Safeguarding & participatory grant-making:

An essential guide for funders

Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

Listening · Learning · Practicing Trust

Contents

With thanks to the Participatory Grantmaking Community for their support in developing this guidance.

1. Introduction

Philanthropy is changing. Slowly but surely, more funders – and the civil society groups they fund – are confronting how their power can be a force for good or ill. They face increased public scrutiny to represent the communities they serve and ensure that the views and experiences of those with whom they work influence their decision-making. Together this is leading to an increasing commitment to open up traditional grant-making and allow those affected by it to have a place at the decision-making table and influence the distribution of resources. While positive, involving a wider range of voices in the grant-making process can lead to changes to the risks funders must manage.

The Funder Safeguarding Collaborative (FSC) is a global network of grant-making organisations committed to listening, learning, and collaborating to improve practices that keep people safe. Since its launch in March 2021, we have welcomed a broad range of funders who are planning to deliver or have started implementing participatory grant-making processes. Many are seeking additional advice and guidance on how to do this safely.

To address this, FSC has developed this document as an introductory guide for funders to embed safeguarding in participatory grant-making.

About this guidance

This document includes guidance on how to consider safeguarding in the planning, delivery, and review of participatory grant-making processes. Its primary focus is to ensure that those involved in participatory grant-making processes, whom we call decision makers, are kept safe from harm.

Questions for decision makers to funders is a handout that these decision makers can use if they are considering getting involved in a participatory grant-making process. It includes questions they can ask funders to check if they have sufficiently considered safeguarding measures in their planning.

Who is this guidance for?

- Staff or trustees in funders supporting participatory grant-making.

- Designated safeguarding leads in funders.

- Individuals invited to engage in participatory grant-making who want to learn more about the actions they can reasonably expect from funders to keep them safe.

This guide is best used by those with experience in managing safeguarding and/or participatory grant-making. You may need further reading and training if you are new to either. This guide provides details of lots of valuable resources you can access.

How to use this guidance?

This guide offers introduction advice and guidance. Approaches to participatory grant-making can vary significantly between funder organisations and contexts. Therefore, you should use this guide which you then adapt to your context.

- **Section 3** is an overview of the basics you should have in place before starting any participatory grant-making.

- **Section 4** gives ideas of potential risks you should consider when planning participatory grant-making.

- **Sections 5–7** give you specific ideas of activities you can take at every stage of recruiting and supporting decision makers involved in your participatory grant-making.

How was this guidance developed?

This guidance is informed by a desk-based review of existing literature and a series of workshops facilitated by FSC to explore safeguarding within participatory grant-making. It builds on the insights FSC members shared since our launch, discussions with staff in other funding agencies, and with those with experience in decision-making. We are grateful to everyone who contributed.

From the outset, the Participatory Grantmakers Community – a global community of practice focused on sharing knowledge to improve participatory grant-making and encourage its use within philanthropy - has supported our work. We are grateful to this community and its members for their insights and expertise.

Learn more about participatory grant-making

- Explore the benefits, challenges, and models of participatory grant-making by reading Cynthia Gibsons Deciding Together: Shifting Power And Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking (2018).

- Understand why participatory grant-making approaches can help not only to devolve power to communities but also help to make the best funding decisions by reading Devolving power through participatory grant making by Hannah Paterson (2021). This includes details of different models of participatory grantmaking.

- Consider the different mechanisms and approaches to meaningful participation of children and youth in philanthropy by reading Weaving a Collective Tapestry: A Funders' Toolkit for Child and Youth Participation by Elevate Children Funders Group (2022).

- Get involved with the Participatory Grantmakers Community: https://www.participatorygrantmaking.org

2. Key terms

Both safeguarding and participatory grant-making are areas of work that are continually evolving. Terms have developed over time in different places related to their specific context. For this guide, we use the following definitions.

Care and support needs

The assistance and services required by individuals who may be unable to fully meet their physical, emotional, social, or practical needs without help from others. This may include children, older people, disabled people, and those with long-term health conditions.

Children

Individuals under the age of 18.

Decision maker

People involved in participatory grant-making processes. Sometimes called participants, they are not the donors, trustees/Board members, or staff of the funder.

Delivery team members

People involved in administering a fund and designing and delivering participatory grant-making processes. This may include the funder Board, staff of the funder, or consultants acting on their behalf.

Funder

An umbrella term to cover a broad range of trusts and foundations that include grant-making as a core component of their organisational mission. This includes private, family, corporate, and community trusts and foundations as well as intermediary funders.[1]

Lived experience

The experience(s) of people on whom a social issue, or combination of issues, had had a direct personal impact.[2]

Participatory grant-making (PGM)

Participatory grant-making cedes decision-making power about funding – including the strategy and criteria behind those decisions – to the very communities that funders aim to serve.[3] Globally the approach to participation of people in the grant-making process can vary significantly with different levels of involvement and sharing of power in decision-making. It can overlap with parallel practices of co-production and engagement with people with lived experience.

For brevity, the acronym PGM will be used throughout this document.

Safeguarding

The arrangements organisations have aimed at preventing and responding to all forms of harm, abuse, and exploitation. This includes efforts to safeguard all individuals who come into contact with funders and the organisations they support.[4]

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1   Adapted from: Walker-Simpson, K. (2021) Funder Approaches to Safeguarding Challenges, positive practices, and opportunities for collaboration Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

2   Adapted from: Sandhu, B. (2017) The value of lived experience in social change: The need for leadership and organisational development in the Social Sector

3   Gibson, C. (2018) Deciding Together: Shifting Power And Resources Through Participatory Grantmaking Grantcraft

4   Adapted from: Walker-Simpson, K. (2021) Funder Approaches to Safeguarding Challenges, positive practices, and opportunities for collaboration Funder Safeguarding Collaborative

3. Getting the safeguarding basics right

Before commencing a PGM process and the specific risks you may need to manage, you should ensure your overall safeguarding approach is fit for purpose.

This section helps you to consider:

