

Policy Proposals for the Joint Interim Committee on Addiction and Community Safety Response

Introduction & Context

Too many Oregonians living with addiction are unable to access detox services, treatment, recovery housing, and the culturally appropriate wraparound services necessary for recovery. This has created a crisis in our communities, neighborhoods, and families. The goals of policies to address this crisis should be to:

- save lives;
- ensure that everyone who seeks addiction recovery services can receive them quickly, easily, and in a way that meets their cultural and linguistic needs — especially Black, Latinx, Indigenous, Tribal, Native, and other communities of color disproportionately affected by the war on drugs;
- maintain and expand current funding for culturally and linguistically-specific addiction recovery providers — particularly those serving the communities of color most impacted by drug war policies, as well as low-income and rural Oregonians;
- reduce the negative impacts of addiction on our communities;
- be informed by evidence and oriented to solutions by bringing together those working on the frontlines of this crisis, from behavioral health providers and law enforcement, to policymakers, local community leaders, first responders, and more;
- efficiently and effectively invest public dollars.

Oregon voters have been consistent—they want *and deserve* a public health approach to addiction. After a 70% increase in overdose deaths from 2019 to 2020, it's become increasingly clear that the system of criminalizing people for their addiction doesn't work, and the surge of fentanyl into communities across the state pushed an already under-resourced treatment system, depleted by the failed War on Drugs and COVID-19 pandemic, to a breaking point.

As we build out a system of care to meet this crisis with the urgency it demands, we must ensure that policy solutions are evidence-based, culturally specific, sustainable, and grounded in the healthcare approach Oregonians want. Funding must be maintained for current Behavioral Health Resource Network (BHRN) providers—specifically the community-based, culturally-specific providers working to heal those most harmed by the war on drugs: Black, Latino, Tribal, Native American, and Indigenous communities. Failed drug war policies have caused disproportionate harm to these communities. We cannot go backward. Oregon’s addiction crisis urgently demands a comprehensive healthcare approach to addiction. You have the opportunity to do that now. Below is a policy roadmap with real solutions to move our state forward, save lives, and build a full continuum of care.

The situation is particularly dire for people living outside, without stable housing. Whether in the forests of Deschutes County, the streets of Portland, or rural communities across the state: the odds are stacked against people desperately trying to get the help they need. Just a few examples:

- All Oregon counties are above the national median for hospitalization due to alcohol or drug use. Deschutes, Jackson, Lane, Lincoln, Marion, Multnomah, Polk, and Yamhill Counties are at the highest risk.
- In Deschutes County alone, over the past year, 31,712 individuals aged 12 and over needed treatment for SUD. Of those, 31,468 individuals were not able to access that treatment in a specialty facility. *That is a 99% failure rate.*
- Portland’s Hooper Detoxification Stabilization Center is forced to turn away some 200 people a month - as many people as it serves - due to lack of capacity. 58% of people who manage to get into Hooper are released back onto the street because of a lack of recovery housing, making it nearly impossible for their recovery to continue.

The OHSU Gaps Analysis confirms that Oregon has only 50 percent treatment capacity to meet the current need, which should be unsurprising after decades of disinvestment. We know it will take years to fully scale up Oregon’s addiction recovery care system. **We cannot serve the people who are ready for help, and mandated treatment will only make things worse, but there are things we can do to expand access to care and services right now.** With the necessary funding, these shovel-ready projects fit into the continuum of care and can begin immediately.

Solution 1: Begin with shovel-ready projects, including these immediate funding needs for the 2024 legislative session.

- **Medicaid and other CCOs (such as CareOregon) need to fund more Mobile Clinics and Medication Unit administration of Medication Assisted Therapy (MAT).** This will expand MAT capacity more quickly to more people at a lower cost.
- **Fund contingency management** (an evidence-based practice of providing incentives for recovery) and alternative payment methodology pilots for MAT providers.
- **Provide grants for low-barrier sobering centers.** These are 24-hour stabilization centers where individuals can regain physical sobriety while under medical supervision, learn more about treatment options, and be kept off the street following disruptive or unsafe behavior exhibited while under the influence of drugs or alcohol. *(Note: OHA took too long to get Measure 110 funds out the door. If they're tasked with doing this again, they need to act much more quickly. If that's not possible, the task should go elsewhere).*
- **Identify ongoing funding sources for addiction recovery services that are not Medicaid-eligible.**
- **Fund more adult and youth-specific withdrawal management/detox facilities.**
- **Fund more housing solutions for medically intensive short-term stays** designed to stabilize someone in early recovery before they enter treatment housing.

Solution 2: Address the addiction and overdose crisis in Oregon by funding the entire continuum of care.

For us to address addiction as a health issue, we must invest in a full continuum of care with evidence-based, culturally and linguistically-specific services. Funding a “continuum of care” means ensuring that a wide range of evidence-based interventions are available to meet the individualized needs of people struggling with addiction. Without providing services in a continuum of care, patients are more likely to fall through the cracks in the system, which increases the likelihood of relapse and overdose. A continuum of care for addiction services should include:

Immediate

- **Expanding Medicaid:** [under HCBS](#), we can expand Medicaid to cover all substance use disorder patients statewide.
- **Expanding clinical treatment services, including** medication-assisted treatment (MAT), Intensive Outpatient Treatment, Residential Treatment, medically supervised withdrawal management, and detox.

- **Make FDA-approved Substance Use Disorder medications more readily affordable and available** to patients, providers, and pharmacies, including **revising Oregon’s Medicaid prescription schedules** to cover every dose and modality of cost-effective, evidence-based medication treatments that can be used to stave off cravings and lessen the impacts of withdrawal. *This includes all forms and quantities of methadone, suboxone, buprenorphine, naltrexone, disulfiram, and acamprosate.* In many cases, these drugs are inaccessible to those who need them, and unnecessary delays are deadly.
- **Establish a warm transition program** to help those recently released from jail to maintain sobriety while connecting with community treatment programs, including peer mentors and crisis response resources.
- **Response and interventions to people in crisis:** create funding for mobile crisis units, crisis-receiving centers, stabilization centers, and medical detoxification/sobering centers.
- **Pre-engagement peer support, harm reduction, and outreach** to give people hope and build the trust needed to facilitate a strong foundation for recovery.
- **Support and expand recovery services:** drop-in centers, housing, supported employment, recovery mentors, life skills-building classes, and support.

Long-Term

- **Making counseling accessible** by creating a statewide mental health and substance use treatment network, effectively making all therapists and substance use counselors “in-network” for Medicaid. This would allow people in rural communities to access treatment from providers across the state, eliminating geographical barriers.
- **Pass legislation to align Oregon’s statute governing the siting of supported housing and secure/residential facilities with the requirements in the Fair Housing Act**, which will enable needed capacity to be built in communities across the state.
- **Primary prevention education** to youth in schools and at home;
- **Youth services** across the continuum of care.

Solution 3: Increased cooperation between peers, law enforcement, and other first responders.

