



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Information Session: VCSE Gambling Harms Prevention & Resilience Fund

Update to the VCSE sector

26/11/2025

Housekeeping



Please keep all mics muted.



If you have any questions, please ask them in the Q&A function. These will be visible for others to see so please do not include sensitive information. Please email any project specific questions directly.



The team has received a lot of questions and will try to get through these and new questions during the briefing, but will respond following the call if this is not possible.



The Q&A will be published after the meeting (with answers to all questions asked – including those not covered in the meeting).

Agenda – VCSE webinar

	Agenda item	Timing
1.	Welcome & Introduction	11:30 – 11:35
2.	Gambling Levy: DHSC programme update	11:35 – 11:45
3.	Overview of the Fund	11:45 – 12:00
4.	The new Public Health approach to VCSEs	12:00-12:05
5.	Our approach during the transition period	12:05-12:15
6.	Q&A	12:15 - 12:25
7.	Closing remarks	12:25-12:30

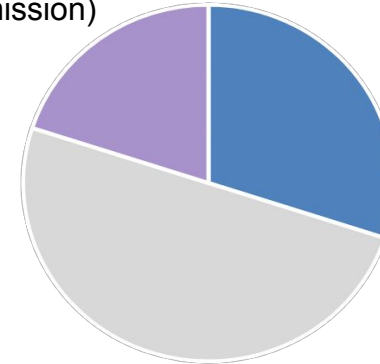
The New Gambling Levy

- In November 2024, the UK Government confirmed the introduction of a **new statutory levy on gambling operators**, to be introduced from **April 2025**.
- The levy, expected to deliver at least **£100 million each year**, will provide increased, independent and sustainable funding for the research, prevention and treatment of gambling-related harms across Great Britain (since the 2005 Gambling Act extends to England, Scotland and Wales).
- In February 2025, OHID was appointed as the lead commissioning body for prevention in England

3 Strands of Levy Funding

20% for research

(Commissioner :UKRI and Gambling Commission)



