

# Annual Report

## 2022



Belong To LGBTQ+  
Youth Ireland



# All different

**Belong To**

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# All together



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# Our Impact in 2022

19  
years of **Belong To**

2,395 → interventions with **LGBTQ+ youth**

673 individuals supported through our **Dublin Youth Service**

127  
hours of crisis counselling provided in partnership with **Pieta**

176  
youth groups through our **Dublin Youth Service**

57 schools joined our **LGBTQ+ Quality Mark** programme

312,971  
STUDENTS REACHED THROUGH **STAND UP AWARENESS WEEK**

72  
**LGBTQ+ youth groups supported nationwide**



# Our Impact in 2022

**3** e-learning modules available

**6,947**   
people trained to support LGBTQ+ youth

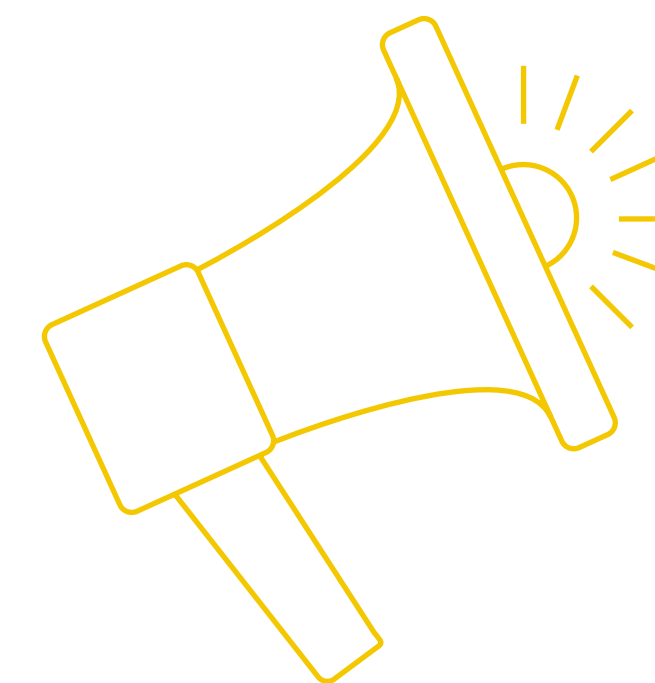
**1357342**  
**POLICY SUBMISSIONS**

**57** incredible volunteers

**277K**  
visits to [Belongto.org](https://belongto.org)

**256**  
pieces of media coverage

**€866,869**  
raised to support our life saving work



**1,208** voices heard through the School Climate Survey



# Message from the Chair

Belong To opened its doors as a youth service in 2003 to provide a safe space for LGBTQ+ young people to find support and acceptance. Thanks to our supporters, our staff team, our volunteers, our Board, our funders, our partners, and most importantly, the LGBTQ+ young people we work with, we have grown to become the leading national LGBTQ+ youth organisation in Ireland.

On behalf of the Board, I am proud to present our Annual Report and financial statements for the year ending 31 December 2022. Within this Report, we offer an overview of our work over the past 12 months, outlining the impact of our work, challenges we encountered and our achievements. We share with you our impact, good governance, financial audit and fundraising results.

2022 was the first year of implementing Belong To's new three-year Strategic Plan, *All Different, All Together*. As part of this process, we reviewed the organisation's vision, mission and values to reflect the Belong To of 2022 and beyond. Within this Report, you can read about these core components of who we are and learn about our key areas of work as outlined in four strategic goals. Guided by our value of being strategic, we aligned the development of this Strategic Plan with the development of a new Fundraising Strategy and brand identity, which you will see reflected in the pages of this Report.

We pride ourselves as being trustworthy as an organisation. We are transparent in our work, how we operate and in our governance. We were pleased that our 2021 Annual Report was shortlisted for a Good Governance Awards last year. Our governance was again recognised in 2022 when we were awarded Charity Board of the Year for the third year in a row at the Charity Excellence Awards, organised by the Charities Institute Ireland. This award recognises excellence in governance, accountability and leadership by the Board of Trustees of the winning organisation. I would like to thank all of our current board members and subcommittee members for their time and commitment to ensuring Belong To operates first-class in governance.

In 2022, I witnessed the dedication of staff and volunteers to deliver on our strategic goals and come together as the organisation responded to the departure of long-standing senior staff members. As Chair, I acknowledge the commitment of the team in playing an essential role in the lives of LGBTQ+ youth across Ireland.

Looking ahead, Belong To is determined to achieve the goals set out in our Strategic Plan – to expand our support services to 10-14 year olds, to develop a dedicated service for the parents, guardians, and caregivers of LGBTQ+ children and young people, and to explore how we can work with primary schools to ensure that they are safe and supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ pupils.

These ambitious plans would not be possible without the ongoing support of our funders, corporate partners and donors, big and small. Thank you for helping to sustain the organisation as we strive to create an inclusive, fair and equal Ireland for everyone.

We are united by our collective differences and when we come together, we can achieve great things.

In Pride

**Dominic Hannigan** (he/him)



*Dominic Hannigan*



# Message from the CEO

As I reflect on the past year and the impact of our work, there is much to celebrate. We proudly launched our new Strategic Plan 2022-2024, *All Different, All Together*, in the spring.

There has been tremendous change in the past 19 years as we expanded from a youth service to a national organisation encompassing support services, training, education and advocacy. The demand for our work continues to build from young people, their families, professionals and our partners. In recent years, we have also experienced an increase in the number of young people under the age of 14, and parents and family members, seeking our services. Greater visibility and awareness of LGBTQ+ people in Irish society in recent years has made it easier for young people to understand who they are.

While we have much to celebrate as an organisation, for the LGBTQ+ community, the world around us seems more unsafe every day. In 2022, we witnessed horrific violence and hate inflicted on members of the LGBTQ+ community in Ireland. We grieved together as a community in the wake of the tragic deaths of two men in Sligo. This grief was compounded as more violent cases of assault and hate were reported by LGBTQ+ individuals. The impact of this on the young people in our service is palpable. 2022 was the year that negative and false messages about LGBTQ+ identities and, in particular, trans and non-binary individuals, dominated headlines in Ireland.

I believe that when we face challenging times like these, it is in coming together and connecting that we see real, progressive change. As you will read in this report, through our campaigning and advocacy, we are working to reach through misinformation, polarisation and this dehumanisation to help people understand the life experiences of the LGBTQ+ young people that we work with. We can't change people's minds by attacking their beliefs, but we can help to distinguish fact from fiction. We can meet people where they are at. Instead of calling people out, we can call people in and help them understand that behind Tweets and viral comments, there are real human beings whose worlds can be shattered by discrimination and hate.

Research shows between 6–10% of any group of young people may identify as LGBTQ+.<sup>1</sup> This means that LGBTQ+ youth are in classrooms, youth services and families all over Ireland. As you will read, we are committed to ensuring that the experiences of these individuals are visible not just in Ireland's policies, practices and law, but also in real-life experiences – in their homes, in their schools and in their communities. Through the work of our Dublin Youth Service and the National Network of LGBTQ+ youth groups that we support, we are there for those who need our services as a space to offer them the acceptance and love they deserve. Meeting people where they are at means we make ramps for people to get on board with our mission through our growing education and training work, equipping thousands of professionals and school communities across the country with the tools and knowledge to support LGBTQ+ youth.

I see the impact of this work on the faces of the young people who initially struggle to speak at a youth group and then join our peer leadership programme. I see it in the growth of LGBTQ+ groups across every county in Ireland. I see it in the number of schools getting behind our Stand Up Awareness Week campaign and saying no to homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.

Every day, we dedicate ourselves to creating a society where LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe and thriving. We could not do this without our dedicated supporters. Thank you to our allies, donors, funders, board members and volunteers. Knowing that you are behind us fills us with inspiration, and fuels us when we encounter particularly challenging times. A special thanks to our staff team for their continued passion, dedication and resilience as the shift in acceptance towards LGBTQ+ rights impacts our day-to-day work.

Together, we can positively impact the lives of LGBTQ+ young people and their families to create an Ireland where we lead with acceptance, compassion and love.

In Pride,

**Moninne Griffith** (she/her)  
CEO, Belong To



Moninne Griffith

1. Dooley B and Fitzgerald A (2012) *My world survey: national study of youth mental health in Ireland*. Dublin: UCD and Headstrong. Available at: <https://researchrepository.ucd.ie/entities/publication/f028b522-c3ed-4e3a-8ffe-e1578443f885/details>



# Our Mission

Our mission is to empower LGBTQ+ young people through youth work, education, changing attitudes and research.

# Our Vision

Our vision is a society where LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe and thriving.





# Our Values

## Welcoming

We are mindful of people's wellbeing and strive for our interactions and spaces to be joyful and fun while ensuring they are safe and respectful.

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## Trustworthy

We are transparent in our work, how we operate and in our governance.

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## Rooted in experience

We work as equals with LGBTQ+ young people. What we say and do is informed by their lives, experience and the challenges they face.

## Courageous

We challenge and speak out about the causes and effects of prejudice, discrimination, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia on LGBTQ+ young people and what must change.

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## Inclusive and diverse

We seek to create a sense of belonging and to reflect and include the diversity of LGBTQ+ young people, and are mindful of intersectionality. We work in community and solidarity for human rights and social justice.

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## Strategic

We make deliberate choices about where we focus our work and energy to make maximum impact on where we lead and where we partner with others.



# Our Strategic Goals

*In All Different, All Together, our 2022-2024 Strategic Plan, we express our vision, mission and purpose to drive and give focus to our work.*

Since 2003, Belong To has grown from a youth project into a unique national services and advocacy organisation with and for LGBTQ+ young people. Youth services, which inform our research, education work and a development approach, enable us to provide solution-based advocacy at an institutional and public level.

We are rooted in and driven by our direct work with LGBTQ+ young people aged 14-24 and we exist to:

- Create and generate safe spaces and places for LGBTQ+ young people.
- Empower others through education to support LGBTQ+ young people.
- Lead policy and practice by providing expertise, developing best practice models, and reflecting lived experiences.
- Ensure LGBTQ+ young people have the opportunity to have their voices heard.
- Be an advocate for LGBTQ+ young people and champion change.

This Strategic Plan process provided us with the opportunity to look to both the past and the future. We came together and celebrated our strengths as an organisation. From reaching and supporting a record number of LGBTQ+ youth to building partnerships and effecting legislative change, we have a lot to be proud of. While celebrating our achievements, we reflected on the growth of the organisation and asked ourselves, what next? How can we support this growing demand and increase safe spaces for LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland?

We developed *All Different, All Together*, our Strategic Plan 2022-2024, to equip us with a roadmap to achieve our vision: a society where LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe and thriving. To achieve this vision, we have set out four ambitious strategic goals. During the strategic planning process, we examined challenges, opportunities and our database, and conducted an environmental analysis. We spoke to our partners, the media, politicians, our team, educators, youth workers, families and LGBTQ+ young people to ensure that this Plan reflects their perspectives on how best to achieve our vision.

Throughout this report, you will see how we are progressing during the first year of this strategy to achieve our strategic goals. The report is divided into four sections corresponding to our four strategic goals.



# Goal 1

**Delivering LGBTQ+ Youth Work**

# Goal 2

**Building Safe Spaces and Services**

# Goal 3

**Campaigning for Change**

# Goal 4

**Being a Learning and Developing Organisation**







# Goal 1

## Delivering LGBTQ+ Youth Work

LGBTQ+ young people are safe and supported by a quality youth work service delivered in Dublin in equal partnership with young people.

A strong, expanding network of quality, targeted LGBTQ+ youth groups and safe and supportive youth groups across Ireland.

### Objectives

- 1.1** Empower LGBTQ+ young people through the continued provision of a blended direct youth work and support service which encompasses support to parents and professionals working with them.
- 1.2** Promote a positive attitude towards mental health while providing pathways for additional support through strategic partnerships with partner organisations.
- 1.3** Improve access to LGBTQ+ youth services across Ireland by developing youth groups in partnership with services within local communities, expanding the existing National Network, and implementing a mark of quality to ensure quality youth work and best practice LGBTQ+ youth work is promoted.
- 1.4** Reduce the harms of alcohol and drug use amongst LGBTQ+ young people.
- 1.5** Empower LGBTQ+ young people to have better sexual health.
- 1.6** Scope and research how best to provide support to LGBTQ+ children in the 10-14 year old age range.

### Outcomes

- LGBTQ+ young people will have access to safe, high-quality youth work groups, services and supports.
- LGBTQ+ young people will have access to safe, high-quality mental health services and supports.
- Young LGBTQ+ people will have access to safe, high-quality youth work services across Ireland.
- LGBTQ+ youth will have access to specialist supports within Belong To, to reduce the harms caused by alcohol and drug use amongst LGBTQ+ youth.
- LGBTQ+ young people will have access to specialist supports and programmes within Belong To related to sexual health and wellbeing, and sexual health professionals will have been supported to provide LGBTQ+ inclusive sexual health programmes.
- Belong To will create and deliver a service for 10-14 year old LGBTQ+ children.





# You Do Belong!

Jamie Feery Canning (he/him) talks about how joining an LGBTQ+ youth group opened up his world to new friends and possibilities.

“I first joined Belong To in August 2021, in the midst of the pandemic and when many things were closed. The group was online then, but I still joined because I wanted to meet other like-minded young queer people with whom I could interact and engage. I was already aware of Belong To’s existence and prevalence within the community at that stage, which prompted me to research them further and subsequently join the Under 18s youth group.

The best thing about attending one of the youth groups and engaging with their wonderful services, in my opinion anyway, is probably simply the love and support they provide each and every one of their members. There is a real sense of community and belonging within the space, as the name implies.

Since first joining the Under 18s group almost two years ago, I’ve had the absolute pleasure and honour to meet so many different, wonderful, diverse queer young people, many of whom I am very good friends with, both within and outside of the group.

In terms of support, I have been offered many unique, exciting opportunities, such as running and assisting with various workshops within my groups, receiving social media training to further enhance my online skill set, and attending various different related campaigns such as their *School Climate Survey* report launch in November and also participating in their very recent ‘It’s Our Social Media’ campaign among many others, all of which I am very grateful.

To anyone considering possibly joining one of the Belong To youth groups, or even just reaching out for support, but may be too nervous to do so, please just know that although it may seem like the most difficult thing you may ever do right now (as the first steps to everything new do) it will get better and easier and Belong To will absolutely help you every step of the way. They are here for you!

And also please remember you are loved, you are valued and you do belong, even if you might not always feel as though you do.”





# Creating Brighter Futures

We empower and support LGBTQ+ young people through youth work and a range of frontline services.

We are rooted in and driven by our direct work with LGBTQ+ young people aged 14-23. Participation in youth services enables young people to overcome adverse circumstances and achieve their full potential. Our Dublin Youth Service delivers peer-support groups for LGBTQ+ youth. Our youth workers also provide one-to-one support to young people, parents and professionals. Our service is rooted in the Critical Social Education Model of youth work. This model is in practice throughout our frontline services as it empowers the LGBTQ+ youth that we support to become agents of social change to tackle challenges they face. These services are funded by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

2022 was a year of significant change for our Dublin Youth Service with the departure of three long-standing staff members. Throughout the year we said goodbye to Youth Work Manager, Gillian Brian (she/her), Drug and Alcohol Youth Worker, Shane Smart (he/him) and Youth Worker, Kate Cummins (she/her). Prior to Gillian's departure as Youth Work Manager, a post she had held in Belong To for 14 years, we commenced a review of our Dublin Youth Service in December 2022. The review will be completed in 2023. With a change in team members, and changes in how we have supported young people through the pandemic, it is an opportune time to review the structure of the Youth Work Team and the needs of our service users.

*\* Clarification: This number was reported as 956 in our 2021 Annual Report. We audit and review our data quality regularly. The decrease in this number reflects a change in data identifiers and the removal of duplicates in our system. The updated figure of 909 in this Annual Report is accurate.*

## Frontline Insights

We collate insights and data from our service users to help us respond to the needs of those who engage with Belong To. In 2022, the majority of young people who accessed our Dublin Youth Service were aged 18-21, an increase from the 2021 age demographic of 15-17. The majority of service users got in touch with us to find out about how to access our peer-support groups and for information on our support services. The other most common presenting issues in 2022 were supports for trans youth, coming out, mental health, bullying and challenges in school or employment.

Our Youth Work Team supported 673 individuals in 2022, a decrease of 26% from the previous year (2021: 909\*; 2020: 905). This total number includes young people, parents, family members, youth workers, teachers, social workers and other professionals who work with LGBTQ+ youth. Our data tells us that LGBTQ+ youth accounted for 47% of this caseload (2021: 54%; 2020: 52%), and there were 2,395 interventions in total including calls and emails (2021: 3,719; 2020: 3,616). January, February and July were the months with the highest number of contacts.

The decrease in the number of individuals supported in 2022 aligns with a national trend across the youth work sector following Covid-19. A large-scale study examining the impact of the pandemic on youth work published by the National Youth Council of Ireland (NYCI) reported a 50% decrease in the number of young people engaged in youth services nationally within the first year of the pandemic.<sup>2</sup>



The findings show that 69% of youth work organisations across Ireland saw a decrease in their engagement from young people over the pandemic. NYCI further highlight the specific challenge of re-engaging vulnerable and marginalised young people.

This is a challenge for the organisation and we seek to mitigate this through the review of the Dublin Youth Service in 2023. As part of the review, we will talk to LGBTQ+ youth, ask them what they need from our services and how we can best accommodate their needs. In addition to supporting the needs of LGBTQ+ youth, our Youth Work Team also refers and signposts those who get in touch to both internal and external services. Externally, we signpost young people to organisations equipped with the expertise to meet specific needs of individual requests including homeless, mental health and sexual health services.

## Support Services

In partnership with Pieta, we offer free Crisis Counselling for LGBTQ+ young people who are engaging in self-harm, thinking of suicide, or who have lost someone to suicide. The service is available to service users aged 14-23, and parental/guardian consent is required for those under 18 years of age.

Many marginalised groups, including LGBTQ+ young people, will not reach out for help unless they know that a space is inclusive and open. Belong To and Pieta came together to create this service, knowing that LGBTQ+ young people experience high rates of self-harm and suicide ideation. LGBTQ+ young people come to this service knowing that they

are going to a therapist who is understanding of their sexual orientation and gender identity. They don't have to explain themselves.

During 2022, 127 hours (2021: 522; 2020: 376) were spent providing free crisis counselling to LGBTQ+ youth and 64 hours were spent on therapeutic assessments (2021: 64; 2020: 47). Pieta offer 12 sessions and work with clients on their internal sense of self and emotional regulation, supporting them to manage stress and anxiety. For LGBTQ+ young people, their anxiety is often linked to their identity. It is linked to their sexual orientation or gender identity and who they are as a person. Often for LGBTQ+ young people, nobody in their home, school or community looks like them or has the same sexual orientation as them.

## Drug and Alcohol Support Service

Our 2021 *LGBTI+ Life in Lockdown: One Year Later* research highlighted high levels of drug and alcohol use among LGBTQ+ young people aged 18-23. Almost all of the young people aged over 18 who had used alcohol within the last year, 99%, said they were struggling with anxiety, depression or stress. Studies in Ireland and internationally have shown high levels of alcohol use among the LGBTQ+ community.<sup>3</sup> Research suggests that LGBTQ+ people are two to three times more likely than heterosexual people to suffer from alcohol addiction.<sup>4</sup>

Belong To has a dedicated drug and alcohol support service to support the needs of those in the North Inner City of Dublin funded by the North Inner City Drug Taskforce.

This is a safe service for LGBTQ+ young people to bring any concerns around drug and alcohol use. The service is free of cost, confidential and non-judgmental. Our service is based on the harm reduction model and focuses on reducing the harm around alcohol and substance use. We are non-judgmental and take a humanistic approach to working with young people within our service and focus on getting the right support and services in place to best serve this group. We provide education and information to LGBTQ+ youth to raise awareness of drug and alcohol use within the community and refer people to specialised agencies and services for further safe and positive support.

In 2022, our entire Youth Work Team received training in brief interventions, which are one or more time-limited conversations between an at-risk service user and a practitioner around substance use. The goals of these interventions are to help the service user increase awareness of their drug or alcohol use and the consequences of this use. Two of our youth workers joined the Health Service Executive (HSE) for their Safer Nightlife Harm Reduction campaign at Electric Picnic in September 2022. In 2022, we continued to contribute to the HSE Chemsex Working Group, the North Inner City Drug and Alcohol Taskforce, the Gay Men's Health Network, the Midlands Regional Drug Taskforce and the National Voluntary Drugs and Alcohol Sector volunteer cluster. We look forward to platforming the voices of LGBTQ+ youth and contributing to the Citizens' Assembly on Drug Use, which is due to take place in 2023.

2. National Youth Council of Ireland (2021) *Youth Work and Covid-19: 2021 Review of the Youth Work Sector Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic*. Available [here](#)

3. Sarma, K. (2007) *Drug Use Amongst Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual & Transgender Young Adults in Ireland*. Dublin: Belong To Youth Services. Available [here](#)

4. Medley G, Lipari R, Bose J, Cribb D, Kroutil L, McHenry G. (2016) *Sexual Orientation and Estimates of Adult Substance Use and Mental Health: Results from the 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*. NSDUH Data Review. Available [here](#)





# A Place to Be Me

Our Dublin groups offer safe spaces for LGBTQ+ youth to come together, learn about their rights and seek support.

Youth work enhances and changes the lives of young people. Through our Dublin Youth Service, we offer a number of groups designed to support the lives of LGBTQ+ youth and enhance their personal and social development. At Belong To, our youth groups provide a safe, welcoming, fun space where LGBTQ+ youth can meet other LGBTQ+ young people, engage in informal educational programmes based on issues affecting their lives, and have fun.

## LGBTQ+ Youth Groups

Our team of professional youth workers, with dedicated LGBTQ+ expertise, facilitate our youth groups assisted by a team of volunteers. These groups met 176 times in 2022 (2021: 133, 2020: 112, 2019: 110). Our practice is youth-centred, and promotes the wellbeing, self-worth and self-belief of LGBTQ+ young people. Our youth workers are trained to identify LGBTQ+ young people at risk of suicide ideation and self-harm, and to implement Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) and a referral to our joint service with Pieta when this occurs. Through our 'Equal Partnership' model and 'Youth Participation' practice of non-formal education, LGBTQ+ young people are co-coordinators of the peer support groups. They democratically decide what workshops take place within their peer groups, and our peer educators facilitate the workshops supported by our youth workers. We facilitate workshops on coming out, harm reduction and sexual health with each youth group. Following a change to the frequency and location of the groups during the pandemic, we were thrilled that our groups returned in-person and weekly in 2022. Our youth groups meet one night a week for 1.5-2 hours.

The rise in anti-LGBTQ+ hate and violence towards members of the community impacted the young people in our groups, with many fearing for their safety and feeling scared to be visible. In response to this, we facilitated workshops in every group on staying safe in public and online. We supported young people being bullied in school and held a workshop on how to report hate crimes. Our youth workers met with a number of local Garda Diversity Officers and developed an ongoing relationship with them.



## Over 18s Group

On Mondays, our group for 18–23 year olds takes place. Following this group’s disengagement during the pandemic, we refocused and relaunched the group in January 2022. This group met 33 times, with a total recorded attendance of 157 in 2022. During the year, the group completed a project called ‘Irish Pride’ that focused on LGBTQ+ icons and allies throughout Irish history and held workshops on healthy relationships.

