

ANNUAL REPORT  
2022-2023



# MESSAGE FROM DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA STAFF

Currently the world is experiencing a significant backlash in regards to human rights for people on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). This backlash is being felt both here at home in Canada and in countries around the globe. Our communities are facing the rise of online hate and the introduction of new anti-LGBTIQ laws and policies. Canadians have an important role to play in working together to advance our human rights.

Dignity Network Canada, now over 60 organizations strong, was created to advance and support Canada's involvement in the global movement for equality and human rights for people on the basis of SOGIESC. We are very proud of our work over the past decade to carefully build this coalition which works with our partners in civil society organizations and federal government agencies. This past year has been critically important for our network as we held our first in-person roundtable meeting since 2019. Nearly 200 people from across our membership, international partners and colleagues from Global Affairs Canada and other

federal departments came together in Ottawa for our largest gathering ever.

Our partnership with Equitas has continued to grow as we increased funding to our members involved in the Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF), with five new projects launched with funding totalling \$2.2M. Partnerships between Canadian and international organizations were launched in Ghana, Malawi, Honduras, Tunisia, Morocco, Jamaica and Fiji. This past year we were also excited to partner with Pride Toronto, Fierté Montréal and Capital Pride in support of their international programming, welcoming leading human rights defenders to Canada from Ukraine, Uganda, Haiti and Lebanon.

As an organization, we've begun to focus more on sustainability and infrastructure, and this year welcomed our second full-time staff to the team. We are working now on expanding our fundraising efforts and creating new partnerships and programs to support our members and partners around the world. We hope you will join us in creating a better world for all our communities beyond our borders.



**Doug Kerr**  
Executive Director



**Althea Branton**  
Director, Operations and Member Relations

# GOVERNANCE

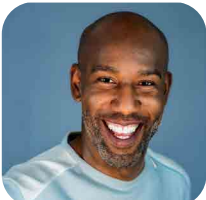
**D**ignity Network Canada is governed by a Board of Directors of thirteen people, a majority of whom are nominated by our member organizations, to help guide the organization. They provide valuable fiduciary and financial oversight, as well as advise the secretariat staff on policy and strategic direction. This

past year we said thank you to outgoing Director Dana Stefov, and welcomed two new Directors, Jane Thirikiwa and Healy Thompson, to the team. DNC also has set up an advisory committee of human rights defenders, activists and policy experts from around the globe to assist with advocacy, policy and community engagement.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2022-23



**Paula Tenaglia**  
Chair



**Steve Bastien**



**Dani Gomez-Ortega**



**Sizwe Ishema Inkingi**



**Alain Mootoo**  
Finance Chair



**Nishin Nathwani**



**Debbie Owusu-Akyeeah**



**Dana Stefov**



**Michaël Arnaud**  
Governance Chair



**Jane Thirikiwa**



**Healy Thompson**



**Haran Vijayanathan**



**Chamindra Weerawardhana**  
Secretary

# GLOBAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE



**Kenita Placide**  
CoChair, St Lucia



**Thomas Ndayiragjie**  
CoChair, Canada



**Melody Boateng**  
Benin



**Anan Bouapha**  
Laos



**J. Ian Burchett**  
Canada



**Hetera Estimphil**  
Haiti



**Soufiane Hennani**  
Morocco



**Carlos Iddibou**  
Cote d'Ivoire



**Steve Letskik**  
South Africa



**Danilo Manzano**  
Ecuador



**Cristina Rodriguez**  
Colombia



**Fernando Us Alvarez**  
Guatemala



**Hai Yen Nguyen**  
Vietnam



**Pepe Onzeima**  
Uganda



**Jannat Ali**  
Pakistan



**Midnight  
Poonkasetwattana**  
Thailand



**Joseph Messinga  
Nkonga**  
Cameroon

# OUR MISSION

**D**ignity Network Canada involves a wide range of Canadian civil society organizations interested in and working on global LGBTQI+ human rights and SOGIESC-inclusive

development. We work together to encourage a stronger Canadian voice supporting human rights for sexual and gender diverse people around the world.



