



**CONSORTIUM**  
for stronger lgbt+ communities

# **LGBT+ Consortium**

**Annual Report & Accounts**  
**Year ended 31<sup>st</sup> Mar 2023**  
**Team Takeover Report**

**Company no: 3534603**

**Charity no: 1105502**

## Contents

Introduction	2
Our approach to the Team Takeover	4
Paul – Chief Executive’s Remarks	6
Partnership and Development Team	8
Hels – Head of Partnership and Development	9
Laura – National LGBT Partnership Coordinator	11
Ray – National LGBT Partnership Officer	13
Mylo – Rainbow Badges Development Officer	15
Leo – Communications Officer	16
Grant Giving Activity	17
LJ & Leyla – Equity Fund Co-Leads	18
Damien – TRANSforming Futures Grants Officer	21
Membership and Engagement	22
Briony – Head of Membership and Engagement	23
Lucie – Engagement Officer	25
Philip – Information and Engagement Officer	26
Nikita – Racial Justice Engagement Officer	27
Marita – London Engagement Lead	28
Nat – London Engagement Officer	30
Violet – Trans Engagement Officer	31
Next steps and future preparation	32
Our Funders	33
Contact Us	34



**CONSORTIUM**  
for stronger lgbt+ communities



## Introduction

Complementing our annual Board of Trustees report, which focusses on top-level reporting against our strategic pillars, this year we also present a team takeover addition.

This has allowed each member of the team to reflect their own operational work in their own words. Our member mandated Strategic Plan for 2021-2026 is now 18 months into action, and we are committed to being transparent and accountable on our progress, so we hope you enjoy reading both elements of our reporting and can get a stronger feel for the diversity of work undertaken by our team of 17.

You can find the Board of Trustees annual report, [here](#).



(Most!) of Consortium's staff team and trustee board at our annual conference Jan 23.



## Our approach to the Team Takeover

To help draw both operational and strategic elements of our work together, we use a series of graphics to link the elements of the strategic plan. We have used these graphics to link staff reports to strategic areas of focus. These images and how they relate to the three central pillars of Resourcing, Resilience and Sustainability are highlighted in the following pictures. They are accompanied by golden thread of Togetherness, reflecting the critical areas of equity, proactive comms and collaboration which weave through everything we do. For more detailed information, please refer to our [Strategic Plan for 2021-2026](#).



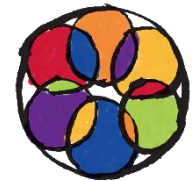


## Paul – Chief Executive



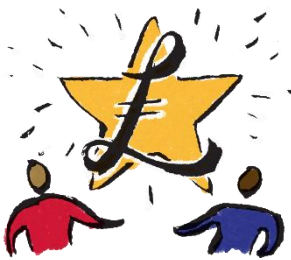
This reporting period represents our first opportunity to report back to our membership, and other stakeholders, using a whole team approach and I am excited we are presenting in this way. Consortium is a network of LGBT+ organisations, but also an incredible team of people working every day for our membership. It is important as a team that we give visibility to the team, are collectively accountable and not seen as one homogenous entity, just as we try to highlight for the sector as a whole. Across Consortium's team of 17 there is a wealth of experience, both lived and professional, and this is what makes our work so exciting and enables us to undertake such a range of practical activities. Enjoy exploring more about our work, and here are some highlight elements from my role.

It somewhat feels like a broken record, but this represents another challenging reporting period—with negatives happening across our communities but countering this our communities rise to these challenges and grabbing opportunities that crop up. Our work as the umbrella body has tried to galvanise on those opportunities, from securing financial resources for some of the most intersectional and marginalised parts of our communities through our co-produced Equity Fund to supporting emerging collaborations like the Helplines Partnership, which aims to create more sustainable support for LGBT+ people across the UK and help increase the available datasets about our communities. All our activities have highlighted to me that our central pillars of resourcing, resilience and sustainability remain critical to the future of our LGBT+ sectors.



Politically, this has to be the most challenging environment I have found myself in across 20 years of working in the LGBT+ sector. Our communities, particularly Trans and Non-Binary communities are being used to centre so-called culture wars and it is crucial that our work to break down the enormous levels of misinformation and hatred, and turn this into proactive positive messaging, continues to expand. We can't however do this alone—it requires the whole of the LGBT+ sector, both geographically and thematically, to come together and fight for a society that is inclusive, progressive and defends basic human rights. Having seen the sector come together to defend our trans communities at key moments such as the UK Government's decision to exclude trans people from Conversion Practice legislation gives me such hope that we are truly stronger together and are working as one—in ways I have never seen before.





Strategically, this also helps affirm our decision to split some of our resource and capacity so we not only remain as the sector's umbrella body, but we can also develop as a specialist funder. We have used our position to strengthen our approach in this area and have now successfully distributed nearly £1.5m, or 232 small grants in total. This has to be the beginning and we are driving our participative approach to grant giving hard. We remain passionate about developing an LGBT+ Endowment Fund, to create long-term resource available to LGBT+ organisations who are small, large, geographically spread, working with intersectional and marginalised parts of our communities. Our limited resource right now is focused on those most marginalised and under-resourced as we look to create better parity right across the sector.

Longer term though we know financial resource and other support is needed across all organisations and we haven't forgotten that. We continue to advocate for other funders to play their part in providing funding and are hopeful of developing new collaborations to support this.



I also want to use this opportunity to thank the incredible Board of Trustees at Consortium. Alongside our members and our staff team, they complete the triangle of moving parts that keep Consortium moving forward. They have brought a diversity of thought to strategic conversations but have also been steadfast in our need to stay focussed on future preparations. By actively supporting our actions to be trans affirmative, encouraging our role as a funder and helping us make new connections they exemplify why the charitable model provides a unique approach to solving complex societal challenges. I would like to pay particular tribute to our outgoing Chair, Chris French. His strong, calm and collegiate approach has provided the perfect conditions for what a strategic board should be and how it can support the operational team. As we enter look to bring our new Chair on board, I am excited to explore how we build on this so Consortium continues to demonstrate what good governance can look like.



