

# [New National Disability Strategy Launches](#)

[National Disability Strategy Foreword video]([National Disability Strategy – YouTube](#))

- Disabled people set to benefit from plans to upgrade job support and opportunities, housing and transport as part of a new [National Disability Strategy](#)
- Improving accessibility of homes, £300m investment in support for children with special educational needs and disabilities in schools and an online work passport to help disabled students move seamlessly from education to work
- Plans to consult on disability workforce reporting for businesses with more than 250 staff

The strategy sets out 100 immediate commitments supported by £1.6bn of funding alongside an ambitious agenda for future reform.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Just as our talented Paralympians are set to take the stage in Tokyo next month, at home we are harnessing that same ambition and spirit, to build a better and fairer life for all disabled people living in the UK.

Our new National Disability Strategy is a clear plan – from giving disabled people the best start in school to unlocking equal job opportunities, this strategy sets us on a path to improve their everyday lives.

Work and Pensions Secretary of State Thérèse Coffey said:

The result of an unprecedented endeavour across government, this national strategy will help level up opportunity and improve the everyday experience of disabled people, whether that is at home; travelling on public transport; using the local high street or going online; enjoying culture, the arts or the great outdoors; and exercising civic roles like jury service and voting.

It sets out the practical actions we will take now, alongside clear accountability for delivering them, as well as renewing our ambition to do even more as we build back fairer.

The strategy is focused on improving inclusion in the workplace, tackling the disability employment gap – currently at 28.6% – and making sure children with special educational needs and disabilities are at the heart of the strategy, including:

- Consulting on introducing workforce reporting for businesses with more than 250 staff on the number of disabled people. A move designed to improve inclusive practice across the UK's biggest employers and builds on existing gender reporting requirements
- Increasing the number of disabled people employed by MI5, MI6, GCHQ, the Reservists and the civilian military by 2030. MI6 has set an interim target of 9% by 2025.
- Launching a new online advice hub available to both disabled people and employers, which provides information and advice on disability discrimination in the workplace, flexible working and rights and obligations around reasonable adjustments. For the first time, the one stop shop will make it easier for disabled people to navigate the workplace.
- Piloting an Access to Work Adjustments Passport to help smooth the transition into employment and support people changing jobs. Pilots will be taking place this year focussing on young people leaving education and veterans leaving the armed forces. The Adjustments Passport will capture the in-work support needs of the individual and empower them to have confident discussions about adjustments with employers. It will also set an expectation with the employer that specialist aids and appliances move when their employee progresses in work or moves post.
- Investing £300 million to create places, improve existing provision in schools and make accessibility adaptations for children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities.

To make sure disabled people can live in homes adapted to their needs, we're taking action to:

- Raise the accessibility requirements for new homes and adapt existing homes using the £573 million Disabled Facilities Grant to make changes like widening doors, installing ramps, fitting stair lifts or installing a downstairs bathroom.
- Mandating that 10% of homes built through the £11.5 billion Affordable Homes Programme 2021-26 will be for supported housing, boosting availability of good homes for those with additional needs. This target is designed to make more homes available to people with additional needs.

The strategy outlines new technology making rail journeys easier and more accessible including:

- Enabling disabled passengers to contact staff from their seat on the train with the new support in place by end of March 2022, with DfT supporting innovative projects that will improve communication for disabled passengers and others with reduced mobility on rail services. Projects will be supported with between £50k and £400k and will use new technology to make using the railways easier and more accessible.

The Disability Strategy also covers a range of other areas including access to justice, culture and the arts. It marks the first cross-government endeavour to improve disabled people's everyday lives with legislation, policy and funding from across all corners of government.

Minister for Disabled People Justin Tomlinson said:

For the first time, we have real cross-government focus, with clearly set out priorities and aims.

We are absolutely committed to putting disabled people at the heart of government policy making and service delivery. Their voices, insights and experiences are central to this strategy and our future approach. By engaging disabled people, their families, carers and organisations, collectively we will deliver real and lasting change.