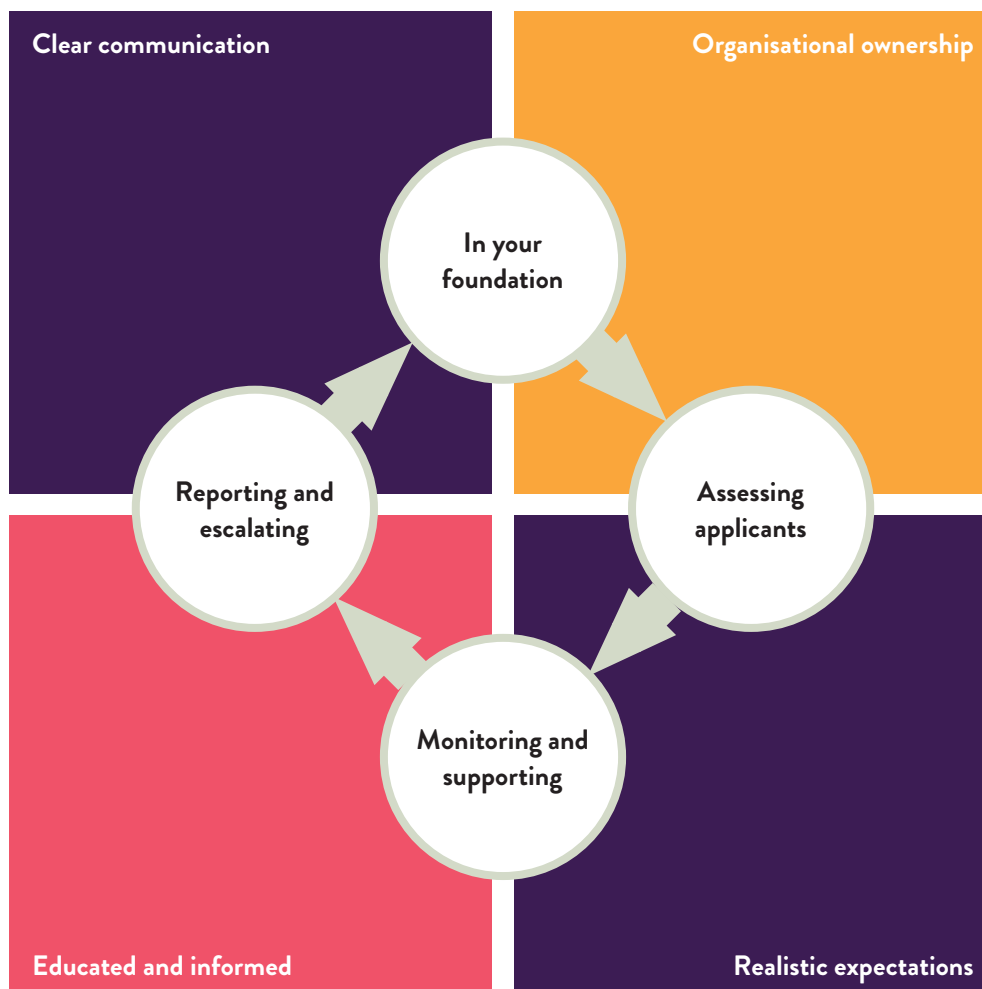- **What are the core aspects of safeguarding in a funding organisation?**

In 2020, the Funder Safeguarding Collaborative and the Association of Charitable Foundations published a safeguarding Framework for Foundations[5]. The framework poses questions to prompt discussion and helps foundations decide what constitutes appropriate and proportionate safeguards for their organisation.

All funders considering or engaging in participatory grant-making processes should consider the four key sections of the framework. Although presented separately, these different aspects of safeguarding are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

All funders should have appropriate and proportionate safeguarding arrangements for their organisation.

- **In Your Foundation:** Funders should create a safe environment for trustees, staff, volunteers, and others who come into direct contact with the organisation. Funders should also take proactive steps to prevent harm and ensure everyone knows how to raise safeguarding concerns.

- **Assessing Applicants:** Funders should undertake due diligence on the organisations they are funding. This should be reasonable and proportionate with the depth of due diligence dependent on various factors, including the level of risk inherent in the nature and location of the activities being funded. Learning from assessment should inform future monitoring and support should funding be awarded.

- **Monitoring & Supporting:** Funders should embed safeguarding within their monitoring processes to ensure grantee partners are implementing safeguarding measures and are updating these regularly to reflect learning and best practice.

- **Reporting & Escalating:** Funders may make reasonable requests for information on safeguarding incidents that come to light. Funders should adopt a survivor-centred approach and ensure their actions do not cause any unintentional harm. They should follow established protocols for wider information sharing and reporting to regulators or criminal investigators.

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5   Although the Framework contains specific guidance on UK regulatory requirements, the questions provided as a guide to funders are relevant to all grant-making organisations wherever they are based.

Clear communication | **Organisational ownership**

In your foundation → Assessing applicants → Monitoring and supporting → Reporting and escalating → In your foundation

Educated and informed | **Realistic expectations**

Learn more about funder approaches to safeguarding

- Join the Funder Safeguarding Collaborative which is open to charitable trusts and foundations, intermediary funders, and funder networks committed to improving safeguarding practices globally.

- Adopt the Funder Safeguarding Collaborative and the Association of Charitable Foundations Safeguarding Framework for Foundations. This offers practical questions you can use to guide building a proportionate approach to safeguarding in your work.

- Use NCVOs grant-making (2021), which has details on how to make sure you're managing to safeguard and how to embed safeguarding at each step of the grant-making process.

- Read Funder Approaches to Safeguarding: Challenges, positive practices, and opportunities for collaboration (2021) by Karen Walker-Simpson to learn from the collaboration between funders seeking to improve how they keep people safe.

4. Relationships and risks of harm in participatory grant-making

Funders are responsible for regularly reviewing and assessing the risks across all areas of their work and planning to manage those risks. This includes the specific risks associated with participatory grant-making.

This section helps you to consider:

- **How do the relationships you build in participatory grant-making processes bring risk?**

- **How can the diversity of people you engage impact risks to manage?**

- **What are some of the specific risks of harm to consider when planning PGM?**

4.1 Understanding Risk

The risks involved in PGM will depend on how you work, whom you work with, and the types of relationships you facilitate. Whatever your approach, actively consider the potential risks of harm at an early stage. By accurately identifying the types of risks that may occur during your work, you can more effectively manage them.

Below are some key risks you should consider. Steps to mitigate these risks are contained later in this guide.

> *The risks involved in participatory grant-making processes will depend on how you work, whom you work with, and the types of relationships you facilitate.*

When considering issues of risk with people, always remember:

- **Process:** Managing risk is a process, not an act. You should continually be looking to identify and assess potential risks, implement strategies to mitigate or eliminate those risks and take steps to reduce the severity of harm if a risk materialises.

- **Benefits as well as harm:** Sometimes, the focus on negative or 'downside' risks, such as risks of harm to decision makers, may overshadow the opportunities for positive outcomes or 'upside risks' and the potential benefits of PGM such as accountability and innovation. Balance potential risks of harm against the potential benefits that PGM processes will bring.

- **Partnership:** Focus on funders' responsibility to manage risks of harm should not detract from the capabilities of decision makers to help build safety for themselves and others. When managing risk, you should be working in partnership with decision makers so they can make informed choices about risk and build their knowledge, skills, and resources to help manage that risk themselves.

- **Proportionality:** The safeguarding arrangements to manage risk must be appropriate and not excessive with the impact on individuals. The benefits of any action must outweigh any harm, costs, or barriers to access these arrangements may create. Our approach to safeguarding itself should do no harm, including harm when we ignore the views, wishes, and feelings of decision makers.

- **Prevention:** Funders should take proactive measures to reduce the likelihood or minimise the negative consequences of potential risks. Good planning, early intervention, and ongoing support are critical, rather than just responding when people have experienced harm.

4.2 How relationships affect risks

All participatory grant-making will bring people together. Consider the interpersonal relationships and power dynamics between the different individuals and groups involved in PGM. The more you engage actively with those at greater risk of harm, the greater the need to consider safeguarding activities that mitigate harm.

In your PGM process, you should consider:

- **Relationships between delivery team members and decision makers:** Team members representing the funder may be – or perceived to be – in positions of power by decision makers. They may decide who can be involved, authorise payments of expenses or honorarium, or control other opportunities.

- **Relationships between decision makers:** There may be differences within the group which may place some at greater risk of harm. For example, when working with a mixed age group; where some have needs for care and support due to disability, illness, or frailty; or where some or all have experiences of past harm or are currently in situations of precarity.