## Under 18s Group

Our group for 14–17 year olds takes place on a Tuesday. This group met 43 times, with a total recorded attendance of 393 in 2022 (2021: 279). In 2022, this group focused on intersectionality and welcoming guest speakers including Darragh Byrne (he/him) from High Rock Autism who facilitated neurodiversity awareness training.

## Individuality

Trans and non-binary young people join us every Wednesday for our Individuality youth group. The group ran 43 times in 2022 (2021: 37) with a total recorded attendance of 475 (2021: 433). In November, the group hosted a celebratory evening for trans and non-binary young people called Transboree. Activities included a guest speaker from the Small Trans Library and workshops based on self-care, resilience, minding your mental health and body positivity.

## The Ladybirds

This peer support group is for lesbian, bi and trans gals and their non-binary pals. The group takes place every Thursday. There were 239 total recorded attendances in 2022 (2021: 176) and the group ran 37 times (2021: 31). In 2022, the Ladybirds explored healthy relationships and held drama and dance workshops.

## New Young Person’s Project

The New Young Person’s Project was set up in 2020 as an induction space for LGBTQ+ young people engaging with Belong To for the first time. Through the Project, we support young people’s integration to the service before joining one of our youth groups. The group takes place online every second Monday for 45 minutes. During the session, our youth workers introduce service users to Belong To, what we do, our youth groups and a history of the LGBTQ+ movement in Ireland. In total, 84 young people attended this project in 2022 (2021: 78) which ran 20 times (2021: 24).

## Peer Leaders

Our peer leader programme nurtures leadership skills among LGBTQ+ youth. Formerly known as the peer educator programme, in 2022 we reviewed this initiative and renamed it. Through this programme, we train a cohort of LGBTQ+ young people in leadership, facilitation and communication skills each year. We build capacity among participants to advocate for LGBTQ+ youth rights. Peer leaders within Belong To engage in an 8 month, structured, participatory action research programme.

The peer leaders themselves are young LGBTQ+ volunteers who engage in a programme of training and facilitation to directly impact their own learning and those of the youth groups they engage with. Peer leaders put the theory, skills and knowledge they gain within the annual training programme into practice within our frontline services.

The role of a peer leader is to greet new young people who join the service and facilitate workshops at youth groups with our youth workers. We equip them with the skills to engage their LGBTQ+ peers within participatory, non-formal education programmes on topics such as sexual health, mental health, drug and alcohol harm reduction, peer-lead campaigns and communication strategies.

In November, we hosted a peer leader weekend for LGBTQ+ young people from the Dublin Youth Service and from the National Network. In total, 14 young people attended this two-day event hosted in Dublin. The aim of this weekend was to build awareness of the wide diversity of LGBTQ+ young people in Ireland and bias, prejudice, discrimination and intersectional oppression facing Ireland’s LGBTQ+ community. Peer leaders attended workshops on LGBTQ+ history, key milestones in LGBTQ+ history in Ireland and LGBTQ+ youth activism. Participants then created their own mock activist campaign. Garda Diversity Officers also attended the session and facilitated a workshop on how to report hate crimes. We look forward to growing this leadership programme in 2023.





# Safe Spaces

As the national LGBTQ+ youth organisation, we share the learning and support LGBTQ+ youth workers and organisations across Ireland to ensure best practice in LGBTQ+ youth work.

Since 2007, we have supported a network of youth workers to ensure that LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland have access to dedicated, high-quality youth services and supports close to home. The National Network is made up of brilliant youth workers from national youth organisations such as Youth Work Ireland, Foróige, Crosscare and local youth and community services that run LGBTQ+ youth groups. As the national LGBTQ+ youth organisation, we facilitate a space to offer subject matter expertise and support to the youth workers who provide these groups. We come together to deliver a standardised model of LGBTQ+ youth work and best practice across Ireland. In April, we welcomed Barry McSkeane (he/him) to the role of National Network Coordinator.

## Supporting The National Network

The number of LGBTQ+ youth groups we supported nationwide increased from 64 in 2021 to 72 in 2022 (2020: 56; 2019: 56). This increase came from existing National Network members running additional LGBTQ+ youth groups, rather than the addition of new members to the Network.

This year we facilitated 12 meetings for National Network members. In 2020, the National Network began to meet online on a monthly basis in place of the quarterly face-to-face meetings due to lockdowns and Covid-19 restrictions. This trend continued in 2022. However, in May 2022, we were delighted to host our first in-person meeting since the start of the pandemic. This offered youth workers a space to check in, discuss emerging themes, and share support, resources and information to meet the needs of LGBTQ+ young people. At this meeting the group revisited their key priorities, with mental health supports and clear pathways for trans healthcare remaining the main focus for 2022-2023. Emma Whitty (she/her) from Ferns Diocesan Youth Service (FDYS), Wexford, remained in position of Chair of the Network for 2022. In April, Paula Kelly (she/her) also from FDYS, took up the post of Vice Chair.

As part of our support to the National Network, we distributed grants totalling €45,000 to 10 National Network members. The annual funding for these grants is provided to us by the National Office of Suicide Prevention.

Pictured at the Belong To and Youth Work Ireland Pride Breakfast: Patrick Burke, Youth Work Ireland, Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth, Roderic O' Gorman; and, Moninne Griffith, Belong To.



## Achievements and Challenges

In early 2022, members of the National Network returned to face-to-face youth work in line with Covid-19 guidelines, bringing about new challenges. Many young people who had been engaged and sought support before the pandemic did not return to their youth service. The new cohort of young people attending groups run by the National Network presented with higher needs compared to groups supported prior to 2022 as a result of living through Covid-19. The move back to in-person groups brought access challenges for young people who engaged online during the pandemic, but are unable to travel to in-person groups.

The need for one-to-one supports for young people and their families remained high among the National Network. Although the number of one-to-one sessions decreased by 52% from last year (2022: 542; 2021: 1,139), there was a 20% increase in the number of young people and family members accessing one-to-one supports (2022: 348; 2021: 290). The top presenting issues for LGBTQ+ young people across the National Network were mental health, bullying and school experiences. We offer a therapeutic group space for LGBTQ+ youth workers experiencing vicarious trauma with Insight Matters. This vital support space continued in 2022 with seven group therapy sessions.

In response to the mental health challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ young people during the pandemic, we continued our collaboration with MyMind, the counselling and psychotherapy service. In the first half of 2022, 22 young people from across the National Network were referred to the free counselling service (2021: 22). In August, the funding made available for this project under Connecting for Life was expended, and sadly the referrals ended. We continued to signpost young people to Jigsaw, Pieta, the LGBT Helpline and the HSE crisis text line, 50808.

It was with great excitement that the annual Dublin Pride event in June returned, following two years of cancellations. Working with Youth Work Ireland and the National Network, we celebrated Pride by bringing over 800 LGBTQ+ young people and their youth workers from across Ireland to Youth Work Ireland's head office for our Pride Breakfast. For many LGBTQ+ young people in attendance, this was their first Pride event. A big thanks to our Pride DJ Glamo (she/her) who provided entertainment in the courtyard at Youth Work Ireland.

## Belong To Rainbow Award

Supporting the creation of safe services for LGBTQ+ youth forms a key part of our new Strategic Plan. Throughout 2022, we continued to engage with youth work consultants Louise Monaghan (she/her) and Olive Ring (she/her) to pilot and review the 'Safe and Supportive Services' project toolkit, developed by Dr Michael Barron (he/him), former Executive Director of Belong To. The updated, adapted toolkit provides youth workers with the skills and best-practice knowledge needed to create safe and supportive youth work services that are fully inclusive of LGBTQ+ young people.

The first phase pilot of the new model, now known as the 'Belong To Rainbow Award' was completed in December 2022. The Rainbow Award is an accreditation for best practice in LGBTQ+ youth work. We provided the six services involved in the pilot phase of this project with a guide, toolkit, training and staff support. A huge thank you and well done to the organisations that participated in the pilot: Cabra for Youth, East Wicklow Youth Service (Crosscare), Ferns Diocesan Youth Service (FDYS), Finglas Youth Resource Centre, St. Andrew's Resource Centre, and Waterford and South Tipperary Community Youth Service. A further 14 organisations have signed up to commence their journey through the Belong To Rainbow Award in 2023, and we look forward to officially launching this best practice accreditation next year.

Support sessions provided by the National Network

**Group Sessions**  
2022: 775  
2021: 706

**Young People and Family Sessions**  
2022: 542  
2021: 1,139

Individuals trained by the National Network

**Students**  
2022: 828  
2021: 683

**Staff**  
2022: 305  
2021: 237

**Other Professionals**  
2022: 322  
2021: 530







# Goal 2

## Building Safe Spaces and Services

Training and educating professionals engaging with LGBTQ+ young people in schools, youth services, sports and other services for young people.

Engaging with and supporting families.

### Objectives

- 2.1** Support the promotion and creation of safe and supportive schools and alternative education spaces for LGBTQ+ young people.

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- 2.2** Increase the knowledge and understanding of professionals and volunteers working across key sectors on issues affecting LGBTQ+ young people.

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- 3.3** Support parents, guardians and caregivers of LGBTQ+ young people to create safe, nurturing home environments.

### Outcomes

- Schools and alternative education spaces will become supportive and inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ young people.

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- Professionals and volunteers working in education, youth services, drug and alcohol services, sexual health services, homeless services and sports will have increased knowledge of the needs of LGBTQ+ young people and how to meet those needs.

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- Belong To will have a dedicated service for the parents, guardians and caregivers of LGBTQ+ children and young people.





# Fostering Equality in Education

Roy Sheehan (he/him) is a teacher at Kinsale Community School, County Cork and one of the coordinators of the Belong To LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme. Here, he talks about their journey towards accreditation.

“I have found working with Belong To to be incredibly impactful for both students and staff. LGBTQ+ inclusion in education is important to me, and the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark model provides a way for our school to show LGBTQ+ students that they are valued members of the school community.

In August 2022, our journey with the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme began with a Zoom meeting with Stephen Cassidy (he/him), the Education and Training Officer from Belong To. The statistics from the 2019 *School Climate Survey* that he shared left me feeling shocked and saddened. Naively, I had believed that the world had changed and that queer students had a positive experience in schools. However, listening to Stephen’s presentation made me realise that there was still much work to be done. In early September, we had the privilege of meeting with some students in our school who bravely shared their personal and often upsetting stories about their experiences. Listening to their perspectives was invaluable. It motivated me to pursue the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme actively and make the school experience safer for LGBTQ+ students and their allies.



## Empowering Student Voice

Before participating in the programme, I thought I understood what it was like to be part of the LGBTQ+ community in Irish schools, based on my own experience in 2011. However, the student experience has changed significantly since then, and the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme has provided students in our school with a platform to share their opinions, feel heard, and have their ideas acted upon. Stand Up Awareness Week gave students the opportunity to create workshops on various aspects of queer life, such as Pride flags, terminology, coming out and different sexual identities. The content of these workshops was informative and often anecdotal, and I was struck by the students' creativity, confidence and courage. Our LGBTQ+ and allies club, which meets three times a week, also provides a space for student voices to be heard, such as recording a fascinating podcast with Stephen that gave me an authentic insight into the students' lives.

## Making Meaningful Connections

The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme has been instrumental in promoting student leadership by offering opportunities for students to take charge of initiatives that promote inclusivity, such as organising Stand Up Awareness Week and coordinating the LGBTQ+ and allies club. This programme has fostered a sense of ownership and responsibility among students, allowing them to develop their leadership skills and make meaningful connections with the local community, making a real difference in their schools and wider society. Additionally, the programme has encouraged peer support and collaboration among students.

The comprehensive training provided to staff and the coordination team as part of the process was engaging and effective. By combining in-person training with e-learning modules, all school staff gained a deep understanding of LGBTQ+ topics in schools and developed the necessary skills to support LGBTQ+ students. As a coordination team, we were fortunate to attend two regional network meetings where we had the opportunity to connect with other schools in Munster. These gatherings are incredible occasions, where creative ideas and innovative approaches are exchanged, leaving everyone feeling invigorated and inspired by the shared commitment to fostering equality in education.

As a coordinator of the programme at Kinsale Community School, I can attest to the positive impact it has had on both students and staff. This best practice model provides a manageable, yet comprehensive way for schools to promote LGBTQ+ inclusion in education. This is especially important in light of the evolving landscape for queer young people in education. The programme has given our school the opportunity to demonstrate to LGBTQ+ students that they are valued members of the school community. By engaging with the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme, schools can make a real difference in the lives of their students, and I highly recommend it to any school looking to foster equality in education.”



# Welcoming, Safe, Inclusive

In 2022, we launched our new evidence-based LGBTQ+ Quality Mark designed to support and accredit LGBTQ+ safe and supportive schools.

The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark is a holistic approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion in schools and alternative education spaces that involves the whole school community. Over the course of 18 months, schools are supported in implementing evidence-based actions across a number of key areas, which research shows improves the wellbeing and safety of LGBTQ+ students.

In May 2022, after a successful national pilot phase, we opened applications for the 2022/23 LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme. While we had initially intended to accommodate 40 schools, we received an overwhelming response, as 99 schools applied to participate in the 2022/23 LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme. In response to this, we accepted 57 schools, representing 19 counties across all provinces of the country, which we have been working with since September 2022. Together, they account for over 3,300 staff and almost 35,000 students. Already these schools are seeing the impact of the actions they are undertaking, and we are looking forward to further supporting them throughout 2023.



The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark programme was developed in 2022 based on learnings from our Safe and Supportive Schools (SASS)<sup>5</sup> pilot programme, guidance from our Education Sector Advisory Group, and the latest national and international research on how schools can be inclusive spaces for LGBTQ+ students, including our 2022 *School Climate Survey*. This research shows that when there is a high level of staff support for LGBTQ+ students, when staff intervene in homophobic bullying, and when positive LGBTQ+ representation is taught in schools, LGBTQ+ students are much more likely to feel accepted and that they belong, and much less likely to miss school days (read more on page 33).

5. Barron, M. and O'Hagan, L. (2019) *LGBTI+ Safe and Supportive Schools*. 2nd Ed. Dublin: HSE, Belong To.



## The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark Model

The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark model is based on four key areas of wellbeing promotion outlined in the Department of Education's *Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice*. These areas are culture and environment; policy and planning; curriculum (teaching and learning); and relationships and partnerships. The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark model sets a number of goals and requirements within each of these areas, which combine to ensure a holistic approach to LGBTQ+ inclusion that involves the whole school community. Each of these requirements are evidence-based, and are informed by the Department of Education's *Being LGBT in School* resource.

We support schools to attain these goals through dedicated resources, trainings and one-to-one supports throughout the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark process.

## The LGBTQ+ Quality Mark Journey

We understand that there is no quick fix to achieving comprehensive LGBTQ+ inclusion. Over the course of 18 months, the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark journey gives school staff and students the time and space to plan, reflect upon and integrate key actions.

The process is split into three phases: recognise, build and grow, and achieve.

### Recognise

From August to October 2022, participating schools took time to prepare for the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark journey. They assembled teams of coordinators and identified key staff members who would play an active role in the process. These coordinators attended online training sessions in small groups so that they could fully understand the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark and all that it entailed. In 2022, 132 coordinators participated in our two-hour coordinator training. Each school carried out a self-assessment, which includes anonymous surveys for students, staff, Boards of Management members, parents and guardians. This allowed schools to gather feedback from the whole school community, and use this feedback to inform their actions throughout the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark process. Using this knowledge, each school drafted an action plan to set out how they would work to achieve the requirements and goals of the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark.

## Build and Grow

With the groundwork covered, the schools got to work on implementing their action plans. All teaching and non-teaching staff in each school completed our 90-minute e-learning module, 'Supporting LGBTQ+ Young People in Schools and Youth Services'. Schools also participated in our annual Stand Up Awareness Week, which served as a great opportunity to launch the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark to their wider school community.

In December 2022, we welcomed 69 educators to the first of our four regional network meetings. Representatives from each participating school came together in person to share ideas, challenges, successes and support. These meetings, held once per term, will strengthen links and bonds between the schools participating in the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark, ultimately building a thriving network of accredited schools, who will continue to support each other and share best practice beyond their accreditation journeys.

### Achieve: Looking ahead

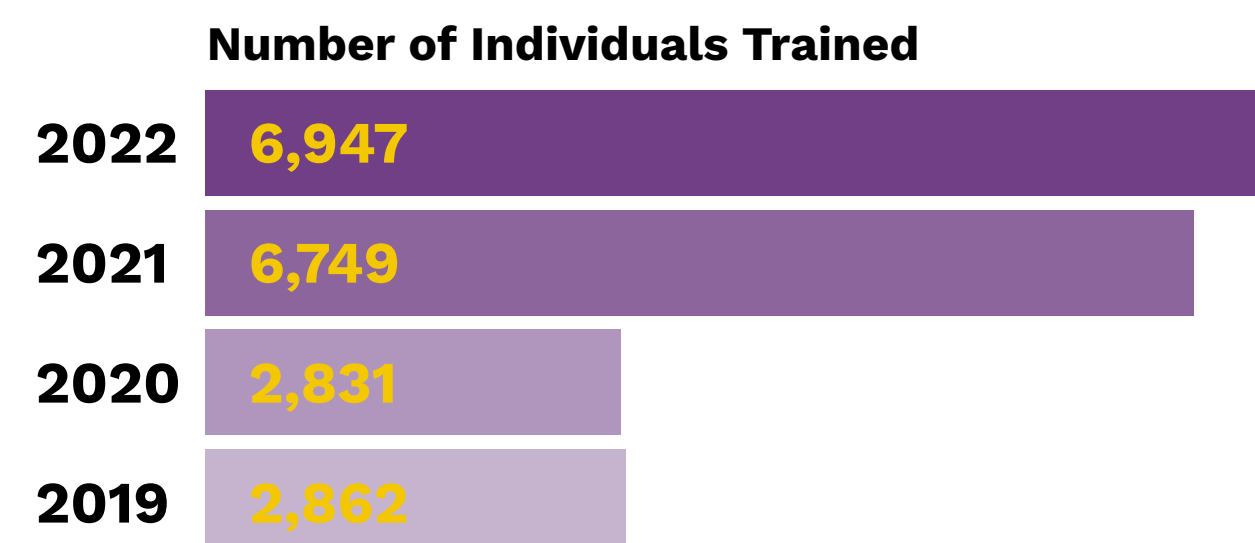
In 2023, the participating schools will continue their LGBTQ+ Quality Mark journeys. All school staff will receive in-person training on LGBTQ+ inclusion from Belong To staff, will continue to implement their action plans, and will attend Regional Network Meetings. In October, they will repeat their self-assessments to measure the impact of their actions and make submissions for their LGBTQ+ Quality Mark accreditation in advance of their assessment visit. We also intend to welcome a new cohort of schools to join the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark journey for the 2023/24 academic year.



# Capacity Building

Through training, we increase the knowledge and understanding of professionals and volunteers working across key sectors on topics affecting LGBTQ+ youth.

Training forms a central part of our new Strategic Plan as we aim to build more safe spaces and services for LGBTQ+ youth. We train professionals to understand what life is like for LGBTQ+ youth today and how they can meet their needs. Through both online and offline training, we increase the knowledge and understanding of professionals and volunteers working across key sectors on issues affecting LGBTQ+ young people.



## Post-Primary Schools

In 2022, our Safe and Supportive Schools (SASS) pilot project concluded. An amazing 13 post-primary schools, encompassing more than 800 staff and almost 9,000 students, received their SASS accreditation in April. We were honoured to be hosted by the Lord Mayor of Dublin, Alison Gilliland (she/her), at the Mansion House to formally award the participants, and to celebrate their incredible achievements in creating meaningful LGBTQ+ inclusion in their schools.

In evaluating the SASS model, we continued to work with Dr Seline Keating (she/her), Assistant Professor in Social Personal and Health Education (SPHE) and Wellbeing, and Research Fellow at Dublin City University's Anti-Bullying Research and Resource Centre. With the evaluation complete, we gathered the learnings and used evidence-based approaches and interventions to create the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark (read more on page 25).

Staff training is an essential component of Stand Up Awareness Week, our annual campaign for schools, Youthreach Centres and youth services. This year, the theme for Stand Up Awareness Week was tackling LGBTQ+phobic language. Our training for teachers and youth workers focused on educating students on the unintended impact that casual homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language can have. Having delivered all training online during the pandemic, we were delighted to host in-person training sessions in regional hubs this year. Based on the success of the online training sessions in 2020 and 2021, we also

maintained online training to offer participants a choice. In total, we trained 173 educators across nine sessions. We had fantastic support from members of the National Network in co-facilitating the training. Feedback from the trainings was very positive, with 96% of attendees reporting feeling satisfied or very satisfied with the training.

## Online Learning

Demand for our suite of online e-learning modules continued to grow in 2022. Our e-learning module 'Supporting LGBTQ+ Young People' continued to prove popular, with 2,381 individuals registering for the course in 2022 (2021: 2,346). This training is designed for professionals working with young people, such as educators, youth workers and social workers.

In 2022, we continued to offer 'In The Know Facilitator Training', for those equipping LGBTQ+ youth with information about sexual health, consent and wellbeing. This programme is a partnership project between the Sexual Health Centre, Belong To and the HSE Sexual Health Crisis Pregnancy Programme (SHCPP). Through this initiative, we aim to equip youth workers, community workers, sexual health workers and other appropriate professionals to deliver the 'In the Know' programme to their young service users. In 2022, 739 individuals participated in this online facilitator training module.

With generous support from Bank of Ireland, we had the opportunity to develop an additional e-learning module aimed at those volunteering with LGBTQ+ young people. The module helps volunteers to support LGBTQ+ young people in any service with which they engage. Launched in October, 142 volunteers had registered for the module by the end of 2022.



Together, these e-learning modules help ensure that LGBTQ+ young people are safe and supported in their schools, when accessing services and within their communities. Looking ahead to 2023, work is continuing for a sports focused e-learning module to help players, coaches and other members ensure that their clubs and teams are LGBTQ+ inclusive. This work is supported by the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth.

## Mental Health

We continued to collaborate with Jigsaw, the national centre for youth mental health, in 2022 to equip professionals to support LGBTQ+ youth. The training programme 'Supporting the Mental Health of LGBTQ+ Young People' provides participants with a greater understanding of LGBTQ+ identities and raises awareness about the specific challenges facing this cohort, including discrimination, homophobia, biphobia and transphobia. The training is for adults who work or volunteer with young people in their community, and organisations and agencies that provide youth services. This training consists of an online self-directed course, followed by a facilitated 3-hour online training session. There was a small increase in the number of individuals who completed the online component, growing from 459 in 2021 to 466 in 2022. In total, 52 individuals participated in the facilitated zoom sessions which took place in March, June and September (2021: 57). In 2022, we also facilitated the first in-person, full-day training since the start of the pandemic. The training was attended by 12 professionals from Galway and Roscommon ETB.

## Specialised Training

### Sexual Health

'In The Know' is our personal development training programme for gay and bisexual men and trans young people. The programme consists of three one-hour sessions taking place over three-to-four weeks. In 2022, we hosted 'In The Know' in January and March. Participants learn about sexual health, online dating, consent, chemsex and HIV prevention. In 2022, 28 people participated in this programme in (2021: 39, 2020: 6). We also hosted a one-day 'In The Know' training session for professionals in September with eight participants.