## **Partnerships and Development Team**

Our P&D team is one of our key mechanisms for remaining agile across our fast-changing sectors. It allows the organisation to support collaborations and fill gaps where others across the sector are unable to lead, or where we have been asked to provide strategic leadership. It also allows us to further test and develop our participatory grant work, which we hope to become a key facet in our own sustainability, alongside that of the wider LGBT+ sector.

For example, we co-lead on The National LGBT Partnership alongside LGBT Foundation, a strategic programme of the Department for Health and Social Care and NHS England. As the umbrella body, we are able to ensure the Partnership engages a diverse range of organisations, both thematically and geographically. This ensures the sector has input into a range of health inequalities discussions and can shape policy and practice. The model adopted means we can draw on frontline expertise and contribute financially, as well as with additional support, to ensure those with the best experience are driving the work.

The following pages reflect the activity of those working across the Partnerships and Development Team.

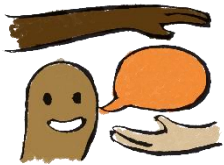




## Hels – Head of Partnerships and Development

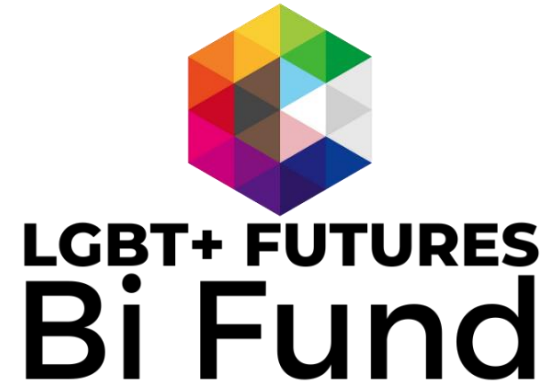


Over the course of the year we've undertaken various activity towards growing our grantmaking capacity, and distributing new grants. In June 2022 we held a funder roundtable, working alongside the Baring Foundation to bring together grant makers to share our approach and development of the Equity Fund, with the objective of encouraging more funders to support our onward grantmaking work and the long-term development of the LGBT+ Futures Fund. In November, we also secured an additional £30k for the Equity Fund from Barrow Cadbury. Following a partnership with SilverPride, we have successfully allocated £4,000 in onward grants to offer an uplift to Equity Fund grantees awarded through the Older People's Panel. The Bi+ Fund, in partnership with Bi Pride UK was launched in January 2023.



In Summer 2022, we held a closed meeting alongside member organisations and wider third-sector groups focussing on 'trans inclusion and gender identity in the third sector', which offered space for organisations to share their successes and challenges as trans-inclusive charities against a backdrop of hostility, and offered attendees better opportunities to share successful approach and to build relationships towards stronger joint messages. This was extremely well-received by attendees and there is a great deal of appetite for further development of this group and future conversations. Additionally, we've connected in with a group of Scottish civil society organisations around their response to the Gender Recognition Reforms, and are in touch about how we can share insights and messaging for any future developments around this matter, which could be very positive for showing the support for our communities beyond our own sector.

We have launched a new communications network as a space for communications staff across the sector to share upcoming matters, develop skills and offer peer support.





We've developed our corporate offer through the creation of the corporate supporters network, which builds on the network model we use with members while also focussing on building lasting relationships and securing funds from new partners. We've also been building new relationships and engaging prospective corporate supporters through bespoke pitches and engagement with corporates, which has led to new relationships with organisations such as Google and Wickes towards a long-term goal of securing a sustainable income-generating partnership with these organisations. We also introduced sponsorship to our 2021/2022 AGM and conference (which took place in January 2023) with companies paying for stands at the conference. This approach was something of a pilot but was very well received by both the companies and attendees and is something which could be strongly developed for future AGMs, particularly to engaging interesting new companies with our work.

We are speaking to Cara Friend about a joint role focussing on sector development in Northern Ireland, recognising that the landscape for LGBT+ organisations varies widely across the four nations. We are also in touch with OutScotland about opportunities for greater partnership and collaboration to bring together our Scotland-based members to support with sector development there.



Both the National LGBT+ Partnership and the Rainbow Badges programme have continued in their successes, with new Consortium team members joining each programme and fully embedding a collaborative, equity focussed approach to these programmes with great success.

We have continued our engagement with the National Helplines Partnership, supporting the helpline partners to develop a vision for the future of the partnership and strengthening ties across the sector.



## Laura – National LGBT Partnership Coordinator



In the past 12 months we have developed the Partnership to be more sustainable, and to remove the single point of failure by only having one person on the work. This has been achieved by splitting what was a single full-time role for the Partnership into two part-time roles and assigning work more clearly. Integration from the LGBT Foundation's side has improved and resulted in more of a "team" rather than a single role.

Model Development – The National LGBT Partnership now consists of 39 Community Collaborator organisations whose expertise vary based on geographical location, health specialism and represented community. We also have 9 Equity Representatives who act as voices for specific demographics within the LGBTQIA+ community, to ensure that work remains intersectional and representative.



In the past year we have conducted quarterly steering groups with the Equity Reps to keep them updated on the core projects that the Partnership is working on and get feedback on these projects to produce more accessible work that reaches a wider range of people. The broader Community Collaborators have a more flexible relationship with the Partnership, whereby updates are made on work via mailing lists and Collaborators can engage as is suitable or is dictated by their capacity.

Recently, we have been reviewing how this past year has gone and are in the process of more clearly defining the expectation of Community Collaborators and Equity Reps in written documents, to ensure that everyone feels appropriately connected to the work of the Partnership, and kept in the loop.

Core Projects – In the past year I have been working on one of three core projects under the Health and Wellbeing Alliance – LBT+ Women & Femme's Sexual and Reproductive Health. This was a comprehensive research study of LBT+ women and femmes experiences with sexual health, including accessing services and support. The report for this study is currently being written. The study comprised of a survey with over 550 responses from LBT+ women and femmes aged 16+ living in England, and three roundtable events, alongside desk research. The project was worked on in collaboration with Equity Reps, HWA partners and the NHSE LGBT team, and some of the results were presented at LBT+ Women's Health Week 2023 to increase awareness and anticipation of the upcoming report.