Members of Dignity Network Canada's Board and Advisory Committee

# DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA'S OBJECTIVES

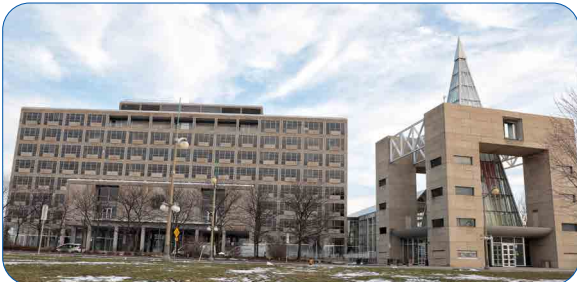
- To promote and mobilize Canadian engagement with global human rights issues and movements related to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC)
- To create, coordinate and support a coalition of Canadian non-governmental organizations engaged in global human rights work related to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC)
- To facilitate research, education, and capacity building, both internationally and domestically, on global human rights related to sexual orientation, gender identity and/or expression, or sex characteristics (SOGIESC).



# ROUNDTABLE 2022

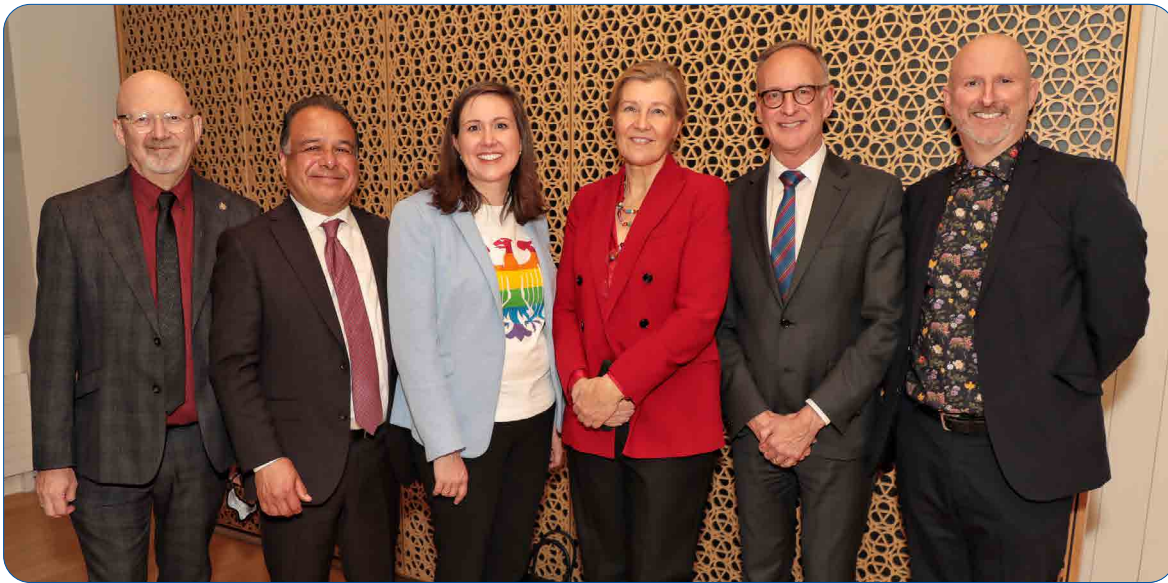
In November 2022, Dignity Network Canada's roundtable meetings brought together Canadian organizations, international partners and partners in government for discussions on Canada's role in the world on SOGIESC issues and human rights. The week included workshops, political meetings, funder meetings, panel presentations from both civil society and government, roundtable discussions and receptions. We partnered with the Embassies of Germany, the Netherlands and Mexico, and our members Equitas, Rainbow Railroad and Pride at Work Canada to make this our

largest and most successful event yet. The event was attended by 200 participants, including 140 representatives of Canadian civil society and 30 international human rights defenders. On the last day of the meetings on November 24 staff from the Government of Canada also participated. The agenda was developed in collaboration between members of Dignity Network Canada and staff at Global Affairs Canada working on SOGIESC issues abroad. Events on November 23 and 24 took place at the John F. Diefenbaker Building in Ottawa.



We welcomed LGBTQI+ human rights defenders from the following countries to the meetings: Guatemala, Jamaica, Mexico, St. Lucia, Ecuador, Peru, Colombia, Argentina, South Africa, Mozambique, Kenya, Uganda, Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Morocco, the Netherlands, Germany, Pakistan, Thailand, and Laos.

We are currently working on plans for our next international roundtable meetings to be held in Ottawa in May 2024. These meetings will examine Canada's role in the world over the next five years supporting SOGIESC issues and human rights.





# ADVOCACY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

One of the pillars of Dignity Network Canada's work involves policy development, education and advocacy related to increasing Canada's role in the world advancing human rights. We do this through several ways: convening our

members in a monthly working group, direct regular engagement with several parts of Global Affairs Canada, liaising with like organizations in other countries as well as non-partisan policy education and awareness of global SOGIESC issues.



