

# 2017 Annual Report

## BeLonG To Youth Services



Supporting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex young people in Ireland





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Creating a world where LGBTI+ young people are equal, safe and valued

2017 was a year of growth for BeLonG To Youth Services. It was a year where we set up a new support service, broadened our reach in second-level schools, expanded our team, and reached out to LGBTI+ young people across 26 counties.

We invite you to read about our journey in 2017 as we worked to respond to the health, safety, and equality needs of LGBTI+ young people during a momentous time with the development of the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy. We are proud that through our lobbying and advocacy work, we were instrumental in the development of this strategy, the first of its kind created by Government worldwide lead by Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone TD.

The stories that we share on the following pages, show how with your support, we are making a real difference to the lives of LGBTI+ young people and their families. There are no limits to what our young people can achieve when they feel accepted and equal – when they feel that they belong.

Over the past 12 months, we have been there to support LGBTI+ young people, their parents and guardians, their brothers and sisters, their teachers, and youth workers. We have shared our expertise with other organisations, contributed to the development of policy, and championed the rights and inclusion of LGBTI+ young people across Ireland. We will not stop until all LGBTI+ young people are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences. We will not stop until all young people can express who they are, and who they love, without experiencing hate and discrimination.

We are proud of all the work that we did in 2017, and of the young people, staff, volunteers, board members, donors, and supporters who helped to make this happen. But there is a lot more to do. Not being accepted for who you are can have serious impacts on the mental health of our young people. LGBTI+ young people are three times more likely to attempt suicide, and two times more likely to self-harm than their non-LGBTI+ friends. Growing up LGBTI+ doesn't need to be painful and challenging. We are committed to reimagining what it means to grow up LGBTI+ in Ireland. Together, we can create a safer, more supportive place where all of our young people belong.

**Moninne Griffith**  
*Executive Director*



**Nikki Gallagher**  
*Chairperson, Board of Directors*



## our Vision

Our Vision is a world where LGBTI+ young people are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences.

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## our Mission

Our Mission is to support LGBTI+ young people as equals to achieve our vision through youth work, changing attitudes, and research.

# OUR Values

Our core values are those of **Inclusion, Integrity** and **Respect**, in an environment of **Honesty** and **Openness**. Our purpose is to create a **Welcoming, Supportive, Safe, and Fun space for LGBTI+ young people**. We are committed to **Collaboration** and **Youth Participation**. We believe in **Solidarity and Intersectional Equality**, and our work focuses on **Human Rights** and **Social Justice**. We are dedicated to **Continuous Improvement** in everything we do.

# WHAT WE GOT UPTO IN 2017

WE INCREASED

**unrestricted funds**  
by 120% by raising  
**€217,460**

WE TRAINED

**16 NEW VOLUNTEERS**  
to work in our Dublin  
youth groups

WE HELPED TO SECURE  
THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE

**FIRST LGBTI+  
NATIONAL YOUTH STRATEGY**  
IN THE WORLD BY THE IRISH GOVERNMENT

Anna Quigley of CityWide Drugs Crisis Campaign stepped down as Chair of our Board of Directors after 10 years

Donor retention rates increased by

**225%**

from 2016

WE LAUNCHED

**TRANSVISIBILITY** OUR PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN

WE DEVELOPED A

**three-year  
Communications Strategy**

**Glenn Keating, Eve Kerton,  
Sinead Keane, Suzanne  
Handley & Marvin Cassidy  
JOINED THE TEAM**

**37 YOUTH GROUPS**  
were supported through  
the National Network

IN EQUAL PARTNERSHIP  
WITH YOUNG PEOPLE,

we developed a  
number of innovate  
recommendations  
to change the  
**GENDER RECOGNITION  
ACT 2015**

Ebay's Pride Network  
RAISED

**€3,000**  
through karaoke and  
Ebay's Got Talent

**The Irish Times,  
RTE News, TV3 &  
Irish Examiner**

WERE JUST SOME OF THE MEDIA  
OUTLETS THAT SPOKE ABOUT

**STAND UP  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**

**LGBTI+ Young People** from across Ireland  
marched with us at **Dublin LGBTQ Pride**

WE LAUNCHED OUR NEW

## MONDAY CHATS SUPPORT SERVICE

Our Executive Director, MONINNE GRIFFITH was appointed Chair of the review of the **Gender Recognition Act 2015**

24 YOUNG PEOPLE received media training & joined our **Media Panel**

We received training around what it means to be **INTERSEX**

111 people became **NEW DONORS** IN **2017**

**€1450**

Wet and Wild Outdoor Sports Club raised through their table quiz in The George

We worked on the development of the new **NATIONAL DRUG AND ALCOHOL STRATEGY** - Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery

We reached more than

**151,000**  
**STUDENTS**

through **Stand Up** Awareness Week

We held our first ever **RAINBOW BALL** RAISING

**€53,000**

Our Executive Director, **MONINNE GRIFFITH** was Grand Marshall of **Dublin LGBTQ Pride**

**140**

education professionals received our Stand Up LGBTI+ training

The American Ireland Funds awarded us a core grant of

**€25k**

We did yoga and got head massages as part of our staff well being programme

We marked the **10-year anniversary** of the **specialised LGBTI+ drug and alcohol service** with a video launch

**378 professionals**

received **LGBTI+** awareness training through National Network Funded groups

IBM, HSBC, Central Bank, SurveyMonkey, A & L Goodbody, Salesforce and Bank of Ireland **JOINED US FOR OUTREACH EVENTS**

**LIZ HARPER** AND **KERY MULALLY** JOINED OUR **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

We developed a new **MENTAL HEALTH** resource for young people

We adopted a **NEW CONSTITUTION** redefining our **vision**, **mission**, and **values** for the next chapter in our history

**OISIN O'REILLY**

our Fundraising and Operations Manager was appointed as

**COMPANY SECRETARY**

**Marks and Spencer, Coca-Cola, Tesco, State Street, The Dalata Hotel Group, Microsoft** and **Salesforce** JOINED US AS

**NEW PARTNERS FOR THE RAINBOW BALL**



# OUR DUBLIN YOUTH GROUPS

It's not always easy for LGBTI+ young people to find other people like them who understand what it is like to be LGBTI+ in Ireland today. Our youth groups are a good place to start.

Our Youth Groups provide a safe, welcoming, fun space where LGBTI+ young people can meet other LGBTI+ young people, engage in informal educational programmes based on issues that are affecting their lives, and have fun. We are very grateful to receive funding for these groups from the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. We work within the Critical Social Education Model of youth work placing the voice of young people at the heart of what we do. As part of the Education For Life programme, young people participate in four mandatory workshops a year on coming out, mental health, drugs and alcohol, and sexual health. The remainder of the programmes are determined by the young people themselves, and youth leaders are trained to deliver the programmes through peer education. Our professional Youth Workers, with dedicated LGBTI+ expertise, facilitate the youth groups assisted by a team of volunteers. In 2017, we ran four LGBTI+ specific youth groups fortnightly.

## IndividualiTY

This safe, positive, and fun space is for young transgender people and those exploring their gender identity or gender expression. They meet fortnightly on a Wednesday evening in the office of the Ombudsman for Children. During 2017, as well as peer support, information and advice sharing, the group worked on proposed amendments to the Gender Recognition Act 2015.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- IndividualiTY, the first transgender youth group in Europe celebrated its 10-year anniversary in April.
- Some 48 members of the group engaged in focus groups to collaboratively create a policy position and submission for the Gender Recognition Act review process.
- Members of the group met Minister for Employment Affairs & Social Protection, Regina Doherty to share their personal experiences around the impact of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 on their lives.
- Following a 19-month process, the group launched Transvisiblity – a series of public awareness videos to reach new audiences and create understanding around what it means to be transgender.
- Jay Pope and Ruan Walsh worked with us to develop and deliver pilot teacher training to 18 teachers around trans issues as part of Stand Up Awareness Week 2017.
- Seamus Byrne travelled to Croatia to represent BeLonG To at the IGLYO Annual Members Conference in September.

