

Catalysing LGBT Equality and Visibility in Ireland

A review of LGBT cluster grants, 2004-2013



The Atlantic Philanthropies Republic of Ireland



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From 2004 to 2013, The Atlantic Philanthropies provided grant funding to support equality and visibility for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in Ireland. Atlantic focused its funding on a cluster of four organisations with the objective of improving LGBT people's access to rights and services.

The LGBT cluster included the Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN)¹, Marriage Equality², the Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)³, and LGBT Diversity⁴, a project brought into being for the purpose of strengthening the LGBT sector in Ireland.

ATLANTIC'S GRANTEEES SHOWED IT IS POSSIBLE FOR GRANT MAKERS TO CATALYSE EQUALITY FOR A MINORITY COMMUNITY BY INVESTING IN LONG-TERM CORE FUNDING AND THEN MAKING ROOM FOR ORGANISATIONS TO DEVELOP THEIR OWN STRATEGIES AND LEAD THE WAY TOWARD CHANGE.

The investment has changed the sector and the welfare of those it represents dramatically for the better. LGBT organisations are supported by a new generation of activists who are out, politicised, trained, and supported to take on inequality and restore dignity for themselves, their families, and their communities. In most cases they are succeeding, often dramatically.

Irish people in same-sex relationships have civil partnership rights, and the political foundation is rapidly being built for social support and legal endorsement of civil marriage through a public referendum in 2015. The Republic of Ireland will be the first country in the world to put the issue to a national public vote. Momentum has built for legislation to protect transgender people from discrimination, and a lively conversation is underway among political actors on all sides of the issue about transformative and politically viable gender recognition policy.

Grantees have campaigned, lobbied, and worked with government officials to develop policies and practices protecting children perceived as gay or transgender from being bullied. They have done the same to secure rights for LGBT people with mental illness, and supports for rural LGBT people. They have built the capacities of their organisations and of the LGBT sector for future progress.

Much, though not all, of the LGBT organisations' successes proved sustainable. Some of the work of the LGBT Diversity has been sustained through its own successes at increasing the capacity of local organisations. However, Atlantic's hope that the capacity created by regional coordinators it funded would in turn be continued by local funding sources proved overly ambitious.

Still, as a result of Atlantic's investment, enduring LGBT sector organisations are staffed with highly-respected and skilled strategists, lobbyists, campaigners, marketing experts, programme managers, and community organisers. Organisations have matured, others have taken root, and strong, creative partnerships have blossomed.



CONTEXT

The Atlantic Philanthropies made its investment in the LGBT sector as a tipping point was approaching. LGBT activists and service providers work starting in the 1980s had prepared the way for more far-reaching change.

Homosexuality was decriminalized in Ireland in 1993. In 1998 and 2000, the Employment Equality Act and the Equal Status Act outlawed discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and other grounds. It forbade discrimination in employment, the provision of goods and services, and other publicly available opportunities.

The Employment Equality Act established The Equality Authority as an independent body that became a public voice and advocate for same-sex couples and their children. Meanwhile in 2004, in a case known as Zappone-Gilligan, a lesbian couple asked the Irish High Court to have their Canadian marriage recognized in Ireland. The case brought a new public face to the topic of gay marriage and is currently under appeal.

Through the early to mid-2000s, the size and strength of the advocacy and service providing LGBT nongovernmental sector grew, though most of it was staffed by volunteers.

At the same time, statutory protections had not trickled down to mainstream public service provision. The LGBT community was under-represented within policy-making bodies. LGBT people faced stigmatisation at work, in education, and in the health system. There were no provisions for transgender people to legally self-identify with a particular gender.

This was the context within which Atlantic extended its Reconciliation & Human Rights Programme in Ireland to include an LGBT focus. From 2004-2013, The Atlantic Philanthropies funded four organisations in Ireland to improve human rights, visibility, and access to services for lesbians, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, providing a total of \$11.5m over that period.

THE FUNDING AIMED TO ACHIEVE THESE FOUR GOALS:

- Deliver legislative change on same-sex partnerships and transgender identity
- Encourage changes in mainstream services to incorporate the needs of LGBT people
- Develop sustainable capacity within LGBT communities
- Increase cohesiveness within and across LGBT communities in Ireland.

ATLANTIC FUNDED THE FOLLOWING LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER ORGANISATIONS:

- Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN)
- Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI)
- LGBT Diversity
- Marriage Equality.