We know from over 50 years of experience that criminalizing drug possession does not work and that it makes things worse. We cannot return to the failed War on Drugs, which has done nothing to solve our addiction crisis while disproportionately harming communities of color. Treating people with addiction as people in need of handcuffs instead of healthcare will not provide the solutions Oregonians want and deserve.

Re-criminalizing addiction will make it more difficult and expensive to address drug addiction and homelessness. It is sure to increase overdose risk, disrupt current treatment investments, and once again saddle people with criminal records that can create lifelong barriers to housing, employment, education, and other services. In addition, **recriminalization will result in deep racial disparities**. Portland already has the 5th highest rate of racial disparities in arrests. We know that Black, Brown, and Indigenous Oregonians will be disproportionately stopped, searched, arrested, prosecuted, and convicted for drug use or possession.

Studies show that a healthcare response to addiction is more effective than incarcerating people for drug offenses — and that incarceration has a questionable impact on public safety. Evidence shows that more punitive, criminal responses (such as misdemeanor and felony convictions) are not practical tools to deter drug use or mitigate the harm it can cause. We also know that initial findings from an independent evaluation show that Measure 110 has not caused an increase in crime. **Recriminalization will fill up Oregon's jails and result in more individuals getting released due to a lack of legal representation.** The state already has nowhere near the public defenders it needs currently, and recriminalizing possession will only add thousands more cases to already overburdened caseloads.

At the same time, we must recognize that the addiction, behavioral health, and homelessness crisis playing out on our cities' streets urgently requires additional programs and resources to keep our community safe while we work to build the needed treatment facilities. **Cooperation with and amongst first responders, including law enforcement, are essential to the solution.** Police are not behavioral health professionals, nor should they be. The State should:

Immediate

- **Provide funding to establish and expand peer-based Community Outreach Teams to work in cooperation with law enforcement** and ensure that the most effective, evidence-based interventions are occurring around public use and overdose. These teams will be trained in de-escalation and overdose response and provide connections to resources and services with those who are ready to engage. This model has already seen success with CAHOOTS in Eugene and Portland Street Response. Third Avenue Project is also a potential model to consider when designing these types of programs.

- **Work to replicate existing program models proven to** enhance public safety and connect people with care. Using successful models like the LEAD program, Oregon can create a similar program for individuals struggling with substance use. Such a program could help divert people with unmet behavioral health needs away from jail and into non-punitive, community-based systems of care. LEAD is a proven strategy for providing a community-based alternative to jail and prosecution for people whose behavior stems from unmet needs related to substance use, mental health challenges, and/or extreme poverty.

Long-Term

- **Create a coordinated post-overdose outreach response protocol.** Multiple studies show that connecting with someone within 24 hours of their overdose is a successful strategy to encourage that person's engagement with treatment and recovery services. Oregon should fund quick response teams that connect with people within 24 hours of an overdose averted by Narcan to offer them support and connection to services.
- **Create a clear policy mandate that establishes overdose prevention sites to reduce public use.** Rather than repeatedly cycling individuals struggling with addiction between overloaded, harmful jails and our streets and adding to the backlog of an already overburdened court system, Oregon's approach to public drug use should involve working with law enforcement and non-police responders to provide transport to detox and sobering centers. At the same time, we must also increase access to housing and harm reduction sites so that people who use drugs are not doing so openly on the street.
 - The CDC has reported that connection to overdose prevention and harm reduction sites increases someone's likelihood of engaging in treatment services fivefold. After 20 years of operating around the globe, overdose prevention sites are a proven intervention to reduce overdose deaths. **No one has died of an overdose at any of these sites**, which are essentially health centers providing drug addiction-specific services, and if we are serious about preventing overdose deaths, the State should authorize and fund overdose prevention centers where people who use drugs can receive low-threshold services such as overdose prevention monitoring, SUD treatment, MAT, food, clothing, housing assistance, and other needs.

Solution 4: Addressing everyday livability concerns in our communities.

Immediate

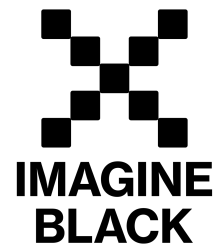
- **Ban drug use on public transit.** Identify how and when substances are being used and what dangers exist for others. Define use and ingestion, and identify what enforcement mechanisms exist that don't criminalize transit riders.
- **Increase and fund regular street and community cleanup.** Require the Oregon Department of Transportation to implement regular weekly routes to clean up their land. Require the Department of Environmental Quality to enforce clean-ups of public land and right of ways, including consistent trash cleanups on public land.
 - In the Portland Metro area, the city, county, and Metro all hold different pieces of garbage cleanup and pickup. They all use contractors, and numerous gaps in the service areas make it hard for unhoused folks and their advocates to coordinate trash pickup. There's also been a significant increase in illegal dumping by housed people in areas that are frequented by unhoused people, so unhoused people are being blamed for garbage they didn't create and cannot remove.
- **Remove bureaucratic barriers and simplify community grant application processes** so that small neighborhood groups and nonprofits can get involved and help with community cleanup.
- **Address obstacles that prevent success.** For example, we can ensure that Oregon's public housing authorities (PHAs) follow federal guidelines and not enforce more restrictive policies than required to keep people with possession crimes on their records out of public housing. (In Oregon, PHAs routinely ban anyone with drug charges for life, despite the federal limitation being only three years.)
- **Invest in communities** by making sure that unhoused people have access to temporary and transitional housing, childcare, and employment resources that will help them get and stay sober and housed.
- **Create certification pathways and workforce development strategies** for drug and health counseling treatment, on-the-ground behavioral health management, crisis response, and other positions. Identify positions that don't require college-level education and could be implemented as apprenticeships, certifications, or other pathways.
 - Design and implement support systems to provide addiction service providers with technical assistance to decrease administrative and workforce burdens.

- **Develop an educational messaging campaign regarding the failed policies of the “War on Drugs.”** Messaging should help all Oregonians cultivate compassion for those whose circumstances are different from their own because those who have hope for a beautiful tomorrow are less likely to become addicted and more likely to seek treatment if they already are.

Conclusion

In passing Measure 110 in 2020, Oregon voters sent a clear message to policymakers. The criminal approach to addiction was *clearly* not working, with addiction rates already skyrocketing. It was clear a different path forward must be forged. The homelessness crisis and fentanyl influx have left communities reeling. Instead of going backward, we have the opportunity to move forward on patient-centered public health solutions that help people experiencing addiction by also recognizing their humanity and addressing the multi-layered issues in our communities that contribute to substance use.

Our communities will not be served by policies that take us backward. Instead, we must come together and ensure that treatment is available for everyone who wants it, that our communities have the resources they need to help their residents who are struggling, and that we move forward in delivering the behavioral health system that Oregonians deserve.



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BY US.
FOR US.



The Queer Data Project is dedicated to providing comprehensive, accessible, intersectional data about queer communities in our region. Our process is grounded in justice and transformation. Our products will be timely and powerful additions to the set of tools currently available to LGBTQIA2S+ advocates, champions, and changemakers.



