

Round 2: Connect Fund Successful Applications

Organisation	Project summary	Location	Area of Partner Organisation
<p>Arts Care Limited</p>	<p>This initiative is a collaborative partnership between Arts Care (Northern Ireland) and Equal Arts (North East England), running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. The project addresses the inconsistent access to creative programming within care homes and supported living settings, specifically for older people and those living with dementia.</p> <p>The programme is built on evidence that artistic participation significantly improves health, wellbeing, and social connection for isolated populations. By sharing expertise between regions, the partners aim to overcome systemic barriers and enhance leadership capabilities within the healthcare arts sector.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Newcastle (England)</p>
<p>bBeyond</p>	<p>The NI-GB Performance Art Network is a collaborative initiative led by Bbeyond in partnership with TactileBosch (Wales), the Belfast School of Art, and the University for the Creative Arts (Canterbury). Running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, the project seeks to bridge the geographic and financial gaps that often limit Northern Irish performance artists from engaging with the wider UK creative landscape.</p> <p>By fostering a participant-centred, "people-to-people" approach, the programme creates safe and inclusive structures for artists, students, and community members to develop civic leadership skills and cultural understanding.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Cardiff Belfast Canterbury (England)</p>

<p>Building Communities Resource Centre</p>	<p>Community Voices East-West is a collaborative initiative between the Building Communities Resource Centre (BCRC), based in Northern Ireland (Causeway Coast and Glens), and the Crossroads Youth and Community Association in Glasgow, Scotland.</p> <p>The project is designed to facilitate structured East-West dialogue and joint place-based learning events, bringing together community leaders from both regions. By creating safe and constructive spaces for engagement, the partnership aims to explore shared social and economic pressures, foster mutual understanding, and build enduring civic connections across the United Kingdom. Ultimately, the initiative seeks to strengthen the capacity of local leaders to address common challenges through a lens of shared learning and future-focused cooperation.</p>	<p>Ballymoney (NI)</p>	<p>Glasgow</p>	
<p>Community Places NI</p>	<p>The Planning Aid Northern Ireland Network is a UK-wide initiative running from April 2026 to March 2027. It aims to address the systemic inequalities that prevent marginalised communities from participating in the planning process. By building a unified network across all four nations, the project seeks to overcome barriers such as complex technical language and a lack of accessible engagement opportunities.</p> <p>The initiative focuses on empowering local people to shape their own environments through independent planning advice and strengthened community involvement.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>London Cardiff Edinburgh</p>	
<p>Co-operation Ireland</p>	<p>The Deliberation Collaborative NI-Wales is an East-West partnership running from 1 May 2026 to 1 February 2027. It aims to bolster Co-operation Ireland's expertise in two specialised fields: Deliberative Democracy and Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration. The project is designed to strengthen organisational capacity and cross-jurisdictional learning, through a structured programme of research, study visits, training, and knowledge exchange delivered on an East-West basis between Northern Ireland and Wales.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Aberystwyth (Scotland)</p>	
<p>Easilink Community Transport</p>	<p>Connecting Rural Communities is a seven-month East-West knowledge exchange partnership running from April 2026 to October 2026. The initiative brings together Easilink Community Transport in Northern Ireland and two partners in Aberdeenshire, Scotland: The Banffshire Partnership Ltd and The Boyndie Trust Ltd.</p> <p>The project addresses shared rural challenges, such as social isolation and limited access to essential services, by exploring sustainable community transport and social enterprise models.</p>	<p>Strabane (NI)</p>	<p>Banff (Scotland)</p>	

<p>East Belfast Community Development Agency</p>	<p>The project aims to build the capacity, skills, networks, and relationships of 11 emerging leaders from the community and voluntary sector in East Belfast. This will be achieved by providing them with greater insight into community development practice outside of Northern Ireland, specifically through a study visit to London.</p> <p>The goal is to facilitate positive and constructive dialogue on shared challenges facing communities across the UK (such as poverty, housing, and demographic change). By exposing leaders to alternative models of community development, the project seeks to prevent stagnation, encourage innovation, and build leadership capability opportunities on an East-West basis.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>London</p>	
<p>Enterprise Causeway</p>	<p>Life Between Two Coasts is a 12-month East–West partnership between Enterprise Causeway (The Courthouse, Bushmills, Northern Ireland) and the Globe Gallery (North Shields, North East England). Running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, the project aims to formalise cooperation between these two community-rooted cultural organisations.</p>	<p>Coleraine (NI)</p>	<p>Tyne & Wear (England)</p>	
<p>Environmental Justice Network Ireland</p>	<p>The goal is to establish options for the creation of an East/West Environmental Rights Forum. The project centers on an in-person, one-day facilitated workshop that will bring together environmental rights organisations from across the UK to exchange ideas and discuss co-creation of collaborative mechanisms.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Edinburgh</p>	
<p>Go-Woman Alliance Community Interest Company</p>	<p>Strong Enough To Share is a collaborative initiative between the Go-Woman Alliance Community Interest Company (GOAL) and Kilcooley Women’s Centre. Running from 1 May 2026 to December 2026, the project focuses on strengthening women-led social enterprises across the UK, specifically linking Northern Ireland and Great Britain.</p> <p>The initiative acknowledges that women face unique systemic barriers in the social enterprise sector, including financial bias, lower investment levels, and the pressures of unpaid caring responsibilities.</p>	<p>Birmingham</p>	<p>Bangor</p>	