APPROACH TO FUNDING

Atlantic committed to multi-year grants, funded core staff, and convened international activists to share strategies and expertise. Atlantic insisted that each of the four organisations conduct strategic planning and develop a clear theory of change. They invested the necessary funds for proper planning, and then gave grantees the freedom to plan and implement, adjusting scope, strategies and tactics as necessary. Financial security gave grantees the ability to hire and retain specialist staff, recruit volunteer advocates, and build long-term relationships and campaigns.

In funding this work, Atlantic supported diverse strategies working toward overlapping aspects of LGBT equality and visibility, and in doing so, produced an impact greater than the sum of its parts.

“ATLANTIC’S COMMITMENT TO GLEN ALLOWED GLEN TO FOLLOW ITS STRATEGY OF BUILDING A MAJORITY FROM A MINORITY AND DELIVERING TRANSFORMATIVE CHANGE FOR LESBIAN AND GAY PEOPLE IN IRELAND.”

BRIAN SHEEHAN, DIRECTOR, GLEN



ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE LGBT CLUSTER

LEGISLATIVE CHANGE

The key legislative goals for the LGBT grantees were to pass same-sex partnership legislation, to move toward a referendum on same-sex civil marriage and toward laws protecting the rights of children of LGBT families, and to make progress toward gender recognition legislation. These goals were achieved through sophisticated lobbying, communications and mobilisation, effective use of transformative personal narratives, and direct contact between LGBT constituents and their elected representatives.

CIVIL PARTNERSHIP

In 2006, public polling showed that up to 80% of the Irish public supported the introduction of some partnership rights for same-sex couples, with a slim majority favouring full marriage. All political party manifestos supported civil partnerships in the 2007 general election.

GLEN saw civil partnership as a legitimate stepping stone along the path to civil marriage, and assessed that they might lose even civil partnership if they pushed prematurely for civil marriage. GLEN had extensive lobbying and public policy experience but their multi-year grant from Atlantic enabled them to ramp up their work into a full-time highly professionalized lobbying machine. It works “inside” the machinery of government where it uses a “principled pragmatist” model in which it consolidates support, wins over the doubtful and pacifies those who are opposed.

GLEN leaders believed that the most viable way to embed long-lasting social change was to legislate incrementally, waiting to advocate for civil marriage until the population was acculturated to the ordinariness of same-sex unions.

GLEN drew on relationships built over two decades of lobbying to bring elected officials from all political parties to the point of commitment on civil partnership rights. They worked inside government and built a persuasive case that civil partnership was the next step for a republic committed to equality for its citizens. Politicians and civil servants responded to GLEN, perceiving them as professional and empathetic to the constraints within which they function, and using them as a source of legal expertise and trusted information.



Marriage Equality had a different strategic analysis. They calculated that if civil partnership passed, people wouldn't care enough about civil marriage to mobilise for it. Marriage Equality's core focus was on transformation of public, legal, and political opinion to support marriage for lesbian, gay, and bisexual people.

The work that Marriage Equality did to expand the marriage conversation served to propel the civil partnership legislation. They mobilised large numbers of people in the lesbian and gay community to connect directly with their local politicians, adding the power of grassroots mobilisation and one-on-one human connection.

The Civil Partnership Act⁵ was passed in 2010, after 5 years of intensive and politically thoughtful grantee effort. As of November 2013 more than 1500 civil partnerships had taken place across Ireland. This huge political and cultural shift was made possible by GLEN's strategic lobbying and the intensive grassroots advocacy mobilised by Marriage Equality.

"WE GOT MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY AND OTHERS WHO WOULD BE CHAMPIONS FOR MARRIAGE EQUALITY TO GO TO THEIR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES AND SAY 'THIS IS AN ISSUE FOR ME AND WE REALLY WANT YOU TO TAKE IT UP.' I DON'T THINK THERE IS ANYONE IN THE DAIL [HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES] OR SEANAD [SENATE] WHO DOESN'T NOW KNOW THAT MARRIAGE EQUALITY IS A PUBLIC DEMAND."

GRAINNE HEALY, CHAIR, MARRIAGE EQUALITY.



CIVIL MARRIAGE

The rights of partners under the Civil Partnership Act do not equate to the rights of marriage in language, law, or perception. Marriage Equality identified more than 160 statutory differences between civil partnership and civil marriage, including the rights of the children of LGBT families.