That's empowered us to focus on the things disabled people tell us are most important to them, and crucially they'll be able to hold us to account as we deliver real and lasting change.

## **Further information**

- Findings from the UK Disability Survey which had over 14,000 respondents showed many disabled people feel held back in their everyday lives by the negative attitudes of others, ranging from awkwardness and misguided empathy to outright hostility; by poorly designed homes, transport infrastructure, and public buildings and facilities or by a lack of support at school and at work.
- A multi-year data programme to improve the availability, quality and relevance of information which will drive policy making across government. This will include regular disability surveys and public perception surveys due to launch by January 2022.
- The strategy builds on the Disability Discrimination Act which enshrined protections for disabled people when it comes to employment, transport, education and provision of goods and services.
- All commitments are backed by the personal drive of the UK government department's Ministerial Disability Champion and progress will be reported on every 12 months.

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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## **Bids invited for projects promoting human rights and democratic values in Sri Lanka**

### **Objectives**

The High Commission particularly welcomes expressions of interest (EOIs) which:

- bring together one or more of the thematic areas (for example: working with media to promote and foster social cohesion or protecting human rights defenders and journalists)
- include project activities across several strands, including working in partnership with other implementing partners with diverse expertise
- are mindful of cross-cutting themes such as conflict-sensitivity, gender and environment

### **Priority themes**

The activities will focus on the following priority themes. Suppliers are encouraged to identify target areas within and across these themes, and justify their focus.

#### **Reinforcing media freedom and protecting freedom of expression**

We welcome suggestions for activities, which support press freedom in Sri Lanka. This could include:

- supporting journalistic practice in identified 'needs' areas in Sri Lanka (such as digital and physical safety, high-quality and inclusive content, or data-driven and investigative journalism) – e.g. through direct capacity building to journalists, or initiatives to support the spread of journalistic best practice and learning
- initiatives to boost civic literacy and tackle disinformation, especially where potential scalability, cross-cutting themes, or sustainability can be demonstrated

#### **Promoting freedom of religion or belief and tackling inter-**

## **communal tensions**

We welcome proposals that address ethno-religious and religious tensions in Sri Lanka. These could include:

- raising understanding and awareness including on triggers of religious and ethno-religious tensions and conflict (inter and intra-communities), through effective research and documentation
- promoting conflict management through education of and engagement with local and national authorities

## **Supporting human rights defenders and strengthening civil society**

We welcome proposals to safeguard the essential role Human Rights Defenders (HRDs) and civil society play in promoting and protecting democracy. This could include:

- supporting civil society engagement through identified 'needs' areas in Sri Lanka (such as digital and physical safety, data-gathering and documentation, access to legal or operational support, linkages between CSOs and other key stakeholders i.e. government and media)
- initiatives to boost collaborative and coordinated advocacy, including between and within grassroots, regional and Colombo-based organisations, especially where potential scalability, cross-cutting themes, or sustainability can be demonstrated

## **Delivery mechanisms**

Suppliers should consider the best delivery mechanism to meet needs. Suppliers may want to consider capacity building (direct, or through 'train the trainer' models) alongside more creative mechanisms such as support to peer to peer networks or sector initiatives, and creating relevant products/resources (eg: technical 'tool kits'). Activities will need to take into account Covid-19 risk mitigation and planning.

## **Timeline**

The successful implementer should be able to commence work from October 2021 and complete all project activity by mid-March 2022 (subject to final funding decisions).

Project involving communications will be subject to an additional approximately 2-month approval process in addition to usual set up processes. Suppliers should consider delay in start-up in designing their work.

## **Budget**

We anticipate budget provision for a number of outputs with individual costs up to £60,000. Proposals with multiple implementing partners should be submitted under one lead contractor. We are unable to support contingency, miscellaneous, small grants, or per diem costs. Admin costs must not exceed

10%.