- **Relationships between team members:** Power dynamics within the team may also present risks. For example, between colleagues, between those in positions of authority and more junior staff, or between those in employment and those who are self-employed or working part-time.

- **Contact between delivery team members, decision makers, and others:** This risk occurs when the process includes access to wider groups of people—for example, contact with third-party organisations and wider community engagement activities.

> *The more you work with marginalised and oppressed groups, the more likely they can be targeted by those intending to cause harm, be in precarious situations and face barriers to speaking out or accessing support services.*

When considering relationships, consider that anyone can be a perpetrator of harm, and anyone can experience harm. However, the likelihood of exposure to harmful behaviours and how they are perpetrated and experienced often echoes wider systemic inequalities in society. Our age, sex, gender identity or expression, race, sexual orientation, religion, health status and disability can all impact our experience of harm. The more you work with marginalised and oppressed groups, the more likely they can be targeted by those intending to cause harm, be in precarious situations and face barriers to speaking out or accessing support services.

Similarly, there are patterns of who is likely to be a perpetrator of harm. Those intending to cause harm may seek positions that offer them access to people, build close relationships and create opportunities to perpetrate harm. This includes positions within funder organisations or opportunities to become involved in PGM.

To build safe relationships, you should:

- **Design the role:** The role should codify the role and your expectations of the decision maker (see section 5.1).

- **Set expectations for behaviour:** There should be clear expectations on conduct for both decision makers (see section 6.3) and team members (see section 6.4).

- **Offer respect and build supportive spaces:** You should build relationships that have appropriate boundaries, and that ensure everyone is treated with respect (see section 6.5).

- **Seek feedback:** You should learn from the experience and be willing to change and improve how you approach safeguarding (see sections 5.5 & 7.2).

4.3 Harms in participatory grant-making

This list of potential harms is not exhaustive and is a starting point to consider harms in your PGM process. Consider your setting, the people you work with, and what harms may be most relevant to your PGM process.

Intentional abuse

Sadly, some individuals will purposely cause harm to another or allow for harm to be done to others.

It is therefore important to be aware of some of the most common forms of intentional harm that you may encounter. Remember that we can experience more than one form of harm and that they can often come together.

You should consider in PGM:

- **Physical harm:** Physical contact that results in intentional discomfort, pain, or injury, including the use of restraint.

- **Sexual abuse:** Involvement in any sexual activity, contact or non-contact, through force or coercion or that an individual is unable to consent to.

- **Sexual harassment:** Unwanted verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

- **Psychological or emotional abuse:** Intimidatory, coercive, controlling, humiliating, or bullying behaviour that causes mental distress.

- **Exploitation:** Misuse of power over another person for financial, social, sexual, or other benefits.

- **Financial abuse:** Theft, fraud, misuse, or misappropriation of an individual's resources.

- **Spiritual abuse:** Patterns of coercive and controlling behaviour in a faith context.

To prevent and manage intentional abuse, you should:

- **Implement safer recruitment processes** to deter and identify those with a history of causing harm (see section 5.1–5.2).

- **Set expectations for behaviour:** Your Code of Conduct should be clear that abuse is unacceptable (see section 6.3) and there should be clear expectations around the conduct of team members (see sections 6.4 & 6.5).

- **Publicise how to report concerns:** Your induction should inform decision makers of whom they can contact for support (see sections 6.1 & 6.6).

- **Respond to inappropriate behaviour** when building relationships with decision makers always act on concerning behaviour (see section 6.7).

Failure to provide appropriate support

Staff and decision makers will all need some form of support to engage fully in a PGM process – this could include practical support, emotional support as well as ensuring the PGM process respects the faith, ethnicity, or cultural needs of those involved. In addition, some PGM processes may involve individuals with specific care and support needs. This may include children, disabled people, those with certain medical conditions or health needs, or those frail due to age.

> *Staff and decision makers will all need some form of support to engage fully in a PGM process.*

Where PGM is poorly planned, there is a potential for funder team members – or those working on their behalf – to cause harm by failing to provide appropriate support that individuals may require.

Issues to consider in PGM include:

- Failure to respond appropriately to people's health status, including failure to administer medication as prescribed.

- Failure to make the process accessible to individuals with a disability, including not providing appropriate communication aids.

- Failure to respond appropriately to people's faith, ethnicity, or cultural needs.

- Failure to provide emotional support or manage the behaviour of others which could be distressing or harmful.

- Running residentials with inadequate supervision, inappropriate accommodation, or sleeping arrangements.

- Failure to manage the behaviour of others, which is challenging or distressing.

- Failure to respond to individuals' harmful behaviour.

To meet people's care and support needs, you should:

- **Carefully design the role:** You should design, and risk assesses the decision maker role in light of your experience, capacity, and skills (see section 5.1).

- **Understand individuals' support needs:** Your recruitment process should enable decision makers to share their support needs and relevant previous life experiences (see section 5.5).

- **Record appropriate contacts:** You should know whom to contact if something goes wrong or you have worries about a decision maker (see section 5.5).

- **Seek support:** You should work closely as a team with regular reflection to identify learning and identify when people may need further support.

Trauma and distress

Trauma can result from one-off events (e.g. exposure to terrorist attacks, conflict, accident, or bereavement) or ongoing harm (e.g. serial abuse). It may also be linked to the experiences of wider prejudice and inequalities, such as exposure to racism and other forms of group hatred and/or discrimination.

Generally, the experience of trauma can cause lasting adverse effects, limiting the ability to function

and achieve mental, physical, social, emotional, or spiritual well-being.[6] It is unique to the individual and varies greatly depending on the wider context of their lives and circumstances.[7]

Issues to consider in PGM include:

- **Funding related to an individual's experience:** Often PGM processes will seek to involve people with lived experience of the issue the funding aims to address. By exposing people to materials about "them" or their experiences, we can 'trigger' significant emotional distress and harm.

- **Funding related to historical inequalities and harm:** Involving individuals in funding to address historical inequalities or harms can trigger historical or intergenerational trauma experienced by a specific cultural, racial, or ethnic group.[8]

- **Money and finance trauma:** Inviting individuals with experiences of debt, unstable income or precarious work to be involved in the distribution of funds – potentially involving large sums of money can lead to worries or distress for individuals.

- **Secondary and vicarious trauma:** Those involved with funding decisions may be exposed to others' traumatic experiences. Individuals can experience bystander guilt or shame that they have not experienced the harm. They may also over-identify with the individuals who have experienced harm or have difficulty maintaining professional boundaries with others.

- **Compassion fatigue:** As a result of helping or wanting to help those in need, we may become exhausted and experience a decrease in our ability to empathise or show compassion to others.

- **Burnout:** Burnout is a state of physical and emotional exhaustion due to long-term stress in a physically or emotionally draining role. Involvement in PGM, especially if not trained or supported to undertake the role, can lead to challenges for practitioners and decision makers.

To minimise distress, you should:

- **Clearly state the nature of the role:** To ensure informed consent of decision makers and advertise the activities and themes they could be exposed to (see section 5.1).

- **Understand individuals' support needs:** Your recruitment process should enable decision makers to share their support needs and relevant previous life experiences (see section 5.5).

- **Build respectful and supportive spaces:** You should know whom to contact if something goes wrong or you worry about a decision maker (see section 6.6).

