



Diversity Digest

The official newsletter of Diversity ACT

Summer 2021



President's report

Well, what an eventful year it's been. It's hard to believe that the AGM and the Christmas Soiree are over, and that it's almost time to start planning for 2022.

You will see from this packed newsletter that, despite the COVID lockdown and all the challenges that involved, Diversity ACT Community Services has continued to work hard for the LGBTIAQ+ community. Our website has been revamped, we have met our obligations around reporting to membership and regulatory bodies, and our support groups continue to enrich the lives of their members. There are also new opportunities opening up for us to reach out to the wider ACT community.

I take this opportunity to wish all our members and supporters a safe and happy festive season, and look forward to meeting up with you in the new year. Here's hoping for a slightly less challenging 2022!

Megan Watts

Treasurer's report

Hi everyone. I am delighted to be the incoming Treasurer for Diversity ACT for the new calendar year of 2022. This is my first report as Treasurer, so I will make it short as I have not done a lot for my role yet. I hope to contribute to the discussion with the other committee members and provide a proper update in the next newsletter.

I have two goals for the achievable year: to give the Treasurer report a more presentable look and consistent information, and to make adjustments with our revenue and expenses efforts to give Diversity ACT a more robust financial health. I will be working with the other committee members and sub-committees to gather their thoughts, so it is a shared community effort, as all members run Diversity ACT.

If you have any questions about my role or any financial queries, please feel free to contact info@diversityact.org.au.

Luka Musicki

Secretary's report

This is my last report as Secretary, as I made the sad decision to not re-nominate at the AGM. I have learnt so much during my short time as Secretary, and will continue my roles on the Policy and governance subcommittee and the Communication subcommittee.

This means that we are looking for a new Secretary! If you're an organised person who enjoys ensuring things run smoothly and everyone is on the same page, this could be the role for you! Find out more by contacting info@diversityact.org.au.

Angel Hellyer

Southside Women's Group

During October, Southside Women ventured out of lockdown to enjoy a range of outdoor activities, including a walk around Jerrabomberra Wetlands followed by drinks and snacks at Capital Brewing Co, and a walk along Weston Park followed by takeaway from Snappers on the Lake. We also had dinner out on a wet Friday night at Vanilla Pod Tuggeranong.



If you're interested in attending our monthly activities, please join the Southside Women Facebook group or SMS me on [0422144441](tel:0422144441).

We are currently planning next year's activities. If you have any suggestions or can help us plan, please contact me.

Liz Stephens
SSW Coordinator

Queer Youth Together

QyouT has had a slow and gentle return from lockdown. We have restricted ourselves to meeting at the Hub rather than braving public spaces and the associated COVID risks. There have been lots of card and board games, many snacks and some physical, creative and intellectual challenges.

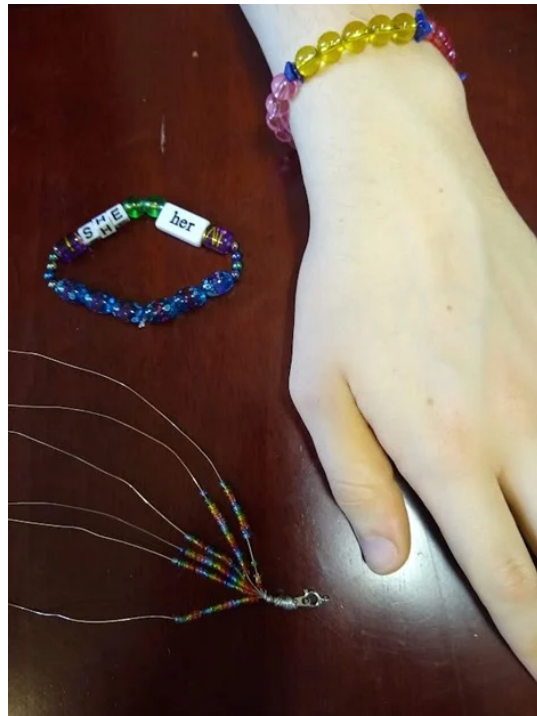
Two of our members have recently applied for their Working With Vulnerable

People cards, and are finding ways to build their employment skills through volunteering with Diversity ACT. Yay team!