## Requirements/Criteria

- EoIs are open to registered community and civil society organisations
- EoIs should be submitted in the form of a concept note on maximum two-sides of A4
- EoIs should cover the type of project intervention and delivery proposed, as well as how it will address value for money. Bidders must provide a broad indication of proposed activities to be delivered, anticipated outcomes, and sustainability approaches post-completion of the project. They should factor in risks and mitigation plans, i.e. with COVID-19. They must also demonstrate an ability to deliver all project activity before mid-March 2020, with a substantial portion within the first half of the project. An outline activity based budget must be submitted as an annex to the EOI.

## Deadline for submitting expressions of interest

EoIs must be submitted to the British High Commission at [colombo.general@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:colombo.general@fcdo.gov.uk) no later than 1700hrs local time on Thursday, 12 August 2021. Please indicate the EOI heading in the subject line.

EoIs will be considered separately by a panel of assessors. Submitters of the strongest proposals will be invited to develop and submit a detailed proposal and activity-based budget for consideration by mid-September 2021. The High Commission aims to inform bidders of the outcome of their EOI by end of August 2021.

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## [British Embassy Santo Domingo: call for bids 2021/2022](#)

The British Embassy Santo Domingo is now accepting project proposals for the 2021/2022 financial year from not-for-profit organizations, civil society, multilateral organisations and the partner government that directly support the following thematic areas:

1. Open societies (democracy, human rights, media freedom)

2. Climate and biodiversity
3. COVID-19 response, recovery and health security

## **Background**

This project funding facilitates adaptive, short-term projects that respond to specific policy outcomes, influence policies and create networks that open opportunities for further engagement and diplomacy.

**We are particularly interested in short-term interventions in the following specific areas**

This year, the British Embassy is seeking to support activities in the range of DOP 285,000 and DOP 569,000.00, or equivalent in USD, that deliver real, measurable outcomes in support of socio-economic growth and development of the Dominican Republic focusing on the following themes:

### **Prevention of child exploitation and abuse, girls' education and gender equality**

In particular, projects aiming to tackle the sexual abuse and exploitation of children, to address teenage pregnancy, or to raise awareness of women's reproductive rights, including, but not limited, to public campaigns and events, workshops, conferences, school and mobile teaching.

### **Climate change and green finance**

Projects related to climate change and tackling green issues through education, training, campaigns, public awareness raising, and other initiatives related to the causes and impacts of climate change.

These projects can revolve around subjects like the implementation of Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), biodiversity loss/deforestation, oceans preservation, renewable energies and the reduction of single use plastic.

In this category, we are also looking for projects that focus on Green Finance (Sustainable Finance, Green Bonds, Blue Bonds, among others) be it through training, workshops and conferences. We will particularly welcome proposals that are linked to or build around COP26 (UN Climate Change Summit) and its objectives.

### **Media freedom**

We are looking for projects that will help promote and/or strengthen media freedom through targeted training and workshops. Projects in this category can include inviting journalism experts from the UK to the Dominican Republic.

We welcome projects by Dominican journalists who have identified short-term, focused training opportunities or conferences related to journalism in the UK.

## **Innovative technologies, cyber security and artificial intelligence**

In particular, we are seeking projects such as workshops, conferences or training seeking to support the socio-economic growth and development of the Dominican Republic through the application of new technologies, cyber security and artificial intelligence.

Including but not limited to digitalisation on government services and information and improving the quality of and access to government national statistics/information.

## **Human rights, rule of law and democracy**

In particular, strengthening democratic governance and rule of law; increasing equality and reducing violence and discrimination against women and vulnerable groups such as the LGBTQI+ community; raising awareness on border migration and tackling modern slavery.

## **COVID-19 response, recovery and health security**

In particular, supporting inclusive, green sustainable economic recovery and growth after the impacts of the pandemic and supporting data-driven initiatives to tackle COVID-19 or aid relief for COVID-19 humanitarian crisis.

