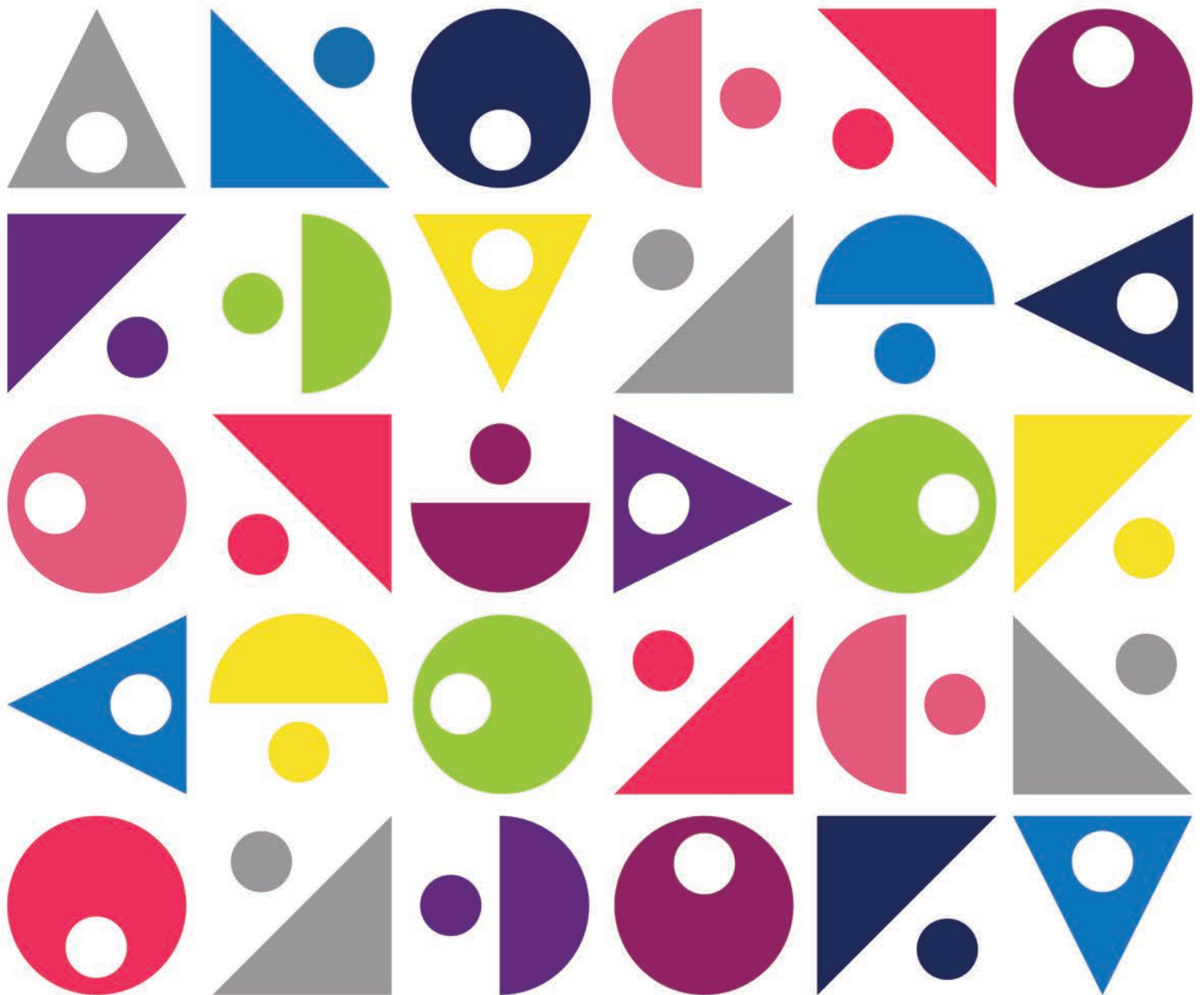


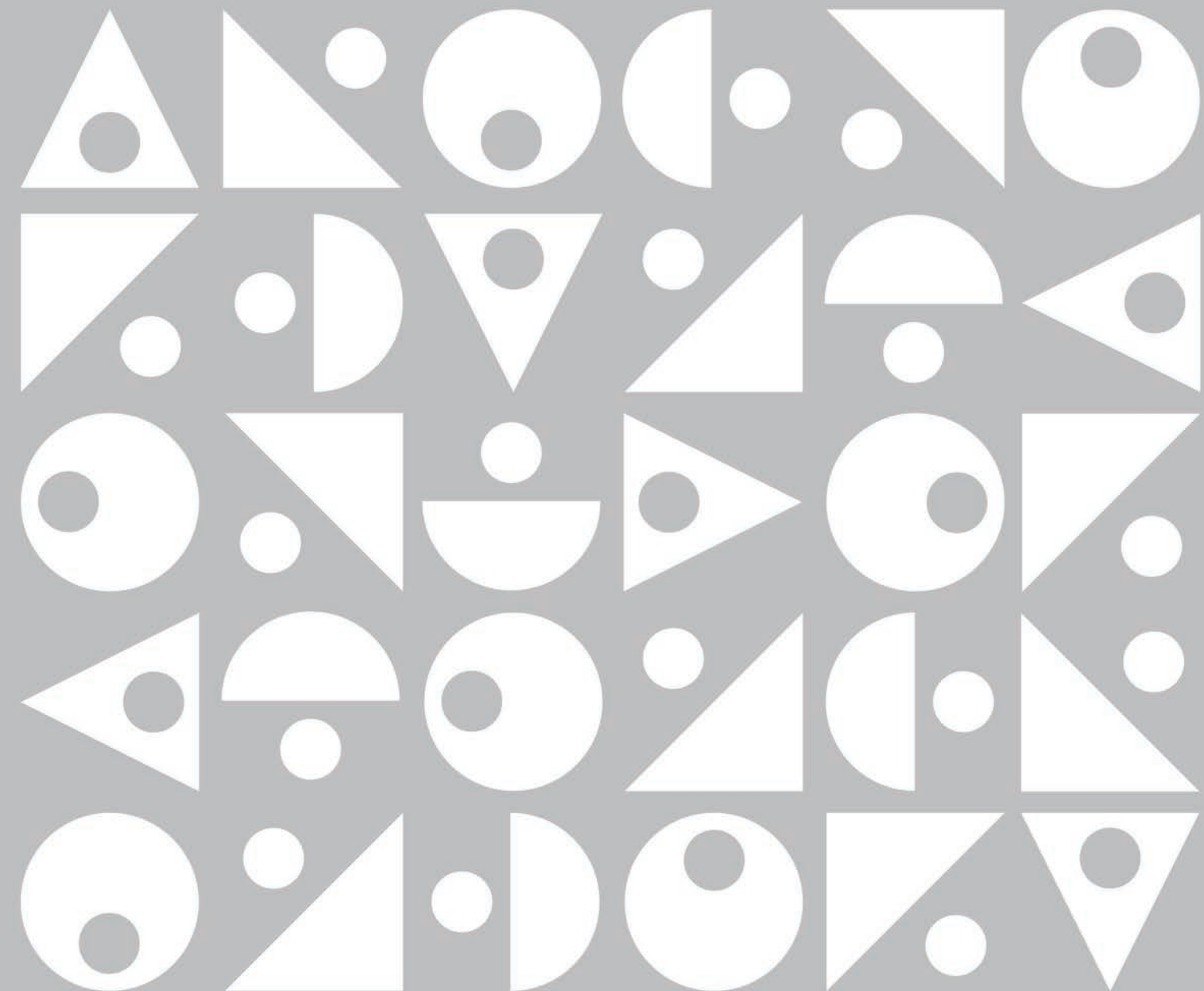
# TOOLKIT ON INTERSECTIONAL MAINSTREAMING

A resource for organizations, volunteers and allies



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This toolkit was developed thanks to the contribution given by the Gender Equality and Intersectionality Lab's trainers:

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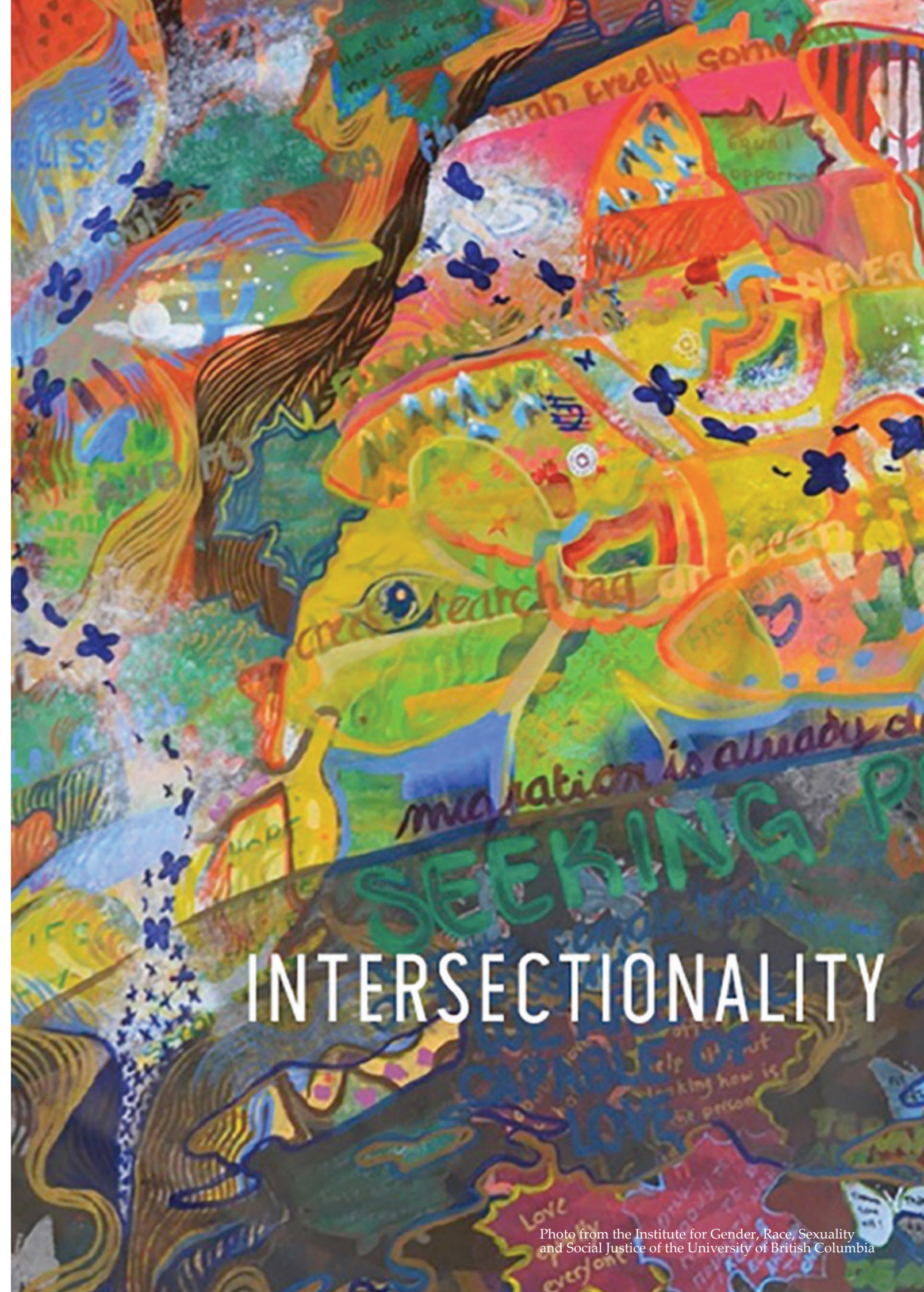


Photo from the Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality  
and Social Justice of the University of British Columbia





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*“To all the voices and silences who inspire(d) us.”*



## FORWARD

Asking myself why I have initiated the Gender Equality and Intersectionality Lab project, one of the outcomes of which is this toolkit, brings me to the personal realizations that gestated this volunteering initiative. Feminisms<sup>1</sup> have taught me to question power relations, understanding how to account for them and how my actions perpetuate those relations within the volunteering context.