## BeLonG To Sundays

Our biggest group for LGBTI+ young people aged 13-17, meets every second Sunday from 3-6pm in Outhouse, Dublin's LGBT community and resource centre. In 2017, the workshops focused on a wide range of issues including sexuality and gender expression, consent, and being LGBTI+ at school.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Inspector Paul Franey from G-Force, the Garda LGBTI+ group visited BeLonG To Sundays to share his experiences as a gay Garda.
- BeLonG To Sundays celebrated Pride month in July by learning about the history of the LGBTI+ community.
- The group held several 'clothes swaps' during the year offering a space for young people to share gender affirming clothes.

## The LadyBirds

This group for young LBT gals and their non-binary pals meets fortnightly on Thursday evenings in BeLonG To. The Ladybirds discuss and run workshops on everything, from sexual health to movies over popcorn and a cup of tea. In 2017, they learned about sexual health, reproductive rights, pink washing and LBT women in Irish history.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Ladybirds received sexual health training from our friends at Dublin Lesbian Line in April.
- The group developed a Manifesto setting out the issues they want to work on and launched it at an evening with their 'Big Sisters' who are friends, allies and older LBT women. Ailbhe Smyth was their special guest.
- Several of the Ladybirds joined the National Women's Council of Ireland soapbox sessions to celebrate International Women's Day in March.
- One of the Ladybirds met Prince Charles and President Michael D Higgins at the 'Young People In Pursuit of Excellence and Ethics' event in May.
- Rae Callan and Jesse Sleator were awarded scholarships to attend the Girls Rock Dublin camp in June.
- Ladybird Emer Bee Lorenz acted as Guest Editor for the Youth Issue of GCN Magazine in August.
- They welcomed visits from guest speakers including Mary McAuliffe, Una Mullaly, and Mia de Faoite.

## Over 18s Group

Our Over 18's Group meets fortnightly on Tuesday evenings in BeLonG To. They covered a broad range of workshops in 2017 from human rights in Chechnya, to mental health and transitioning.

### HIGHLIGHTS

- The Group created a harm reduction and drug awareness video with the production company, Event Junkies, and launched it to mark 10 years of our LGBTI+ Drug and Alcohol Service.

### Our Model of Youth Work Practice

Our model of youth work practice is adapted from Critical Social Education.

**Critical:** LGBTI+ young people thinking for themselves

**Social:** Pro-society and working together as a group

**Education:** Youth Work values guide the education process



I was so terr



When 19-year-old Katie McCabe first set foot in BeLonG To, she was terrified. Here she talks about how much has changed since that day...

“Try and imagine that you’re 15 again. Imagine all the things you cared about at that age. Did you make the sports team? Would your mam let you go to the disco? Try and remember how much these things mattered at the time – as trivial as they may seem now.”

Now imagine, as well as the normal, everyday stresses of being a teenager, along with the raging hormones, school pressures, and everything else that comes with being a teenager; you were terrified.

Terrified, that your friends would leave you. Terrified that your family would disown you. Terrified that your community would exclude you. I was terrified.

All because, at 15, you fancied that girl in your history class. Imagine how scary that is! The fear becomes almost all you can think about. You do your best to live your, seemingly normal, teenage life, all the while lying, to those you love about who you really are.

This is not a new story. It’s not ground breaking or unique. It’s been told a thousand times before by anyone who’s ever felt different, or wrong, or ashamed. But it’s my story too.

The day I stepped into BeLonG To was the day the terror in my life began to come to an end. The first time I went there, I was so scared. I was so used to hiding who I was that I didn’t know how to react to such an open, inclusive, and accepting place. Half way through the group I slipped out to the bathroom to cry. I was so overwhelmed with emotion. Going from the terror and anxiety that I felt, to being accepted and empowered was an unbelievable experience. No longer did I feel the constant panic that I would be judged and ridiculed for who I am.

Through the work at BeLonG To, I gained the strength and courage to be who I truly am. This has empowered me to go on and study youth work at university.

I have seen the power of youth work and the impact of a supportive, non-judgemental space. I know exactly what isolation feels like, and I don’t want anyone else to feel like that. I want that girl, age 15, frightened and unsure to know that things can change, and there is a place where you can truly be who you are.”

ified...



# SUPPORT SERVICES

We know that growing up LGBTI+ isn't all rainbows. In addition to our youth groups, we offer a range of support services for LGBTI+ young people.

## Monday Chats

In January 2017, we launched our new one to one service 'Monday Chats'. This free service operates weekly, every Monday afternoon and is run by our Youth Work Team. The service offers a dedicated space for LGBTI+ young people to meet one to one with one of our expert Youth Workers for information and support in a confidential setting. During 2017, we conducted over 100 one-on-ones with vulnerable LGBTI+ young people. Issues ranged from support on 'coming out', bullying, issues at school, issues for young people in care, sexual health, mental health, transgender health care and legal gender recognition.

## Counselling Service with Pieta House

Our specialised in-house counselling service offered in partnership with Pieta House continued in 2017. This service is for LGBTI+ young people aged 14-23 who were self-harming or thinking of suicide. Clients attended the sessions with a dedicated Pieta House Psychotherapist for an average of six to eight weeks.

## Street Outreach

Our street-based outreach programme ran eight sessions from July to September 2017, on Wednesday evenings. Two of our Youth Workers engaged up to 100 hard to reach LGBTI+ young people in Dublin City Centre. These young people were provided with harm reduction information in relation to drugs and alcohol, their mental and sexual health and signposted, when necessary to additional support services.

## Sexual Health

During 2017, we ran our sexual health and wellbeing programme 'In the Know' three times, in February, May and October. The free, six-week course is aimed at gay, bisexual, and trans men, and trans women aged 17-24. The content of the course includes safe sex, transgender sexual health, information on HIV, AIDS and STIs, consent and body image.

All of our BeLoNG To Youth Groups were engaged in a sexual health information session in 2017 as part of our Education for Life programme.

## Drug and Alcohol Service

Our dedicated Drug and Alcohol Service provides a space for LGBTI+ young people to discuss any concerns they have around drug and alcohol use with an expert Youth Worker – the only dedicated LGBTI+ Drug and Alcohol worker in Ireland. The service is free, confidential and non-judgmental. The service is funded by the North Inner City Drug Taskforce. In 2017, the service marked its ten-year anniversary with a Drug and Alcohol Attitude Survey, conducted with 191 young LGBTI+ people. Some 83% of LGBTI+ young people surveyed called for changes to drug laws in Ireland, highlighting the effect of the current drug legislation on them and their peers.

# OUR PEER EDUCATOR PROGRAMME



Last year, we trained 40 young people in leadership, facilitation and communication skills as part of our Peer Educator Programme. Harper McVeigh was one of our amazing peer educators in 2017...

“Sometimes it is easier for a young person to talk to someone your own age, rather than a Youth Worker. The Peer Educator Programme trains you to structure and deliver workshops in Youth Groups and act as a support for your peers. But really you learn so much more. I learned a lot about emotional support. One thing that I never thought about before this experience was that, in many cases, trying to cheer someone up is not always the best response. The best thing to do is to offer a listening ear and let them elaborate on their problems. It is not about trying to move someone from sad to happy right away.

Before I did this programme, I considered myself confident. Yet it is nothing compared to how confident I feel now. As a peer educator, I launched a drugs campaign for young people in Dublin’s Mansion House in the presence of Dublin’s Deputy Lord Mayor Rebecca Moynihan. The Over 18s Youth Group I am part of made a video on decriminalisation of drugs and harm reduction. This was shown on the day to highlight a health-based approach to drug use, rather than one of criminal justice. Evidence shows young people are far more likely to go and get help for drug addiction if they are not worried about receiving a criminal conviction for it. By only telling young people not to do drugs and not providing any information on drugs, you are putting them in danger.