<p>Kabosh</p>	<p>Not On Our Watch' is an expanded UK-wide touring programme led by the Belfast-based theatre company Kabosh, in partnership with Unite the Union Women's Committees across England, Scotland, and Wales. Running from 4 May 2026 to 1 February 2027, the project builds on a successful pilot to deepen East-West civic collaboration and solidarity.</p> <p>The initiative uses theatre as a catalyst for dialogue on gender equality, social justice, and workplace rights. By staging performances in accessible civic and trade union spaces, the project aims to reach women workers directly and amplify their voices within a safe, inclusive environment.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>London</p>	
<p>Kilcooley Womens Centre</p>	<p>The JEWEL Project is a collaborative initiative designed to establish a permanent framework for female leadership across the UK. Running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, it connects grassroots leaders from Kilcooley Women's Centre, GOAL Women's Alliance, and Devon Mind.</p> <p>The project addresses the historical isolation of frontline female leaders in disadvantaged regions by creating a formalised platform for sharing trauma-informed and culturally competent practice models.</p>	<p>Bangor (NI)</p>	<p>Birmingham Devon (England)</p>	
<p>Live Music Now</p>	<p>Shared Lullabies is a creative health initiative led by Live Music Now (LMN), designed to support families in Northern Ireland and Essex facing mild to moderate perinatal mental health challenges. Running from May 2026 to March 2027, the project implements the internationally recognised Lullaby Project model to strengthen parent-child bonding and improve parental wellbeing through collaborative songwriting.</p>	<p>Londonderry / Derry</p>	<p>Belfast Essex (England)</p>	
<p>Newtownbreda Football Club</p>	<p>East Meets West is a celebratory partnership initiative marking the 50th anniversaries of Newtownbreda FC in Northern Ireland and Stafford Town FC in England. Scheduled for August 2026, the project centres on a structured exchange visit where members of the Belfast-based club travel to the West Midlands.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Stafford (England)</p>	

<p>Northern Ireland Environment Link</p>	<p>Landscapes Youth Connect is a collaborative initiative led by Northern Ireland Environment Link in partnership with EUROPARC Atlantic Isles. Running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, the project aims to deepen East–West cooperation between youth groups active in designated landscapes across the United Kingdom.</p> <p>The programme focuses on empowering the Landscapes Youth NI group by connecting them with Youth Ranger and Ambassador programmes in National Parks and protected landscapes across Great Britain.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Wiltshire (England)</p>	
<p>Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network</p>	<p>This project is a strategic partnership led by the Northern Ireland Rural Women's Network (NIRWN) in collaboration with Derry Well Women and The Women's Organisation. Running as a follow-up to an initial exploratory phase, this initiative focuses on addressing persistent inequalities in women's access to healthcare and their limited influence over health system design in both England and Northern Ireland.</p> <p>The programme uniquely bridges the gap between grassroots lived experience and high-level policy by involving the England Women's Health Strategy Partnership and representatives from the Department of Health. This alignment ensures that the project's findings support national priorities, including digital transformation and the development of a dedicated women's health strategy for Northern Ireland.</p>	<p>Cookstown (NI)</p>	<p>Liverpool (England)</p>	
<p>Northern Ireland Women's Budget Group</p>	<p>This project is a collaborative effort led by the Northern Ireland Women's Budget Group in partnership with its counterparts in Scotland, Wales, and the UK-wide group. Running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, the initiative focuses on monitoring and refining a long-term strategy to advance gender economic equality across all four nations.</p> <p>The project addresses the need for dedicated, in-person strategic planning time to ensure the collective remains responsive to the differing political and economic landscapes across the UK.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>London Cardiff Glasgow</p>	
<p>Rural Community Network NI</p>	<p>This project will support a study visit from Northern Ireland to Scotland, enabling six community development practitioners (five participants and one coordinator) to attend the World Community Development Conference.</p>	<p>Tyrone (NI)</p>	<p>No Partner</p>	

<p>Schomberg Society Kilkeel Ltd</p>	<p>Pitch & Prose is a dual-strand civic initiative delivered by the Schomberg Society, designed to strengthen long-standing connections between communities in Northern Ireland and Scotland. Running from 1 May 2026 to 31 March 2027, the programme addresses shared social challenges, such as youth disengagement and community tension, while celebrating a shared Ulster-Scottish cultural heritage.</p>	<p>Kilkeel (NI)</p>	<p>Glasgow Kilkeel Ayr (Scotland)</p>	
<p>Springboard Opportunities Ltd</p>	<p>Horizon is a 12-month initiative by Springboard Opportunities Limited, running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027. The project is designed to evolve community cohesion strategies in Northern Ireland by learning from established, ethnically diverse contexts in England.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>No Partner</p>	
<p>The Rainbow Project</p>	<p>The East-West LGBTQIA+ Forum is a UK-wide initiative led by The Rainbow Project Ltd in partnership with the LGBT Consortium. Running from 1 April 2026 to 31 March 2027, this second phase builds upon a successful pilot to formalise a consistent platform for cooperation between LGBTQIA+ organisations in Northern Ireland and Great Britain.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Exeter (England)</p>	
<p>YouthAction</p>	<p>Islands of Innovation 2 is a strategic youth leadership initiative led by YouthAction Northern Ireland. Running as a second phase of the Connect Fund, the project aims to deepen civic relationships and create a permanent infrastructure for collaboration between young leaders across Northern Ireland, England, Scotland, and Wales.</p> <p>The programme addresses the "knowledge silos" that often affect the youth sector by moving beyond one-off events and creating structured, long-term opportunities for young people (aged 18–35) to address shared social inequalities and improve civic participation.</p>	<p>Belfast</p>	<p>Christchurch (England) Edinburgh Wales</p>	