Questioning is a learning cycle that enables awareness and reflexivity upon the positionality that one occupies in the world. It urges one to become aware of one's own privileges. It helps understand how personal struggles are political and structural. It cultivates within you the political responsibility for noticing and naming those power structures and relations that produce inequalities and exclusion.

As a feminist and a volunteer for student and alumni organization<sup>2</sup> I saw that there was a need to organize and unite volunteers across various backgrounds and locations around issues affecting social justice. In order to name and challenge power relations within our organizations and work practices<sup>3</sup> we need to craft policies that identify and address the root causes of intersecting social inequalities if we are to erect organizational structures that anchor the worldviews and amplify the voices of marginalized and disadvantaged people.

To conceive of an organizational culture that fights oppression internally without practicing patriarchy and other oppressive 'isms'<sup>4</sup>; and to envision social relations that welcome alternative forms of being(s) and becoming(s) so that collective rethinking of our organizational priorities for contributing to and advancing social and economic justice is possible.

This toolkit supports and promotes critical thinking and reflection on the structures and cultures of student and alumni organizations through the lenses of intersectionality. It can be used by organizations and volunteers with different levels of knowledge and experience to reflect upon and ensure that intersectionality is engraved into the core existence of the organizations.

I am grateful to Ingrid Annilo, Caroline Manik and Elisa Massari for their time, effort and commitment to implementing this challenging project. I owe a debt of gratitude to Dresda Emma Méndez De la Brena and Kitty Baracsi for training 21 ESAA volunteers on basic concepts of gender and intersectionality, equipping them with practical knowledge and tools to get involved in bringing change into their organizations. Your support, passion and dedication for this project is truly appreciated. Thank you for believing and engaging on a voluntary basis in this project.

I would like to acknowledge the Gender Equality and Intersectionality Lab participants for their feedback and contributions: Annisa Caesara, Dario Andrés Cruz Malagón, Karim Maatouk, Oyinkansola Awolo, Natalia Vergara Fuentes, Teresa Pedreira, Carolyn Lee Lian Yin, Andrea Turiso Sanz, Yalei Li, Dritan Tola, Spriha Dhanuka, Floriana Bécares, Arjay Arcinué Dineros, Kata Csontos, Rodana Mohamed.

Lastly, I gratefully acknowledge financial assistance from the Erasmus+ Students and Alumni Alliance.

*Joana Xhemali*

<sup>1</sup> I use the term feminisms to stress the plurality and heterogeneity of feminist theoretical approaches, movements, practices and life-styles.

<sup>2</sup> Erasmus Mundus Student and Alumni Association.

<sup>3</sup> To see collective struggles and the opportunity to transform power relations through the optics of intersectional feminisms.

<sup>4</sup> I refer to systems of oppressions such as racism, ableism, cissexism, heterosexism, classism, ageism etc. Systems of oppression are interdependent and embedded in the fabric of our society. Various societal institutions such as government, culture, education, etc. are complicit in the oppression of marginalized groups while privileging dominant social groups.





Photo by Matteo Paganelli on Unsplash

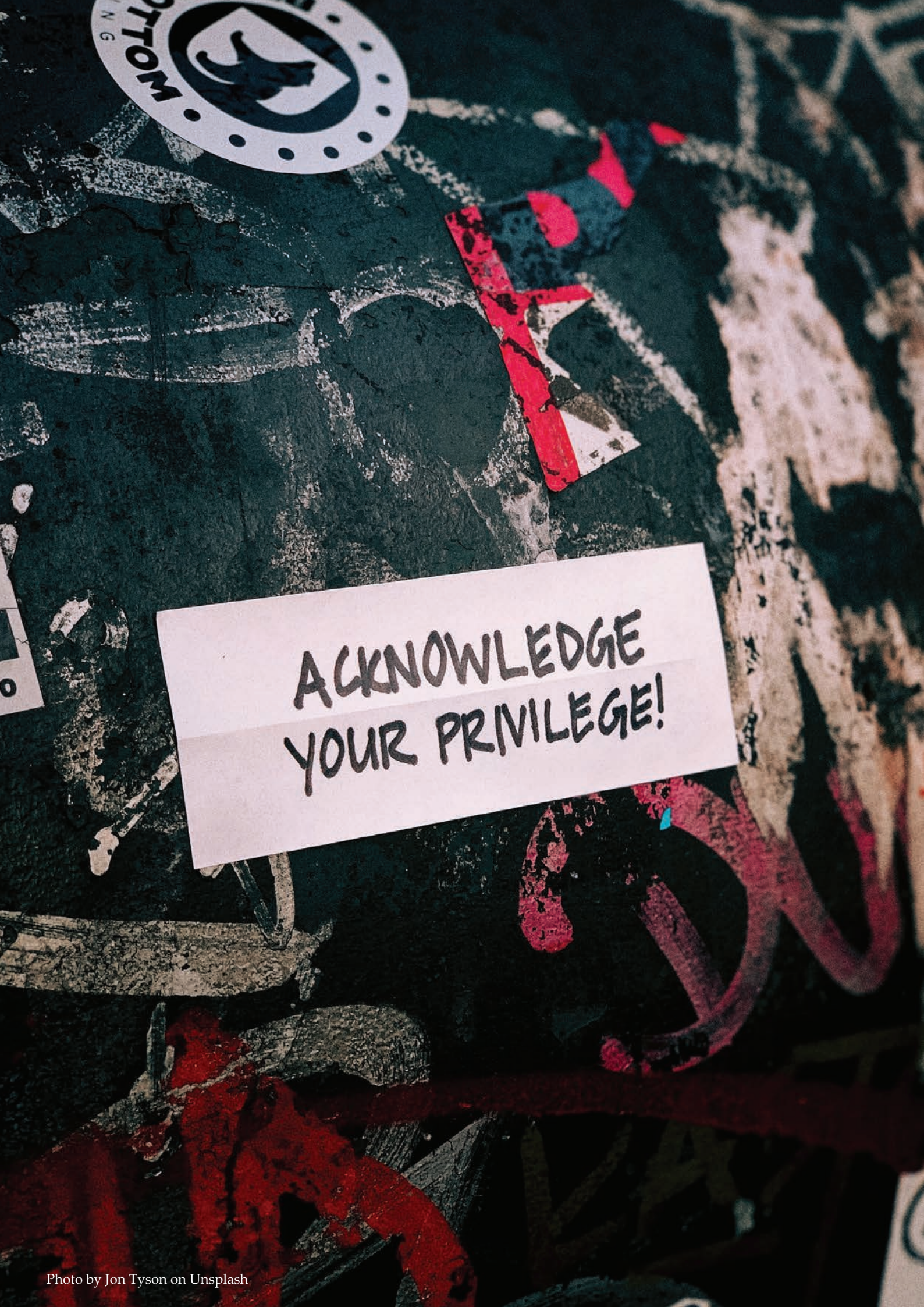
## MANIFESTO<sup>5</sup>

We position ourselves against neoliberal capitalism, neo-colonialism, neo-imperialism, xenophobic nationalism, hetero-patriarchy, white supremacy and fascist power structures and relations. We believe in transformative change that is inclusive and responsive to diverse knowledge(s) and experiences. We opt for a better version of humanity in which subordination and exploitation do not become the prices of existence. We are tired of being rendered voiceless and marginal. We will trouble oppressive binaries (mind/body; gay/straight; man/women; white/black; north/south, private/public etc.). We will reclaim the personal as political. We will politicize our (un)told stories made of dialogical struggles, embodied oppressions, resilience, negotiating survivals, subversive alliances and radical care<sup>6</sup>. We demand that, to enable favorable conditions for social justice, we must unlearn our own privileges and promote transnational solidarity. We must recognize our own parts in reproducing harmful practice and consider ways to avoid such harm. Self-love, respect, radical empathy and care must be the basis for every human practice. We welcome and envision alternative models of world-making free of asymmetrical power relations and structural oppression. We invite you to question the world that was given to you and reflect how we will co-create more inclusive communities

<sup>5</sup> This manifesto reflects the views of the Gender Equality and Intersectionality Lab's participants.

<sup>6</sup> Radical care refers to a relational and complex set of care discourses and practices between people, environment and objects. It is central in maintaining both individual and community resilience against racism, (hetero) sexism, colonialism, ableism, etc. Radical care excludes the kind of self-care promoted by the neoliberal system that aims increasing productivity through self-optimization and self-management technologies. For more see: Hobart, K.J.H & Kneese, T. (2020). Radical Care: Survival Strategies for Uncertain Times. *Social Text* 142, 38(1), 1-16





## INTRODUCTION

This toolkit is a practical guide for student and alumni organizations' volunteers to acquire knowledge on intersectionality and its main concepts. A valuable tool which can be used as reference for exploring intersectional mainstreaming into organizational structures and cultures. The toolkit development was triggered by the significant contributions of ESAA volunteers during the Gender Equality and Intersectionality Lab<sup>7</sup>. The goal of the training lab was to equip ESAA volunteers with professional knowledge on how to deploy gender equality and intersectional concepts into practice as well as contribute to social justice. The participants sought to explore the complex nature of intersectionality, but due to time and resource limitations we could not seize many of the varied perspectives of intersectionality.

We invite readers to consider this toolkit as a partial and limited understanding of intersectionality, as a living text which is open to constructive criticism, questioning and future revisions. This toolkit contains traces of a collective exploration carried out by the participants, trainers and organizers. It is a communal commitment to make informed work that can result in different ways of constructing relations with each other. To acknowledge and be accountable for our own privileges and the implications of our actions gives us agency in the (re)production of relations of power. It is our hope that this toolkit might inspire organizations to further develop and contextualize intersectionality within the framework of institutional policy.

This toolkit shall be seen as the beginning of a transformative process in which trying to open up to multiple perspectives and learn from different voices and silences within our organizations. It allows reflection on the impact that our work as volunteers brings. Forcing our organizations to rethink their priorities and embrace difference and intersectionality in all its richness. This format unpacks the concept of intersectionality as a fundamental tool to achieve social justice, including a collection of checklists which interrogate specific working units through the lenses of intersectionality. Finally, it proposes a set of recommendations that organizations can consider when dealing with decision-making, budgeting, communication, partnerships and project development as well as organizational management issues.

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<sup>7</sup> The Intersectionality Lab took place from 20th – 24th of February 2020, at the European Youth Center in Budapest, Hungary



## TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE

We understand and are aware of how multiple systems of power work together and animate each other by reinforcing conditions of inequality and social exclusion. Hence, this toolkit is a conscious and reflective effort to demand transformative change for the future:

- 1 Free of structural and systematic inequalities that interlocking systems of power and oppressions such as neo-liberal capitalism, xenophobic nationalism, neo-colonialism, neo-imperialism, hetero-patriarchy, fascism, and globalization bring into life and sustain;
- 2 Wherein our difference does not legitimize and normalize multiple and intersecting forms of oppression, inequality and discrimination based on the interplays of identity markers such as sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexuality, race, class, age, ability, ethnicity, religion or belief, geographical location, refugee and immigration status, etc.; but rather our difference and diversity are celebrated and viewed as decidedly human;
- 3 Where fluid, uncertain and non-western subjectivities and relations do not establish grounds for marginalization, social exclusion and neoliberal “engineering” solutions but rather will be seen as a political opening towards alternative world views and knowledge(s) that have historically been marginalized.

Transformative change requires systemic and structural revisions both in our daily life and work practices as individuals, members of social communities and volunteers of student and alumni organizations. It demands a collective understanding and examination of how structures and practices we inhabit and conceive produce asymmetrical relations of power that normalize multiple and intersecting forms of social inequalities.

Transformative change calls also for contextual and situational mapping of structures and cultures of student and alumni organizations from an intersectional perspective that will allow us to analyze whether these foundations create favorable conditions for social exclusion or rather if they favor social justice and defy the productive work of power structures.

To challenge such structures means integrating a situated intersectional and action-oriented approach to local, national and transnational level because mechanisms and technologies of powers are interrelated across space and time.

While questioning at organizational and cultural levels remains crucial to understand how and to what extent student and alumni organizations are contributing to social justice and a contextual intersectional approach to equality. Similarly, we must invest more efforts in identifying and creating strategies of collation building and networking with local, national and transnational movements that build radical resistance, solidarity and strength.