Since I have finished the Peer Educator Programme, I have been very active in campaigning about drug use as a health issue. The opportunities you get through this programme can lead to even more afterwards. Sean, who now leads the programme was a peer educator when he was a young person. Some of my fellow peer educators are now developing a National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy with the Department for Children and Youth Affairs. The programme’s outcomes are visible to everyone and young people who go to BeLonG To see the positive change peer educators achieve.

During my time as a peer educator, there were nine of us. This year, 21 people applied to the programme. In the space of a year, interest doubled! Likewise, I was inspired by the peer educators I met on my first day in BeLonG To and wanted to become one. One of the new peer educators said to me: “At my first BeLonG To Sunday, you were a peer educator. If it wasn’t for you, I wouldn’t have come back. I’m now becoming a peer educator to do the same for some other anxious young person.”

To hear those words, and know that I have helped to change someone’s life feels really rewarding.”

# ← Across the → NATION

When we first opened our doors, young people travelled for as long as three hours to attend our Dublin based youth groups and access support services. Our National Network was set up to provide local support for young LGBTI+ people close to home and is provided in partnership with national youth organisations such as Youth Work Ireland, Foroige, Crosscare and some local LGBTI+ groups.

In 2017, we supported 37 LGBTI+ youth groups nationwide from Kerry to Donegal. We worked with our partners to ensure that their youth services are safe, supportive and welcoming for LGBTI+ young people.

The National Network's focus in 2017 can be broken down into three areas: continued support of the LGBTI+ youth groups nationwide; promotion of mental health initiatives by LGBTI+ youth groups; and, supporting engagement within the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy.

In 2017, BeLonG To distributed €45,000 to 17 LGBTI+ youth groups with the support of the HSE's Mental Health Directorate. This funding is crucial for the sustainability of many groups in our network. Without this funding, many groups would close, and the provision of a dedicated space for LGBTI+ young people would cease in many locations across the country. The funding we provide ensured that there were dedicated youth work hours in place to support

these youth groups. It also allowed time for Youth Workers to provide support, information and advice to LGBTI+ young people and their families. These dedicated LGBTI+ Youth Workers have also been able to reach out to their local community, deliver talks in schools, provide training to other professionals, and support other service providers with knowledge and best practice where working with LGBTI+ young people.

The number of young people attending LGBTI+ Youth Groups in the National Network increased noticeably in 2017. There was a 20% increase in young people attending these groups last year. Trans young people's attendance rose by 19.5%. The number of young women rose by 28%, and attendance by young men increased by 8%. This increase in demand for the service has put pressure on many groups in the network, forcing some to cease outreach work, and limit new young people joining their groups.





Over 2017, the National Network also supported the development of a number of local suicide prevention actions plans. This work has been important to ensure LGBTI+ young people, who have been recognised as a priority group in the National Strategy for Suicide Prevention ‘*Connecting for Life*’, are not forgotten about at a local level. Highlighting the mental health of LGBTI+ young people has also been a priority in the training that we provided to other professionals in 2017. Working with the youth mental health organisation Jigsaw, we delivered six training sessions in locations throughout Ireland to mental health professionals in 2017.

The topic of mental health was one of many issues raised by young people from the National Network at consultations for the LGBTI+ Youth Strategy. In 2017, the Network played an important role in providing a space for some of these consultations to take place, but most importantly in supporting young people to engage with the process, including membership of the strategies youth advisory panel.

## FAST FACTS

**37**  
**YOUTH**  
**GROUPS**

supported through the  
**National Network**

**378**

Professionals received  
**LGBTI+ awareness training**  
through the  
**National Network Fund**

**2,352**

Young people received  
**LGBTI+ awareness training**  
through the National Network Fund

**137%**

Increase in young  
people under 14  
attending National  
Network funded groups

# TAKING A STAND



Ireland's largest anti-bullying event, Stand Up Awareness Week highlighted homophobic and transphobic bullying in 2017.

For eight years, our Stand Up Awareness Week campaign has been a time for second level schools to take a stand against anti-LGBTI+ bullying, harassment, and name-calling that silences many students and can result in serious mental health challenges. Stand Up Awareness Week ran from November 13-17<sup>th</sup> in 2017, with a record 43% of secondary schools participating in the initiative, reaching over 151,000 students. Second-level schools across Ireland received a resource pack with information for teachers and classroom activity ideas to mark the event. They also received posters to highlight that their school is a safe space for LGBTI+ students, and create confidence around common LGBTI+ terminology. BeLonG To is pleased that Stand Up Awareness Week continues to be supported by the Department of Education and Skills, and is endorsed by all of the major organisations in the second-level school sector, such as the National Association of Principals, the teachers' unions, guidance counsellors, and all four management bodies for second-level schools.



**2,515**

Schools received  
Stand Up packs

**FAST  
FACTS**

**151,000+**

Students reached by Stand  
Up Week activities & posters

**43%**

Schools participated in  
**Stand Up Awareness Week**

**37,455**

Stand Up Awareness video views

**244**

Attended Stand Up  
Teacher Training

## Training

We hosted 13 training sessions to build skills and confidence in schools who were interested in Stand Up Awareness Week. These trainings were delivered to teachers, principals, members of the Board of Management, guidance counsellors, school psychologists, and Education Welfare Services staff. The trainings were held in Cork, Tipperary, Kilkenny and in a number of locations in Dublin. Participants learned how LGBTI+ bullying can impact the mental health of students, how to signpost a young person to support services, terminology to ease conversations around the topic, and how to support an LGBTI+ person who comes out.

## Pilot Programme

In 2017, we ran a pilot training programme focusing on trans and non-binary inclusion in schools. This training was co-developed and co-delivered by two members of IndividualiTY, our group for young people who are trans, non-binary or questioning their gender. The training was delivered on October 4<sup>th</sup> in the Marino Institute, Dublin. The content included: trans and non-binary young people's mental health, transphobic language and bullying, positive strategies for respecting, accommodating, protecting and supporting trans and non-binary students, six typical scenarios related to trans and non-binary students in second-level schools, and ways that schools could specifically include trans and non-binary students in Stand Up Awareness Week.

## Awareness

On November 8<sup>th</sup>, Minister for Education and Skills, Richard Bruton TD and Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone TD joined forces to launch Stand Up Awareness Week 2017. We received national media coverage with feature article in the *Irish Times* and the *Irish Examiner*, and appeared on RTE Radio 1 Drivetime, Ireland AM on TV3, the RTE Six One News, Newstalk, Spin 103.8, Kildare FM, South East FM, and *In Tallaght*. We created awareness via Facebook advertisements and posts with a reach of 51,693 and Twitter, with 27,607 impressions in response to tweets about Stand Up Awareness Week.

# A Mother's Story

Mother of three, Kirsty Donohue shares her family's story, and their journey to understanding, and accepting the T in LGBTI.

"Sixteen years ago, I got to meet my first born – a beautiful baby girl. My husband Dara and I had her whole life planned out in front of us before we knew it – that's what parents do, right?

Everything about her was perfect. She came on her due date, she hit every milestone, she was all you could hope for your child to be. I long awaited the time that she would become the young lady I thought she'd be. I envisaged girlie weekends away, going clothes shopping, and teaching her how to apply makeup. All the dreams, hopes and aspirations I'd allowed myself to believe came crashing down around me one Friday in March 2015 when our daughter told us that she was in fact our son.

The following 48 hours were horrendous. We told our child that they were too young to know how they felt. We thought it was their hormones, it was an adjustment to secondary school, it was spending too much time on the internet. We told them to come back to us when they were 18 and stop trying to put themselves in a box. These are the words that still haunt me today.

To this day we regret the way we handled this situation. I wish that I had been more educated about what being Transgender meant. All our child wanted was to be loved and accepted for who they were, but we didn't have the knowledge nor the understanding to handle it any other way.

