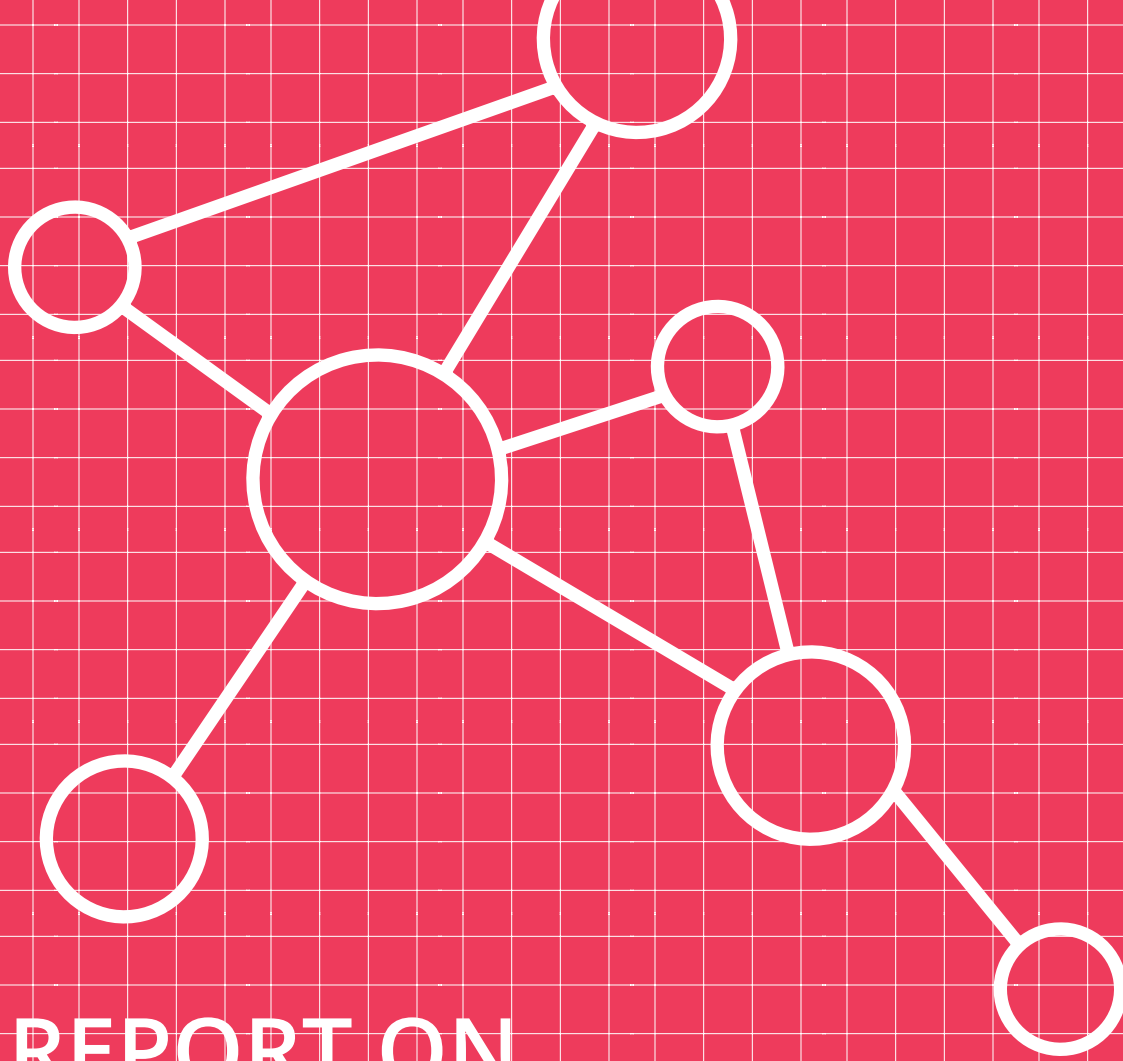


JANUARY 2021



REPORT ON THE STRATEGIES OF PROVINCIAL GROUPS

As part of the project “Family diversity: Creating a regional and intersectional network”

LGBTQ2 Community Capacity Fund
Women and Gender Equality Canada



Coalition des
Familles LGBT+
LGBT+ Family Coalition



Femmes et Égalité
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INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction to the LGBT+ Family Coalition

Founded in 1998, the LGBT+ Family Coalition (LGBT+FC) is a community rights organization that advocates for the social and legal recognition of families that come under the umbrella of sexual and gender diversity.