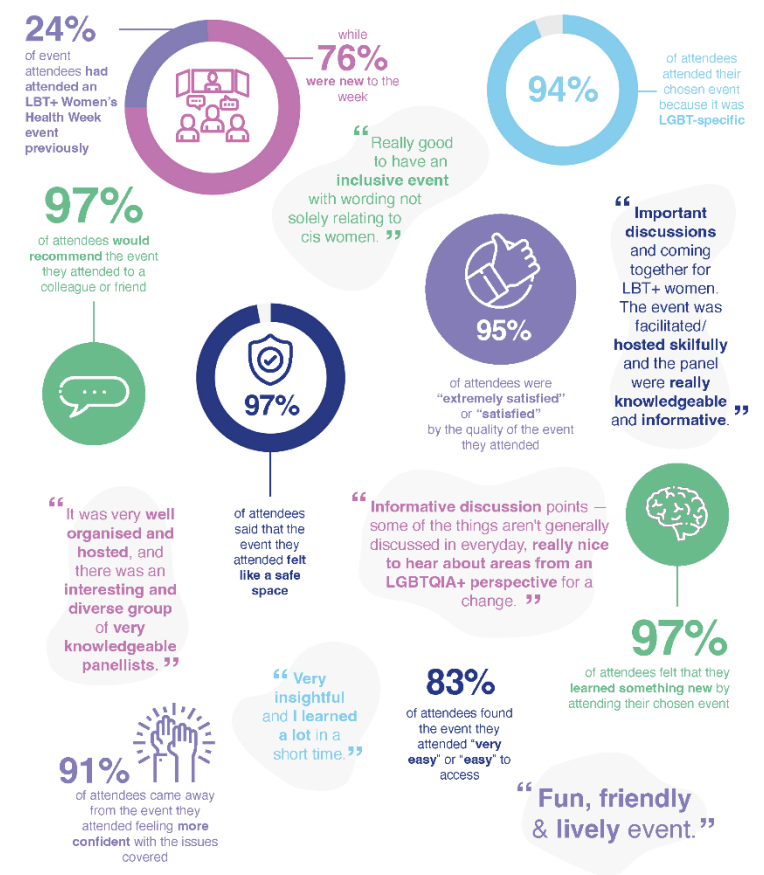


The National  
  
 LGBT Partnership



LBT+ Women’s Health Week 2023 – LBT+ Women’s Health Week is always a collaborative occasion, with Community Collaborators contributing their own events and insights to the week. This year’s week was a success, with 97% of attendees saying they would recommend the event to a friend or colleague, 97% of attendees saying the event they attended felt like a safe space, 95% saying they were “extremely satisfied” or “satisfied” with the event and 91% coming away from the event more confident in the issues covered. 76% of attendees were new to the week, meaning we continue to attract new people to the campaign. Meetings to prepare for LBT+ Women’s Health Week 2024 are already underway, and tactics to include even more Community Collaborators in next year’s events are being explored.

Other Work – Despite several delays, we were thrilled to finally publish the LGBTQIA+ COVID-19 report – The New Normal – and have also continued to develop the Hard Done Bi report which we are hoping will be published soon, alongside the bi+ pamphlet which is already complete.

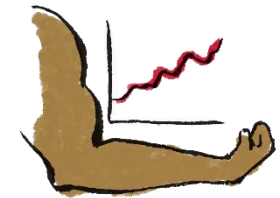


## Ray – National LGBT Partnership Officer

My work in the National LGBT Partnership during the reporting period has focused on: Developing a bi+ inclusivity training offer aimed at 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and healthcare organisations; Engaging and connecting with an extensive partnership of 38 LGBT organisations who centre on LGBTQI+ health; Advocating for LGBTQI+ perspectives among HW Alliance members and system partners (NHSE, DHSC, and UKSHA).

Consortium's strategic aims support the National LGBT Partnership by:

- Building data and evidence about LGBT+ health inequalities, enabling LGBT+ organisations to secure funding in response to these priorities (Resilience)
- Promoting LGBT+ inclusion across 3<sup>rd</sup> sector organisations working in health and care, shaping affirming and proactive messaging to challenge discrimination. (Resourcing)
- Maintaining a partnership of health-focussed LGBT+ organisations and facilitating conversations around health-specific solutions (Sustainability)



Previously, we found that bi+ people faced significant health inequalities. To build on this work, we've developed a training that puts our research into a wider context of biphobia and gives 3<sup>rd</sup> sector and health organisations the tools to embed bi+ inclusion in their delivery. The training highlights the vital role of LGBT+ organisations in improving bi+ inclusivity and health outcomes.

This was developed from July 2022 and delivered in January 2023 with consistent feedback and input from our Partnership Equity reps to ensure intersectionality.

The LGBT Partnership relies on engagement with its members to learn about emerging priorities and work in LGBT health. As a newer member of staff, I've been developing connections with members of the LGBT Partnership, learning about their work, what they've heard from their service users and how they have engaged with the LGBT Partnership in the past. This has allowed me to me to draw from the wealth of knowledge held in the Partnership to inform how I advocate for LGBT health priorities in HW Alliance meetings.

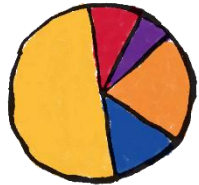




I've also spent the year learning how to navigate the HW Alliance and building connections with other HW Alliance organisations, such as Faithaction, Age UK, The Race Equality Foundation, Samaritans and Carers UK. This has allowed me to more effectively build LGBT+ health as an intersectional priority across organisations and support stakeholders to improve the inclusivity of their projects. This has included:

- Consulting on inclusive language in reports and resources, such as Samaritans' policy paper on LGBTQ+ identity, alcohol and suicide and Carers UK's report on the experiences of LGB carers.
- Providing connections to members of the Partnership to ensure their projects include LGBT organisations
- Recruiting people with lived experience to attend a focus group on multi-disciplinary teams with National Voices.