We were aware that our child had become very withdrawn from the family, and practically lived in darkness in their bedroom with the curtains closed. But we thought that they were studying hard for exams as they are so academic. Never would we have guessed the turmoil that they were going

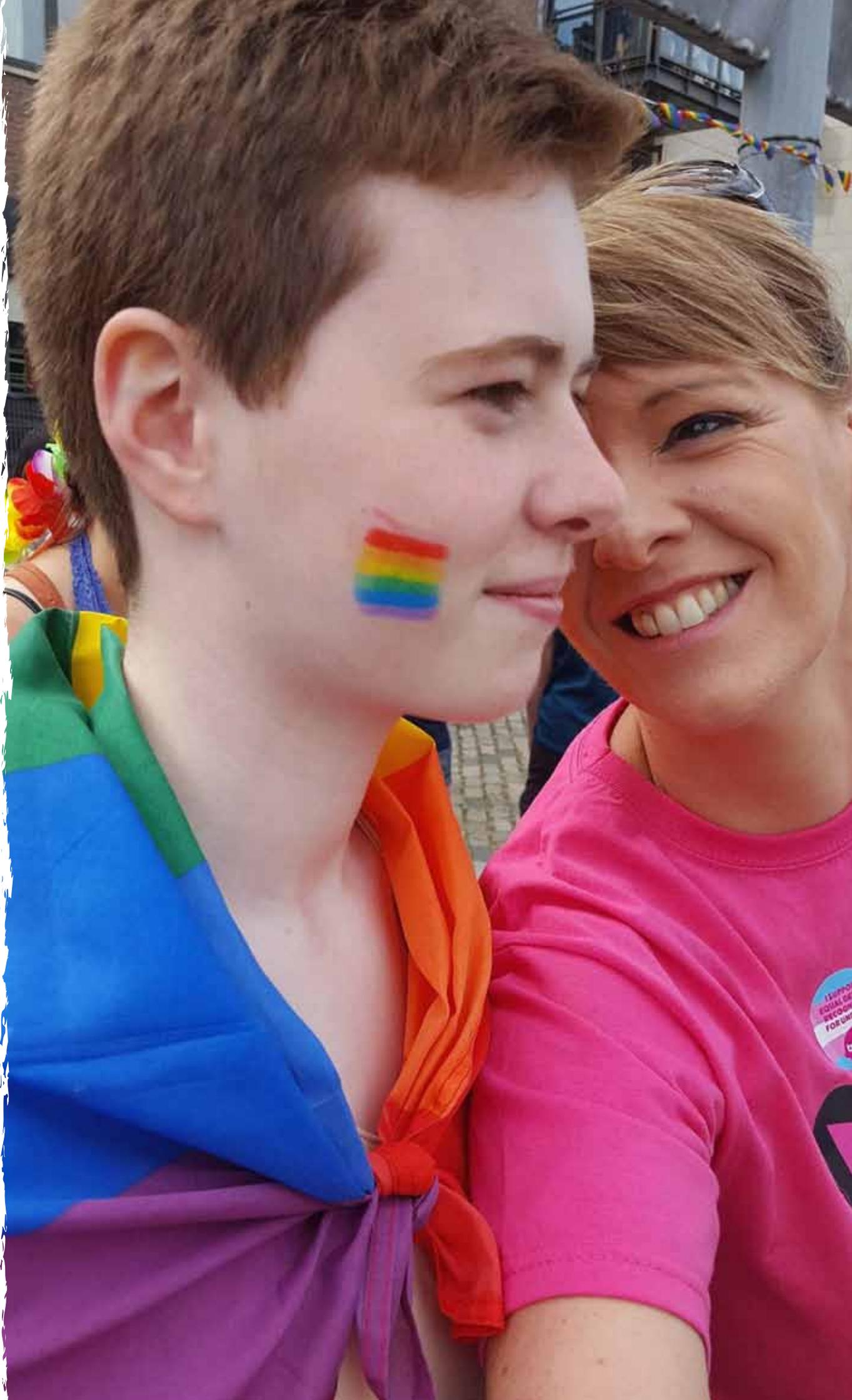
through in their room – the self-harming inflicted with pencil sharpener blades. My hearts broke in the knowledge of the pain and suffering they were going through. And without our support. How could this be happening and for us not to know?

We agreed to let our beautiful daughter get her gorgeous long red hair cut off. It cut like a knife. It was the first part of the transition from daughter to our son, Dylan. I was saying goodbye to my daughter and to all my future plans. But as soon as those locks were cut, our son emerged, blossomed and grew. His mask had at long last been removed.

At first I didn't know where to turn for help or support. I felt so isolated, scared, and alone. We found BeLonG To online and contacted them for help. I walked through their doors with Dylan and instantly felt safe, not just for me, but more importantly for Dylan.

It's like a second home to both of us. The Youth Workers support and listen to us without judgement. Dylan started going to BeLonG To on a regular basis and we could see a change in him. His self-harming stopped, he became a happier person, despite the crippling dysphoria he felt about his body. He lives for these meetings. He has made so many friends and can be his authentic self, he can be who he was born to be without fear of judgement. A plus side is that instead of self-harming he has found a better coping mechanism – he now plays the ukelele.

We do still miss our daughter, from time to time. But we can't deny that our lives have been enriched and enhanced by having been invited to take a front row seat and a look into his life with our rainbow glasses well and truly on."



# RAISING FUNDS

We cannot change the lives of LGBTI+ young people alone. Our work is built on the support of generous donations and the fundraising efforts of many organisations, groups and individuals who care. Together we can make a difference.

2017 was a definitive year of growth for BeLonG To. Our objective was to exceed our fundraising performance in 2016 by raising €176,000 in unrestricted income. This would allow us to make strategic investments in fundraising, communications, and volunteering. This added significant capacity for us to enhance our services for LGBTI+ young people and add capacity for us to better advocate on their behalf.

In 2017 we launched the Rainbow Ball, created three new roles, and established many new corporate relationships. We exceeded our target of €176,000, and raised a total of €217,460 in unrestricted income placing the organisation on a secure financial footing coming into 2018.

## Charity Partnerships

We were chosen as one of HSBC's causes to support in 2017, and we also successfully completed a two-year charity partnership with the Central Bank of Ireland. Thanks to this partnership, we reached an additional 20,250 students as part of Stand Up Awareness Week, Ireland's largest anti-bullying campaign.

The Community Foundation donated €3,030 to make vital support information available on our website for migrants in three different languages, ensuring equal access to our services. The American Ireland Funds provided us with a core grant of €25,000.

## Community Fundraising

We were incredibly lucky to see an increase in community fundraising events in 2017. Students from Dublin City University and Dublin Institute of Technology hosted events for us, and second-level schools hosted bake sales and non-uniform days across Ireland as part of Stand Up Awareness Week. Scouting Ireland's LGBT Fellowship patrol raised €100 by organising a hike at Glendalough. Outdoor activities organisation Wet and Wild raised an incredible €1,450 by hosting a table quiz. Staff from companies across Dublin such as EY, Brown Brothers Harriman, eBay and Google held talent competitions, Christmas jumper days, drag events and fun runs, raising thousands to help young LGBTI+ people in Ireland.

## Rainbow Ball

The Inaugural Rainbow Ball grew from a possible idea around a table in our kitchen in late July to a sold-out, glittery event in November. With a target of €25,000, our generous donors went on to raise a phenomenal €53,000 to support LGBTI+ young people on the night. Some 23 corporate groups were present on the night, with 380 guests in total. The event would not have been possible without our dedicated committee of volunteers: Val Quinn, Darina Brennan, Laura Stopforth, John MacNamara, and Justin McAleese.

We are extremely grateful for all this support in 2017.



**€217,460**

Raised increasing  
unrestricted funds by 120%

## FAST FACTS

**225%**

Increase in donor retention  
rates from 2016

**111**

**Amazing allies**  
joined us in advancing  
our mission



Image: Alex Ricóller Photography

In 2017, Ireland embarked on a journey to become the first country in the world to deliver a LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy led by Minister Katherine Zappone and the Department of Children and Youth Affairs. Central to this strategy is the voice of young people, represented by a Youth Advisory Panel (YAP). Aryton and Seamus are just two of the young people who formed part of the panel and helped to shape the consultation process and strategy.