### Homeless Sector

In 2022, we built on our learnings from the previous year to develop LGBTQ+ youth homeless training. This work focused on the outputs of a 2021 needs analysis conducted by the LGBTQI+ Youth Homelessness Working Group, established by Dublin Homeless Network.

A pilot training programme was developed which focused on developing awareness of the specific needs of young LGBTQ+ people in their experiences of homelessness, language and gender pronouns, and the availability of LGBTQ+-specific supports. We delivered the first phase of the pilot in 2022 to frontline staff within Focus Ireland.

Feedback from pilot participants highlighted the importance of this training to their work engaging with LGBTQI+ young people, and the urgent need for further training of this kind within the sector.

In May, we continued this pilot by training senior staff and directors within the LGBTQI+ Youth Homelessness Working Group.

In 2023, we plan to rollout this training to all staff members in Focus Ireland and explore the delivery to all members of the Dublin Homeless Network.

## Drug and Alcohol Training

We work to reduce the harms of alcohol and drug use amongst LGBTQ+ young people. Part of this work involves equipping professionals who work in mainstream drug services with the tools to support LGBTQ+ youth. In 2021, we established an LGBTQ+ Drug and Alcohol Advisory Group with representatives from Merchants Quay, SAOL Project, Rialto Drug service and Ana Liffey Project to feed into a training needs analysis survey and focus group structure. As part of this needs analysis, Belong To facilitated a focus group with Crinan Youth Project which contributed greatly to the work in 2022.

2022 saw the development of the pilot training programme based on the results of the training needs analysis. The Drug and Alcohol Youth Worker moved on from Belong To in late 2022 and the position is currently being filled. In 2023 we hope to complete the pilot phase of this project and explore opportunities to expand the training offering as well as collaboratively collate and recognise good practice in the field.



# Goal 3



Campaigning for Change  
Campaigning for Change

Campaigning for Change  
Campaigning for Change



# Goal 3

## Campaigning for Change

Champion the voice of LGBTQ+ young people through advocacy and engagement to create an Ireland where LGBTQ+ young people are equal, safe and thriving.

Empowering LGBTQ+ young people to be agents for positive social change.

### Objectives

- 3.1** Campaign for laws, policy, legislation, and national strategies that protect LGBTQ+ youth.
- 3.2** Develop the research and data environment to better understand and improve the lives of LGBTQ+ young people.
- 3.3** Amplify the voice and experiences of LGBTQ+ young people, supporting and facilitating them to be agents in positive social change.
- 3.4** Grow public awareness of content related to LGBTQ+ youth and Belong To by reaching and mobilising existing and new stakeholders and the general public.
- 3.5** Work for international solidarity to protect and advance LGBTQ+ people's rights.
- 3.6** Campaign for inclusion of LGBTQ+ young people in education.

### Outcomes

- Belong To will have influenced policies, legislation and national strategies relevant to LGBTQ+ youth, ensuring there is greater attention to non-discrimination, bullying, access to healthcare including mental health and sexual health, and the creation of safe, supportive and inclusive environments.**
- Belong To will have produced a high-quality evidence base of research reflecting the lived experiences of LGBTQ+ young people in Ireland.**
- Belong To will have ensured that the voices and lived experiences of LGBTQ+ young people have been heard in the decisions that the effects their lives taken by the state.**
- Belong To will have increased its visibility and recognition amongst its stakeholders in the media and in public discussions on matters that relate to LGBTQ+ young people.**
- Belong To will have engaged in solidarity actions to protect and support the advancement of LGBTQ+ rights internationally.**
- Schools will be supportive and inclusive environments for LGBTQ+ young people.**





## #FeedTheGood

Lara Fitzsimons (she/her) wrote about making Online Spaces Safer for LGBTQ+ Youth as part of our 2022 ‘It’s Our Social Media’ campaign.

“I got involved with the ‘It’s Our Social Media’ campaign through my youth group at Belong To, and when the opportunity came up to be part of it, I was very eager to get involved and have my say.

I am part of the Ladybirds group within Belong To. We meet every Thursday with the themes of the group changing from week to week. Some days, we chat for hours over a cup of tea while listening to our favourite music. Other weeks we discuss more serious topics like queer sexual health, history of the community and healthy relationships.

The topic of safe spaces would creep into our discussions, not just during group meetings but outside of groups, too. A lot of us have become frustrated at the current online world and how draining it has been on our mental health over the past couple of years. I felt as though my online feeds were being flooded with spam and unhealthy ideas every day before I’d even had my breakfast.

### Blocking the Bad

When I really thought about it, I realised that we are actually the first generation who has had to grow up and be treated as test subjects for massive online corporations, with millions of ideas and opinions pushed onto us every day, including a lot of hateful content. It is crazy and totally unhealthy that, for many young people, it has gotten to the point where we are used to hearing such negativity every day. I found I was completely desensitized to “the bad” on social media.

It was exhausting, especially during the pandemic when my only view of the outside world came from my phone.

Blocking the bad is something that I needed to do. When I heard about the campaign, I leaped at the chance to have my say because, when I began to turn away and monitor the media I consumed, I began to feel a lot better in myself. I had a whole different mindset and I wanted to encourage others to do the same.

### Anti-LGBTQ+ Hate Online

It can’t be denied that there has been an increase of hate spread online and unfortunately a lot of it is directed towards the LGBTQ+ community. Last year, a study found that LGBTQ+ people experienced 50% more online hate and harassment than any other minority group.<sup>6</sup> LGBTQ+ youth are also more likely to experience bullying or harassment online than their non-LGBTQ+ peers, and are less likely to feel safe while using social media.<sup>7</sup>

LGBTQ+ young people use social media at much higher rates than non-LGBTQ+ youth, often to seek community and look for the safe spaces and information they may not have access to in real life.<sup>8</sup> Coming across this trolling, harassment and discrimination can cause detrimental effects for their mind and their overall confidence. This campaign gives us the chance to talk about these effects and find ways to block this bad.

6. ADL Centre for Technology & Society (2021) *Online Hate and Harassment: The American Experience*. ADL: New York. Available [here](#).

7. GLSEN (2013) *Out Online: The Experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Youth on the Internet*. GLSEN: New York. Available [here](#).

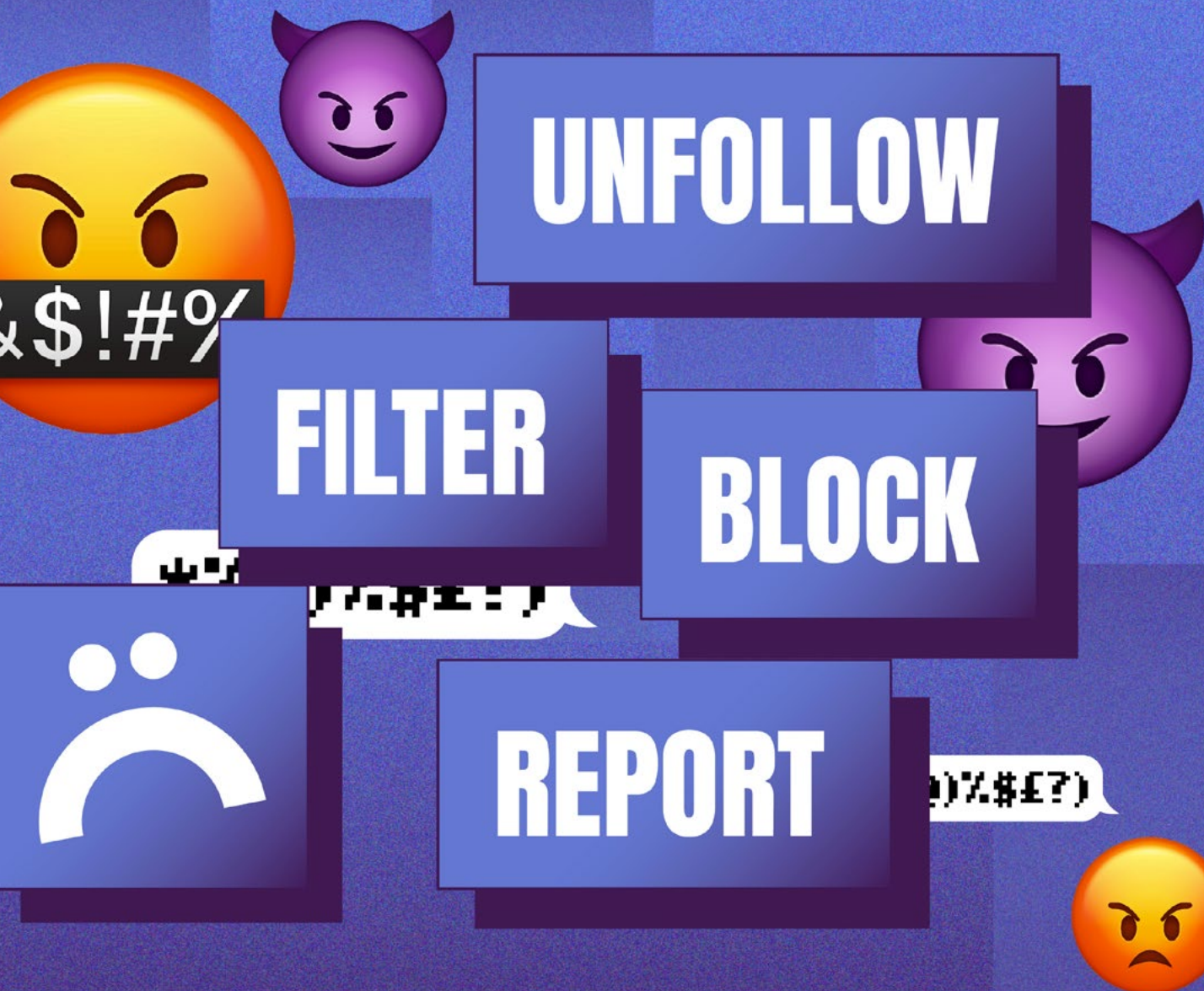
8. Steinke, J. Root-Bowman, M. Estabrook, S. Levine, D. Kantor, L. (2017) ‘Meeting the Needs of Sexual and Gender Minority Youth: Formative Research on Potential Digital Health Interventions’, *Journal of Adolescent Health* 60(5). Available [here](#).



Connect  
Explore  
Express yourself



#FeedTheGood



There are things you can do to  
**#BlockTheBad** on social media

## It's Our Social Media

It's important to understand that social media exists because of us - the users - and it is a massive part of the lives of young people in the world at the moment. We spend a lot of our time online and this can be a great tool for research, connecting with people and even getting inspiration and finding a sense of self.

However, there is a really fine line that we can sometimes unknowingly cross when it comes to the media we absorb and it is extremely important for us young people to be able to voice when something is not right. I always say that it is so much easier for people to just hop online and write a negative comment anonymously with zero consequence than it would be in real life. Trolls and hate groups often find a new confidence that they may not have in real life, and feel they have the power to say whatever they want to whoever they want.

Unfortunately, individual users cannot prevent all of the hateful content that circulates online. That's why, as part of the 'It's Our Social Media' campaign, we are calling on social media platforms to be more proactive in preventing and responding to reports of harassment, cyberbullying, and anti-LGBTQ+ language.

## Finding Community through Social Media

Aside from all of this, social media has been an amazing tool to help me connect with others, especially over the pandemic. It isn't all bad and I love to use social media every day, it can be a wonderful thing.

During the height of the pandemic, I joined Belong To after seeing an ad on Instagram for online groups. I had wanted to go along for years so I thought, why not now when all I have to do is pop on Zoom for an hour each week? Those online groups continued for a year until we could meet up in person again, but by the end of the first month it was like we had known each other for years. We would never have met each other if it hadn't been through social media. We were an escape from online class, the ups and downs of the exams that "may or may not happen", the cancelling of debs and graduations, and overall we gave each other a guaranteed smile each week.

And now, even though the lockdown is over, we use social media in a different way. We now use it to find playlists for our house parties, send updates to the group chats, and post photos of our days out together where we are actually sitting beside each other and not waving through a screen. I feel so lucky to have found my community and some of my closest friends through social media."





# LGBTQ+ Inclusive Education

In 2022, we kicked off Stand Up Awareness Week with the launch of our *School Climate Survey* research.

## Stand Up Awareness Week

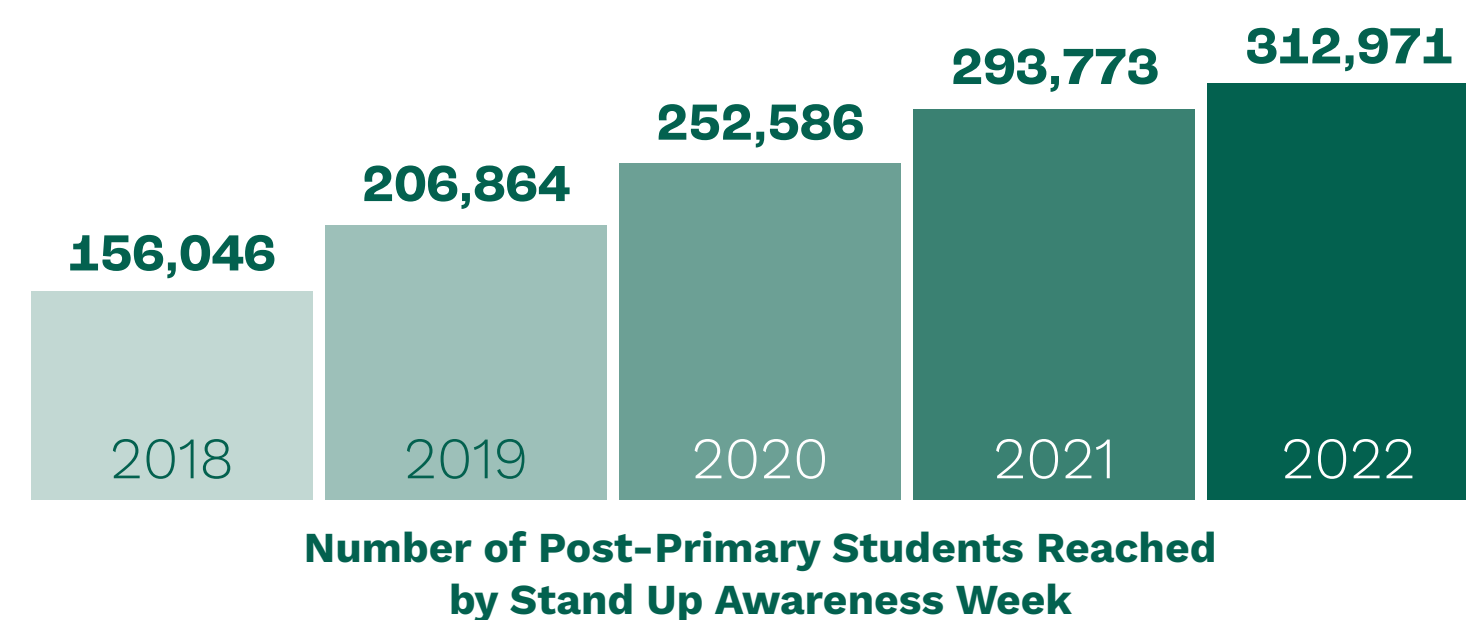
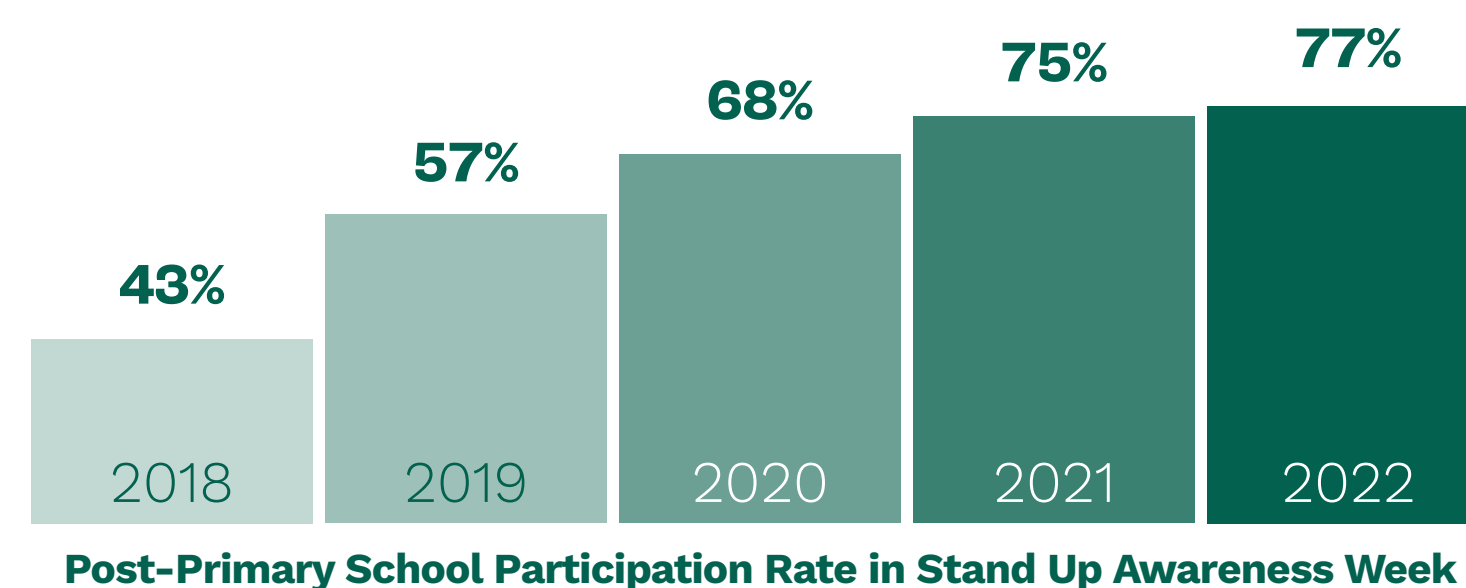
Stand Up Awareness Week is Ireland's largest LGBTQ+ anti-bullying campaign. Now in its 13<sup>th</sup> year, the campaign took place from Monday, 14 November to Friday, 19 November, 2022. Running Stand Up Awareness Week can be the first step to creating a safe space within a school, Youthreach or youth service for LGBTQ+ young people. It is a time to show solidarity with LGBTQ+ youth so they feel seen, heard and safe, and to ensure everyone knows that homophobic, biphobic and transphobic language and bullying will not be tolerated.

The campaign aims to decrease bullying, isolation, self-harm, suicide ideation and mental health difficulties among LGBTQ+ youth. With the campaign, we also strive to increase peer support between LGBTQ+ youth and their classmates, and increase awareness of the experiences of LGBTQ+ students among the entire school community.

Our 2022 *School Climate Survey* research revealed that casual homophobia remains rife in Irish post-primary schools. Among LGBTQ+ students surveyed, 69% reported hearing other students make homophobic remarks, and 58% overheard a homophobic remark from school staff. We used these findings to inform the theme for Stand Up Awareness Week 2022, 'tackling LGBTQ+phobic language'. Within our longer, 28-page resource guide to running Stand Up Awareness Week, we outlined a clear four-step procedure for identifying and addressing LGBTQ+phobic language. This procedure is supported by new online toolkit resources, including a sample student survey, and a clear process for recognising and recording instances of LGBTQ+phobic language. We sent three packs including the resource guide, a terminology poster and a campaign poster to every second-level school in Ireland. The packs were also available to download from our website.



We were delighted to see a continual year-on-year increase in the number of post-primary schools coming on board to recognise and celebrate their LGBTQ+ community by taking part in Stand Up Awareness Week. In 2022, 77% of Irish post-primary schools participated in the campaign, translating to 312,971 students being reached with our anti-bullying message. In the last five years alone, participation of post-primary schools in Stand Up Awareness Week has increased by an incredible 79%, from 43% in 2018 to 77% in 2022. A huge thank you to all of the teachers, youth workers, educators and young people who took the time to make this year our greatest Stand Up Awareness Week yet!



Stand Up Awareness Week is supported by the Department of Education, and endorsed by major organisations in the post-primary school sector, including the National Association of Principals, the teachers' unions, guidance counsellors, and management bodies for second-level schools.

## School Climate Survey

In 2022, we once again partnered with the Teachers College, Columbia University, to conduct research into the experiences of LGBTQ+ students in schools across Ireland. The 2022 *School Climate Survey* is our second iteration of this research, with the first report published in 2019.

The research examined indicators of a negative school experience, the impact of the school environment on students, and school-based supports that can improve the lives of LGBTQ+ youth. Our findings paint a bleak picture of the reality of school life for LGBTQ+ students in Ireland. An alarming 76% of LGBTQ+ students felt unsafe at school (2019: 73%). Many students reported being subjected to homophobic remarks; physical, verbal and sexual harassment; and physical and sexual assault.

However, there is hope. Almost all LGBTQ+ students who responded to the survey, 99%, identified one school staff member supportive of LGBTQ+ identities (2019: 97%). The proportion of LGBTQ+ students taught positive things about LGBTQ+ identities also increased significantly, from 22% in 2019 to 36% in 2022. Our research once again found that staff intervention in instances of homophobic language, higher levels of staff support for LGBTQ+ students, and an LGBTQ+-inclusive curriculum increases feelings of safety, acceptance and belonging among LGBTQ+ students, and reduces their likelihood of missing school.

To obtain a representative national sample of LGBTQ+ young people, we engaged with our education partners, network of parents and guardians, professionals and young people, along with national and regional LGBTQ+ and youth organisations. Through increased promotion on youth platforms, TikTok and Snapchat, we achieved the largest ever research sample of LGBTQ+ young people in schools in Ireland. The final sample consisted of 1,208 LGBTQ+ students, representing all 26 counties in the Republic of Ireland (2019: 788).

Policy-makers, politicians, supporters and the media attended the report launch during Stand Up Awareness Week. Journalist and psychotherapist Dil Wickremasinghe (she/they) hosted the event, which included a presentation of key findings and a panel discussion with Head of Psychology at St Vincent's University Hospital, Dr Paul Dalton (he/him); Deputy General Secretary of the ASTI, Diarmaid de Paor (he/him); Equality Officer at ISSU, Rebecca Livingstone (she/her); doctoral candidate in trans studies at UCD, Matt Kennedy (he/him); and LGBTQ+ youth activist, Adam Pidgeon (he/they).

The *School Climate Survey 2022* has provided us with a solid evidence base for our ongoing policy work in this area. The research will run again in 2024, to reassess the experiences of and supports available to LGBTQ+ students. The report is available at [www.belongto.org](http://www.belongto.org)





# Advocacy in Action



We strive to advance the rights of LGBTQ+ youth by impacting decision-making and policy.

At Belong To, we push the dial towards LGBTQ+ equality through our research, policy and advocacy work. Through this work, we strive to ensure that policy formation and legislation are informed by the voices and experiences of LGBTQ+ youth.

In March, Quality Matters were successful in tendering a research project with Belong To and TENI into the development of resources for parents of LGBTQ+ youth. In December, we were delighted to be a recipient of the Irish Research Council's New Foundations grant, for a project researching LGBTQ+ inclusion in primary schools in collaboration with Dr Aoife Neary (she/her) of the University of Limerick. This research will commence early 2023.

In October, it was announced that new laws on hate crime and hate speech will include the ground of sex characteristics, a vital protection for intersex youth. We are continuing our work as a member of the Coalition Against Hate Crime to ensure that new hate crime legislation is introduced as a matter of urgency.

We are members of the End Conversion Therapy Steering Group and we are working to ensure that a ban on conversion practices is introduced in 2023. Belong To has continued to campaign for amendments to the Gender Recognition Act 2015, allowing a simplified process for 16 and 17 year olds to be granted a Gender Recognition Certificate with parental consent, and for the inclusion of non-binary identities within the Act.