GLEN and Marriage Equality followed the Civil Partnership Act by continued campaigning for civil marriage. Marriage Equality focused on visibility campaigns, where videos on the web and posters on the street dramatically raised the visibility of LGB people and their families. Their powerful 2009 video, 'Sinead's Hand'⁶, has been seen by at least half a million viewers.

Marriage Equality trained family members and other allies to become spokespeople for the LGBT community. They organised these spokespeople on a massive scale using personal stories to educate the public, members of the legal community, and politicians that civil partnership was not equivalent to civil marriage. Marriage Equality also held a conference about the experiences of young people growing up in Ireland with gay parents to highlight the fact that the rights of children in LGBT families weren't protected by the civil partnership legislation. This mobilisation led to 73% public support for marriage equality in 2012, an increase from 56% in 2008.

A key step toward enactment of civil marriage took place at a Constitutional Convention in 2013 in which 79% of Convention members recommended that the Government introduce marriage equality for same-sex couples. A public referendum on civil marriage is expected to be held in 2015.



CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

Also in the spring of 2013, the Constitutional Convention passed by a vote of 81% a recommendation stipulating that the state should recognize the rights of parents and children in LGBT families, such as allowing for second parent adoption and guardianship. This was the result of the emphasis on children's rights in Marriage Equality's grassroots lobbying, and on GLEN's continued inside lobbying on behalf of the children of LGBT families. Draft legislation was published in January 2014. This law aims to protect children across the range of family structures, including those headed by lesbian and gay parents.

GENDER RECOGNITION

When TENI was founded, there was little or no positive public recognition of gender diversity. Ireland is the only country in the European Union that has no legislation to account for the recognition of a transgender person's preferred identity. TENI raised awareness among politicians, developed relationships with politicians and policy-makers, developed effective and creative advocacy tools, and has been proactive in defining best practice, human-rights based gender recognition legislation.

"TENI'S EXISTENCE AND THE SUPPORT WE'VE RECEIVED THROUGH ATLANTIC PHILANTHROPIES HAS ACTUALLY ALLOWED US TO SAVE LIVES. IF YOU'RE THINKING ABOUT A COMMUNITY OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN MARGINALIZED AND INVISIBLE FOR SO LONG IT'S SO IMPORTANT TO HAVE AN ORGANIZATION PEOPLE KNOW THEY CAN REACH OUT TO AND KNOW THERE IS SOMEBODY THERE TO LISTEN TO THEM."

BRODEN GIAMBRONE, DIRECTOR, TENI

In a three-year period TENI held more than 120 educational and awareness-raising events. TENI publications gave readers a three-dimensional picture of transgender lives.

As a result of TENI's advocacy, paired with litigation brought by Free Legal Advice Centres, the government set up the Gender Recognition Advisory Group in 2010 to make recommendations on how to proceed toward gender recognition. By leading the government to establish the Gender Recognition Advisory Group, TENI succeeded in pushing gender recognition up the legislative agenda. TENI thus achieved their goal of initiating a legislative path toward gender recognition. It is now working on ensuring that legislation reflects the reality of the lives of transgender people. The expected publication date for a transgender-positive Bill for Gender Recognition is 2014.

In its gender recognition work, TENI formed strategic partnerships with Amnesty International, along with LGB groups. Amnesty conducted lobbying training for TENI staff, board and volunteers and provided their expertise. This partnership created allies around gender recognition, helping develop the critical mass needed for political change. Amnesty is now using the terminology LGBTI, i.e. including transgender and intersex people, because of their work with TENI.

In the process of its advocacy, TENI has become a professional and well-respected advocacy organisation. The transgender community has shifted from reacting to the government's initiatives to proactively setting the terms of the debate, lobbying and mobilising the community to tell their own stories.



IMPROVED MAINSTREAM SERVICES

Atlantic's LGBT cluster grantees hired specialist staff to engage with mainstream agencies, government departments, trade unions, and professional bodies to secure policy commitments and changes to practice. The grantees also improved the skills of local LGBT groups so that they could advocate for themselves and partner on equal terms with regional and local policy-makers and service-providers.

It emerged that in many cases government workers were already motivated to improve services for LGBT people, but needed the grantees' know-how.

Grantees carefully selected issues such as homophobic bullying as relatively accessible routes into more challenging areas like education where fear of difference and concern for children combine to block open support for LGBT students and teachers. Grantees partnered effectively with mainstream agencies, using a mix of policy expertise and relationship management to build toward LGBT-positive rules and practices.