### Seamus Byrne

“When I signed up to join the YAP, I wasn’t expecting to be on such an important panel. On the first day when we all met it was amazing! I hoped to be able to help change Ireland for the better for young LGBTI+ people, especially young trans people in Ireland as they are often overlooked when it comes to LGBTI+ issues. When I first came out, I dealt with a lot of issues at school,

as I needed parental permission to transition when it came to my name and uniform. I had to fight for my right to wear my uniform and use my name. I don’t want other trans young people having to deal with similar issues, which is why we put a large focus on school in the strategy.

The National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy can help abolish some of the issues for trans young people such as challenges at school and accessing healthcare. I am used to speaking with those in the Dublin about LGBTI+ issues, but to hear people from Sligo, Donegal, Offaly and other counties voice their needs, was really interesting. As someone from Meath I do live in a rural area compared to Dublin, but to hear from those without services for LGBTI+ young people on the panel was really interesting. I learned that although there are plenty of good things in Ireland since the marriage referendum, there are still a lot of issues relating to lack of services and bullying, especially in rural areas.

At Limerick Pride, the YAP were honored to have been named the Grand Marshalls of the parade. We got to meet with young people before the march, and sing and dance with them before beginning the parade. This day was definitely one of the highlights of my summer.

In December 2017, we launched the findings from the reports at DogPatch Labs in Dublin. It was an amazing experience. I got to meet with young people from all over the country and show them our findings through a fun day filled with music, special guests and stalls set up by other young people from all over the country.”



### Ayrton Kelly

“When I came out and started attending BreakOut, an LGBTI+ Youth Group in Letterkenny, I never could have imagined what was to come. I didn’t envision that two years later, I would be sitting at a table drafting Government policy that will have a profound impact on the lives of young LGBTI+ people across the country.

Sitting on the YAP has shown me the importance of being open to new experiences. I have met some incredible young people in the past year, and we have all taught each other so much from our different life experiences. Regretfully, in the LGBTI+ community, there is a certain ‘gay cis male’ privilege and this entire experience has highlighted the injustices of which I was blissfully unaware. At first, I was quite blinded by the issues of gay cis men (HIV transmissions in men who have sex with men (MSM) and sexual health, blood donation ban, App and hook up culture, body image), as well as the needs of my local youth group, BreakOut. However, as time went on I developed a much more broad, deep understanding of the issues of the entire community, and of all the young LGBTI+ people across Ireland.

More important than developing my communication skills at a board room table, the social justice warrior within me has been awakened. My ability to understand, empathise and enrich others’ lives has improved dramatically. The importance of the work we are doing as part of this process was realised for me during a night in The George. Surrounded by young, LGBTI+ people, the reach of the strategy struck me and it was humbling, motivating and eye opening.

My involvement has taught me of the danger of blissful ignorance and indifference. It has ignited a passion for activism that I never knew I had. I always saw myself graduating with a B.Comm. from UCD and entering one of the Big 4 consultancy firms. But more recently I have found myself doing elective Social Justice modules and imagining myself applying my skills within a non-profit. The National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy will have a profound effect on thousands of young people once it is published and acted upon. In the meantime, it has already had an overwhelming influence on my life and my future.”

# CAMPAIGNING FOR CHANGE



During 2017, our advocacy work covered a range of activities focusing on creating a world where LGBTI+ young people are equal, safe, and valued.

## LGBTI+ Youth Strategy

In 2017, Minister for Children and Youth Affairs, Katherine Zappone TD, launched the World's first LGBTI+ Youth Strategy, an initiative first proposed by BeLonG To as part of our work on the General Election in 2016. We were appointed as a member to the Oversight Committee for the strategy and was also tasked with providing support to the Youth Advisory Group (YAP). Glenn Keating of BeLonG To took on this role of Youth Engagement Officer. The YAP consisted of 13 young people recruited through our National Network and the NYCI membership. They offered their insights on the key challenges facing LGBTI+ young people in Ireland, as well as developing the look and feel of the strategy document and a video summarising the key findings from the youth consultation. Three members of the YAP also sat on the Strategy Oversight Committee. Young people also fed in to the process through regional consultations and an online survey of 3,710 young people. The priorities that emerged included barriers to LGBTI+ young people in schools, bullying, isolation, health and mental health. We look forward to the LGBTI+ Youth Strategy being launched by Minister Zappone during Pride 2018.

## Gender Recognition

2017 was a year in which we made significant steps in the areas of legal gender recognition of transgender young people. After three consultation processes with members of IndividualiTY the previous year, in 2017, we continued our work in equal partnership with young people to write our recommendations for changes to the current law. We also drew on the advice of National Network and European colleagues. As the year closed, we were honoured that our Executive Director, Moninne Griffith was appointed by Minister of Social Protection, Regina Doherty TD, to be the Independent Chair of the Gender Recognition Review Group (pictured to the right). The Review Group will complete their work by the end of May 2018.

## National Drugs Strategy

In 2017, we worked with the Prevention and Education Focus Group for the development of the new National Drug and Alcohol Strategy - *Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery*. As Ireland's only designated LGBTI+ drugs service, we welcomed the announcement of a working group on decriminalisation in the new National Drugs Strategy in July, and the inclusion of the LGBTI+ community as a high-risk group with specific health needs. We continued our work advocating for the development of services that are relevant and responsive to the needs of LGBTI+ young people.

## Submissions

We also contributed to the development of policy in relevant areas with submissions to:

- Seanad Public Consultation Committee on Children's Mental Health
- Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport on the upcoming Policy on Sports
- CSO 2021 Consultation
- National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy

## Collaborations

As part of our advocacy work, we are involved in sharing our expertise with other organisations and championing the rights and inclusion of LGBTI+ young people. In 2017, we were members of the following groups:

- Taskforce on Youth Mental Health
- LGBTI+ Youth Strategy Oversight Committee
- Gender Recognition Act Review Group
- Dublin City South CYPSC Mental Health Subgroup
- Gay Health Network
- Children First Oversight Committee, Department of Children and Youth Affairs
- National Quality Standards Framework for Youth Work
- National Youth Council of Ireland's Equality and Inclusion Support Network
- National Youth Council of Ireland's Specialist Groups Network
- Trans Group Alliance National Representative Committee for Trans Young People and Adults
- HSE Sexual health and Crisis Pregnancy Advisory Group
- HSE Sexual Health Communications Working Group
- Kildare LGBT Steering Group
- BreakOUT Steering Group, Donegal Youth Service
- Athlone Allies Advisory Group
- shOUT Advisory Group, Youth Work Galway
- Connecting for Life Dublin North City and Council Consultation Working Group
- Prevention and Education Focus Group for the development of the new National Drug and Alcohol Strategy - Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery
- North Inner City Drugs and Alcohol Task Force - Project Promoters
- North Inner City Drugs and Alcohol Task Force - Prevention & Education Committee
- North West Inner City Drugs Working Group

# LOOKING BACK at 2017

2017 WAS A YEAR WHERE WE COMMITTED TO GROWTH, WHILE PLACING THE VOICE OF LGBTI+ YOUNG PEOPLE AT THE CENTRE OF OUR WORK.

We built the capacity of the organisation adding three new team members and establishing a volunteer programme. We are dedicated to creating a sustainable organisation, and so in the past 12 months improved the quality of our policies, procedures and programmes. Our achievements in 2017 spanned across health, safety, equality, systems, fundraising, and the LGBTI+ Youth Strategy. Here are some of the highlights:

## HEALTH

- Our Dublin youth groups were accessed 1,587 times
- Supported 37 LGBTI+ youth groups nationwide
- Launched 'Monday Chats', our new one to one support service
- Ran 'In the Know', our sexual health programme three times
- Developed a new mental health resource for young people
- Developed and rolled out LGBTI+ mental health training for professionals with our partners Jigsaw
- Opened in-house counselling service with our partners Pieta House