"Queer Data Project is an ambitious project with incredible potential to deeply understand the experience of LGBTQIA2S+ people living in Oregon as well as to provide critical data and narratives to shape the future of those communities. This project is remarkable and historic not only in the scale of its goal, but also the thoughtful, inclusive, and revolutionary way that it is being developed. This project will offer communities across the country with models for how to engage communities deeply in every stage of research from ideation, design, data collection, and the dissemination of the data and accessible tools."

— **Naomi Goldberg**

Deputy Director, Movement Advancement Project,
National LGBTQ Policy and Data Center

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What is the Queer Data Project?

The Queer Data Project is the first of its kind: a historic, state-wide, community-led effort to provide comprehensive, accessible, intersectional data about LGBTQIA2S+ folks in Oregon, to better target interventions, improve outcomes, and be more efficient with government resources. The project is grounded in community, justice, and transformation. The deliverables will be impactful, timely information for use by public institutions, policymakers and the public to make informed decisions.

Why is the project important?

Accurate data is an essential foundation to informed decisions about public policy, investment and future planning for healthy communities. Currently, Oregon does not have the comprehensive information policymakers need to assist in legislative changes to improve the lives of LGBTQIA2S+ Oregonians.

Approximately 210,000 people identify as LGBTQIA2S+ in Oregon. That's roughly equivalent to the population of Jackson County (the 6th most populous Oregon county). The LGBTQIA2S+ community in our region is large and rapidly growing. We also know that the LGBTQIA2S+ community in Oregon faces disproportionate barriers to inclusive education, quality healthcare, adequate housing, and economic opportunity –and that these are issues policymakers in Oregon are committed to addressing.

Timely, high-quality data, largely quantitative data, about historically marginalized communities is often required by policymakers, funders, and other decision-makers to demonstrate the need for change and inform equitable decision-making (for example, [State of Black Oregon](#), [Count Her In](#), [H.E.A.L.](#), [Leading with Race](#), and many others).

What kind of data will be collected?

The project will gather and report out comprehensive quantitative and qualitative data from individuals across the state in order to identify where our communities are thriving and where we need to take action to improve the lives of LGBTQIA2S+ Oregonians. This will include health, education, economic, and civic participation data, as well as what

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state and local policies and services are best serving us and what we need in order to not just survive, but to thrive.

Specifically, our project will:

- 1. Aggregate Existing LGBTQIA2S+ Data for Oregon and Tribal Nations**

This will allow institutions and organizations to understand what the big picture of life in Oregon is like for our communities.

- 2. Collect Primary Data from 5,000+ LGBTQIA2S+ folks in Oregon and Tribal Nations**

This will add important, and often missing, data to the landscape in order to tell the story of what's happening on the ground in the state.

- 3. Map over 100 LGBTQIA2S+ Serving Organizations in our Region**

We will be able to identify where folks are being served and where there are gaps and needs in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

- 4. Analyze State and Local Public Policy for LGBTQIA2S+ Communities**

The combination of state and local policy impacts the wellbeing and ability of people to meaningfully participate in their local community, whether it's civic engagement, education, or the economy. This will help us find out what's working and what needs to change.

- 5. Create Strategic Communications to Share Our Findings**

This project will produce a series of user-friendly data products that will allow state and local policymakers, organizations, and individuals to guide change. They will likely include: data widgets, interactive maps, mini-reports, policy briefs, storytelling videos, white papers, and advocacy frameworks.

How much will the project cost and how long will it take to complete?

Our current projections are that this effort will cost between \$2.5-3M and take approximately 20 months to complete once funding is secured.

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What role can state legislators play?

Public institutions, including the State, are going to be the vast majority of the end-users of the data produced by this project. The data collected will be instrumental in ensuring we are using public resources effectively in targeting interventions to improve lives of Oregonians.

By the time the 2024 short session begins, we anticipate that we will have raised at least \$1M in funding that is being offered as a **match** for public investment. In 2024, we are asking the State Legislature to provide \$1.5M needed to meet this match and complete the project.

Is there a specific organization leading this project?

The Queer Data Project is a 100% collaborative project led solely by the Design Team. The Design Team includes representatives from Basic Rights Oregon, Black and Beyond the Binary, Cascade AIDS Project, Movement Advancement Project, Mid Willamette Trans Support Network, Nativewomanshare, Pride Foundation, and Rogue Action Center. The project is fiscally sponsored by the Pride Foundation, which means that it operates like a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, under the fiduciary umbrella and legal status of the Pride Foundation.

We've designed our legal and financial structure this way so that no one organization has more influence or ownership over the project over any other. We believe this is the best way to structurally reflect that this is a collective, community-led project. However, we know that close partnership with many LGBTQIA2S+ organizations is critical to our success. The Design Team has contracted with three consultants to support project management: Emily Evans, Lukas Soto, and Iva Torres. Anyone interested in connecting with the project is encouraged to contact that team at emily@evanspractice.com.

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How will the primary data be collected?

Our cross-sector data team composed of academics, career researchers, and community leaders has designed the project's primary data collection process. As such, our collection efforts will be rigorous, community-led, participatory, and intersectional.

A core component of this project (and one that is already underway) is mapping and connecting with 100+ LGBTQIA2S+ focused organizations and groups across the state. The strength of our connections with these service providers and grassroots organizations—and the strength of their connections with the communities they serve—will allow us to collect primary data at an extraordinary scale. We anticipate gathering primary data from 5,000 LGBTQIA2S+ folks in our state through a massive, multi-channel engagement effort, likely centered on Pride celebrations.

We will use a variety of research methods to ensure that the data we collect are valid, inclusive, authentic, non-oppressive, decolonized, and actionable. (e.g. culturally responsive and linguistically inclusive surveys, multimedia story-telling, interviews, listening sessions, etc.). All our research approaches will be trauma-informed, asset-based, and deeply rooted in storytelling, healing justice, and thriving.

Will the data be disaggregated by race?

Absolutely. Intersectionality is a core value of this project, and both our process and products reflect that. In addition to collecting data that can be disaggregated by race and ethnicity, we will also be providing data that can be disaggregated by ability/disability, age, geography, income, education, language, family structure, and many other intersectional categories.

Our project will ensure that all data can be disaggregated by race for the following reasons:

- 1) We want to center the experiences of those who have multiple marginalized and oppressed identities.
- 2) We want to correct for the exclusion of People of Color in previous research.

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3) We want to have large enough group samples to evaluate the identities/experiences within groups. We intend to have a minimum of 100 participants from each racial/ethnic group, so that we can better understand the intersectional identities of people within each group.

4) We need to have large enough samples to protect people's privacy and confidentiality. We will set a minimum sample reporting threshold to make sure that no one can be identified using their demographic info.

Who is leading the project?

The project is led and governed by a Design Team that functions similarly to a Board of Directors of a nonprofit organization. We believe those with the most lived experience of oppression are the best equipped to envision liberation and create pathways to transformation.