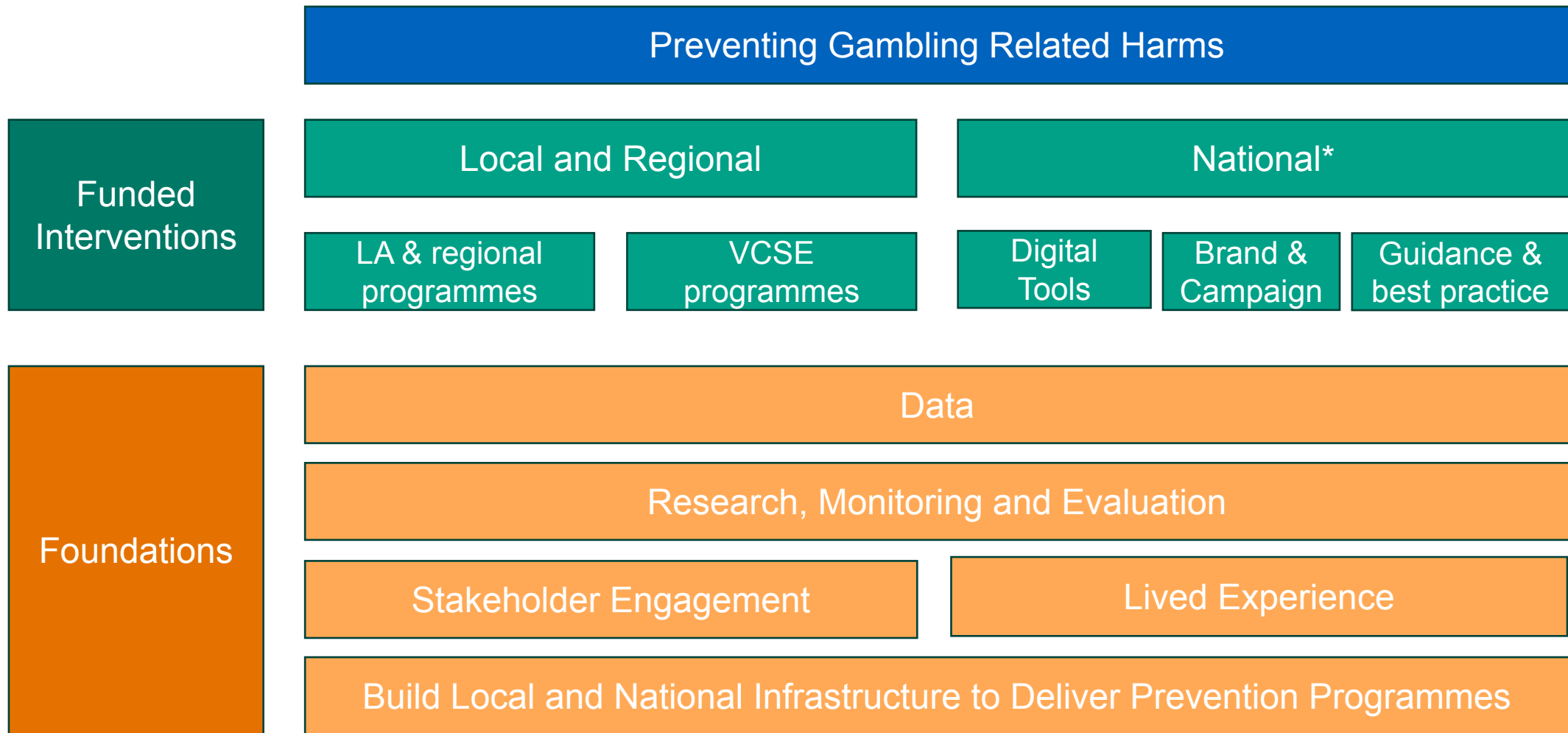
30% for prevention

(Commissioner: OHID and Public Health Scotland and Public Health Wales)

50% for treatment

(Commissioner: NHSE and appropriate bodies in Scotland and Wales)

OHID's approach to preventing gambling related harms



*separately DHSC will continue to develop and influence policy at a national level

What is the New Fund?

Our funding priority is to ensure an **efficient, flexible and equitable** method of allocating monies to VCSEs. We need to provide **stability** for the system and **mobilise** behind a new public health and funding approach.

Our offer to the sector

Multi-year fund (26/28 - £30m delivered by DHSC/OHID; administered through GGMS) open to all third sector organisations intending to carry out gambling harm prevention activities.

Includes a **core strand, resilience option to build capacity, innovation strand and a priority projects option** to allow for another opportunity to spend unallocated finances within year.

Through this grant we will aim to ensure:

- Stable, transparent and fair multi-year access to funds.
- Proportionate monitoring requirements.
- Application and delivery support.

Why is the government launching this fund now...?

- We have needed to decide **how to best fund VCSEs from 1 April 2026**, once Gamble Aware closes. There is **significant anxiety from the VCSE sector** on the future of their funding.
- This **change provides the Department with the opportunity** to map activity and begin to capture data for the first time, towards building an evidence base for future prevention commissioning and sustainability.

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What is the New Fund?