## SAFETY

- 43% of second level schools participated in Stand Up Awareness Week
- Trained 714 professionals around LGBTI+ issues
- 2,352 young people nationwide attended LGBTI+ awareness talks, workshops and trainings through the National Network Fund
- Engaged 16 new volunteers to increase support at youth groups

## EQUALITY

- Worked with young people to write recommendations for changes to the Gender Recognition Act 2015
- Supported the development of the new National Drug and Alcohol Strategy 'Reducing Harm, Supporting Recovery'
- Marched with young LGBTI+ people from all over Ireland at Dublin Pride

## SYSTEMS

- Updated our vision, mission, and values in equal partnership with LGBTI+ young people
- Adopted a new constitution for the organisation reforming how we work
- Introduced a staff well-being program
- Completed a migration of all our email, document management, and collaboration tools to Microsoft Office 365

## FUNDRAISING

- €217,460 raised increasing unrestricted funds by 120%
- Increase in donor retention rates by 225%
- 111 new supporters joined us in advancing our mission offering financial support
- Hosted our inaugural Rainbow Ball raising a profit of €53,000

## LGBTI+ YOUTH STRATEGY

- Played an instrumental role in securing the development of the first LGBTI+ Young Strategy in the world by Irish Government
- Supported 13 young members of the strategy's Youth Advisory Group

# LOOKING FORWARD to 2018

OUR VISION FOR 2018 IS TO BUILD ON THE FOUNDATION OF GOVERNANCE, SYSTEMS AND POLICIES WE SPENT THE PAST TWO YEARS IMPROVING, TO CREATE A PROFESSIONAL AND SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATION.

Two major bodies of work – the National LGBTI+ Youth Strategy and the review of the Gender Recognition Act 2015 – will emerge in 2018, both of which will have implications for our work, and the lives of young LGBTI+ people across Ireland. While proud of all that we have achieved in 2017, we recognise that much remains to be done to reach a place where LGBTI+ young people are equal, safe, and valued in the diversity of their identities and experiences. Our work in 2018 will focus on achieving the following outcomes:

## HEALTH

- To improve the health and wellbeing of LGBTI+ young people
- To improve timely access to LGBTI+ inclusive health services for LGBTI+ young people

## SAFETY

- To improve the safety of LGBTI+ young people in their communities, schools, homes, services, in care, sport, public spaces and those who are homeless
- To work on safeguarding and child protection best practice
- To foster safe, supportive, and fun space for LGBTI+ young people
- To project and protect a strong reputation for the organisation

## EQUALITY

- To highlight the human rights of LGBTI+ young people and challenge the intersecting oppressions LGBTI+ young people, in their diversity, face
- To empower LGBTI+ young people to be agents in positive social change in accordance with our vision
- To position BeLonG To as Ireland's leading voice for LGBTI+ youth
- To position BeLonG To as the authority in Ireland on LGBTI+ research and opinion
- To achieve gender recognition for young transgender people under 18

## SYSTEMS

- To maintain robust internal capacity to achieve our vision
- To continuously improve the quality of our work, campaigns, projects, programs, and services

## FUNDRAISING

- Develop a culture of fundraising across the organisation, communicating regularly and appropriately with our colleagues, and internal and external stakeholders, ensuring our funding need is consistently communicated

## LGBTI+ YOUTH STRATEGY

- To support the development and implementation of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy to achieve our vision for LGBTI+ young people in Ireland, our mission, better outcomes, and brighter futures for LGBTI+ young people

# Training Professionals

Our vision is to create a world where young LGBTI+ people are safe, valued, and equal in their experiences. Through support, dialogue, and education we can achieve this.

We regularly offer specialised LGBTI+ training to mental health professionals, the education, and the corporate sector. During these training sessions, we work to break down barriers associated with LGBTI+ identity, educate individuals around terminology, discuss sexual health, and inspire participants to support their LGBTI+ colleagues, friends, and community. In 2017, we conducted the following trainings and workshops:

Date	Organisation Name	Participants	Number of Attendees
January	Ballymun Regional Youth Resource	Youth Workers/Managers	17
	Liberties College	Community and Youth Work Students	20
February	Institute of Guidance Counsellors	Guidance Counsellors, Dublin	27
	Empowering People in Care (EPIC)	EPIC Staff	12
March	SPHE Educators	Teachers, Dublin	33
	SPHE Educators	Teachers, Kilkenny	13
	The National Behaviour Support Service	Psychologists and Teachers	70
	Child & Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS)	CAMHS Staff	15
	LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy	Oversight Committee	21
April	Tulsa - The Child and Family Agency	Social Workers, Dublin	60
	Crosscare	Youth Workers/Managers	16
	Ballymun Regional Youth Resource	Youth Workers	19
	Institute of Guidance Counsellors	Guidance Counsellors, Tipperary	12
	Merchants Quay Ireland	Staff and Volunteers	30
	National University of Ireland Maynooth	Community and Youth Work Students	35
	Gorey Youth Needs	Youth Workers/Managers/Social Workers	16
May	Pavee Point	Mothers in the Travelling Community	30
	National University of Ireland Maynooth	Community and Youth Work Students	13
	National Educational Psychological Service	School Psychologists	12
June	Familibase, Ballyfermot	Youth Workers	10
July	Crosscare	Crosscare Staff	16
September	Stand Up Awareness Week Training	Teachers, Principals, Board of Management, D. West	18
	Stand Up Awareness Week Training	Teachers, Principals, Board of Management, Cork	9
	Kildare Youth Services	Youth Workers/Managers/Counsellors	24
	Jigsaw, Dublin 15	Mental Health Professionals	13
	Jigsaw, Dublin City	Mental Health Professionals	15
October	Stand Up Awareness Week Training	Teachers, Principals, Board of Management, D. North	13
	Stand Up Awareness Week Training	Teachers, Principals, Board of Management, D. South	19
	SPHE Educators	SPHE Educators, Dublin	16
	National Centre for Guidance in Education	Guidance Counsellors	60
	Jigsaw, Kerry	Mental Health Professionals	18
	Jigsaw, Clondalkin	Mental Health Professionals	18
	Jigsaw, Tallaght	Mental Health Professionals	13
November	Jigsaw, Cork	Mental Health Professionals	15
December	National University of Ireland Maynooth	Community and Youth Work Students	20
	Education Welfare Services	Education Welfare Services Staff, Cork	10

**Total**

**778**

# Financial Overview 2017

The financial results for the year ending December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 are set out on pages 33 and 34. These results show a net surplus of €30,956 (2016: loss €3,056). Income totalled €792,225 up 7% on 2016 (2016: €743,282). Total resources expended amounted to €761,269 (2016: €746,338).

## Reserves Policy

Reserves are needed to fund asset replacement, shortfalls in income or unexpected expenditure. The trustees consider that the ideal level of unrestricted reserves would be up to three months of the estimated running cost and reserves should be held in liquid funds in a bank deposit account at any one time. BeLonG To Youth Services is still in the process of building up its unrestricted reserve in line with the above policy.

The Finance Team and Executive Director will be responsible for monitoring and growing the reserves to the agreed level. The Board of Directors will regularly review the Reserves policy. BeLonG To Youth Services unrestricted reserves as at December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017 are €79,264.