Our Design Team members are all LGBTQIA2S+, a third are trans and/or non-binary, majority Black, Indigenous, or other People of Color, and represent rural and urban parts of the state from downtown Portland to rural Coos County. Our leaders have lived experience with disability, poverty, incarceration, immigration, addiction/recovery, houselessness, gender nonconformity, gender-based violence, and many other forms of marginalization and oppression.

Additionally, our Design Team includes academics, researchers, funders, nonprofit professionals, policy experts, community organizers, artists, activists, and advocates.

DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS:

Aileen Duldulao, Oregon Health Authority, Multnomah County
Artemis Leona, Mid Willamette Trans Support Network, Curry County
Aubri Qian, City of Portland, Multnomah County
Bianca Fox, Nativewomanshare, Josephine County
Eliot Feenstra, Rogue Action Center, Josephine County

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Erin Waters, Black & Beyond the Binary Collective, Multnomah County
Jade Aguilar, ECONorthwest, Multnomah/Deschutes County
Jesse Beason, Northwest Health Foundation, Multnomah County
Jonathan Frochtzwaig, Cascade Aids Project, Multnomah County
José Romero, Pride Foundation, Washington State
Julia Przedworski, Diversity Science, Multnomah County
Kari Greene, Oregon Department of Health, Multnomah County
LeeAnn O'Neill, Allyship in Action, Deschutes County
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Lukas Soto, Lukas M Soto Consulting, Linn-Benton County
Lycan Coss, Nativewomanshare, Josephine County
liliana cabrera, Planned Parenthood Columbia-Willamette, Deschutes County
Nancy Haque, Meyer Memorial Trust, Multnomah County
Naomi Goldberg, Movement Advancement Project, Michigan
Nina Clarisa Pamintuan, Rogue Action Center, Jackson County
Zeloszelos Marchandt, T & A Grand Theater, Washington County

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Project Plan

Prepared and submitted by Iva Torres
and Emily Evans, April 2023

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1. Background, Context, and Project Summary

TL;DR – Phase one of this Queer Data Project project strongly suggests that comprehensive, accessible, intersectional data about queer communities in Oregon would be a timely and powerful addition to the set of tools currently available to LGBTQIA2S+¹ advocates, champions, and changemakers.

Introduction and Context

According to data collected by Gallup between 2015–2017, LGBTQIA2S+ people make up an estimated 5.6% of Oregon’s adult population. Approximately 207,000 people in ages 13+ identify as LGBTQIA2S+ in the state – that’s roughly equivalent to the entire population of Jackson County, the 6th most populous county in the state. The LGBTQ community in our region is large and growing.

Timely, high-quality data, often quantitative data, about historically marginalized communities is expected – or required – by policymakers, funders, and other decision makers to demonstrate the need for change (for example, [State of Black Oregon](#), [Count Her In](#), [H.E.A.L](#), [Leading with Race](#), and many others).

However, this constant need to provide evidence of the harmful impacts of marginalization is, in and of itself, a form of injustice.

Marginalized communities who live the daily realities of their own oppression should not be asked to prove it to those in power over and over again. Furthermore, many well-intended data gathering efforts often end up being redundant, reductive, extractive, under-utilized, and/or otherwise harmful to the very communities they seek to highlight.

Given all of that complex context, before diving into yet another research project, the City of Portland’s Office of Equity and Human Rights commissioned a needs assessment and

¹ We acknowledge the deep imperfection of LGBTQIA2S+ as an acronym/term/catch-all for referring to the full community of folks we are trying to include. As stated in our project commitments “We know that no single word, acronym, or term can capture the breadth of identities in our community. We honor your right to choose your own language to describe yourself, your life, and your community.”

feasibility study regarding data for Oregon's LGBTQIA2S+ community. From January 2022 to December 2022 this process worked to determine if a comprehensive, community-driven data effort would add value to the ongoing movement for queer justice in the state. The findings of that effort are detailed in [this memo](#).

Project Summary And Plan

After conducting a needs assessment and feasibility study, the Design Team and phase one Project Team believe that comprehensive, accessible, intersectional data about queer communities in Oregon is necessary to furnish LGBTQIA2S+ advocates, champions, and changemakers with the tools they need to improve conditions for their communities.

After determining the need for and feasibility of a queer data project in our region, the Design Team moved into a planning process that ran from Jan 2023–June 2023. This project plan is the result of those efforts. The pages that follow detail the values, goals, audiences, team members, and key project elements. What this project plan does not include is a detailed description of the actual products or deliverables themselves. These days, a single, comprehensive, lengthy, written report produced in hardcopy and/or PDF is simply not the most impactful way to convey data and information to a broad audience, nor is it the most helpful format for information for advocates and decision-makers.

Therefore, instead of pre-emptively committing to any particular product or set of products, we propose to let the Design Team, Project Team, and the relevant subcontractors/committees arrive at the data products that they believe will be the most impactful for our community. This could include data widgets, websites, mini-reports, policy briefs, storytelling videos, white papers, advocacy frameworks, and any number of other data tools or products. We trust the folks guiding and supporting this project to make these determinations and eagerly look forward to the final products that come from this important work.

A History of Harm

Central to this project must be the unequivocal acknowledgement of the deep and lasting harm done by the historical acquisition and use of data about queer people. We invite each reader of this project plan to understand that the vast majority of queer collection efforts have been explicitly motivated by discrimination and the intent to cause harm.

Kevin Guyan, in their book *Queer Data*, highlights that nearly all of the data about people we might now describe as LGBTQIA2S+ exists as the result of actions that were unethical and often illegal – primarily criminal violations of privacy and consent. Furthermore, Guyan notes that previous data collection largely ignored personal stories and experiences and that researchers often used queer data to provide evidence of a ‘problem’ and to justify further oppression of queer communities in order to “fix” them. These “fixes” included incarceration, institutionalization, chemical castration, social isolation, and the destruction of queer families, businesses, spaces, and communities.

In addition to these forms of queer-specific harm done by data collection efforts, the data injustices of white/dominant culture have also perpetuated great harm, not only to queer folks, but members of any historically marginalized community – particularly communities of color, people with disabilities, immigrants and refugees, young people, and elders. These ongoing forms of data injustice include: extractive information gathering, the devaluation of qualitative/narrative data, forced categorization, deliberate exclusion, oppressive narratives, and more.

Though the history of queer data projects is largely harmful and traumatic, we believe it’s possible to aggregate and gather information in ways that heal, build community, and increase compassion across differences. The number of queer folks in Oregon is large and growing. We believe accurate, accessible, ethically-compiled information has the potential to help improve outcomes for queer people across the state. Our hope is that this project collects, synthesizes, curates, and presents that data in ways that minimize harm and center relationships, mutuality, and liberation.

Centrality of Intersectionality

The existing datasets noted in the [summary memo](#) cover a wide variety of geographies, indicators, and communities. However, in Oregon and elsewhere, there continues to be a lack of genuinely intersectional data on queer folks. The queer experience does not exist in a vacuum and the majority of folks in queer communities have multiple marginalized identities.