## SOME HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PAST YEAR INCLUDED:

- A day of high-level political meetings with LGBTIQ human rights defenders from around the world with Canadian Ministers and Parliamentary Secretaries, as well as representatives of opposition parties. We discussed the future of Canadian foreign policy and international assistance related to SOGIESC issues.
- We welcomed Alex Kofi Donkor, the head of LGBT Rights Ghana to Ottawa, and coordinated discussions with Global Affairs Canada, the Minister of International Development and the Minister of Women and Gender Equality to discuss the anti-LGBTIQ legislation in Ghana.
- In collaboration with the European Union delegation to Canada, we convened a meeting of Canadian organizations with Stefano Sannino, the Secretary General of the European Union External Action Service (Foreign Affairs ministry) to discuss LGBTIQ issues in Canadian and European foreign policy.
- We hosted the United States Special Envoy on LGBTIQ Human Rights, Jessica Stern to Canada. In collaboration with our members Egale Canada and Rainbow Railroad, we organized public events, as well as private meetings with Canadian officials and parliamentarians.
- With the introduction and approval of the anti-LGBTIQ law in Uganda, we convened our members with partners in a working group to encourage the Canadian government to respond to the situation. We coordinated both virtual and in-person meetings between LGBTIQ activists from Uganda and Kenya to Ottawa for briefings with political leaders and Global Affairs Canada on the anti-LGBTIQ legislation in the region.



# COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE ON INTERNATIONAL SOGIESC SOLIDARITY



The Community of Practice (CoP) on international SOGIESC solidarity is a group space where members from ACTIF-funded (Act Together for Inclusion Fund) projects share best practices and knowledge to support each other in achieving individual and collective goals. A joint effort of Equitas and Dignity Network Canada, the CoP relies on various shared spaces to conduct activities such as virtual meetings & learning sessions. The CoP is dependent on common interest, active interaction, participation & knowledge sharing. The CoP is used to create a space for members to share information and observations regarding local, national, or international policy. The CoP continues to be effective in fostering collaboration between different stakeholders that contribute to policymaking.

DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA'S COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE PRESENTS A VIRTUAL PANEL DISCUSSION:

## THE LANDSCAPE OF GLOBAL SOGIESC ADVOCACY AND THE ROLE OF CANADA

1:00PM TO 2:30PM EASTERN  
WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 2023

**SPEAKERS**




 <b>Neela Ghosal</b> (Senior Director of Law, Policy and Research, OutRight International)	 <b>Kim Vance-Mubanga</b> (Director of International Programs and Partnerships, Egale Canada)	 <b>Douglas Janoff</b> (Author of Queer Diplomacy: Homophobia, International Relations and LGBT Human Rights)	 <b>Dr. Chamindra Weerawardhana</b> (Dignity Network Canada Board of Directors)
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**TO REGISTER**

[CLICK HERE](#)

The discussion will be primarily in English with English-French interpretation provided.  
La discussion se déroulera principalement en anglais, une interprétation anglais-français étant prévue.

This learning session is a part of DNC's Community of Practice on international SOGIESC solidarity and supported by the Act Together for Inclusion Fund, a project of Equitas and Dignity Network Canada.


   




**DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA**  
**RÉSEAU DIGNITÉ CANADA**

DNC Community of Practice Presents:

# DIGNITY NETWORK MAPPING REPORT




A chance to see and discuss the recent mapping report conducted by Dr Claire House




A presentation and interactive discussion

**WED, JUNE 8 AT 1:00PM-2:30PM (EASTERN)**

Interprétation en français


In partnership with  Canada




**DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA**  
**RÉSEAU DIGNITÉ CANADA**

Dignity Network Canada's Community of Practice presents

# CARING, WELLNESS AND SOUL IN ORGANIZATIONS




Heart to Heart with Hope Chigudu



An interactive discussion and workshop on building healthier, soulful and caring organizations

**WED. APRIL 13, 2022 1:00PM TO 2:30PM EASTERN**

In partnership with  Canada

To register email: [doag@dignitynetwork.ca](mailto:doag@dignitynetwork.ca)



**DIGNITY NETWORK CANADA**  
**RÉSEAU DIGNITÉ CANADA**

Community of Practice presents:



Moderated by Sizwe Ishema Inkingi

## ANTI-RACISM AND ANTI-OPPRESSION IN INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY



**Musu Taylor-Lewis**  
Canadian Foodgrains Bank



**Taib K Boyce**  
TKB Consulting

Supported by the Act Together for Inclusion Fund



Canada

Wednesday December 15  
1:00PM to 2:30PM Eastern

**CETTE SESSION SERA TRADUITE EN FRANÇAIS**

# PARTNERSHIPS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

**D**ignity Network Canada is committed to fostering partnerships that raise awareness and engages the general public on global SOGIESC issues and human rights in Canada. This past year, we proudly worked with many of our members and partners on a number of events and activities.