To question and transform our internal structures and operations from an intersectional optics will provoke a continuous, long and painful process. It certainly will bring tensions, ruptures and struggles both internally and externally. The politics of questioning and transforming are never accommodating processes because they require a lot of courage to acknowledge our own implications and complicities in (re) producing social inequalities.

We require the courage to name our own privileges and oppressions, courage to seek help from and care for others, and most importantly courage to establish bonds of transnational and reflective solidarity that are rooted in radical equality and empathy. These politics might bring social justice and radical equality as they hold the potential to trouble the intersecting oppressions that multiple power structures embedded in our organizations produce. They might pave the way towards alternative frameworks that move beyond Eurocentric models which romanticize the advancement of individuals by maximizing their productive potential and disconnecting them from their contexts and communities.



## WHAT IS INTERSECTIONALITY

The concept was initially introduced by the Black feminist scholar Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, one of the founders of Critical Race Theory in the U.S. legal academy. However, intersectionality has a long history as the language of intersections was present in several important texts of the anti-racist feminist theories written by Audre Lorde, bell hooks, Angela Davis and Gloria Anzaldúa. The roots of intersectionality are grounded in the political theorizations and movements of Black women, Chicana and Latina women, and other women of color.

Intersectionality is a feminist tool for analysis, advocacy, policy and project development that addresses how the relation between power structures and systems of oppressions construct our multiple identities and social locations in hierarchies of power and privilege.

Systems of oppression are not singular but rather multiple, converged and interconnected. The intersectional perspective regards identities and social practices within a given context as relational, co-constitutive, multiple and mutable. Since “a real-life person is not, for example, a woman on Monday, a member of the working class on Tuesday, and a woman of African descent on Wednesday”, intersectionality responds to the “theoretical demand [...] to read these categories simultaneously” (Russell, 2007, p. 47). This understanding allows us to analyze how the shifting intersections of

identity markers such as gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, class, race, religion or belief, ethnicity, ability, age, religion, immigration or refugee status, etc. in combination with current system of oppression (neoliberal capitalism, globalization, neo-colonialization, etc.) shape access to and control over resources, power and opportunities.

Intersectionality captures how individuals or groups simultaneously experience multiple and interconnected forms of discrimination, oppression, inequality and stigmatization. Multiple experiences of oppression that people face cannot be fragmented and hierarchized through privileging or addressing one form of oppression at the expense of ignoring others. As Afro-American feminist writer and scholar Audre Lorde (1984, p. 138) asserts “There is no thing as a single-issue

struggle because we do not live single-issue lives”. Therefore, we can argue that multiple forces of oppression and power animate and interact with each other to reinforce conditions of inequality and social exclusion. All constitutive properties of our identities (gender identity, sex, sexuality, race, etc.) simultaneously partake in the formation of our lived experiences and social practices.

Intersectionality is a critical analytic tool that allows us to unpack how social processes through which power structures and different forms of inequality are constructed and maintained. It connects power structures and inequality to an individual’s possibility to act within the given societal structures, institutions and dominant ideologies. Through capturing the dynamic interoperability of the intersections between multiple forms of discriminations and power structures, intersectionality allows us to understand the complex positioning(s) of individuals in relation to agency or access to power and control over resources. This analytic tool exposes how specific policies create inequalities and discrimination that flow along these interplaying axes of power structures and systems of subordination.

When we undertake an intersectional analysis, we must practice situatedness and contextual reflexivity. Situatedness acknowledges the importance of people’s own identities in their interpretations of the world surrounding them. It reflects how our embodied privileges and shifting social positions affect our understanding of what is observed and experienced. Acknowledging our positionalities when carrying out intersectional analysis is an act of accountability. In addition, through practicing reflexivity we can become more aware and accountable for the relations of power that the analytic work produces.

We believe that intersectionality gives a better understanding of challenges and opportunities that members of student and alumni organizations face in particular contexts. Through looking at and connecting the micro and macro dynamics of power structures we can discern where to invest our efforts and resources for bringing inclusive, participatory and transformative change within the organizations we adhere to.



### Further readings:

Crenshaw, W. K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, pp. 139–167.

Davis, K. (2008). Intersectionality as Buzzword: A Sociology of Science Perspective on What Makes a Feminist Theory Successful. *Feminist Theory* 9. (1), pp. 67–85.

Hooks, B. (1981). *Ain't I a Woman? Black Women and Feminism*. Boston: South End Press.

Lorde, A. (1984). *Sister Outsider: Essays and Speeches*. Freedom: The Crossing Press.

Moraga, C., & Anzaldúa, G. (2015). *This Bridge Called My Back, Fourth Edition: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. SUNY Press

### Notes:

[1] Innermost circle represents a person's unique circumstances.

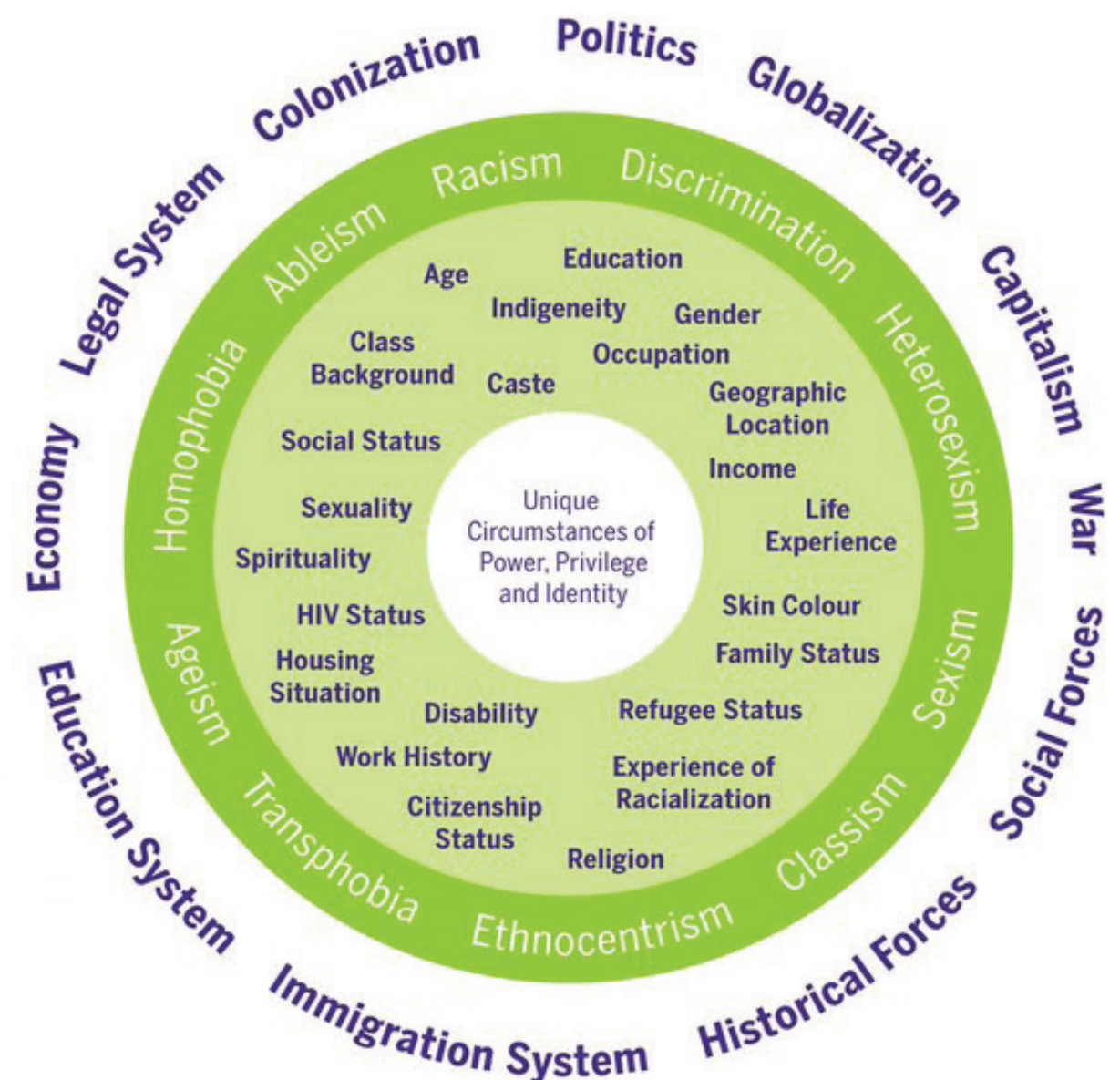
[2] The second inner circle represents aspects of identity.

[3] Third circle represents different types of discrimination/isms/attitudes that impact identity and positionality.

[4] Outermost circle represents power systems and structures that work together to reinforce exclusion.

Source: Adapted from Simpson 2009. p.5 in Straatman, A. (2005). *Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) in Rainbow Communities*. Center for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children.

## Intersectionality Wheel Diagram





## Exploring Intersectionality: Bowling Against Oppressions Activity

This activity triggers reflections on intersectionality, power and privilege through group discussions about personal experiences. It is a dynamic activity to be applied in a diverse group to allow participants to better articulate embodied privileges and lived oppressions through reflecting on their own experiences of lived discrimination and oppressions. Participants are asked to name and write down on a small piece of paper a personal situation where they felt discriminated against, their rights oppressed, or socially excluded.

Through naming personal experience of oppression and discrimination the group will better understand the role that intersections of identity markers in combination with power structures have in forming multiple and intersecting discriminations. As this activity can generate strong emotions for people, it is important to mention to participants that they do not have to feel obliged to participate in any action which would expose an experience that they are not comfortable sharing with others.

After personal reflection, each participant is asked to stick those post notes on a bowling pin meanwhile the facilitator randomly arranges all the bowling pins in triangular shape as in a bowling lawn. Voluntarily, participants are asked to roll a bowling ball from a distance towards the bowling pins and a smashing strike to their lived oppressions. This can be metaphorically considered both as personal and collective relief. The facilitator will pick up all the laying bottles and loudly read the written texts.

The participant whose message was read will reflect on his/her/their own experiences and histories and simultaneously the group will reflect whether they have been through similar situations. For example one of the participants of the training lab expressed how she felt discriminated against while crossing European borders, because of her gender identity, gender expression and nationality. Meanwhile the rest of the participants became aware of their own personal experience of privilege and oppression in relation to the situation articulated by the participant.