We had a donation of a huge box of beads, so we explored making bracelets. You can see a couple of examples of our achievements. Can you tell that one of our members has much more patience and skill than the rest of us? That bracelet is going to be six interwoven rainbows!

Two of our members are now the proud owners of badge makers, so we plan to create many pronoun badges for use at Diversity ACT events.

Our final get together for 2021 is our Christmas party at the Hub on 18 December. Past and present QyouT members are very welcome to attend! We will spend some time at the party developing a program for January, which we will list on the [Diversity ACT calendar/website](#).



The first day back for QyouT in our regular term schedule will be Saturday, 5 February. We already know that there's an opportunity to encourage new members for the group at the Lake Tuggeranong College Community Showcase on 9 February. If you have contacts with a local school, feel free to pass on our contact details: Megan Watts (QyouT adult convenor) ph: [0450 502081](tel:0450502081), or Aster (QyouT young adult convenor) ph: [0466 986993](tel:0466986993).



Opportunities

Be our new Volunteer Coordinator!

We're seeking a motivated, passionate and organised person to be our Volunteer Coordinator!

The Volunteer Coordinator reports to the Membership Secretary. The time commitment is approximately 10 hours/month.

The duties of the Volunteer Coordinator are:

1. Interview potential new volunteers, introduce them to the organisation and arrange completion of membership/volunteer registration if appropriate.

2. Establish and maintain a Volunteer Register (as a separate sheet on the Membership Register)
3. Ensure the currency of volunteer WWVP registration.
4. Provide a monthly list of new volunteers requiring induction to the President.
5. After volunteers are inducted by the President, arrange contacts with the appropriate subcommittee chair.
6. Arrange thank you certificates for regular volunteers/one-off special events.
7. Provide an article for each newsletter highlighting the contribution of volunteers.

The Volunteer Coordinator should have:

- Mandatory attributes: over 15 years of age, Diversity ACT membership, WWVP registration
- Highly desirable attributes: administrative skills, people management experience
- Personal qualities: passionate, looking for mentoring/growth opportunities

Find out more or apply by emailing info@diversityact.org.au

Want to do some LGBTIAQ+ readings on the radio?

The team at Canberra's volunteer-run radio station, [1RPH](#), is running a series about people turning text into sound by reading out works. They've asked Diversity ACT if we'd like to be involved by doing readings of LGBTIAQ+ significant texts (fiction or non-fiction) that will play on the radio.

So if you've got a voice for radio, or if you love reading aloud, get in touch by emailing info@diversityact.org.au and tell us what you'd like to read!

Make a difference

"I should have been left how I was born."

They're the words of 11-year-old Noah, who was born with an intersex variation and operated on without his consent as an infant. Now Noah and his parents are speaking up to stop the same thing from happening to other children born with variations of sex characteristics.

At Diversity ACT, we agree that everyone should be able to make their own choices about what happens to their body. But many intersex people still don't have a say about medical procedures performed on their bodies that modify their sex characteristics.

This can have lifelong consequences.

That's why [Equality Australia](#) and [Intersex Human Rights Australia](#) have developed a campaign to end unnecessary medical procedures and give more rights to people born with intersex variations.

You can [find out more about Noah's story and join the campaign](#).

Find out more

It feels Good2Give

Did you know you can donate to charities through your workplace, so it's done on your pre-tax income? That means you get the tax reduction immediately rather than having to wait until tax time to claim it!

Workplaces can sign up to give to charities like Diversity ACT through various workplace giving programs, such as [Good2Give](#). This means you can sign up to donate a specific amount each pay, and your payroll team takes care of it all for you!

If you think you can make a small, regular donation to Diversity ACT through your workplace, please get in touch with your Payroll team to see if you have a workplace giving program set up, or instigate one!