In addition to homophobia and transphobia, many LGBTQIA2S+ identified people also face the oppression of white supremacy, racism, sexism, xenophobia, ableism, ageism, and many other harmful forms of marginalization. Queer folks also hold multiple overlapping identities around religion, language, ethnicity, occupation, and immigration status, to name a few. Intersectionality is central to the queer experience, and more and better data is needed to fully understand and reflect the many realities of the queer experience.

2.

Descriptions of Recommended Project Components

Aggregate Existing Data – A

subcontractor(s) will gather and collate all possible data on Oregon/Native Nations LGBTQIA2S+ folks from existing federal, state, local, and private/nonprofit data sources (see [this memo](#) for known existing data sources). The Data Committee will guide the selection of key indicators, relevant crosstab comparisons, core analyses, and impactful data products (data widgets, reports, briefs, social media posts, etc.) with input from the Project Management Committee and/or full Design Team as necessary.



Collect Primary Data – A subcontractor(s) and/or partner organization will conduct a large-scale mixed methods primary data collection effort in Oregon and Native Nations. This will likely take the form of an expansive survey with both qualitative and quantitative questions. To generate a large number of responses (goal: 2,500+ stretch goal: 5,000+) will require substantial and sustained community outreach to community based organizations and leaders throughout the state and Native Nations. Once the survey collection is completed, the Data Committee will guide the integration of the survey data with the existing data as well as determining the selection of key indicators, relevant crosstab comparisons, core analyses, and impactful public products (data widgets, reports, briefs, social media posts, etc.) with input from the Project Management Committee and/or full Design Team as necessary.

****NOTE:** A team of folks from PrideNW and the Equi Institute have been working on a large-scale LGBTQIA2S+ survey for several years. A lack of funding and corresponding limited capacity has slowed progress to-date, but the effort has already brought together dozens of LGBTQIA2S+ researchers and a broad statewide group of LGBTQIA2S+ organizations who are committed to supporting the effort.

The phase one Project Team has been in conversation with PrideNW and Equi leadership for many months about the possibility of integrating these two efforts into a single, combined project. The Project Management and Finance Committee is moving forward with laying out options for merging these efforts.

Map Service Ecosystem – A subcontractor(s) and/or partner organization will conduct a primary data collection effort on organizations and services for LGBTQIA2S+ folks in Oregon and Native Nations. Once gathered, the Data Committee will guide the analysis of the data to integrate with the other data efforts/products, with the goal of communicating substantive take-aways about the availability, well-being, and type of resources available to LGBTQIA2S+ folks in our region.

****NOTE:** With funding from the Meyer Memorial Trust, a team of folks from INTERSECT, the Center for Women’s Leadership at PSU, Emily Evans Consulting Practice, Pride NW, and the Equi Institute, have come together to map as many of the values-aligned gender-focused organizations in Oregon and Native Nations as possible (estimated 200–300 total). By Summer 2023, their goal is to produce a free, publicly available “gender justice navigator.” The tool will be an interactive, sortable, map and directory that contains a wide range of information about each organization.

With a small amount of compensation and a data sharing agreement in place, the Gender Justice Navigator team is willing to make the back-end data for the tool available to the Queer Data Project Team, to use in any products they would like over the next 3–5 years.

Analyze Existing Public Policy – Oregon and Native Nations are home to a complex patchwork of federal, state, and local public policies that have a massive collective impact on the well-being of LGBTQIA2S+ folks in our region. With the support of the Policy Committee, as well as partner organizations, a subcontractor(s) will analyze the preliminary and final results from the data/literature review, the primary data collection, and the map of the current service ecosystem. They will use this information to assess how the needs and lived experience of LGBTQIA2S+ people is influenced by the current policy landscape. With input from the full Design Team, they will create a framework for analysis, and make a set of recommendations to public policymakers. The Policy Committee will guide product creation and recommendations, with the support of the Project Management and Data Committees as necessary.

Create Strategic Communications – Even the most brilliant data/research/policy minds are rarely experts at strategic communications and narrative change. No matter what set of queer data products this project lands on, each of them will need the support of a communications subcontractor(s) to maximize their public impact and ensure that they are all working in concert with one another. The strategic communications subcontractor(s) will guide the development of the final data products, with support from the relevant committee(s).

Project Values/Commitments:

These are our commitments to our Q/T/2S Siblings:

- We know that no single word, acronym, or term can capture the breadth of identities in our community. We honor your right to **choose your own language** to describe yourself, your life, and your community.
- We know that the pain, trauma, and harm done to our communities is often all that other people see and hear about us. We will see and celebrate your **brilliance, contributions, magic, and joy**.
- We know that data collected on our communities has mostly been used to target, harm, abuse, and kill us. We will do everything in our power to **protect you and your story**. We will **keep your data safe** and use it only with your permission.
- We know that too many of us have been left behind. This project **belongs** to all of us. We will do everything we can to be in **right relationship** with you and make space for everyone who wants to be a part of this work.
- We know that the timelines of others often rush this kind of work and damage our community's trust. We will take the **time** it takes to get this project right.
- We will collect and use data for action. But we know that data alone will not make things better for our communities. Throughout this project, we will actively work to ensure that all of our queer, trans, and 2-spirit siblings can **rest, heal, and thrive on their own terms**.
- We know that one-off, extractive efforts drain power and deplete our communities. We will build this project **sustainably** and **relationally** so that it has an impact **now** and well into the **future**.

Project Goals

- To celebrate, honor, and highlight queer, trans, and two-spirit peoples and Oregonians
- To use both the process and the product(s) as organizing tool(s), community building tool(s), and help/healing/resource pathway(s) for queer, trans, and two-spirit people and communities
- To honor our past and our elders while imagining a clear and attainable better future
- To create tools and products that inform/motivate/catalyze improved conditions for queer, trans, and two-spirit folks
- To generate a watershed / high-visibility era for queer, trans, and two-spirit communities in our region
- To do right by the next generation of folks who do the next iteration of this work

Project Accountability

Who we will hold ourselves accountable to:

- The most excluded from power, privilege, and access
- The next seven generations
- CBOs/Nonprofits/Organizers/Advocates whose service to the LGBTQIA2S+ community is intersectional and liberatory
- The next team to do this work
- Each other

Who we will strive to hold accountable:

- Policymakers (at all levels)
- Administrators/bureaucrats (at all levels)
- Funders/foundations/donors
- Media
- Private sector leaders
- CBOs/Nonprofits who are not serving the LGBTQIA2S+ Community
- Organizers/Advocates who are not centering LGBTQIA2S+

Phases

With seed money from the City of Portland and the Oregon Community Foundation, Phase One of this project (needs assessment, feasibility, and planning) began in January 2022 and ran through June 2023. Phase One of this Queer Data Project included a 18 month-long inquiry process focused on gathering existing data sources about LGBTQIA2S+ people, analyzing exemplar research efforts for both queer and other marginalized communities, conducting dozens of 1-1 interviews with queer community leaders, and convening an intersectional Design Team of LGBTQIA2S+ community leaders.