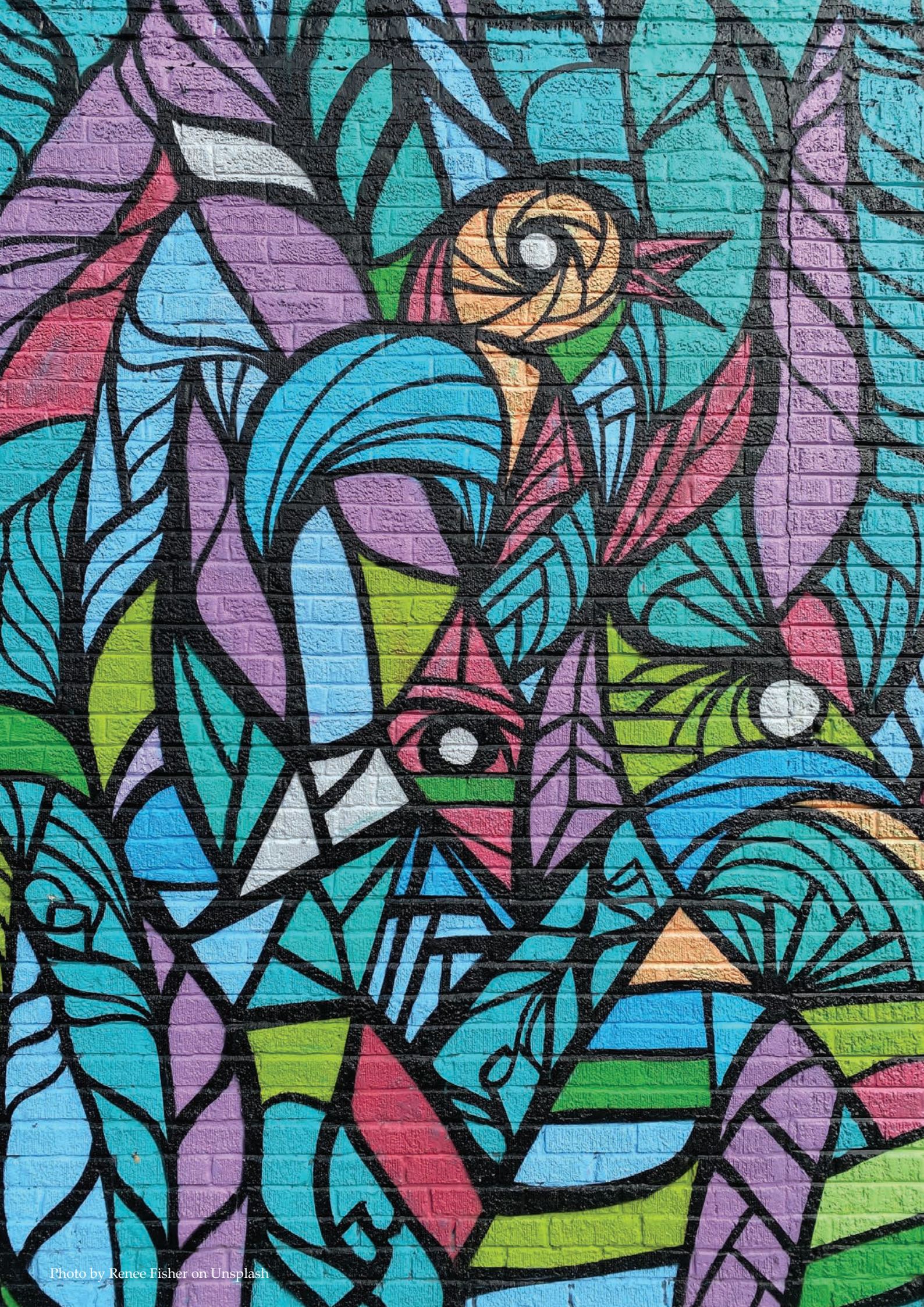


After all personal testimonies have been voiced by each participant, the group realized how we can all simultaneously experience privilege and oppressions in different ways depending on the intersections of our identity markers within a given social-temporal context.

**Duration:** The activity can take 20 minutes depending on the size of the group and willingness of participants to explore more in depth personal experiences of oppression.

**Activity materials:** minimum five participants, bowling pins, bowling ball, post-it-notes.





## GLOSSARY<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The concepts are not sorted in the alphabetical order as an attempt to queer normalized arrangements of text and treat all letters in the same way. Readers are free to create relational connections among concepts.



## Sex

Commonly, ‘sex’ and ‘gender’ are often used interchangeably, despite having different cultural connotations. According to biological determinism sex is linked to a set of biological sexual organs in both humans and animals. However, sex is a cultural and biomedical construction that is assigned at birth in accordance with a binary categorization, either female or male, taking into consideration chromosomes, gene expression, or hormone levels that have been historically attributed to one category. Research suggest that depending on the context sex can be defined differently by including or excluding certain biological or bodily characteristics, this is seen in sex-testing in professional sport and Olympic Games, e.g. Castor Semenya. There is nothing natural in sex and the systematic erasure of intersex and non-conforming bodies is a testament to the policing necessary to maintain this kind of binary system.

### *Further reading:*

De Beauvoir, S. (1949) *The Second Sex*. Trans. H.M. Parshley. Middlesex, UK: Penguin.

## Gender

There are different feminist conceptualizations of this term. In its performative aspect, gender refers to the performative repetition of acts associated with expressions of femininity and masculinity. The performative character of gender is indicated by the fact that we learn to perform our gender through time and continuous repetitions of actions and behaviors. In this sense, we can imagine gender as a kind of theatrical script that dictates how people act, interact and how they perceive themselves and others must be based on characteristics, and behaviors deemed masculine or feminine. Most importantly, the material realities of gender determine the control over power and access to resources that individuals have within a given social context.

As a social construction, gender categorizes people’s behaviors, interests, and characteristics in accordance with a naturalized binary logic either male or female. The set of roles and expectations that are ascribed to women and men can vary from one culture to the other. Feminist and queer studies

have challenged this binarism by disclosing that individuals experience and identify with a wide range of genders. As an analytical tool, gender allows examining how the power system and social discourses construct gender binarism and social hierarchies according to the value assigned to certain gender expressions and identities (normally, male and heterosexual).

### *Further readings:*

Butler, J. (2011). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Abingdon: Routledge.

“Perspectives of Sex and Gender”. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, available online: <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/feminism-gender/#GenTer>

## Gender identity and expression

Gender identity & expression is how a person identifies her/him/themselves. It is the internal experience and naming of our gender. Gender identity can be fluidity expressed in a variety of ways over a lifetime. Considering the limited language for gender, naming one’s gender identity can be a complex and changing matter. As gender is a spectrum there are more than two gender identities (woman and man) with which people can identify with.

Gender expression is the way we communicate our gender to other people, through mannerisms, attires, and performance. It also includes how communities and society perceive and shape our gender which often enforces conformity with those gender roles and norms that a society holds. Gender expression differs from identity as we cannot assume a person’s gender identity based on their gender expression.

### *Further reading:*

“GLAAD Media Reference Guide”. *GLAAD.org*. Available online: <https://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender>



## Gender norms

Set of rules and shared social expectations that differentiate expected behavior on the basis of gender. Gender norms are social constructions and therefore are mutable, varying across and within societies, cultures, and time. They define access to and control over power, resources, and opportunities. Gender norms are not only internalized at a personal and community level but often are embedded in institutions.

### *Further reading:*

Connell, R., & Pearse, R. (2015). "Gender Norms: Are They the Enemy of Women's Rights?" *United Nations Research Institute for Social Development*. Available online: <http://www.unrisd.org/beijing+20-connell-pearse>

## Gender roles

Gender roles: constructions or mandates regarding behaviors, values, and attitudes that society considers appropriate and determine how a person should behave according to male and female categorizations. Gender roles are products of the socialization between individuals, communities and their milieus and dictate which sort of behaviors are believed and accepted to be appropriate for which sex. They force people to perform what society expects of them, limiting what an individual can do.

For instance: traditionally, many Western societies have assigned women a role that requires more emotional labor in the home than men by historically excluding women from participating in public life. This maintains the cultural construction that women should behave in a caring way towards family and community members because they 'naturally' have greater emotional resources than men. The naturalization of this role has contributed to gender inequalities manifested in forms of the unequal division of unpaid care work. It is important to underline those gender roles are mutable, dependent on context and therefore constantly in a state of flux.

### *Further reading:*

Blackstone, A. (2003). "Gender Roles and Society" in *Human Ecology: An Encyclopedia of Children, Families, Communities, and Environments*, edited by Julia R. Miller, Richard M. Lerner, and Lawrence B. Schiamberg. Santa Barbara, CA: pp. 335-338.

## Gender stereotyping

Preconceived ideas or biased perceptions of certain gender or group that tend to reinforce social exclusion and discrimination. The essentialization of characteristics and traits of certain individuals or groups based on their gender can lead to discrimination particularly when a person challenges the assumptions others have about his/her/their gender. Non-binary people often experience systemic discrimination and violence because of gender stereotyping or misgendering.

## Gender variance and gender nonconformity

Gender expression that moves fluidly within a wider spectrum of gender identities; that is, a gender expression differs from conventional expectations of masculinity and femininity. Gender nonconformity is a term to describe people whose gender expression expands on or does not conform to given gender roles and norms. This term might be considered as problematic in certain contexts as it implies that conformity is desirable rather than a harmful social construction. Transgression of gender roles and norms often brings social ostracization and violence.

### *Further readings:*

"GLAAD Media Reference Guide". *GLAAD.org*. Available online: <https://www.glaad.org/reference/transgender>

## Binarism

A hierarchical classification system (male/female, body/male, nature/culture, north/south, western/eastern, gay/straight, margin/center, empowered/disempowered, etc.) that reduces the diversity of identities, bodies, desires, relations, and cultures in two opposed and antagonistic aspects. Such reductive and simplistic classification omits and silences the limitless living potentialities and infinite ways of being(s) and becoming(s). Oppositional in nature, binary thinking regards the formation of identities as stable and static, not as ongoing and dynamic processes shaped both by contexts and relations.

### *Further readings:*

Dea, S. (2016). *Beyond the Binary: Thinking About Sex and Gender*. Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press.



## Gender binarism

A typical hierarchical understanding of gender solely contemplating feminine and masculine expressions. Gender binarism positions women and men as exclusionary categories. This hierarchy legitimizes men's dominant positions, placing women in subservience conditions.

### *Further reading:*

Ortner, B. Sh. (1974). *Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?* In M. Z. Rosaldo and L. Lamphere (eds), *Woman, culture, and society*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp. 68-87.

## Gender diversity

A broad term used to describe the existence of various different gender identities and expressions that move beyond the binary categorizations, either woman or man. The gender binary system is constraining because it fails to encapsulate those people who have non-binary gender identities and expressions as well as those who were born intersex. The term exposes the fallacy of the binary gender system and opens space to defy normalized gender norms, roles, identities, expressions, and relations.

### *Further readings:*

"What is Gender Diversity?" *Gender Agenda.org*. Available online: <https://genderrights.org.au/information-hub/what-is-gender-diversity/>

"Gender diversity terminology", *Penn State University*. Available online: <https://studentaffairs.psu.edu/campus-community-diversity/lgbtq-community/explore-lgbtq-resources/identity-based-resources/gender-terms>

## Cisgender

A term used to describe a person whose gender identity corresponds with the sex assigned to them at birth.

## Womxn

A term that shows the inclusion of trans, nonbinary, womxn of color and all marginalized genders, embracing any other form of 'femme' presenting individuals.

## Performativity

Its genealogy can be traced to the philosopher John Austin who in the 1950s developed the speech act theory naming 'performative utterances'. According to Austin, performative utterances are sentences that not only describe a given reality but also alter the social reality they represent. In 1990, queer and feminist philosopher Judith Butler reinterpreted the term to develop the concept of gender performativity. According to Butler, gender is a social construction of how bodies should act or perform; there are a set of repetitive actions and behaviors that create our gender; this acting is gender performativity. However, Butler argues in favor of forms of gender identities that trouble this construction by overexposing gender binarism.

### *Further reading:*

Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Abingdon: Routledge.

## Oppression

A dynamic and contextual process by which a group of society acquires power and privilege through the systemic exploitation and control over other groups, which are pushed down into lower strata of the social order (Pincus, 2006, p. 145). Systems of oppression are embedded in beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, socio-cultural structures, institutionalized policies and ideologies. Hence, oppression cannot simply be regarded as an attitudinal component towards an individual or group of people. Rather oppression should be viewed as deeply implanted in social structures and policies, creating thus supportive material conditions for its existence. Besides, systems of oppression such as classism, (hetero) sexism, ableism, racism and other oppressive "isms" are interconnected in ways that nurture, reinforce and validate each aspect of existence.

### *Further readings:*

Pincus, F.L. (2006). *Understanding Diversity: An Introduction to Class, Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation*. (Co-edited with Howard J. Erlich) Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Young, I. M. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference*. Princeton: Princeton University.



## Marginalization

The multilayered and dynamic process of being made peripheral or silenced in a social group, preventing individuals and groups from having access to and control over resources and power. The marginalization of an individual or group because of their gender, class, age and other identity markers should be seen as a relational and socially reproduced phenomenon, mutable across time and space. Marginality can be experienced as multiple because the different dimensions of marginalization are cumulative and interconnected. This process often operates through the practice of subjugation and domination which itself is contextually variable.

### **Further readings:**

Singharoy, D. (2010). *Marginalization and the Marginalized: Reflections on the Relational-Cumulative Dynamics in Surviving Against Odds*: Marginalized in the Globalized World, Manohar.

Mansoor, A. (2016). “Marginalization” in Third World Feminism: Its Problematics and Theoretical Reconfiguration”. *Palgrave Communications*. 2(16026) DOI: 10.1057/palcomms.2016.26.

