

THE UK LGBTQI INTERNATIONAL GIVING REPORT

An analysis of UK giving to LGBTQI issues internationally
by UK trusts and foundations, government, corporates
and individuals.

2025



First published in 2025 by
GiveOut
3rd Floor, Thomas Ford House
23-24 Smithfield Street
London EC1A 9LF
United Kingdom

© GiveOut 2025
All rights reserved.

This publication is copyright-protected but may be reproduced by any method without fee for educational and advocacy purposes, provided it is not used for resale.

To cite this report:
Walker, C., & L. Dibben (2025). The UK LGBTQI International Giving Report.
GiveOut, Elton John AIDS Foundation.

GiveOut is a charity registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales (Registered Charity Number 1176434).

giveout.org

CONTENTS

Foreword	2
Overview of UK Funding to LGBTQI Issues Internationally	3
UK Trust and Foundation Funding	6
UK Government Funding	14
UK Corporate Funding	20
UK Individual Funding	26
Conclusions and Recommendations	34
Methodology Notes	38
Endnotes	42
Acknowledgements	44

FOREWORD

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer and intersex (LGBTQI) people around the world continue to face discrimination, violence and criminalisation. In many countries, hard-won rights are being rolled back, civic space is closing, and organisations working to protect LGBTQI communities are operating under increasing risk.

This report examines how the UK has responded to that reality through funding. It analyses how much the UK gave collectively during the period 2021–22 to support LGBTQI communities internationally, with a focus on the Global South, and where that funding came from. As in our previous Giving Report, published in 2023, we examine contributions from four sources: trusts and foundations, Government, corporates, and individual philanthropists.

The figures in this report tell a story of funding that is small in scale but significant in impact. UK giving to LGBTQI issues internationally remains a tiny fraction of overall charitable and development spending. Yet, because the global LGBTQI movement is so chronically under-resourced, funding from the UK carries significant weight. In this context, even modest increases or reductions in UK funding can have profound effects on the stability, reach, and survival of organisations on the ground.

The 2021–22 period covered by this analysis was one of relative stability and managed transition. Covid-19 emergency funding was coming to an end, while many funders were reassessing priorities and funding models. At the same time, this period laid important groundwork for subsequent growth in UK Government investment, including the £40 million, five-year commitment to global LGBTQI rights announced in 2023. Seen in this light, 2021–22 represents a moment when the UK funding ecosystem was holding steady and positioning itself for future scale.

Since then, the international funding landscape has changed dramatically. Overseas aid budgets have come under renewed pressure, and major international funding streams — most notably USAID — have been abruptly cut. For LGBTQI organisations and the intermediaries that support them, these shocks are not abstract: they translate into immediate funding gaps, programme closures, and reduced ability to respond to escalating backlash. In this environment, the UK's role as a reliable funding partner matters more than ever.

These challenges indicate two clear priorities. First, the UK should safeguard existing commitments so that hard-won progress is not lost in the face of contracting resources. Second, the UK should fund smarter by deepening collaboration between trusts and foundations, government, corporates, intermediaries, and individual donors. Co-funding, match funding and blended approaches can help bring in new resources, share risk, and ensure funding reaches the organisations and regions facing the greatest pressure.

The challenges facing international LGBTQI movements today are severe, but they are not inevitable. They are shaped by policy decisions, funding priorities and collective choices. The evidence in this report shows that, even at relatively modest levels, UK funding can play a decisive role. We hope this report provides a clear evidence base to inform those choices, and supports renewed commitment to ensuring that international LGBTQI communities and the organisations that support them are not left to face this moment alone.

Jason Ball, Executive Director, GiveOut

Anne Aslett, Chief Executive Officer, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

KEY FINDINGS

Overview of UK Funding to LGBTQI Issues Internationally

Annual average total UK giving (2021-2022)

£12.2 MILLION

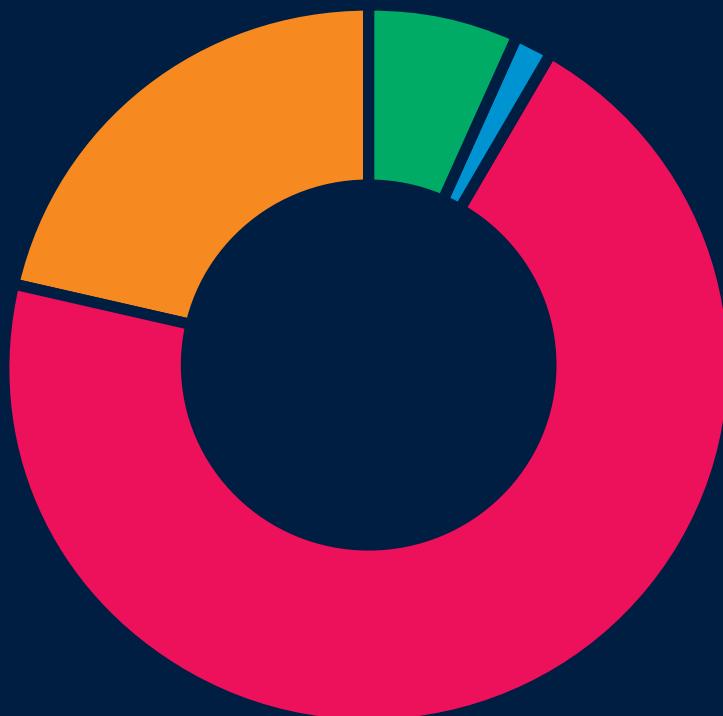
AROUND 3%

of the annual income of one single international aid charity

**1.9P IN
EVERY £100**

given to charities in the UK

UK Giving to Support LGBTQI Issues Internationally



70%
UK Foundations
£8.6m

21%
UK Government
£2.6m

7%
UK Corporates
£830k

2%
UK Individuals
£192k



KEY FINDINGS

UK giving to support LGBTQI issues internationally¹ in 2021-22 averaged an annual total of £12.2 million,² equivalent to around 1.9 pence in every £100 pounds, or 0.019%, given to charities in the UK;³ or around 3% of the annual income of one single international aid charity.⁴

This demonstrates the paucity of funding to LGBTQI causes internationally. Without vital resources, LGBTQI organisations struggle to advance equality, freedom and safety, in the context of well-funded efforts to roll back LGBTQI rights.

In a global context, however, the UK remains a significant player. The UK Government ranked sixth in terms of governments and multilateral agencies funding global LGBTQI issues, while four of the top foundation funders worldwide are based in the UK,⁵ and UK corporates account for more than half of all corporate funding for LGBTQI issues internationally.

Comparison with other research indicates that UK giving to LGBTQI issues internationally is worth around one fifth of the amount that goes to LGBTQI issues in the UK.⁶ This provides a useful point of comparison between domestic and international LGBTQI funding from UK sources, and a baseline against which future trends can be assessed.

In the period between our first Giving Report in 2019-20⁷ and the current reporting period, 2021-22, UK funding for LGBTQI issues internationally decreased by one fifth (19%).⁸ While funding decreased across all donor groups, the largest part of this reduction was due to a change in funding patterns at one major foundation. There were also fewer UK funders in this year's report, in an already small pool, underlining the fragility and precarity of the UK funding landscape in this area.

How much does the UK give to support LGBTQI issues internationally?

We have separated UK-based sources of funding for LGBTQI organisations working internationally into four categories:

- Foundation funding: donations received from UK-registered grant-making trusts or foundations.
- Government funding: donations received from the UK Government via government departments.
- Corporate funding: donations received from UK-based companies, UK corporate foundations, or companies giving through their UK office.
- Individual philanthropic funding: donations received from individuals.

We analysed existing data from the Global Philanthropy Project's *Global Resources Report* (GRR) for 2021-22, and supplemented this with additional data by surveying international intermediaries and analysing the accounts of potential donors. This allowed us to build our understanding of how much UK-based donors give to support LGBTQI work internationally, noting the time lag inherent in global funding data. In this report, "internationally" refers to all giving focused on the Global South, including international and multi-regional funding that majors in this area and incorporating cross-border giving in areas such as the Commonwealth within our figures (see Methodology).

Funding from grant-making foundations accounts for 70% of the UK's total funding for LGBTQI causes internationally, with Government funding accounting for one fifth (21%), and corporate and individual philanthropic donations combined making up less than ten percent (7% and 2% respectively). The sections that follow explore these funding sources in more detail.

Support for LGBTQI issues internationally from UK funders collectively is equivalent to just 0.02% of annual giving to UK charities. This paucity of funding, coupled with its concentration amongst a small number of funders, creates a fragile financial ecosystem for grassroots LGBTQI organisations around the world in which relatively small shifts by a few donors can have outsized impacts.

In this report, we examine the structural and practical barriers that continue to constrain funding for LGBTQI issues internationally, and outline recommendations to help address them. Taken together, these point towards changes needed to better resource movements working to protect rights, respond to harm, and sustain progress in increasingly challenging contexts.