As well as this, I've attended 'reactive' meetings requested by system partners, including a roundtable on elective care hosted by the British Red Cross where I made space for recognising trans healthcare as an elective care priority, and a meeting with the intermediate care and virtual wards team where I was able to provide guidance on effective communications with LGBTQI+ people.



Another part of my Partnership work has been securing funding for a piece of impact-measurement work on the cost of living crisis for LGBT communities. We were able to bid for HW Alliance priority project funding to deliver desk-based and qualitative research. This research continues to an evidence base for future funding applications within the sector, resourcing organisations to address the impact of the cost of living crisis.



## Mylo – Rainbow Badges Development Officer



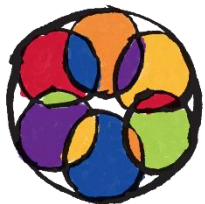
I work in partnership with NHS England to facilitate the NHS LGBTI+ Sounding Board. The board is made up of 20 volunteers and LGBTI+ community members. We meet monthly with guest speakers from a variety of NHS specialisms. These meetings support Sounding Board members to directly interact with and provide feedback to NHS services. We recently met with NHS Specialised Commissioning (responsible for the commissioning of Gender Dysphoria Clinics). A huge amount of discussion and action planning came out of this meeting, and we are looking to hold a follow-up Sounding Board with Specialised Commissioning in September 2023.

More recently I started to support Sounding Board members to organise within Subgroups, enabling them to network and collaborate further as team members. Subgroups currently focus on the following themes:

- Trans and Non-Binary Healthcare
- LGBTI+ Mental Health
- Neurodiversity and people with Learning Disabilities
- Primary Care.



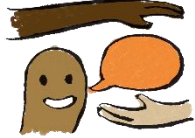
I have created an LGBT+ focused resource pack which will be shared across NHS Trusts participating in Rainbow Badges. The pack is designed as an educational and service-specific resource for trusts working to develop their workplace culture and healthcare provision for LGBT+ communities. The pack has an intersectional focus and will be updated regularly. It also contains regional sections which aim to link NHS Trusts with their local LGBT+ organisations.



Encouraging collaboration and resource sharing between NHS Trusts is a key part of the Rainbow Badges programme. We recently held the first of several Network Forums. These are themed meetings in which NHS Trusts are encouraged to discuss and share best practice around LGBT+ healthcare provision. Trusts can also access guidance for their assessment process within Rainbow Badges. We had 30 staff members from NHS trusts across the country attend our session in April, which gave opportunity for plenty of shared insights, information exchange and networking.



## Leo – Communications Officer



- Member Organisation Features – Spotlighting member organisations on social media, sometimes to align with awareness days. These features allow the organisation to promote their work and connect them with new audiences.
- Highlighting awareness days – Creating social media content around awareness days / weeks / months.
- Greater accessibility on website by creating directional videos for the members

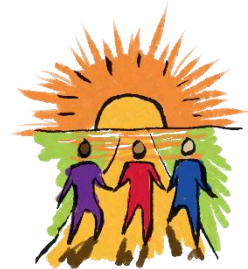
dashboard to make navigation easier. This has increased our digital offering and made it easier for members to utilise the resources on the website

- Adding a “Communications” section to the Members Dashboard and working with the website huddle to improve accessibility. This has made it easier for members to access our resources.
- Video content e.g., Instagram lives, interviews with members, etc. These help to promote our work and the work of our members along with our podcasts and blog posts
- Newsletter. The newsletter includes sector news, Consortium news, and member news. This keeps members informed of the events in the sector and encourages them to share their achievements.



- Organisational Spotlights for Equity Fund grantees. This spotlights the recipients of the Equity fund and helps to raise awareness of the fund itself, as well as the work that our members are doing.
- LGBTQIA+ exhibitions for IDAHOBIT 2022 and Trans Awareness Week 2022. These exhibitions drove engagement and were focused on shaping affirming messaging and engaging with new audiences.
- Comms Strategy. The emerging communications strategy is helping to formalise our current processes as well as implementing new ways of working and being proactive with our comms. This will help us to be flexible in response to the changing climate around LGBTQ+ issues in the UK.

- Creation of Comms Network. The comms network was set up to provide support, networking and skill sharing opportunities for people responsible for communications within our member organisations.





## Grant Giving Activity

Whilst we are still not at a point where our Grant Giving and Philanthropy development has its own department, it has become an integral and important part of our own Sustainability and Resilience, and Resourcing of the sector. We want to acknowledge this in our annual report and highlight this activity which crosses Consortium's departments.

The work reported on by the following team members is grant giving specific, whilst the staff delivering the work practically sit within one of our two designated departments. We have also started exploring a more matrix approach to this type of work, so we can benefit from the knowledge and expertise needed to successfully deliver. For example, our Equity Fund team are based within all parts of the organisation and have different line managers, but the working across each other allows us to bring the right expertise into the room at all times.



## LJ – Equity Fund Co-Lead: Grants & Leyla – Equity Fund Co-Lead: Projects

This year, the Equity Fund Project Officer and Grants Officer oversaw great development in the Equity Fund with five rounds of panels and 77 awards throughout the year and the beginning of wraparound support for grantees. More details about the breakdown of these funds can be found in our [Interim Evaluation Report](#).

The Project Officer supported community-led LGBT+ organisations to access new sources of funding, develop new collaborative partnerships, network, develop leadership capacity, and explore sustainable development and growth of their organisations. The Grants Officer supported the grant-making process by supporting applicants to complete their applications, assisting Community Panellists with their assessment process through due diligence, and providing grantees with ongoing tailored support around grant-funded work. Following the distribution of the grants, both officers turned their attention to wraparound support, focusing on enabling organisations to access the knowledge, skills, and connections they need to move forward and grow sustainably, beyond the lifetime of the Fund.

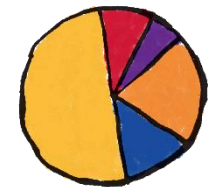


In partnership with the National Lottery Community Fund, the Equity Fund delivers specialist onward grant giving using a fully participative model. Additionally, utilising existing grant-making capacity and mechanisms funded by the NLCF, we brought Comic Relief and Barrow Cadbury Trust on board as partners to fund grants in the devolved nations and additional grants for trans and non-binary groups, the community of focus from which we received by far the most applications.

