



NICVA Summit 2026 Case for Support Proposal

As CEO of NICVA, I am delighted to invite you to partner with us as a supporter of the NICVA Summit 2026.

In October 2024, NICVA hosted its inaugural Future Thinking Summit, bringing together senior leaders from across Northern Ireland's voluntary, community and social enterprise sector alongside government, public sector, and civic society partners. The response was overwhelming. The Summit highlighted both the scale of the sector's contribution and the urgency of the challenges it is addressing, from health inequalities and economic inactivity to community resilience, skills, climate, and social cohesion.

The VCSE sector in Northern Ireland employs tens of thousands of people, mobilises volunteers in every community and delivers essential services that underpin inclusive economic growth and social wellbeing. It is a major delivery partner for government and a critical driver of social value. As demand for services increases and funding and policy landscapes continue to shift, strong leadership, innovation and cross-sector collaboration have never been more important.

Building on the success of 2024, the 2026 Summit will be bigger, more ambitious, and more influential. With over 400 vol/comm leaders, trustees, senior managers, and decision-makers expected to attend, the Summit will bring together those who work in every community in Northern Ireland, deliver services with and for communities and shape long-term strategy across the sector.

Funding the NICVA Summit will enable community organisations to **demonstrate their impact, access vital resources, build strategic partnerships**, and **strengthen their capacity to deliver meaningful, lasting impact across their communities**. It also provides a critical platform to demonstrate and deepen understanding of the value of the sector; without funding support, the Summit simply could not take place.

Celine McStravick

CEO NICVA

Event Overview:

We are thrilled to announce our NICVA Summit will take place in the ICC Waterfront, Belfast on the 10th of June 2026. The landmark conference for the voluntary, community, and social enterprise (VCSE) sector in Northern Ireland. Building on the success of 2024, the 2026 Summit will be bigger, and more ambitious, bringing together leaders, influencers, and changemakers to address key issues, share best practices, and drive meaningful social change.

Summit 2026 Key Outcomes:

- **Value:** demonstrate the breadth and depth of the voluntary and community sector and the significant impact it makes.
- **Inspire:** Gain insights from innovators and industry leaders who are shaping the future of the voluntary sector, as well as influencing policymakers with insights and evidence from the sector.
- **Connect:** Network with peers, build new relationships, strengthen existing ones within the community, and foster partnerships that will drive real and meaningful social change.
- **Strengthen:** Equip the VCSE with the knowledge and tools needed to advocate effectively and build a stronger, more connected sector.

Audience:

We expect to attract 400+ people including;

- **Sector Leaders:** voluntary and community organisations.
- **Policymakers:** Government officials and policymakers focused on civic issues.
- **Practitioners:** On-the-ground staff and volunteers driving change.
- **Stakeholders:** Businesses and organisations invested in community well-being.

Content:

Developed with and for the Voluntary and Community sector, the Summit will cover a wide range of emerging themes including;

- ✓ Poverty
- ✓ Environmental and Climate change
- ✓ Community development/people and place

- ✓ Health
- ✓ Children and social care
- ✓ Arts and culture
- ✓ Faith and community
- ✓ Housing and homelessness
- ✓ Economic inactivity
- ✓ Equality and Diversity
- ✓ NI Partnership Agreement

Each theme will showcase the role of the Vol/Comm sector in addressing that issue and provide a platform for collaboration and knowledge exchange.

Funding Needs:

We are committed to making the NICVA Summit 2026 inclusive for attendees - this is crucial for maximising participation and impact. We aim to cover the majority of event costs through partnerships to keep attendance fees as low as possible. Your support will help us with:

- Venue and Logistics: Cover the costs of the venue, equipment, catering and other logistical needs.
- Speakers and Sessions: Fund travel and honoraria for key speakers and session facilitators.
- Materials and Resources: Provide attendees with high-quality materials and access to resources.

Our Ask

The NICVA Summit is not a profit-making event. We will be charging less than £80 per person for attendance to ensure accessibility across the sector; however, this means we must raise over £70,000 to cover the full costs of delivery. To enable the Summit to take place at the scale and quality required, we are seeking a contribution of £20,000 from Belfast City Council. This investment will directly support the delivery of a vital platform for collaboration, learning, and advocacy, ensuring that organisations across Belfast and beyond can participate and that the value of the voluntary and community sector is clearly demonstrated and strengthened.