ISF Summit

24 November 2026

Firth Hall, Sheffield

Individual Service Funds: Better Lives. Better Value. Stronger Communities.

University of Sheffield

Self-Directed Support Network

dimensions

WHY THIS MATTERS

Around the world people are turning away from institutional care and towards self-directed support so people who need help can live as citizens at every stage of life. In England we've made significant progress.

But today we're stuck!

Self-directed support must work for everyone. If the system only works for people who can manage money or employ their own staff then this means 80% of the people who use social care are excluded. This is the current reality.

There is a solution to this problem—Individual Service Funds (ISFs).

The law in England and Scotland allows local authorities and the NHS to work with trusted organisations so they can manage money and employ staff in partnership with the person and their family.

This brings multiple benefits:

- **People get the personalised support they really need**
- **People can live as citizens—contributing to their neighbourhoods**
- **Money is used more effectively and efficiently**
- **Local economies benefit from support rooted in community**

ISFs were first created in Glasgow in 1996 and thanks to the work of organisations like Self Directed Futures we've seen steady growth in England over the last 10 years. Sheffield University has also led important research setting out the benefits of ISFs.

Citizen Network has published numerous papers and research showing the benefits. Small and large organisations like Dimensions and Enable have made the transition to full personalisation.

But progress could be so much faster.

So together we've organised this ISF Summit to share best practice, help everyone understand the practical changes required and send a message to government about how they can help.

It is time to ensure everyone has the benefits of self-directed support.

WHY JOIN US

The ISF Summit is a one-day national event bringing together people with lived experience, senior commissioners, providers, system leaders, and families.

Attendees will explore what works in practice, hearing from councils, providers, and people with lived experience who are demonstrating that doing the right thing delivers the best value. It's a space for genuine connection and collaboration. Delegates will be part of the conversations shaping the next phase of reform.

The event is co-hosted by two organisations leading change in self-directed support and community-based commissioning. Together, they are building a shared reform movement grounded in trust, inclusion, and practical collaboration.

Citizen Network

Citizen Network is an international non-profit connecting citizens from across the world who believe in equality, inclusion, and citizenship for all. Its work spans England, Europe, and beyond - uniting communities of practice committed to creating more human systems of care and support.

Self-Directed Support Network

SDS Network England leads the development of self-directed support in England. It provides interlocking communities of practice for commissioners, service providers and citizens. It is part of the global SDS Network that publishes the global standards for self-directed support and has national hubs in over 12 different countries.

Join Us!

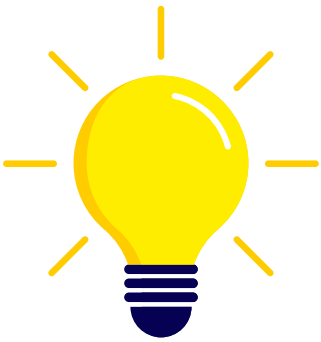
Who Should Attend

Commissioners who want to help more people live as citizens

Support Organisations who want to work flexibly with the people they serve

Citizens who want justice and independent living for everyone who needs help

WHY SPONSOR THIS EVENT



Our events allow you to really connect with people, find the solutions you need and share what you are doing and how you can help.

Our World Café structure helps you meet many different people and target the topics that are important to you.

Topics we will cover include:

- How to commission for ISFs
- Policy opportunities and obstacles
- Using ISFs to strengthen neighbourhood life
- Research and practice on ISFs
- Good support is community action
- ISFs empowering social work
- Technology to support personalisation
- Achieving citizenship for all

Share your story and sponsor a table

By becoming a sponsor, you will be promoting your organisation to a national audience, whilst standing alongside the people and organisations shaping self-directed support.

You'll gain meaningful visibility, valuable relationships, and association with a trusted, progressive community. And your support helps keep this national dialogue open and inclusive, ensuring the sector continues to move towards systems that are both humane and sustainable.

SPONSORSHIP OFFER

EVENT SPONSOR PACKAGE

£500 + VAT

- Up to two tickets for your team
- Signage on the main conference platform
- Host a World Café table for at least 3 sessions with 10 people per session
- Share your resources and materials with up to 150 people
- Significant social media recognition of your support
- Recognition on the day's agenda

SPECIAL RATE

£250 + VAT

We are pleased to be able to offer a **discount** on the **Event Sponsor package** for **charities**, **user-led organisations** and similar **social purpose/social justice organisations.**

SUPPORTER

£300 + VAT

Support the event and get up to two tickets for your team plus the same recognition as a sponsor but **without the obligation to host a World Café table.**

Entry is by ticket only and places are limited.
Please get in touch to confirm your sponsorship, and if you have any questions we're here to help.

Sanja Ilieva, Events and Partnerships Coordinator

sanja@selfdirectedfutures.co.uk

AGENDA AM

WELCOME

Simon Duffy and Wendy Perez will open the conference and begin the day with an introduction: **Why ISFs Are Essential**

10:00 AM

MY SUPPORT, MY MONEY - THE DIMENSIONS JOURNEY

Jimmy Pearson and Sinead McHugh Hicks
Dimensions have made a strategic commitment to ISFs and people like Jimmy are proving that it works.

10:10 AM

ISFS IN MY NEIGHBOURHOOD

Faith Walton & Karyn Kirkpatrick, KeyRing
KeyRing are leading work on the innovative use of ISFs and Faith is demonstrating people want to make a difference where they live.

10:35 AM

EMBRACING ISFS

Mary Gardner, Sheffield City Council
Sheffield City have been successfully piloting and growing the use of ISFs and its opening up new horizons for personalisation.

11:00 AM

EQUALD

Liz Croot, Sheffield University
Sheffield University researchers have worked with disabled people and professionals to define good practice in the delivery of ISFs.

11:15 PM

MORNING BREAK

11:30 AM

ISFS THE NATIONAL PICTURE

Chris Watson, Self Directed Futures
Self Directed Futures has been the leading champion of ISFs for 10 years. Chris will explain how things have changed and what is the national picture today.

11:45 AM

AGENDA PM

WORLD CAFÉ 1

There will be up to 15 different tables covering multiple topics, and sharing stories, research, best practice, data and describing helpful technologies. You will visit 3 different tables to listen and discuss. **12:00 PM**

LUNCH **13:30 PM**

WORLD CAFÉ 2

There will be up to 15 different tables covering multiple topics, and sharing stories, research, best practice, data and describing helpful technologies. You will visit 3 different tables to listen and discuss. **14:15 PM**

AFTERNOON BREAK **15:45 PM**

TRANSFORMING YOUR SUPPORT

Mari Galletly, Enable and Tim Keilty, New Prospects Association **16:00 PM**
ISFs mean nothing unless there are good support providers who can provide the creative, flexible and personalised support you need.

POLICY CHALLENGE

Simon Duffy, Citizen Network and Wendy Perez, See Me As Me **16:15 PM**
It should not be so hard to do something that improves lives and is efficient. It is time that policy-makers get on board and we have a plan to make that happen.

CLOSE

You don't need to rush off. There will be refreshments and a further opportunity to catch up with people. **16:30 PM**

CURRENT SPONSORS

dimensions

University of Sheffield

EQUALD

Qenable

SELF DIRECTED FUTURES

new prospects

KeyRing
... We're Life Changing

NIHR | School for Social Care Research

www.citizen-network.org