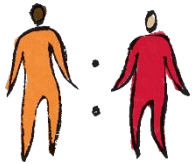
Additionally, the officers shared learnings around participative funding and how best to support intersectional LGBT+ groups with a wide range of partners, including community foundations, public and third sector funders, and as part of research into best practices around diversity, equity, and inclusion in grant-giving.

One of the most important contributing factors to the success of the Equity Fund and this participative model was the involvement of our five Community Panels, made up of panellists with lived experience from the communities of focus. The officers oversaw their involvement in engagement and outreach, application assessments, and panel meetings.

Some of the most important learnings of the Equity Fund are around the nature of wraparound support needed by grantees at different stages of their organisational journey. This support has included pairing grantees with fiscal hosts or, in a few cases, hosting grants ourselves. Wraparound support for particular organisations has been uniquely tailored to the needs of each group but has included helping groups open their first bank account, pairing grantees with fiscal hosts, hosting grants, and answering queries around governance. Wraparound support has also included larger



workshops and networking spaces, based on trends identified across the grantees, both from conversations that the officers have had with grantees and from the interim evaluation report, produced by Civil Society Consulting. When it comes to wraparound support, we are continuously learning, but we get more and more excited everyday about the potential of intersectional LGBT+ work across the UK and how best we can support and strengthen groups undertaking this important work.



Through the wraparound support offered through the Fund, we have identified the need for additional specialist networks, especially for neurodivergent LGBT+ people. The officers are still refining what this network might look like. However, the officers have taken the initial steps of having individual exploratory conversations with grantees and hosting neurodivergent peer support sessions for neurodivergent LGBT+ leaders. In the future, the officers anticipate facilitating more opportunities for peer support and skill-swapping and look forward to developing this aspect of our work.



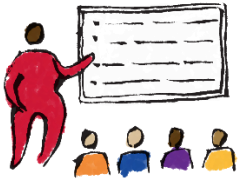
Additionally, through our wraparound support, the officers have identified the need across our grantees for additional capacity in the areas of fundraising and grant-writing. The Racial Justice Network also identified a similar need. In collaboration with the Racial Justice Engagement Officer and the Baring Foundation, we began developing a workshop tailored to the needs of these two groups.



Leadership development is another integral part of the wraparound support we are offering our grantees. Co-facilitated with a grantee/ Panel Member, the beginning of 2023 was spent planning a series of sessions to deliver across the rest of the year. With events such as a roundtable and in-person workshop event in May 2023 will serve as an initial opportunity for grantees to share their experiences of being intersectional leaders and their needs, whether that be training or coaching, peer support, regular open meetings, or workshop sessions. Cross-community leadership learning will be a priority for our grantees alongside exploring the barriers our leaders have, such as a lack of representation and time constraints, and what we can do as a sector to combat this together.

The officers have supported groups to improve their fundraising capacity through a number of mechanisms. While the Fund was open for applications, we hosted a weekly online fund support drop-in session, where groups could join to ask questions about applying to the fund and be signposted to other relevant fundraising opportunities. The officers also provided tailored support around completing Fund applications to any organisation that requested it. Since the closure of the fund, the officers have continued to support the fundraising capacity of intersectional LGBT+ groups by developing workshops and panels, hosting Q&A sessions for other funds, and signposting groups to relevant fundraising opportunities.





Fundraising continues to be the main topic of support requests, so we are continuing to develop our support in this area. Currently, this work includes the development of fundraising workshops, planning an end-of-programme showcase event for funders, and communicating relevant funding opportunities to grantees through our fundraising newsletter. We have also seen how networking and peer support among grantees strengthens organisations through mutual learning, and we are interested to explore intentional, structured peer support and networking opportunities further, with an emphasis on fundraising.

Through the Fund, we encouraged and actively sought out intersectional LGBT+ groups that may not have had many interactions with mainstream funders or have worked without much contact with other similar groups locally and nationally. Both the Grants Officer and Project Officer have supported collaboration and the widening of the reach of such groups through networking and strategic introductions, as well as by boosting engagement through Consortium's channels. The officers have hosted online grantee drop-in sessions, and in this environment, groups have been able to meet each other directly or request introductions from Consortium or other grantees to groups doing similar work. Additionally, other groups and individuals involved in wider Fund work, such as Community Panellists, have benefited from the networking and peer support opportunities created and the resulting collaborations.

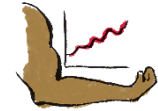


## Damien – TRANSforming Futures Grants Officer



During my time with Consortium, I have been working as grant officer of the TRANSforming Futures partnership. In the space of seven months, we have held two successful rounds of application receiving and decision making with 21 (subject to change) applicants receiving financial and/or non-financial support!

This work greatly compliments Consortium's strategic aim of grant development as TRANSforming Futures is a project supporting trans-led projects to improve the criminal justice and healthcare systems for trans people, and the trans and nonbinary community is a group who can often come across difficulty with accessing funding, particularly for grassroots groups. TF's work also fits in with Consortium's strategic aim of supporting new and innovative partnerships, as the partnership is made up of 10 LGBTQ+ and trans organisations whose representatives have worked together to award applications broadly across England carrying out a diverse range of projects.



TRANSforming Futures received a total of 123 applications across the two application windows and applicants ranged from individuals to informal and grassroots groups, to well-known organisations. From pre-existing work to new ideas, with a widespread all across England. This level of applications demonstrates the need for funding streams specific to the TNBI community.



As we move into the next stage of TRANSforming Futures, we will continue to make use of the amazing partnership to provide skill and information sharing to those we have awarded, alongside additional support they may request from us. We will also be pursuing networking opportunities for TF awardees, giving them opportunities to connect with each other which will hopefully benefit groups on a local as well as wider scale.