BULLYING

LGBT students are part of every classroom in Ireland. Many experience school as unsafe or unsupportive, and most will not come out until they leave school, for fear of rejection, isolation, and bullying.

GLEN worked with the Department of Education and Skills to develop and standardise national responses to address homophobic bullying and ensure the support of LGBT young people in schools. They participated in the Minister for Education and Skills' Anti-Bullying Working Group, and helped produce its Action Plan⁷, which calls for legislation and strong action to be taken by second-level school principals to make sure that bullying does not take place in schools. The high level of buy-in from "insider" partners makes these actions more likely to be implemented.

MENTAL HEALTH

When professionals who provide mental health care do not have an awareness of LGBT mental health concerns there is the potential for poor care at best and damaging care at worst. GLEN worked closely with mental health leadership to make it much more likely that LGBT people will be cared for by someone who is properly trained in their concerns.

For example, GLEN worked with health professional bodies to influence the curriculum and practice of the Psychological Society of Ireland and the Irish College of Psychiatry. 'Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Patients: The Issues for General Practice, 2013⁸' was developed by the Irish College of General Practitioners and GLEN; 'Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Patients: Quick Reference Guide for Primary Care Staff⁹,' 2013 and 'Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Patients: The Issues for Mental Health Practice¹⁰,' 2011 were developed by the College of Psychiatry of Ireland and GLEN. GLEN also provided input to the National Office on Suicide Prevention and to the Health Promotion Unit.

"WITH TENI'S FORMATION IN 2005, THE TRANS COMMUNITY'S EXPECTATION CHANGED AND AS A RESULT YOUNG PEOPLE'S EXPECTATIONS CHANGED. THEY NOW SEE TRANSITION, EQUALITY, AND HORMONE TREATMENT ALL AS A RIGHT RATHER THAN SOMETHING THEY HOPE TO HAVE. THEY ARE DEMANDING THOSE RIGHTS NOW!"

SARA PHILLIPS, CHAIR, TENI.

TENI, too, developed close working relationships with the Health Service Executive (HSE), focusing on developing transgender treatment initiatives. TENI's advocacy has ensured that transgender health issues are dealt with separately from LGB health issues. TENI's development worker is a member of the HSE Transgender Health Working Group. Resulting advances include improved guidelines and training for HSE staff about treatment options such as surgery and hormone therapy.





IMPROVED REGIONAL AND LOCAL SERVICES

While the LGBT community in Ireland has seen legislative improvements in recent years, the benefits have been largely felt in urban areas. For many LGBT people living in rural areas, their experience can remain one of fear, exclusion, and isolation. To address these needs, LGBT Diversity developed three regional strategies¹¹ and strong public policy statements of intent to support the regional strategies. These strategies were important to address the particular concerns and needs of LGBT people living outside of Dublin who are often an afterthought in the larger LGBT community. The public policy statements are the first step to legal protections and social acceptance in these regions.

"ONE OF THE CHALLENGES THAT FACE THE RURAL LGBT COMMUNITY IS THE LIMITED INFRASTRUCTURE THAT KEEPS US FROM COMING TOGETHER. THERE WERE TWO MAIN OUTCOMES OF THIS GRANT. ONE WAS THE DEVELOPMENT OF A SOCIAL NETWORK WHERE RURAL ISOLATION WAS TARGETED. THE OTHER WAS A MOVEMENT TOWARD INVOLVEMENT IN CIVIC LIFE. I'VE WITNESSED A MUCH INCREASED NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ARE WILLING AND ABLE TO IDENTIFY AS LGBT WITHIN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY."

HAYLEY FOX ROBERTS, LGBT DIVERSITY, DEVELOPMENT WORKER

LGBT Diversity also focused on building the capacity of local LGBT groups to work in partnership with mainstream agencies to better meet the needs of LGBT people throughout Ireland. LGBT Diversity provided training for more than 400 attendees at 12 regional seminars in which mainstream agencies were introduced to local LGBT groups, and became familiar with issues of transgender health and ageing concerns for older LGBT people.

By the end of LGBT Diversity's three-year programme, there was an increase in knowledge of LGBT issues among the staff of mainstream social agencies and the programme had successfully connected LGBT individuals to mainstream agencies and made their needs more visible.