In recent years, we have witnessed a sharp increase in anti-LGBTQ+ hate and harassment online. As a member of the Children's Rights Alliance Online Safety Advisory Group, we worked on the introduction of a new law to better protect LGBTQ+ youth online. We were delighted to see the Online Safety and Media Regulation Act introduced in December of this year. The Act contains a key ask from Belong To's 'It's Our Social Media' campaign – a procedure for individuals to make complaints directly to the new online safety commissioner, where the complaint has not been effectively handled by an online platform.

In December, we welcomed the publication of *Cineáltas*, a new national action plan on bullying, by the Department of Education. Our CEO, Moninne Griffith (she/her), was a member of the action plan's Steering Committee, and secured a number of key actions for LGBTQ+ students. These include the Department's continued support for Stand Up Awareness Week; LGBTQ+ inclusion in SPHE and RSE; and updating the Department's *Being LGBT in School* resource. We look forward to commencing this work in 2023.

In 2022, we developed our relationships with the international LGBTQ+ community by attending a number of conferences, including the ILGYO Annual Members Conference, the ILGA-Europe Annual Conference, the ILGA-World Annual Conference, and the TGEU European and Central Asian Trans Council.



## Trans Equality Together

Trans Equality Together is a coalition led by TENI, Belong To and LGBT Ireland, with 26 members from across civil society. The coalition is working towards an Ireland where trans and non-binary people are equal, safe and valued.

In June, we officially launched the coalition with an event at the Mansion House hosted by LGBTQ+ and feminist activist, Ailbhe Smyth (she/her). Along with our membership, we continued to advocate for access to healthcare, a review of existing gender recognition legislation, and issued statements in response to topics including conversion practices and barriers to trans women and girls playing sport.

In September, we secured funds from ILGA-Europe to hire a Campaign Coordinator to progress the work of the coalition. We are delighted that, following a successful recruitment process, our new Coordinator will join Trans Equality Together in early 2023.

## Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland

In 2022, Belong To and Trinity College, Dublin began working on an exciting new research project on the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ people in Ireland. The project, entitled *Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland*, is being conducted by a group of researchers led by Professor Agnes Higgins (she/her) in the School of Nursing & Midwifery, Trinity College, Dublin in collaboration with Belong To.

*Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland* aims to examine the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQI+ people in the Republic of Ireland and investigate public attitudes towards LGBTQI+ people. This project is a continuation of the *LGBTIreland Report* published by Belong To, GLEN and Trinity College, Dublin in 2016 – a ground-breaking national study into the mental health and wellbeing of the LGBTQI+ community in Ireland.

*Being LGBTQI+ in Ireland* is funded by the National Office for Suicide Prevention (NOSP) & Social Inclusion, the Health Service Executive (HSE), the What Works and Dormant Accounts Fund, Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth through Belong To.

A wide range of stakeholders are also working with us on this research project, including other LGBTQI+ organisations, statutory agencies and government departments. With this new body of research, we have the chance to see what has changed for the LGBTQI+ community following the major policy and legislative milestones that have been reached in recent years. This research will shed light on the experiences of the LGBTQI+ community in Ireland since 2016 and will provide significant insight into the community's needs. The final report will be published in March 2024.

## SPHE and RSE Consultation

In November, we submitted our observations to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) on the draft Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE curriculum. Through our youth work, advocacy and research, we have long been aware of the need for the SPHE/RSE curriculum to be revised and updated, to be fully LGBTQ+ inclusive, and to meet the needs of all young people in Ireland.

Our 2022 *School Climate Survey* research revealed that only 35% of LGBTQ+ students have been taught positive things about LGBTQ+ identities in SPHE. Building on this research, we wanted to know more about LGBTQ+ young people's experience of SPHE, their views on the new curriculum, and what is needed for the course to fully meet the needs of LGBTQ+ youth.

In August, we facilitated two focus groups with LGBTQ+ young people from our Dublin groups to explore these topics. Young people gave important insights into the need for teachers to be sufficiently trained to deliver SPHE and RSE, and highlighted the need for consent, harm reduction, and respect for LGBTQ+ identities to be threaded throughout the curriculum.

We look forward to the publication and roll-out of the updated Junior Cycle SPHE/RSE curriculum in September 2023, and engaging in the upcoming review of Senior Cycle SPHE/RSE.



**News  
Over  
Noise**





## We raise awareness about the key issues facing LGBTQ+ youth through our communications and campaigns.

Our communications work shines a light on important topics and challenges experienced by LGBTQ+ youth and provides a space for young people to share the issues that are important to them. By engaging the public through mainstream media channels, we create understanding of what life is like for LGBTQ+ youth in Ireland today.

We speak to a range of stakeholders and individuals who impact the lives of LGBTQ+ young people, including parents, educators, youth workers, health professionals and policy makers. We communicate with these groups through a range of activities including media engagement, digital media, e-newsletter, advertising, flyers and mailouts.

In 2022, we received a number of awards for our digital media activity including Gold for Best Social Media Strategy and Silver for Best Video Campaign at the Social Media Awards. These awards reflected our work within the social media landscape and how we've utilised this space in order to reach and engage with LGBTQ+ young people online. In addition to our social media achievements, we were also nominated for the Digital Transformation Award at the Charity Excellence Awards by the Charities Institute Ireland.

## Media Coverage

In 2022, we witnessed a significant increase in coverage of LGBTQ+ topics. *Belong To* featured in 256 pieces of media coverage across national and regional radio, television and publications (2020: 130). Unfortunately, much of this coverage related to the questioning of trans identities and focused on misinformation and myths about the trans community.

Alongside our coalition partners at Trans Equality Together, we released statements concerning the ban on trans women playing contact rugby and about including trans identities in the ban of conversion practices. Our *School Climate Survey* launch in November attracted a lot of media attention with media pieces across high-profile national publications including RTÉ News, the Irish Times and the Irish Examiner, and regional outlets.

Additional coverage focused on our National Coming Out Day digital event for parents, recruitment of participants for our upcoming *Being LGBTQI+ In Ireland* research (to be published in 2024) and regional media coverage of the schools who participated in our Safe and Supportive Schools programme (now known as the LGBTQ+ Quality Mark).

## Digital Media

In 2022, some areas saw exponential growth, including increasing our overall social media following by 8%. However, we noticed a shift in the digital landscape which in turn led us to expand to new platforms, utilise new tools and microsites, and re-evaluate how we connect with our key stakeholders online.

With more and more young people flocking to platforms like TikTok and Snapchat, this meant we had to shift our attention to these new online spaces, and understand how we can best communicate with our audience. This provided us with an opportunity to reach more young people than ever before, with a total of 16.7 million impressions generated across TikTok and Snapchat alone in 2022.

Unfortunately, this shift also brought new challenges as we saw an increase in online harassment and targeting online. Towards the end of 2022, some platforms became more lenient in the regulation and enforcement of their reporting process and community guidelines. This unfortunately led to an increase in hostile responses to our own social content and also created unsafe online spaces for users within the LGBTQ+ community. In response, we adjusted the type of content we posted on certain platforms to combat further negative interactions and overall sentiment.



## Campaign: Better Out Than In

Better Out Than In is a campaign that aims to promote a healthier relationship with mental health and wellbeing amongst 14-23 year olds in Ireland who are LGBTQ+. The campaign objective is to reach LGBTQ+ youth throughout Ireland, highlighting the importance of talking about their mental health while sending them to an online hub where they can learn a variety of ways to support their mental health and engage in help-seeking behaviour.

As this campaign entered its fourth year, we faced a new challenge around messaging. LGBTQ+ youth told us about the barriers they experienced when reaching out for help so we integrated these into our campaign message. They included 'my problem doesn't matter' and 'I've just come out as LGBTQ+ so I should be happy'.

To help break the stigma of asking for help, we collaborated with mental health professionals from a range of organisations; Anne Marie Toole (she/her), Dil Wickremasinghe (she/they) and Paul O'Beirne (he/him) from Insight Matters, Dr Tara Logan Buckley (she/her) from the HSE 50808 textline and Maria Postolache (she/her) from MyMind. Each professional created bespoke, short-form videos discussing our key campaign messages and breaking down the stigmas surrounding these issues. The Better Out Than In campaign ran across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and TikTok, generating over 6.7 million impressions, 404,000 video views, and 36,800 link clicks. (2021: 2.1 million impressions, 477,000 video views, 12,000 link clicks)

## Campaign: It's Our Social Media

It's Our Social Media is a digital media campaign combatting online hate speech experienced by LGBTQ+ youth, while empowering young people to take back social media, protect themselves online, and to hold social media companies accountable as we work to make spaces safe for users. This campaign is funded by Google.org through the 2019 Impact Challenge on Safety.

In March of 2022, we launched It's Our Social Media for the first time. The campaign featured a range of digital assets including a short-form animation and a hero video of young LGBTQ+ people sharing their thoughts on social media and how we can create safe spaces for LGBTQ+ youth online. We had two key campaign slogans; #FeedTheGood and #BlockTheBad, both of which helped us prompt users to join in the conversation online and take action.

Another key component of this campaign was our microsite, *itsoursocialmedia.com*, which acted as an online hub that housed resources on how to stay safe online, digital self-care tips and much more. We also included information on the Online Safety and Media Regulation Bill as part of our collaboration with the Children's Right Alliance on this campaign, which has since been passed into law. Our microsite also featured an online poll to gather users' thoughts on online safety. The campaign ran across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, and TikTok, generating over 11 million impressions, 3.3 million video views and 35,700 link clicks.

## Digital Performance Highlights



### Website Data

**277K** Page Views / **52K** Users



### Most visited pages:

1. How do I know if I'm trans?
2. Stand Up Awareness Week
3. Stand Up Awareness Week Resources
4. Online training for youth services and schools



### Most Engaged Facebook Posts:

1. Christmas Donation Appeal
2. Safe and Supportive School Visit
3. #ComeIn Campaign



### Most Engaged Instagram Posts:

1. Lesbian Visibility Day
2. Homophobic Attack Solidarity Post
3. #CommunityChampion



### Most Engaged Twitter Posts:

1. #CommunityChampion
2. Sligo Vigils
3. LGBTQ+ Quality Mark







# Goal 4

## Being a Learning and Developing Organisation

A sustainable, professional, learning organisation with a skilled team, and robust systems working to achieve our vision.

### Objectives

- 4.1** Nurture an internal culture that is rooted in our values, and which prioritises wellbeing, curiosity, courage and learning.
- 4.2** Review organisational structure.
- 4.3** Collaborate with other like-minded LGBTQ+ organisations to scope out the potential for a shared flagship premises in Dublin.
- 4.4** Review and enhance key processes, through optimising the use of digital technology, emphasising effective communications and strengthening relationships of trust.
- 4.5** Protect existing resources and grow sources of income to ensure sustainability.
- 4.6** Maintain good governance.

### Outcomes

- Belong To's team will have been effectively managed, will have embodied the organisation's values, and be resilient.
- Belong To will have a robust Senior Management Team and team in place to achieve the organisation's ambitious strategic goals.
- A strategic decision will have been reached on the co-location of services for the LGBTQ+ community.
- Belong To will have best-in-class operating systems and practices, our organisation will be efficient, well-run, and we will emphasise tools to save time and money.
- Belong To will have maintained, diversified and increased its resources. It will maintain a high proportion of independent fundraised income comparatively to income from the state and state agencies.
- Belong To will be fully compliant with legal obligations, the Governance Code and our own governance guidelines and policies.



# Celebrating Our Volunteers

We are inspired by our dedicated volunteers who assist with projects across the organisation - from supporting our frontline team to shaking buckets at fundraising events.

Volunteers play an essential role in the work that we do. Many of our volunteers work directly in our Dublin youth service, supporting our professional youth workers with LGBTQ+ youth groups. Other roles undertaken by volunteers include supporting our fundraising and governance through various subcommittees and working groups. Our volunteers play a vital role in helping us to achieve our strategic goals, and we are so grateful to this dedicated group of individuals. You can read more about our Board of Directors on page 52 and our subcommittees on page 54.

In 2022, 57 volunteers contributed 1,579 hours to the organisation (2021: 27 volunteers, 810 hours). Our Volunteer Coordinator leads our volunteering programme. He works part-time, two days per week, to recruit, train, support and manage volunteers. In the second half of the year, we saw a decline in active volunteers as some of our long-term volunteers moved country or changed jobs. We embarked on a recruitment drive in September, and welcomed 13 new volunteers to the organisation in December 2022.

The organisation benefits greatly from the involvement and enthusiastic support of our volunteers. Following the Charities SORP (FRS102), the economic contribution of our volunteers is not recognised in the Financial Statements. Using the Volunteer Investment as Value Audit tool (VIVA) for every €1 we spend on volunteers; we get back €2.32 (2021; €2.27) in the value of work they do. The tool calculates volunteer value by linking volunteer roles to the cost of employing staff to perform the functions and dividing that value by the total expenditure on the volunteer program. Volunteers are supported through a group supervision process and have access to external support should the need arise.

## Whole Organisation Approach

Following on from the Volunteer Impact Assessment work we conducted with Volunteer Ireland in 2021, volunteering has been adopted across the organisation. As part of our new Strategic Plan, we moved the volunteer program coordination from the youth service to our Operations Team so that the entire organisation can benefit from working with volunteers. This programme now sits under Goal #4 Being a Learning and Developing Organisation.

We have focused on how to improve our volunteer programme and have included active volunteers in this process to:

- Increase the recognition of Belong To volunteers through social media postings and putting volunteers forward for volunteer recognition awards.
- Enhance the flow of information to volunteers regarding the impact the organisation has on LGBTQ+ young people through quarterly communication and feedback mechanisms.
- Utilise existing volunteers in the onboarding and training process of recruiting new volunteers.





**Emma Clay (she/her), a volunteer with our LGBTQ+ youth groups, speaks about her journey:**

**“I started as a volunteer three years ago, and it has been amazing to see the growth and development of the young people that have been part of the group over this time, as well as to welcome new people into the group and see the benefit that the service has on them.”**



**Colm Monks (he/him) recognised what he has learned from volunteering with our LGBTQ+ youth groups:**

**“Every day I spend with the amazing youth workers and young people is a learning day from queer sign language, gender identity, challenges young LGBTQ+ people face, anime, amazing books and movies. But most important for me is I am learning how to support people in a way that empowers them.”**







# Inspired by your Generosity!

We gained many new donors and funders in 2022. Thanks to these kind people and generous organisations, we can deliver our life-saving work and be there for LGBTQ+ youth.

Our Fundraising Team strives to maintain existing resources and grow sources of income to ensure sustainability and growth within our organisation, enabling us to be there for LGBTQ+ youth when they need us. 2022 was a uniquely challenging but rewarding year for the Fundraising Team as we navigated a new fundraising strategy, staffing changes and the return to face-to-face fundraising. We had an ambitious fundraising target of €1,035,587 for 2022. Despite challenges, including the postponement of our flagship fundraising event, The Rainbow Ball, we had a really successful year, raising €866,869 to support LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland! We thank each and every one of our donors and supporters for their generosity.



## Changes

In March 2022, we said goodbye to Oisín O'Reilly (he/him), Head of Fundraising and Operations, following over a decade of service to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ youth. This departure of a key staff member impacted the resources and reach of the team in 2022, while the recruitment process took place.

Despite these challenges our work continued and, thanks to the dedication of our Fundraising Team, our fundraising efforts were successful in 2022. Some key highlights of 2022 include hosting our in-person Pride Donor Care event at Bank of Ireland, College Green in June. We brought together over 100 of our partners and allies to celebrate our life-saving work. Thank you to the 'With Pride LGBT+ Network' at Bank of Ireland for this opportunity to connect with our supporter base. We were kept busy during the rest of the year. The team delivered 45 workshops and panel events (2021: 60, 2020: 40) across various industries, promoting the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people in workplaces and society.

In September 2022, we welcomed our new Director of Development, Marty O'Prey (he/him). This appointment was vital in driving the success of our new Fundraising Strategy for the duration of 2022 and beyond. We were also delighted to welcome our new part-time Fundraising Administrator, Emma Dornan (she/her), in December, adding much-needed resources and assistance to the team's efforts.

## Fundraising Strategy

Our new 2022-2024 Fundraising Strategy focuses on protecting our existing income while diversifying into new areas through individual giving, major giving and legacy giving, thereby ensuring the sustainability of Belong To's life-saving work into the future. We are grateful to Nick Sparrow (he/him) and Niall O'Sullivan (he/him) who worked with our team, the Board and stakeholders to create our new Fundraising Strategy. We aligned this strategy with the launch of our new Strategic Plan as we aim to maintain, diversify and increase our income and resources during the lifespan of this Plan to support our ambitious goals. We go into 2023 as a strong team with a clear strategy to protect and grow our income.

## Individual Giving

One of the key aspects of our new Fundraising Strategy is to increase our individual giving. We know that many of our supporters want to help LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland through giving gifts to Belong To, and it's our job to make that as easy as possible for them. In December, we launched our new drive for individual giving through our Christmas Appeal. We told our supporters about a young LGBTQ+ person named Jamie\* (he/him). Jamie was lost until he found Belong To. But thanks to our donors, he found a safe space and he found support at Belong To. We asked our supporters to help the next LGBTQ+ young person like Jamie, and we were thrilled with the response. Thank you to our donors, both old and new, for supporting our first Christmas Appeal in many years, and for helping more young people like Jamie. This successful test of an individual giving appeal paves the way for building a strong individual giving fundraising programme, which, along with launching a new regular giving drive during Pride 2023, will make it easier for our generous donors to support LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland.

\*We changed Jamie's name and used stock imagery to protect his privacy.



## Community Fundraising

From sponsored events to Taylor Swift nights at the University of Galway's Bród Soc, our generous community fundraisers continued to inspire us with their exciting fundraising efforts throughout 2022. Some of the highlights included Claire Comerford's sponsored cycle from Paris to Nice, which raised an unbelievable €5,000. The wonderful team at Fly Dance Studio Dublin supported our services with a week of special classes and inclusive events including heel classes and hip-hop. Erika Bellamy chose Belong To as her chosen charity at the Rose of Tralee as Miss Wicklow Town. And we thank the students' unions and university societies around the country that held movie nights, treasure hunts, stand-up comedy evenings, battles of the bands, drag nights and speed dating – all in support of LGBTQ+ young people!

We were also so grateful for all the small independent Irish businesses and artists who sold products with proceeds going to help LGBTQ+ young people. We must also thank the hundreds of people around the country who celebrated their birthdays by creating Facebook donation pages to support our work. These wonderful fundraisers are just a sample of the many fun – and generous – activities around Ireland in support of LGBTQ+ young people and Belong To's work. Thanks to each and every one of you for your support!

## Corporate Fundraising

There was a welcome return to normality throughout 2022 with a resumption of in-person collaborations and events with our corporate partners. Several corporate partners across the country engaged in workshops, collaborations and campaigns in support of Belong To. One of the key highlights was hosting our Pride donor event at Bank of Ireland College Green, where we launched our volunteer e-learning platform. This free online resource was created to improve awareness and understanding of LGBTQ+ people for volunteers in communities across Ireland. The event was also a fantastic opportunity to bring many of our funders and donors together in celebration of Pride, reaffirming their support and allyship to Belong To. On the day of Pride, we were delighted to host groups of volunteers, including a group of employees from the National Lottery, who hit the streets with our first on-street bucket collection in almost two years.

The Rainbow Ball was due to make a comeback in November 2022, for the first time in three years. We had a huge response from our corporate partners and allies, with the event selling out. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the event has been postponed to January 2023 and we look forward celebrating our work with our supporters and allies.

A special thank you to all of the individuals, employee resource groups and allies within the organisations we work with. We acknowledge and appreciate the work you do in campaigning for and promoting Belong To internally, often in addition to your own workload – you know who you are – thank you!

**Fundraised Income 2022**  
€866,869



# Staff

Our team is made up of passionate and hardworking individuals dedicated to supporting the lives of LGBTQ+ young people in Ireland.

A total of 24 staff were employed by the company over the course of 2022. As of 31 December 2022, there were 18 employees.

## Aggregate payroll costs incurred during the year:

	2022	2021
Wages and Salaries	€796,644	€740,632
Social Insurance Cost	€87,112	€79,624
	<b>€883,756</b>	<b>€820,256</b>

<b>Moninne Griffith</b>	she/her	CEO
<b>Oisín O'Reilly</b> <i>Resigned March 2022</i>	he/him	Head of Operations and Fundraising, Company Secretary
<b>Gillian Brien</b> <i>Resigned December 2022</i>	she/her	Youth Work Manager
<b>Suzanne Handley</b>	she/her	Finance and Governance Manager
<b>Sinéad Keane</b>	she/her	Director of Communications and Advocacy
<b>Caroline Flynn</b>	she/her	Partnerships and Engagement Manager
<b>Shane Smart</b> <i>Resigned December 2022</i>	he/him	Drug and Alcohol Youth Worker
<b>Kate Cummins</b> <i>Resigned October 2022</i>	she/her	Youth Worker
<b>Glenn Keating</b>	he/him	Volunteer Coordinator
<b>Sean Frayne</b>	he/him	Sexual Health Youth Worker
<b>Tiffany Fitzgerald-Brosnan</b>	she/her	Office Manager
<b>Matt Kennedy</b>	he/him	Policy and Research Officer
<b>Hannah Clancy</b>	she/her	Digital Communications Officer
<b>Sharon Heron</b>	she/her	Training and Education Manager
<b>Barry McSkeane</b>	he/him	National Network Coordinator
<b>Freya Carroll</b>	she/her	Administration and Finance Officer
<b>Neasa Candon</b>	she/her	Communications and Policy Officer
<b>Chris Rowan</b>	he/him	Fundraising Officer
<b>Anila O'Sullivan</b> <i>Resigned April 2022</i>	she/her	Salesforce Administrator
<b>Stephen Cassidy</b>	he/him	Training and Education Officer
<b>Brenda Kelly</b>	she/her	Youth Worker
<b>Jessica Ryan</b> <i>Contract ended July 2022</i>	she/her	Project Assistant
<b>Marty O'Prey</b>	he/him	Director of Development
<b>Emma Dornan</b>	she/her	Administrative Assistant
<b>Bronagh Ritchie</b>	she/her	Student on Placement, Maynooth University



## Remuneration Policy

The Company has a Remuneration Policy that has been agreed by the Human Resources and Remuneration Subcommittee as delegated by the Board. This policy states that we seek to be competitive with our peers. As a general principle, this means the Company pitches its salaries at the median of the marketplace. A salary grading structure has been in place for several years and has been approved by the Board.

## Chief Executive's Remuneration

The CEO, Moninne Griffith, commenced on 1st November 2015. The value of her remuneration in 2022 was €84,114.51 (2021: €78,125). Included in this is employer pension contributions of €634. She receives no other additional benefits. Her contract of employment does not include a performance-related award scheme or any benefit-in-kind/perquisites.

## Senior Management Remuneration

The Senior Management Team (SMT) at Belong To was restructured in 2022 in response to the organisation's continued growth and to best support the organisation's work. At the end of 2022, there were seven staff who were members of the SMT. Remuneration paid to the SMT in 2022 amounted to €341,912. Included in this figure is employer pension contributions of €4,594 (2021: Nil). This compares to a total SMT remuneration figure of €169,805 in 2021, when the senior management team was comprised of just three individuals. No other additional benefits are received by the SMT and contracts of employment do not include performance-related reward schemes or any benefits-in-kind/perquisites.

