

Press release: Over £5 million awarded to community groups to fight extremism

Community organisations across the UK will receive more than £5.3 million for projects countering extremist views and to build resilience within communities, it has been announced.

Minister for Countering-Extremism Baroness Williams awarded the funds as part of the Building a Stronger Britain Together programme, which aims to protect communities and empower them to challenge extremism. It funds more than 100 groups with grants of up to £200,000 and is estimated to reach around 175,000 people across the UK.

The organisations, including groups such as Khulisa, the Anne Frank Trust, Core Education and The Prince's Trust will run year-long schemes that challenge extremist narratives and support people who may be vulnerable to them. The projects being supported are wide-ranging and spread across the country: from Khulisa's work in prisons to reduce re-offending and transform young people's lives, to Core Education's 'Echo Eternal' project that will use video testimony by Holocaust survivors to educate people on genocides across the world.

The funding comes as 300 representatives from the Building a Stronger Britain Together network met in London yesterday (Wednesday 17 October) for an annual conference.

Speaking at the event, Baroness Williams, Minister for Countering Extremism, said:

Building a Stronger Britain Together is powerful coalition of positive voices in society who are standing up to the hatred and extremism which, sadly, is present in Britain.

We are increasingly confronted with statements designed to justify support for twisted ideologies – these must be challenged in all their forms.

I am proud of the support we are giving groups and local communities, who recognise that this country is stronger together.

The new funding will expand the Building a Stronger Britain Together network to more than 220 groups, as the government steps up its fight against extremism.

During its annual conference, keynote speakers including academics and reformed extremists addressed delegates and advised on the latest thinking around countering extremism. It was chaired by Professor Matthew Feldman, Director of the Centre for Analysis of the Radical Right and one of the UK's

foremost experts on extremism.

Nick Stace, UK Chief Executive of The Prince's Trust, said:

Every day The Prince's Trust supports young people from a range of backgrounds and communities to work together to develop the confidence and skills they need to succeed.

We help young people to gain a better understanding of people who are different to themselves, building mutual respect and tolerance and diverting them from activities that could lead to extremist views becoming engrained.

Many of our interventions also lead to employment opportunities, giving young people a greater stake in our economy and society.

This funding will help us to engage with more young people at an early stage to break down stereotypes, build tolerance amongst their communities and give young people the opportunities they need to thrive.

Adrian Packer, Founder and CEO of Core Education, said:

Echo Eternal will help to honour the commitment of every generation to never forget the Holocaust and genocides around the world. By working with young people, initially in Birmingham and then across the UK, we will tackle the extremism of those who wish to demean and degrade these memories.

We are delighted to be supported by Building a Stronger Britain Together for this crucial project. It's important that government continues to support organisations like ours who are taking on extremism in all its forms.

Dominique Airey, Chief Executive Officer of Khulisa, said:

The funding announced by the government will help organisations like ours tackle social exclusion and crime in the heart of our communities. As part of the counter-extremism strategy, this will help us work with some of those who may be at risk or hard to reach.

Khulisa powerfully believe in the potential of every young person to live a healthy, crime-free life if given the right support. We provide a safe space for young people to explore their identity, experiences and to build healthy relationships with themselves and others. Our programmes are delivered in schools, prisons and a range of other community settings across the UK and are proven to

increase well-being, empathy and reduce violence and offending.

We also support professionals such as social workers, police officers and prison staff to work more effectively with young people in a way that promotes inclusion and tolerance for all.

Since 2015, the Building a Stronger Britain Together programme has supported organisations, including the English Football League Trust and Show Racism the Red Card, for innovative projects to stand up against extremism. It was set up as part of the government's counter-extremism strategy.

The Building a Stronger Britain Together network includes grassroots campaigns across England and Wales that bring together young people from segregated communities, build resilience to extremism and challenge extremist narratives.