UK TRUST AND FOUNDATION FUNDING

Annual average total UK giving (2021-2022)

£8.6 MILLION

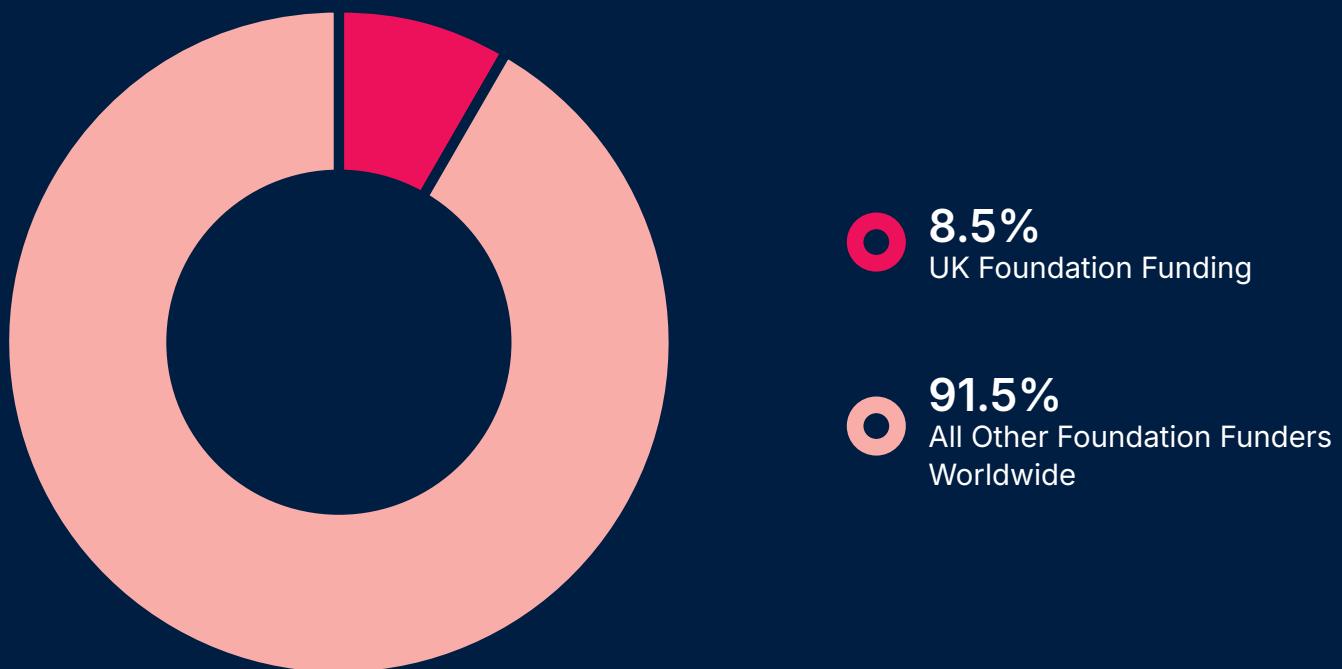
12P IN EVERY £100

of UK trust and foundation funding supports LGBTQI causes internationally

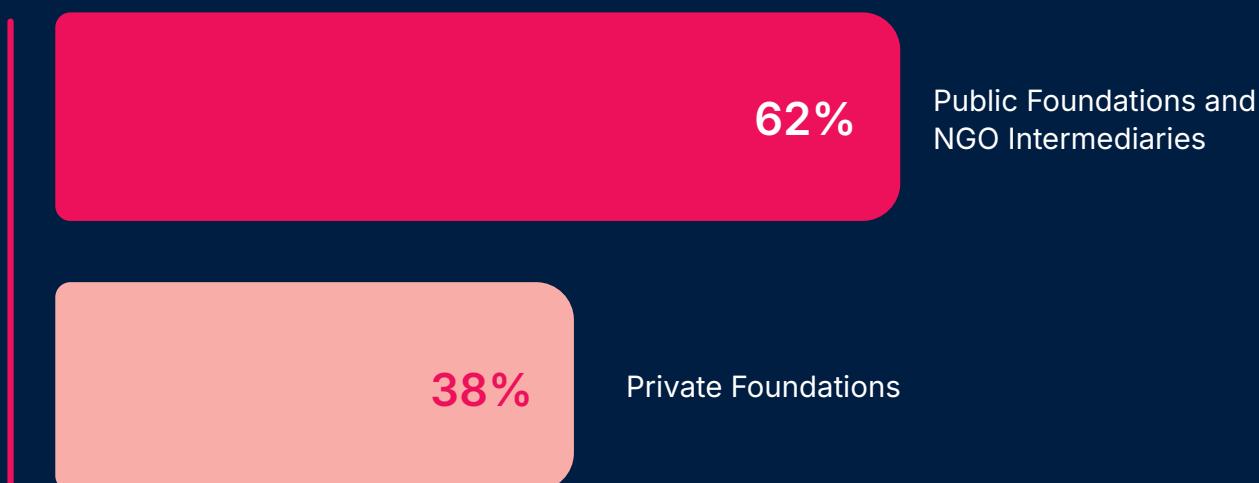
70%

of UK funding for international LGBTQI issues comes from trusts and foundations

UK Foundation Funding as a Proportion of Total Foundation Funding for LGBTQI Rights Internationally



UK Foundation Funding for LGBTQI Issues Internationally by Source



UK trusts and foundations play a significant role in funding LGBTQI organisations. Grant funding to support LGBTQI issues internationally from UK-based grant-making foundations averaged £8.6 million⁹ annually in 2021-22. This equates to 12 pence for each £100 of all UK foundation funding (or 0.12%).¹⁰

UK trust and foundation funding accounted for 70% of the UK's total funding to LGBTQI issues internationally,¹¹ and 8.5% of the global total for grant funding in this area.¹² Twelve UK-based foundations were identified as giving significantly in this area, with 10 foundations funding consistently in the first Giving Report period (2019-20) and in this one (2021-22). The small number of UK foundations supporting LGBTQI issues internationally means that the funding landscape is vulnerable to shifts in funding priorities, which could have huge repercussions for LGBTQI communities on the ground.

The vast majority of funding from UK foundations to support LGBTQI issues internationally comes via intermediaries, including: public foundations which fundraise from public sources, such as the Elton John AIDS Foundation; intermediaries which fundraise from public sources to operate grant-making programmes, such as GiveOut; and NGO intermediaries, non-governmental and/or civil society organisations operating a range of programmes. This includes the regranting of funds received from other foundations or development agencies to other, generally smaller, civil society organisations and grassroots groups.

The funding coming via all intermediaries accounts for 62% of the UK's total foundation funding in this area. UK-based private foundations (often funded by individuals or families) account for over one third (38%) of the UK's total foundation funding going to support LGBTQI issues internationally.

A small number of large UK-based foundations make an oversized contribution. For example, the Sigrid Rausing Trust, Elton John AIDS Foundation, and AmplifyChange all appear in the top 20 foundations funding LGBTQI issues globally.

In the period between our first Giving Report in 2019-20 and the current reporting period of 2021-22, UK foundation funding for LGBTQI issues internationally decreased by one quarter (24%).¹³ This is almost entirely due to decreased funding in this period at one large foundation following the conclusion of Covid-19 emergency funding and the end of a previous funding cycle, succeeded by a period of strategic transition and the development of a revised funding strategy. Without this one outlier, the general trend in foundation funders giving across both Giving Reports (2019-20 and 2021-22) was a 23% increase.

UK TRUST AND FOUNDATION INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS

Trusts and foundations are the largest donor group for funding from the UK going to support LGBTQI issues internationally, giving £8.6m, representing 70% of the total funding from the UK across all funders and 8.5% of the global total in this area. This highlights how little funding goes to LGBTQI issues relative to other causes, both as a proportion of UK foundation grant-making (0.12%), and as a global total.

Only a small number of UK foundations support LGBTQI issues internationally. These tend to be specialist organisations that have dedicated staff members to work in this field. There is very little support or evidence of grant-making from the wider foundation community, which means that the funding landscape is vulnerable to shifts in funding priorities. One foundation leaving the LGBTQI space could result in a large reduction in the UK's total funding, and have huge repercussions for international LGBTQI issues.

Social and legal change for international LGBTQI communities requires stable, predictable funding that allows organisations to plan beyond short project cycles, retain staff, invest in leadership and governance, and respond to rapidly changing political risks. During the Covid-19 period, many funders temporarily shifted to one-year "resilience" grants to help organisations survive immediate shocks. By 2021-22, grant-making had largely returned to multi-year funding, with some funders extending timelines or increasing grant amounts for existing partners rather than spreading resources more thinly by onboarding new grantees.

Intermediary funders played a central role in the picture of trust and foundation leadership. In line with findings from the previous Giving Report, the vast majority of international LGBTQI organisations supported by funders remained small, grassroots groups, often operating in hostile or legally challenging environments. These groups were rarely in a position to absorb large direct grants from UK institutions or corporates, or to navigate complex compliance and reporting requirements. This meant that intermediary organisations remained crucial in absorbing larger grants, combining them, and redistributing smaller, more flexible awards to local groups. Sometimes intermediaries also provided accompaniment and practical support that multiplied the impact of their funding. Intermediaries were also particularly important for corporate and individual donors, who

“Both long-term and locally-based funding is critical, and the leadership of LGBTQI people in their own contexts is the principal and most important way for social change of any kind to take place.”

David Sampson, Deputy Director, Baring Foundation

were typically more comfortable funding through specialist intermediaries than engaging directly with many small, hard-to-reach grantees.