## Diversity, Equality and Inclusion

Belong To is committed to being an inclusive and diverse organisation. Indeed, this is at the core of the organisation's charitable purpose. All employees, volunteers, beneficiaries and visitors are treated with dignity, respect and equality of opportunity, and are not discriminated against.

We do not discriminate based on race, ethnicity, colour, class, ancestry, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, disability, anti-body status, marital status, membership of the Roma or Travelling community, or any other legally protected status.

The Company is fully compliant with the requirements of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2018 and the Employment Equality Acts 1998-2015.

## The Safety, Health and Welfare at Work Act 2005

Belong To continues to take appropriate measures to protect the safety, health and welfare of all staff, volunteers, visitors and young people and promote awareness within its offices to meet this Act's provisions. This extends to the Public Health (Tobacco) Acts, 2002 and 2004.

## Team Wellbeing

The Company continued staff wellbeing initiatives in 2022, which had commenced in 2020 during the Covid-19 pandemic. The Employee Assistance Programme is available to all team members and their immediate families and offers a confidential service which can provide practical assistance and emotional support, covering a spectrum of issues from personal and family matters to work and financial issues.

## Staff Training and Professional Development

The Company operates a further education scheme for staff members and actively encourages continuing professional development of the team. Participating staff members may be entitled to either paid or unpaid leave, or a combination of both, to attend an approved course, or to have a contribution towards the cost of academic fees. All courses relate to identified organisational needs and are dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

During 2022, five staff members availed of this scheme. Two team members completed courses commenced in 2021 - a Masters course in Child Protection, and a Masters in Rights and Social Policy. One team member continued their Doctoral Studies at University College Dublin with the support of funding from the Irish Research Council's Postgraduate Employment Based Programme researching 'Transnormativity and the Everyday Lifeworlds of Young Trans Individuals in Ireland'. Two staff members commenced new programmes in 2022 - a Certificate in Equality, Diversity and Inclusion, and a Certificate in Training and Continuing Education.



# Energy Efficiency Report



The next decade requires a concerted efforts to overcome the climate crisis. Here, we report on our energy efficiency as an organisation.

In 2022, the energy consumed by Belong To was higher than 2021.

<b>Energy Use</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
Direct Consumption (kWh) Electricity, lighting, ICT, office power, heating and cooling	17,200	16,826

The following measures are in place to mitigate our operations' harmful effects on the environment and climate change:

- Our energy provider is one of the leading suppliers of green energy in Ireland, ensuring emissions as a result of our operations are kept to a minimum.
- The Charity continues to operate a comprehensive internal recycling system.
- The Charity procures refurbished ICT devices as part of its commitment to the circular economy; each refurbished device saves 1,500 litres of water, 3,000kWh of electricity, 22kg of chemicals and 700kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.



# Structure, Governance and Management

Our values of transparency, openness and honesty are demonstrated through our adherence to the Charities Institute Ireland Triple Lock Standards of transparent reporting, ethical fundraising and strong governance structures.

Belong To was deemed a Charity per Section 40 of the Charities Act 2009 and is registered as such with the Charities Regulator in Ireland with registration number 20059798.

Belong To Limited is registered in Ireland as a Company Limited by Guarantee incorporated in the Republic of Ireland under the Companies Act 2014. Under section 1180 of the Companies Act 2014, the Company is exempt from including the word 'limited' in its name. The Company does not have a share capital. Consequently, the member's liability is limited, subject to each member's undertaking to contribute to the Company's net assets or liabilities on winding up such amounts as may be required not exceeding €1.

The Company was set up under a Memorandum of Association that established the charitable Company's objects and powers. The Company is governed by a Constitution and is managed by a Board of Directors. The Articles of Association and Constitution were last amended by a unanimous written resolution of the Company members on 6 September 2017.

The main objective or charitable purpose of the Company is:

- To advance the wellbeing of the community at large by the provision of support and services for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) young people and families in need; and,
- To advance the wellbeing of the community at large by the promotion and the advancement of the wellbeing of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT+) young people and their families whose lives have been affected by homophobia, social exclusion, discrimination, or other disadvantage, by fostering a culture of inclusiveness, equality, and human rights.

The Companies Act 2014 commenced on 1 June 2015.

Belong To Limited has completed the process of converting to a company limited by guarantee, under Section 980/1190(5)/1247(4) Companies Act 2014.

The Company has been granted charitable tax exemption by the Revenue Commissioners per the provisions of Section 208 (as applied to companies by Section 76), Section 609 (Capital Gains Tax) and Section 266 (Deposit Interest Retention Tax) of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997. This exemption, which applies to Income Tax, Corporation Tax, Capital Gains Tax, and Deposit Interest Retention Tax, extends to the Company's income and property. Furthermore, the Company, as a registered Charity, has been designated as an approved body within the meaning of Section 848A, Taxes Consolidation Act 1997 by the Revenue Commissioners.

Belong To Youth Services Limited is referred to as "The Company" or as "The Charity" in our Annual Reports for ease of reading per relevant section.

## Directors/Charity Trustees

Belong To is governed by a Board of Directors with a maximum number of 10 people. In 2022, Patricia Carey was co-opted as an alternate trustee. All Board members and alternates work voluntarily and do not receive any remuneration as required by the Charities Act 2009. They are entitled to reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses in the discharge of their functions. The Board of Directors are also the Trustees of the Charity.



# Board Members

Board Meeting Attendance 2022



## Dominic Hannigan

(he/him)  
*Chair of the Board*

Appointed  
08/05/12

Dominic Hannigan is Head of Public Transport Regulation at the National Transport Authority. He served as Teachta Dála (TD) for the Meath East constituency from 2011- 2016. During that time he chaired the Good Friday Agreement Committee and was Chair of the EU Affairs Committee. He was a Senator for the Industrial & Commercial Panel from 2007 to 2011. From 2004 to 2007 he was a Councillor on Meath County Council. Dominic was one of the first two openly gay people elected to Dáil Éireann in 2011. Dominic brings significant experience in public policy and campaigning to the Board.

7/9



## Ciarán McKinney

(he/him)  
*Vice-Chair of the Board*

Appointed  
09/10/15

Ciarán McKinney is Manager of the Engage programme, promoting Lifelong Learning and Active Citizenship at Age & Opportunity. Ciarán has extensive experience in policy development and delivering services to meet the needs of groups often distinguished by the experience of social exclusion, including people living with HIV, sex workers, lesbian, gay and bisexual people, and IV drug users.

6/6\*



## Maria Aftonsenko

(she/her)  
*Treasurer*

Appointed  
09/10/15

Maria Aftonsenko is currently a Director of FS Audit in Grant Thornton Ireland. She is a member of the Institute of Chartered Accountants in Ireland and has extensive financial services experience and expertise, particularly in risk management, corporate governance and internal financial controls.

5/9



## Lucy Ní Raghail

(she/her)  
*Board Member*

Appointed  
01/12/16

Lucy's professional background is in human resources and recruiting, with leadership roles across start-ups, SMBs and multinational enterprises. She has been a Scout Leader for 11 years with Scouting Ireland - a national youth organisation dedicated to the development of life skills for young people. She is a passionate LGBTQ+ rights advocate and ally.

5/9



## Liz Harper

(she/her)  
*Board Member*

Appointed  
17/01/17

Liz has over 30 years of experience working with young people and with youth services. She managed youth training projects in Tallaght for over a decade and subsequently has supported many locally based management groups and provided external supervision for youth workers in several settings. Liz holds a MSc in Equality Studies from UCD.

8/9





**Kery Mullaly**  
(he/him)  
Board Member

Appointed  
11/07/17

Kery is a well-known antique dealer and is also Director of Fundraising, Marketing, and Events Management at Fundfest, which works with a variety of festivals, charities, and not-for-profit organisations. A long-time advocate for LGBTQ+ rights, he has been pivotally involved in the delivery of the Cork LGBTQ+ Pride Festival for near on a decade.

5/9



**Valerie Maher**  
(she/her)  
Board Member

Appointed  
25/11/21

Valerie is Principal of Holy Child Community School, a post-primary school in Sallynoggin. Valerie is committed to providing a safe and inclusive environment for all students. Over the past five years, Valerie and her team have created a safe and welcoming space for LGBTQ+ students. Previously Valerie worked with the National Behaviour Support Service as Assistant National Coordinator, working with schools around Ireland to promote and support a culture of positive behaviour.

3/3\*



**Aisling Gannon**  
(she/her)  
Board Member

Appointed  
25/11/21

Aisling is the proud mother of two teenagers, and stepmother of three young adults. She is the mum of a trans young person, Steve. As a Board Member of Belong To, Aisling strives to ensure that the services best reflect and support the needs of LGBTQ+ young people across Ireland. Last year Aisling was appointed to the Dublin District Coroner's Court as Senior Counsel. She previously practiced as a Solicitor for over 25 years, and was a Senior Partner in the Dublin office of a global law firm.

5/9



**Dermot Ryan**  
(he/him)  
Board Member

Appointed  
25/11/21

Dermot has over 25 years of experience working in key advisory roles with political and campaigning organisations. Dermot returned to Ireland in 2017 after seven years in Australia, where he served as Head of External Affairs with Amnesty International and as Chief of Staff with the Transport Workers' Union. As Principal of Dermot Ryan Advisory, Dermot now offers a range of services to organisations, helping them to implement their vision. In 2022, Dermot was appointed Chair of the Board of the award-winning agency Alice Public Relations.

5/9



**Dr Brian Melaugh**  
(he/him)  
Director

Appointed  
18/12/21

Dr Brian Melaugh is a lecturer in the Department of Applied Social Studies Maynooth University. Before taking up an academic position he worked extensively in the area of drug practice and drug policy and was CEO of the Ana Liffey Drug Project in Dublin. Brian holds professional qualifications in community work and youth work, social work, Masters in Systematic Organisation and Management, Masters in Organisational Consultancy, and a Doctorate in Health.

6/9



**Patricia Carey**  
(she/her)  
Alternate trustee\*

Appointed  
25/11/21

Patricia has over 30 years' experience in the public service and not for profit sector. Most recently as CEO of the Adoption Authority of Ireland, previously Patricia was Director of the St Vincent De Paul charity for 13 years. She is a founding board member of Outhouse. Patricia has worked with many not-for-profit organisations both as a volunteer and in senior staff roles since the 1990's.

9/9

\* Valerie Maher (she/her) and Ciarán McKinney took a leave of absence from the Board during 2022



## Director/Charity Trustees Expenses

In 2022, the total amount of vouched expenses paid to Board members was nil (2021: €62). No Board member claimed expenses during the year (2021: 1). This expense related to travel costs associated with the attendance at Board meetings.

The Charity has taken out insurance to protect the Directors/Trustees. No loans have been granted to Directors. No remuneration or other benefits have been paid or are payable to any Directors, directly or indirectly, from the Charity's funds. Remuneration of Directors/Trustees is expressly forbidden by the governing document of the Charity.

Other than as shown above, any further required disclosures in Sections 305 and 306 of the Companies Act 2014 are nil for both financial years.

## Selection of Board Members

Board members are selected under the Board Recruitment and Selection Policy. Members are chosen based on their skills and any identified skills gaps on the Board.

Board members are appointed initially for a one-year term of office, during which time new members are supported and evaluated. Following successful completion of the probationary period, and subject to the members' approval, Board members serve in three-year terms to a maximum of nine consecutive years as a Board member. An exemption from the maximum duration of nine years applies to Board members serving at the time of its adoption on 6 September 2017. Presently, one Board member has served terms totalling more than nine years. No new Directors were appointed in 2022.

## Induction of Board Members

Board induction occurs as soon as possible after an individual has been selected to join the Board. In all cases, this is scheduled to take place in advance of their first meeting. Induction is the responsibility of the Company Secretary in collaboration with the CEO and Chair of the Board. Induction training includes a face-to-face meeting covering the organisation's role and aims, governance structures, core activities, history and successes.

Also covered is an introduction as to how the Board functions and the role and responsibilities of becoming a member of the Board. A new Director also receives an induction pack which will include at a minimum the Constitution, governance handbook, Strategic Plan, minutes and the Board Book from previous Board meetings, organisational financial procedures and policies manual, Staff Handbook, and audited accounts of the prior year.

## Board Review and Evaluation

In 2022, Belong To engaged an external consultant to undertake an independent review and evaluation of the board, including its membership, processes and procedures. An action plan has been implemented to strengthen and enhance the Board which will be reviewed in 2023.

## Board Subcommittees

The Board is supported by a committee structure that deals with specific aspects of the Charity's business. There were five subcommittees in 2022. Each subcommittee is governed by terms of reference specifying the scope of their competencies and any delegated authorities. Attendance at each subcommittee is outlined in the following table:

Subcommittee	Members	Attn.
<b>Safeguarding and Child Protection</b>	Aisling Gannon (she/her)	1/1
	Brian Melaugh (he/him)	1/1
	Liz Harper (she/her)	1/1
	Moninne Griffith (she/her)	1/1
	Gillian Brien (she/her)	1/1
	Oisín O'Reilly (he/him)	1/1
	Barry McSkeane (he/him)	1/1
<b>Finance, Audit and Risk</b>	Sharon Heron (she/her)	0/1
	Ciarán McKinney (he/him)	2/4
	Maria Afontsenko (she/her)	4/4
	Moninne Griffith (she/her)	3/4
	Tiffany Fitzgerald-Brosnan (she/her)	2/4
	Vincent Teo (he/him)	4/4
	Suzanne Handley (she/her)	4/4
<b>Advocacy</b>	Dominic Hannigan (he/him)	4/4
	Valerie Maher (she/her)	1/4
	Dermot Ryan (he/him)	3/4
	Moninne Griffith (she/her)	3/4
	Sinéad Keane (she/her)	4/4
	Andrew Hyland (he/him)	3/4
	Anthony Muldoon (he/him)	3/4
<b>Fundraising</b>	Stephen Lynam (he/him)	4/4
	Patricia Carey (she/her)	1/1
	Sinéad Keane (she/her)	1/1
	Caroline Flynn (she/her)	1/1
	Rob Kiely (he/him)	1/1
	Nick Sparrow (he/him)	1/1
	Moninne Griffith (she/her)	1/1
<b>HR and Remuneration</b>	Ciarán McKinney (he/him)	2/2
	Lucy NíRaghail (she/her)	2/2
	Moninne Griffith (she/her)	2/2
	Oisín O'Reilly (he/him)	1/2
	Tiffany Fitzgerald-Brosnan (she/her)	1/2



In 2022, matters relating to Governance and Quality were dealt with at board level rather than a subcommittee.

## Governance

The Board of Directors is committed to achieving the highest standards of governance.

The Charity has completed adopting and implementing the Charities Governance Code issued by the Charities Regulator. It will report on its compliance with the Code formally as required by the regulator in 2023.

The Charity was an early adopter of the Charities Statement of Recommended Practice (Charities SORP) and publishes its annual financial statements per Charities SORP annually.

The Charity has implemented the Charities Regulators Fundraising Guidelines and operates a professional Fundraising Team guided by high ethical standards.

The Charity has achieved the three standards named above and was awarded the coveted Triple Lock status by Charities Institute Ireland to recognise its achievements and commitment to good governance. Belong To is the first LGBTQ+ organisation in Ireland to be awarded the Triple Lock standard.

The Charity is committed to the highest standards of openness, integrity and accountability. An important aspect of accountability and transparency is enabling any staff member or volunteer and other organisation members to voice concerns responsibly and effectively. Since 2016, the Charity has had a Speaking Up Policy in place, including an independent point of contact for staff or volunteers to raise

concerns about any malpractice or wrongdoing within the organisation. The Speaking Up Policy is in full compliance with the requirements of the Protected Disclosures Act, 2014.

The Board of Directors was awarded an exceptionally high honour when named the Board of the Year in the Charity Excellence Awards for the third year in a row. This award acknowledges the hard work and dedication the Board has for their collective role as stewards of the organisation.

## Legal Compliance

The Strategic Plan commits the organisation to ensuring that the Charity's Board and Management comply with all relevant legal and regulatory requirements, and that appropriate internal financial and risk management controls are in place. In 2022, Belong To submitted its Annual Report to the Charities Regulator, its reports under the Lobbying Register, and returns for the Companies Office on time. The Charity is compliant with the European Union (Anti-Money Laundering: Ownership of Corporate Entities) Regulations 2019. As a charitable company, there are no 'beneficial owners' of the entity, and therefore the senior managing officials, comprising the Directors/Trustees and CEO, appear in the register.

## Data Protection Act, 2018 (GDPR)

The Charity has undertaken rigorous work to ensure compliance with the Data Protection Act, 2018, especially as it processes large amounts of sensitive personal information regarding minors. A copy of the organisation's Privacy Notice is available to read at [www.belongto.org/privacy-notice/](http://www.belongto.org/privacy-notice/).

## Decision-Making

The Board has the following matters specifically reserved for its decision:

- The Company's strategic plans and annual operating budgets;
- Projects outside the scope of the strategic plan;
- Business acquisition and disposals;
- Litigation;
- Appointment and/or removal of Members of the Company;
- Co-option of individuals to be Directors of the Company;
- Appointment and/or removal of Subcommittee Chairs and Members;
- Appointment and/or removal of the CEO;
- Appointment and/or removal of the Auditors;
- Approval of borrowing and/or Finance Facilities;
- Approval of contracts with a term exceeding one year or a financial liability on Belong To exceeding €15k;
- Approval of changes in accounting or financial procedure;
- Approval of the annual accounts and annual report; and,
- Annual review of risk and internal control.



The Board delegates authority on specific duties and responsibilities to sign legal documents, contracts for services, and funding contracts to the CEO. The day-to-day management of the organisation is also delegated to the CEO and staff. This includes contributing to and implementing the Strategic Plan; leading, recruiting, and managing staff; managing the organisation and its finances effectively and efficiently; consulting and linking with stakeholders; representing Belong To; contributing to national policy development affecting LGBTQ+ young people; and developing mechanisms for involving young people in the work of the organisation.

## Principal Risks and Uncertainties

Effective risk management is important to the Board, ensuring that the Charity operates within its financial capabilities and makes prudent financial decisions. In addition to financial risk management, the Trustees also place a high priority on minimising exposure to service users, staff, volunteers, and visitors.

The Trustees are aware of the key risks to which the Charity is exposed, particularly those related to the operations and finances of the Charity, and are satisfied that there are appropriate systems in place to address these risks. At a governance level, potential risks relate to maintaining sufficient skills. At an operational level, risks relate to compliance, reputation, and health, safety and ICT risks. At a human level, they relate to ensuring the Charity is appropriately staffed and that staff are supported to ensure continuity of service delivery. At a financial level, potential risks relate to budgetary control and retaining sufficient funding to deliver core activities.

Policies and procedures are in place (and published on the Charity's website) concerning service provision to children and vulnerable adults, health and safety, the GDPR, and HR. Risk assessments are routinely carried out for the offices, general service provision, and off-site events. These are reviewed by management, reviewed at a senior level, and reported to Trustees as appropriate.

The Charity has an organisation-wide risk register which is reviewed by the Board on a rolling basis and, when required, in response to changes in the environment that increase risks and/or their potential impact. High impact risks are identified, and mitigating strategies discussed and agreed.

The Board is satisfied that systems and processes are in place to monitor, manage, and mitigate the Charity's exposure to its major risks. The following have been identified as areas of most risk to the Charity:

### Funding and Fundraising

The Charity is dependent on gifts and donations, and grant income from state organisations, companies, trusts and foundations. Following detailed modelling and assessments, the Board is confident that the Charity is well-positioned to manage the costs of running the Charity in the event of an economic decline due to the level of reserves on hand and maturity of fundraising operations.

## Financial and Related Controls

The charity mitigates its financial and related control risks by continuous careful monitoring, implementation of the organisation's financial policies and procedures, and by monitoring emerging changes to regulations and legislation.

## Information Security

There is a risk of a cyber security attack and data theft. This risk is mitigated by a range of measures including training for staff in the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and information security. We conduct regular reviews of policies, procedures, and systems. We also use two factor-authentication across our ICT systems and employ the use of intrusion detection and alert systems.

## People

There is a risk that the Charity will not be able to attract and retain talent at all levels, including volunteers, trustees and employees. This risk is mitigated by robust performance management with regular performance reviews for all team members. The Charity undertakes strong resource planning considering demands for services and commitments to funders, and have a commitment to a flexible working environment to facilitate team members.



## **Reputation**

There is a risk of reputation damage to the Charity or the charity sector caused by an event either within or outside the Charity's control. This risk is mitigated by regular engagement with The Wheel, The National Youth Council of Ireland and Charities Institute Ireland (CII) to promote trust in the charity sector. Additionally, regular Board and subcommittee oversight of compliance and governance processes to ensure best practice and proactive engagement with partner organisations on good governance help to mitigate the risk further.

## **Child Protection and Safeguarding**

The organisation has adopted a Child Safeguarding Statement in line with its obligations under the Children First Act, 2015. Belong To are fully compliant with the National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act, 2012. Belong To has Child Protection and Safeguarding policies based on the Children First Act, 2015, and associated Children First Guidelines, 2017, and best practice recruitment policies and procedures.

## **Conflicts of Interest and Loyalty**

The Charity has a conflict of interest and loyalty policy in place. A register of interests is kept at the registered address of the Charity. None of the Directors or Senior Management Team had a material interest during the year ended December 31 2022, in any contracts of significance concerning the Charity's business.



# Financial Overview

Transparency around how we are funded and how we use these funds is central to our values as an organisation. Here, we present a detailed commentary on the financial results for 2022.

## Financial Results

The year's financial results ended 31 December 2022 are set out in detail on pages 60-76. These results show a net surplus of €132,562 (2021: surplus €449,717).

Income totalled €1,843,036 a decrease of 17.4% on 2021 (2021: €2,231,127). The decrease is a result of the deferral of the Rainbow Ball to 2023 decreasing income from fundraised donations and training by 11% to a total of €866,869 (2021: €944,192). Advertising benefit in kind costs were reduced in 2022 by €250,589 decreasing the total benefit in kind donations in 2022 to €164,882 (2021: €415,471).

Total expenditure was €1,710,474 (2021: €1,781,411) a decrease of 4% on 2021.

## Income Diversification

The organisation aims to maintain a minimum 50/50 split in funding between state and non-state funding. In 2022 the funding mix for the organisation was 48% state funding (2021:46%) and 52% non-state funding (2021: 54%). Maintaining a balance of funding between state and non-state sources is important to mitigate the risks associated with a decline in any one source of income. It is also an essential guarantee of our independence in advocating for the health, safety, and equality of LGBTQ+ young people.

The lack of diversification in non-state funding represents a sustainability risk. 67% of non-state funding (2021: 77%) originates from or is related to companies' donations, grants and fundraising activities. The Board addressed the over-reliance on corporate fundraising by expanding the Fundraising Team in 2022 and investing in a fundraising strategy that will see results in 2023.

## Reserves Policy

BeLonG To has set a reserves policy to ensure that the Charity's core activities could continue during a period of unforeseen difficulty e.g., a global economic crisis. The policy considers the cost of making staff redundant in an emergency, the risk associated with variances in planned income versus expenditure, and the Charity's contractual commitments.

The Trustees have established a target of building reserves equal to six months operating costs. The Finance, Audit, and Risk (FAR) Subcommittee advises on the appropriate level of reserves and planned contributions to the reserves set by the Board during the annual budget process and reviewed as necessary.