- **Be open to feedback:** Decision makers should have opportunities to continue influencing how the PGM process is run, including the arrangements to keep them safe (see sections 5.5 & 7.2).

Learn more about different forms of harm

- The World Health Organisation (2022) has an overview of child maltreatment and abuse.

- The American Centre for Disease Control (2021) has information about elder abuse.

- UN Women had a resource centre on ending violence against women and girls.

- Learn more and access quality evidence-informed resources about trauma and distress on the UK Trauma Council website. The UK Government (2022) has issued a Working definition of trauma-informed practice. There are significant practices through Trauma-Informed Wales (2022) and the Scottish Government (2021) Trauma-informed practice: toolkit.

- The US Department for Human Services Resource Guide to Trauma-Informed Human Services Trauma gives ideas for the support you can offer.

- Learn more about how funders can be more trauma-informed in the Philanthropy Network Greater Philadelphia Trauma-Informed Philanthropy: A Funder's Resource Guide for Supporting Trauma-Informed Practice in the Delaware Valley

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6   Office for Health Improvement & Disparities (2022) UK Working definition of trauma-informed practice
7   Adapted from What is trauma (2022) UK Trauma Council
8   Adapted from US Department for Human Services Resource Guide to Trauma-Informed Human Services Trauma

5. Recruiting decision makers

Funders need to ensure that the decision makers they engage are suitable to take on the role and that they are safe throughout the process. The exact arrangements will depend on the expected responsibilities of the role, the care and support needs of those involved, and the risks that need to be managed.

This section helps you to consider:

- **What are the key safeguarding considerations when designing the decision maker role?**
- **How to consider the specific risks associated with the decision-making role?**
- **How to advertise the role in a way that reflects good safeguarding practice?**

5.1 Design the decision maker role

To be able to consider potential safeguarding issues with a decision maker, you need to codify the role and your expectations of the decision maker. Doing so will enable those interested in participating to make an informed choice about whether to engage. It will also provide clarity to team members leading the PGM process on the boundaries of the role.

> *Codify the decision maker role to help you consider potential safeguarding issues.*

From a safeguarding perspective, issues to consider when developing a role description include:

- **Status:** Are they employees, volunteers, or a consultant for the organisation?
- **Background:** Do you have expectations on a certain level of knowledge, skills, personal experience, or personal characteristics to undertake the role effectively?
- **Contact:** Whom will they be working with to fulfil the role – is it your team or also with other community members? Will they work with children or specific groups known to be at greater risk of harm?
- **Content:** What issues may they be exposed to through the grant-making process?
- **Impact:** Could the role impact other aspects of the individuals' lives – including impact on time, costs, or creation of conflicts of interest due to their contact with others?

5.2 Risk assess the role

Before commencing any PGM processes, you should look at specific risks related to the planned decision-making role and the ways you will mitigate those risks. It is good practice for this to be written down in a formal risk assessment document. Some organisations will have a formal process of risk assessment to follow or you can use the resources at the end of this section to get templates and ideas.

When completing the risk assessment, you should consider:

- **Content:** Identify the risks of harm the decision maker could experience as a result of the materials they will be exposed to or the issues to be discussed.
- **Background:** Identify if decision makers are likely at risk of harm or have a known history of harm to others or if they have any specific care and support needs (eg. physical, emotional, medical, religious).

> *Look at specific risks related to the decision-making role and the ways you will mitigate those risks before starting any participatory grant-making processes.*

- **Contact:** Consider any risks that may arise from their interactions with others – either within the funder organisation, within the wider group of

decision makers, or through contact with third parties. Will decision makers have contact with others who are supervised or unsupervised?

- **Conduct:** Identify any risk of harm arising from the conduct of decision makers that could harm others.

- **Location:** Consider any risks associated with the venue (in person or virtual) where decision makers will be participating, as well as potential risks travelling to/from the venue.

> *What type of safeguarding risk mitigations you put in place will depend on your organisation's capacity and your skills and experience.*

Once you have identified the risks of harm, you will need to decide how you are going to mitigate these risks. The decision of what type of mitigations you put in place will depend on your organisation's capacity and your skills and experience. When thinking of mitigations, consider:

- **Legal obligations:** Are there any legal or regulatory requirements you need to consider, including safeguarding and the risks of harm?

- **Role requirements:** Depending on the decision maker's status (as an employee, volunteer etc), does your organisation's safeguarding policy have specific requirements regarding recruitment, induction, or training? Are there minimum expectations for following a Code of Conduct? Or requirements for reporting safeguarding concerns? You should consider if this is proportionate to the risks in the role and if necessary, seek a change to the organisation's policy or change of status to the role.

- **Support:** What level of support will you be offering? What resources/skills are required to care for and support decision makers? Is the planned level of support and supervision for decision makers adequate given the risks you have identified? Do you have the capacity and skills to offer this support? Do you have the right support for the team members to work with that group of decision makers?

- **Accessibility and appropriateness of current safeguarding procedures:** Consider whether your current approach to receiving safeguarding concerns is fit for purpose for the decision makers

you will seek to engage. Consider whether the reporting routes are accessible and written in appropriate language, or whether additional changes are needed.

- **Your team's experience:** Do your team members have experience in safeguarding more widely, including identifying or managing risks? Do they have experiences in the community where decision makers are based or with similar types of people? Do they understand the wider environment?

- **Your team's embeddedness with decision makers:** Does your team have previous experience with the individual recruited decision makers or a similar group of people? Does your team include people from the group you seek to support? How will this impact your team's ability to provide support to others? Does it create additional risks?

- **Contact:** Will team members be supervising contact between decision makers and others? If decision makers will have contact with children or specific groups known to be at greater risk of harm, are there additional requirements of who is safe and suitable to undertake the role? For example, do you need to understand someone's criminal record or seek references?

The risk assessment process may lead you to redesign the role or change your initial plans for the PGM process. It may mean you restrict who can undertake the decision maker role. You should consider whether you need to change your ways of working to manage the intended risks rather than excluding more people from the role.

> *The risk assessment process may lead you to redesign the role or change your initial plans for the participatory grant-making processes.*

When making these decisions, remember:

- The greater the risks of harm and the lower your capacity or experience, the more you should consider redesigning the PGM process to be safer.

- The lower the risks of harm and the higher your capacity or experience, the more confident you can feel that you can manage the risks.

5.3 Advertise the role and encourage applications

When advertising the role, you should state any expectations for safeguarding within the role. This information has several benefits:

- **Deterrence:** Individuals with an intent to cause harm may not apply in the first place as you are showing that you take safeguarding seriously.

- **Clarity:** Individuals can make an informed choice as to whether the role is right for them.

- **Trust:** Individuals with previously negative experiences with organisations may feel encouraged to apply if they see you are committed to keeping them safe.

Within your advert or application information, you should include details about:

- Your organisational commitment to safeguarding and a link to your policy (if online)

- Whether the role will require references and/or a criminal record check and if so, for what purpose

- What support decision makers can expect from you

- How someone can ask for more information about the role and what is expected of them.

How you advertise is as important as what you advertise. Things to consider when publicising the role include:

- **Advertise the role openly and widely:** Never rely solely on personal recommendations – those with an intent to cause harm can try and recruit other people with the same intentions.