Objectives of the fund

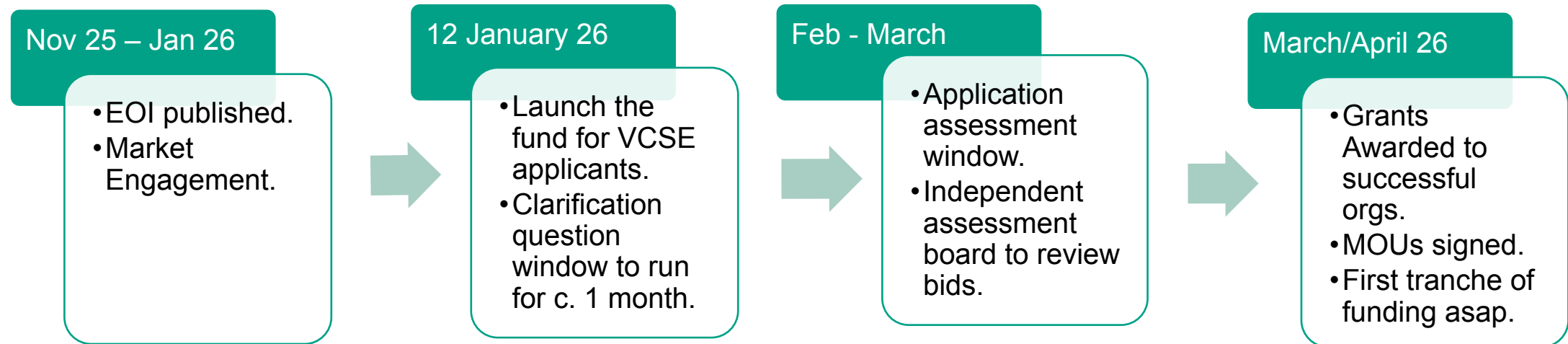
Primary objective

Reduce and prevent gambling related harm by continuing to support and strengthen independent, community-led prevention through the levy structure.

Investment objectives

1. Maintain and support sector to deliver on prevention outcomes
2. Build sector capacity and sustainability free of industry influence
3. Develop evidence & innovation
4. Demonstrate strategic responsiveness

Indicative Timelines



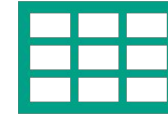
Who can apply?

Organisations will need to demonstrate the following:

- That they fall into the defined category of a third sector organisation.
- That they are intending to carry out a prevention activity under a range of prevention categories;
- That they can provide a theory of change to demonstrate how these services to help us build, evidence – based prevention services at scale in future.
- Applicants will need to demonstrate their commitment to achieving an industry free funding status for the 4 years leading up until 2030 and will be required to sign a Declaration of Interest agreement which we will provide.
- That they will share best practice and build partnerships across the sector.
- How they will build ‘lived experience’ into their plans.



Digital solution for data collection



Why?

- Enable a consistent approach to data collection
- Support a test-and-learn approach
- Streamline assurance mechanisms

Where?

- Across all VCSEs and UTLAs

How?

- Commissioning an external provider
- 'Discovery phase', with a representative sample of VCSEs and UTLAs

When?

- Rollout as soon as possible after April 2026 (to support regular monitoring and reporting))

How the prevention/treatment split will work

Prevention (In scope)

- Training
- Awareness & education
- Brief advice and early support
- Community outreach & social action
- Support for affected others
- Blocking tools (help to set up)
- Capacity building & resilience
- Other

Out of Scope (examples)

- Clinical therapy or counselling
- Structured treatment programmes
- Group or 1:1 therapy sessions
- Crisis mental health support
- Debt/legal casework
- Post-treatment recovery programmes
- Digital therapeutic tools

Update from our commissioning partners at NHSE:

- NHSE will seek an interim approach to commissioning and funding arrangements for VCSE organisations providing **treatment and support services** 2026/27 to ensure system stability.
- NHSE are happy to confirm they do intend to run a **grant funding scheme**, and we will be able to share further details imminently.