At the same time, many of the barriers identified in the last Giving Report remained in place. Foundations that were not funding LGBTQI work internationally reported a lack of knowledge and confidence in funding LGBTQI groups, particularly in politically sensitive contexts. Decision-makers who did not have personal or professional connections to LGBTQI communities were less likely to see LGBTQI work as aligned with their existing priorities, and internal expertise on LGBTQI issues remained limited in many trusts and foundations. This contributed to a perception that the area sat “outside” mainstream development, health, or human rights funding. There were also ongoing concerns about how to undertake due diligence and support organisations safely in contexts where LGBTQI identities and organising were criminalised, and about the risk of unintentionally exposing grassroots organisations to harassment or retribution from authorities. These factors combined to keep grant-making concentrated in a small group of specialist foundations.

Due to the small number of UK trusts and foundations funding international LGBTQI work, those that do have the potential to take a leadership role. For example, throughout 2021-22 leading foundations in the UK worked closely in partnership with the UK Government to help shape the design and scale of the £40 million Equal, Safe and Free Fund launched in 2023.

A key aspect of this partnership was the sharing of specialist knowledge from foundations with the FCDO, which helped to build internal expertise on LGBTQI funding and onward grant-making. This, in turn, enabled

government resources to reach a wider range of grassroots organisations than would otherwise have been possible, while allowing foundations to fund in places and at scales that they could not easily reach alone. Such arrangements illustrate how, in a highly constrained environment, leadership from a small group of expert foundations can leverage larger public budgets and improve funding practice across institutions.

In the 2021-22 period funders described a global environment in which the combined effects of Covid-19, geopolitical crises such as Afghanistan and Ukraine, and broader economic pressure, pushed governments to reprioritise spending towards domestic concerns and defence. The cut in UK Official Development Assistance (ODA) from 0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI), also placed pressure on international programmes. This impact was particularly pronounced on international HIV/AIDS work, with UN AIDS reporting that the reduction of UK funding from £15m to £2.5m in 2021 negatively impacted their work for older LGBTQI people.¹⁴ These experiences offer important lessons as further reductions to UK ODA are considered. Funders strongly emphasised that no philanthropic actor could replace the loss of official development assistance, highlighting that

“Working through a multi-partner mechanism allowed us to reach groups that we wouldn’t have otherwise been able to. For example, we were able to reach small, grassroots, and unregistered groups, and to support work in more challenging contexts while mitigating risk.”

Nina Spataru, Programme Officer, Oak Foundation¹⁵

trust and foundations could not sustainably fill this gap. This reinforces the limits of philanthropy to fill these gaps and the central role of public funding in sustaining international LGBTQI work.

In this context, and in response to the shrinking and unstable landscape for official development assistance, funders and movements began to place greater emphasis on domestic and community-level resource mobilisation. Interviewees described initiatives such as community investment

funds and saving schemes in parts of Africa and Asia, as well as diaspora support and peer-to-peer fundraising platforms, as representing new opportunities for LGBTQI communities to increase internal resilience. A range of innovative or alternative financing approaches were also described, such as co-payment schemes, property and land funds, and business training initiatives. These mechanisms diversified income streams and, in some cases, created assets and spaces under community control. At the same time, trusts and foundations emphasised the need for continued grant-making and core funding for LGBTQI advocacy and community organising, arguing that community-driven financing was not always achievable or appropriate. Years of underfunding meant that many groups lacked basic fundraising infrastructure, communications capacity and financial systems, and few had dedicated staff focused on resource mobilisation. This limited their ability to engage with local corporates, domestic

“Advocating for Government funding became more difficult because of the ODA cut to 0.5% and the impact that had on aid programming within the FCDO. However the political consensus at that stage meant that increased LGBTQI funding remained a possibility, not least because our communities receive a really small amount of money in development terms.”

David Sampson, Deputy Director, Baring Foundation

philanthropists or international donors, even when opportunities arose. It also meant that the idea of diversifying income often remained aspirational rather than practical for smaller organisations. Without parallel investment in organisational infrastructure, leadership and safety, the scope to take advantage of “innovative” financing models was constrained. As such, trusts and foundations framed alternative financing as a complement to, rather than substitute for, sustained grant-making for human rights, advocacy and protection.

Recommendations

There is a clear need to fund in partnership. Existing specialist funders are well placed to co-design and co-fund programmes with governments, multilaterals, other foundations and, where appropriate, corporates. These collaborations do more than simply increase the overall volume of funding. They create structured entry points for new funders, reduce perceived risk, and enable practical sharing of tools, evidence and learning on how to support LGBTQI organisations safely and effectively, including in hostile environments.

Intermediaries need to be recognised and supported as essential facilitators in the ecosystem. Sustained, flexible funding for intermediary organisations allows them to maintain and strengthen the core functions on which the wider system depends: absorbing larger grants, redistributing them to small grassroots groups, providing accompaniment and security advice, and acting as a bridge for institutional, corporate and individual donors who cannot reach these groups directly. Investing in intermediaries in under-served regions, and in newer funds where infrastructure is still emerging, is particularly important.

Funding international LGBTQI issues needs to be mainstreamed into non-specialist trusts and foundations. In particular, funders whose core work lies in areas such as international development, health, and human rights should consider integrating an LGBTQI lens into their existing grant programmes due to the existing thematic overlap with international LGBTQI rights. Funders could also explore partnering with specialist LGBTQI trusts, foundations, and intermediaries to pilot grants in this area and build their internal knowledge and confidence over time. Even modest, well-targeted grants from a small number of non-specialist funders would help to diversify the funding landscape.

To build broader institutional support, trusts and foundations should continue to strengthen and diversify the case for support for international LGBTQI funding. Funders have made strong moral and human rights cases for supporting international LGBTQI causes, but there is a need to consider additional arguments around national security, public health, and economic inclusion. In appealing to government partners, trusts and foundations should also consider the increasing proportion of young people identifying as LGBTQI or allies, and to use this data to demonstrate that sustained global LGBTQI support aligns with the expectations of a rising generation of voters and consumers. By leveraging their research capacity and convening power, trusts and foundations can help institutional funders adopt these broader arguments and embed LGBTQI equality as a cross-cutting priority.

Together, these shifts would move the system away from dependence on a small cluster of specialist funders and towards a more diverse, resilient and sustainable funding base for LGBTQI movements worldwide.

UK GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Annual average total UK giving (2021-2022)

£2.6 MILLION

2P IN EVERY £100

of UK Government Overseas Development Assistance (ODA) supports LGBTQI causes internationally

21%

of UK funding for international LGBTQI issues comes from the UK Government

UK Government Funding as a Proportion of Total Government Funding for LGBTQI Rights Internationally



4%
UK Government Funding

96%
All Other Government Funders Worldwide



"We've seen overseas foreign aid reductions in a lot of governments. So that essentially means that the future looks a little bit bleaker in terms of HIV response. I think that is really catastrophic for LGBTQI communities. We've already seen a lot of civil society organisations closing down or reducing staff or reducing size of operations."

Columbus Ndeloa, Portfolio Lead, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

UK Government funding accounts for just over one fifth of the UK's collective funding to LGBTQI issues internationally (21%), representing 4% of donor government LGBTQI funding globally in 2021-2022 according to the *Global Resources Report* (GRR).

The GRR records funding for LGBTQI issues internationally from the UK Government as an annual average of £2.6m in 2021-22. This equates to 2 pence in every £100 of international development funding (net Official Development Assistance (ODA)), or 0.02%. This was around half the global average (0.04%), highlighting that despite the UK's relative global prominence as a donor, only a very small share of UK development was directed to LGBTQI issues during this period.

It should be noted that: a significant proportion of international Government funding goes to Commonwealth countries, spanning multiple regions; the UK Government's funding for HIV/AIDS is not included in these figures, as the proportion of HIV/AIDS funding specifically focussed on LGBTQI communities is not recorded; and that there is a significant issue in conflating HIV/AIDS and LGBTQI funding across all donor groups with funding for LGBTQI organisations. In addition, these figures may not capture UK Government contributions routed through intersectional funds, and women's rights or human rights vehicles (for example, the Equality Fund), where LGBTQI allocations can vary year to year and are not always reported in a way that enables consistent attribution.

In the period between our first Giving Report in 2019-20 and the current reporting period of 2021-22, UK Government funding for LGBTQI issues internationally decreased by 13%.¹⁶ This is largely due to reductions in Overseas Development Aid (ODA) as a whole, and strategic and programmatic changes.

UK GOVERNMENT INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS

In our last Giving Report on the 2019-20 period, we highlighted the gap between the UK Government's diplomatic commitment to supporting LGBTQI rights internationally and the relatively limited development funding that followed. This trend persisted into 2021-22 as UK ODA was cut from 0.7% to 0.5% of Gross National Income (GNI), leading to a reduction in UK Government funding for LGBTQI issues internationally. However, this reduction did not represent a straightforward continuation of Government strategy from the previous period.

The years 2021-2022 can be seen as a period of pause and transition in UK Government funding for LGBTQI issues internationally, shaped by both the reduction in ODA and preparations for a significant scale-up in funding from 2023. This preceded the launch in 2023 of a new 5-year programme worth £40 million to advance global LGBTQI rights through the Equal, Safe, and Free Fund and GiveOut's LGBTQI Solidarity Fund, the announcement of a Special Envoy for LGBT+ Rights, and a substantial increase in dedicated staffing within the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO). The design and delivery of this programme was informed by close collaboration with specialist trusts, foundations and intermediaries, helping to strengthen funding practice and extend reach to grassroots organisations in challenging contexts. As preparations for the launch of this fund were being made throughout 2021-22, some funding for LGBTQI issues in these years was delayed due to this and the ODA reduction. This may account for some of the 13% decrease in UK Government funding seen in this period.