- **Ask decision makers to promote:** Always ask current decision makers to help promote the opportunity and encourage applications. Other potential applicants may feel assured that those currently involved would recommend it to others.

- **Proactively approach other organisations:** Consider how organisations that reach into the communities of decision makers you seek to engage can help share the opportunity. If these are organisations you fund, always be mindful of the power dynamic between funders and grantees – always ensure that the organisations are comfortable with the request and happy to assist.

5.4 Select decision makers

As with any recruitment, safeguarding should be embedded into the process. The safeguarding measures you include in the selection process will depend on the risks associated with that specific role. The higher the safeguarding risks of a role, the more thorough the process you should undertake.

When designing the selection process, you should consider:

- **How you will ensure your recruitment process is accessible:** As a matter of principle, funders should make reasonable adjustments to the materials to ensure they are accessible to disabled people. In some jurisdictions, this may be a legal requirement.

> *The higher the safeguarding risks of a decision maker role, the more safeguarding arrangements you should embed within the selection process.*

- **Will you be seeking references?** Referees can verify the individual's identity, and any statements they may have made and improve your understanding of their suitability for the role. If you are seeking references, always seek references from a broad range of people and never rely just on family members or others with a potential conflict of interest.

- **Will you seek verification of identity?** For higher risk roles, this can give you confidence that the individual is whom they claim to be. This may be by asking for a photo ID or, if unavailable, relying on references.

- **How will you understand individual motivations for the role?** This can include whether their values align with your organisation, including their understanding of your organisation's commitment to keeping people safe.

- **Is it necessary to understand their previous life experience?** Depending on the risk assessment, you may have decided that additional information may help you know someone is safe and suitable for the role – for example, whether there is anything in their history that suggests that they pose a risk of harm to others, or which may exceed your capacity to offer support. You should only collect information that is necessary given the risks in the role. If you are asking about sensitive information about someone's history, this should only be collected by team members who should be suitably skilled and able to manage this appropriately, shared with people directly involved

in any recruitment decision or management of the PGM and held safely and securely in line with clear confidentiality guidelines.

- **Will you seek details of someone's criminal record?** In some jurisdictions, you can get a certificate or record from the police or a Government body to verify someone's criminal record. However, before doing so, you need to consider whether requesting this sensitive information is justified given the level of risks inherent within the role. Remember that criminal records will only tell you about known and recorded crimes – many people may have commited harm but never have a criminal record.

- **How they found out about the role?** This can include whether they have any close or intimate relationships with others in the organisation. While that should not necessarily be a bar to recruitment, it may require thought as to whether that poses further risks to be managed.

If you have existing decision makers, you may work with them or enable them to decide who will join the team. In these situations, you should consider:

- **Duties of confidentiality:** Agree on clear boundaries and expectations for how information is kept confidential and that information about applicants is not shared.

- **Openness about potential previous contact:** Existing decision makers who know applicants should be asked to share this.

- **Fairness and bias:** Any involvement in selection decisions should be based on the applicant's evidence or where a specific concern is shared. It is important to consider any bias that may result from involving existing decision makers.

5.5 Offer a role

Before offering a role, asking applicants for feedback about the recruitment process is good practice. They may share examples of any harm, distress, or discomfort they experienced or were at risk of during the process. It can also give you insight into their potential support needs.

For roles where you have decided that it is important to understand someone's criminal history, any offer of a role should be conditional on receipt of any relevant statutory declaration or certification.

When offering the role, it is good practice to have a clear written agreement between the funder and the decision maker. You should consider including:

- **The role description:** You should share the final version of the responsibilities for the role.

- **Expectations of their behaviour:** State they must follow any Code of Conduct or agreement on behaviour. This might have been set in advance or, ideally, negotiated with or co-created with them upon appointment.

- **Expectations of the delivery team:** Including the conduct of staff, support that will be offered, and steps that will be taken to ensure their safety and well-being.

- **How to report harm or concerns:** Detail their right to share experiences of harm or worries about others. It should include ways for individuals to share feedback and minor concerns as identifying any issues early, can prevent potential risks from becoming more serious.

- **Freedom to pause or leave:** For voluntary roles, individuals must be free to withdraw at any time without any consequence or without giving any reason.

When someone is selected, you should consider:

- **Collecting contact details:** Record contact details for the decision maker including any boundaries they have for their use (e.g. not to be contacted at certain times). It is good practice – and essential when working with children or adults with care and support needs – to have the details of someone to contact in case of an emergency or if you are worried about an individual.

> *Have a clear written agreement between the funder and the decision maker setting out the role and expectations.*

- **Recording support needs and promoting inclusion:** You should keep records of relevant support needs identified in the recruitment process (e.g. disability or health status). This should include considering the specific steps that might be required to ensure that the process is as inclusive as possible and that all individuals, irrespective of age, sex, gender identity or expression, race, sexual orientation, religion, health status and disability, feel valued and can participate fully.

- **Recording agreed-on actions:** It is good practice to have a written agreement with the decision maker of how your organisation will respond to any

identified needs (e.g. any additional requirements for travel, food, or accommodation or what costs can be claimed or covered including for carers, interpreters, or personal assistants).

- **Recording specific risks and agreed actions:** you should keep records of any specific risks identified during the recruitment process and how these will be managed if they take on the role. For example, if someone has a specific history of harm to others but you feel it is proportionate for them to be involved with specific mitigations, ensure these are clearly defined and agreed upon in writing with the individual. You should be clear about who is responsible for these actions and the consequences if not implemented in good faith.

Learn more about safer recruitment

- NCVO (England) has published guidance on recruiting volunteers safely (2019) which could be adapted for use with decision makers.

- NSPCC (UK) has guidance for specific considerations when working with young volunteers (2019).

- The Safeguarding Resource and Support Hub has information about embedding safeguarding within human resources.

- The Start Network, on behalf of the CHS Alliance, has issued Safer Recruitment Guidelines to aid recruitment in an international setting.

- The Misconduct Disclosure Scheme aims to stop perpetrators of sexual misconduct from moving between organisations undetected. The Scheme facilitates sharing of misconduct data between employers.

6. Supporting decision makers

Funder should provide team members and decision makers with the information and support they need to meet safeguarding expectations and protect themselves and others from harm. The level of support and engagement will depend on the role and the model of PGM.

This section helps you to consider:

- **What to include in a safeguarding induction?**
- **Whether to provide safeguarding training to decision makers and if so what to include?**
- **How to develop a Code of Conduct and what to include?**
- **How to build safer relationships with decision makers?**

6.1 Induction

All decision makers should have a clear induction to the organisation, which should include expectations around safeguarding and give them the knowledge, skills, and resources to respond to harm linked to their activity. This information should reflect your organisation's internal policies and procedures but be tailored to the needs of the decision makers.

> *All decision makers should have a clear induction to the organisation, including expectations around safeguarding.*

When planning your induction, you should consider how you will share information with decision makers about:

- **Your commitment to safeguarding:** Inform decision makers of their right to be safe when in contact with the funder.
- **Your approach to safeguarding:** Provide an overview of the organisation's safeguarding policy and relevant procedures.
- **Safe practice and standards behaviour:** Everyone should understand what is expected by the Code of Conduct and how they can reduce the risks of being harmed or of harming others.
- **Reporting any concerns:** How they can share worries using the safeguarding procedures.