Current LA landscape

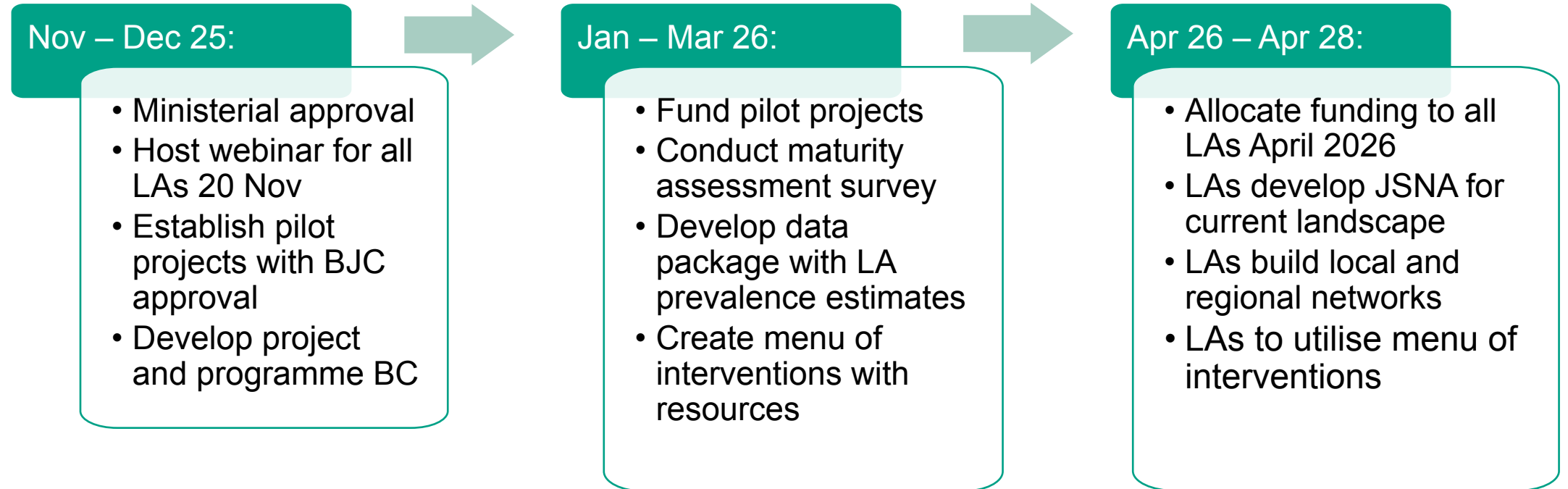
Opportunities

- LAs have **extensive PH experience and local knowledge**
- **Regulatory powers** – advertising and licensing
- Experience of bringing wide range of **stakeholders** together to ensure holistic public health approach

Challenges

- **Large variation** across the country on maturity of GRH work
- To date LAs have had **limited resource and capacity** to invest in GRH work
- Limited availability of **local GRH data**

Proposed Timelines for LAs



Ongoing: Evaluation process and Digital solution to data collection development (TBC)

New Public Health Approach – What This Means

Shift to a unified public health model.

- **Focus on reducing risk factors and strengthening protective factors.**
- **Equity-driven: targeting communities disproportionately affected.**
- **Prevention at population level alongside targeted interventions.**

Clear pathways connecting activities → outputs → outcomes → long-term impact.

- **Strengthens evidence base for effective prevention.**
- **Supports consistent monitoring across all funded organisations.**
- **Improves national understanding of ‘what works’ in gambling harm prevention.**

Standardised reporting creates national insights.

- **VCSEs supported to develop evaluation skills and data capability.**
- **Learning shared across the sector to scale effective interventions.**
- **Creates foundation for long-term commissioning under the levy.**

Standard practice in relation to industry links

It is standard practice that industries that produce products and services that are harmful to health are not involved in prevention, treatment or research activities

E.g. Tobacco companies do not fund, provide or guide smoking cessation services

It is standard practice that to be eligible for funding, individuals and organisations have not had employment or received research support or other funding from, or had any other professional relationship with industry in the last four years and that they sign a declaration of interest stating that fact

Transition Period – Why This Grant Matters Now

Recognises uncertainty following the shift away from GambleAware funding.

- Provides stability to protect essential services and retain skilled staff.
- Allows organisations time to adapt to new requirements.
- Creates a smoother pathway into future levy-funded commissioning.

Proportionate application and reporting – especially for smaller VCSEs.

- Advance payments may be available where cashflow is a barrier.
- Plain-English guidance and support webinars.
- Clear expectations but flexible enough to reflect organisational diversity.

Existing VCSE strengths and specialisms remain central.

- No expectation that organisations redesign work beyond their capacity.
- Focus is on stabilisation first, innovation second.
- Monitoring designed to support learning, not penalise organisations.

This grant helps build readiness for full levy commissioning from 2028.