"LGBTQI people are among the most systematically persecuted individuals globally. This vulnerability makes it significantly harder for some LGBTQI communities to access innovative investment models, leaving them heavily reliant on government and philanthropic funding."

Nina Spataru, Programme Officer, Oak Foundation

“Using flexible private foundation money alongside more complex Government funding means we can learn together. The team within the FCDO has grown both in size and experience and we’re now at a high point of that technical expertise.”

David Sampson, Deputy Director, Baring Foundation

The UK Government also continued its commitment to international LGBTQI issues through working with international partners to protect and promote the human rights of LGBTQI people. In response to the Taliban retaking control of Afghanistan in August 2021, the UK Government partnered with Rainbow Railroad and Stonewall to evacuate over 100 LGBTQI Afghans and their family members to Britain. At the same time the Government maintained its commitment to the Equal Rights Coalition, which the UK co-chaired alongside Argentina between 2019-22, and planned to host its first ever global conference on LGBTQI issues in 2022. The legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic continued to shape Government engagement with international LGBTQI activists and organisations, with greater participation from activists from the Global South enabled by widespread adoption of online convening. In this sense, UK Government support for international LGBTQI rights encompassed both “in kind” and financial support in this period, with a blend of development and diplomatic initiatives acting to multiply the impact of funding.

The domestic political context for LGBTQI rights in the UK also became more volatile during this period. The UK Government’s announcement that it planned to exclude trans people from proposed legislation to ban conversion therapy, prompted significant concern among LGBTQI organisations and allies, leading to widespread withdrawal of support for the planned Safe To Be Me conference in 2022. As a result, the conference was cancelled, which had a significant impact on the UK’s international convening role: planned announcements by partner governments were lost or delayed, and international engagement became dominated by discussion of the UK’s domestic policy situation, limiting the space for substantive progress on the conference’s intended international objectives.

In contrast to the findings of the first Giving Report looking at 2019-20, which highlighted stalled momentum and delays in UK Government funding for international LGBTQI issues, a more strategic portfolio was emerging by 2021-22. Although this period represented a decrease in UK Government funding overall, the Government maintained its commitment

to international LGBTQI rights through diplomatic and technical support. However, this was challenged by a growing anti-rights movement internationally and domestically. These developments heighten the need for sustained, long-term support for LGBTQI rights internationally to enable LGBTQI movements to develop both trust and resilience in the face of global turbulence and funding cuts.

"Diplomacy can't really happen effectively without civil society. We need civil society on the ground in places that diplomats simply can't operate."

Richard Pyle, Director of Policy & Advocacy,
the Elton John AIDS Foundation

Recommendations

In 2025, further cuts to ODA have been announced alongside a growing anti-rights movement which threatens LGBTQI rights internationally. In this context, it is more important than ever for the UK Government to maintain its strong commitment to international LGBTQI rights through funding, diplomatic, and technical support.

We continue to recommend that the Government maintain its commitment to funding international LGBTQI issues, restore ODA to 0.7%, and abandon plans to reduce this to 0.3% by 2027. We have already seen the impact of the ODA reduction on gender equality and women's rights work around the world, with the UK's cross-party International Development Committee describing this as "devastating".¹⁷ In contrast, the Government's commitment to LGBTQI rights through the Equal, Safe, and Free Fund ensured that international LGBTQI movements did not face the same disastrous impacts. This illustrates the extent to which UK Government funding decisions can have a direct and substantial impact on the health and stability of international human rights movements, indicating the importance of maintaining Government funding to ensure that this progress is not lost.

The Government should continue to multiply its impact through funding in partnership with trusts and foundations, philanthropists, the private sector, and individuals. For example, it is estimated that in the financial year 2024-25 the FCDO's core LGBTQI rights budget of around £9.6 million has translated into total resourcing closer to £14 million once pro bono contributions and match funding from philanthropic partners are included. Government funding can therefore unlock additional resources,

and evidence points to the growing importance of blended and leveraged funding models in a challenging economic climate. This is consistent with our 2023 recommendation that the UK Government should use its position to attract and coordinate other funders.

LGBTQI people and identities should be considered and integrated across all FCDO and ODA programmes to ensure sustainable and scalable support for international LGBTQI issues. This should be accompanied by the creation of a marker in FCDO systems to allow LGBTQI work to be identified and quantified across programmes, supported by a clear expectation that LGBTQI inclusion will be considered wherever relevant across the wider ODA portfolio. Although there is a need to maintain a distinct LGBTQI portfolio so as not to lose the expertise already developed within the FCDO, a wider adoption of an LGBTQI lens may support a more holistic approach to supporting international LGBTQI movements.

The UK Government should maintain its role as a global leader and visible champion on LGBTQI human rights through its funding, diplomatic, and convening support. This leadership should be public and consistent, signalling to partners, peers, and hostile actors alike that LGBTQI rights remain a core UK priority. Protecting and promoting LGBTQI rights is essential to the UK's national security, economic growth, and global health priorities. In highly hostile environments, direct funding remains irreplaceable for supporting human rights defenders, strategic litigation, and core movement infrastructure. Support to locally-led and Global South-led organisations, including through trusted intermediaries, should be given greater priority and longer-term security.

Finally, we again call on all political parties in the UK to commit to a shared, long-term approach to international LGBTQI rights, recognising these as fundamental human rights and essential to ensuring people can live openly and safely without fear of violence, persecution or discrimination. In more polarised and volatile global and domestic environments, the case for stable, cross-party backing is stronger than ever. Continued scrutiny, open engagement with civil society, and a willingness to match diplomatic leadership with adequate and predictable funding will be essential if the UK is to play the consistent, constructive role that LGBTQI communities around the world urgently need.

“The LGBTQI community has proven that they can do huge amounts with limited amounts of funding. However, the funding really, really does help in terms of the pace of change.”

Nina Spataru, Programme Officer, Oak Foundation

UK CORPORATE FUNDING

Annual average total UK giving (2021-2022)

£830,000

**4.5P IN
EVERY £100**

of UK corporate funding
supports LGBTQI causes
internationally

7%

of UK funding for international
LGBTQI issues comes from
UK corporates

UK Corporate Funding as a Proportion of Total Corporate Funding for LGBTQI Rights Internationally



55%
UK Corporate Funding

45%
All Other Corporate
Funders Worldwide



"One of the models we have been seeing is partnering. That is not only growing income or financial capacity and resources to the community, but also providing in-kind support to grassroots organisations in the Global South to support knowledge transfer and capacity building."

Columbus Ndeloa, Portfolio Lead, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

Corporate funding to support LGBTQI issues internationally, including corporate foundations and grant-making programmes at for-profit organisations, totalled £830,000 in 2021-22.¹⁸

This equates to 4.5 pence in every £100 of UK corporate charitable giving (or 0.045%).¹⁹ Corporate funding accounted for 7% of the UK's total funding to LGBTQI issues internationally,²⁰ but constituted an outsized 55% of all corporate funding in this area worldwide.²¹ This reflects the fact that only a very small number of specialist corporate funders give in this area globally.

A very small number of UK-based corporate funders were identified as giving significantly in this area. The large proportion of global contributions by UK-based corporates is primarily due to the contribution of ViiV Healthcare, a global specialist in HIV care.

As a consequence, this research was unable to track down many reliable additional figures for UK corporate giving to support LGBTQI issues internationally. However, extensive research with intermediary organisations and others identified an additional £186,000.²²

In the period between our first Giving Report of 2019-20 and the current reporting period of 2021-22, UK corporate funding for LGBTQI issues internationally decreased by over one quarter (28%).²³ This is due both to reductions at one major corporate funder and to more corporates giving via intermediaries (see p. 26).

UK CORPORATE INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS

Despite their potential influence, corporate funding for international LGBTQI issues remains limited, reflecting a reluctance to engage at scale in areas perceived as politically or socially sensitive. In line with patterns identified in our last Giving Report, corporate giving to international LGBTQI causes in 2021-22 continued to be shaped by structural, strategic, and reputational considerations unique to the corporate environment. Overall levels of international giving by UK corporates remained very limited in comparison to other philanthropic actors. However, estimating the true scale of UK corporate giving remains challenging due to the fact that many corporates give anonymously or do not report their giving publicly.

Corporate giving in 2021-22 was rarely driven by standalone LGBTQI strategies, indicating a continuation from our last Giving Report. Instead, funding decisions were closely tied to existing operational geographies, areas of business focus, and established partnerships. For globally oriented sectors such as finance, health, and law, international LGBTQI funding was often distributed through broader human rights, inclusion, or community investment portfolios. There is also some indication that corporates with international footprints or close thematic ties to LGBTQI work, such as through HIV work, may be more likely to fund LGBTQI causes

“Partnering and ensuring that skills transfer takes place could be a huge and significant way to increase the resources, and then increase sustainability to ensure that organisations stay afloat rather than just giving them money to do so.”

