

Diversity Digest

The official newsletter of Diversity ACT



DiversityACT
COMMUNITY SERVICES

COVID-19 update

The Management Committee of Diversity ACT hopes all our members and supporters are coping in these difficult times. We know that lockdowns, although necessary, can disproportionately impact those already most vulnerable.

If you are in need, the ACT Government is providing [a range of supports](#), including financial assistance and food relief. For mental health support, you can contact [QLife](#), [Twenty10](#), [Beyond Blue](#) or [Lifeline](#). And of course, we at Diversity ACT are always here to support you.

Please note the rest of this newsletter was written before lockdown, so it's free of COVID mentions!



President's report

It's definitely winter – you can tell by the condensing breath when we go outside. And the occasional snow flurries.

Welcome to the Winter edition of the Diversity Digest. A particularly warm welcome to those for whom this is the first issue. Whether you came to us through the Volunteering Expo, through a stall at an event, or you hunted us out, we are very pleased to have you with us. We hope that you find what you are looking for with us, and we look forward to getting to know you better.

The cold weather certainly doesn't seem to slow the pace at all for Diversity ACT. Whether it's the wonderful team on the Management Committee; the volunteers at a Bunnings sausage sizzle; the people working to prepare for the AGM; those putting this newsletter together; making sure that Queer Youth Together and Southside Women are continuing to provide support for their members; or whatever action it is, Diversity ACT is kept running by the work of our volunteers.

I'd like to take this opportunity to once again thank them for all of their hard work. A couple of special mentions for this month to some of our newest members: Amelia, Luka, Lauren, Michael, Matt, Matthew and Richard. Amelia and Matt joined the adult leadership team at QyouT. Luka

and Lauren donated hours at the Bunnings BBQ. Michael and Matthew have been working on our IT, and Richard donated a huge TV that the young people are absolutely loving! Also, many thanks to Shay for her emergency shift at Bunnings when another volunteer was unable to attend due to respiratory symptoms.



As we continue to build our links with other local, national and international groups, we were very pleased to be able to provide free tickets to the recent [Canberra Qwire](#) concert. Some of the new members and one of the youth were blown away by the concert. Thanks to the Qwire for those tickets and congratulations! It was also great to see our young people impressing the Australian UN Youth Representative. There's so much knowledge and passion in that group.

Throughout the rest of the newsletter, you will find more details of the many and varied activities that make up part of what we do.

As always, we are keen to hear from our members. If you have feedback and suggestions for future directions for Diversity ACT, please feel free to send an email to info@diversityact.org.au.

Treasurer's report

Queer Youth Together



After reporting last time that we were finally able to secure an electronic point of sale payment option, that service sadly stopped being provided in Australia. However, we have worked with Square to get an account, so should be able to have this available at future fundraising events.

Southside Women's Group

Southside Women is a group for LBTIAQ+ women. The group provides regular social activities in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere.

Over the last few months, they've had the opportunity to connect a range of local events.

These have included dinner catch-ups, heading to the movies and to Queer Stories, musical outings to see [Canberra Qwire](#), listen to blues bands and dance away to retro rock.



Members of Southside Women had a great time seeing Black Widow

In April they held the Southside Women's Autumn Event Rainbow Pour Art event, including lunch and performance by Drag King Latin Lover. This event was a huge success with many new members joining up with Diversity ACT.

SPRINGOUT

SpringOUT and the Purple Dance Party

The Canberra SpringOUT Pride Festival is back in November 2021 and Diversity ACT and the Southside Women's Group will be managing this year's Women's Dance! There's more detail in our upcoming events section to get your ticket.

We'd love to have more people help out with the organising committee for the dance. If you have some free time to make this night even more incredible, please get in touch: info@diversityact.org.au.

Queer Youth Together (or QyouT, pronounced "cute") is the Diversity ACT youth group.

First up, the additions to our leadership team. Aster and Sezi are doing great work as the Youth Leaders. Megan is chuffed that Matt and Amelia have come on board as part of the adult convening group. Matt has plans to engage everyone with The Vampire card game, which should go down pretty well.

QyouT was very excited to receive \$100 from [Grill'd Woden](#) as part of the [Local Matters](#) program. The young people have plans for the funds; the adult leaders suspect that craft supplies and board games will feature heavily.



Recently the QyouT members participated in a consultation with the Australian UN Youth envoy.

While we were sorry that Sophie couldn't physically join us, the new TV makes Zoom meetings really easy. Everyone had an opportunity to talk about the big and small issues that matter to them. Sophie was chuffed with the contributions, and very interested to hear about the [Darlington Statement](#). Hopefully she will be able to get the priorities of Australian and New Zealand intersex people on the UN agenda.