## Directors/Trustees

The trustees and officers serving during the year and since the year end were as follows:

Directors/Trustees	Attendance	
Maria Afontsenko	5/8	
Karen Ciesielski	0/2	<i>Resigned 07/02/2017</i>
Maurice Devlin	4/8	
Dominic Hannigan	7/8	
Ciaran McKinney	7/8	
Anna Quigley	6/8	<i>Resigned 06/12/2017</i>
Nikki Gallagher	5/8	
Lucy Ní Raghail	5/8	
Liz Harper	5/8	<i>Appointed 17/01/2017</i>
Kery Mulally	3/3	<i>Appointed 11/07/2017</i>

## Secretary

Karen Ciesielski	<i>Resigned 07/02/2017</i>
Oisín O'Reilly	<i>Appointed 07/02/2017</i>

## Key Financial Management Staff

**Moninne Griffith**  
Executive Director

**Oisín O'Reilly**  
Fundraising and Operations Manager

**Suzanne Handley**  
Finance Manager

## Staffing

The average number of persons employed by the organisation during the year was as follows:

	2017	2016
Administrative	3	3
Fundraising	1	1
Programming	9	7
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>

The aggregate payroll costs incurred during the year were:

	2017	2016
Wages and Salaries	€421,914	€401,301
Social Insurance Costs	€44,406	€41,739
<b>Total</b>	<b>€466,320</b>	<b>€443,040</b>

## Salary Bands

Numbers of staff employed by the organisation within each band:

	2017	2016
€50,000 – €60,000	-	3
€60,001 – €70,000	1	1
€70,000+	-	-

Remuneration includes salaries and any benefits in kind. Remuneration paid to key management staff at the organisation in 2017 amounted to €131,635 (2016: €129,500). BeLonG To's Executive Director, Moninne Griffith, is paid €67,917 per year (2016: €67,500). She receives no additional benefits.

The Management team at staff level work closely with the Executive Director in planning, delivery of outcomes and accountability ensuring that the strategy is delivered through annual work plans. Staff are committed to a wide range of policies and procedures ensuring accountability, high quality services and regulatory compliance. The staff team are managed through a line management system, with regular individual support and supervision sessions.

# Financial Overview 2017

## Principal Risks and Uncertainties

The Board of Directors are responsible for assessing the risks facing BeLonG To and ensuring measures are taken to manage these risks. These risks are identified and mitigated through an ongoing Risk Management Framework.

## Funding

In common with other companies operating in Ireland in the charitable sector, we are dependent on both voluntary income, donations, and income from state organisations. The directors are of the opinion that the company is well positioned to manage the costs of running the company.

## Internal Controls

The risk of fraud is mitigated by maintaining segregation of duties for receipt of funds, and the payment of creditors in so far as is possible within the small staff team at BeLonG To. The directors have put processes and controls in place to ensure that detailed checking is carried out at all stages to ensure the accuracy and validity of all transactions.

## Child Protection and Safeguarding

Similar to other youth organisations operating in Ireland, the safeguarding and protection of the welfare and wellbeing of children accessing services at BeLonG To is of paramount importance. The organisation has adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in line with its obligations under the Children First Act, 2015. The organisation has taken steps including recruitment practices, vetting of all staff and volunteers, and ongoing training to ensure a safe environment for children accessing our services.

## Trustees' Interests

The company has a conflict of interest and loyalty policy in place, which is reviewed regularly. A register of Directors interests is kept at the registered address of the company. None of the Trustees had a material interest at any time during the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017, in any contracts of significance in relation to the business of the company.

## PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

In 2018, we will commence strategic planning for the period 2019 – 2022 building on the success of its previous strategic plan which ran from 2015 – 2018.

Core to the organisations future planning will be securing the complete implementation and resourcing of the LGBTI+ National Youth Strategy negotiated with Government that addresses the needs of LGBTI+ young people with appropriately resourced specialist and mainstream services.

## Grant Recipients

The Mental Health Directorate in the HSE provides funding on an annual basis to BeLonG To to operate a small grants scheme to support the establishment and ongoing running of LGBTI+ youth groups across the country.

The scheme is open to a number of members of BeLonG To's national network of LGBTI+ youth groups and an application process is in place. In 2017 the total amount of funding disbursed through the scheme was €45,000 (2016: €45,000).

Recipient	2017	2016
Crosscare (Bray Youth Services)	2,250	2,588
Youth Work Ireland Cork	6,125	6,145
Crosscare (East Wicklow Youth Services)	2,265	2,242
Donegal Youth Service CLG	8,000	7,631
FDYS	3,500	3,500
Foróige (Gateway Youth Project)	3,659	3,214
Kerry Diocesan Youth Service	2,033	1,000
Kildare Youth Services Ltd.	4,000	3,196
North Connaught Youth Services	2,190	2,190
GOSHH	4,500	4,000
Youth Work Ireland Galway	4,478	4,000
Youth Work Ireland Tipperary	2,000	2,000
Ossory Youth Service	-	3,294
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>€45,000</b>	<b>€45,000</b>

# Structure, Governance & Management

BeLonG To Youth Services Limited is registered in Ireland as a company Limited by Guarantee without a share capital. At the company's Annual General Meeting on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2017 the membership of the company adopted a revised governing document following a routine review.

The Directors are elected at the AGM. Board Members are recruited to ensure a mix of professional skills and personal experiences. Two members of the Board retired in 2017 after several years' service and two co-options were made to fill these vacant seats.

Each Board Member undergoes an induction process when they join the board. This process ensures board members are aware of their legal and ethical obligations as trustees of the organisation.

The Board met eight times during 2017. As required by the provisions of the Charities Act, 2009 Board Members are volunteers and do not receive remuneration. Board Members are entitled to reimbursement for out of pocket expenses in the discharge of their functions as Board Members. In 2017, the total amount of expenses paid to Board Members was €823.

The Board has established several standing subcommittees each of which is governed by terms of reference specifying the scope of their competences and any delegated authorities. The subcommittees are:

- Finance, Audit, and Risk
- Safeguarding and Child Protection
- Governance and Nomination
- Human Resources and Remuneration

Independent external members have been appointed to both the Governance and Nomination committee and the Safeguarding and Child Protection committee.

We are at an advanced stage of adopting the Governance Code for the Community, Voluntary and Charitable Sector in Ireland and the Board expects implementation to be completed early in 2018.

We have completed the process of adopting the Statement of Guiding Principles for Fundraising and fully complies with the principals set out in the statement.

The Board of BeLonG To has delegated day-to-day management of the organisation to the Executive Director who maintains an oversight and monitoring role. There are strong communication systems between staff and Board, policies are regularly reviewed and updated by the Board and the strategic plan is developed jointly between the Board, staff, and beneficiaries and approved by Board.

We are proud to be members of Charities Institute Ireland's Triple Lock Standard indicating transparent reporting, and good fundraising and governance.

# Financial Overview

2017 was a year where we increased the scale and impact of our programs, while being cognisant of maintaining the quality of our work. This managed growth came from a reallocation of existing resources and a modest increase in expenditure of 2%.

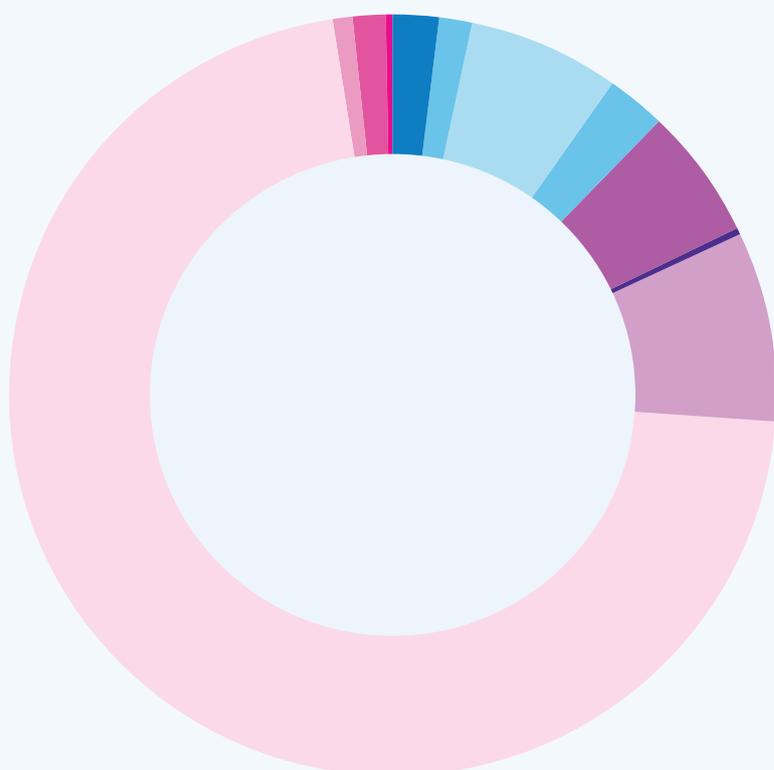
The primary investments were threefold. Firstly, we brought a Communications Officer on board to strengthen our work overall. Secondly, we made strategic investments in fundraising yielding a 120% growth in unrestricted income. We also invested in a Volunteer Coordinator to improve the quality and capacity of our front-line services.

