I write in support of the recent submission by SCVO and STUC to seek funding from the Scottish Government to enable third sector organisations to increase levels of voter registration in the lead up to the 2014 Referendum – and higher levels of participation in the referendum.

The work of our organisation is focused on working alongside many of Scotland’s very poorest individuals and communities. It is amongst this group of people and neighbourhoods that democratic participation is often at its very lowest. We are keen to work alongside others to seek to address this issue not just around the referendum but for the long term future of our nation.

Whatever the result of next year’s vote, it is in everyone’s interest that this occasion is taken as a significant opportunity to help to re-engage significant groups of people who currently feel disenfranchised with the democratic structures of our society.

Certainly we would be keen, in collaboration with others, to take whatever steps we can to increase voter registration and voter turnout amongst traditionally excluded groups in what is potentially the most significant vote in Scotland for generations.

Martin Johnstone
1 July 2013