Outside of the advocacy side of the equation, the young people have been enjoying food opportunities, card games, board games, and binging She Ra and Owl House. Once they finish with Owl House, Loki will be part of the program.

There are plans to try and knit mini blankets for rescued cats and kittens, and a QyouT virtual table at the [Wear It Purple Trivia Night](#).

Before the weather got too cold, there was an afternoon out at Tidbinbilla. While we didn't encounter a physical platypus, we did see several Eastern Bettongs. None of them would pose for photos though.



Opportunities



Diversity ACT in the community

Rainbow Ranting

Are you looking to improve your public speaking and communication skills? The Rainbow Ranters Toastmasters group would like to offer one member of Diversity ACT a 12-month membership. In return, the person sponsored must commit to attend meetings and participate in meetings roles. The members will help and mentor them in developing their communication and leadership skills.

The group focuses on public speaking, prepared speeches and impromptu speaking, plus listening, interpersonal communication skills and leadership skills. The club aims to help and LGBTQIA+ people or allies in a mutually supportive and safe environment.

Meetings are twice a month (2nd and 4th Thursdays) at the Pride Hub, Havelock House, 6.30 to 8pm.

If you're interested in this sponsored membership, please send a short pitch covering what you would get from the membership and your ability to meet the requirements to info@diversityact.org.au by 7 September.

Research

Non-binary views on general practitioner cultural competence

Laura/Remus Short from Curtin university is conducting research to fill a gap lack of clear research on non-binary individuals, and little specific guidance on how to deliver supportive care to them. This includes what culturally competent health care from a general practitioner (GP) to non-binary Australians looks like.

The research team aims to fill this knowledge gap by exploring what non-binary adult Australians think culturally competent health care from a GP would be for them. In the future, this research may contribute towards helping improve non-binary individuals' comfort when accessing care from a GP.

It is intended that up to approximately 15 non-binary adults spread across Australia will be interviewed for this project.

[Read more about the project and how to become part of the research.](#)

We were invited to have information tables recently at Queerstories, the opening of the Canberra Roller Derby League (CRDL) season and the Volunteers Expo.

These were important opportunities to raise awareness of our work and engage with our community. Thanks to those organisations for inviting us, and the volunteers on the stalls.

IDAHOBIT

Diversity ACT was proud to represent at two events for [IDAHOBIT Day](#). Our President was asked to speak at [Penten](#), and Management Committee member Cat Sullivan attended an event at the Legislative Assembly.

Fundraising update

CSCC Community rewards

You now have yet another reason to head to a meal at the [Canberra Southern Cross Club](#) (CSCC): supporting Diversity ACT at the same time!

We are now part of the [CSCC Community rewards](#) program. Club members can nominate us as their chosen charity and we'll receive a donation of 7.5 cents for every dollar spent on food and drinks at any of the Canberra Southern Cross Club venues. [Nominate us as your charity today!](#)



Bunnings BBQ

Diversity ACT was lucky enough to be selected by Bunnings Tuggeranong to hold a sausage sizzle on 10 July. With so many charities seeking this opportunity, we are so pleased to be selected!

To make it even better, we had a huge number of volunteers helping us on the day. Thanks to their hard work we were able to raise enough money to cover our essential insurance costs for the year in one day!

All up, we sold 696 sausages on bread!

Rainbow Open Mic Comedy

We hope everyone who attended the Rainbow Open Mic Comedy night at the [Boardwalk Bar and Nightclub](#) in April had a great time! We were so thrilled to be offered this fundraising opportunity.



Management Committee news



We've had a few changes in our Management Committee and sub-committees since the last newsletter. I am pleased to welcome Angel Hellyer, Jaz Payne, Caterina Sullivan and Jay Moran onto the management committee!

We've recently established a Communication sub-committee to help us communicate both with our members and our community more regularly. You should see some changes coming up soon!

We have reviewed our Association Rules and will propose updates for endorsement by the membership at the 2021 AGM in October: stay tuned for more information!

We are also seeking people to help us out with maintenance of the Diversity Hub. If you're handy in the garden or in making small fixes around the Hub, including helping with minor IT issues, we'd love to hear from you!

Subcommittees

We are seeking new members for all our sub-committees, so if you're interested in being part of the work we do, this is your chance!

To apply, email info@diversityact.org.au with a paragraph on why you want to join your selected subcommittee and what you will bring. Preference will be given to people who add diversity not currently represented on the sub-committee.