As part of our events in Ottawa to mark the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia (IDAHOBIT) on May 17th, we worked with the Embassies of Germany and Mexico on a symposium on “SOGIESC Issues in Feminist Foreign Policy” for government officials, civil society and the diplomatic community in Ottawa.

In partnership with the Canadian Pride Caucus, a new network of 2SLGBTQI+ Canadian parliamentarians, we co-hosted a reception for over 200 people for IDAHOBIT at the National Arts Centre. Our keynote speaker for this event was Alex Kofi Donkor, head of LGBT Rights Ghana.

In collaboration with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) National, we supported partnerships with three Pride organizations across the country to celebrate LGBTIQ human rights defenders and raise awareness of international issues at Pride festivals. In Toronto, we supported the participation



DNC Advisor and Fierté Montréal Honorary Co-President Hetera Estimphil (Kouraj Haiti) and Laurent Breault, ED of Fondation Emergence.

of Pride Toronto’s 2023 International Grand Marshal, Tarek Zeidan, ED of Helem in Lebanon. In Montreal, we supported the participation of Honorary Co-President Hetera Estimphil, the head of Kouraj in Haiti. In Ottawa, we supported the participation of Beyonce Karoongi from Transgender Uganda, as a special guest and keynote speaker.

We were proud to also work with Cooperation Canada, the national association of international development and humanitarian organizations this past year through bringing SOGIESC content into their Futures Festival. We were proud to welcome Joseph Messinga Nkonga, one of our advisory members and an LGBTIQ human rights defender from Cameroun as a guest speaker to the event.

# ACT TOGETHER FOR INCLUSION FUND

**A**ct Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF), a joint partnership between Equitas and Dignity Network Canada (DNC), was created to help Canadian civil society organizations collaborate with partners in the Global South to promote, defend & advocate for the human rights of 2SLGBTQI+ individuals and communities internationally. ACTIF is funded by Global Affairs Canada.

DNC is the implementing partner and leads activities related to community outreach, engagement & consultation, public engagement and knowledge-sharing activities.

Five new projects were selected to receive direct funding from ACTIF bringing the total number of projects to twelve.

Projects range from promoting social change for the recognition of LGBTQI rights in Honduras to protection and

fulfillment of the human rights of LGBTQ2I persons in the Maghreb region through tackling discriminatory and exclusive public narratives on human rights issues related to LGBTQ2I persons specifically in Tunisia and Morocco.

## CURRENT ACTIF PROJECTS (2021-23)

### **Building Durable Solutions for LGBTQI Refugees in the Global South**

Rainbow Railroad (Canada), PASSOP (Kenya), Diálogo Diverso (Ecuador), Access Chapter 2 (South Africa), Al Otro Lado (Mexico)

### **Economic RES-Q**

CGLCC Canada's LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce (Canada), Samavesh Chamber of Commerce (India), Equal Asia Foundation (Thailand)



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### **For Me, For Others**

Egides – Alliance internationale francophone pour l'égalité et les diversités (Canada), FACSDIS – Femmes en action contre la stigmatisation et la discrimination sexuelle (Haiti), CCAP – Chambre camerounaise des acteurs en psychologie (Cameroon)

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### **Reclaiming Our History, Defending our Rights**

Inter Pares (Canada), Colombia Diversa (Colombia), Fondo Lunaria Mujer (Colombia) Asociacion Lambda (Guatemala)

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### **The Right to Health and Healing**

Stephen Lewis Foundation (Canada), Freedom and Roam Uganda – FARUG (Uganda), Sexual Minorities Uganda

(Uganda), Ice Breakers Uganda -IBU (Uganda), Men Against AIDS Youth Group – MAAYGO (Kenya), HIV and AIDS People's Alliance of Kenya – HAPA (Kenya), Health Options for Young Men in HIV, AIDS & STIs – HOYMAS (Kenya) TRANScendant Opportunities - YMCA GTA (Canada), YMCA of Peru (Peru), Organización por los Derechos Humanos de las personas Trans (Peru)

