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Dear Trina Budge, Marion Calder and Susan Smith,

Thank you for your letter of 11 June 2026 to the First Minister. As a member of the Scottish Government's LGBTQI+ Equality Team I have been asked to respond.

The Scottish Government provides funding to Equality Network to support its work advancing equality and human rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland. This includes policy and advocacy work, engagement with LGBT communities, providing evidence and expertise to inform policy development, and supporting measures to tackle discrimination and promote inclusion.

Scottish Trans is a project delivered by the Equality Network. The Scottish Government fund the Equality Network through the Equality and Human Rights Fund (EHRF) to support work to advance equality and human rights for LGBTQI+ people in Scotland.

The Equality Network is an independent organisation and is responsible for determining its own positions, priorities and public statements. Scottish Government grant funding must not be used for party-political purposes, including activity or material intended to influence support for a political party. Scottish Government funding is allocated for clearly defined purposes and must be used in line with the terms and conditions set out in grant offer letters.

Charity law in Scotland is clear that a charity cannot be set up to advance a political party. This applies equally across all political parties and is in line with guidance published by OSCR, the independent charity regulator. Charities may undertake campaigning and advocacy activity in furtherance of their charitable purposes, but they must remain independent and cannot exist to advance the interests of a political party. We fully support the right of charities to campaign on behalf of those they represent and advocate for changes in policy. We consider the constructive challenge offered by the third sector a key part of robust policy making.



All grant funding provided by the Scottish Government is subject to terms and conditions that specify the purposes for which funding may be used. Organisations in receipt of public funding are required to comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and expenditure must align with the agreed objectives of the grant award.

All government grant funding is subject to due diligence before funding is awarded and grants are carefully monitored to ensure that intended outcomes are achieved.

The inquiry into political funds is currently a matter for the Scottish Parliament.

I hope that you find this information helpful.

Yours sincerely

LGBTQI+ Policy Team

E : LGBTQI+, BSL, SIAL AND OLDER PEOPLE