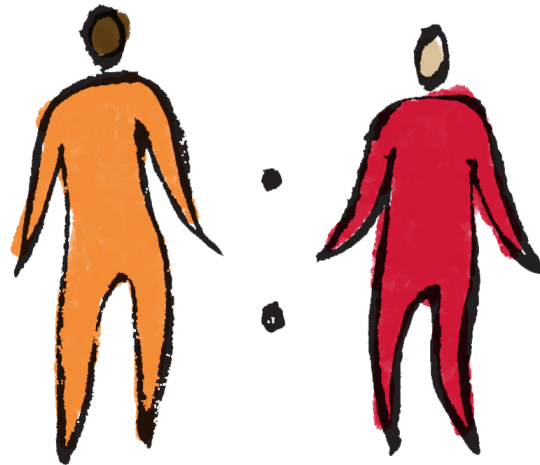
**TRANSFORMING  
FUTURES**



## Membership and Engagement

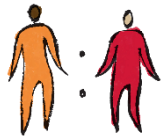
Our membership and engagement domain is the other operational focus at Consortium. As a membership and umbrella body, it is vital we have capacity to support our members to grow, to develop, to resources themselves and to thrive. We have tried to adapt this as our membership has evolved, resulting in our specialist engagement roles exploring racial justice and trans and non-binary issues working alongside our broader Engagement Officers. What is important in this, is how we ensure this dual approach doesn't create a segregated system where specialist issues are the sole concern of a specialist officer. We are working hard to ensure our engagement approach is one where expertise and skills are shared across the team to keep that sense of shared delivery and mutual support.

The following pages reflect the activity of those working across the Membership and Engagement Team.



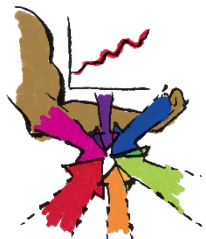
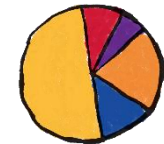
## Briony – Head of Membership and Engagement

As a small charity, supporting a membership that is made up mostly of small charities, we have had to work hard to mitigate the impacts of a range of issues on ourselves whilst also being creative about finding ways to support our members who are going through the same. Despite all this, we and our members have continued to do incredible work, benefiting literally millions of people in the UK across our communities, their families, friends and wider allies. In the face of negativity and abuse, we have all achieved so much, and it's hard to feel anything but enormous pride about that.



Our engagement work over the last year has had a strong wellbeing focus, addressing the needs of a sector under extreme stress due to attacks on our communities, increased demand on services and ever-reducing resourcing. The team have worked hard to identify emerging areas of need and develop resources to address these. We have seen high levels of sickness and burnout across our member workforce, with some groups having to pause service provision at points due to reduced capacity or to protect team wellbeing. We have been supporting members to implement strategies to protect themselves in an increasingly hostile media and political environment and defend their teams and the folks they work with against targeted attacks and abuse. At the same time, our small team have had to operate in the same climate and we continue to work towards developing robust self-care practices and to look after ourselves and each other.

Our ongoing work with funders and commissioners highlighted a clear need to engage our sector with the importance of collating data to evidence all the fantastic work being done, and finding new ways of amplifying voices of those with lived experience in reporting. A lot of our smaller member groups especially told us that they did not feel confident talking about data and a workshop at our AGM & conference that focussed on storytelling was very well-attended and resulted in ongoing conversations.



We have continued to review the data that we collect about our membership and the work we do to support them. A key issue was addressing the low level of engagement with our Insights survey over recent years. We have reviewed where we have opportunities to obtain data from members in our existing systems and are implementing a new membership/renewal process which will allow us to record information annually in a way that is not burdensome to the groups we are supporting, who we know have extremely limited capacity. We have also undertaken an accessibility review of our website and resources, to ensure that all members can quickly and easily find the information and guidance that they need.



The ongoing cost-of-living crisis has impacted on all of us and on multiply marginalised and oppressed groups especially so. The needs of our communities have continued to shift as we moved into a 'post-covid' world and the emergency funding that was available to our sector during the pandemic came to an end at the same time as Cost of Living crisis hit, a double-whammy that has affected member groups of all sizes. Many groups set-up to address gaps in their communities during the Covid lockdowns have either had to pivot to a different purpose, move into collaborative work with other organisations or shut down. This year, we have been working closely with a number of funders to evolve their understanding and practice in relation to funding small equity-led organisations who are having to navigate this new and challenging environment.

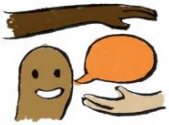
Looking ahead, it is clear that peer support and solidarity will be key to the success and stability of our sector. We will continue to promote and support our networks, encourage sharing of resources and facilitate collaboration and partnership.





## Lucie – Engagement Officer

As a member of the Engagement Team a key part of my role is to offer new members a welcome meeting and over the past year I met with 46 new member groups.



The welcome meetings allow me to talk through *how* Consortium supports our members and to ensure groups know how to access the Engagement team for 1:1 sessions and where to find our resources via the members dashboard. It is also an opportunity for groups to share their current needs or challenges so we can work together and create a tailored package of support.

This process allows to me to understand what types of resources are most needed, highlighting common themes and requirements as well as identifying any gaps in order to create new resources to ensure that we remain responsive. For example, we are aware of the huge pressures facing our sector and therefore to foster resilience we have updated and overhauled our wellbeing resources with a focus both on individual and organisational wellbeing and this was additionally a key theme at our AGM.



I am also a part of our Consortium EDI huddle and it has been great to be able to take our learning and journey as an organisation and share it with our members, again creating new resources as well as updating our digital offer to improve accessibility.

I lead the Training Providers Network, which brings together members who provide training as part of their organisational offer. We meet quarterly and the sessions topics are very much led by the network. In the past year we have explored: Interactive tools; Trans inclusive sector messaging; Hybrid meeting spaces and in line with the focus on sector wellbeing, our most recent session focused on trainer wellbeing.



I additionally facilitate a Safeguarding Network, which meets on an adhoc basis to address relevant topics as they arise. This is a relatively new network (launched in December 2021) and it has been fantastic working alongside Stonewall who lead the sessions. A key development that has come from this network, is the recognition that we need Designated Safeguarding Lead training that is fully LGBT+ inclusive. And we have been able to successfully secure funding for this to be developed, led by GIRES in partnership with the network members.