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### **Translating research, education and dialogue into change and action for LGBTI communities**

Egale (Canada), Intersex Asia – IA (Bangladesh, Nepal, India, Pakistan), Transbantu Association Zambia – TBZ (Zambia)

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## NEW ACTIF PROJECTS FUNDED IN 2023

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### Preventing and Addressing Gender-Based Violence Against LGBTQ+ Youth Through Arts-Based Activism



- LGBT+ Rights Ghana (Ghana)
- The Centre for Girls and Interaction (Malawi)
- Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexuality Diversity (Canada)

This three-year project involves an innovative collaboration between LGBT+ Rights Ghana, the Centre for Girls and Interaction (CEGI), and the Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity (CCGSD) with consultancy support from Wisdom2Action (W2A). The partner organizations will work together with an advisory group of LGBTQ+ young people from Ghana, Malawi, and Canada to build the capacity of participating organizations to become more inclusive of LGBTQ+ youth. The project will also foster networks of solidarity and facilitate learning on ways young people can address and prevent gender-based violence through their art-based activism.

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### Diverse Voices of the Maghreb



- Journalists for Human Rights (Canada)
- Partner Organization in Tunisia

Diverse Voices of the Maghreb is a project for two years and a half by Journalists for Human Rights and a Tunisian organization. The proposed project aims at enhancing the respect

for, and protection and fulfillment of the human rights of LGBTQ2I persons in the Maghreb region (in particular Tunisia and Morocco) through tackling discriminatory and exclusive public narratives on human rights issues related to LGBTQ2I persons. The project will improve the performance of local media to increase and improve their coverage of human rights issues related to LGBTQ2I persons. These media outlets will also improve their internal processes to encourage the participation and promotion of LGBTQI persons in media sector.

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### Fiji and Jamaica Initiative

- Caribbean Vulnerable Communities Coalition (Jamaica)
- Rainbow Pride Foundation (Fiji)
- The Global Interfaith Network for People of All SSOIGIE (South Africa)
- Rainbow Faith and Freedom (Canada)



The goal of this two-year project is to change the hearts and minds of families and faith communities in Jamaica and Fiji so that they can become more inclusive and embrace LGBTQ2I people of faith in order to improve their lives, allow them to express themselves completely and be an integral part of their families and faith communities. It seeks to improve the lives of LGBTQ2I people of faith in Fiji and Jamaica, by changing social norms or community acceptance on LGBTQ2I issues and by reducing discrimination and violence.



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## EDING

Programme d'appui aux droits humains A  
Support Program for Human Rights in  
Francophone Africa



- LGBT+ Rights Ghana (Ghana)
- The Centre for Girls and Interaction (Malawi)
- Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexuality Diversity (Canada)

Based on Pan Africa ILGA's research on the most effective LGBTQ2+ rights interventions, the EDING (Love in Ewondo, a local language of Cameroon) is a three-year project, designed by and for communities, is building the programming and network for a new organization; Fierté Afrique Francophone, for deployment in several countries in Francophone Africa, so that LGBTIQ+ people increase their capacity for influence and leadership in political and public life and in democratic mechanisms and spaces, in collaboration with political, religious, and community allies who work for the full development of LGBTQI+ people in Africa.

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## Together for Equality

Promoting social change for the  
recognition of LGBTQ2I rights in  
Honduras

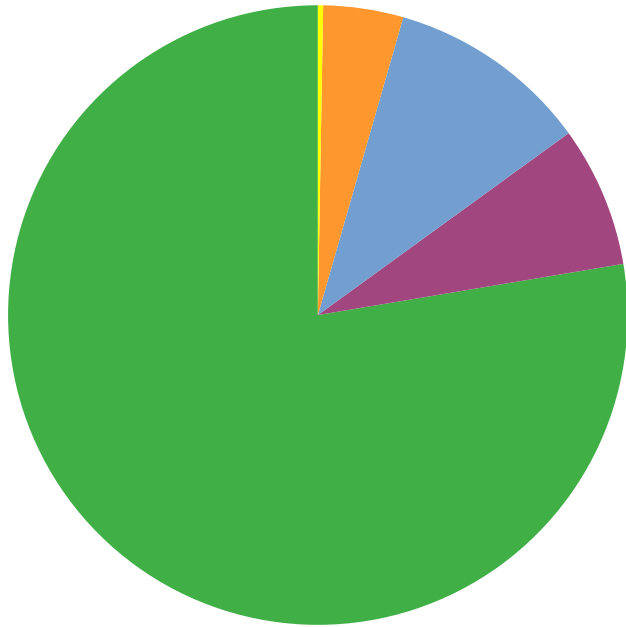


- Centro para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación LGBTI – SOMOS CDC (Honduras)
- Avocats sans frontières (Canada)