## Discrimination

Actions that make an unfavorable distinction or deny equal treatment to persons perceived belonging to certain social categories or groups. People can experience discrimination in wide-ranging ways which are not always overtly evident. There are different types of discrimination such as individual, institutional and structural which often normalize differential and/or harmful treatment on the subordinated groups. Institutional discrimination is often systemic, insidious and interconnected.

### **Further readings:**

Pincus, F.L. (1999). *Race and Ethnic conflict: Contending Views on Prejudice, Discrimination, and Ethnoviolence*. Boulder, CO: Westview.

Pincus, F.L. (2006). *Understanding diversity: An Introduction to Class, Race, Gender, and Sexual orientation*. (Co-edited with Howard J. Erlich) Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner

## Disability

The socio-cultural constructions of human variation from an abled bodied perspective which normalizes ‘normative’ bodies as superior and differently abled bodies as deficient. People with a wide variety of mental, physical and emotional differences are constructed as incapable and flawed. These contextual constructions create systems of exclusion that discriminate and stigmatize human differences which are not regarded as a richness rather than as innate inferiority, deficiency or pathology to medicalize and cure.

### **Further reading:**

Garland- Thomson, Rosemarie. (2005). *Feminist Disability Studies*. Chicago Journals, 30(2), pp. 1557-1587.

## Ableism

A system of oppression that privileges able-bodied people whereas oppresses, discriminates and stigmatizes differently abled and neuro-divergent people or those who have perceived to have disabilities. Ableism can take the form of either an institutionalized system of oppression or personal prejudice or discrimination.

### **Further reading:**

McRuer, Robert. (2006). *Crip Theory: Cultural Signs of Queerness and Disability*. New York University Press.



## Ageism

The system of inequality which privileges the non-old at the expense of the elderly (Calasanti, 2003). This system fuels and normalizes both at a social and institutional level any stereotyping, discrimination and marginalization on the grounds of a person's age or a generation. In spite of the fact that age is a social construction it is important to consider that age categories have material realities along with social meanings ascribed to these categories as they shape access to privilege and resources.

### **Further readings:**

Calasanti, T. M. (2003). "Theorizing Age Relations." In the *Need for Theory: Critical Approaches to Social Gerontology*, Simon Biggs, Ariela Lowenstein, and Jon Hendricks, (eds.) pp.199–218. New York: Baywood Press.

Calasanti, T. M., and Slevin, K. F. (2001). *Gender, Social Inequalities, and Aging*. Walnut Creek, CA: Alta Mira Press.

## Class

Divides and structures groups' population and relations according to labor and the means of production. According to Marx, class division is a precondition of capitalism and constitutes the basis of a social stratification and inequality struggle. Class is also about power as it shapes control over resources, participation, and self-determination by exploiting and substituting the real value of human life and labor for the symbolic value of monetary gain.

### **Further reading:**

Federici, S. (2018). *El Patriarcado del Salario. Críticas Feministas al Marxismo*. Tinta Limón. Buenos Aires.

## Classism

A system of oppression that privileges and assigns a high status to wealthy people whereas working-class people and their cultures are oppressed, stigmatized and disadvantaged because of their lack of wealth (Fiske-Rusciano & Cyrus, 2005, p. 346). The stigmatization and discrimination of working-class people is sustained and exuberated by capitalism which deepens unequal distribution of power, privilege and wealth. Classism is not simply a prejudice or discrimination based on social class but an institutionalized system of oppression that nurtures and legitimizes the power and privilege of the capitalist middle and upper classes. The latter owns all the means of production and profits from the labor of working-class people. Classism cannot be understood without referring to capitalism, class struggle and exploitation of working-class people.

### **Further readings:**

Fiske-Rusciano, R. & Cyrus, V. (2005). *Experiencing Race, Class, and Gender in the United States*, fourth edition. Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Gorski, P. (2006-07). "Savage Unrealities: Classism and Racism in Ruby Payne's Framework". *Rethinking Schools*, 21(2, Winter) pp. 16- 19.

## Race

Race is not a biological category but a socio-political construct that classifies people into groups based on physical traits, religion, and genetics. From a historical perspective, it has been built upon a set of ideologies based on a 'genetic reality' that situate(d) whiteness, as a racial feature that inherently holds superiority and more intelligence. Racial identity is a culturally constructed and fluid term. People can racially perceive themselves and can be perceived by others differently according to the context they are situated in and the ways in which that context defines racial characteristics. As such, racial identity shifts according to how the person experiences it and the assumptions of others within given social fabric.



## Racism

An organized system of subjugation socially constructed and institutionally maintained based on a claimed inherent racial/ethnic/cultural/ religious inferiority of a group. It enables and sustains subjection, denigration, and objectification of groups considered to be inferior because of their race, skin color, ethnicity, background, accent, culture or religion. Racism can be internalized by incorporating racist beliefs and attitudes in one's worldviews. It is structural because it permeates every aspect of the social fabric and institutional control.

### *Further readings:*

Coates, T. (2015). *Between the World and Me*. New York: Spiegel & Grau

Ngozi Adichie, C. (2013). *Americanah*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf

Moraga, C. & Anzaldúa, G. (Eds.) (2015). *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color*. London: Persephone Press.

## Sexism

The perpetuation of systemic oppression and discrimination based on perceived sex or gender of an individual and the belief that men are superior to women. Differences in sex or gender are regarded as foundational grounds to establish the superiority of one group over the other group. Sexist oppression and discrimination are means to assert and maintain male domination and power. Sexism operates through sexist ideology, practices, and institutions. Even groups who experience sexism might (un)consciously reproduce their oppression and exploitation. Sexism animatedly interacts with other forms of oppression such as racism, classism, ableism shaping the experience of individuals within a given context.

### *Further reading:*

Napikoski, L. (2019). "What Is Sexism? Defining a Key Feminist Term". Available online: <https://www.thoughtco.com/what-is-sexism-3529186>

## Heterosexism

The oppression and marginalization of individuals who do not identify as heterosexual, those who are gender-nonbinary, intersex or asexual. It is manifested through negative beliefs, attitudes, behaviors, and practices that denigrate and stigmatize LGBTQI+ people and non-heteronormative forms of relations and family structures. Heterosexism considers heterosexual relations and feelings between a woman and man as the norm, in doing so, every relationship that does not adhere to the norm is considered deviant or immoral. Hetero-sexism is often promoted and (re)produced at multiple levels in order to maintain heteronormativity and leads to systemic marginalization and social exclusion of anyone who challenges the heterosexual family structure on which neoliberal capitalism relies on. This includes limiting that person's access to resources, jobs, healthcare, education, social security, parental and marriage rights.

### *Further reading:*

Rich, A. (1980). *Compulsory Heterosexuality and Lesbian existence*. Signs, 5, pp. 631–660.

## Discourse

A contingent social system of signifiers and meanings that confer power (according to who uses it) to determine and/or name reality. Discourse produces knowledge(s) and meanings that structure the constitution of social relations, through its acceptance as a social fact and legitimate truth. According to Foucault, discourses are means of forming subjectivities and power relations that constitute our very bodies within the meaning systems of our social world. In his view, the formation of identities, social relations, and practices are related to historically specific discourses. It is important to consider that when discourses produce meanings, knowledge(s) and subjectivities they mask their political intentions to sustain the ideas that are supposedly objective and universal. Discourses produce and fix specific meanings by disqualifying other dissenting meanings and interpretations related to bodies and social relations.

### *Further reading:*

Foucault, M. (1972). *The Archeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language*. New York: Pantheon Books.



## Power

An attribute not to be possessed by anyone. In Foucauldian (1980) terms, power rather than concentrated is distributed throughout society and social relations, deeply embedded into a network of practices, institutions, discourses, and technologies. Likewise, it operates at all micro levels of everyday life. Power should not be understood solely as coercive and repressive but rather as creative and productive because it emerges and prevails from every social interaction and practice that form the fabric of society. We all are vessels of power that produce knowledge and desire. Through knowledge, power influences and controls our behaviors, pressuring us to ensure we conform to constructed norms and such conformity is achieved through desire. The desire to conform to the norms is how we construct conceptions of normality and deviance, making the former appear natural, morally right and positive. Technologies of power are both individualizing and totalizing, operating and regulating our very bodies through self-surveillance and self-regulatory practices adopted in the 21st century that previously would have been the role of punitive punishment and public humiliation.

### *Further readings:*

Faubion, J. & Hurley, R. (ed). (2002). *Power: The Essential Works of Michel Foucault 1954-1984*. New York: Penguin Books.

Foucault, M., & Gordon, C. (1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972-1977*. New York: Pantheon Books.

## Privilege

Rights or benefits granted and unearned or available to a particular person or group in detriment of others. These rights and benefits constitute forms of power given to certain individuals or groups based on the grounds like gender, nationality, sexuality, ability, etc. Privilege is closely linked to the concept of oppression as it constructs social relations and practices by putting certain individuals or groups at disadvantage making it impossible for them to thrive in society. For an example of how the concept of privilege can be applied we can refer to the notion of ‘white privilege’ which McIntosh (2008) defines: as a list of unearned advantages that come from being a member of a dominant group.

Unacknowledged privilege leads to assumptions about the capacities of other races on the grounds of stereotypes rather than to the access of resources. For example, the access to education that many white people are afforded due to material wealth is seen as a personal accomplishment and serves as proof of racial or cognitive superiority rather than as a result of historical inequality and racial prejudice. White privilege is built on a set of established principles and codes that define whiteness as the center of the heteronormative matrix on which patriarchal dominance is anchored. According to it, the white, heterosexual male is at the center, placing all others in varying degrees of subordination and therefore, according to modernist thinking, they have the god given responsibility and mission to civilize those individuals and groups not considered white. This kind of paternalism has been used to justify the exploitation of resources and hundreds of years of slavery.

### *Further reading:*

McIntosh, P. (2008). “White Privilege and Male Privilege” in *The Feminist Philosophy Reader*, Bailey, A. and Cuomo, C., (eds.), New York: McGraw Hill.

## Colonization

A process of conquest and domination established when white Europeans settled in the Americas, Australia, New Zealand, much of Africa and Asia, for political and economic benefits. To justify conquest and establish a system of administrative control over natural resources and land, the European colonizers construed the colonized population as inferior. The construction of colonized subjects as barbaric, savage and non-humans justified the cruelties that the civilizing mission of European colonization brought. It also normalized the dehumanizing exploitation of and violence against the colonized population.

The systematic exploitation and oppression of the colonized took many forms such as genocide, dispossession of lands, languages, knowledge(s), expressiveness, relations, images, symbols, beliefs, cultures, etc. Colonies served also as cultural sites to glorify and (re)produce the Western civilization principles through the continuous othering and dehumanizing of native communities.

### *Further reading:*

Lugones, M. (2010). “Toward a Decolonial Feminism”. *Hypatia*, 25(4), pp. 742-759



## Neoliberal capitalism

A political and economic system of governance wherein private market functions penetrate every domain of human action and replace almost all social and economic activities. The state is no longer a provider of public welfare but is a promoter of competition and markets. In the name of preserving the rights and interests of capital, governments might even sacrifice democratic and social justice demands. Hence any potential crises will be solved at the expense of underprivileged people by shrinking welfare service.

Economic principles guide almost every aspect of human life based on the principle that all economic and social problems have a market solution. From a historical perspective, sexism, racism, and classism have been a core part of strategies for capital accumulation. Neoliberal capitalism creates an unequal distribution of resources, power, and opportunities both at the national and global scale. This unequal distribution is structured along gender, race, ability, ethnic and class lines in a way that some lives are deemed more valuable than others.

### **Further reading:**

Fraser, Nancy. (2013). *Fortunes of Feminism: From State-Managed Capitalism to Neoliberal Crisis*. London: Verso.