Our mission is to work to build a world free of homophobia, transphobia, heteronormativity¹ and cisnormativity² where all families are celebrated and valued, regardless of their composition or the ethnic origin or nationality of their members.

Our actions are inspired by our values of equity, inclusion, kindness and solidarity.

As the only organization defending the rights of LGBTQ2+³ families in Québec, the LGBT+FC aims to represent all families, particularly families that are under-represented.

1. A school of thought that takes heterosexuality as the norm and favours people with this sexual orientation.

2. A school of thought that takes cisgender people (people whose gender matches the one they were assigned at birth) as the norm and favours cis people to the detriment of trans people.

3. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit. Two-spirit is a First Nations concept that refers to both an Indigenous identity and sexual and gender diversity.

1.2. Introduction to the project

In 2015, the Ministère de la Famille du Québec stated that most families with same-sex parents (64%) live outside major urban centres. These families have urgent needs for support, information and networking. However, in cities, for many families, ironically the situation is the same: First Nations families living off reserve and racialized families may be isolated and lack resources and support. Although the LGBT+FC has some 1700 member families throughout Québec, the organization has a difficult time reaching these families and serving them sufficiently.

The main objective of this project, funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada, is to put new measures in place to try and fill these gaps.

This report contains analyses and recommendations for the first phase of the project, which is to meet with non-LGBTQ+ organizations that have Québec-wide mandates and learn from their member-related practices in the following areas:

- languages used;
- services to members;
- types of activities (social, informational and networking);
- activities in rural areas;
- membership categories;
- membership drives;
- communications;
- membership loyalty;
- volunteers;
- funding.

The end goal is to improve the range of services provided to our members and to reach more LGBTQ2+ families across the province.

METHODOLOGY

2.1. Research on provincial organizations

Types of organizations chosen

To guide us in our choices, we selected two key areas:

- Provincial family organizations;
- Provincial feminist organizations.

Once this was decided, the preliminary research on organizations was carried out online, resulting in an initial sample. After correction, we retained a selection that only included organizations that do not represent professionals. The remaining number of organizations (28) was not satisfactory for our research purposes. As such, we broadened the research areas (while keeping in mind the provincial scope), and this increased the number of organizations to 39 (see Appendix 5.1). The new directions were:

- Recreational groups;
- Various aid groups;
- Cultural groups;
- Human rights groups.

Questionnaire

We created a questionnaire template with eight sections. This served as a guideline throughout our interviews (see Appendix 5.2). Next, we adapted the questionnaire over the course of our meetings to abbreviate sections where we had a saturation of similar responses or to specify or strengthen missing information.

The topics addressed in the questionnaire were:

- **Organizational structure** (committees, employees, board of directors, management, etc.);
- **The organization on the Québec landscape** (areas served, languages of services, placement within Québec, etc.);
- **Service to members** (number of members, scope within Québec, types of services, benefits, activities, partnerships, personalized member zone, etc.);
- **Member retention** (fluctuation, sign-up campaign, member rewards, promotional tools, etc.);
- **Volunteers** (number of volunteers, recruitment, retention, rewards, etc.);
- **Communications** (methods of communication);
- **Funding and donations** (status as a charitable organization, donation campaign, minimum contribution, rewards for major donors);
- **Diversity and inclusion** (inclusive language; policies against harassment, discrimination, racism, ableism, etc.).

Special aspects

Some questions on sexual and gender diversity were written specifically to be asked to organizations predominantly made up of cisgender women, in order to understand the dynamics and methods put into place to include and meet the needs of trans women and non-binary people.

Unfortunately, when filling out the report, the organizations for which these questions were specifically intended declined our interview requests.

Happily, some associations we interviewed responded that inclusive language and openness were everybody's job, and that a constant effort to break established habits had been put into place. However, they were aware that work remained to be done when it comes to employing certain terms.

In regard to trans men and non-binary people, the question was asked to Mouvement allaitement Québec, which responded saying they provide services to all breast- and chest-feeding people without distinction, and that they use inclusive language in their publications.