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirited and intersex (LGBTQ2I) people in Honduras face various forms of discrimination and stigmatization, too often expressed through acts of violence and other forms of human rights violations. Unfortunately, these violations are rarely reported and therefore go largely unpunished. To counter this injustice, important changes in attitudes in the different spheres of society are necessary, especially at the level of state actors. With this in mind, Lawyers Without Borders Canada (LWBC) and Centro para el Desarrollo y la Cooperación LGBTI – SOMOS CDC have agreed to join forces to develop the three-year project “Together for Equality: Promoting Social Change for the Recognition of LGBTQ2I Rights in Honduras”, which aims to promote public policies and regulations that are consistent with international human rights standards, through greater participation of strong, representative CSOs committed to promoting systemic change in favour of LGBTQ2I rights.

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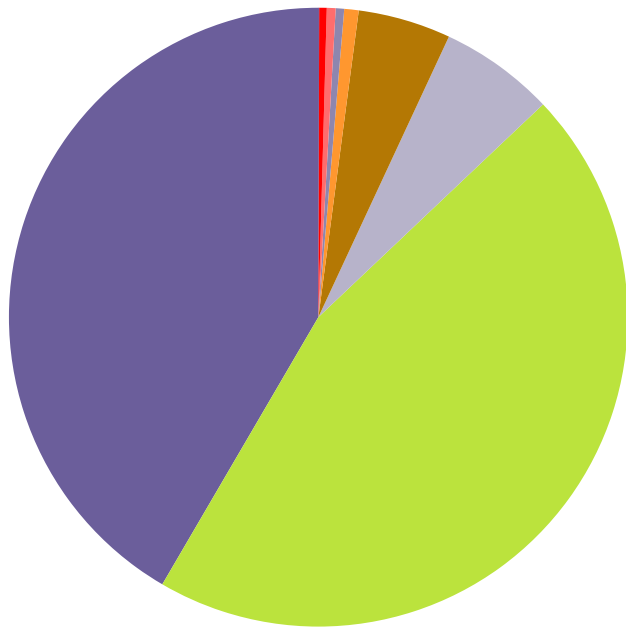
# FINANCIALS 2022-23



- Grants** \$240,765
- Sponsorship** \$32,769
- Donations** \$22,770
- Memberships** \$12,935
- Other Income** \$850

**TOTAL** \$310,089

## 2023 REVENUE



- Program Delivery** \$147,748
- Salaries and Benefits** \$135,127
- Accounting and Legal** \$19,508
- General and Administrative** \$15,748
- Professional Development** \$2,442
- Communication and Design** \$1,498
- Insurance** \$1,431
- Technology** \$1,267
- Loss on Disposal of Capital Asset** \$139

**TOTAL** \$324,908

## 2023 EXPENSES

\*These financials do not include the ACTIF funds, which are administrated by our member Equitas.

# OUR MEMBERSHIP



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# WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS 2022-23



Participants at Dignity Network Canada roundtable meetings, November 2022.

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**We would like to thank the following colleague organizations, partners and funders for their collaboration this past year:**

Act Together for Inclusion Fund at Equitas  
Consulate General of Canada in Sydney  
Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Canada  
Embassy of the Netherlands in Canada  
Embassy of Mexico in Canada  
Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE)  
Canadian Pride Caucus  
Claire House, House Consulting  
Cooperation Canada  
Glad Day Bookshop  
Global Affairs Canada  
KM Hunter Foundation  
Leblanc Communications  
Wellspring Philanthropic Fund

**We also want to thank the following Dignity Network Canada member organizations for going above and beyond in their work with us through additional partnerships and sponsorships:**

BlackCAP  
Capital Pride / Fierté dans la capitale  
Centre canadien de la diversité des genres et de la sexualité  
Egale Canada  
Égides  
Réseau Enchanté  
Fonds Égalité  
Fondation Émergence  
Fierté Montréal  
Inter Pares  
Oxfam Canada  
Fierté au travail Canada  
Fierté Toronto  
Rainbow Railroad

**WE THANK YOU FOR  
YOUR CONTINUED  
DEDICATION TO ENDING  
DISCRIMINATION ON  
THE BASIS OF SOGIESC**



**DIGNITY  
NETWORK  
CANADA**

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