Find out more

Fundraising update



Trivia night wrap-up

Many thanks to everyone who participated in the Wear It Purple Trivia night on 4 September. It was a tough time, with COVID having recently appeared back in the ACT and lockdown in place, so we truly appreciate everyone who made the effort to join us.

Congratulations to Team Purple Haze on their outstanding first place with 30,769 points.

Tickets sales raised over \$800 to support LGBTIAQ+ young people, and we made a substantial donation to the [Wear It Purple Foundation](#).

Management Committee news

Annual General meeting

We held our Annual General Meeting on 27 November. You can have a read of the [draft minutes](#) for full details, but here are a few key points:

- You can read our 2019-20 [Annual report](#) and [financial report](#).
- Morgan Sedaitis has completed his time as Treasurer. Our new Treasurer is Luka Musicki.
- Caterina Sullivan and Angel Hellyer chose not to re-elect to the Committee, which means we have a vacant position for Secretary.
- Daniel Sudarto, an existing General member, is taking on the Membership Secretary role.
- Kim Malcolm is coming on as a General member. We still have a few General member positions available if you're interested.
- We made some minor changes to our [Association Rules](#), mainly to make them more inclusive and flexible and ensure we could continue to have virtual meetings even if the Federal Government does not pass legislation to make that permanent (it's currently a temporary provision because of COVID-19).

Subcommittees

We are seeking new members for our sub-committees, so if you're interested in being part of the work we do, this is your chance! Find out more [on our website](#), and [watch our video](#).

To apply for one of these roles, email info@diversityact.org.au with a paragraph on why you want to join the committee and what you will bring. Preference will be given to people who bring a form of diversity not currently represented in the existing sub-committee membership.

Finance and Fundraising

– *Luka Musicki (chair), Megan Watts*

After an interesting time with electronic point of sale devices (thanks for deleting that service PayPal!), we are all settled in with Square. Several volunteers have successfully learned how to drive the app and the device, so cashless transactions are becoming more common at our events and fundraisers.

Luka has already mentioned his personal goals for the Treasurer position. The AGM affirmed the goals that we had set for the Finance & Fundraising subcommittee, some of which have been overtaken by other events. But moving forward, we seek to grow the subcommittee and determine what action is needed to ensure appropriate GST exemption status for the organisation.

Policy and governance

– *Angel Hellyer (chair), Sarah Hanrahan*

We've gotten all the policies up to date after a few slipped their review date during COVID-19. Next up is a big-picture review to ensure all our policies are consistent and determine any gaps. If you're keen to help out, [watch this video](#) about what we do, and apply for a role!

Events and outreach

- Liz Stephens (chair), Megan Watts, Luka Musicki

Christmas soiree wrap-up

We had such a fun afternoon at the Hub, and the weather gods were kind to us! It was great to see a combination of regular event attendees and people who were at the Hub for the first time. We had fun exploring a new way of recycling and making art out of plastic lids, played Christmas Bingo, were thoroughly entertained by Zapp Backagain, decorated the footpath with chalk drawings, and ate a delicious BBQ dinner.

The raffle was hugely popular: many thanks to the folk who donated prizes. For those of you who missed out this time, feel free to drop past [Obsidian Wax's website](#) and check out the amazing artwork there.

As always, these events don't create themselves, so a huge shout out to the Events team of Liz Stephens, Luka Musicki and Megan Watts, and the many volunteers who helped out on the day.



Wellbeing Priori-Tea

We planned to reopen the Diversity Hub at Kambah after lockdown in November with a Wellbeing Priori-Tea event. Unfortunately, both times we tried to schedule it we got rained out.

Purple Dance Party

We also had to postpone the planned Purple Dance Party due to COVID-19 and will reschedule for March 2022 (date to be confirmed). We are currently looking for people to assist on the planning team and on the night. Please [email Diversity ACT](#) or contact Liz on [0422144441](tel:0422144441) if you are interested. We are also looking for musicians, dancers, poets, drummers, etc., who would like to perform on the night.

See the end of this newsletter for our upcoming events.

Communication

- Angel Hellyer

You may have noticed our [refreshed website](#)! Hopefully you're finding it easier now that more of our forms are online, and it's much easier to put up our events.