The core of LGBT Diversity's work was carried out by three regional development workers who were hired for three years with Atlantic funding. These workers provide support to individual gay, lesbian and bisexual people living in communities outside of Dublin and provided new social and educational programming.

As a result of LGBT Diversity's work, local LGBT groups better understand the language of mainstream organisations, are more confident in approaching mainstream service providers, and have increased capacity to lobby and advocate for themselves.

WORKPLACE EMPOWERMENT

GLEN has been a strong advocate for the positive connection between diversity and economic success. Among its work it published 'Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Diversity in the Workplace Guide: A Good Practice Guide for Employers, Trade Unions and LGBT Employees'¹², which highlights specific issues that LGBT employees may experience in the workplace, and suggests how companies and trades unions can address them.



SUSTAINABLE ORGANISATIONAL CAPACITY

All of the policy and service work described above had the effect of establishing lasting increased capacity in the grantee organisations or their constituent groups. Two grantees, LGBT Diversity and TENI, had a clear focus on building capacity inside communities. However, GLEN and Marriage Equality also carried out their work in such a way as to increase the capacity of the community around them.

Atlantic's funding enabled LGBT Diversity to develop the first nationally organized LGBT community development, area-based programme across multiple provinces for LGBT people in Ireland through its three regional strategies. LGBT Diversity trained 26 local LGBT groups, increasing their skills and capacity for facilitation, fundraising, advocacy and negotiation with mainstream agencies, and developed a new residential LGBT community leadership programme.

LGBT Diversity's regional development workers shared specialist skills and knowledge with local community workers. More groups were established, more people came out, and more local and regional mainstream agencies like Family Resource Centres and Community Development Companies are working in partnership with local LGBT groups.

In its three years of existence, LGBT Diversity leveraged €223,563 in funding for local LGBT groups and development work, and, with Community Foundation Ireland, secured an LGBT Fund of €50,000 per year in small grant funding for LGBT groups. When Atlantic funding ended, however, the positions of the three regional development workers were not continued or incorporated into community organisations or volunteer capacity.

GLEN and LGBT Diversity worked in partnership with BeLongTo, a national organisation for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) young people to expand services for LGBT youth, and offered development support in areas of the country where rural isolation is a challenge.

For transgender people there has been a huge change with more local support, especially outside of Dublin. TENI established or supported six new Transgender Support Groups and set up the Transgender Group Alliance¹³ in Ireland, which connects transgender people across Ireland. In 2011, TENI set up TransParenCI, a support group for the family members of transgender people.

Children of LGBT parents and parents themselves saw increased support as well. Marriage Equality supported the founding of a self-advocacy group for children of LGBT parents, and LGBT Diversity commissioned the first major research into LGBT parenting in Ireland.



A MORE COHESIVE LGBT SECTOR

The LGBT sector is more cohesive now than it was when Atlantic made its commitment to LGBT rights and services. This is a sector with multiple, vibrant voices held together by strong relationships and diverse, intentional, strategic organisational partnerships.

There is a strong sense that transphobia in the LGB community has begun to be reduced, and that LGB organisations better cater to the needs of transgender people.

Groups had sometimes conflicting strategies in the campaigns for civil partnership and civil marriage. Some have taken from this episode the importance of coordinated campaigning and strategic dialogue between advocacy groups. At the same time, many report the value of intentional decisions about when coordination is not beneficial.

There is no appetite at this juncture for a single LGBT network organisation, but there is an obvious preference for ad-hoc partnerships that can deliver the type of successes described throughout this report.

"IN THINKING THROUGH HOW THESE ORGANISATIONS HAVE MANAGED TO ACHIEVE SO MUCH IN A RELATIVELY SHORT SPACE OF TIME I THINK THAT IT'S THAT THEY'VE HAD THE CAPACITY TO THINK AND ACT STRATEGICALLY. SO PROVIDING CORE FUNDING ON A MULTI-ANNUAL BASIS ALLOWS ORGANISATIONS TO BUILD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THOSE THEY ARE SEEKING TO INFLUENCE AND BUILD UP THE EXPERTISE AS WELL TO BECOME A RESOURCE TO DECISION MAKERS AND OTHERS."

BRIAN KEARNEY-GRIEVE, PROGRAMME EXECUTIVE, ATLANTIC PHILANTHROPIES.





LGBT DIVERSITY

LGBT Diversity was a key vehicle and deliberate strategy of Atlantic's to support increased cohesiveness within and across LGBT communities. There was more direct contact, networking and information-sharing among the groups, and an increase in the promotion of each other's work.