## **Exceptions**

We are unable to support proposals that involve:

- procurement of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), oxygen-related equipment (e.g. ventilators and respirators), diagnostic tests/materials and COVID-19-related medicines
- purchase or maintenance of any IT and other equipment
- direct cash transfers to vulnerable individuals or families
- activities which are not aligned with the Paris Agreement on climate change
- exploitation of adult workers or employment of children
- luxury goods (incl. alcohol, tobacco, fur skins, pearls and precious and semi-precious stones)
- drugs not on the World Health Organization Essential Drugs List (with limited exceptions)
- pesticides, unless agreed by a Climate and Environment Adviser. The UK is a signatory to the Stockholm Convention that seeks to eliminate 12 persistent organic pollutants
- chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs). The UK is a party to the Montreal Protocol and the substances currently controlled by the Protocol may not be supplied under the aid programme
- tobacco. For any purpose that identifiably supports the tobacco sector, including the agricultural production and processing. General agricultural inputs, such as fertilisers can still be funded if the



tobacco sector is not an identifiable consumer

- any relationship, financial, programmatic or bilateral with Breast Milk Substitute manufacturers that violate the International Code of Marketing of Breast Milk Substitutes. FCDO may on a case-by-case basis engage with these companies in multilateral or multi-donor funded programmes or initiatives, if approved by the relevant Director General

## **Bid guidance**

Proposals can be submitted in United States Dollars (USD) or Dominican Pesos (DOP) currencies.

Project proposals must be submitted using the Activity Bid Form below. Projects are funded under a reimbursement scheme for a single financial year, with no expectation of continued funding beyond this period.

Project must be completed by 31 January 2022. Projects with finishing dates of 31 January 2021 can be considered as long as 85% of the budget is executed by 15 November 2021.

## **Assessment**

Bids will be assessed against the following criteria:

- alignment with the above thematic priorities and outcomes
- outcomes are achievable within the funding period and sustainable after the funding ends
- project design which includes clear monitoring and evaluation procedures
- proposal includes identified risks and planned mitigation
- demonstrated value for money in the activity based budget
- the organisation's safeguarding policies that ensure protection of beneficiaries

## **Official Development Assistance (ODA)**

All expenditures must qualify as ODA eligible. ODA is a term created by the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). This term serves as a measurement of international aid. ODA projects have, as a primary objective, the promotion of economic development and welfare.

## **Process**

1. Project proposals must be received by 23:55 (Santo Domingo time) on Sunday 15 August. Any proposals received in a format different to the one requested, in a language other than English, or submitted after the set date and time will not be considered
2. Proposals must be submitted using the attached forms only. (Project

Proposal and Activity Based Budget)

3. The Activity Based Budget needs to be in the same currency as the bank account where funds reimbursements are to be received
4. Proposals must be submitted to [UK.InDominicanRepublic@fco.gov.uk](mailto:UK.InDominicanRepublic@fco.gov.uk). In the subject, you must include: FCO Programme Funds 2021-2022, followed by the name of your organisation
5. Proposals selected for further consideration will be notified by the end of August 2021. If you are not contacted by this date, the Embassy has decided not to pursue your proposal. Due to the high number of bids we receive, we are unable to provide feedback to unsuccessful bids
6. The British Embassy Santo Domingo aims to sign grant agreements or memorandums of understanding (MoU) with successful project implementers by Friday 3 September and to begin activities immediately after signing the agreement/MoU

## Important milestones

Date	Activity
15 August 2021 (11:55 PM DR Time)	call for bids closes
End of August	confirmation to successful participants
Friday 3 September 2021	grant agreements/MoUs signed
Early September 2021	projects initiate
15 November 2021	projects must reach a minimum 85% spend
31 January 2022	projects must reach 100% spend, activities must have been completed and Project Completion Report (PCR) submitted

## Additional information and documentation

All implementers will be expected to sign a standard FCDO contract, grant agreement or MoU with the Embassy. The terms of the contract or agreement are not negotiable.