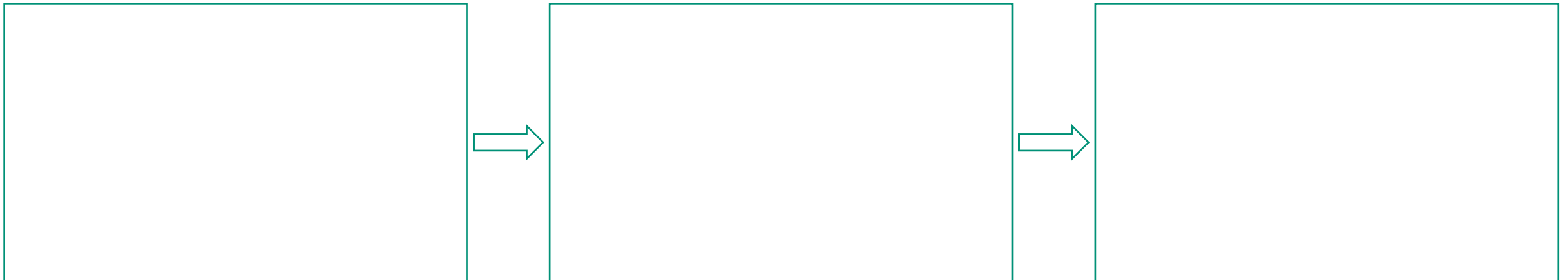
- Supports VCSE capacity-building, evaluation maturity and partnership working.
- Ensures continuity so organisations are not disadvantaged by the transition.
- Insights gathered will shape future commissioning frameworks.

A pragmatic approach to Conflict of Interests

It is important to recognise the funding arrangements for the third sector prior to the 2025 statutory gambling levy and that their situation is different to other sectors

There needs to be a smooth transition from the old voluntary system to the new statutory system, where there is independence of funding arrangements that is beyond doubt and is free from industry influence

- Our ambition remains to move towards a gambling levy system that is free of industry influence.
- From April 1st organisations who receive this grant funding cannot be in receipt of industry funding.
- The commissioners are working hard to develop a unified approach to future stipulations around conflict of interest. We will use your declarations of interest as part of this future assessment.



Declaration of interest statement from 2031

By 2031 all organisations in receipt of gambling levy funding should be able to record “no” to the following statement:

“Within the past 4 years, have you had employment or received research support or other funding from, or had any other professional relationship with:

an entity directly involved in the production, manufacture, distribution, sale or promotion of gambling products and services or representing the interests of any such entity?

- Yes / No

an organization that has received funding or other forms of support from an entity directly involved in the production, manufacture, distribution or sale of gambling products?

- Yes / No

Our expectations for the fund

What does a strong application look like?

In line with government best practice, to include:

- How well the project meets the objectives of the fund (ToC)
- Ability to Deliver
- Does the project target the population groups of concern and/or marginalised groups and/or areas of high geographical need?
- Sustainability of project/ further learning

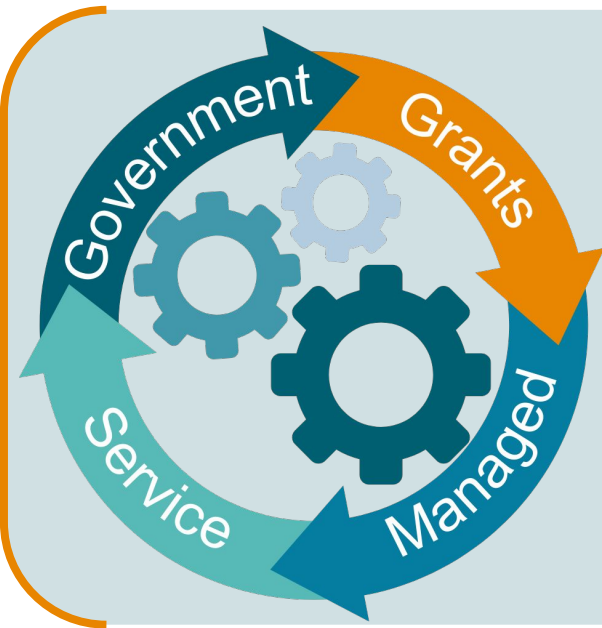


We recognise the importance of VCSEs

- **This is only possible with your engagement!**
- **VCSEs are fundamental to the success of meeting our objectives**
- **Please do apply!**



This scheme is being administered by the **Government Grants Managed Service (GGMS)**.



The GGMS is a centralised grants administration service working on behalf of central government departments, arm's length bodies and local authorities.

The GGMS provides **end-to-end grant lifecycle management**, including advertising, applications, enquiry management, due diligence, assessment, awards processing, monitoring, and reporting capabilities.

You will be able to apply via **Find a Grant and Apply for a Grant** services, on  **GOV.UK**

Register for an account at <https://find-government-grants.service.gov.uk/apply/applicant>.

Questions