## Philip – Information and Engagement Officer



It has been another monumental year for Consortium, with the continued development and roll-out of our bespoke Grant Management System (GMS), ensuring LGBT+ organisations are well-resourced through our participative funding model. The adaptive nature of the GMS makes it possible for us to respond quickly to new funding sources and implement grants programmes to distribute these funds. It also allows us to host multiple funding programmes concurrently. The GMS continues to adapt and meet needs that could not have been anticipated when it was constructed. I am proud to continue to work on this project, along with our development company. It has been a very rewarding journey, and the feedback we continue to receive from partners and collaborators is extremely positive.



As an office-less organisation, our website is critical to how members and non-members engage with us. It is therefore vital we are proactive about accessibility. With this in mind, we have reviewed the structure of our website from an accessibility perspective and collaborated with our Equity and Inclusion Working Group, to gather their valuable feedback. We now have a tool that visitors can use to change the look and the way they can navigate our website, to meet accessibility needs they might have. To make this possible, we overhauled several critical webpages, allowing the integration the tool to function. This was no mean feat, but our commitment to accessibility and inclusive communication is of utmost importance.

Our membership continues to rise, having surpassed the milestone of 550 members. Most new members have joined us on the recommendation of other members, or on the back of targeted engagement. We have found that many members have retained a hybrid model of engagement with their service users post-Covid. We have been there with them, every step of the way – making sure they are well-resourced and have the tools they need to implement or maintain these practices. As well as keeping service users safe, and making them more accessible to a wider audience, members using this model have benefitted from savings compared to exclusively in-person engagement.

Membership engagement is at the core of what we do so we have been working on the ways in which members can access the benefits and resources that come with their Consortium membership. The Member Dashboard has been streamlined to make it easier to navigate, and the structure of the dashboard and subsequent pages have also been overhauled, so they work with the accessibility tool mentioned above. We have also been working on the implementation of a new Members Portal, which makes it even easier for members to update their details and manage their membership with Consortium at any time.



## Nikita – Racial Justice Engagement Officer

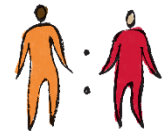
It's been an interesting first six months based within this role. If I had to pick the most impactful areas, it would be member engagement, sector development and wider EDI work within Consortium itself.

### Member engagement



There are ongoing mechanisms for folks who are a part of the Racial Justice Network – we have a closed monthly meeting for members who have experienced racism, and this space is open to others in the sector who are not a part of our membership. The meetings are communicated through a monthly newsletter, which also details relevant events, grants, and opportunities for folks to take part in (i.e., paid projects, steering groups etc).

Ensuring that members are supported is particularly important to me. There have been a few instances of members needed 1:1 support, and I've tried to foster a sense of community – e.g., connecting members to each other if they may have experience or support that the other needs, reaching out to other organisations to see if they can step in. My favourite part of engagement work so far has been the [Hidden Histories](#) Online Panel discussion where we discussed queer, intersectional history usually not seen within the mainstream with folks from 2 member organisations, and two prominent folks within the sector.



### Sector Development



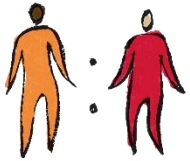
Consortium was invited to join a wider steering group around *Dismantling Racism* including group discussions, staff surveys and focus groups. Alongside others in the group, I've contributed to the wider report which will soon be published detailing recommendations for the sector when it comes to dismantling power structures like white supremacy.

### EDI work within Consortium

Last but not least, I believe that any development work must include leading from the front. We have started some wider EDI work here at Consortium – I have established racial justice actions for 2023 which are currently being agreed and formulated into clear goals. I've also started an audit of the resources we have on the dashboard to understand how useful they are intersectional orgs and folks, which will form part of a wider EDI audit at Consortium.



## Marita – London Engagement Lead



The last 12 months have been an exciting time in which we have made more new connections than ever – both within our sector – and beyond. For the first time we have more than 200 member groups in London, which is an incredible milestone for our organisation. We thrive working alongside our members, and by providing tailored 1:1 support and more than 40 funding drop-in sessions, our London members have benefited from a substantial support system.

Members in London have also had access to quarterly networking events taking place across the city. Our LGBTQIA+ migration network, that we deliver in collaboration with Micro Rainbow, is thriving and has been growing steadily since its inception in 2021. It has become a location for thought-provoking conversations on the pressing challenges of LGBT+ migration. The network is now established as a key peer support and connection point for groups who support LGBT+ refugees and asylum seekers, and through it we are able to share many opportunities, as well as important links with key institutions such as the GLA and their Migration Team.



Working in partnership and collaboration is a key component of our London work. Within the last year we have built strong connections with the three largest LGBT+ community spaces in London, with pan-London networks such as the Proud London Councils, the London LGBT Forums Network, the Pan-London Collective Forums, Queer Venues Forum and more. 2023 is also the final year of our Queer Leaders Forum partnership with the Outside Project and our FindOut partnership with LGBT Hero.



Both partnerships have provided organisations big and small with invaluable support and resources, and we now have great relationships with the partner organisations that will no doubt lead to future projects. For example, just a few months ago we supported the delivery of LGBT Hero's Don't Lose Your Vote campaign, which informed thousands of LGBT+ Londoners about the recent changes to electoral law.

One integral part of the sector development work in London is making sure that communities in the outer boroughs are not left behind. We have worked hard to engage decision-makers in local authorities, statutory service providers and infrastructure organisations, and we have provided practical support to emerging organisations who we are confident will change the activity and service landscape for LGBT+ communities in West London.



As we continue to provide support and guidance alongside West London partners, we turn our gaze towards boroughs in the southeast and northeast. Outer southeast London is potentially our biggest puzzle here, but it is one we remain excited and motivated to solve.



Looking at the 12 months ahead, we have just launched a survey which explores the organisational and structural challenges London's LGBT+ groups are facing. Capturing the needs and aspirations of LGBT+ groups in this intriguing piece of insight, we will work alongside our members towards a better London for all LGBT+ Londoners.



