

This video discusses the process and implications of judicial review in the UK, particularly in relation to the rising trend of crowdfunding for legal challenges against government bodies. Judicial review is a critical legal procedure enabling the public to contest government actions they believe to be unlawful, though the high costs associated with such cases can deter individuals from pursuing them. Legal aid has significantly declined since reforms in 2012, leaving most potential litigants without financial support for their cases.

As a result, many individuals have turned to crowdfunding to finance judicial reviews. A key platform for this is Crowd Justice, which specializes in funding legal cases. The author conducted an empirical study analyzing 413 crowdfunding cases related to judicial reviews, revealing that a sizable portion of cases were public interest litigations—those affecting broader community concerns rather than individual issues.

Notably, the Good Law Project emerged as a significant player in this arena, successfully using crowdfunding for cases relating to various pressing policy issues. However, the study also found a disparity in funding, with a few high-profile cases attracting the majority of donations, while many others struggled financially. The findings highlight that inexperienced litigants, including local community groups, are increasingly involved in public interest litigation, suggesting that crowdfunding is democratizing access to legal processes.

The analysis underscores the diverse landscape of public interest litigation, challenging traditional views that associate it primarily with established civil society organizations. The conclusion calls for more nuanced understanding and research into the experiences of various groups using crowdfunding for legal challenges, especially local community organizations.