Columbus Ndeloa, Portfolio Lead, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

internationally. This could be seen as both a practical and values-led response to risks facing LGBTQI employees, as well as a way to forward strategies tied to corporates' organisational goals.

At the same time, corporates continued to display a strong preference for funding through intermediaries. This was primarily due to concerns around risk, limited internal expertise, and the complexity of identifying and channeling funding to grassroots LGBTQI organisations internationally. Intermediaries were widely viewed as essential to mitigating regulatory, reputational, and safeguarding risks, particularly for companies operating in or providing grants to volatile or legally sensitive contexts. Working with intermediaries also provided access to the grant-making infrastructure that many corporates lacked internally, and reduced capacity challenges around due diligence, participatory grant-making models, reporting, and building relationships with grassroots movements. As a result, intermediary organisations played a large role in enabling corporate funds to reach LGBTQI groups in the Global South and other under-resourced regions.

Increasingly, companies also valued intermediaries for their ability to facilitate collaborative and pooled funding, with match funding emerging as a valuable entry point for corporates new to international LGBTQI giving. This enabled companies to maximise the impact of their giving while distributing reputational and operational risk. Match funding was also seen as a practical mechanism for companies seeking to demonstrate alignment with employee values, support internal LGBTQI networks, or build partnerships without requiring large upfront strategic commitments.

In-kind support also continued to be a way for corporates to either enter the giving space or scale their impact. Examples included partnering with intermediaries to provide in-kind support such as legal expertise, communications support, employability training, and capacity-building to grassroots LGBTQI organisations and movements. These contributions were valued not only for extending impact beyond grant funding, but also for enabling companies to deploy their strategic assets in ways that supported LGBTQI movements facing increasingly complex challenges.

Despite these developments, structural limits continued to shape the scale of corporate giving overall. Many companies remained hesitant to invest in international LGBTQI work beyond domestic commitments, often

“Ending the HIV epidemic means tackling the inequalities that drive it. As the only global healthcare company 100% dedicated to this mission, supporting LGBTQI rights and community-led responses is a core part of how we work.”

Audrey Abernathy, Communications and Government Affairs, ViiV Healthcare

perceiving this as outside their core remit unless clearly tied to workforce safety, market presence, or brand alignment. Moreover, the crisis-driven nature of international LGBTQI needs could prompt some corporate donors to make one-off donations to emergency appeals that did not translate to sustained giving. Corporates also had to balance reputational risks to both their own organisation and grassroots LGBTQI movements in sensitive contexts, where corporate support could be framed as an attempt to impose LGBTQI rights in contexts where these were not welcomed. This may explain why corporates are rarely open about their giving to LGBTQI causes, limiting our ability to estimate the scale of this unknown giving.

Many corporates produce specialised ranges of Pride merchandise, which provide an important and growing source of support in the form of visibility and funding for LGBTQI charities. Some corporates, however, appear to fly the flag but not walk the walk, drawing accusations of pink- or rainbow-washing, the promotion of a corporate's LGBTQI inclusivity to downplay or soften aspects of its operations which are considered negative by the public. There is very poor transparency around corporate giving generally, and even less around LGBTQI funding. Increasing the transparency of reporting among corporates could help reassure LGBTQI consumers that organisations are truly committed to LGBTQI rights through showcasing their giving. This could also play an important role in inspiring other corporates to join them in funding international LGBTQI rights.

Recommendations

Fund through intermediaries to simplify and strengthen international giving. Intermediaries remain essential for enabling corporates to fund effectively and safely in complex international environments. Companies should partner with intermediaries to access trusted expertise and regional knowledge; connections to grassroots organisations; due diligence, compliance and risk management; participatory grant-making models; and impact reporting and learning frameworks. Strengthening these intermediary structures will allow corporates to engage more confidently, reduce administrative burdens, and ensure that their contributions reach the communities and movements most impacted by global anti-LGBTQI hostilities.

Scale impact through match funding, in-kind support, and funding in partnership. Match funding offers a low-barrier, high-impact entry point for companies seeking to explore LGBTQI funding while sharing risk and building collaborative credibility. Alongside financial contributions, in-kind support can also significantly strengthen the long-term resilience of LGBTQI organisations and movements while creating value for employees through volunteering. Organisations looking to mitigate risk may also consider funding in partnership with other corporates, government, or trust and foundation partners to maximise impact.

Integrate international LGBTQI giving across broader business operations. As dedicated LGBTQI giving strategies remain uncommon and even impossible in some political contexts, corporates should explore how international LGBTQI work may fit within their existing funding programmes and DEI commitments. As well as this, corporates should assess how global LGBTQI rights intersect with their work, such as across global operations, supply chains, workforce safety, and cybersecurity. This approach can reveal new pathways for strategic and values-led engagement for organisations who may not yet recognise their connection to LGBTQI rights, and help make the internal case for entry into this funding space.

“I think there’s a window of opportunity in targeting sectors that have traditionally not been giving the money to HIV response and LGBTQI communities, such as the corporate sector.”

Columbus Ndeloa, Portfolio Lead, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

UK INDIVIDUAL FUNDING

Annual average total UK giving (2021-2022)

£192,000

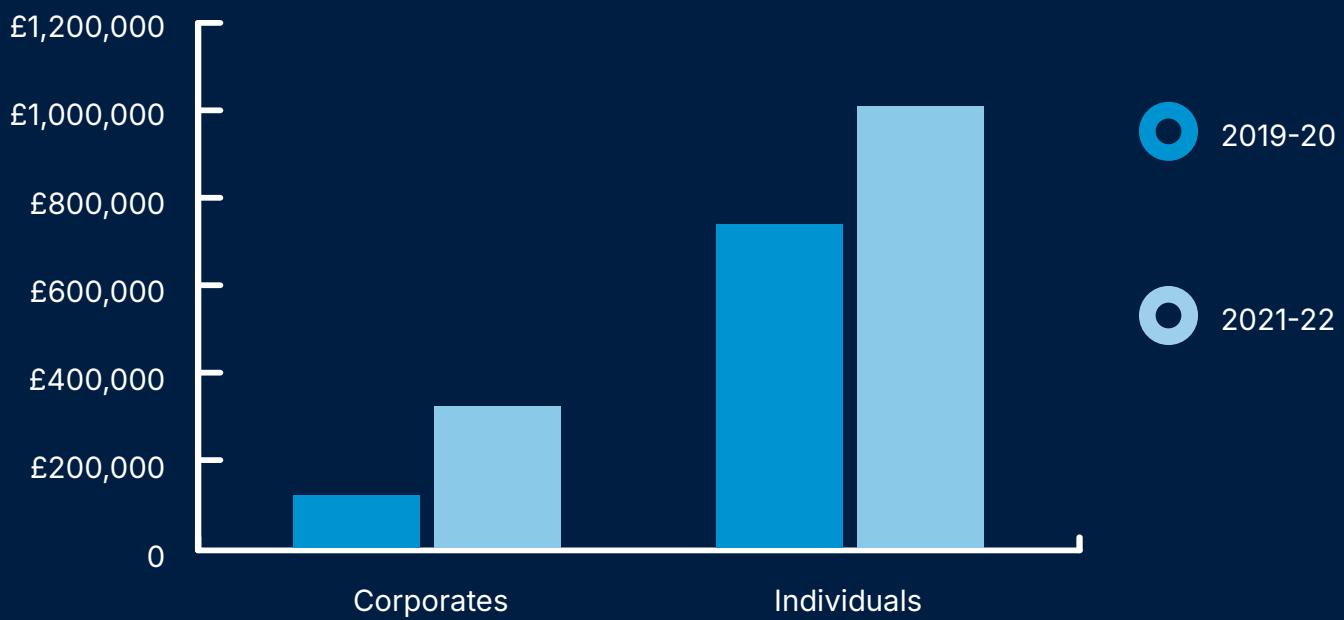
**1.6P IN
EVERY £1000**

of UK individual giving
supports LGBTQI causes
internationally

2%

of UK funding for LGBTQI
issues internationally comes
from individual giving

Increase in Corporate and Individual Funding through UK-Based Intermediary GiveOut 2019-20 - 2021-22





"If you get together, lean on each other, and spur each other on to share knowledge and give more in times of crisis it can be really helpful."

Paolo Fresia, Philanthropist

Individual donors and philanthropists are at the heart of giving to LGBTQI issues and communities. They give through private and public foundations, through family businesses and family foundations, via donor-advised funds, and by buying Pride-related or LGBTQI-focused merchandise. While much of this is therefore captured in other sections of the report, this research also set out to look at more direct individual philanthropy flowing from UK individuals through international NGO and foundation intermediaries and directly to LGBTQI organisations globally.

While this is likely an under-estimate, extensive research with intermediary organisations and others working in this space has identified £192,000²⁴ donated by UK-based individuals to LGBTQI communities internationally. This equates to around 1.6p in every £1000, or 0.0016% given to charities in the UK by individual donors,²⁵ and accounted for 2% of total UK giving to LGBTQI issues internationally in 2019-20.

Previous research has suggested that domestic-focussed LGBTQI voluntary and community sector organisations rely more heavily on individual donations than international ones.²⁶ This reinforces the importance of making international LGBTQI giving clearer and easier for individual donors to access.

In the period between our first Giving Report in 2019-20 and the current reporting period of 2021-22, funding from UK individuals has decreased by two-thirds (68%). This is very likely to be due to more individual donors giving via intermediaries.