2.2. Data collection

Inventory

- **39 organizations contacted;**
- **16 interviews conducted;**
- **2 refusals;**
- **3 positive responses from organizations that could not hold an interview before 2021;**
- **18 non-responses.**

Test interview

The Zoom platform was used for all meetings in order to respect COVID-19 distancing measures. We asked our contacts for permission to record and use some elements from the interviews. The first interview was conducted on October 26, 2020. It was the longest one (one hour and 45 minutes) because it was mainly used to test the questionnaire, which was followed more or less to the letter.

Interview follow-up

For each interview, the questionnaire was revised to better grasp the various facets of the organizations. We decided to devote less time to concepts that were not the organizations' strengths and to have richer discussions on the points that were essential. When redundancies arose, over the course of the various interviews, we redirected our questions toward the more relevant points, depending on the organization, and asked for more specific explanations to increase the amount of data gathered (length: an hour and 15 minutes to an hour and a half).

DATA ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1. Languages used

Analysis

- Six of the 16 organizations said they used both official languages as their languages of communication.
- Three of the 16 organizations said they used other languages, in addition to the two official languages, to communicate with their members (Spanish, Arabic, certain African and Asian languages).
- Ten of the 16 organizations said they used only French as their language of communication.

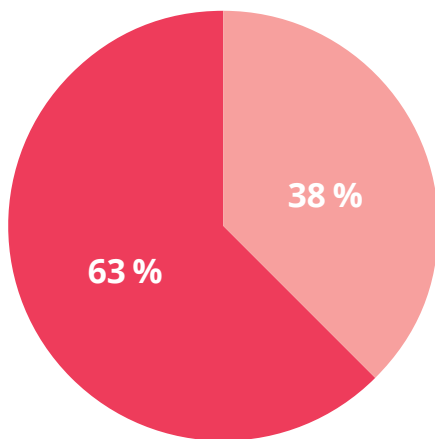
Recommendation

- Continue to communicate in both official languages as much as possible, in order to be open to a broader range of individuals.

Ideas inspired by the interviews

- Should the Coalition make its social media bilingual?
- Would it be useful to make a database of members who speak languages other than the official languages in order to support these members at our activities if needed?

Languages used



● French only ● 2 or more languages

3.2. Member services

Analysis

- Three of the 16 organizations have a member database that indicates specific needs for accompaniment, mentorship or buddying.
- Three of the 16 organizations have meetings with new members in order to make sure they fully understand what the organization can offer them.
- Six of the 16 organizations make sure their members can express their needs and thoughts by a range of means (videos, member portraits, surveys, meetings, etc.).
- Seven of the 16 organizations have a directory of various resources for their members for referral purposes if needed (for consultation online or in person).
- Eight of the 16 organizations use a membership card as a way to strengthen the sense of belonging (also important if the organization is affiliated with businesses or sponsors).
- Eight of the 16 organizations accompany their members through certain processes (in court, filling out government forms, job-seeking, etc.) and provide personalized support services that create a trust-based relationship and give members the sense that they are being taken into account.
- Eight of the 16 organizations have partnerships with businesses that offer a discount to their users on products or services.
- Ten of the 16 organizations use a welcome or renewal kit (brief documentation, welcome gift, personalized letter, etc.).

“WE THOUGHT WE’D CHANGE THE FEE SYSTEM. THEY COULD DONATE UP TO \$5 A MONTH INSTEAD OF AN ANNUAL FEE. SOMETHING THAT LOOKED MORE LIKE SUPPORT THAN LIKE MEMBERSHIP. IT WOULD LEND ITSELF BETTER TO SUPPORT THAN SAYING ‘YOU PAY A FEE, YOU’RE A MEMBER.’ BUT WHAT DO WE HAVE TO OFFER YOU AS A MEMBER?”

ÉLISE, RÉSEAU QUÉBÉCOIS D’ACTION
POUR LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES

- Eleven of the 16 organizations carried out surveys of their members in the form of online or paper questionnaires (at the time of renewal) to help them adjust the services they offer.

“I THINK A NEW MEMBER KIT WORKS SUPER WELL. WHEN YOU’RE A MEMBER, YOU GET YOUR ENVELOPE WITH A BUNCH OF LITTLE THINGS IN IT, YOU’RE JOINING THE CLUB. WHY NOT RENEW EVERY YEAR?”

ÉLISE, RÉSEAU QUÉBÉCOIS D’ACTION POUR LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES

- Fifteen of the 16 organizations have member committees to get members involved (wellness committee, workshops committee, sponsorship committee, etc.).
- Fifteen of the 16 organizations provide privileges to members in comparison to the general public in terms of advance information, exclusive communications, or activities and benefits exclusive to members.