A network made up of 12 LGBT organisations, LGBT Diversity successfully delivered a new regional and local community development programme across Ireland. Representatives of these organisations, together with local partners, clarified their purpose, developed governance systems, carried out financial management, made decisions, managed conflict, and aligned national, regional, and local voices.

A large number of two- or three-organisation partnerships began to deliver innovative projects, like BeLongTo's transgender specific support group, Individuality, for young transgender people, and LGBT NOISE's solidarity campaign, 'Solidarity: I'm for Transgender Rights.'

At the end of Atlantic's three-year programme, previously fractious relationships among the community leaders who served together on the LGBT Diversity steering group had markedly improved. There was increased collaboration between organisations across the LGBT sector with joint initiatives among steering committee members, and common cause between national, regional, and local levels of the LGBT sector in Ireland. Organisations see the benefits in sharing their strategic analyses as part of a common platform, even if they then take different steps to achieve their goals.



KEY LEARNING

There is an emerging consensus around the idea of having a common legislative platform approach to campaigning on LGBT issues. Groups can work on the same issue, strategizing together around key challenges, goals and messages, while their approaches and tactics, underpinned by different political analyses, are heterogeneous.

The impact of the LGBT Cluster on civil partnership and changes to mainstream services were possible because there were policy and legislative infrastructure, expertise, and relationships, along with transformative personal narrative and large-scale action. Grantees worked both inside what was politically possible, and outside to expand what was politically possible.

Disagreements about politics, tactics and political values, such as the tension between principled pragmatism and direct action as leading strategic frames, are not necessarily dysfunctional. Coming at an issue with a diversity of approaches can create power, energy and opportunity, but it calls for investment in building strong relationships and partnerships, and not uniformity and constraint.

IN ADDITION, THE EXPERIENCE OF ATLANTIC'S LGBT CLUSTER SHOWED THESE TO BE TRUE OF POLITICAL CHANGE IN IRELAND:

- There is no substitute for the type of key political relationships, developed patiently over time that enabled GLEN to bring scores of legislators closer to voting for civil partnership.
- It is possible to change policy makers' and the general public's perception of an issue through the large-scale mobilisation of constituents to make direct contact with their elected representatives, as exemplified by Marriage Equality's grassroots lobbying campaign.
- Training volunteers can be cost-effective and high-impact, as LGBT Diversity modelled in training local community organisers.
- Innovative use of video and other social media can be key to changing public conversation and attract a younger generation of activists, as seen with Marriage Equality's striking use of visuals in the civil partnership campaign.
- Personal stories can be a key to changing a narrative. Personal narrative has consistently been the greatest currency of TENI's work.

THE EXPERIENCE SHOWED THESE TO BE TRUE OF LGBT ADVOCACY WORK IN IRELAND:

- A huge appetite exists for regional and local improvements in mainstream services for LGBT people. Partnership with the Health Service Executive on transgender health issues has been effective, but it's still a challenge to their culture and practice. Carefully selected gateway issues such as homophobic bullying are relatively open routes into challenging areas such as education.
- Community development workers can be an effective way to reach individuals but they are also an expensive approach since they must tailor their approach to the needs and culture of each local group. Funders should weigh the costs and benefits of taking such an approach in their strategy.
- Partnership on LGBT issues with allies from wider human rights and social justice communities is possible and can be fruitful. The participation of mainstream groups broadens the space available for potential new support, and in turn, LGBT groups give legitimacy to their mainstream allies' campaigns for inclusion and equality.

Finally, the experience confirmed the power of grantee-led strategic planning and organisation-building. Financial security and the scale of the grants enabled the grantees to hire skilled staff, recruit allies and volunteer advocates and build long-term political relationships and campaigns. This increased the return on Atlantic's investment.