To illustrate this, the chart below shows the flow of funding from corporate donors and individuals between 2019-20 and 2021-22 through GiveOut, the UK-based charity intermediary focussed exclusively on LGBTQI issues internationally. Giving through GiveOut from individuals increased by 36% while funding from corporates has increased by 169%.

The potential for greater giving is huge, however. New estimates put giving to charity in the UK by high net worth (HNW) and ultra high net worth (UHNW) individuals at £11.3 billion annually,²⁷ yet LGBTQI issues internationally receive a minute fraction of this.

UK INDIVIDUALS INSIGHT AND ANALYSIS

As highlighted above and in our previous Giving Report, individual giving remains difficult to accurately quantify due to the privacy of many philanthropists and a preference for individuals to give via private foundations, family businesses, or donor-advised funds. In addition, more direct UK individual giving to international LGBTQI causes typically flows through intermediary organisations, meaning that individual giving in this area is often obscured within intermediaries' (trusts and foundations') giving figures. However, the role of individual donors remains essential to ensuring that international LGBTQI movements are sustainably resourced.

In the 2021-22 period, individuals continued to express a preference for giving through intermediaries. Some individual philanthropists chose not to establish their own foundations or make funding decisions in isolation. Instead, they deliberately routed their giving through intermediary organisations, preferring models in which decisions were taken by people with lived experience of the issues or by those with deep expertise. Alongside this, there was growing interest in participatory approaches, where communities and activists play a leading role in deciding how funds are allocated. Although recognised as complex and sometimes imperfect, these models were valued as a practical way to shift power away from wealth-holders and reduce the risk of replicating the same hierarchies philanthropy seeks to challenge.

"I feel so privileged for having won the birth lottery and having largely lived in counties with a good track record on LGBTQI rights. That's why I've always been particularly attracted to putting my pounds towards work in countries where there's more repression."

Paolo Fresia, Philanthropist

"I don't feel like a lot has changed sadly, or if anything things have changed for the worse in terms of the urgency with which we have to act. The world feels sometimes it's going backwards rather than forwards."

Paolo Fresia, Philanthropist

Other donors chose to establish donor-advised funds under their own names to be more visible role models for LGBTQI giving. Whether giving anonymously or in their own name, individuals felt that being able to rely on intermediary expertise and grant making structures was important due to the complexity of locating and funding international LGBTQI organisations. Donors also expressed a desire to connect with others supporting the same cause, and increasingly joined funding circles and peer networks to share intelligence, mobilise rapid responses, and pool resources. These spaces frequently generated additional non-financial contributions, including public advocacy, professional expertise, and access to networks, extending the concept of resourcing beyond monetary value alone.

However, as highlighted in our previous Giving Report, individual giving to international LGBTQI movements overall remained significantly limited among UK-based HNW and UHNW individuals. In this period, the UK's LGBTQI pay gap remained unchanged at around 16%, meaning that relatively few LGBTQI people in the UK accumulated the levels of wealth typically associated with major philanthropy. LGBTQI women also remained underrepresented among major philanthropic donors, leading GiveOut to launch the first iteration of its Women's Fund to create a space for female donors to connect around international LGBTQI giving. This limited visibility continued to shape barriers to individual giving, with limited role-modelling hindering the emergence of a cohesive LGBTQI philanthropic network independent of intermediary organisations. As well as this, non-specialist trusts, foundations, and philanthropic advisors cited a lack of knowledge and confidence in supporting giving to international LGBTQI causes. Increasing the visibility of individual giving to LGBTQI causes, and intermediary organisations who can facilitate this, therefore remains essential to empowering more individual donors to enter the space.

Equally concerning was the apparent absence of philanthropic support from allies at any meaningful scale, leaving an already small donor pool even more constrained. Our interviews indicate that individual giving was largely driven by personal LGBTQI identity, alongside a desire to support

LGBTQI communities in more hostile or restrictive environments. LGBTQI philanthropists expressed feeling a responsibility to support LGBTQI people in countries where repression, criminalisation and violence are key issues due to having benefitted from legal protections and social progress in the UK. This sense of responsibility may influence LGBTQI donors to give to contexts and causes where the contrast with their own experience feels most pronounced, such as supporting movements for decriminalisation and marriage equality. However, this motivation and sense of responsibility may also reinforce the structural limits identified previously. If LGBTQI identity remains the primary driver of engagement, the pool of potential donors is restricted by the demographics of wealth, structural inequities such as the LGBTQI pay gap, and by the relatively low visibility of LGBTQI philanthropists in the UK. Furthermore, philanthropists who have no connection to LGBTQI communities may be less likely to engage without deliberate strategies to build understanding, relationships, and compelling routes for allyship.

Global developments in this period further complicated this picture as

"Giving smaller amounts all together as part of a funding circle can make bigger amounts, and then a real difference. So working as a group is always much, much better than doing it in isolation. Otherwise, the challenges and needs can feel insurmountable."

Paolo Fresia, Philanthropist

competing "crisis" demands on individual donors continued to increase. While there was a wave of emergency giving during the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, this was not followed by a straightforward return to normal in 2021-22. A sequence of new crises unfolded over this period including the war in Ukraine, the Taliban's takeover of Afghanistan, escalating global anti-rights movements, and renewed conflict and displacement in other regions. Some donors described how it became necessary to provide continued emergency support to ensure the survival of LGBTQI organisations, while recognising that the structural sources of vulnerability were only escalating. In more recent years, donors described how philanthropic capital has been used to offset sudden cuts to government funding, limiting their ability to invest in longer term objectives around sustainability and capacity building. In response, some individual donors consciously tried to balance "gap-filling" with systems change approaches. They

"The funding landscape for the LGBTQI+ movement is more challenged than ever. In this climate, even small contributions carry extraordinary weight. We are proud to stand with the frontline organisations defending fundamental freedoms where they are most at risk.

Joshua Graff and Jon Steinberg, The Steinberg-Graff Fund for International LGBTQI Rights

continued to provide emergency support while also funding strategic litigation, advocacy, press freedom, protest infrastructure, and grassroots organising to address the underlying political and economic conditions that kept producing emergencies. In this view, philanthropy was expected both to mitigate harm in the present and to help shift the system that kept creating those emergencies.

Overall, the landscape of individual giving for international LGBTQI rights in this period remained constrained by deep structural barriers, compounded by limited visibility, a lack of role models, and the complex and crisis-driven nature of global LGBTQI needs. However, in 2021-22 patterns also emerged around more donor collaboration, a greater willingness to shift power, and a growing interest in sustainable, flexible resourcing models. These developments point to opportunities to strengthen individual giving in ways that align with the needs and priorities of international LGBTQI movements, even as the pool of potential donors remains small.

"It may be difficult for individuals to directly fund grassroots LGBTQI organisations alone, but funding through organisations like GiveOut, EJAF, and others can make it possible to reach those groups."

Anna Macdonald, Grants Manager, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

Recommendations

Strengthen visibility and role-modelling to expand the pool of individual donors. Given the continued scarcity of visible LGBTQI philanthropists and the near absence of allyship giving, there is a clear need to increase the visibility of individual donors who support international LGBTQI movements. Creating public pathways, such as donor networks, named funds, and storytelling platforms, would help encourage both LGBTQI and allied philanthropists to enter the space. Celebrity and influencer engagement should be also encouraged in the UK in a similar fashion to the US. This should be supported by intermediary organisations with the expertise to guide new donors and demonstrate the impact of their contributions.

Invest in intermediary and participatory structures that enable individuals to give confidently and effectively. With most individual giving channelled through intermediaries due to privacy, complexity, and the challenges of identifying international LGBTQI organisations, strengthening these structures remains essential. In particular, intermediaries should be resourced to expand participatory grant-making models and facilitate donor circles to support peer networking. Doing so would allow individuals to rely on trusted expertise, reduce the risk of reinforcing power imbalances, and ensure philanthropy aligns with the lived experience and priorities of international LGBTQI movements.

“There’s always an emergency, there’s always a cut in funding.”

Paolo Fresia, Philanthropist

Support sustainable financing models and blended approaches to reduce reliance on crisis-driven giving. The ongoing sequence of global crises has pushed many individual donors into repeated “gap-filling” roles, limiting their ability to invest in long-term strategies. To counter this, donors and intermediaries should prioritise sustainable financing approaches and support for revenue-generating initiatives within grassroots LGBTQI organisations and communities. Encouraging donors to contribute time, labour and networks alongside funding can also strengthen movement resilience. These diversified approaches will be vital in enabling LGBTQI organisations in the face of an incredibly turbulent funding environment.

"Funders are keen to see innovative and community-led opportunities, and to either contribute to financing them or see that they're working in the local context. I think those would be gems because they integrate funding into a sustainable model to make this more effective in the long term."

Paolo Fresia, Philanthropist

"Trans communities are facing serious and growing threats, driven in part by a globally coordinated, well-funded 'anti-gender' movement. When billions are mobilised against equality, it's alarming how fragile and insufficient the funding for trans-led organising still is. That's why more donors, including allies, need to step up with sustained, flexible support for trans-led groups."