- **Getting support:** Whom they can turn to for assistance, including contact details of the organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead.
- **Complaints and whistleblowing:** How they can raise a complaint (complaints policy); and how to act if they are worried the organisation is failing in its safeguarding duties (whistleblowing policies). Make clear consequences for raising false and malicious accusations.
- **Consequences for poor behaviour:** How concerns about behaviour will be resolved resolved within the PGM process; if there are any additional procedures for managing concerns that the organisations may use to resolve issues (e.g. HR procedures).

Although it is important to include this information at the decision maker's induction, team members should reiterate the importance of safeguarding and reminding people of where to access support or report concerns at appropriate points throughout the PGM process.

6.2 Training

Whereas an induction will give an overview of the organisation and explain minimum expectations or ways of working, training helps develop wider knowledge and skills.

> *The higher the risks in the decision maker role; the more training you should offer.*

Not all decision makers will need training on safeguarding. It will be your choice, depending on the risks inherent in the role and the PGM process. The higher the risks in the role; the more you should offer training. An example of where you might consider providing additional training would be in PGM processes where decision makers have contact with children, adults at risk of harm, or other community members.

When designing the training, consider topics like:

- **Understanding harm:** Do decision makers need to be aware of the common forms of harm that the funder is alert to and be able to identify signs and symptoms of harm?

- **Responding to safeguarding concerns:** Developing their skills to respond well should others in the decision-making group share experiences of harm and how to report this through the established procedures.

- **Involvement in grant decision-making:** If decision makers have a role in assessing funding organisations, consider what training they will have to understand and undertake due diligence of applicants.

6.3 Agree on a Code of Conduct with decision makers

An essential component of any organisation's approach to safeguarding is a Code of Conduct which sets out expectations regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

How detailed your Code of Conduct is depends on the risks you manage and you may choose to have one Code of Conduct for decision makers and team members or to have separate documents.

> *A Code of Conduct sets out expectations regarding acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.*

You should actively involve decision makers in developing expectations for behaviour and ways of working. This helps build ownership and ensure a shared understanding of what is expected. As a minimum, always give decision makers the chance to influence and raise questions about any Code of Conduct they will need to adhere to.

When developing a Code of Conduct consider:

- **Add, don't replace:** You may already have an organisational Code of Conduct. If so, tailor it to the work with decision makers involved in your PGM process. Your Code of Conduct with decision makers should align with any organisational expectations to ensure consistency but be unique to the risks for that role and that process.

- **Apply to all:** These Codes of Conduct should be the basis for mutual agreement with decision makers. It should apply to all decision makers equally. Any differences in expectations between decision makers and your team members should be justified and explained.

- **Implement it:** You should use the Code of Conduct as the key document when responding to behaviour that you find challenging or that could be harmful to others. You should actively refer to it at the start of any meetings and when managing any concerns.

- **A living document:** As you learn from the PGM process, or new risks emerge, update the Code of Conduct together.

- **Support, not threaten:** The Code of Conduct should encourage positive behaviour, not just tell people what not to do. To achieve this, think about your language when framing expectations. Consider how individuals can be educated and supported to meet expectations and, where necessary, change their behaviour rather than using the document as a threat to remove them from the PGM process or shame them in front of peers.

- **Clarity on reporting and responding to harm:** Your Code of Conduct should be clear about how decision makers can report inappropriate or unsafe conduct. It should also establish the agreed ways the funder will respond and offer support to those raising concerns.

6.4 Ensure safe conduct by delivery team members

Team members play a key role in engaging with decision makers. They can create a positive safeguarding culture where decision makers are respected, treated with dignity, and protected from harm. They should role model the behaviour they expect from others and within boundaries appropriate to the relationship.

Examples of the types of behaviour that help build positive safeguarding include:

- **Minimising opportunities for lone working:** Lone working contains some inherent risk. Without others around there is no support for you or them and may create the opportunity for individuals to make false allegations. You should always avoid being in a private space where you are alone with decision makers or they are alone with one another. Even in group situations, it is always preferable to have other team members available for support; this should be built into the PGM design. Many organisations will set a Lone Working Policy which outlines the responsibilities of both the organisation and team members to build safety.

> *Team members should role model the behaviour they expect from others and within boundaries appropriate to the relationship.*

- **Maintaining appropriate physical boundaries:** Everyone has different personal boundaries of physical contact. We should always ensure that physical contact is necessary and appropriate. We often use physical contact to show empathy and care, but it should be based upon decision makers' consent and of limited duration. It should never be secretive or initiated when others are not present.

- **Avoiding personal or dual relationships:** Team members must ensure their behaviour cannot be brought into question. They should not hold more than one type of relationship with a decision maker – this includes having personal or intimate relationships with decision makers, providing additional support that is outside of their role, or employing the decision maker in another role. In situations where there is a legitimate reason for a change in the relationship, this should always be approved at an organisational level based on a clear assessment of potential risks and conflicts of interest. The outcome should be transparent with other members of the team.

- **Communication:** Avoid sharing personal phone numbers, emails, or addresses with decision makers. Always use the routes which are agreed upon by your organisation.

- **Social media:** Accepting social networking "friend" requests from decision makers will often allow them access to personal and potentially private information about your life. Adopt clear rules as a team on whether personal platforms or profiles

(e.g. Facebook) can be shared with decision makers or only to use personal profiles (e.g. LinkedIn).

- **Gifts:** Do not buy decision makers gifts with your own money or lend them cash. While the funder may choose to mark others' birthdays or significant events, it should be clear that this is on behalf of the funder not you individually.

- **Alcohol:** Be clear on situations when alcohol use would be inappropriate (e.g. if team members are responsible for children or adults with significant care and support needs or if it is not permitted by the funder more widely). If you are in a situation with alcohol, moderate your alcohol intake and model appropriate behaviour to others. Avoid purchasing alcohol for others and being seen to encourage irresponsible alcohol use. Recognise whether there are inequalities in income or wealth and how that may impact how others feel.

6.5 Building positive and appropriate relationships

You must ensure that your behaviour and interactions between decision makers and between decision makers and team members are appropriate and respectful. Team members should be alert to the expected standards of behaviour and the risks of inappropriate contact and misconduct.

> *Behaviour and interactions between decision makers and between decision makers and team members should be appropriate and respectful.*

You should consider:

- **Authenticity:** To encourage equitable relationships based on mutual respect and trust, team members and decision makers should feel free to be authentic about their lives, situations, and personality. This may include talking about their wider lives and circumstances. However, team members must always be clear about the purpose of the sharing and consider if this is meeting the need of decision makers.

- **Respecting others' boundaries:** Sharing personal experiences can be emotionally demanding for people sharing and those hearing. Team members should be thoughtful about how we encourage

people to draw on their experiences and never coerce or expect people to share. Actively encourage people to set and maintain their boundaries and what they will/will not share.

- **Power Dynamics:** It is important to be aware of power dynamics and how this impacts interactions. Team members should be careful not to dominate the space and drown out the experiences of decision makers. Attention should be paid to dominant and quieter voices within the group and how to manage these so that everyone can contribute.

- **Encouraging peer support:** While there are risks of harm of contact between decision makers, there is also significant potential for peer support. Team members should consider how they can connect decision makers to support from one another rather than just relying on support from the funder.