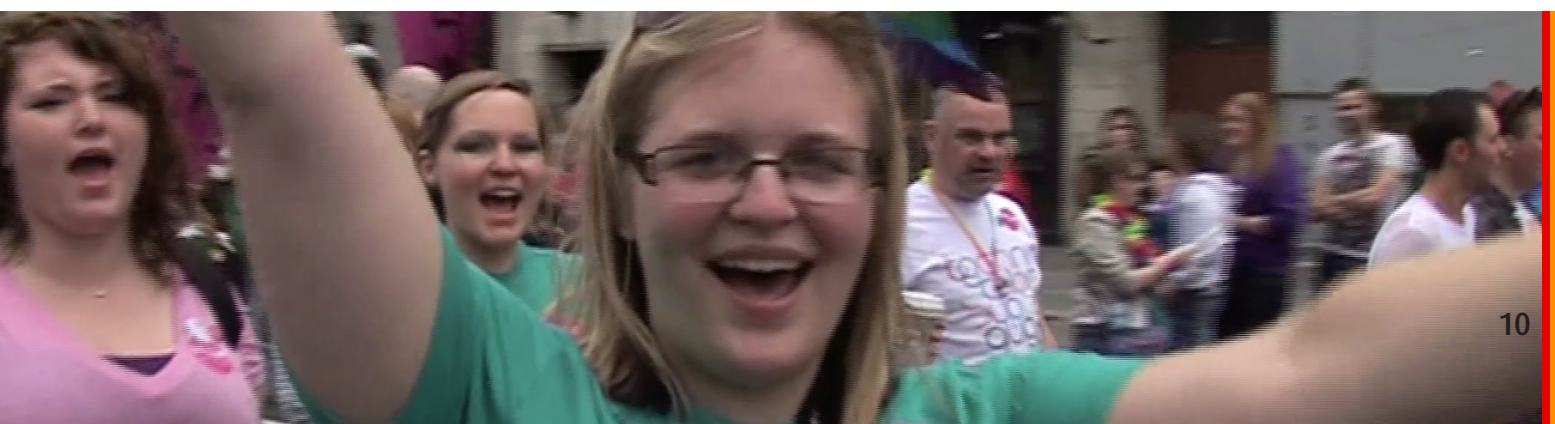
FUTURE OF THE LGBT SECTOR

The LGBT Cluster has been successful in developing a new level of professional capacity and competence through the support of Atlantic over the last decade. It provided a much broader and deeper network of support for LGBT people across the country. Given the continuing tough economic environment and Atlantic's withdrawal from the LGBT sector as part of the phased wind-down of the Foundation, grantees fear a rollback of the progress to date.

IF THEY ARE ABLE TO SECURE FUNDING TO MOVE FORWARD, GRANTEEES WILL PRIORITISE THE FOLLOWING WORK IN THE NEXT 3-5 YEARS:

- Ensure implementation of LGBT policy and guidance by mainstream agencies and professional bodies
- Secure the Constitutional amendment and civil marriage
- Ensure LGBT parenting rights and the rights of children in LGBT families
- Secure community-endorsed, best-practice gender recognition legislation
- Improve transgender treatment guidelines and training
- Improve health services for LGBT people.

As sustained core funding has underpinned the successes of the Atlantic LGBT cluster, renewed sustained core funding will be the key to the future success of the Irish LGBT sector.



END NOTES

- 1 Gay and Lesbian Equality Network (GLEN) www.glen.ie
- 2 Marriage Equality www.marriageequality.ie
- 3 Transgender Equality Network Ireland (TENI) www.teni.ie
- 4 LGBT Diversity www.lgbtdiversity.com
- 5 Civil Partnership Act www.irishstatutebook.ie/2010/en/act/pub/0024
- 6 Sinead's Hand www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qxkq6Wd3h9U
- 7 Action Plan www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Action-Plan-On-Bullying-2013.pdf
- 8 Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Patients: The Issues for General Practice, 2013
www.glen.ie/attachments/ICGP_Guide_May_2013.PDF
- 9 Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Patients: Quick Reference Guide for Primary Care Staff
www.glen.ie/attachments/ICGP_Guide_-_Summary_May_2013.PDF
- 10 Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Patients: The Issues for Mental Health Practice
www.glen.ie/attachments/feeffa6c-e238-4044-8155-2c01de243bd8.PDF
- 11 Regional Strategies www.lgbtdiversity.com/attachments/a7652e03-b975-4641-9290-4e64cf8398de.PDF
- 12 Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Diversity in the Workplace Guide: A Good Practice Guide for Employers, Trade Unions and LGBT Employees www.glen.ie/pdfs/WorkplaceLGBTDiversityGuide.pdf
- 13 Transgender Group Alliance www.teni.ie/page.aspx?contentid=14

Find the video short which accompanies this report at bit.ly/AtlanticLGBT along with all our other publications which capture the learning emerging from our various programmes around the world.