Finance and fundraising

- Morgan Sedaitis (chair), Megan Watts

The Finance and Fundraising sub-committee has been very busy organising a range of fundraising activities (including the Canberra Southern Cross Club membership and Bunnings BBQ mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter), and applying for a range of grants to improve our Hub spaces and capacity to deliver services.

Policy and governance (formerly known as Strategic Planning & Governance)

- Angel Hellyer (chair), Jay Moran, Sarah Hanrahan, Luka Musicki

Following a full review of our policies and procedures, the sub-committee has been finalising our Privacy Policy and starting work on a range of new policies and policy updates.

Events and outreach

- Liz Stephens (chair), Megan Watts

See the next page for all the upcoming events!

Education and training

- Shay-Leigh Willis (chair), Daniel Putra

The team is currently exploring how to increase awareness of Diversity ACT, and particularly QYouT, in southside schools.

Research and analysis

- Megan Watts (Chair)

This sub-committee is currently focussing on analysing the results of the community survey we undertook earlier in the year, so we can incorporate the results into future event and engagement planning.

Health and wellbeing

This sub-committee is currently in need of revitalising! A chair and a couple of interested members would be great!

Advocacy in action

New government regulations a threat to charities

The Federal Government is proposing a major change to how Australian charities are regulated which would place advocacy organisations at risk of being deregistered by the (government-appointed) Charities Commissioner for being involved in political protests, even if they have not broken any laws.

They could even be deregistered for things they haven't done yet if the Charities Commissioner 'reasonably believes' they could in the future.

This is extraordinary overreach which will have a chilling effect on the vital work that charities do in this country, especially on politically divisive issues such as many that Diversity ACT advocates on.

You can read more at the [Hands Off Our Charities campaign website](#).

Take action

What you can do:

1. Write to your [local MP or Senator](#) calling on them to withdraw these harsh new regulations.
2. Raise awareness on social media. Consider tagging Scott Morrison and Assistant Treasurer Michael Sukkar.

Please always use the hashtag #HandsOffCharities and, if space allows, also use #auspol when tweeting.





SEE-Change Repair Café

1pm to 4pm, last Sunday of the month, at the Tuggeranong Community Centre.

Bring in your broken items and see them get repaired. Learn new skills and connect with the community. Diversity ACT will again be running the food component of the Café, selling tea, coffee and delicious afternoon tea goodies. (If the weather is cold, maybe even homemade soup!)

Interested in being on the roster for the Café or doing some baking of afternoon tea items? Email info@diversityact.org.au.



Wear It Purple day

27 August is Wear It Purple Day. [Wear It Purple](#) strives to foster supportive, safe, empowering and inclusive environments for rainbow young people.

We encourage everyone to wear purple on 27 August in support of LGBTIAQ+ young people. Feel free to share your purple outfit on [our Facebook page!](#)

And of course, with Wear It Purple day coming up, it means it's nearly time for...

Wear It Purple Trivia Night

Our annual Wear It Purple Trivia Night is back as an online event on **Friday, 4 September!** This is your opportunity to (virtually) bring your friends together, have lots of fun, answer questions, play games, and win prizes!

Find out more at the [Facebook event](#) and grab tickets from [Eventbrite](#).

We're also still looking for prizes for the night. If you have something you'd like to donate, please get in touch!

Not So Binary

The 'Not So Binary Project' is an exploration of and response to the use of language as a weapon against the LGBTIQ+ community. Not So Binary is both a production of a performance work and a photography exhibition, with the performance process captured on film and still photographs, which will be exhibited in November!

This will begin with [a launch event at 6pm on 4 November at the Diversity Hub](#), and there will be [exhibition openings each Saturday in November](#). Head to the hyperlinks to respond on Facebook so you don't forget.

This project, highlighting the lived experiences of LGBTIAQ+ people, was made possible with the help of photographer Ella Wilkes, artistic advisor Sian Brigid, PhotoAccess in Griffith and support from Johnathan Davies, Greens MLA for Tuggeranong.

Not So Binary is funded through the Capital of Equality Grants Program.



Purple Dance Party

The SpringOUT Women's Dance returns under new management and at a new venue. Diversity ACT and the Southside Women's Group are keen to see you at this great night of music, dance and fun on **6 November**.

Held at the Weston Creek Community Centre, the Purple Dance Party is an opportunity for women and non-binary folk to dance the night away. Register your interest on [Facebook](#) or just [go to Eventbrite now to get your ticket](#).

Christmas soiree

Can you believe we're thinking about Christmas already? We'll be figuring out the date and details of our annual Christmas soiree soon. Keep an eye on [our website](#) and [Facebook page](#) for details.