additional investment from the AB Charitable Trust in the autumn of 2025 provided for a series of grant uplifts for the human rights defenders grants and some additional targeted support for grantees in response to requests gathered during conversations and meetings that autumn. This included:

- Small uplifts of £10,000 to the human rights defenders grants..
- Support for leadership peer support sessions.
- Support for developing risk management and wellness resources relevant for work on human rights.
- Security grants of £1,000 for smaller organisations.
- A grantee-led communications initiative with a budget of £15,000.

2 March 2026

Corra Foundation, Office Suite 30, Pure Offices, 4 Lochside Way, Edinburgh EH12 9DT

e: hello@corra.scot t: 0131 444 4020 www.corra.scot

(The) Corra Foundation is a charity registered in Scotland (No SC009481) and is also a company limited by guarantee (No SC096068)