- **Raise awareness:** You should regularly revisit your induction materials and Code of Conduct and ensure a strong understanding of risks and how anyone can report concerns. Always inform decision makers of any updates to your safeguarding policy or procedure or changes in the Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- **Confidentiality:** To build a safe relationship, be explicit about the boundaries of confidentiality and that these are agreed upon with the decision makers and team members. The more sensitive the content to be shared, the more care and attention will be required. Team members should be clear on what information can be shared with others in the organisation, not identify the decision maker to others outside of the programme and protect their right to confidentiality.

- **Reflect on previous relationships:** Team members may have connections with decision makers before the PGM process. There should be an expectation that team members are open and transparent about any contact outside of the PGM process and the ways that may impact their role.

- **Act as a team:** While team members want to be open and transparent with decision makers, you should consider adverse consequences in sharing internal frustrations or worries about the ways of working with the funder.

To maintain relationships and coordinate logistics, you will inevitably need to communicate with decision makers throughout the PGM process. You will need to talk with decision makers to decide the appropriate ways to communicate and keep in touch. In doing so, you should also consider:

- **Telephone Contact:** Where regular communication by phone is likely to be necessary, providing team members with credit for their phones or a specific phone is advisable and this needs to be included in the PGM budget.

- **Online Platforms:** If you encourage decision makers to use a particular platform to communicate with you, this implies a duty of care to ensure this platform is safe. You will need to consider the inherent risks involved in using different platforms. For help, consult the resources at the end of this section.

- **Privacy:** Consider whether your platform gives decision makers access to others' contact details (e.g. by being in a shared WhatsApp group or cc'ing in emails so others see their email address). Have they consented to this information sharing? To avoid this some groups will prefer to use a specific online messaging platform (e.g. Slack or Teams) which does not automatically share personal contact details and, if people leave the platform, the contact ends.

- **Boundaries:** Always set boundaries when agreeing on communication routes – how often will it be checked and what are reasonable expectations for a response? For team members, it is important that agreements around communication reflect the professional boundaries around your role, so careful consideration should be given to communication that is out-of-hours and whether this is appropriate and necessary.

6.6 Support decision makers to raise concerns

Effective safeguarding requires people to be heard and to feel confident to report experiences of harm or other aspects of the process which might cause them concern. All funders should have a process for people to raise concerns and manage this. You should consider if your current safeguarding reporting process is culturally sensitive and meets the diverse needs of the decision makers you are working with.

You should consider:

- **Having multiple ways to raise concerns:** Can decision makers report concerns in-person, by phone, or online? Consider who will be receiving any reported concerns and whether decision makers will feel safe and comfortable reporting concerns to these individuals.

- **Make reporting accessible:** Consider if your ways of reporting are clear and accessible, including how to report and whom to contact. Regularly remind decision makers of these different channels and seek feedback about how accessible these channels might be for those in the group.

> *Effective safeguarding requires people to be heard and to feel confident to report experiences of harm or other aspects of the process which might cause them concern.*

- **Advertise the extra support available:** Reporting concerns can be daunting. It is important to be clear about what emotional and practical support might be offered to individuals who raise concerns. Access to counselling services could be considered for those who have suffered some form of harm.

- **If and how they want to be involved going forward:** If a decision maker reports a concern, work with them to consider if they wish to continue to be involved in the PGM process and how this may work in practice. This may include any changes that need to be made to the process to address the concern and decide what information is shared with other decision makers or wider team members.

- **Consider providing an advocate:** If a decision maker reports harm, consider whether an advocate may enable them to be heard. An advocate is someone who provides support and representation to individuals raising safeguarding concerns or complaints. They will be independent of the organisation and solely focused on the needs and interests of the individual raising the concern. In some jurisdictions, there will be professional organisations that provide advocacy services. Where this does not exist, the individual may want someone they trust to act as an advocate and support them through the process.

- **Ensure impartiality:** Make clear that all parties involved will receive an impartial hearing and fair treatment and that the dignity and privacy of all will be protected, i.e. no information will be shared with parties who are not involved.

- **Never victimise those who report:** Ensure that individuals who report concerns are not punished or discriminated against for speaking out. This includes protecting them from retaliation from

other decision makers and ensuring that their views are considered in any investigation or forward disciplinary process.

6.7 Responding to challenging behaviour

During the participatory grant-making process, we may encounter behaviours that we or others find challenging or distressing. In responding to these behaviours, recognise that everyone will have different support needs and ways of communicating their feelings and this may be reflected in the way they behave. Team members are responsible for intervening and reducing the distress their behaviour can cause themselves and others. Always consider the intent behind an individual's behaviour and what this may be communicating about the individual's situation or support needs.

When decision makers are behaving in a manner that causes concern, consider:

- **Reflect:** Consider whether the behaviour is challenging for you due to your own experiences or need for skill development rather than being inherently harmful.

- **Your Code of Conduct:** Your Code of Conduct should establish and mutually agree on ways of responding to inappropriate behaviour. It should be applied consistently and equally to all.

- **Talk:** If you have concerns about decision makers and their behaviour discuss this clearly and calmly with them. Do not make assumptions and remain open-minded about their perspective.

> *We may encounter behaviours that we or others find challenging or distressing. Always consider the intent behind an individual's behaviour and what this may be communicating about the individual's situation or support needs.*

- **Show dignity and respect:** All of us can find the behaviour of others frustrating at times. This can cause feelings of anger, frustration, and exasperation. When we feel like this, we can end up making an unwise response to others' behaviour. If you become aggressive or emotional it's likely to inflame and escalate the situation. You should

remain calm, and considerate and act within your organisation's Code of Conduct and values.

- **Give examples:** Give clear, concrete examples of behaviour that has been challenging.

- **Seek solutions from decision makers themselves:** Support the decision maker to identify what they wanted to achieve that led to this behaviour. Work together to identify the positive behaviours you want to promote rather than simply focusing on behaviours you want to avoid.

- **Identify support:** Seek to understand what they may need you to do to support them in the future.

- **Affirm boundaries to the support you can offer:** You should avoid becoming involved in support needs beyond your role, knowledge, or expertise. Some behaviours may be linked to issues outside the PGM process, and you should be cautious of becoming overly involved. Always work with the decision maker to identify other sources of support from other services or from within their wider support network.

- **Work with colleagues:** Don't respond to behaviour individually, work together with team members to ensure you are well supported and offer consistency. Speak openly about the behaviour or relationships you are finding challenging and why with teammates. Always share information and any concerns about behaviour with your line manager or, if necessary, your organisation's Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- **Keep records:** Ensure you have clear records of specific incidents that have been challenging or resulted in distress or harm to others. Ensure that decision makers are aware of those issues. Consider whether these should be reported to your Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- **Fair process:** Decision makers should always have the opportunity to escalate concerns if they feel the Code of Conduct has been misapplied, used unfairly, and/or there has been some injustice in a decision.

Learn more about working safely

- Keeping Children Safe supports organisations around the world to end the abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children. They have issued safeguarding practices standards when working with children.

- The UK National Youth Agency has issued guidance on working well with young people on their Safeguarding and Risk Management Hub.

- NCVO England has a range of resources and guides to help your organisation do safeguarding well and keep people safe.

- NSPCC has guidance on how to prevent abuse of trust in relationships. While focussed on laws

in the UK, it provides useful considerations for any jurisdiction.