If you've got any feedback on the website, we'd love to hear it.

We're also in need of a Chair for the subcommittee and more members. If you're keen to help out, [watch this video](#) about what we do, and apply for a role!

Education and training

- *Shay-Leigh Willis (chair), Daniel Putra*

Diversity ACT strives to educate the public and our leaders on best practices for providing services and support to the LGBTIAQ+ community. We are currently providing funded training to our team and members interested in becoming certified in Mental Health First Aid.

We are reaching out to schools in South Canberra to help provide educational opportunities for both students and staff about LGBTIAQ+ issues and support students regarding these topics.

Do you want to help educate Canberrans on matters LGBTIAQ+? We are looking for new members in this subcommittee!

If you are interested in taking advantage of these opportunities or have any questions about what we can provide, please feel free to [contact us](#) for more information.

Research and analysis

- *Megan Watts (Chair)*

As you can see, this subcommittee is very low on members, and therefore limited in what it can achieve. Since the last newsletter, the subcommittee's work has focused on draft legislation both federally and in NSW.

Our research and analysis of the NSW One Nation Education Bill led to a [letter from Diversity ACT Community Services to the then NSW Premier Gladys Berejiklian](#), asking her to categorically reject the [NSW Parliamentary Education Committee's](#) report into One Nation's proposed amendment to education legislation and its findings, and to oppose One Nation's [Education Legislation Amendment \(Parental Rights\) Bill 2020](#).

We also responded to the federal [Religious Discrimination Bill 2021](#). Diversity ACT [wrote to all ACT federal politicians](#) on 23 November 2021 to express our deep concern about the potential negative impact of the bill and the associated amendments to other legislation. Our position is that legislative provisions for religious freedom would best be made through the mechanism of a comprehensive Human Rights Act.

If you're keen to help us do more in this space, [watch this video](#) about what we do, and apply for a role!

Hub maintenance

- *Liz Stephens (chair), Michael Still*

A break-in occurred in October through the back fence. Fortunately, nothing was stolen. We reported the incident to the police and are exploring alarm systems.

A big thanks to Michael Still for mowing the lawn regularly after all the drenching rain. The bushes around the Hub have also been pruned.

The maintenance committee is still in the formation process. If you would like to assist on the committee or enjoy gardening, please [send us an email](#).

Health and wellbeing

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

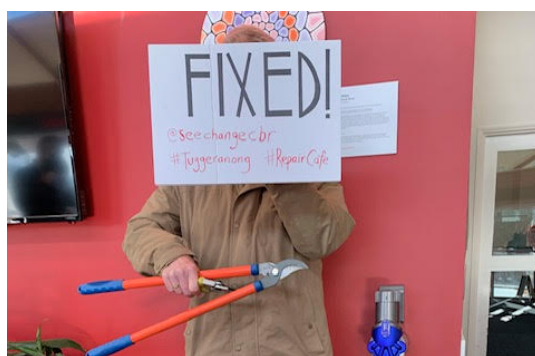
Upcoming events

Not So Binary

The *Not So Binary* project is a photographic exploration and unpacking of gender. It explores and responds to the use of language as a weapon against the LGBTIAQ+ community. It features members of the Canberra LGBTIAQ+ community, arranged and shot by members of the Canberra LGBTIAQ+ community.

The project has been hard hit by COVID, as the artistic team are all high risk. But there are plans afoot to reboot the project early in the new year. So, if you are a person who sits outside the gender/sexuality binary and would like to be a part of an exciting photography project, feel free to email the project team at info@diversityact.org.au

Not So Binary is funded through the Capital of Equality grants program.



Repair Cafe

Diversity ACT has once again been providing refreshments, including home-baked goodies, at the [Tuggeranong Repair Cafe](#). This event, run by SEE-Change, has volunteers who help repair broken household items at no charge to prevent them from going to landfill.

It is held from 1 to 4pm on the fourth Sunday of each month (except December) at 245 Cowlshaw St Tuggeranong.

Find out more

Find out more



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Diversity ACT Community Services

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