The opening balance on reserves was €984,573 on 1 January 2022. Details of reserves and designated funds:

Reserves	Description	Amount
3 Months Operating Costs	Based on Expenditure of €1,781,410 (2021)	€445,353
Designated to 2022	Designated to increased staffing expenditure to cope with the scale of demand for support from the organisation and increase our fundraising and advocacy capacity	€155,000
Designated to 2022	Designated to 2022 to ensure completion of current projects	€384,220
<b>Total Reserves @ 1 January 2022</b>		<b>€984,573</b>

The closing balance on reserves was €1,117,135 on 31st December 2022. Details of reserves and designated funds:

Details of reserves and designated funds:

Reserves	Description	Amount
6 Months Operating Costs	Based on Expenditure of €1,710,474 (2022)	€855,237
Designated to 2023	Designated to increased staffing expenditure to cope with the scale of demand for support from the organisation and increase our fundraising and advocacy capacity	€130,000
Designated to 2023	Designated to 2022 to ensure completion of current projects	€131,897
<b>Total Reserves @ 31 December 2022</b>		<b>€1,117,135</b>



## Fundraising Policy

Belong To organises fundraising events and activities throughout the year. In addition, the Charity solicits the financial support of individual donors, companies, trusts and foundations, among others to fund both general operating costs and specific projects and programmes.

Belong To is committed to applying the highest standards of good governance and ethical fundraising practices in our work. We have completed the implementation of the Fundraising Guidance issued by the Charities Regulator and are in full compliance with the voluntary Statement of Guiding Principles in Fundraising.

Belong To is committed to ethical fundraising and all institutional donors are ethically evaluated prior to engaging them in fundraising or monetary support for our mission. During 2022 we declined to accept donations or asked fundraisers to cease fundraising on our behalf on two occasions due to ethical concerns.

In line with best practice our professional fundraising staff are paid a fixed annual salary. There is no element of performance-related pay or bonus payable to professional fundraisers employed by the Charity.

## Investment Policy

The organisation's policy for investments is to retain its cash reserve in a low-risk deposit account.

## Apportionment

Individual costs that are shared and not directly attributable to an individual programme are apportioned. In 2022, the organisation continued to use a budgeting template that allows precise apportionment of income against activities and related expenditure. The organisation's financial systems allow for income and expenditure to be apportioned against funded costs.

## Accounting Records

The Board believe that they have complied with the requirements of Section 281 and 285 of the Companies Act, 2014 concerning accounting records by employing personnel with appropriate expertise and by providing adequate resources to the financial function. The accounting records of BeLonG To are maintained at Charity's registered office, 13 Parliament Street, Dublin 2, Ireland.

## Auditors

The auditors, Hayden Brown & Company, have taken up office per Section 383(2) of the Companies Act, 2014 at the last annual general meeting.

## Relevant Audit Information

In the case of each of the persons who are Directors at the time this report is approved per Section 332 of the Companies Act, 2014:

- So far as each Director is aware, there is no relevant audit information of which the company's statutory auditors are unaware and,
- Each Director has taken all the steps that he or she ought to have taken as a Director to make himself or herself aware of any relevant audit information and establish that the company's statutory auditors are aware of that information.

## Going Concern

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Directors have reviewed the 2022 statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the approved 2023 budget, and the latest financial information, including an up-to-date forecast which considers the ongoing impacts of Covid-19, Brexit, the war in Ukraine, high inflation and the increase in cost of living. The Directors are satisfied that the Charity has adequate resources to continue operational existence for the next 12 months. As a result, they are confident that there are sufficient resources to manage any operational or financial risks. There is no material uncertainty that affects this assumption.

## Principal State Funders

The table below is provided as required by DPER Circular 13/2014. All grants listed in the table below are restricted.

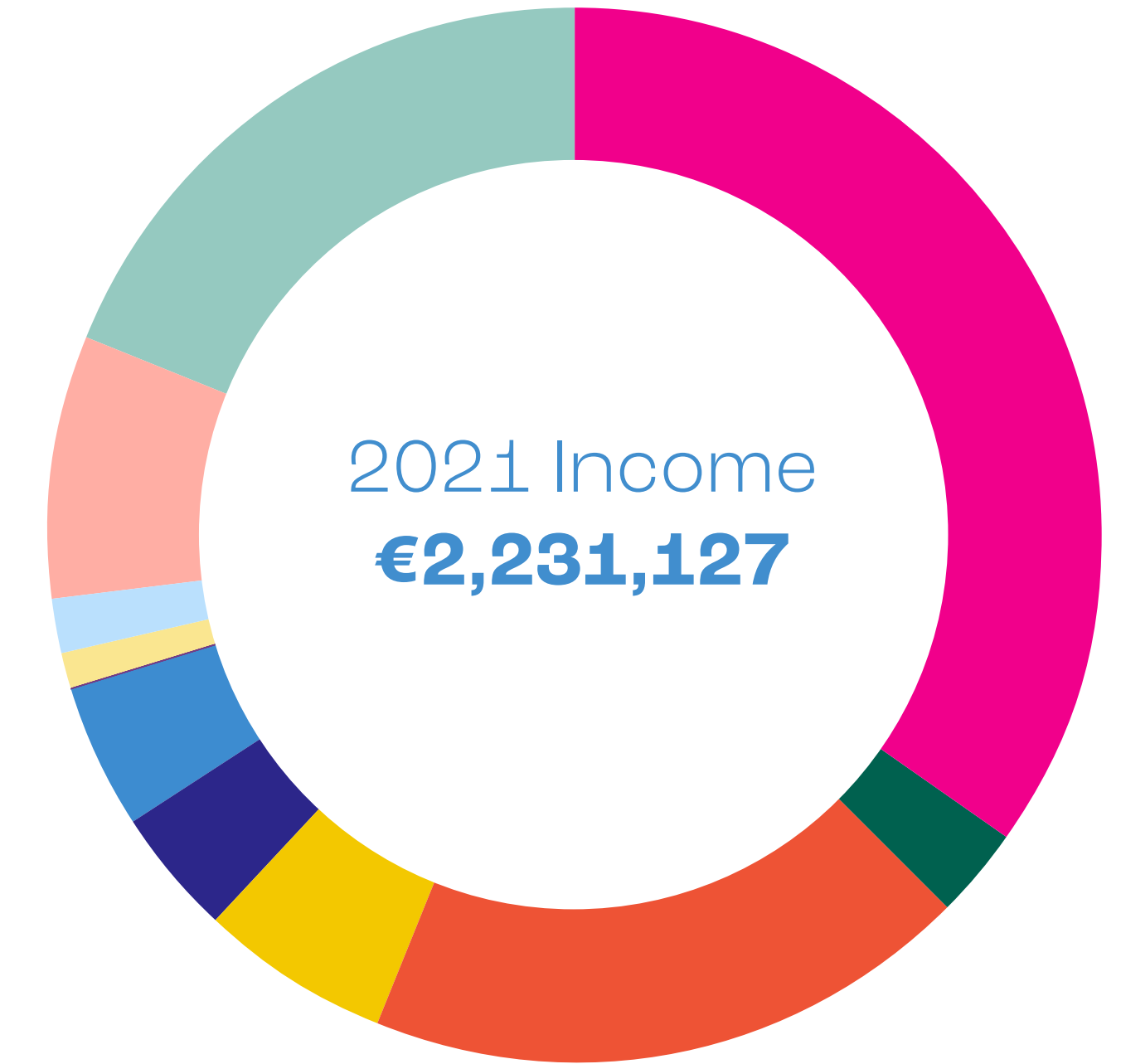
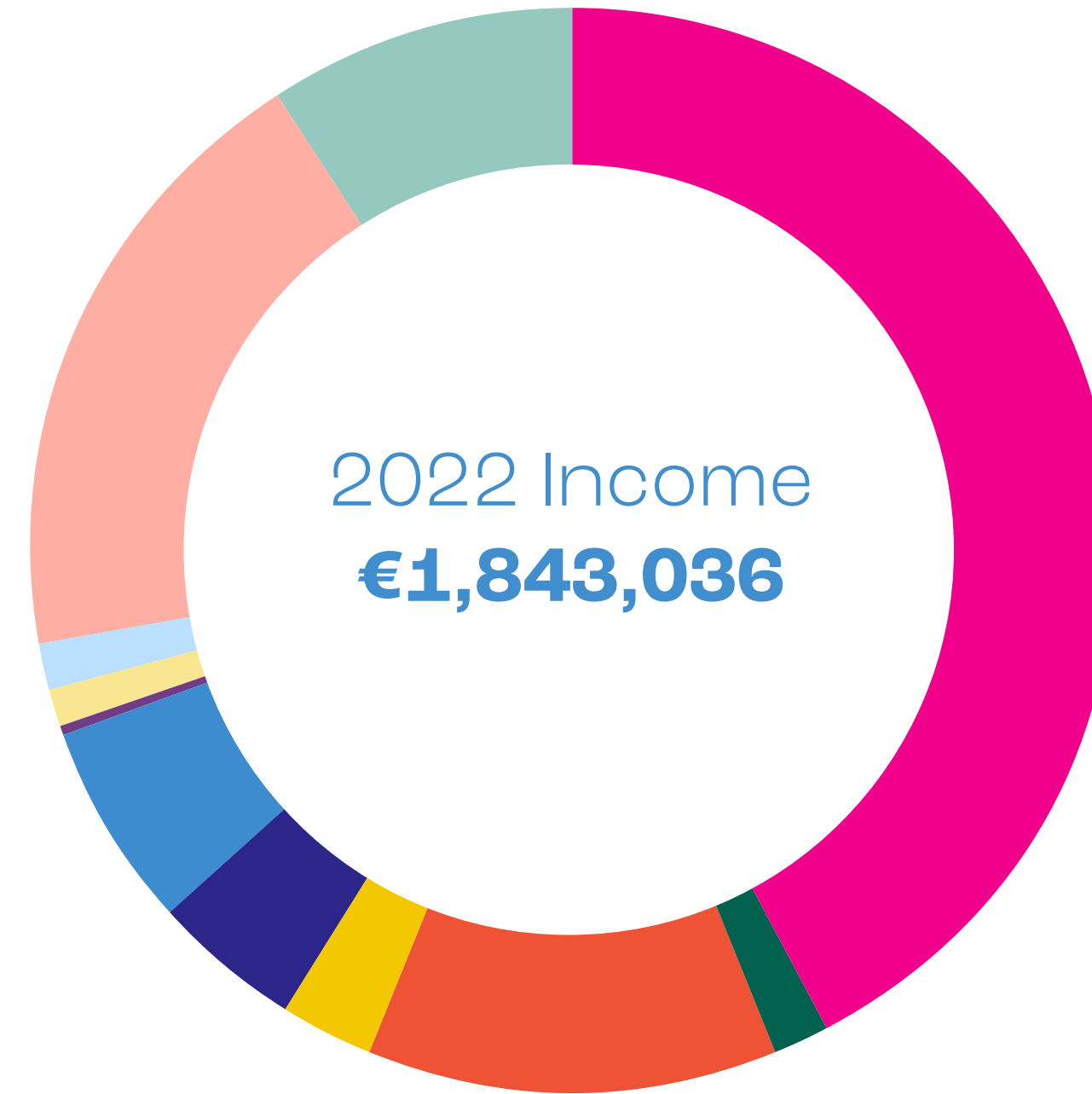


Funder	Scheme	Amount and term of the total awarded	The amount of the grant taken to final income in the financial statements		The purpose for which the funds are applied	Where relevant, the amount of capital provided and the reporting policies being used concerning current and future instalments
			Taken to final income	Deferred to 2023		
Health Service Executive – Mental Health Directorate / National Office for Suicide Prevention	Section 39, Health Act 2004	€233,401 per annum Term: 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2022	258,275		Provision of nationwide supports for LGBTI+ young people, self-harm and suicide prevention, information and referral pathways, elimination of LGBTI+ bullying.	Reports submitted quarterly as set out in the agreement - additional reports submitted at specific internals. No capital grant received.
Health Service Executive – Mental Health Directorate / National Office for Suicide Prevention	Section 39, Health Act 2004	€53,402 Once-off Term: 1 Dec 2020 to 31 Dec 2022	-	€38,971	Deferral of €53,402 at year-end 2020 was approved and carried forward to 2021. Provision of enhanced nationwide supports for LGBTI+ young people to enable an effective response to the COVID-19 pandemic.	Reports submitted quarterly as set out in the agreement - additional reports submitted at specific internals. No capital grant received.
North Inner-City Drugs Taskforce: administered by CDYSB	Local Drugs Taskforce – Emerging Needs	€45,600 per annum Term: 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2022	€45,600	-	Provision of prevention and education service for the North Inner City targeting the LGBTI+ youth population.	Annual application submitted each year. Quarterly reports submitted as set out in the grant aid agreement. No capital grant received.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY): administered by Pobal	Youth Service Grant Scheme	€225,490 per annum Term: 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2022	€225,490	-	Core funding to support the delivery of nationwide supports for LGBTI+ young people.	Annual report and application submitted each year. No capital grant received.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY): administered by Pobal	Youth Service Grant Scheme	€45,000 Once off Term: 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2022	€38,095		Deferral of €38,095 was approved to 2022. Additional funding to address the unique additional needs of LGTBI+ Young People during the Covid 19 pandemic and the resultant increased demand for directly provided services.1984	Annual report and application submitted each year. No capital grant received.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)	2022 LGBTI+ Community Services Funding Call: SCHEME A: SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR LGBTI+ PERSONS	€100,000	€12,815	€87,185	LGBTQ+ Quality Mark for Schools. Funding to increase the safety and inclusion of post-primary schools for LGBTI+ young people by providing evidence-based support to staff and students. €87,185 deferred to 2023 in line with project agreement.	Final project report due on completion. No capital grant received.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY): direct administration	Grant Scheme to Support the Continuous Professional Development of Service Providers Working with LGBTI+ Young People.	€750 (phase 1) Term: 8 Oct to 31 Dec 2019	-	€750	Funding to support the development and roll-out of the Safe and Supportive Schools/ Services Project delivering continuous professional development of service providers working with LGBTI+ young people.	Final project report due on completion. No capital grant received.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY): direct administration	Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2022	€10,127 Term: 4 Aug to 31 Dec 2022.	€10,127	-	A capital grant for upgrades too, and replacement of critical information and communications infrastructure.	Final project report due on completion. The total amount is a capital grant. The funds were entirely expended in 2022 and are reflected in the Balance Sheet.
Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY): direct administration	Scheme A: Supporting Community Services for LGBTI+ Persons	€51,145.35 Term: 31 December 2021 to 30 June 2022	€51,145.35		Deferred to 2022. This project aims to increase the safety and participation of LGBTI+ young people in sporting activities by providing evidence-based training intervention to coaches, captains and other key stakeholders involved with sports in clubs and school settings	Final project report due on completion. No capital grant received.
Department of Education	National Action Plan on Bullying	€58,000 per annum Term: 1 Jan to 31 Dec 2022	€58,000	-	Grant aid to support the delivery of Action 8 under the National Action Plan on Bullying (2013).	Annual report and application submitted each year. No capital grant received.
Department of Rural and Community Development – administered by Pobal	Scheme to Support National Organisations 2019-2022	€270,000 Term: Jul 2019 to Jun 2022	€45,000	-	Core funding to support the delivery of nationwide supports for LGBTI+ young people and eliminate LGBTI+ bullying/discrimination/isolation and promote equality and human rights.	SSNO expenditure reports submitted every 6-months as set out in the agreement. Additional reports submitted at specific intervals. No capital grant received.
Department of Rural and Community Development – administered by Pobal	Scheme to Support National Organisations 2019-2022	€270,000 Term: Jul 2012 to Jun 2025	€45,412	-	Core funding to support the delivery of nationwide supports for LGBTI+ young people and eliminate LGBTI+ bullying/discrimination/isolation and promote equality and human rights.	SSNO expenditure reports submitted every 6-months as set out in the agreement. Additional reports submitted at specific intervals. No capital grant received.
Health Service Executive – Mental Health Directorate / National Office for Suicide Prevention	LGBT Research	€60,000	-	€26,661	LGBT Ireland 2: The Second National Study of the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people in Ireland	Reports submitted as and when requested as per the terms and conditions of the scheme. No capital grant received.
Health Service Executive -Social Inclusion	LGBT Research	€50,000	-	€50,000	LGBT Ireland 2: The Second National Study of the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex people in Ireland	Reports submitted as and when requested as per the terms and conditions of the scheme. No capital grant received.



## Financial Overview

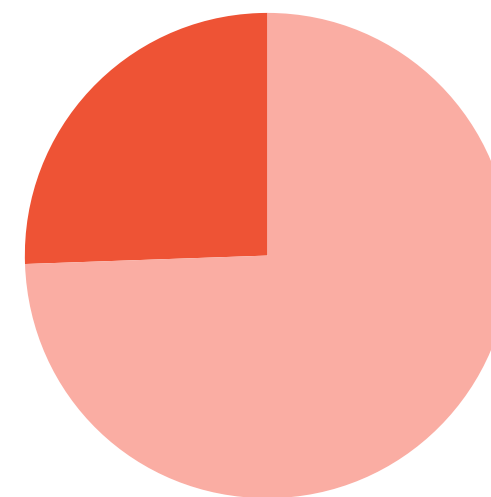
	2022		2021	
Income Streams	€		€	
Central Government Grants	780,642	42.36%	779,478	34.94%
Other Government Agencies	30,643	1.66%	59,049	2.65%
Corporate	225,142	12.22%	411,923	18.46%
Direct Marketing Fundraising Appeal	52,254	2.84%	135,351	6.07%
Local/Community Fundraising	80,246	4.35%	84,847	3.80%
Other	115,457	6.26%	96,404	4.32%
Other Grants	778	0.04%	1,170	0.05%
Regular/Committed	22,441	1.22%	29,444	1.32%
Training Income	28,105	1.52%	33,418	1.50%
Trust/Foundation	342,446	18.58%	184,570	8.27%
Donated Good and Services	164,882	8.95%	415,471	18.62%
	<b>1,843,036</b>		<b>2,231,127</b>	



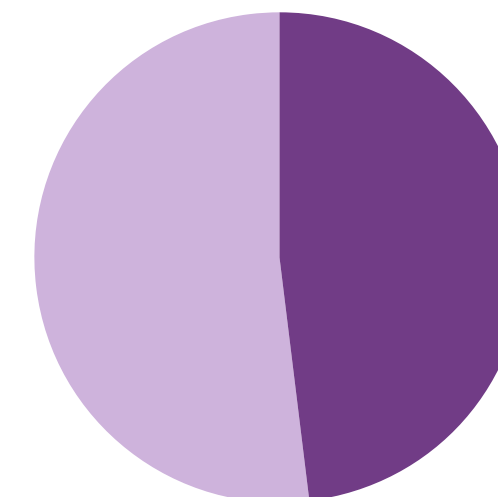
## Where Your Money Goes: 2022 Expenditure

At Belong To, our values of transparency, openness and honesty are demonstrated through our adherence to the Charities Institute Ireland Triple Lock Standards of transparent reporting, ethical fundraising and strong governance structures. Thank you to our generous donors and supporters who make our support for LGBTQ+ young people possible.

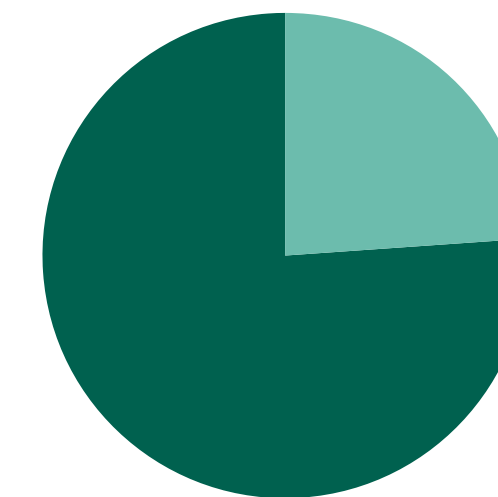
Goal 4 includes fundraising costs of €167,958.



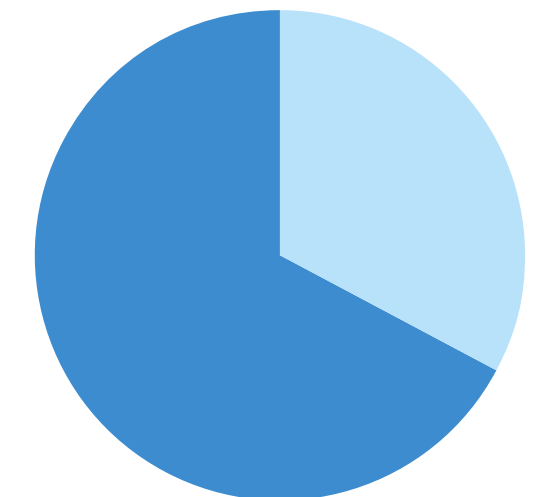
**Goal 1**  
Delivering LGBTQ+ Youth Work  
State Funding €309,995  
Fundraised Income €105,750



**Goal 2**  
Building Safe Spaces & Services  
State Funding €322,236  
Fundraised Income €344,967



**Goal 3**  
Campaigning for Change  
State Funding €76,499  
Fundraised Income €240,310



**Goal 4**  
Being a Learning and Development Organisation  
State Funding €102,555  
Fundraised Income €208,162



## Statement of Financial Activities Year Ended 31 December 2022

	Notes	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2022 €	Restricted Funds 2021 €	Unrestricted Funds 2021 €	Total Funds 2021 €
<b>Income</b>							
Donations and legacies	3.1	139,186	699,577	838,764	183,187	761,005	944,192
Charitable activities	3.2	81,286	164,882	976,167	838,044	415,471	1,253,515
Other trading activities	3.3	-	28,105	28,105	-	33,420	33,420
Total Incoming Resources		950,472	892,564	1,843,036	1,021,231	1,209,896	2,231,127
<b>Expenditure</b>							
Charitable activities	4	(790,760)	(751,756)	(1,542,516)	(1,460,018)	(188,823)	(1,648,841)
Cost of raising funds		-	(167,958)	(167,958)	-	(132,570)	(132,570)
Other expenses		-	-	-	-	-	-
Total Resources Expended		(790,760)	(919,714)	(1,710,474)	(1,460,018)	(321,393)	(1,781,411)
<b>Net income/ (expenditure)</b>		<b>159,711</b>	<b>(27,149)</b>	<b>132,562</b>	<b>(438,787)</b>	<b>888,503</b>	<b>449,717</b>
Transfers Between Funds		(159,711)	159,711	-	438,787	(438,787)	-
<b>Net movement in the funds for the financial year</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>132,539</b>	<b>132,562</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>449,717</b>	<b>449,717</b>
<b>Reconciliation of funds</b>							
Balances brought forward at 1 January 2022	26	-	984,573	984,573	-	534,856	534,856
Balances carried forward at 31 December 2022		-	1,117,135	1,117,135	-	984,573	984,573

The statement of financial activities has been prepared on the basis that all operations are continuing operations.

There are no recognised gains and losses other than those passing through the statement of financial activities.

A detailed breakdown of the above items is included in the supplementary information part of the notes to the financial statements.

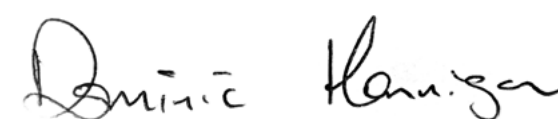
The cost of voluntary income includes the apportioned fundraising salary costs.