- The Resource and Support Hub has a range of materials about community-based reporting mechanisms – the ways that community members can best be supported to share safeguarding concerns.

- The UK Government has issued Online Safety Guidance (2021) on how to protect users from online harm if they own or manage an online platform. The UK National Cyber Security Centre has information on managing online platforms.

7. Closing the relationship with decision makers

No PGM process is indefinite. You should make sure you plan a clear and safe ending to the relationship. It is a unique opportunity to gain feedback and reflect on whether individuals felt safe and if there are any issues for them to report.

This section helps you to consider:

- **How to set expectations for future relationships with decision makers?**
- **Why you should seek feedback about decision makers' experience?**
- **How to capture learning for future initiatives?**

7.1 Set expectations for future relationships

At the end of the PGM process, your team and decision makers should all understand the changes to their roles and understand expectations around future communication and support.

You should consider:

- **Prepare for closure:** You should talk together with the decision makers about what will happen as the process draws to a close and your relationship changes. Although this discussion is critical towards the end of the process, clarity about when and how the relationship with the funder will end should be as clear as possible from the outset. Clarity is important to avoid false expectations.

- **Plan for future support:** If you have been offering proactive support or aftercare by anyone during the project, you should be explicit about what they can reasonably expect from you or your team moving forward. You may need to consider where else decision makers will receive that support moving ahead. It may be helpful to get their permission to speak directly with others who support them – including if relevant a parent or carer – to ensure future support needs are met.

- **Share correct contact details:** Make sure you have up to date contact details for decision makers and that they know where they can raise queries or requests for references can be sent.

- **Close communication routes:** If you established specific communication routes (eg. WhatsApp/Slack), ensure that these are closed.

- **Avoid misrepresentation:** Involvement with a PGM process can lead others to perceive a decision maker with credibility and potentially give them access by others to people at risk of harm. Make it explicit that decision makers must not lead others to believe they continue in the role once it has ended. They should update their social media profiles and be clear that the role has ended in any other applications or roles.

- **Update your team:** Make sure other team members understand that the role has come to an end and that there are new expectations for information sharing or access to spaces.

7.2 Seek feedback about safeguarding

All decision makers should be asked to feedback about their experiences, including their experiences of the organisation keeping them and others safe from harm. The scale of feedback and opportunity should be proportionate to the duration and depth of the process and relationships which have been fostered.

All decision makers should be asked to feedback about their experiences of the organisation keeping them and others safe from harm.

You should schedule the feedback near the very end of the role and after sharing final communications on exit tasks or expectations post-role.

When seeking feedback, consider:

- **Who is best to gain feedback:** You may want opportunities for decision makers to speak to someone less directly involved in the process. This independence may enable people to speak up without fear for their reputation or to be considered for future opportunities. At a minimum, they should always be reminded they can contact the Designated Safeguarding Lead with feedback about how safe they felt during the process or any concerns that emerged.

- **It's an opportunity, not an obligation:** While all decision makers should have the opportunity to be heard, it is their choice. You should be cautious of coercing them to participate while also actively removing any barriers to them being heard.

- **Always seek specific feedback about others:** When decision makers leave the role, they may feel more comfortable reporting worries they have about the behaviour of others. Always ask if there were any concerns they've never felt able to share or anything they think the organisation should be aware of.

- **How to give specific feedback:** How to give specific feedback: during the exit process, you should consider whether there is any further feedback about the individual's behaviour or relationships with others. Constructive feedback can be useful for decision makers to consider when engaging in future projects. Avoid digging up resolved conflicts or challenges but rather emphasise lessons learnt.

7.3 Close the process and capture learning

Every PGM process provides a learning opportunity that can strengthen future safeguarding activities. The process of capturing learning should involve your team members, decision makers, and other partners involved.

You could:

- **Facilitate a reflective discussion:** Encourage team members to share their perspectives and experiences on what went well, what could

have been done differently, and what lessons can be applied to safeguarding in future processes. Compare and contrast team members' perspectives with that of decision makers and consider any differences in experiences.

- **Confirm future management of ongoing incidents:** If there have been any safeguarding concerns or incidents that are still being resolved when the main initiative is closing, you should identify who is responsible for any future liaison with the individual concerned and with relevant authorities. It should be clear who will be responsible for any follow-up actions, including confirming that the Designated Safeguarding Lead has the necessary information.

> *Every PGM process provides a learning opportunity that can strengthen future safeguarding activities.*

- **Manage data:** You may hold personal and sensitive information about decision makers. You should dispose of this in line with relevant laws, regulations and your organisation's Data Protection Policy. Always destroy any hard copies of sensitive information securely. All relevant electronic data should be securely deleted or archived.

- **Compile a lessons learned report:** Summarise the key findings from the reflective discussion and other project-related information, such as project reports and evaluations, into a safeguarding lessons learned report.

- **Share learning:** Share the report internally with relevant team members to help continuously improve your safeguarding practices in the future. Consider whether there are lessons learned that you wish to share with other funders.

Learn more about closing a relationship

- NCVO (England) has produced underline guidance (2018) on how to close a relationship with volunteers safely.

Questions for decision makers to funders

Before getting involved with a funder, ask yourself these questions to check they are taking the necessary steps to keep you safe from harm. If you are unsure on the answer to any of these questions, you could talk with the funder and seek explanation.

About you:

- **Your role:** Are you clear about the status of the role: are you staff, a volunteer or a paid consultant? Do you understand what this means and any implications?

- **About you:** Have you been asked to give any information about your life, background or previous criminal history? Are you clear why this is needed, who will have access to this information and how they will use it?

- **Induction and training:** Have you had an induction which explains your role? Have you had training relevant to the role, including any expectations they have in relation to keeping yourself and others safe from harm?

- **Code of Conduct:** Do you know what expectations there are around behaviour? For example, have you been provided with a Code of Conduct or agreements on behaviour? Do you know what will happen if these are not met? Do you know what to do if you are concerned about the behaviours of others?

About expectations on the funder:

- **About the funder:** Have you been informed how the organisation wants to keep you and others safe from harm? This might include being given details of their Safeguarding Policy.

- **Expectations on their team:** Do you know how members of the funders team should behave with you and others? Is it clear the boundaries of the relationship they should have with you? Do you know what to do if the team don't follow these guidelines?

- **Fair Treatment:** Do staff at the funder treat you well? Are you treated fairly and on an equitable basis with other decision maker?

- **Where to get support:** Do you know what support will be provided to help you fulfil your role? Do you know what to do if you are worried or concerned about something related to this process? Have you got the specific contact details for someone who you can talk with?

- **Information sharing and confidentiality:** Do you know whether the funder intends to take photos or use any information you might share during this process? Have you been asked for consent to share this information? Do you know what happens if you change your mind?

If things go wrong

- **Reporting concerns:** Do you know how to complain about the behaviour of someone involved or working with the funder? Do you know what to do if you are worried that you or someone else involved is at risk of harm? Have you got the specific contact details for someone who you can talk with? They may be called a Designated Safeguarding Lead.

- **Taking action:** If you report concerns, are you clear on what action the funder is taking? Is someone keeping you updated? If you were worried that the organisation was failing to take safeguarding issues seriously, have you been told what to do or who to contact? In some countries there may be legal requirements to keep you safe and you may be able to get advice from an independent regulator or Government body.