## Patriarchal society

Historically, it can be defined as a social, male-centered structure wherein men hold primary power, status, privileges that predominate in the social, legal, religious, and economic systems. Patriarchy also describes a set of preconceived ideas that justify male dominance over women and other disadvantaged groups. There is no singular, monolithic and universal patriarchal framework because power hierarchy and relations have cultural, social and historical specificities. Feminist and queer movements around the world have elaborated theoretical and practical tools to discredit it. Notably, regarding postcolonial contexts, Latin American authors such as Lorena Cabnal or Julieta Paredes argue on a different approximation of patriarchy as a historical junction between the pre-colonial and the western patriarchal colonialism.

### **Further readings:**

Lerner, G. (1987). *The Creation of Patriarchy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Paredes, J. (2014). *Hilando Fino Desde el Feminismo Comunitario*. México: Cooperativa el Rebozo.

## Linguistic diversity

An expression of the diversity of human languages and cultures, markers of individual and collective identities. However, linguistic diversity is often accompanied by linguistic stratification. This concept unfolds how relations between languages are hierarchically structured in a way that certain languages (e.g. English) acquire dominant position and power at the expense of subordinating minoritarian ones. This stratification process does not only privilege one language over others but subjects linguistically disadvantaged groups to discrimination because of insufficient language proficiency or the ways of speaking the dominant language.

The prestige and value that certain languages and their speakers have acquired, it has led to linguistic discrimination of languages not spoken by the majority, dialects, creole languages whose speakers face structural barriers in accessing the labor market, civic participation education and health systems. For instance, the use of English as a global language produces social injustice and inequalities for other linguistic communities. Lack of linguistic diversity operates as a medium for social exclusion and marginalization of minoritarian linguistic communities.

### **Further readings:**

Idiazabal, I. & Pérez- Caurel, M. (eds) (2019). *“Linguistic Diversity, Minority Languages and Sustainable Development”* Universidad del País Vasco Euskal Herriko Unibertsitateko Argitalpen Zerbitzua.

Piller. I. (2016). *Linguistic Diversity and Social Justice*. Oxford University Press.



## Feminisms

Feminisms encompass heterogeneous, context-driven theories, movements, lifestyles, political positioning(s) and praxes that work towards deconstructing oppressive patriarchal power structures and relations. They challenge and interrogate the dialogical and contextual connections between power structures and relations that oppress, marginalize or exploit people on the bases of their gender, class, race, ability, sexual orientation, nationality, etc. Feminisms have been always characterized by a willingness and openness to assert a wide range of competing voices, perspectives, interests, strategies, and practices with the purpose of bringing transformative change and social justice. As such, feminisms urge the commitment to establishing relationships and organizational cultures that do not reproduce the power relations we are questioning in the world outside.

### *Further readings:*

Ngozi Adichie, C. (2014). *We Should All Be Feminists*. Fourth State.

Varela, N. (2008). *Feminismo Para Principiantes*. Ediciones Bolsillo. Barcelona.

Curiel, O. & Galindo, M. (2015). *Descolonización y Despatriarcalización de y Desde Los Feminismos de Abya Yala*. Acsur. Las Segovias.

## Queer theory

It is not easy to provide a definition of what queer theory is, as it is related to what is disruptive. Queer theory moves against fixed and conventional understandings of sexual formations. It is a subversive body of theory and practice that challenges notions of finite identity categories and norms which create a binary understanding of sexualities. Overturning society's conventional views of sex, sexuality, and desire queer theory exposes how heterosexuality is a social construction.

### *Further readings:*

De Lauretis, T. (1991). *Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities*. Indiana: Indiana University Press.

Richardson, D., McLaughlin, J., & Casey, Mark E. (2006) *Intersections Between Feminist and Queer Theory*. Palgrave Macmillan.

## Gender budgeting

It is a transformative policy which unpacks the social content of macro-policies, through analyzing from gender lenses how public resources are allocated and spent. It seeks to provide a more equitable collection and distribution of public resources between women and men. In other words, through scrutinizing the impact and effectiveness of public spending, gender budgeting attempts to remedy discrimination against women and address gender inequalities. In principle, gender budgeting should be a participatory process, opened to public consultation and input throughout the preparation and monitoring of the budget.

## Intersectional budgeting

There is no widely accepted definition of this term, yet it is used on a few occasions such as in the research "Towards Budgeting for Dalit Women in Tamilnadu - An Intersectional Approach". We define intersectional budgeting as a process of integrating an intersectional perspective into budget policy and cycle. This process requires an analysis of the distribution of public or organizations' resources and spending from intersectional lenses. It considers the different needs, experiences and living conditions of people on the basis of intersections of identity markers (gender identity, sexual orientation, class, ability, age, religion, ethnicity, immigration or refugee status, etc.) to determine the differential impact that budget has on people's lives.

It helps to examine how distribution of resources and budgetary decisions affect social inequalities. This analysis should include an *ex ante* evaluation that measures to what extent the allocation of resources and spending affects social justice. When undertaking an intersectional analysis of budgeting we have also to consider how certain political and economic systems such as neoliberal capitalism or globalization do not result in a high standard of living for everybody. Rather they exacerbate inequalities through the systemic exploitation of underprivileged, marginalized people and natural resources. For instance, gender, race, and class inequalities increase in the course of capital accumulation and globalization. Intersectional budgeting should be participatory by allowing citizens/or members of an organization to play a role in deciding where and how public resources should be allocated and spent. In this way, it will offer to historically underprivileged citizens the



opportunity to influence governmental or organizational decisions on public spending. Intersectional budgeting is about both the content of budgets and the process of budget-making.

It pays attention to how budget decisions are made, which are the suppositions and priorities that inform the budget and who makes budgeting decisions and who is left outside. Intersectional budgeting demands a changing of the structures and processes which sustain intersecting social inequalities. Integrating an intersectional approach to budgeting requires a continuous commitment to systemic budget readjustments to prioritize the changing needs of the members to who your organization serves.

**Further reading:**

“Towards Budgeting for Dalit Women in Tamilnadu - An Intersectional Approach”. (2013). *Social Watch* - Tamilnadu. Available online: <http://www.dotcue.net/images/file/Towards%20Budgeting%20for%20Dalit%20women%20in%20Tamilnadu%20-%20An%20Intersectional%20Approach,%20June%202013.pdf>

## Social justice

It is a political aim to construct societies and institutions that embrace difference as richness and ensure that every person has equal access to and control over power, resources, rights, and opportunities regardless of gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, ability, race, class, location, immigration status, age, religion, ethnicity, and other identity markers. Social justice is a communal vision that fundamental dignity, rights, intersectional equality, freedom, and safety are accessible to all and not a privilege of some. It is a political praxis of recognizing how interconnected systems of oppression and powers are deeply ingrained in our institutional practices, social relations, organizational structures, and cultures. As such, it encompasses systemic reflections and commitment to undertaking actions that undermine the status quo and productive work of these unjust structures both at a personal and collective level.

**Further reading:**

McLaren, M. A. (2019). *Women's Activism, Feminism, and Social Justice*. Oxford University Press.







## CHECKLISTS *and* PROPOSALS



## Why Checklist

We believe that intersectional mainstreaming is a continuous process that starts with collective self-awareness in any organization, becoming an organic part of all organizational structure that eventually develops into material culture. With material culture, we mean that intersectionality becomes ingrained in all structures, policies, programs, projects, partnerships, and activities of our organization and everyday work of volunteers. In this fashion, the intersectional perspective will be cemented on the foundational basis of the organization, getting diffused in every institutional cell and informing the work relationships. It will be an effective tool to ensure that social justice, solidarity, and equality are not void concepts but material realities.

Members of an organization should go through a process of intersectional awareness, understanding and capacity building. They should receive ongoing intersectionality training and capacity building workshops to ensure that the practices and activities of each working unit are informed by intersectional concepts. Intersectional mainstreaming requires a careful examination of the organizational structure and work praxes. The examination is conducted to quantify and understand whether these structure and praxes destabilize or succumb to the multiple inequalities that asymmetrical power relations and interlocking system oppressions foment. This requires the integration of an intersectional perspective in each organizational unit to ensure that the unique experiences, needs, interests, and backgrounds of our members are prioritized.

Intersectional mainstreaming should be informed by intersectional responsive situational analysis and impact assessment, contributing to equal empowerment of all members. Intersectional responsive analysis and impact assessment are crucial tools for intersectional mainstreaming as they serve to identify and address the underlying causes of intersecting inequalities. The deployment of these tools acknowledges that women, men, and gender-nonconforming people are not homogenous categories, having the same needs, interests, and experiences.

Intersectionality mainstreaming takes into account how the intersections of identity markers such as gender identity, gender expression, sex, sexual orientation, class, race, religion or belief, ethnicity, ability, age, religion, immigration or refugee status, etc. in combination with existing systems of oppression (neoliberal capitalism, globalization, neo-colonization, etc.) shape access to and control over resources, power, and opportunities. The contextual analysis of these simultaneous intersections helps us to understand and address multiple and interconnected forms of discrimination and social inequalities that an individual may experience, simultaneously paying heed to how these forms sustain each other.

Intersectional mainstreaming goes beyond the “add and stirring approach” and affirmative actions (quota system) as it requires that we regard the eradication of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination, structural inequalities and power structures as the sustaining pillars of democratic, just and fair societies. There are different possible approaches for intersectional mainstreaming, varying from integrating intersectional perspective into the existent organizational structure and practices to a transformational approach. The latter approach looks in-depth at how to make any organization more inclusive in intersectional terms.

In this section of the toolkit, you will find a limited collection of checklists that can help the members and volunteers of organizations to mainstream intersectionality in their working units and practice. The questions forming each checklist serve to call attention to various aspects of the organizational structure and culture; to reflect upon the status quo in the organization and further steps you could take to ensure that the intersectional approach is incorporated into the fabric of any organization.

<sup>9</sup> For more details read proposals under the project and agenda checklist.

<sup>10</sup> Idem

<sup>11</sup> The phrase refers to the acknowledgment of marginalized groups without considering the perspectives of those groups to inform and transform institutional policies, programs and projects. For instance, adding women of color to existing policies would not improve their situations if these policies do not incorporate their standpoints and concerns. For more information read: Harding, S. (1995). Just add women and stir? In *Missing Links: Gender Equity in Science and Technology for Development*. *United Nations Commission on Science and Technology for Development*.





# *Decision-making*



## Checklist

The aim of this checklist is to reflect whether the intersectional perspective is integrated into the decision-making structure and process of your organization. Decision making should be guided by transparency and based on a bottom-up approach, prioritizing the voices of the least empowered and most marginalized members of your organization.

- ☒ Is the selection of decision-makers an inclusive process?
- ☒ Who holds the power in the decision-making process? Are the decision-making processes and procedures questioning power relations and structures?
- ☒ Does leadership represent the diversity of the organization? Is it inclusive of less privileged members who are underrepresented and socially excluded?
- ☒ How are decisions made within the organization, collectively or by management?
- ☒ If decisions are made in a physical space - is it easily accessible for everyone from an intersectional and time perspective?
- ☒ Is it clear to all members of the organization how decisions are made? Can they easily participate or challenge the process if they wish to?
- ☒ How power and privilege are shared in the organizational structure? Can power be held accountable?
- ☒ Is there any hierarchy within the organizational structure or is it more decentralized and circular with power and privileges being equally shared among members?
- ☒ To what extent are the policy priorities, annual work plan, budget and annual activity reports of your organization informed by situated intersectional analysis and impact assessment?

- ☒ Do the management board review organizational policies to analyze whether they account for the needs and interests of marginalized groups and members?
- ☒ Are individuals with expertise in intersectional mainstreaming involved in the decision-making process?
- ☒ Is there any working unit, task force, policy and/or action plan that addresses questions of representation and decision-making from an intersectional perspective?
- ☒ Does the organization run surveys for assessing the different needs that womxn, LGBTQI+ communities and differently abled people have regarding access to learning mobility opportunities and professional development programs?
- ☒ If the organization applies membership fees, are these fees affordable towards socio-economically disadvantaged groups? Are there fee waiver processes available for underrepresented groups or those individuals who experience multiple inequalities?