## Nat – London Engagement Officer

The LGBTQIA+ Migration Network is in partnership with Micro Rainbow, but why is this and our other networks valuable?



- Peer support provides a space where communities can connect over shared stories and identities, having all these groups in one space can be so powerful as there is a mutual understanding and a drive to move forward together.
- This network allows for reoccurring/common barriers with the migration community to be discussed, lending support for the shared experience as well as troubleshooting ways they can collaborate to support each other.
- The Network provides resources that help them to be resilient, sustainable and connected.
- It's a centralised place where we can link them with opportunities for funding and building relationships with key decision-makers like the GLA
- The Migration network had an in-person event around Pride across borders. This event allowed people to share stories of queer joy and resilience.
- By contextualising their experiences within the struggles that they are still facing, a discussion opened up on changes that they would like to see in London spaces, further sparking ideas and collaborations for the migration meet-up to be involved in. It was a wonderful experience of connecting communities and sharing stories.
- This event highlighted how important it is to keep these conversations going, and by listening to what the Network needs Consortium can best support these members.



### Sector Development and Partnerships



- Partnership with London LGBTQ+ Community Centre to support grassroots organisations
- A we have in the works that I am very excited about is the Preventing Burnout workshop. Preventing burnout is vital for the longevity of organisations; ensuring that organisations not only look after themselves structurally but also support the individuals working within their team.
- I have seen so many incredible groups crash within the first few years because they felt they needed to push themselves to match the pacing of other groups in the sector that have been running longer.
- By prioritising individual as well as community well-ness and rest, grassroots groups that attend the Burn out workshop can ensure that their foundational structure does not put their workers at risk of pushing themselves too far
- Help with resourcing our members have the tools to take care of their own wellbeing.



## Violet – Trans Engagement Officer



The Trans Organisations Network (TON) membership has grown by 21 to include a total of 89 member organisations. Our members benefit from monthly community building opportunities through the TON membership meetings, which take the form of both strategic organising as well as peer-to-peer resourcing sessions resulting in upwards of 20 hours of contact time a year. On an alternating biweekly basis, the TON newsletter is circulated to ensure full coverage of the events of each month without overloading members with individual requests for their time and attention. Both the monthly meetings and newsletters contribute to members' support networks and understanding of current challenges faced by the sector. By virtue of both outreach methods being digital, they serve as opportunities to engage a variety of geographically diverse organisations in both regional and national conversations on topics like trans healthcare, under 18 experiences, political campaigning, and more.



At the time of writing, a portion of the membership is collaborating on the development of a second Trans Manifesto—the first of which instigated the original formation of the Trans Organisations Network in 2013. Designed through a series of democratically led roundtables, the new Manifesto will serve as tool to better communicate with elected officials on key themes decided by and for the UK trans and gender diverse community. By partnering with TransActual, the Manifesto will be accompanied by materials such as a guide for approaching your MP about trans rights and a 'Trans Wiki' that aims to provide an objective evidence base and informational reservoir regarding the contemporary issues faced by trans people in the UK.



In my role as Trans Organisations Engagement Officer, I have also been involved with assessment and granting of the TRANSforming Futures funding of which Consortium is a key partner. Where the sector struggles with engagement and retainment of multiply marginalised trans organisations and projects, TRANSforming Futures targets those initiatives directly for increased financial and organisational support. Given that the majority of the partnered organisations orchestrating the fund are Consortium and/or TON members, TRANSforming Futures exemplifies our commitment to diversifying the sector and supporting intersectional organisations and projects that might otherwise go unfunded through traditional means.



## **Next Steps and Future Preparation**

We are now 18 months into our cycle strategic planning period and what is very evidence is how quickly LGBT+ issues develop, change direction and become ever more complex. We fully expect the following 3.5 years will continue in this direction, confirming the need for an agile and adaptive approach to how we implement our central core pillars. We are confident that these themes of resourcing, resilience and sustainability are strong lenses for everything we do, although the balance of work we do across each may vary with time.

Alongside working towards a sustainable LGBT+ voluntary and community sector, we must ensure Consortium itself becomes sustainable. We recognise our income balance is still heavily weighted towards grants and foundations—a pattern across similar second-tier organisations. Our role as a specialist funder is not only good for LGBT+ organisations—with an increase in funds being distributed—we are planning for it to be a long-term sustainable income stream for our core work. As we move through the strategic timeframe we will weight more capacity and time to developing these areas, whilst maintaining our existing capacity for member engagement and development work.

There are risk factors we must consider in our drive for progress. The political situation across the UK is one of instability, and when it comes to the UK Government, one of increasing hostility. We cannot underestimate the impact this has on our ability to advance the LGBT+ sector. To prepare we must be vigilant at horizon scanning and scenario planning for different eventualities. By doing this, we will enable both Consortium and the LGBT+ sector to be better prepared for what eventually transpires. The political environment will also have a direct impact on areas such as media and wider public sector engagement. If, for example, the toxic narratives continue then more capacity will need to be directed in tackling this head on and trying to reframe the narrative to something more positive. However, if more positive developments emerge politically, or through media coverage, then our communities will be in a stronger position to drive forward positive change. Whichever direction we find ourselves travelling, Consortium is committed to being as prepared as possible, partnership with our members and others, remaining a strong vocal ally for all parts of our communities, and remaining steadfast in our plans for a well-resourced, strong and resilient, and sustainable LGBT+ voluntary and community sector. We are stronger by working together and being allies for each other.





## Our Funders

We would like to express our huge thanks to all our funders and partners throughout this reporting period.



## Contact Us

For more information about Consortium's work, or to get in touch with one of our team, please contact us on:



Website  
[www.consortium.lgbt](http://www.consortium.lgbt)



Instagram  
[@lgbtconsortium](https://www.instagram.com/lgbtconsortium)



Twitter  
[@LGBTConsortium](https://twitter.com/LGBTConsortium)



Email  
[admin@consortium.lgbt](mailto:admin@consortium.lgbt)

