



ALTERNATIVE GRANTS APPLICATION

Organisation:

Z's Defence Academy

Project Brief:

Project Name: Stop·Think·Self-Defence

Funding Requested: £13,730

Total Project Cost: £13,730

Project Duration: 18-hour programme delivered across three locations (Burnley, Accrington, and Blackburn), running between **December 2025 and June 2026.**

Start Date: 16 December 2025

Location: Burnley, Accrington, and Blackburn (East Lancashire)

Project Aim:

The project aims to prevent and reduce violence against women and girls (VAWG) by improving personal safety, confidence, and situational awareness among women and girls who face heightened risk due to cultural, social, and economic barriers. By providing culturally competent, women-only self-defence and empowerment training, the project seeks to reduce fear, vulnerability, and isolation while strengthening resilience, early help-seeking, and community safety across East Lancashire.

Key Interventions:

The project will deliver a coordinated, co-produced programme comprising both intensive and sustained elements:

- Delivery of a **6-hour intensive self-defence and awareness course** for each cohort, covering physical self-protection techniques, risk recognition, de-escalation, boundary setting, and street awareness.
- **Twelve weekly 1-hour follow-on physical empowerment sessions** to reinforce learning, prevent skill fade, and build confidence and resilience over time.
- All sessions delivered in **women-only spaces** by **female instructors**, ensuring cultural sensitivity, safeguarding, and accessibility for participants who may otherwise be excluded from mixed-gender provision.
- Trauma-informed discussion and reflection components addressing harassment, coercive control, reporting pathways, and emotional wellbeing.
- Distribution of **personal safety alarms** to participants to support ongoing safety and reassurance beyond the sessions.

Three cohorts will be delivered in parallel across the three locations, improving access and ensuring equitable reach across Burnley, Accrington, and Blackburn.

Partners & Roles:

- **Z's Defence Academy (Lead Delivery Partner):** Specialist delivery of the self-defence programme, instructor provision, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation.
- **Aspire Burnley Community Development:** Engagement and support for South Asian, BAME, and marginalised adult women, community outreach, safeguarding, and culturally competent delivery environments.
- **Bahja Initiative (Accrington):** Engagement with girls and young women (particularly ages 11–17), youth outreach, venue support, and safeguarding.
- **VAWG and Domestic Abuse Services (e.g. Humraaz, The Wish Centre, Safenet) and PCSOs:** Referral pathways, safeguarding advice, and links to wider support and reporting mechanisms.

This partnership model combines trusted community access with specialist delivery expertise and statutory alignment.

Expected Outcomes:

The project is expected to deliver measurable improvements for participants and wider community safety, including:

- Increased confidence, self-esteem, and perceived safety among women and girls.
- Improved ability to recognise, avoid, and respond to threatening situations, harassment, and early signs of coercive control.
- Increased awareness of rights, reporting pathways, and available support services.
- Reduced fear and vulnerability in public spaces, particularly among women from culturally diverse communities.
- Strengthened peer networks and informal support systems, contributing to longer-term resilience and empowerment.

At community level, the project supports prevention, early intervention, and improved trust in support services aligned with PCC VAWG priorities.

Evaluation & Success Measures:

A proportionate but robust evaluation framework will be embedded throughout delivery, including:

- Baseline and post-programme confidence and safety surveys.
- Attendance, engagement, and completion tracking across all sessions.
- Qualitative feedback through participant reflection, testimonials, and case studies.
- Instructor and partner feedback on behavioural change, confidence, and engagement.
- Monitoring referrals into wider support services and community safety pathways.

Evaluation findings will be shared with partners and used to inform future practice and potential scale-up.

Funding Request:

The PCC funding of **£13,730** will cover all direct delivery costs, including sessional delivery, follow-on coaching, venue hire, coordination and evaluation, participant safety equipment, volunteer expenses, and safeguarding support. The project represents a targeted, preventative investment aligned with PCC priorities, offering strong value for money through early intervention and community-led delivery.

Priority Supported:

**Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls
Rebuild Public Trust and Confidence**