## Proposals

- 1 The leadership should embody the diversity of the community members. Those who are often excluded from leadership positions (often women, racialized, differently abled, non-binary people, etc.) should be supported to take up positions through mentorship or succession programs.
- 2 Promote and support the leadership of those who have been marginalized and socially excluded and center their suggestions into any decision and policymaking agenda and initiatives.
- 3 Create a more diverse membership plan through avoiding tokenism and without expecting members to represent the interests and speak on behalf of an entire group.
- 4 Ensure that management board members understand the intersectional perspective and different modes of implementing it. Provide regular training to management board members on intersectional concepts, tools, and techniques.
- 5 Seek regular feedback on the decision-making process to ensure that everyone in the organization has a clear understanding of how decisions are made, and can critique or challenge the organization for transformative change. Pay attention to soliciting feedback from members and groups who hold less privilege and are more likely to be left out in the decision-making process.
- 6 Reflect on whether the decisions made are responsive to intersectional analysis or rather if they privilege the needs of already privileged members. If so, find ways to hold decision-makers accountable for official policies, ensuring that all voices are heard with equal weight.
- 7 Make sure that there is a periodic change in the holders of official power, instituting short term periods and mandatory enforced gaps between holding office to reduce instances of nepotism and totalitarianism.
- 8 The organization should run systematic surveys to identify the structural challenges and barriers that women, LGBTQI+, racialized, immigrant and differently abled members face, aiming at making the learning mobility opportunities and professional development programs more inclusive from an intersectional perspective.
- 9 Membership fees establishment should be affordable considering that affordability and/or accessibility are shaped by the contextual and simultaneous interplay of identity markers such as gender identity, class, race, sexual orientations, ability, ethnicity, immigration status, geographical location, etc. that the member inhabits.
- 10 All the decision-making documents (annual work plan, annual activities report; annual budget, etc.) should be available online in an accessible manner and easy-to-read versions, keeping in mind the needs of differently abled and neurodivergent members.
- 11 Disseminate information in a clear and easily accessible way about the decision-making process in your organization. Prior to the decision making, ensure that all the relevant data about the issues on the table are made available to everyone with enough time to review it. This information should not be hidden away in difficult to access webpages but routinely shared, and everyone should know where to find this information if they wish to access it. The minutes of meetings and all financial statements involving key decision-making should be communicated by the designated person and validated by an independent party (i.e. representative from a minority group).
- 12 Depending on the geographical specificities of the organization, consider if having a physical space to make decisions is the best approach. Try to move at least part of the process online if that would enable more people, particularly belonging to marginalized groups, to participate in the process. If not, find ways to make the physical space more accessible to all by providing free transport, accommodation, childcare service ensuring the space itself is optimized for differently abled people.





# *Human Resources*



## Checklist

This checklist calls for an approach to human resources that questions power structures within organizations and invites the creation of more inclusive styles of organizational management. It serves as a resource for employers and volunteer recruiters on adopting an intersectional approach

- ☒ Do hiring policies favor or exclude anyone? Why and on which ground?
- ☒ Are historically marginalized and disadvantaged members encouraged to apply for job positions (transgender, queer, differently abled and neurodivergent people, etc.)?
- ☒ Are non-formal and informal educational experiences recognized during the selection and recruitment process of candidates?
- ☒ How and to what extent does your organization minimize gender, racial, sexual or ability biases during the recruitment and hiring process?
- ☒ Do the recruitment procedures consider intersectional principles (your information brochures and publicity campaigns)?
- ☒ Is the organization promoting work-life balance measures for its staff and volunteers (flexible working arrangements; teleworking, parental, careers and menstrual leave, etc.)?
- ☒ Does the organization ensure there is an intersectional equal pay for equal work?
- ☒ Does the organization provide professional development opportunities for those members who experience intersecting social inequalities and face structural barriers to accessing job positions?
- ☒ Are the members of the organization familiar with intersectionality concepts, techniques, and tools? How are the training needs of any working units' members identified in terms of intersectional mainstreaming and what is the most effective way of meeting them?

- ☒ Is the volunteer work recognized by the organization in a concrete way (volunteer contract, letter of support or recommendation)?
- ☒ Do western values characterize the working culture? Do certain groups dominate this culture?
- ☒ Is there any internal policy, structure or reporting procedure in place to address cases of wrongful treatment, harassment and discrimination (homo/bi/transphobia, racism, ableism, ageism, (hetero) sexism, classism, etc.)? If yes, what kind of support is given to members who are subjected to intersectional forms of discrimination or harassment? Does every member know who to contact in the case of harassment and what the line of communication is if the immediate superior is part of the problem?
- ☒ Does the organization gather systematic information and undertake consultations to spot and remove any structural barriers employees or volunteers may experience?



## Proposals

- 1** Review recruitment procedures to reach out to marginalized and disadvantaged candidates. The organization should identify and address the structural barriers to intersectional equality in order to enact systemic and meaningful change. Through an intersectional analysis of workplace structures and recruitment procedures, you can capture the interplays between multiple forms of inequalities experienced at the individual level, structural inequalities within the organization and forms of oppression produced by systems of power. Through analyzing and tackling the forces that limit equality, employers can challenge power relations at the workplace and achieve meaningful equality and tangible inclusion.
- 2** Transform the organization's work culture to make employees and volunteers feel included, recognized, understood and respected. The workplace culture should embrace differences and cultivate a sense of communal solidarity, empathy, and care. It should move away from a culture which exclusively centers on western values that praise rationality, objectivity, competitiveness and production. Moving away from western workplace culture means leaving behind a culture that constructs the workplace in accordance with the interests, needs and values of white western cisgender men.
- 3** Volunteer and job advertisement, as well as interviews, should use an intersectional inclusive language and images, avoiding usage of male stereotyped words like "dominant", "competitive" or "agile" that exclude women, LGBTQI+ and differently abled people. Similarly, selection criteria to determine the hiring and promotion of candidates should not favor a gender or racial stereotypical profile.
- 4** Recognize the diverse knowledge(s) and experiences that job applicants have acquired through non-formal and informal educational opportunities. Consider that access to formal education is not a question of meritocracy but it often reflects the gender, racial, class privilege that applicants hold.
- 5** Put in place inclusive rewards systems based on intersectional equal pay for equal work. For instance, equal pay policies often center on white cisgender women but do not consider that trans women of color might be more affected by pay inequities. Consider that pay inequities are results of multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination based on gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, disability, age, etc. Interrogate how the dynamic interplays between power structures such as capitalism, and globalization sustain and exuberates pay inequities.
- 6** Set up internal structures, policies, and processes for employees and volunteers to raise grievances about discrimination and harassment, such as trustee contact points. The course of creating these structures and policies should be a collective effort to ensure all voices are heard and all the members feel represented. Communicate the existence of these positions to all volunteers and employees. The persons who serve as trustee contact points should apply the utmost levels of confidentiality, empathy, respect and understanding. Establish inclusive grievance procedures that avoid re-victimization of volunteers and employees, guided by intersectionality principles.
- 7** Assess the knowledge that the staff and volunteers have on intersectionality. Identify and meet the intersectional training needs across all working units of the organization.
- 8** Recognize volunteer contributions to the organization through the provision of personalized letters of support or acknowledgment.
- 9** Communicate your position on intersectionality on the organization's website à la equal opportunity employer disclaimer. Be upfront!





## *Partnership Development*



## Checklist

The aim of this checklist is to create a partnership team that ensures diversity within its members and establishes partnerships with companies or organizations that cater for the needs of community members. Any partnership should be characterized by shared responsibility, equality, balance of power and have a positive impact on social justice.

- ☒ Do you have a partnership team which is dedicated to social justice?
- ☒ Do you ensure gender, LGBTQI+ and racial representation in the partnership team? Are differently abled and neurodivergent people represented in the partnership team?
- ☒ Do you provide intersectional training to the partnership team members? Have you established appropriate monitoring mechanisms to measure the impact of intersectionality training on the partnership development team?
- ☒ Do you consult members and stakeholders when defining partnership priorities?
- ☒ How and to what extent do you consider the different needs and interests of your members when initiating partnerships? Do your established partnerships prioritize mostly the needs of those members who experience marginalization? If yes, how is it done?
- ☒ Do you have a checklist of requirements a company or an organization must meet in order to become a partner?
- ☒ Do you do background checks before approaching possible partners? E.g. Does the company engage in or can be connected to any kinds of exploitation? Is there gender balance within the company? Does the company ensure diverse representation?



## Proposals

- 1 Have a checklist of requirements a company or an organization must meet in order to become a partner. Underline that you aim at developing partnerships with organizations or companies which contribute to social justice and prevent any forms of exploitation.
- 2 Assign a “background checker” in the partnership team to undertake regular checks, verifying that your potential partners fully embrace intersectionality in their DNA and it is manifested through their activities.
- 3 Make sure that the partnership agreements or memorandums of understanding will generate benefits for members, through prioritizing the needs and interests of less privileged ones. Before initiating a partnership listen to what members want, allowing different perspectives and voices to be heard.
- 4 Encourage members of your organization to propose potential partners, as this creates a bottom-up and democratic structure. Open systemic consultation with members of your organization to define partnership priorities.
- 5 Consider forming partnerships with organizations, equality bodies and social justice groups (LGBTQI+ and feminist collectives) that specialize in gender equality and intersectional topics in order to increase knowledge and acquire expertise about these issues. Strive to collaborate with organizations and groups from different communities to promote transformative change and social justice.
- 6 Communicate the partnership openly on the website, have a dropdown menu on the partnership history to ensure accountability and transparency.
- 7 Ensure that the representation of your partnership team reflects the diversity of the community members. Encourage that women of color, LGBTQI+, differently abled people and ethnic minorities are represented in any positions within your partnership team.
- 8 Provide intersectional training to the members of the partnership team and establish mechanisms to assess the impact of this training on the work of the partnership unit.
- 9 Find ways to ensure independence from governments and corporate partners as such dependency can force organizations to be less oriented towards intersectionality and less responsive to the needs of the members and communities they serve.





# *Projects*



## Checklist

The aim of this checklist is twofold, to reflect upon whether the project support unit and project proposals development integrate an intersectional perspective. The premise behind mainstreaming an intersectional perspective into the project support unit is to affect a radical transformation in how the unit operates and ensure that project thematic areas respond to social justice.

- ☒ Who is making the decision about which projects to apply for?
- ☒ Do you have an open and inclusive space for members to propose project ideas?
- ☒ Do you provide support and guidance to your members to develop and implement project proposals? How and to what extent is your support accessible to all members of your organization?
- ☒ Is there any organizational support for mainstreaming key principles of intersectionality in project proposals?
- ☒ Are there any pre-screening mechanisms to ensure that project proposals align with social justice and intersectionality principles? Is there a way to communicate why and how the project proposal does not align to the members so that learning is possible?
- ☒ Does the project proposal prioritize and account for the unique experiences, needs, interests and concerns of target groups? Does the context-driven analysis take into account the different social, economic, cultural and political situations of target groups? Do all project phases and planned activities integrate a situated intersectional analysis? If yes, how is it done?
- ☒ Is any analysis conducted on how gender inequality simultaneously intersects with different inequalities based on sex, race, age, ability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, class, etc.? To what extent do project activities and deliverables take into account the intersectional perspective?

- ☒ Does the intersectional analysis ensure that data is disaggregated on the basis of intersections of identity markers such as gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, class, ability, race, etc.?
- ☒ Do project objectives and results contribute to achievement of intersectional approach to equality and social justice?
- ☒ How and to what extent are proposed activities inclusive to marginalized and vulnerable groups?
- ☒ How will the project outcomes affect the everyday lives of the target group taking the complexity of intersectional inequalities into account?
- ☒ What risk mitigation measures are taken to redress and remove any intersecting social inequalities or discriminatory effects that proposed activities might perpetuate? Are challenges to the achievement of social justice identified and mitigated?
- ☒ Does the project examine potential barriers that project beneficiaries and team members might face in accessing services such as transportation, physical access barriers, language barriers, childcare, time, access to information, unequal division of care work, etc.? If there are barriers, how can they be overcome?
- ☒ Are proposed monitoring and evaluation mechanisms responsive to intersectionality?
- ☒ Do the proposed communication objectives and materials incorporate an intersectional approach (e.g. usage of intersectional inclusive language and visual representations, address gender stereotyping, promote social justice)?