Phase One's feasibility and preparatory work is intended to build toward Phase Two of the project: the implementation phase. We anticipate Phase Two being a 2-3 year endeavor (Draft Timeline/Gantt Chart [here](#)), with a range of project elements and final products. We anticipate that there will also be a Phase Three of the project, which will focus on community engagement, ongoing accessibility, and product updates.

Governance Structure

Many values-aligned data projects focused on oppressed communities have been housed within a single organization and/or were funded by a single funder. This structure works well in many ways (speedy/nimble decision-making, in-kind staff support, predetermined policies/procedures, existing reputation/relationships, etc.). For this project however, we're recommending a combination of a fiscal sponsorship + a governance/oversight leadership group + project team, rather than housing and staffing the whole project within an existing organization.

We're doing this for two reasons: First, if there was an organization in our region that had the bandwidth, scope, interest, and fundraising capacity to support a queer data project of this size, it likely would have happened already! Second, when a project lives within a single organization, it means that the final decision-makers for the project are that organizations' CEO/ED and/or Board. This concentrates power and authority for the project a great deal. Relatedly, when a project lives within a single organization, tension can arise between tending to the well-being of the project and tending to the well-being of the organization. That tension can put the project at risk of delay, underfunding, or dissolution if its parent organization faces budget shortfalls, staff transitions, unforeseen competing priorities, etc.

Given that context, the Design Team for this project has landed on a three-part legal/financial/governance structure:

- 1. Fiscal Home** – Often, emergent organizations have a fiscal sponsor.² Time-bound projects like this one can also have fiscal sponsors. The Pride Foundation has generously agreed to serve as the fiscal home for this project. The fiscal sponsorship agreement between the Pride Foundation and the Queer Data Project was executed in September 2023 and is available by request.
- 2. Design Team** – The Design Team for this project is roughly analogous to the Board of an organization, in the sense that it has decision-making, governance, and caretaking responsibility for the project. At a summary level, the Design Team is the group of folks that set direction, make high-level decisions, and generally oversee the well-being and values-alignment of the project. Collectively, the Design Team for this project holds many intersectional identities and is geographically dispersed throughout the state. As with all fiscally sponsored projects, ultimate legal and fiduciary responsibility lies with the fiscal sponsor (Pride Foundation).

² A 501(c)(3) organization can create a contract with a non-501(c)(3) effort that allows the non-501(c)(3) organization to function as if it were a 501(c)(3)-- including operating as a 501(c)(3) for legal and tax purposes, as well as receiving operational support like bookkeeping, contracting, insurance, accepting/distributing funds, etc.

- 3. Project Team** – The Project Team(s) for this project are roughly analogous to the – The Project Team(s) for this project are roughly analogous to the staff of an organization, in the sense that they take the overall direction/guidance of the Design Team and implement it on a day-to-day basis. At a very basic level, the Design Team **creates and guides** the project and the Project Team **carries out** the project.
- a. Phase One Project Team** – For the planning and feasibility phase, the Project Team included Emily Evans, Iva Torres, Lex Jakusovszky, and Lukas Soto. Since the seed money for phase one was provided by the City of Portland, and the Design Team didn't exist yet, the Phase One Project Team was selected using the City's procurement process. The Phase One Project Team recommends that a new, more equitable and expansive contractor selection process be used for the Phase Two Project Team as well as for all subcontractors going forward.
 - b. Phase Two Project Team** – This team has not been selected yet. Members of the Phase One Project Team may seek to serve on the Phase Two Project Team, but final contracting decisions will be up to the Design Team. The Design Team recommends 3-6 Seasoned Project Management Team Members (2.5-3.5 FTE total).
 - c. Subcontractors to the Phase Two Project Team** – Many of the project components require specialized expertise and skills. A suggested list of potential subcontractors is included in this plan. Structurally, these subcontractors would be selected by, work closely with, and report to, the Phase Two Project Team (as the project managers). The Design Team will interact with those subcontractors as makes sense for the project implementation (e.g. the Policy Committee will likely be in close contact with the Policy subcontractor).

Proposed Subcontractors

1. Existing Data Collection/Analysis:

A team of researchers/data experts to collate, interpret, and analyze existing LGBTQIA2S+ data sources

2. Primary Data Collection/Analysis

A team of mixed methods researchers with substantial community connections and outreach/partnership capacity

3. Service/Resource Ecosystem Mapping

One or more community outreach professionals able to connect with, and gather data from, LGBTQIA2S+ organizations and/or other service providers across the state
Ability to manage active platform on an ongoing basis for 3-4 years

4. Public Policy Analysis and Recommendation Development

At least one policy expert to research best-in-class LGBTQIA2S+ policies in other cities, counties, states, and countries and compare them to Oregon policies
At least one policy expert to develop a policy advocacy framework for the project

5. Strategic Communications

At least one seasoned communications expert to craft key product messages/framework(s)

At least one public relations expert to handle product release and earned media

At least one social media manager

6. Product Creation/Delivery

Lead Copywriter(s)

One to three Copy Editors

Data Visualization Expert(s)

Graphic/Web Designer(s)

Printer (if any printed products)

Fair Compensation Commitment

At present, we all have to exist under capitalism. Given that reality, many values-aligned data projects focused on oppressed communities were/are, by necessity, created using under- or unpaid labor. This means that folks who were engaged in projects designed to prove and explain their own oppression were/are doing so with little or no compensation. We view this as a compounding injustice.

In this project, we seek to pay everyone involved – the Design Team, the Project Team, all subcontractors, etc. – fairly for their time, labor, and expertise. Based on the precedent for impact that many of our pre-cursor projects have created, we believe we can fundraise enough to compensate people fairly AND to demonstrate just how much projects like this truly cost.



5. Recommended Design Team Committee Structure and Charters

Design Team Leadership Positions:

Project Management Committee – This committee guides and oversees the overall management of the project. This includes contracting/subcontracting decisions, timeline adjustments, and workflow oversight. The Project Management Committee includes the Project Management Lead(s), the Finance Lead(s), the Governance Lead(s), the Data Lead(s) and any other members of the Design Team who wish to serve. The PM Committee is supported by the Project Management Lead/Co-Lead(s) and staffed by one or more members of the Project Team.

Finance Committee – The Finance Committee guides and oversees all financial components of the project, including all revenues and expenditures, as well as overseeing cash flow management, contractor payments, fiscal sponsor requirements, and any legal agreements with financial impacts on the project. The Finance Committee is supported by the Finance Lead/Co-Lead(s) and staffed by one or more members of the Project Team.

Governance Committee – The Governance Committee decides and implements all self-governing functions of the Design Team. This includes recruitment of additional Design Team members, Design Team compensation, decision-making processes, project policies, leadership roles, and committee structure. The Governance Committee is supported by the Governance Lead/Co-Lead(s) and staffed by one or more members of the Project Team.

