

5 Steps to Success for SOGI-Inclusive Education in Atlantic Canada



Overview

A group of folks from organizations supporting SOGI-inclusive education across Atlantic Canada gathered in Tatamagouche, Nova Scotia, from November 4 to November 6, 2024. Our goals were to build regional collaboration, share skills, create capacity, and make progress on inclusive public education for 2SLGBTQIA+ students. We came up with ways to move issues important to our community forward in a changing political landscape, while deepening relationships and building community across provincial lines

We made this resource to help people who weren't at the gathering benefit from the resources and connections that were made.

Are you looking to educate others on sexual orientation and gender identity? Bring complex identity issues into the classroom? Help inform your community? Check out this framework and reach out to any of the organizations involved for support and collaboration.



LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

In the spirit of reconciliation, we acknowledge the lands on which we met are the traditional, unceded, and stolen territory of the M'ikmaq, known as Mi'kmak'ì. We recognize the people and the land in this way as part of our commitment to anti-oppression and decolonization. We are all treaty people.

Five Steps for Regional Success

Collaborate – Create the Vision
– Build Influence – Seek Funding
and Resources – Continue the
Conversation

Collaborate

We talked about our individual projects, and found threads of collaboration that we didn't know about before:

A word cloud featuring various terms in different colors and sizes. The words are arranged in a cluster, with some overlapping. The colors include shades of blue, purple, red, and pink. The words are: understanding, networking, outreach, solidarity, resources, queer, people, dreaming, rural, SOGI, community, building, connections, education, and sharing. The word 'resources' is the largest and most prominent, followed by 'building', 'queer', and 'rural'.

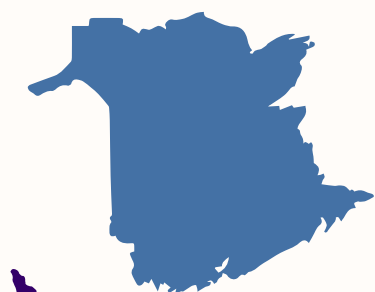
understanding
networking
outreach
solidarity **resources**
queer people
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community **building**
connections education
sharing

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Create the Vision

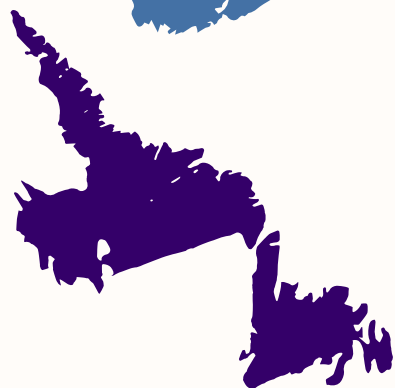
We talked about a positive vision for the future and a shared approach for policy changes.



Revert policy 713, achieving more inclusive SOGI education.

Policy to support delivery of comprehensive sexual and consent education.

Provincial election was a success for allies on this issue. The landscape has changed.



Need a policy scan of government and crown corporations.

Full implementation of existing policies i.e. sexual health must be taught multiple times per year, not only 1 session a year.



More Francophone materials needed.

Expansion of Department of Education support and working closely with Teachers' Union.

Update policies (gendered language, family structures).



Add student rights to education act.

Action on housing/food/income – until needs are met, it's hard to work with other allies.

Policies for SOGI, diversity, consent, bodies, education for all ages.

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Build Influence

We came up with specific actions to be taken and ways to influence public schools in a positive, affirming way.

How to continue building inclusive SOGI education in Atlantic Canada:

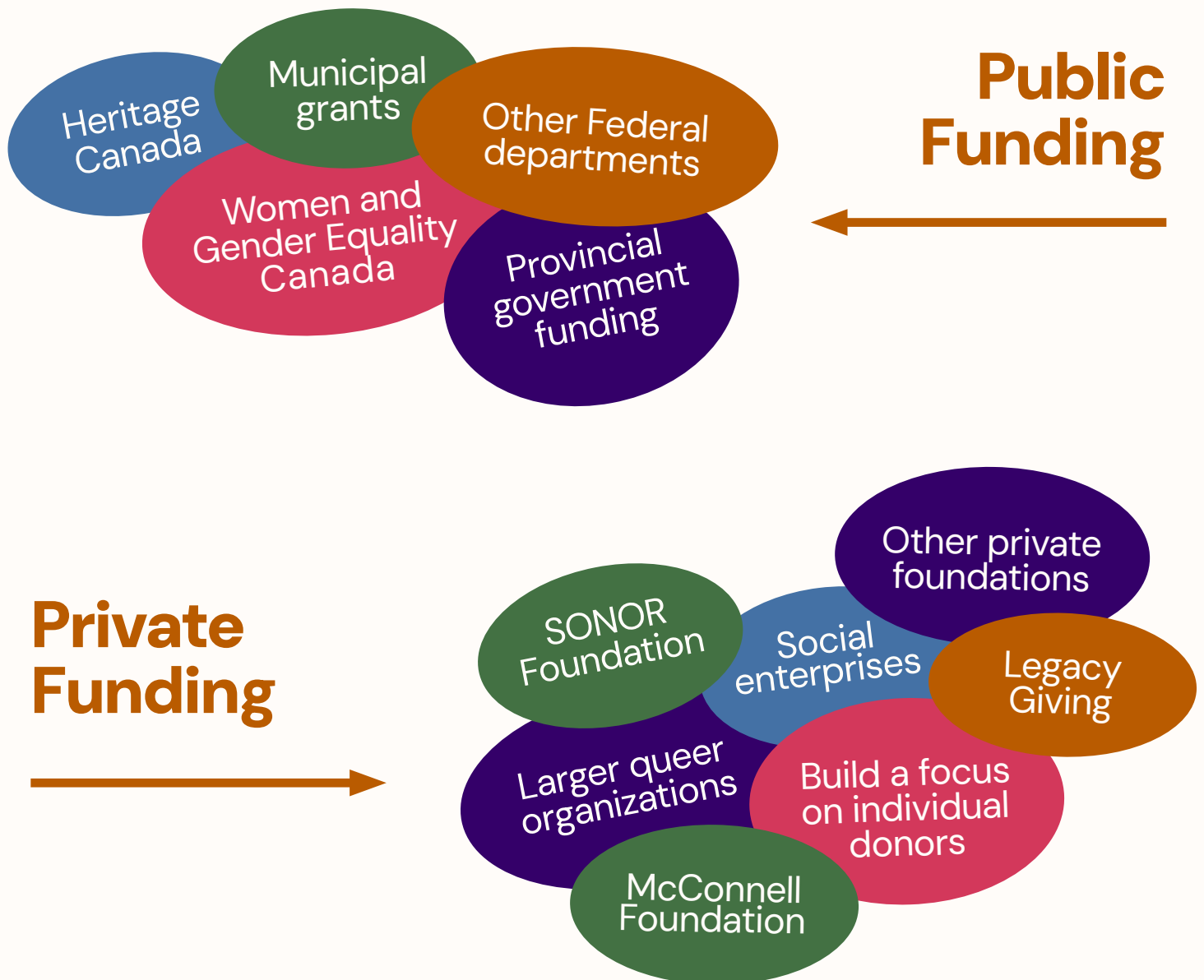
- ✓ Meetings with education officials, teachers' unions and associations, teaching staff, etc.
- ✓ Invite people outside the queer and trans community to our events, leverage discussions and engagement.
- ✓ Familiarize yourself with existing policies.
- ✓ Letter writing campaign and other forms of community engagement.
- ✓ Make materials accessible, easily understood, and evidence based. (ex: Alter Acadie: Keeping Students Safer in Schools – [FR](#) / [EN](#))
- ✓ Work with community leaders, find relatable allies.
- ✓ Talk to the media.
- ✓ Awareness campaigns to inform the public/
- ✓ Engage parents.
- ✓ Empower and support youth.
- ✓ Forge strong partnerships with other nonprofits (policy sharing, media strategy, joint lobbying).

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Seek Funding & Resources

We pulled together resources and funding ideas for joint projects.



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Continue the Conversation

We identified further conversations we need to have as a community.



Appendix

Organization Summary

Alter Acadie – We aspire to live in a society where members of the Francophone 2SLGBTQIA+ community in New Brunswick are able to thrive are well established and represented and have access to services without discrimination. NB

ARC Foundation – ARC Foundation's mission is to foster Awareness, Respect and Capacity through SOGI-inclusive K-12 education. ARC Foundation is a recognized innovator in SOGI-inclusive education. **SOGI 123** helps educators make schools inclusive and safe for students of all sexual orientations and gender identities (SOGI). Atlantic + other regions

Chroma NB – Chroma is a community organization focusing on advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ people in the Menahqesk / Saint John Region. Our goal is to promote initiatives and highlight issues impacting our community by maintaining a strong cohesive voice.

Peers Alliance – PEERS Alliance's Alliance mission is to educate, engage, and support Island residents to build healthier, inclusive communities and to end stigma surrounding sexual health and drug use using a trauma-informed approach. PEI

Planned Parenthood NL – Planned Parenthood NLSHC is a non-profit charitable organization that promotes positive sexual health for all and the social determinants of health for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals through education, community partnership, information, and services within an environment that supports and respects individual choice. NL

Quadrangle NL – A community centre for 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals and organizations, a space that is a resource for building community resilience and connection, and that provides supports for existing initiatives of our 2SLGBTQIA+ community. NL

Trans Support NL – Trans Support NL is a non-profit organization based in St. John's Newfoundland & Labrador (NL), that aims to improve the experiences of Two Spirit, trans, non-binary, intersex, and gender diverse folks in NL through advocacy, peer support, resources, community building, and education. We provide holistic support and services for the trans community. NL

Truro Pride – The Truro Pride Society creates conversations and fosters understanding between 2SLGBTQIA+ community members and the members of the local, traditional, and social communities in which they reside. Conversations are respectful, inclusive, celebrate diversity, and conducted to encourage intersectionality. Truro Pride will advocate for safer spaces, celebratory events, such as the Truro Pride Parade, and better understanding of 2SLGBTQIA+ challenges and successes. Truro and area

Wisdom2Action – A social enterprise and consulting firm supporting civil society organizations and governments to facilitate change and strengthen communities. Our work is driven by a dream of justice, health and safety for all communities across Canada. Atlantic + other region

Youth Project – The Youth Project is a non-profit charitable organization dedicated to providing support and services to youth, 25 and under, around issues of sexual orientation and gender identity. We have a provincial mandate and host staff/volunteers in the HRM, Cape Breton, the Valley, and the South Shore and travel around the province to meet with youth in other communities. We provide a variety of programs and services including support groups, referrals, supportive counselling, a resource library, educational workshops, social activities. NS