## Proposals

- 1 Make sure to include the different voices and perspectives of all members when your organization decides about which projects to apply for.
- 2 Create an inclusive, safe and accessible digital space that allows members of your organization to propose project ideas that better meet the needs of your community. Prioritize the voices and needs of those members who experience marginalization.
- 3 Provide systemic and accessible support to the members of your organization to deepen their knowledge and enhance skills on project development and management.
- 4 Provide training to the members of the project support team to increase knowledge on intersectionality and establish pre-screening mechanisms that ensure any project proposals integrate an intersectional perspective.
- 5 Make sure you integrate an intersectional perspective in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of projects. This will ensure that the unique experiences, needs, interests and living conditions of your target groups are prioritized and accounted for.

All project phases should be informed by a situated intersectional analysis and impact assessment. Situated intersectional analysis explores the ways the intersections of gender identity, gender expression, age, race, class, ability and other categories of difference shape access to and control over resources and power within a specific context.

This analysis is sensitive to social and temporal locations of the individuals because it considers identity and positionality as shifting, multiple and contested. It helps to understand and address multiple and intersecting social inequalities that your target groups experience through examining how systems of power (e.g. neoliberal capitalism, heteropatriarchy, nationalism, etc.) simultaneously interact between each other to constitute particular social positioning(s) and reinforce social exclusion.

Through the intersectional responsive situational analysis you can understand local power dynamics and see how these are part of macro-power structures and relations. In this way you can address underlying inequalities that your target groups experience. Whereas, intersectional impact assessment is an *ex ante* evaluation of a project to identify whether the proposed intervention have any consequences in supporting multiple and intersecting inequalities and discriminations.

- 6 In case when you are subcontracting action tasks, make sure to check whether the subcontractor comply with intersectionality principles. These principles should be taken into consideration also when purchasing services and goods.





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# *Communications*



## Checklist

The aim of this section is to reflect upon whether the communication unit contributes to and promotes an intersectional approach to equality. Through the power of language and images, communication mirrors the socio-cultural norms that a society incarnates. It is a powerful means to sustain power structures and (re) produce power relations in each context. Nevertheless, communication can be used as an effective tool to challenge power structures and inequalities they foment. In this sense, it should serve the interests of collective liberation and social justice. Representation in social media matters because marginalized communities remain invisible and largely underrepresented. Through incorporating an intersectional analysis into communication objectives, materials and channels we can better analyze in which ways our communication system challenges power structures and relations.

- ☒ Who makes decisions regarding the communication strategic plan of your association? Who sits in positions of editorial power in your communication unit? Do marginalized and underrepresented members have a say on the communication plan and objectives?
- ☒ Do the communication objectives incorporate an intersectional approach? If yes, how is it done?
- ☒ What is the dominant language that your organization uses to communicate? Is there any space for linguistic diversity?
- ☒ Are your communication channels inclusive to all users? If yes, in which ways?
- ☒ To what extent the language, graphics and visual representations used in your communication materials reinforce or deconstruct gender stereotypes, norms and relations?
- ☒ Do the images and graphics used in your website and social media channels portray often white men explaining something to white women or white men being at the center of discussion and women standing to the margins?

- ☒ Does your communication content reflect exclusively the experiences and needs of white western cisgender men and women? To what extent the language and visual representations in your communication materials avoid racialized sexualization or objectification of women?
- ☒ Does your communication plan identify actions to counteract hate speech, cyber gender-based violence, trolling, doxing and other forms of online attacks that reinforce intersecting inequalities?
- ☒ Do the members of your communications team receive training on intersectionality?



## Proposals

- 1 Communication objectives should respond to the unique experiences, needs, interests and backgrounds of the members of your organization.
- 2 The communication plan should name the specific forms of structural oppression that prevent social justice, including globalization, neo-colonization, heteropatriarchy, neoliberal capitalism, xenophobic nationalism etc. Through naming these power structures, the communication strategy and objectives can pave the way towards meaningful social change.
- 3 Communication materials and social media channels posts should use intersectional inclusive language and visual representations. The materials should avoid reflecting the experiences of dominant groups in the organization rather they should privilege the voices, stories and struggles of those members who are marginalized and underrepresented.
- 4 Communication channels should be inclusive and accessible to all members of the organization. Consider using websites and social media channels that are friendly to differently abled and neurodivergent people.
- 5 Ensure that all genders are equally represented and portrayed in active roles in your communication materials (newsletters, website articles, brochures, reports, etc.). Create space to politicize the existence of non-normative gender identities and expressions.
- 6 Consider the usage of gender inclusive pronouns such as they or them or asking the members what pronouns they prefer and how they see their gender identity. Misgendering someone is both dismissive and disrespectful. For instance, it can occur when you frame the language in a written article as if all your readers are western males and compulsory heterosexual.
- 7 Avoid patronizing, overgeneralizing language and essentialist representations of women and LBGTQI+ people in the communication materials and channels. Overgeneralizing language reinforces gender stereotyping and inflicts a symbolic violence towards people's unique identities and experiences. Both language and visual representations should portray marginalized members and communities as agents of change not as passive disempowered recipients of aid. It is important to avoid language that victimizes people who live in precarious conditions.
- 8 The communication plan should identify effective measures and undertake initiatives to counteract different forms of online hate speech against women, LBGTQI+, differently abled people and minority communities.
- 9 Consider linguistic diversity and various different forms of communications that the members of the organization might express their voices and concerns in. Though English has imposed itself as the language of power and civilization, take measures to undermine such supremacy by using other languages, including minoritarian, dialects, creole, and hybrid ones. In this way your communication will be more inclusive and participatory.





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# *Budgeting*



## Checklist

The aim of this checklist is to reflect whether the intersectional perspective is part of budgeting of any organization. Budget preparation, approval, execution and monitoring should be guided by transparency, prioritizing the needs of the marginalized members, considering social justice aspects. Budgeting should be based on collective discussions about often-conflicting and shifting needs of members. It should prioritize resource allocation to respond to those needs.

- ☒ Are there transparent and accessible budgeting guidelines available that include clear instructions on the budget preparation and approval procedures? Are these guidelines and instructions prepared according to an intersectional approach and made available in an accessible way?
- ☒ Do resource allocation and spending contribute to social justice and cater for the members' particular and shifting needs such as attention to linguistic diversity, physical accessibility, neurodiversity, caring responsibilities, socio-economic background, immigration status, and vulnerability based on the intersections of identity markers?
- ☒ Do the members of the organization influence budgetary decisions on resource allocation and spending? Does the organization hold regular budget consultations with its members?
- ☒ Do members have the possibility to discuss and decide together on resource allocation priorities and the accommodation of their specific needs?
- ☒ Does the budget equitably allocate resources in compliance with intersectionality principles? Is there a significant percentage of projects explicitly dedicated to social justice?
- ☒ Do the procurement and disbursement procedures align with an intersectional approach and is there transparency in how these decisions are made?

- ☒ Do intersectional disaggregated statistics and other qualitative data available inform the preparation, approval, execution and monitoring of the organization's budget?
- ☒ Is there information available on sponsorships and other financial resources?
- ☒ Can members regularly monitor, challenge and provide feedback on the execution of the budget?
- ☒ Are external audits available to check compliance with intersectional budgeting?



## Proposals

- 1 The organization should elaborate detailed budgeting guidelines, periodically revise its priorities, applying an intersectional perspective. Guidelines should be agile to respond to possible changes and specific situations.
- 2 Resource allocation and spending should support specific social justice priorities collectively determined and respond to particular and shifting needs of the members.
- 3 The organization should promote collective and participatory decision making about the budget preparation, approval, execution and monitoring through applying an intersectional approach. Budget priorities should be decided through collective decision-making processes, considering the members' specific changing needs and the established guidelines.
- 4 Information about budgeting should be available, transparent and accessible.
- 5 Make sure that intersectional disaggregated quantitative and qualitative data inform all aspects of budgetary processes. Have systematic budget consultations to identify the differences in needs, situations and living conditions of members.
- 6 Review and audit the budget of the organization periodically and evaluate the degree to which the budget has reduced, exacerbated or maintained multiple and intersecting social inequalities. The conclusions will allow for appropriate and effective budget readjustments.
- 7 Consider introducing intersectionality requirements in procurement and disbursement procedures, using them as instruments to advance social justice. Where possible, purchase services from suppliers supporting underrepresented groups and operate in line with social justice.





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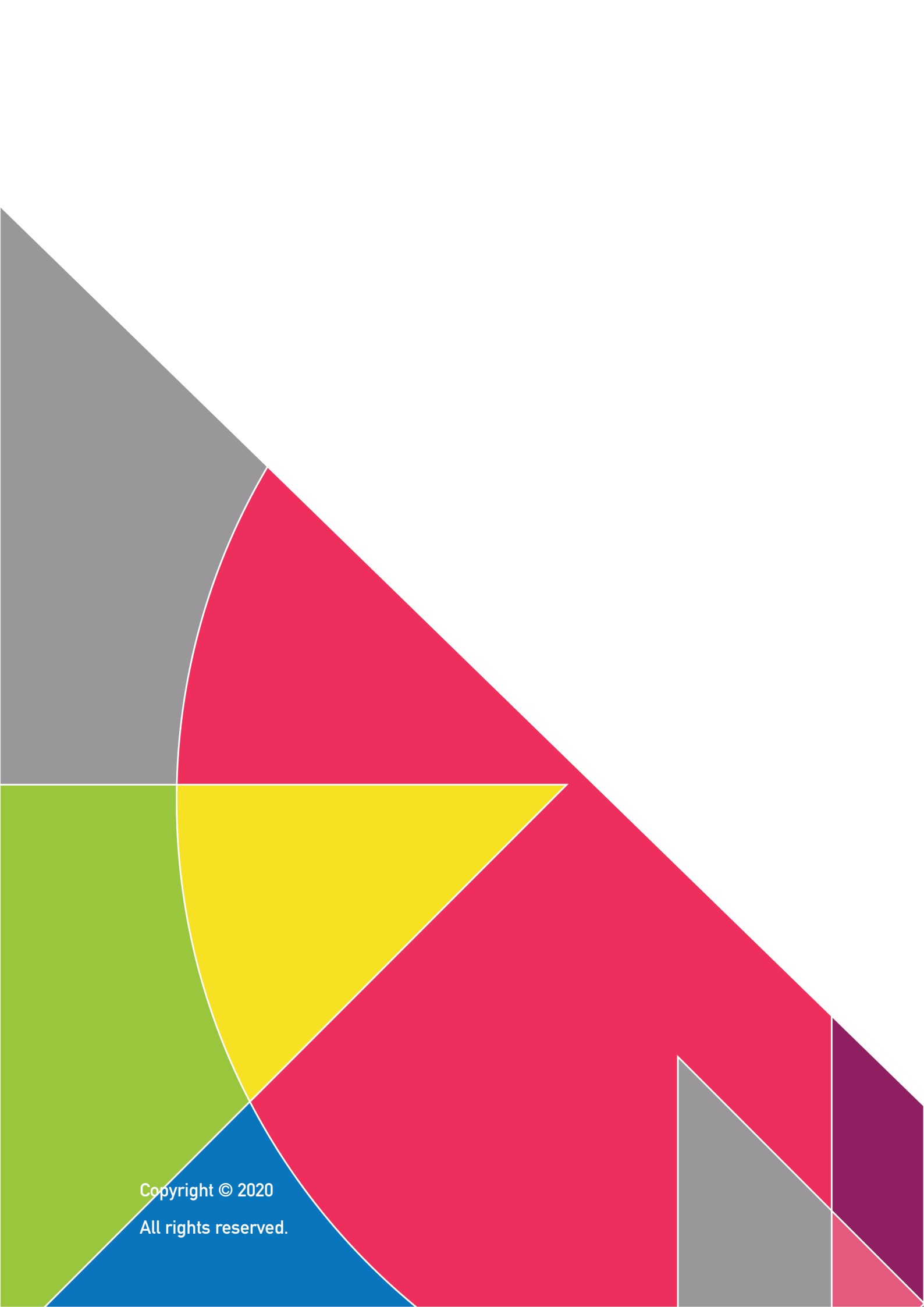
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