Policy Committee – The Policy Committee guides and oversees all the public policy related components of the project, including supporting the selection and management of any policy subcontractors. The Policy Committee, in collaboration with the Project Team and policy subcontractor(s) will select any policy-related products/deliverables for the project. The Policy Committee is supported by the Policy Lead/Co-Lead(s) and staffed by one or more members of the Project Team and/or policy subcontractor(s).

Data Committee – The Data Committee guides and oversees all the data related components of the project, including supporting the selection and management of any data subcontractors. The Data Committee, in collaboration with the Project Team and data subcontractor(s) will select all data-related products/deliverables for the project. The Data Committee is supported by the Data Lead/Co-Lead(s) and staffed by one or more members of the Project Team and/or data subcontractor(s).

6. Design Team Member Bios



Dr. Jade Aguilar

Dr. Jade Aguilar is a sociologist and the Director of Research Equity at ECONorthwest, a policy and planning consulting firm based in Portland. She has worked with a variety of private and public organizations to offer consultation on equitable research practices, institutional and systemic changes related to equity and inclusion, or providing an equity lens in project-based work.



Bianca "Fox" Ballara

Bianca "Fox" Ballara, She/her/ella, Indigenous latina, Taino and Ciboney of the Caribbean on both my mother and father's family lines. I am Co-Founder of NativeWomanshare, a Land Back Process for the Takelma Tribe of Southern Oregon and re-matriation of the land for Native women and Two-Spirit of the diaspora. I have worked as BIPOC Environmental Justice activist for Beyond Toxics, 350.org, and with the immigrant farmworkers of rural Oregon; also as bilingual Project Manager for the 2020

U.S. Census in efforts to reach greater diversity. I make a damn good cup of café con leche and: I am farmer, Indigenous land steward, astrologer and also co-lead House Del Mar for Southern Oregon 2SLGBTQIA+ event and party organizing.



Jesse Beason

Jesse Beason is Northwest Health Foundation's President and Chief Executive Officer. He leads the Foundation in pursuit of its vision of health for everyone in Oregon and Southwest Washington. Before becoming President in January 2019, Jesse served as the foundation's Vice President of Strategy & Public Affairs. He has also been Executive Director of Proud Ground and a Senior Policy Director for then-Commissioner Sam Adams. Jesse keeps saying yes to serving on boards – too many to list here.

It's a dangerous habit. He moved from Denver, Colorado to Portland to attend Lewis & Clark College two decades ago. Jesse is a proud uncle, a semi-closeted sci-fi geek and a middling beekeeper.



José A. Romero

José A. Romero is a nonbinary organizer and storyteller living with HIV who is committed to transformative justice and wellness for all BIPOC and 2S LGBTQ+ people. They were born to Mexican and Salvadoran farmworkers in rural Washington State and spent their youth working in agricultural fields across the Northwest. José graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with honors in Cultural Anthropology. They have led systems change across the US and Mexico and provided gender-affirming Spanish

interpretation/translation for clients around the globe.

Before joining Pride Foundation, they have held leadership roles with the Latino Commission on AIDS, NMAC, Participatory Budgeting Durham, the University of Houston Wellbeing COMPASS Center, and the tilde Education Fund, among others. They have been featured in CNN's Blind Angels Series and some of their proudest work includes bailing out Black caregivers from jail annually for Mother's Day with SONG, training thousands across the US on alternatives to safety and criminalization with Mijente, co-advising a local QTPOC COVID-19 resilience fund with the LGBTQ+ Center of Durham, and helping queer,

trans, and two-spirit folks laugh. As the Director of Community Advocacy, Research, and Education, at Pride Foundation, they are blessed to carry the torch lit by Jeremiah J. Allen and Agaiotupu Viena to Transform Culture.



Liliana Cabrera

hi, i'm liliana (yehuatl/yeh). i was born and raised in Salinas, California and come from a migratory family that originated from both coasts of Central America. my ancestors have been storytellers, teachers, pathmakers and bridgebuilders. i've lived my life in borderlands and have been able to navigate within the systems of academia as my parents before me as an educator and advocate. i've lived in redmond, oregon since 2015 and worked as an educator, community builder, and facilitator during that time.



Lycan Coss

Lycan is Apache/Aztec and is the Director of Operations & Food Sovereignty Lead at NativeWomanshare.



Aileen Duldulao

Aileen Duldulao (she/her/siya pronouns) currently serves as a member of the Board of Directors for the Filipino Bayanihan Center (FBC) in Portland, Oregon. She is a proud Ilocana whose roots run deep in Batac, Ilocos Norte, Philippines and whose heart runs equally as deep in service to the Filipino community. Aileen is also a cancer survivor and experiences chronic pain and movement limitations as a result of her ongoing treatment. Combining her love of

community, service, and research, Aileen became a research scientist and epidemiologist focusing on health equity, data disaggregation, and decolonizing research. She currently works with the Oregon Health Authority Equity and Inclusion Division's Race, Ethnicity, Language and Disability (REALD) & Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) data standards team.



Eliot Feenstra

Eliot Feenstra (he/they) is an organizer, a performer, a teacher, and a gardener. He is descended from Frisian potato farmers and early English settlers to North Carolina but grew up in Pittsburgh, PA and lives and works in rural southern Oregon. He is the artistic co-director of Beyond Boom & Bust, a theatre project about the economy and resilience, and works as an LGBTQ+ community organizer with the Rogue Action Center in southern Oregon. His work focuses on using community-based arts, dialogue, and

organizing to lift up radical and queer histories, land justice movements, reckoning with inheritance, and our relationships to the places we live. He lives on a former commune in Takilma, Oregon.



Jonathan Frochtzwajg

Jonathan Frochtzwajg (he/him/his) is the Public Policy & Grants Manager for Cascade AIDS Project, the oldest and largest HIV-services and LGBTQ+ healthcare provider in Oregon and Southwest Washington. In this position, he advocates at the local, state, and federal levels for public policies that promote the health and wellness of people living with HIV, LGBTQ+ communities, and people of color. Prior to joining CAP, Frochtzwajg worked as a grant writer for a number of health and arts nonprofits and served as

board co-treasurer of Next Up (formerly The Bus Project), Oregon's leading youth civic-engagement nonprofit. He holds a bachelor's degree in sociology from Lewis & Clark College.



Naomi Goldberg

Naomi Goldberg (she/her) has worked for 15 years to advance LGBTQ policy, including for LGBTQ families, through her work first at the Williams Institute and now at the Movement Advancement Project where she is deputy director and leads the LGBTQ program. She believes strongly in the power of data to break down silos and the ability of stories to change hearts and minds. Naomi advocates for LGBTQI data inclusion, writes policy reports, and works to build collaborative efforts to speed equality.

Naomi lives in Ann Arbor, MI, with her wife and son. She serves as the VP for social action for her local Jewish congregation and is the LGBTQ Liaison to the City of Ann Arbor.