Approved by the Board of Directors on 22 May 2023 and signed on its behalf by:

Maria Afontsenko  
Director



Dominic Hannigan  
Director





## Balance Sheet Year Ended 31 December 2022

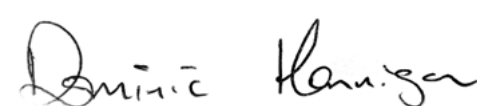
	Note	2022	2021
		€	€
<b>Fixed Assets</b>			
Intangible Assets	20	0	0
Tangible Assets	21	67,689	68,685
		<b>67,689</b>	<b>68,685</b>
<b>Current Assets</b>			
Debtors	22	136,409	47,917
Cash at bank and in hand		1,374,794	1,504,257
		<b>1,511,203</b>	<b>1,552,174</b>
<b>Creditor: amounts falling due within one year</b>	23	(461,758)	(636,286)
		<b>1,049,446</b>	<b>915,888</b>
<b>Total assets less current liabilities</b>		1,117,135	984,573
<b>Net Assets</b>		1,117,135	984,573
<b>Contingency Reserve Fund</b>			
Restricted Funds		-	-
Unrestricted Funds		1,117,135	984,573
<b>Funds of the Charity</b>	26	<b>1,117,135</b>	<b>984,573</b>

These financial statements were approved by the Board of Directors on 22 May 2023 and signed on behalf of the Board by:

**Maria Afontsenko**  
Director



**Dominic Hannigan**  
Director



## Statement of Cash Flows Year Ended 31 December 2022

	2022	2021
	€	€
<b>Cash flows from operating activities</b>		
Surplus for the financial year	132,562	449,717
<i>Adjustments for:</i>		
Depreciation of tangible assets	18,854	12,735
Amoritsation of intangible assets		339
Accrued (income)	10,434	1,789
<i>Changes in:</i>		
Trade and other debtors	(88,492)	(19,792)
Trade and other creditors	(184,963)	36,195
<b>Net cash from operating activities</b>	<b>(111,605)</b>	<b>480,983</b>
Cash flows from investing activities		
Purchase of tangible assets	(17,858)	(45,960)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>	<b>(17,858)</b>	<b>(45,960)</b>
<b>Net increase/ (decrease) in cash and cash equivalents</b>	<b>(129,463)</b>	<b>435,023</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at beginning of year</b>	<b>1,504,257</b>	<b>1,069,234</b>
<b>Cash and cash equivalents at end of year</b>	<b>1,374,794</b>	<b>1,504,257</b>



## 1. Statement of compliance

Belong To Youth Services is constituted under Irish company law, being a company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital. Prior to the enactment of the Companies Act 2014, companies not trading for gain by the members were not within the scope of certain company law requirements that applies to for-profit companies. In particular, companies not trading for gain were exempt from applying specific requirements in respect of formats and content of financial statements thus permitting charities to adopt a financial statement format appropriate to the sector.

Accordingly, Belong To Youth Services adopted and reported its performance with consideration to the format recommended by “Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements with consideration to the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland” (Charities SORP (FRS 102)) developed jointly by the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator. Specifically, Belong To Youth Services reports its financial activities for the year in the format of the Charities SORP (FRS 102) Statement of Financial Activities (SoFA).

The Accounting Standards Body is the body responsible for developing accounting standards for the UK and Ireland. It recognises the Charity Commission for England and Wales and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator as the SORP-making bodies for the charity sector. Heretofore, the SORP has been recognised as best practice for financial reporting by charities in Ireland.

The Companies Act 2014 became effective in law on 1 June 2015 and from that date, its provisions

in respect of the format and content of financial statements became applicable to companies not trading for gain such as Belong To Youth Services. This would require Belong To Youth Services, for example, to present a Profit and Loss Account and report on items such as turnover, costs of sales and profit or loss on ordinary activities before taxation along with related notes. In the view of the Directors, this is neither an appropriate presentation nor terminology for a not-for-profit organisation.

In order to provide information relevant to understanding the stewardship of the Directors and the financial activities and position of the company, Belong To Youth Services has prepared its financial statements in accordance with the formats provided for in the SORP consistent with the prior year.

## 2. Accounting Policies

### Basis of Preparation

The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis under the historical cost convention and with consideration to:

- Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their financial statements with consideration to the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (Charities SORP (FRS 102));
- The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102);
- Irish statute comprising the Companies Act 2014; and
- Department of Public Expenditure and Reform Circular 13/2014;

The requirements of the Companies Act 2014 have been modified to comply with the Charities SORP (FRS 102).

Financial reporting in line with the Charities SORP (FRS 102) is considered best practice for charities in Ireland. As noted above, the Directors consider the adoption of the Charities SORP (FRS 102) requirements as the most appropriate accounting practice and presentation to fairly reflect and disclose the activities of the company.

In preparing the financial statements, the Directors have considered whether in applying the accounting policies required by FRS 102 and the Charities SORP (FRS 102), the restatement of comparative items was required.

The preparation of financial statements in compliance with FRS 102 requires the use of certain critical accounting estimates. It also requires management to exercise judgement in applying the company’s accounting policies.

As noted in the Directors’ Report, the financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis.

### Departure From The Format Set Out In The Companies Act 2014

In accordance with Section 291 of the Companies Act 2014, the charity is required to prepare, in respect of each financial year, entity financial statements which comply with the format set out in Schedule 3 of the Companies Act 2014. The company has availed of Section 291(5) of the Companies Act 2014 and has prepared the financial statements under the format as set out under SORP. The company is a public benefit entity. The Directors of the company believe that the information provided under this format, better reflect the activities of the charity.

## Principal Accounting Policies

The following principal accounting policies have been applied:

**Incoming Resources:** Income is analysed according to the activity that produced the resources as follows:

**Voluntary Income:** Voluntary income, which consists of monetary donations from the public and corporate and major donors together with related tax refunds, is recognised in the period in which the organisation is entitled to the resource, receipt is virtually certain and when the amount can be measured with sufficient reliability. In the case of monetary donations from the public, this income is generally recognised when the donations are received.

**Charitable Activities:** Grants from Governments and other large institutional donors; where related to performance and specific deliverables are accounted for as the Charity earns the right to consideration by its performance. It is accounted for when amounts receivable on grant and funding applications are approved or paid. Where entitlement is not conditional on the delivery of a specific performance by the charity, are recognised when the charity becomes unconditionally entitled to the grant.

**Donated Services and Facilities:** The value of donated services and gifts in kind provided to the organisation are recognised at their open market value in the period in which they are receivable as incoming resources, where the benefit to the charity can be reliably measured. An equivalent amount is included as expenditure under the relevant heading in the Statement of financial activities, except where the gift in kind was a fixed asset in which case the amount is included in the appropriate fixed asset category and depreciated over the useful economic life in accordance with the charity’s policies.



The organisation benefits greatly from the involvement and enthusiastic support of its many volunteers. In accordance with the Charities SORP (FRS102), the economic contribution of its volunteers is not recognised in the Financial Statements. Using the Volunteer Investment was Value Audit toll (VIVA) for every €1 we spend on volunteers; we get back €2.32 (2021: €2.27) in the value of work they do. The tool calculates volunteer value by linking volunteer roles to the economic cost of employing staff to perform the functions and dividing that value by the total organisational expenditure on the volunteer program.

**Investment:** Investment income is accounted for on a receipts basis.

**Charitable Trading Activity:** Incoming resources from charitable trading activity are accounted for when earned.

**Restricted Income:** Income received by the company, the application of which is restricted to a specific purpose by the donor, is treated as restricted income and any unspent amounts as restricted assets. Such specified purposes are within the overall aims of the organisation

**Unrestricted Income:** Other income, apart from restricted income, is used by the company in the furtherance of its work and objectives. Such funds may be held in order to finance working capital or may be used at the discretion of the organisation for specified purposes that are within the aims of the organisation.

**Resources Expended:** Resources expended are analysed between raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities. Raising funds and expenditure on charitable activities are accounted for on an accrual basis.

**Raising Funds:** Expenditure on raising funds includes all expenditure incurred by Belong To Youth Services for its charitable activities.

**Charitable Activities:** Expenditure on charitable activities includes all costs incurred by Belong To Youth Services in undertaking activities that further its charitable aims, including costs that can be allocated directly to such activities and those costs of an indirect nature necessary to support them.

**Governance Costs:** Governance costs are those activities that provide governance infrastructure which allows the Charity to operate appropriately and to generate the information required for public accountability and transparency.

**Contingency Reserve Fund:** The Contingency Reserve Fund is a restricted and unrestricted fund, which is designed for ongoing projects which the organisation is committed to. Unrestricted funds are funds, which are expended at the discretion of the directors in furtherance of the objects of the company. If a part of an unrestricted fund is earmarked for a particular project it may be designated as a separate fund, but the designation has an administrative purpose only and does not legally restrict the directors to apply the fund.

**Fund Accounting:**

*Restricted Funds*

Restricted funds are those donated for use in a particular area or specific purposes, the use of which is restricted to that area or purpose and the restriction means that the funds can only be used for specific projects or activities.

*Unrestricted Funds*

Unrestricted funds are general funds that are available for use at the Board's discretion in furtherance of any objects of the organisation and

which have not been designated for other purposes. Such funds may help to finance working capital or capital expenditure requirements.

**Going Concern:** The financial statements have been prepared on a going concern basis. The Directors have reviewed the 2022 statement of financial activities and balance sheet, the approved 2023 budget, and the latest financial information, including an up-to-date forecast which considers the ongoing impacts of Brexit and the war in Ukraine. The Directors are satisfied that the Charity has adequate resources to continue operational existence for the next 12 months. As a result, they are confident that there are sufficient resources to manage any operational or financial risks. There is no material uncertainty that affects this assumption.

**Foreign Currencies:** Revenues and costs arising from transactions denominated in foreign currencies are translated into Euro at the rates of exchange ruling on the date on which the transaction occurred. Assets and liabilities denominated in foreign currencies are translated into Euro at the rate of exchange ruling on the balance sheet date. The resulting surplus or deficit is dealt with in the statement of financial activities.

**Cash and Cash Equivalents:** Cash and cash equivalents include cash on hand, demand deposits and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less. Bank overdrafts are shown within borrowings in current liabilities.

**Tangible Assets:** Tangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and are subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated depreciation and impairment losses.

Any tangible assets carried at revalued amounts are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation

less any subsequent accumulated depreciation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

An increase in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of a revaluation is recognised in other comprehensive income and accumulated in capital and reserves, except to the extent it reverses a revaluation decrease of the same asset previously recognised in profit or loss. A decrease in the carrying amount of an asset as a result of revaluation is recognised in other comprehensive income to the extent of any previously recognised revaluation increase accumulated in capital and reserves in respect of that asset. Where a revaluation decrease exceeds the accumulated revaluation gains accumulated in capital and reserves in respect of that asset, the excess shall be recognised in profit or loss.

**Depreciation:** Depreciation is calculated to write off the cost or valuation of an asset, less its residual value, over the useful economic life of that asset as follows:

Equipment	-20%	straight line
Fixtures and Fittings	-20%	straight line

If there is an indication that there has been a significant change in depreciation rate, useful life or residual value of tangible assets, the depreciation is revised prospectively to reflect the new estimates.

**Impairment:** A review for indicators of impairment is carried out at each reporting date, with the recoverable amount being estimated where such indicators exist. Where the carrying value exceeds the recoverable amount, the asset is impaired accordingly. Prior impairments are also reviewed for a possible reversal at each reporting date. When it is not possible to estimate the recoverable amount of an individual asset, an estimate is made of the recoverable amount of the cash-generating unit to



which the asset belongs. The cash-generating unit is the smallest identifiable group of assets that includes the asset and generates cash inflows that are largely independent of the cash inflows from other assets or groups of assets.

**Intangible Assets:** Intangible assets are initially recorded at cost, and are subsequently stated at cost less any accumulated amortisation and impairment losses. Any intangible assets carried at a revalued amount, are recorded at the fair value at the date of revaluation, as determined by reference to an active market, less any subsequent accumulated amortisation and subsequent accumulated impairment losses.

Intangible assets acquired as part of a business combination are recorded at the fair value at the acquisition date.

**Amortisation:** Amortisation is calculated to write off the cost of an intangible asset, less its estimated residual value, over the useful life of that asset as follows:

If there is an indication that there has been a significant change in amortisation rate, useful life or residual value of an intangible asset, the amortisation is revised prospectively to reflect the new estimates.

**Financial Instruments:** Belong To Youth Services has financial assets and financial liabilities of a kind that qualify as basic financial instruments. Basic financial instruments are initially recognised at transaction value and subsequently measures at their settlement value.

**Taxation:** The company has been granted charitable tax exemption by the Revenue Commissioners in accordance with the provisions of Section 208 (as applied to companies by Section 76) Section 609 (Capital Gains Tax) and Section 266 (Deposit

Interest Retention Tax) of the Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997. This exemption, which applies to Income Tax/ Corporation Tax, Capital Gains Tax and Deposit Interest Retention Tax, extends to the income and property of the company. The charity remits significant payroll taxes and incurs significant costs in irrecoverable VAT. The charity is fully tax compliant.

The charity is an approved body under the “Scheme of Tax Relief for Donations to Eligible Charities and Approved Bodies” under Section 848A Taxes Consolidation Act, 1997. Therefore, income tax refunds arising from donations exceeding €250 per annum are included as income in the unrestricted funds.

**Debtors:** Debtors are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently less any provision for impairment. A provision for impairment of trade receivables is established when there is objective evidence that the Charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of receivables. The amount of the provision is the difference between the assets carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows, discounted at the effective interest rates. All movements in the level of the provision required are recognised in the income and expenditure.

**VAT:** Where appropriate, expenditure includes irrecoverable Value-Added Tax. Irrecoverable VAT is charged as a cost against the activity for which the expenditure was incurred.

**Provisions:** Debtors are recognised initially at fair value and subsequently less any provision for impairment. A provision for impairment of trade receivables is established when there is objective evidence that the Charity will not be able to collect all amounts due according to the original terms of receivables. The amount of the provision is the difference between the assets carrying amount

and the present value of estimated future cash flows, discounted at the effective interest rates. All movements in the level of the provision required are recognised in the income and expenditure.

Provisions are recognised when the entity has an obligation at the reporting date as a result of a past event; it is probable that the entity will be required to transfer economic benefits in settlement and the amount of the obligation can be estimated reliably. Provisions are recognised as a liability in the balance sheet and the amount of the provision as an expense.

Provisions are initially measured at the best estimate of the amount required to settle the obligation at the reporting date and subsequently reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted to reflect the current best estimate of the amount that would be required to settle the obligation. Any adjustments to the amounts previously recognised are recognised in profit or loss unless the provision was originally recognised as part of the cost of an asset. When a provision is measured at the present value of the amount expected to be required to settle the obligation, the unwinding of the discount is recognised in finance costs in profit or loss in the period it arises.



# Notes to the Financial Statements Year Ended 31 December 2022

## 3. Income

### 3.1 Donations and Legacies

	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2021 €
Corporate donations and sponsorship	-	225,142	225,142	238,736
Local/ community fundraising	-	80,246	80,246	173,299
Regular & committed giving	-	22,441	22,441	29,444
Tax refunds	-	778	778	7,952
Direct marketing/ fundraising appeals	-	52,254	52,254	135,834
Other	-	115,456	115,456	174,570
Other Small Grants	-	-	-	1,170
Community Foundation for Ireland	-	-	-	10,000
Trusts and Foudations	-	203,260	203,260	
Google.org - Impact Challenge on Safety	139,186		139,186	173,187
	<b>139,186</b>	<b>699,577</b>	<b>838,763</b>	<b>944,192</b>

### 3.2 Charitable Activities

	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2021 €
Donated goods and services		164,882	164,882	415,471
HSE Mental Health Directorate/ National Office for Suicide Prevention - s.39 Health Act 2004	258,275		258,275	292,404
HSE Mental Health Directorate/ National Office for Suicide Prevention - s.39 Health Act 2004 LGBT Research			-	33,339
HSE Social Inclusion			-	50,000
DCEDIY - YSGS LGBT Research			-	20,000
CDYSB/ NICDTF - LDTF Emerging Needs	45,600		45,600	45,600
DCEDIY - Youth Service Grant Scheme	264,395		264,395	180,017
DCEDIY - Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2020			-	10,117
DCEDIY - Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2021	12,144		12,122	-
DCEDIY - LGBTI+ Youth Strategy	12,816		12,816	-
DCEDIY Scheme A: Supporting Community Services for LGBTI+ Services	51,145		51,145	
Dept of Education - National Action Plan on Bullying	58,000		58,000	58,000
DCC Dormant Accounts			-	35,000
National Lottery Grants Scheme			-	1,727
Gay Health Network			-	3,340
University College Dublin and Irish Research Council - Employment Based Programme	18,499		18,499	18,500
Dept of Rural and Community Development - SSNO Scheme 2019-2022	45,000		45,000	90,000
Dept of Rural and Community Development - SSNO Scheme 2022-2025	45,412		45,412	-
	<b>811,286</b>	<b>164,882</b>	<b>976,168</b>	<b>1,253,515</b>

### 3.3 Other Trading Activities

	Restricted Funds 2022 €	Unrestricted Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2022 €	Total Funds 2021 €
Other Grants	-	-	-	-
Training Income	-	28,105	28,105	33,420
	<b>-</b>	<b>28,105</b>	<b>28,105</b>	<b>33,420</b>
<b>Total Funds YE 2022</b>	<b>950,471</b>	<b>892,564</b>	<b>1,843,036</b>	<b>2,231,127</b>

Analysis of state funding and expenditure is detailed in Note 30



## Notes to the Financial Statements Year Ended 31 December 2022

### 4. Expenditure

	Direct Costs €	Grant Funding of Activities €	Other Costs €	Support Costs €	2022 €	2021 €
<b>4.1 Charitable Activities</b>						
Goal 1 - Delivering LGBTQ+ Youth Work	302,606	-	-	113,139	415,745	300,863
Goal 2 - Building Safe Spaces and Services	463,119	45,000	-	159,084	667,203	485,966
Goal 3 - Campaigning for Change	171,460	-	95,125	50,224	316,809	767,339
Goal 4 - Being a Learning and Development Organisation	42,394	-	81,902	18,463	142,759	94,673
	<b>979,579</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>177,027</b>	<b>340,910</b>	<b>1,542,516</b>	<b>1,648,841</b>

	Direct Costs €	Other Costs €	Support Costs €	2022 €	2021 €
<b>4.2 Governance Costs</b>					
Governance costs	14,081	-	-	14,081	5,297
Board members vouched expenses	-	-	-	-	62
Legal and professional	-	-	-	-	-
Finance staffing costs	-	-	48,017	48,017	33,080
Audit fees	-	-	4,551	4,551	4,428
	<b>14,081</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>52,568</b>	<b>66,649</b>	<b>42,867</b>

	Fundraising €	Goal 1 €	Goal 2 €	Goal 3 €	Goal 4 €	2022 €	2021 €
<b>4.3 ANALYSIS OF SUPPORT COSTS</b>							
Governance costs (note 4.2)		19,995	23,327	16,662	6,665	66,649	42,929
Office premises & facilities		48,898	75,343	24,616	7,546	156,403	155,744
Information technology		20,227	18,880	3,678	1,323	44,108	31,873
Human resources		18,875	22,092	2,376	1,704	45,047	28,447
Miscellaneous		5,143	19,442	2,892	1,225	28,730	19,004
		<b>113,139</b>	<b>159,084</b>	<b>50,224</b>	<b>18,463</b>	<b>340,910</b>	<b>277,996</b>



## 5. Exemption From Disclosure

The charity has availed of no exemptions, it has disclosed all relevant information.

## 6. Funds Held As Custodian Trustee On Behalf Of Others

The charity does not hold any funds or other assets by way of custodian arrangement.

## 7. Events After The End Of The Reporting Period

Apart from the continuing global Covid-19 pandemic, there have been no other significant events affecting the Company since year-end. As outlined in the Director's report, the Board has taken a range of preventive measures intended to help minimise the virus's risk to the Charity. The Board has assessed and considered the potential financial impact to the Charity's fundraising operations due to both Brexit, Covid-19 and the war in the Ukraine. The risk was assessed as a low probability in the short term but that a medium-term risk presents in 2022 with the conclusion of some multi-annual funding commitments. A risk mitigation strategy which includes diversification of income and designation of reserves has been agreed to reduce the risk.

## 8. Related Party Transactions

The Directors' Report details vouched for expenses paid to Board members. In 2022, the total amount of vouched expenses paid to the Board members was €0 (2021: €62). No Board member claimed expenses during the year (2021: 1).

As well as donating their time and expertise during 2022, the Directors made unconditional donations of €672 (2021: €1,188) to the charity.

The total amount of donations, donated goods, and donated services received from companies, controlled by Directors during 2022 was €nil (2021: nil).

Key management personnel made unconditional donations of €948 (2021: €520) to the charity, there were no other related party transactions with key management personnel other than remuneration note 19.

There were no further related party transactions in relation to the affairs of the Charity in which the Directors had any interest, as defined in the Companies Act 2014, at any time during the period ended 31st December 2022.

## 9. Ex-Gratia Payments

The charity made no ex-gratia payments in 2022.

## 10. Public Benefit

The company is a registered charity and constituted as a Public Benefit Entity.

## 11. Capital Commitments

The company had no capital commitments at the 31st December 2022. (2020: €nil).

## 12. Contingent Liabilities

The company had no contingent liabilities at the 31st December 2022. (2020: €nil)

## 13. Umbrella Organisations

The charity is a member of a wide range of umbrella organisations. Membership of these umbrella organisations does not impact on the operating policies adopted by the charity in any way.

## 14. Taxation Clearance

Belong To complies with Circular 44/2006 "Tax Clearance Procedures Grants, Subsidies and Similar Type Payments" by providing its tax clearance access number to grant providers when requested.

## 15. Operating Leases

Expenditure on operating leases is accounted for on a straight-line basis over the length of the lease.

	2022	2021
	€	€
Payable on leases in which the commitment expires within:		
One year	-	-
Two to five years	-	-
More than five years	220,000	275,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>220,000</b>	<b>275,000</b>

## 16. Pension

The Charity operates a Defined Contribution Pension Scheme matched 3% contribution of €7,481.35 (2021: Nil) to employees. Per the provisions of the Pensions (Amendment) Act, 2002, the charity facilitates employees in establishing a Personal Retirement Savings Account (PRSA) by way of payroll deductions.

## 17. Critical Accounting Judgements and Estimates

The preparation of these financial statements requires management to make judgements, estimates, and assumptions that affect the application of policies and reported amounts of assets and liabilities, income, and expenditure.

Judgements and estimates are continually evaluated and are based on historical experience and other factors, including expectations of future events that are believed to be reasonable under the circumstances.

The charity makes estimates and assumptions concerning the future. The resulting accounting estimates will, by definition, seldom equal the related actual results. The estimates and assumptions that have a significant risk of causing a material adjustment to the carrying amounts of assets and liabilities within the next financial year are discussed below.

### (a) Establishing useful economic life for depreciation purpose

The annual depreciation charge depends primarily on the estimated useful economic lives of each type of asset and estimate of residual value. The directors regularly review these assets useful lives in light of prospective economic utilisation and physical condition of the assets concerned. Changes in asset useful lives can have a significant impact on depreciation and amortisation charges for the period. Detail of the useful economic lives is included in the accounting policies.