Antonia Belcher OBE, Antonia & Andrea Belcher Trans Fund

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

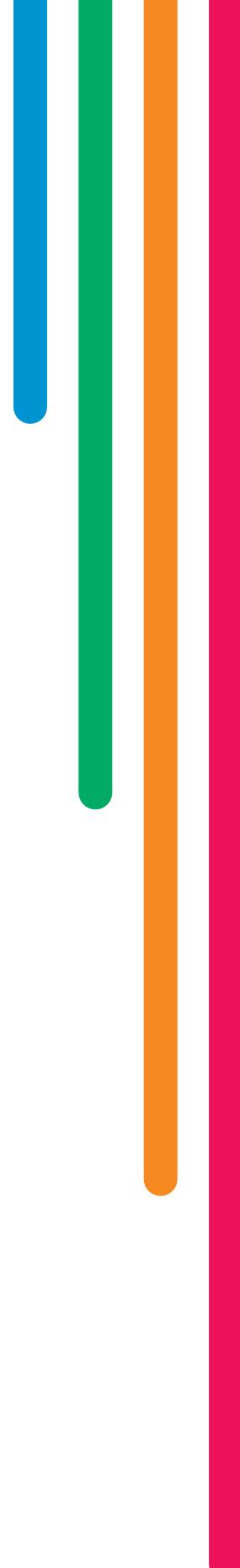
Across governments, trusts and foundations, corporates, and individual philanthropists, a shared picture emerges of a UK funding ecosystem under acute pressure yet rich with opportunities for collective impact. International LGBTQI movements are confronting an increasingly volatile landscape with escalating anti-rights campaigns, shrinking civic space, recurring emergencies, and sustained under-resourcing of grassroots organisations, particularly in the Global South. At the same time, there is a growing recognition that siloed or short-term approaches are inadequate for the scale and complexity of today's challenges.

The UK funding landscape in this area is fragile and rather precarious. A small core of committed funders consistently support LGBTQI issues internationally, while other funders may dabble but not commit. This leads to a situation where any changes in one large funder can have a dramatic influence on the ground, as was witnessed in the decreased funding in 2021-22. In the current climate, pressures on even the most committed funders are higher than ever, leading to a volatile and risky funding environment where the loss of one funder could be catastrophic.

The 2021-22 period reveals a clear convergence around the need for more diverse, sustainable, and collaborative sources of funding for international LGBTQI movements, and this need has only increased in recent years. Across funders several shared themes and recommendations emerged that can support UK funding for LGBTQI causes internationally to be scaled sustainably:

"As a foundation we aren't able to fill the gaps left by governments, and I don't think any foundation is able to do that. There is an underlying concern about spreading too thin and bringing in partnerships that we may not be able to sustain in the long term, because long-term funding is at the core of our philosophy. This means we may not be able to bring on new partners to ensure that we can provide sustainable support."

Nina Spataru, Programme Officer, Oak Foundation



Intermediary organisations play an essential role in the UK's funding ecosystem due to their ability to channel funding to international LGBTQI movements. Whether motivated by risk management, operational complexity, privacy, or limited internal expertise, funders consistently rely on intermediaries to bridge the gap between large institutional resources and small, often precariously positioned, LGBTQI organisations. Intermediaries provide the due diligence, contextual expertise, and grant-making infrastructure that enable safe and effective resourcing, particularly in hostile environments where direct funding is not possible. Strengthening these intermediaries, especially in under-served regions, is therefore essential to the resilience of the global funding ecosystem.

"Long timelines and unrestricted support are essential to affecting and embedding change."

Nina Spataru, Programme Officer, Oak Foundation

Funding collaboratively can help scale impact and make it easier for new funders to enter the space. Whether through partnerships between public, private, and philanthropic actors, or match funding, blended models have demonstrated their capacity to unlock additional resources, lower perceived risk, and provide structured entry points for new donors. In a constrained economic environment, these partnerships are essential for scaling impact and diversifying the donor base, especially given the limited number of specialist LGBTQI funders and the relatively small pool of visible individual philanthropists.

LGBTQI issues should be integrated into non-specialist funding portfolios. The integration of an LGBTQI lens into international development, funding strategies, and DEI/ESG commitments will ensure that LGBTQI equality is a cross-cutting priority. This may include internal expectation-setting, data collection, and leadership commitment as well as auditing where LGBTQI rights intersect with global operations, workforce safety, economic participation, and social impact. For the Government in particular, this will require mainstreaming LGBTQI issues across ODA systems and maintaining political leadership on international LGBTQI rights commitments. Through this approach funders can challenge perceptions that LGBTQI giving is a specialised area and support goals to unlock funding from new sources.

There is a need for long term and unrestricted funding to support movement stability. While emergencies continue to demand rapid responses, the repeated diversion of resources to “gap-filling” has restricted the ability of funders to invest in long-term strategies such as movement infrastructure, leadership development, and sustainable financing models. Across all funders, there is increasing acceptance that philanthropy must both mitigate harm in the immediate term and address the structural conditions that repeatedly generate crises. This dual approach requires longer-term commitments, greater flexibility, and tools that prioritise movement sustainability over short-term outputs. For this reason it is essential that funders maintain their existing commitments to international LGBTQI causes to provide stability in the face of a volatile global funding landscape.

For individual and corporate giving, increasing visibility and transparency remain essential. The absence of visible LGBTQI philanthropists, limited ally engagement, and a lack of clarity around institutional pathways all restrict the growth and stability of the funding ecosystem. Storytelling, donor networks, and transparent role-modelling are vital to expanding the pool of funders and cultivating a broader societal mandate for long-term LGBTQI rights work. Celebrity and influencer engagement should be encouraged in the UK in a similar fashion to the US. Corporates should also seek to increase the transparency of their giving to international LGBTQI rights, where possible. This can inspire other corporates to enter the funding space and build credibility around organisational commitments to LGBTQI rights in the UK.

“Mainstreaming of LGBTQI rights within broader development programming is an appropriate next step, but it is one which only sits effectively alongside bespoke, explicit funding for LGBTQI communities complemented by technical expertise within funders.”

David Sampson, Deputy Director, Baring Foundation

"There's an area of hope in terms of looking at new areas. We can mitigate the size of the impact of funding cuts by considering how to diversify, look at alternative funding, and think of non-traditional and new ways of actually getting out there and bringing funding to the ecosystem."

Columbus Ndeloa, Portfolio Lead, the Elton John AIDS Foundation

Taken together, these insights point towards the need for a more interconnected, strategically aligned, and sustainably resourced UK LGBTQI funding landscape. Amid rising anti-rights movements, economic pressures, and mounting global instability, the imperative for coordinated and sustainable support has never been clearer. Only by fostering partnerships rooted in trust, accountability, and long-term commitment can the UK continue to serve as a reliable ally to grassroots LGBTQI organisations working at the front lines of some of the world's most challenging contexts.

Achieving this vision will require renewed political commitment, deeper collaboration, stronger intermediaries, and a long-term approach that recognises both the urgency of immediate crises and the structural investments necessary to transform the conditions in which LGBTQI movements operate. We hope that you will join us to build this collective focus as we work towards a more connected and diverse UK funding landscape that can sustainably support global LGBTQI movements to achieve lasting change.



METHODOLOGY NOTES

Data Sources

Our primary source of data for this report is the Global Philanthropy Project (GPP)'s *Global Resources Report 2024: Government and Philanthropic Support for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex Communities (2021-2022)* (GRR). The GRR is the most comprehensive resource available on worldwide LGBTQI funding. Due to the availability of published accounts, direct reporting to GPP from around the globe and the highly detailed grant-level methodology employed, taking over a year to produce, there is necessarily a time lag, resulting in data being around two years old by the time of publication.

As in the previous edition, this report contains new analysis of the UK funding contribution from the GRR data for 2021-2022. We have added to this a small amount of additional UK funding from UK-based funders (particularly by corporate funders and individuals) to international intermediaries contained within the GRR dataset. These figures come mainly from a survey of intermediaries working in this space, but also from reviews of company, foundation and intermediary accounts.

To complement this data, we also conducted interviews with individuals from across the different funding groups. These were analysed for contextual background to the giving figures, and funder motivations and challenges in this period, and used to inform the insight and analysis sections above.

Our Methodology

Our methodology in this report entails a small number of departures from the GRR methodology:

- The GRR records funding from governments, foundations and corporate funders for a two year period, 2021 and 2022. In this report we take an average across the two years to create an annual total representing a single year "2021-22".
- We have included all public foundations in our definition of intermediaries as, while not all will self-categorise as such, these definitions are quite subjective.
- All GRR data has been converted from the GRR dataset in USD\$, using 30 June for single years and an average across two years where figures cannot be broken down annually. Totals may not be exact due to some currencies being translated twice and rounding errors. As in the GRR, figures are absolute and not adjusted for inflation.

All efforts have been made to avoid double counting in this report within the confines of the data.

The Invisible Cause – Why LGBTQI Funding Is Hard to Spot

Research in this area is hampered by a lack of good data. The vast majority of representative surveys and analyses of individual, foundation and company giving don't include LGBTQI as a cause area. Researchers are therefore left to search through funding for "unpopular causes", "marginalised people", "human rights" and "international funding". Equally, the UK Government does not have a marker in their data for this.