Kari Greene

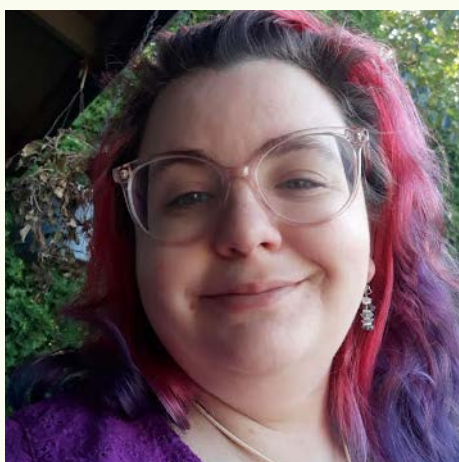
For over two decades, Kari Greene has worked in partnership with state and local agencies, as well as community organizations and coalitions, to design, collect and disseminate useful information to improve health programs, policies and systems. Kari commits to using participatory and liberatory practices to address oppressive systems and social inequities. She is excited when projects include improving qualitative and mixed methodologies and building evaluation capacity with

emerging evaluators and community partners across the lifespan. When she's untethered from screens, Kari loves wandering through woods with her dog, singing with elders, and spontaneous dance parties for one or many!



Nancy Haque

Nancy Haque is the Gender Justice Program Officer at Meyer Memorial Trust. Prior to Meyer, she was the Executive Director of Basic Rights Oregon and the Building Political Power Director at Western States Center.



Artemis Leona

Artemis Leona is an artist and advocate living on Kalapuya land. They are the Resource Dispatcher for the Mid Willamette Trans Support Network, connecting community members with the resources they need. They are also an artist and cook, with a passion for incorporating social justice in these works.



Zeloszelos Marchandt

Zeloszelos has a diverse background. He has worked as a journalist, news director and in forensics for 15 years focusing on gender and sexuality, civil rights and good governance. He is an SCC delegate, pcp and was the chair of the Washington County Black Caucus for three years. He is also the Artistic Director of T & A Grand Theater and the Artistic Director and Founder of Ten, Tiny, Talks: An artist in residency for Black and Indigenous trans, gender non-conforming and queer artists both founded by him in 2020.



LeeAnn O'Neill

LeeAnn (she/her or they/them) is a recovering attorney and founding partner of Allyship in Action, a collaborative of consultants advancing equity and social justice in Central Oregon from an anti-racist and intersectional framework. As a queer Korean transracial adoptee growing up and living in rural spaces, she is deeply committed to creating community, connection, and thriving. LeeAnn also serves on the board of the Latino Community Association and co-founded the affinity group Asians and Pacific Islanders of Central Oregon.

Nina Pamintuan

Originally from the San Francisco Bay Area, Nina has been living in the Rogue Valley for 5 years, where she recently graduated from Southern Oregon University. She works as a community organizer for the Rogue Action Center and co-leads their LGBTQ+ Listening Project, a project featuring different programs and volunteer opportunities that work to mobilize queer communities and movements in Southern Oregon.



Julia Przedworski

Hi! My name is Julia Przedworski (“Yulia Pshedvorsky”), they/them. My work focuses on advancing health equity, inclusion, and justice for queer and trans people and communities, particularly LGBTQ people who experience multiple intersecting forms of marginalization. I have experience in public health research, community activism, and healthcare training /consulting. I also design, implement, and evaluate equity actions and initiatives at institutional and systemic levels. Beyond the professional,

here is a little bit about me and my positionality: I emigrated from Poland as a teenager and have lived in Portland for the past 5 years. I’m queer, genderfluid/nonbinary, neurodivergent, and have a cognitive disability. I’m white and benefit from white privilege. I have experienced houselessness and poverty, but have greater class privilege now due to my education. I love to travel and have a preposterous number of houseplants :)



Erin Waters

Erin Waters (she/her), Programs Director at Black & Beyond the Binary Collective. I have spent a number of years as an advocate and activist supporting the needs of trans and queer-identified folks with a particular focus on trans and queer identities of color.

Phase 1 Project Team Bios



Emily Evans

Born and raised in Ashland, Oregon, Emily has dedicated her career to unearthing and dismantling the many ways gender injustice harms us all. From 2014–2021, Emily served as Executive Director of the Women’s Foundation of Oregon. In that role, she brought her passion for dismantling sexism, racism, and other forms of oppression back home to the Pacific Northwest, with the goal of creating true and lasting gender justice in our region.

Prior to her time leading the Women’s Foundation, Emily worked for several think tanks on the east coast, with an abiding focus on gender justice and multi-sector systemic change. Over the past two decades, Emily has given hundreds of keynotes, trainings, and workshops across the country. She’s a frequent guest speaker for outlets like City Club, OPB, KBOO, KOBI, KGW, and X-RAYFM. Emily is also the author of several articles, Op-Eds, reports, and other resources, including the groundbreaking Count Her In report and companion policy briefs.

Emily holds a bachelor’s degree from Bryn Mawr College and Master’s in Public Administration from the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. She lives with her wonderful wife, their two terrific kids, and their sweet dogs in NW Portland.



Lex Jakusovszky

From Oregon's legislative chambers to the board rooms of Portland area nonprofits, Lex Jakusovszky has spent their career advocating for the most marginalized members of Portland's community. As the City of Portland's first Senior LGBTQIA2S+ Policy Analyst they strive to bring an intersectional lens into the City's equity infrastructure. They are leading the development of a ten-year strategic plan that bolsters City policy, City culture, economic development and data collection efforts. Lex's work is

informed by their own lived experience and years of serving as the Chief of Staff for multiple equity-focused state legislators, where they crafted statewide policy on issues ranging from housing to climate to economic justice. Lex is a former Board Member at Next Up and the Center for Women's Leadership, and a proud alum of the Catalyst Leadership Program with Basic Rights Oregon.



Louie Soto

Louie Soto (Ojibwe/Mapuche) is a two-spirit community organizer, abolitionist, storyteller, and death doula. They bring an interdisciplinary and intersectional approach to racial and social justice work including advocacy and previous consulting experience in healthcare, higher education, nonprofits, and government. They specialize in US race/identity politics, queer theory, transgender justice, two-spirit and Indigenous sovereignty, trauma informed care, and other topics that center marginalized voices.



Iva Torres

Iva Torres has been in movement-building work for almost a decade. She has had many roles across organizational development, program management, administrative operations, and research projects. From growing relationships with incredible organizers, activists, and comrades across the country, Iva has learned many lessons, developed her skills and held brave revolutionary moments with others. Making social justice spaces accessible is what guides her work and she is always designing, writing, and researching with that in mind.

Iva is committed and passionate about shifting systems within traditional institutional structures that have built their base and values off of white supremacy, capitalism, and anti-Blackness. Iva has worked with a range of organizations, including Women's Foundation of Oregon, Community Alliance of Tenants, Coalition of Communities of Color, Portland State Center for Women's Leadership, Meyer Memorial Trust, City of Portland Office of Equity and Human Rights, Action St. Louis, ArchCity Defenders, Demand Progress, and The Ops Collective.