Our fundraised income saw significant growth of 122% to €217,460 (2016: €98,757) overall with exceptional growth in local and community fundraising up 764%. Strong growth was also recorded in trusts and foundations income up 96% and corporate (inclusive of sponsorship) income was up 85%.

The organisation is on track to complete its income diversification strategy where state funding is reduced to represent 70% of income by the end of 2018. At the end of 2017 state funding represented 72.35% of income to the organisation.

We will continue to focus a significant part of our fundraising investment on local and community, trust and foundation, and corporate channels while making strategic investments in regular and committed giving.

2017 saw the organisation generate an unrestricted surplus of €30,956 which was added to the organisations reserves. The organisation is working towards building a reserve equivalent to 3-months of operating costs in line with its reserve policy. Current reserves at year end are €79,264 representing 42% of the target reserves of 3-months operating costs.



## Income Streams

Major Donors	€16,250	2.05%
Regular/ Committed	€10,345	1.31%
Corporate	€51,331	6.48%
Corporate Sponsorship	€19,050	2.40%
Trusts/ Foundations	€44,730	5.65%
Selling Something	€100	0.01%
Direct Marketing/ Fundraising Appeal	€1,590	0.20%
Local/ Community Fundraising	€63,989	8.08%
Central Government Grants	€566,247	71.48%
Government Grants (others)	€6,895	0.87%
Other	€11,698	1.48%
<b>Total</b>	<b>€792,225</b>	

# Statement of Financial Activities

**December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017**

	<i>Restricted Funds 2017</i>	<i>Unrestricted Funds 2017</i>	<i>Total Funds 2017</i>	<i>Total Funds 2016</i>
	€	€	€	€

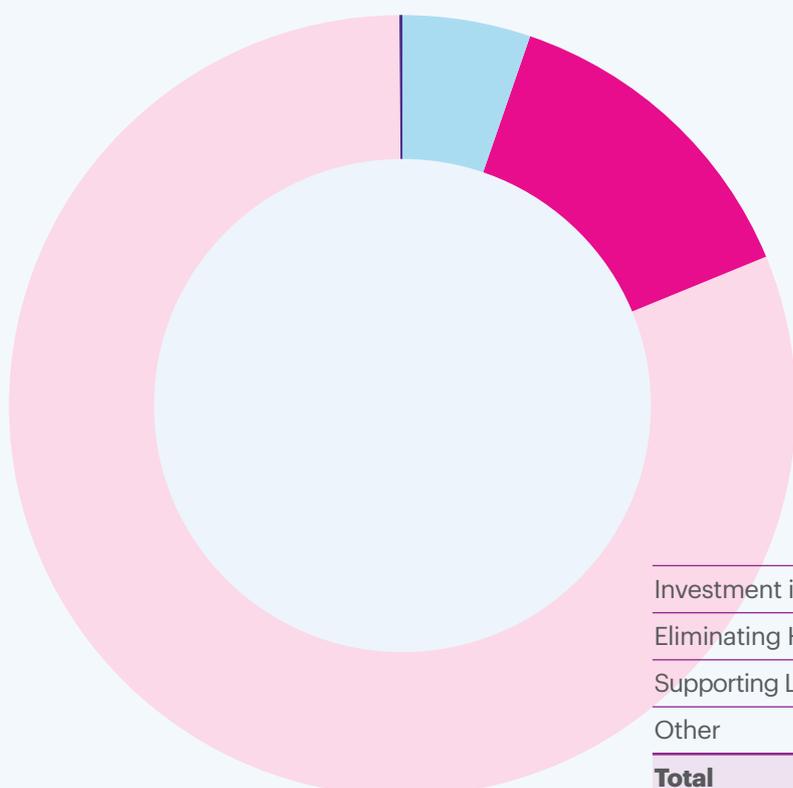
## Incoming Resources

Voluntary Income	19,000	198,460	217,460	98,757
Charitable Activities	573,142	-	573,142	630,578
Other Trading Activities	408	1,215	1,623	13,947
<b>Total Incoming Resources</b>	<b>592,550</b>	<b>199,675</b>	<b>792,225</b>	<b>743,282</b>

## Resources Expended

Cost of Voluntary Income	(66)	(39,977)	(40,043)	(94,961)
Charitable Activities	(670,586)	(49,817)	(720,403)	(651,377)
Other Expenses	(823)	-	(823)	-
	<b>(671,475)</b>	<b>(89,794)</b>	<b>(761,269)</b>	<b>(746,338)</b>

Net Outgoing Resources Before Transfers	(78,925)	109,881	30,956	(3,056)
Transfers	78,925	(78,925)		
Transfers Between Funds	-	30,956	30,956	(3,056)



## Resources Expended

Investment in Future Income	€40,043	5.26%
Eliminating Homophobia and Transphobia	€102,857	13.51%
Supporting LGBTI+ Young People and their Families	€617,547	81.12%
Other	€823	0.11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>€761,269</b>	

# Balance Sheet

December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2017	2017		2016	
	€	€	€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>				
Intangible Assets	7,062		9,335	
Tangible Assets	8,036		11,174	
		<b>15,098</b>		<b>20,509</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>				
Debtors	36,909		23,380	
Cash at bank and in hand	128,919		63,143	
	<b>165,828</b>		<b>86,523</b>	
<b>Creditor: amounts falling due within one year</b>	(99,843)		(56,905)	
<b>Net Current Assets</b>		65,985		29,618
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		81,083		50,127
<b>Net Assets</b>		<b>81,083</b>		<b>50,127</b>
<b>Contingency Reserve Fund</b>				
Restricted Funds		1,819		1,819
Unrestricted Funds		79,264		48,308
Funds of the Charity		<b>81,083</b>		<b>50,127</b>

# Statement of Changes in Funds

Year Ended December 31 <sup>st</sup> , 2017	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total
	Funds	Funds	
	€	€	€
<b>At January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>	52,758	425	53,183
Surplus/ (deficit) for the year	(4,450)	1,394	(3,056)
<b>Total comprehensive income for the year</b>	(4,550)	1,394	(3,056)
<b>At December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2017</b>	48,308	1,819	50,127
Surplus/ (deficit) for the year	30,956	-	30,956
	30,956	-	30,956
At 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2017	79,264	1,819	81,083

# Thank you for being there for LGBTI+ young people

We are so grateful to our funders  
for their incredible support in 2017.



An Roinn Leanaí  
agus Gnóthaí Óige  
Department of Children  
and Youth Affairs



Department of Rural and  
Community Development



A & L Goodbody  
Adobe  
Airbnb  
Aviva Insurance  
Byrne Wallace  
Canada Life  
Cloud 9  
Coca-Cola  
EBay  
ESB Energy for Generations  
Event Ease  
EY  
Google  
HSBC Bank  
Marks and Spencer  
McCann Fitzgerald  
Microsoft  
PayPal  
Salesforce

State Street  
Tesco  
The Central Bank of Ireland  
The Community Foundation for Ireland  
The Cupcake Block  
The Dalata Hotel Group  
The Hospital Saturday Fund  
The Ireland Funds  
The Silver Lining  
Travelodge



**BeLonG To** means  
the world to me.

—  
It's a place to come  
where I won't  
be judged for  
**who I am.**

-Kelly

Registered Charity Number: CHY 2005 9897

Supporting Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual &  
Trans Young People in Ireland



**BeLonG To Youth Services**  
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