## (b) Providing for doubtful debts

The charity estimated the recoverable value of trade and other debtors. It uses estimates based on historical experience in determining the level of debts, which the charity believes will not be collected. These estimates include such factors as the current credit rating of the debtor, the ageing profile of debtor, and historical experience. Any significant reduction in the level of customers that default on payments or other significant improvements resulted in a reduction in the level of bad debt provision would have a positive impact on the operating results. The level of provision required is reviewed on an on-going basis.

## 18. Operating surplus is stated after charging:

	2022	2021
	€	€
Amortisation of intangible assets	0	339
Depreciation of tangible assets	18,854	12,735
	<b>18,854</b>	<b>13,074</b>

## 19. Staff Costs

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

	2022	2021
Administration	6	6
Education and Training	2	2
Policy, Research, and Communications	4	4
Youth Work	7	7
Fundraising	3	3
	<b>22</b>	<b>22</b>

The aggregate payroll costs incurred during the year were:

	2022	2021
	€	€
Wages and Salaries	796,644	740,632
Social Insurance Costs	87,112	79,624
	<b>883,756</b>	<b>820,256</b>

Bands of Salaries	2022	2021
€50,000 - €60,000	3	2
€60,001 - €70,000	2	1
€70,000 +	1	1

Remuneration includes salaries and any benefits in kind. Two (2020:2) part-time employees would have the full-time salary equivalent of between €50,000 - €60,000 in the year, those part-time staff are included in the table above.

Belong To's CEO, Moninne Griffith is paid €84,114.51 per year (2021: €78,125). Included in this is employer pension contributions of €634. Her contract of employment does not include a performance-related award scheme or any benefit-in-kind/perquisites.

The Charity has a remuneration policy that has agreed by the HR and Remuneration Committee as delegated by the Board. This policy states that the Charity seeks to be competitive with its peers. As a general principle, this means the Charity pitches its salaries at the median of the marketplace. A salary grading structure has been in place for several years and has been approved by the Board.

The Senior Management Team (SMT) at Belong To was restructured in 2022 in response to the organisation's continued growth and to best support the organisation's work. At the end of 2022, there were eight staff who were members of the SMT. Remuneration paid to the SMT in 2022 amounted to €341,912. Included in this figure is employer pension contributions of €4,594. This compares to a total SMT remuneration figure of €169,805 in 2021, when the senior management team was comprised of just three individuals. No other additional benefits are received by the SMT and contracts of employment do not include performance-related reward schemes or any benefits-in-kind/perquisites.



# Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 December 2022

## 20. Intangible Assets

	Software Development €	Total €
<b>Cost</b>		
As 1st January 2022 and 31st Dec 2022	11,364	11,364
Amortisation		
At 1st Jan 2022	11,364	11,364
Charge for the Year	0	0
<b>At 31st December 2022</b>	<b>11,364</b>	<b>11,364</b>
<b>Carrying Amount as at 31st Dec 2022</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

	Software Development €	Total €
<b>Cost</b>		
As 1st January 2021 and 31st Dec 2021	11,364	11,364
Amortisation		
At 1st Jan 2021	11,025	11,025
Charge for the Year	339	339
<b>At 31st December 2021</b>	<b>11,364</b>	<b>11,364</b>
<b>Carrying Amount as at 31st Dec 2021</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

Intangible Assets represent the costs involved in the development of Belong To's CRM technology produce which allows the charity to manage all their resources and information in one single shared secured location. The costs are being amortised over a five year period.

## 21. Tangible Assets

	Equipment €	Fixtures and Fittings €	Total €
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1st January 2022	93,961	35,921	129,882
Additions	17,858	0	17,858
<b>At 31st December 2022</b>	<b>111,819</b>	<b>35,921</b>	<b>147,740</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1st Jan 2022	47,621	13,576	61,197
Charge for the Year	13,307	5,547	18,854
<b>At 31st December 2022</b>	<b>60,928</b>	<b>19,123</b>	<b>80,051</b>
<b>Carrying Amount as at 31st Dec 2022</b>	<b>50,891</b>	<b>16,798</b>	<b>67,689</b>

	Equipment €	Fixtures and Fittings €	Total €
<b>Cost</b>			
At 1st January 2021	67,962	15,960	83,922
Additions	25,999	19,961	45,960
<b>At 31st December 2021</b>	<b>93,961</b>	<b>35,921</b>	<b>129,882</b>
<b>Depreciation</b>			
At 1st Jan 2021	37,845	10,617	48,462
Charge for the Year	9,776	2,959	12,735
<b>At 31st December 2021</b>	<b>47,621</b>	<b>13,576</b>	<b>61,197</b>
<b>Carrying Amount as at 31st Dec 2021</b>	<b>46,340</b>	<b>22,345</b>	<b>68,685</b>

## 22. Debtors

	2022 €	2021 €
Trade Debtors	55,778	22,192
Other Debtors	4,186	0
Prepayments and Accrued Income	76,445	25,725
	<b>136,409</b>	<b>47,917</b>

## 23. Creditors: amounts falling due within one year

	2022 €	2021 €
Trade Creditors	48,822	167,153
Other Creditors	28,941	30,767
PAYE and Social Welfare	23,706	42,646
Accruals	16,662	6,228
Deferred Income	343,626	389,492
	<b>461,757</b>	<b>636,286</b>

### Deferred Income

	2022 €	2021 €
Gay Health Network	0	0
HSE - National Office for Suicide Prevention	38,971	10,440
HSE - National Office for Suicide Prevention (LGBT Research)	76,661	26,661
HSE - National Office for Suicide Prevention	0	53,405
Pobal Covid 19 Minor Grant Scheme	0	20,000
DCEDIY - Elearning	0	51,145
DCEDIY - CPD LGBTI+ Youth Strategy	750	750
ESB Electric Aid Fund	0	15,000
DCEDIY - YSGS Funds 45k Youth Worker	0	38,905
DECDIY	87,185	
Google.org Impact Challenge on Safety	34,000	173,186
ILGA Funds	1,588	
Rainbow Ball	104,471	
	<b>343,626</b>	<b>389,492</b>



# Notes to the Financial Statements

Year Ended 31 December 2022

## 24. Company Status

The company is limited by guarantee not having a share capital. The liability of each member in the event of the company being wound up is €1.

## 25. Statement of Movements on Statement of Financial Activities

Statement of Financial Activities	€
As 1st January 2022	984,573
Surplus for the Year	132,562
<b>At 31st December 2022</b>	<b>1,117,135</b>

## 26. Movement Of Funds

26.1 Reconciliation of Movement of Funds	Unrestricted Funds €	Restricted Funds €	Total Funds €
At 1 January 2021	534,856	0	534,856
Movement during the financial year	449,717	0	449,717
At 31 December 2022	984,573	0	984,573
Movement during the financial year	132,562	0	132,539
<b>At 31 December 2022</b>	<b>1,117,135</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,117,135</b>

26.2 Analysis of Movements on Funds	Balance 1 January 2022 €	Income €	Expenditure €	Transfers between funds €	Balance 31 December 2022 €
Restricted income					
Restricted	-	950,471	(790,760)	159,688	-
Unrestricted income					
Unrestricted general	984,573	892,565	(919,714)	159,688	1,117,135
<b>Total Funds</b>	<b>984,573</b>	<b>1,843,036</b>	<b>1,710,474</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,117,135</b>

26.3 Analysis Of Net Assets by Fund	Fixed assets - charity use €	Current assets €	Current liabilities €	Total
Restricted Funds	30,807	343,625	(374,432)	
Unrestricted Funds	36,882	1,167,578	(87,325)	1,117,135
	<b>67,689</b>	<b>1,511,203</b>	<b>(461,757)</b>	<b>1,117,135</b>



## 27. Grant recipients

The Mental Health Directorate/ National Office for Suicide Prevention in the HSE provides funding on an annual basis to Belong To Youth Services to operate a small grants scheme to support the establishment and ongoing running of LGBTI+ youth groups across the country. Prospective fundees are invited to make an application for funding annually setting out their priorities for the year and how they align to the published criteria for the fund. Applications are reviewed against these criteria and are awarded in line with the overall funding available for disbursement and the points awarded to each application. The scheme is open to all members of Belong To's National Network of LGBTI+ youth groups. In 2022 the total amount of funding disbursed through the scheme was €45,000 (2021: €45,000). The recipients of funding in 2022 were:

	2022 €	2021 €
Crosscare (Bray Youth Services)	2,850	2,250
Youth Work Ireland Cork	8,000	7,500
Crosscare (East Wicklow Youth Services)	2,200	2,200
Donegal Youth Service CLG	8,400	8,000
Ferns Diocesan Youth Service (FDYS)	5,004	3,504
Foróige (Gateway Youth Project)	-	3,632
Kerry Diocesan Youth Service (KDYS)	4,132	3,500
Kildare Youth Services Ltd.	5,000	5,000
North Connaught Youth Services	2,190	2,190
Red Ribbon Project Limited T/A GOSHH	4,500	4,500
Youth Work Ireland Tipperary	2,724	2,724
	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>

## 28. Financial Instruments

The carrying amount for each category of financial instruments as follows:

	2022 €	2021 €
Financial assets measured at amortised cost		
Trade debtors	55,778	22,192
Other debtors	80,631	25,725
Cash at bank and in hand	1,374,794	1,504,257
	<b>1,511,203</b>	<b>1,552,174</b>
Financial liabilities measured at amoritised cost		
Trade creditors	(48,822)	(167,153)
Other creditors	(404,834)	(469,133)
	<b>(453,656)</b>	<b>(636,286)</b>

## 29. State Funding Income and Expenditure

See following page.



## 29. State Funding Income and Expenditure

Name of Grantor	Health Service Executive - Mental Health Directorate	City of Dublin Youth Service Board (GDYSB)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Education and Skills	Dept. Rural and Community Development (administered by Pobal)	Dept. Rural and Community Development (administered by Pobal)	Health Service Executive - Mental Health Directorate / National Office for Suicide Prevention	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)
Funding Stream	Section 39 Health Act 2004	LDTF Emerging Needs	Youth Service Grant Scheme	Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2022	Scheme A: Supporting Community Services for LGBTI+ Services	LGBTI+ Youth Strategy, CPD for Service Providers (Phase 1)	National Action Plan on Bullying	SSNO 2019-2022	SSNO 2022-2025	LGBT Research	SCHEME A: SUPPORTING COMMUNITY SERVICES FOR LGBTI+ PERSONS
<b>Income YE 2022</b>	233,401	45,600	225,490	10,127			58,000	45,000	45,412	50,000	100,000
Deferred Income from 2021 C/F	63,845		38,905		51,145	750				26,661	
Less Deferred Income to 2022	-38,971					-750				-76,661	-87,185
Benefit in Kind											
Legal Fees											
Campaign and Communications											
Equipment											
Computer Costs											
Capital Grant*				-10,127							
Amortisation of Capital Grant				12,144							
<b>Total Income YE 2022</b>	<b>258,275</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>264,395</b>	<b>12,144</b>	<b>51,145</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,412</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,815</b>
Capital Grant*   Note: This expenditure is recognised on the balance sheet as it is a capital expenditure											
<b>Expenditure</b>											
Wages	116,222	36,516	196,456				19,513	45,000	45,412		12,815
Program Costs	90,665	2,293	10,662		51,145		31,235				
Rent and Rates	16,049	1,800	17,500.00				1,231				
Telephone	1,959	1,018.79	2,429.52				157				
Motor and Travel	3,250	762.80	1,250.00				639				
Light and Heat	1,237	643.41	1,534.35				99				
Print, Post and Stationery	1,964	447.00	2,418.30				169				
ICT Management	4,377	620.00	7,369.98				919				
Professional Fees	2,744		6,301				15				
Staff Costs	5,397	400.00	5,500.00				579				
Communications	1,672	224.00	1,750.00				474				
Insurance	3,949	540.09	4,000.00				1,703				
Repairs and Maintenance	3,620	55.00	2,743.00				316				
Bank Charges and Interest	162		200.39				290				
Depreciation	-			12,144			-				
Membership, Conference and General Expenses	2,592		1,601.00				13				
Governance and Board	1,838		2,039	-	-	-	347				
Audit & Accountancy	578	280	641	-	-	-	300				
Investment in Future income											
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>258,275</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>264,395</b>	<b>12,144</b>	<b>51,145</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,412</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,815</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

## 30. Ethical Standard – Provision Available for Small Entities

In common with many other businesses of our size and nature we use our auditors to prepare and submit returns to tax authorities and assist with the preparation of the financial statements. We also use our auditors to provide tax advice and to represent us, as necessary, at tax tribunals.

## 31. Controlling Party

The Directors are the controlling party of the company.

## 32. Lobbying and Political Donations

The Charity did not make any political donations during 2022, and as a result, no disclosures are required under the Electoral Act, 1997. As required under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015, the Charity records all lobbying activity and communications with Designated Public Officials (DPOs). The Charity has made the returns and submissions required by the Act.

## 33. Comparative Figures

Comparative figures have been re-classified on the same basis as current year figures.

## 34. Approval of the Financial Statements

The board of directors approved these financial statements for issue on 22 May 2023.



## Income and Expenditure Year Ended 31 December 2022

Income	2022 €	2021 €
DCEDIY - Youth Service Grant Scheme	264,395	180,017
DCEDIY - Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2021		17,145
DCEDIY - Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2022	10,127	0
DCEDIY - Youth Capital Funding Scheme Transfer of capital grant	(10,127)	(17,145)
Amoritisation of on the Youth Capital Funding Scheme Grants (DCEDIY)	12,144	10,118
DCEDIY- Youth Service Grant Scheme		20,000
HSE Mental Health Directorate/ National Office for Suicide Prevention		33,339
HSE Social Inclusion		50,000
CDYSB/ NICDTF - LDTF Emerging Needs	45,600	45,600
Dept of Education - National Action Plan on Bullying	58,000	58,000
Dept of Rural and Community Development - SSNO Scheme 2019-2022	45,000	90,000
Dept of Rural and Community Development - SSNO Scheme 2022-2025	45,412	
HSE Mental Health Directorate/ National Office for Suicide Prevention - s.39 Health Act 2004	258,275	292,404
The National Lottery		1,727
DCEDIY - LGBTI+ Youth Strategy	12,816	
DCEDIY Scheme A: Supporting Community Services for LGBTI+ Services	51,145	
Donations and legacies	699,578	770,524
Google.org - Impact Challenge on Safety	139,186	173,187
University College Dublin and Irish Research Council - Employment Based Programme	18,499	18,500
Small Grants		0
Training	28,105	33,418
Dublin City Council		35,000
Gay Health Network		3,340
TWSS - Covid-19		482
Donated Goods and Services	164,882	415,471
	<b>1,843,036</b>	<b>2,231,127</b>

Expenditure	2022 €	2021 €
Wages and salaries	796,644	740,632
Employer's PRSI contributions	87,112	79,624
Advertising and communications	124,715	422,755
Programme costs	321,595	264,616
Investment in future income	35,203	26,032
Printing and publications	3,271	11,160
Rent payable	55,000	55,000
Insurance	19,250	13,928
Light and heat	4,855	4,136
Cleaning	6,531	4,688
Repairs and maintenance	10,575	30,603
Professional fees	87,011	24,670
Telephone	7,762	6,332
ICT Management	44,108	34,744
Postage and stationery	10,130	5,909
Staff training and recruitment	27,793	17,089
Travel and subsistence expenses	15,970	5,207
Auditors remuneration	4,551	4,428
Bank charges	1,009	1,044
Subscriptions	4,935	3,713
Conference	3,997	
General Expenses	5,522	6,605
Governance and board expenditure	14,081	5,421
Amortisation costs	0	339
Depreciation of tangible assets	18,854	12,735
	<b>(1,710,474)</b>	<b>(1,781,410)</b>
<b>Operating Surplus</b>	<b>132,562</b>	<b>449,717</b>



# 2022 Financial Statements

Name of Grantor	Health Service Executive - Mental Health Directorate	City of Dublin Youth Service Board (GDYSB)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Education	Dept. Rural and Community Development (administered by Pobal)	Dept. Rural and Community Development (administered by Pobal)	Health Service Executive - Mental Health Directorate / National Office for Suicide Prevention	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth (DCEDIY)	Trusts, Foundations and Donors	Trusts, Foundations and Donors	Donated Goods and Services	
Funding Stream	Section 39 Health Act 2004	LDTF Emerging Needs	Youth Service Grant Scheme	Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2022	Scheme A: Supporting Community Services for LGBTI+ Services	LGBTI+ Youth Strategy. CPD for Service Providers (Phase 1)	National Action Plan on Bullying	SSNO 2019-2022	SSNO 2022-2025	LGBT Research	Scheme A: Supporting Community Services For Lgbti+ Persons	Funds other than State Grants to complete work programmes in 2022	Fundraising	Donated Goods and Services	Totals
<b>Income:</b>															
Income YE 2022	233,401	45,600	225,490	10,127			58,000	45,000	45,412	50,000	100,000	705,053	180,315		1,698,397
Deferred Income from 2021 C/F	63,845		38,905		51,145	750				26,661					181,306
Less Deferred Income to 2022	-38,971					-750				-76,661	-87,185				-203,566
Benefit in Kind															-
Legal Fees														69,757	69,757
Campaign and Communications														95,125	95,125
Equipment															-
Computer Costs															-
Capital Grant*				-10,127											-10,127
Amortisation of Capital Grant				12,144											12,144
<b>Total Income YE 2022</b>	<b>258,275</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>264,395</b>	<b>12,144</b>	<b>51,145</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,412</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,815</b>	<b>705,053</b>	<b>180,315</b>	<b>164,882</b>	<b>1,843,036</b>
Capital Grant*   Note: This expenditure is recognised on the balance sheet as it is a capital expenditure															
<b>Expenditure</b>															
Wages	116,222	36,516	196,456				19,513	45,000	45,412		12,815	279,067	132,755		883,756
Program Costs	90,665	2,293	10,662		51,145		31,235					135,594			321,595
Rent and Rates	16,049	1,800	17,500.00				1,231					16,770	1,650		55,000
Telephone	1,959	1,018.79	2,429.52				157					1,965	233		7,762
Motor and Travel	3,250	762.80	1,250.00				639					9,589	479		15,970
Light and Heat	1,237	643.41	1,534.35				99					1,195	146		4,855
Print, Post and Stationery	1,964	447.00	2,418.30				169					8,001	402		13,401
ICT Management	4,377	620.00	7,369.98				919					29,498	1,323		44,108
Professional Fees	2,744		6,301				15					7,324	870	69,757	87,011
Staff Costs	5,397	400.00	5,500.00				579					15,083	834		27,793
Communications	1,672	224.00	1,750.00				474					21,729	3,741	95,125	124,715
Insurance	3,949	540.09	4,000.00				1,703					8,480	578		19,250
Repairs and Maintenance	3,620	55.00	2,743.00				316					3,523.36	317		10,575
Bank Charges and Interest	162		200.39				290					326.70	30		1,009
Depreciation	-			12,144			-					6,144	566		18,854
Membership, Conference and General Expenses	2,592		1,601.00				13					16,149.58	630		20,985
Governance and Board	1,838		2,039	-	-	-	347					9,435.28	422		14,081
Audit and Accountancy	578	280	641	-	-	-	300					2,615.59	137		4,551
Investment in Future income												-	35,203		35,203
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>258,275</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>264,395</b>	<b>12,144</b>	<b>51,145</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>45,000</b>	<b>45,412</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>12,815</b>	<b>572,491</b>	<b>180,315</b>	<b>164,882</b>	<b>1,710,474</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>132,562</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>132,562</b>



# 2021 Financial Statements

Name of Grantor	Health Service Executive - Mental Health Directorate	City of Dublin Youth Service Board (GDYSB)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Department of Education	Dept. Rural and Community Development (administered by Pobal)	Health Service Executive (Dublin South, Kildare, and West Wicklow Community Health Care)	Health Service Executive - Mental Health Directorate / National Office for Suicide Prevention	Health Service Executive - Social Inclusion	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Dublin City Local and Community Development	Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration, and Youth (DCEDIY)	Trusts, Foundations and Donors	Donated Goods and Services	Totals
Funding Stream	Section 39 Health Act 2004	LDTF Emerging Needs	Youth Service Grant Scheme	Youth Capital Funding Scheme 2021	Scheme A: Supporting Community Services for LGBTI+ Services	LGBTI+ Youth Strategy. CPD for Service Providers (Phase 1)	National Action Plan on Bullying	SSNO	National Lottery Grants Scheme	LGBT Research	LGBT Research	Youth Service Grant Scheme: LGBT Research	Dormant Accounts Fund	Covid 19 National Youth Organisations Scheme 2021			
<b>Income:</b>																	
Income YE 2021	289,840	45,600	218,922	17,145	51,145		58,000	90,000	1,727	60,000	50,000	20,000	35,000	20,000	999,450		1,956,830
Deferred Income from 2020 C/F	66,407					750					-						67,157
Less Deferred Income to 2022	-63,843		-38,905		-51,145	-750				-26,661	-		-	-20,000			-201,304
Benefit in Kind																	-
Consultancy Fees																	13,312
Campaign and Communications																	395,208
Equipment																	4,080
Computer Costs																	2,871
Capital Grant*				-17,145													-17,145
Amortisation of Capital Grant				10,118													10,118
Funds Returned																	-
<b>Total Income YE 2021</b>	<b>292,404</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>180,017</b>	<b>10,118</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>58,000</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>33,339</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>999,450</b>	<b>415,471</b>	<b>2,231,127</b>
<b>Capital Grant*</b>	Note: This expenditure is recognised on the balance sheet as it is a capital expenditure																
<b>Expenditure</b>																	
Wages	121,677	36,513	125,664				71,534	90,000					26,903		347,965		820,2576
Program Costs	89,899	1,041	2,358				28,438			33,339	50,000	20,000	161		39,380		264,616
Rent and Rates	20,000	4,400	14,857				10,507	-					1,636		3,600		55,000
Telephone	2,111	274	1,688				1,211						186		863		6,332
Motor and Travel	1,556	12	1,723				1,121						234		552		5,2067
Light and Heat	1,375	440	1,028				879						196		219		4,137
Print, Post and Stationery	3,111	241	3,472				3,877						565		5,805		17,070
Computer Costs	11,513	513	6,796				184						1,359		11,508	2,871	34,744
Professional Fees	3,768	207	3,499				2,287						997		601	13,312	24,670
Staff Costs	6,369	286	3,383				2,899						334		3,817		17,089
Communications	10,017	218	2,278				10,822						457		3,756	395,208	422,756
Insurance	4,898	605	3,411				2,974						458		1,582		13,928
Repairs and Maintenance	6,452	151	4,230				4,055		1,727				1,291		8,617	4,080	30,603
Bank Charges and Interest	276	49	234				153						31		301		1,044
Depreciation	2,051	0	0	10,118											905		13,074
General Expenses	3,820	98	2,128				2319.06						0		6,639		15,004
Governance and Board	1,901	207	1,765				1,154						194		200		5,421
Audit and Accountancy	1,610	345	1,495				978										4,428
Investment in Future income															26,032		26,032
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>292,404</b>	<b>45,600</b>	<b>180,017</b>	<b>10,118</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>145,392</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>1,727</b>	<b>33,339</b>	<b>50,000</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>35,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>462,342</b>	<b>415,471</b>	<b>1,781,410</b>
<b>Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(87,392)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>(0)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>537,109</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>449,717</b>



## We are grateful for the ongoing support from our funders:



Thank you to the following organisations for supporting us in 2022. Thanks to their support, we can be there for LGBTQ+ youth when they need us most.

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