HIV/AIDS funding is similarly 'hidden', and where it is available it is often difficult to identify funding that focuses on LGBTQI communities rather than other population groups. There is also the issue that HIV/AIDS funding is largely focussed on direct health service provision rather than rights and inclusion work, which many funders consider to be two very separate functions. The GPP make every effort to only include HIV/AIDS funding that specifically focuses on LGBTQI communities. For the very reason that it can be difficult for some funders to identify this, some data may be missing.

Definitions Used in This Report

“UK funding” – refers to funding from UK-registered charitable organisations or UK-based funders. Some UK-based funders receive income from international sources, particularly where they operate internationally. In this report, we include giving from the US component of a major UK-headquartered foundation, reflecting the fact that its UK Charity Commission accounts report UK and US funding as a single combined figure. Figures for the previous period have been restated accordingly.

“LGBTQI” – throughout this report we use the acronym LGBTQI to indicate those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex. This is not an exclusive definition, however, and is intended to encompass other identities that fit under this umbrella, such as non-binary.

“LGBTQI grant” – data sourced from the GRR uses a specific definition for inclusion that comprises “grant-making that specifically focuses on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex issues” (while acknowledging that there are many alternate terms for these populations). It should be noted that there is much more funding coming from UK sources that benefits or supports LGBTQI communities and issues as part of the grant’s general remit that is not counted here.

“Internationally” – in this report, “Internationally” refers to all giving focussed on the Global South, including international and multi-regional funding that majors in this area.

“Global South” – in this report, we use the term “Global South” as shorthand for the regions that the GPP groups as the “Global South and East” in the GRR: Asia and the Pacific; Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Russia; Latin America and the Caribbean; the Middle East and North Africa; and Sub-Saharan Africa.

“International funding” – this geographic focus encompasses all funding that crosses country and regional boundaries and could include funding to promote LGBTQI issues globally through advocacy to international bodies.

“Multiregional funding” – this is a new category of funding in this year’s GRR, and here denotes funding that spreads across multiple geographic regions (within GRR’s definitions) but with a majority focus on the Global South. While every care has been taken to avoid including large amounts of multiregional funding where this benefits the Global North or Western Europe, inevitably a small amount of the multiregional UK funding included in this report includes a small amount that benefits Western Europe.

The inclusion of international and multiregional funding reflects an acknowledgement that much UK Government funding, in particular, will be focussed on multiple countries and regions (largely reflecting the "commonwealth countries" banner) but with a majority focus on benefiting LGBTQI communities in the Global South.

"Regranting" – the GRR tracks the proportion of funding that is given to intermediaries included in their data for regranting and exclude this from some totals to avoid double counting. In our analysis we have included all funding from UK-based funders, including regranting through internationally-based intermediaries, as legitimate totals for UK funding. Unfortunately, it has not been possible in the current analysis to identify regranting from UK-based funders through UK-based intermediaries (which would entail double counting). Therefore in the total UK funding figure (p.3) it should be understood that the total includes what we believe to be a small amount of double counting.

We have followed GRR's methodology in reporting the full amount of funding (with regranting) for each donor group, to document the full amount of LGBTQI funding flowing from (or through) each donor type.

Methodological Changes in 2021-22

In developing the latest GRR report, the GPP research team made significant evaluation and improvement efforts, including revision of the overall taxonomy used for coding and analysing grants, redesigning the method used for assigning amounts to grants focused on multiple LGBTQI populations, and redesigning the method used for assigning geographic focus, yielding improvements in the classification of grants at International, Multiregional, and/or Global South and East levels.

These methodological changes had knock-on effects for our report, resulting in us restating totals from the previous Giving Report. Therefore direct comparisons should not be made between figures in this report and the previous one.

ENDNOTES

1 See Methodology for full definitions. This report focuses on funding going to the 'Global South', which in this data includes Asia and the Pacific; Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and Russia; Latin America and the Caribbean; the Middle East and North Africa; and Sub-Saharan Africa. The data also includes International and Multi-regional funding that majors in this area.

2 This total includes donations given to international intermediaries for regranting, and a small amount of regranting through UK-based intermediaries. Without international regranting, the total funding going to support LGBTQI causes on the ground was £11.2 million. See Methodology for full details.

3 Calculated using total UK voluntary sector income excluding investment income (NCVO (2024) *UK Civil Society Almanac*, data for 2021-22).

4 Oxfam's total income for 2021-22 was £373 million (*Oxfam Annual Report and Accounts 2021-22*).

5 Global funding in this context includes funding for the Global North and Global South.

6 Walker, C. (2025) *The LGBT+ Fund Report: The UK LGBT+ Voluntary and Community Sector - Finances, Funding & Future*. LGBT Consortium. Estimated that around £55m of focussed funding went to LGBT+ voluntary and community sector organisations in the UK in 2023.

7 Walker, C. & A. McKinnon (2023) *The UK LGBTQI International Giving Report*. GiveOut, The Baring Foundation.

8 Due to methodological changes in this second report, figures from 2019-20 have been restated. UK funding in 2019-20 totalled £16 million, the equivalent of 3p in every £100 given to charities in the UK and equal to 4.4% of the annual income of one single international aid charity.

9 This total includes figures for UK foundation giving additional to the GRR data, including UK grants given to international intermediaries for regranting. Without this additional UK giving, the total figure for UK foundation funding was £8.56 million.

10 Calculated using estimates of trust and foundation funding ("charitable grantmaking") in 2021-22 of £7bn by UK Grantmaking (360Giving.org in partnership with the Association of Charitable Foundations) (<https://www.ukgrantmaking.org/2023/highlights/>). This marks a change from previous figures used and therefore comparison should not be made with previous years.

11 Calculation includes all UK funding (GPP/GRR plus additional sources identified by this research).

12 Calculation includes all UK funding (GPP/GRR plus additional sources identified by this research).

13 Due to methodological changes in this second Giving Report, figures from 2019-20 have been restated. UK foundation funding in 2019-20 totalled £11.3 million and accounted for 68% of total UK giving.

14 Philip Loft, *Research Briefing: UK aid for LGBT+ inclusion*, House of Commons Library, 13th July 2022, <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-9434/CBP-9434.pdf>.

15 Oak Foundation is a major figure in the global LGBTQI funding landscape, but while their International Human Rights programme is based in the UK, the foundation is registered and headquartered in Switzerland, meaning that they don't appear in our figures as a UK funder.

16 Due to methodological changes in this second Giving Report, figures from 2019-20 have been restated. UK Government funding totalled £3 million in 2019-20, the equivalent of 2.07p in every £100 of ODA (compared with 2.1 pence in 2021-22).

17 "A Girl in South Sudan Will More Likely Die in Childbirth than Finish School": IDC Reports on "Devastating Impact" of Slashed UK Aid "Failing Women and Girls and Marginalised People the World over" - Committees - UK Parliament', 25 January 2024. <<https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/98/international-development-committee/news/199494/a-girl-in-south-sudan-will-more-likely-die-in-childbirth-than-finish-school-idc-reports-on-devastating-impact-of-slashed-uk-aid-failing-women-and-girls-and-marginalised-people-the-world-over/>> [accessed 18 December 2025]

18 This total includes figures for UK corporate giving additional to the GRR data, including UK grants given to international intermediaries for regranting. Without this additional UK giving, the total figure for UK corporate funding was £644,000.

19 Calculated using total UK corporate charitable giving taken from CAF (2023) Corporate giving by the FTSE 100.

20 Figures include all funding (GRR plus additional sources identified by this research).

21 Calculation includes all UK funding (GRR plus additional sources identified by this research).

22 This was largely funding to international intermediaries working in this space.

23 Due to methodological changes in this second Giving Report, figures from 2019-20 have been restated. UK corporate funding in 2019-20 totalled £1.2 million, the equivalent of 6p in every £100 of UK corporate charitable giving.

24 This was largely funding to international intermediaries working in this space.

25 Calculated using average UK individual giving to charity in 2021 and 2022 (CAF UK Giving (2023)).

26 Colgan, F, Hunter, C and McKearney, A (2014). *'Staying Alive': The Impact of 'Austerity Cuts' on the LGBT Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) in England and Wales*. UK TUC; Walker, C. (2025) *The LGBT+ Fund Report: The UK LGBT+ Voluntary and Community Sector - Finances, Funding & Future*. LGBT Consortium.

27 Barclays Private Bank (2025) *The Modern Philanthropist* (https://privatebank.barclays.com/content/dam/privatebank-barclays-com/en-gb/private-bank/documents/insights/2025/how-are-modern-philanthropists-making-a-difference/The_Modern_Philanthropist.pdf); Beacon Collaborative (2024) Market Measurement (<https://www.beaconcollaborative.org.uk/growing-giving/market-measurement/>).



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We would like to thank our strategic partner, the Global Philanthropy Project, and in particular Ezra Nepon and Jay Postic, for their support in extracting and sharing UK funders' data from the *Global Resources Report* for analysis. While every effort was made to ensure accuracy, responsibility for any errors or omissions rests with the quantitative analyst (The Researchery).

We are also grateful to the donors and funders who shared their time, insights and perspectives with us, both on and off the record, as well as to the individuals and organisations who contributed data and expertise to inform this research.

Report Credits

Lead authors: Dr Cat Walker, The Researchery; Lee Dibben, GiveOut

Data analysis: Dr Cat Walker, The Researchery

Designer: Luke Smith, GiveOut

Funding for this research was kindly provided by the Elton John AIDS Foundation