1. [Project Proposal Form \(PPF\) template](#) (ODT, 55.1KB)
  2. [Activity Based Budget \(ABB\) template](#) (ODS, 10.3KB)
  3. [Value for Money and ABB Guidance](#) (ODT, 13.7KB)
  4. [Administration Cost Guidance](#) (ODT, 10.8KB)
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# National strategy to boost accessibility for disabled passengers

- major audit of all UK railway stations and fast-tracked improvements
- new laws to boost accessibility standards on buses and taxis
- measures come as part of government's National Disability Strategy as we build back fairer from COVID-19

Disabled passengers will have better access to public transport and a bigger say in how they travel, under a new strategy that will boost inclusivity across the entire network.

The Department for Transport (DfT) is today (28 July 2021) unveiling a range of initiatives to remove barriers and improve confidence for disabled people as they return to trains, buses and taxis after the pandemic.

An audit of all UK train stations, originally pledged in the [Williams-Shapps Plan for Rail](#), is now underway – helping to identify improvements and highlighting existing areas of excellence. The findings will form a new public database so people can better plan their journeys and, along with input from disabled passengers, will shape future investment in accessible rail travel.

DfT will also work with Network Rail to improve safety with a new programme to install all station platforms with tactile paving. This comes on top of work to develop a [Passenger Assist App](#) to simplify communication with rail staff and encourage better customer service.

The government will bring forward new regulations to force bus companies to provide audible and visual announcements onboard services. To help smaller companies achieve this, government grants will be boosted to £3.5 million. New research into the designs of bus stops and stations will ensure they are accessible for all.

DfT will also support new legislation for taxis and private hire vehicles, protecting disabled passengers from being overcharged and to better ensure they get the right help from drivers.

Accessibility Minister Chris Heaton-Harris said:

Disabled passengers should be empowered to use all forms of transport with the same confidence as everyone else – whether by taxi, train, bus or ferry.

Today's measures will have a positive, real-life impact and double-down on our promise to build back fairer from COVID-19.

There is also a boost to seaports, with new £1 million funding to improve

access at ports to the Isle of Wight and Isles of Scilly.

In addition, DfT will work with consumer groups to design more accessible chargepoints for electric vehicles, as the industry steers away from fuel-burning cars.

Alongside local authorities, DfT will work to reduce parking on pavements to declutter our streets and free up paths, so vulnerable pedestrians can make journeys more safely and easily. An announcement on next steps will be made later this year.

And for longer journeys, new £450,000 funding will help deliver more accessible toilets, through the [Changing Places programme](#), on top of the £2.2 million already invested, to ensure most motorway services have the right facilities for the quarter of a million people who cannot use standard accessible ones.

Anthony Smith, Chief Executive of the independent watchdog Transport Focus, said:

It's important that transport operators seek the views of disabled people to make sure services better suit their needs as the country recovers from the pandemic.

These measures will help remove barriers and improve access for all transport users.

Robert Burley, Director of Campaigns, Care and Support at Muscular Dystrophy UK, said:

We regularly hear from people living with muscle-wasting conditions who have had to cancel or cut short days out or don't consider them at all, because of poor accessibility.

The strategy announced today is a step in the right direction to helping tackle the exclusion that so many disabled people face on a daily basis.

The measures are part of the government's National Disability Strategy – the most ambitious endeavour to remove barriers to disabled people's everyday lives. It makes solid commitments and sets out immediate practical steps to create a society that works for everyone. These include building more supported housing, providing £300 million to improve accessibility in schools and improving access to cultural venues.

It follows the ["It's everyone's journey" campaign](#), launched in 2020 to champion equal access across all forms of public transport and encourage people to be more considerate and supportive of others when using the transport network.

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