Recommendations

- Maintain close ties with our members to ensure we have a special relationship (good follow-up on requests, personalized assistance, providing more detailed information on our political actions, etc.) and to remain an indispensable asset for our target population.
- Survey our members to find out or review the directions the LGBT+FC should take in order to best meet their needs.
- Ensure that our members are well aware of the services we provide and make sure way pay special attention to centring these needs (via various mediums) throughout their membership.
- Motivate members and get them involved by soliciting them for committees (wellness, sponsorship, partners, etc.). These committees also maintain the link between the staff and some active members.
- Separate members into categories (parents, future parents, reconstituted families, multi-parent families, etc.) in our database to better target their interests.

- Create loyalty and a sense of belonging among our members by giving them membership cards and a welcome or renewal kit (these elements seem to be used by almost every organization we met).
- Establish partnerships with local businesses, such as children’s clothing companies, bookstores, pharmacies and show venues, among others, to provide more benefits to members.

Idea inspired by the interviews

- Partner with one or more Pharmaprix (to receive insemination kits to distribute, pre- or post-pregnancy vitamins, etc.) since these pharmacies run the Tree of Life campaign each year, whose funds are then donated to chosen organizations. The other pharmacies should also be considered for obtaining materials or other things.



3.3. Social, informational and networking activities

Analysis

- Seven of the 16 organizations provide social activities.
- Ten of the 16 organizations hold informational activities.
- Six of the 16 organizations organize networking activities.
- Fourteen of the 16 organizations have the idea of creating hybrid formulas (in-person and virtual) post-COVID in order to maintain new ties with members in rural regions.
- Five of the 16 organizations pair topic-based lectures (aimed at the general public) with recruitment and donation campaigns (ex.: campaign on menstruation, campaign on 12 days of action against violence against women, mentorship month campaign, etc.).
- Four of the 16 organizations said they hold workshops or other events at the Maisons de la culture or other partner spaces, which also help them reach a very different audience than their regular members.

The activities provided by these organizations take various forms and are held at a range of times. They can be recurrent or annual, free or paid, open to everyone or reserved for active members (meaning those who have paid their fees). Their annual calendars also show many types of activities:

Informational activities

- Trainings (sometimes free for members and paid for the general public).
- Lectures linked to recruitment campaigns.
- Meetings with professionals from various relevant areas (ex.: with a lawyer or a child psychologist) or with other organizations.
- Annual or twice-yearly conferences to discuss specific issues. Free or paid depending on the subject.
- Inter-regional congresses once per year in different regions.

“WHEN IT COMES TO SHOWS, WE DID THE MATERNITY SHOW EVERY YEAR. WE ALSO DID THE TECHNOVISION SHOW. OVER TIME, SOME PEOPLE CAME TO THE SHOWS EXPRESSLY FOR THAT, BECAUSE IT WAS ANNOUNCED.”

ROLAND, ASSOCIATION
QUÉBÉCOISE DES PARENTS
D'ENFANTS HANDICAPÉS VISUELS

Networking activities

- Matching of groups or individuals sharing the same issues, questions or even aspirations (activities reserved to members only).
- Knowledge-exchange workshops: a group or individual shares their knowledge or expertise in a field or on a subject with others (activities on various topics that recur every month or two months).
- Booths at various trade shows or events (volunteers from among the members to staff the booths in shifts).
- Networking breakfast or dinner: Members have the chance to talk with professionals who can help them with their requests and processes.

Social activities

- 5 à 7 (cocktails): On special days or times of year (international days or at the end of specific events or campaigns, during the holidays and at New Year's).
- Recreational and learning outings (apple-picking, sugar shack, exhibitions, recreational gatherings, etc.).

“A 5 À 7 WAS IN THE \$30-\$40 RANGE DEPENDING ON WHETHER YOU WERE A MEMBER. NOW, VIRTUALLY, IT’S AROUND \$15 MAX. WE SET A PRICE, BECAUSE IT’S A COMMITMENT. IF YOU PAY A SMALL AMOUNT, YOU’RE MORE LIKELY TO COME. I’D DONE A LOT OF RESEARCH AS PART OF MY LAST JOB ON VIRTUAL ACTIVITIES. IT’S WRONG TO THINK THEY NECESSARILY HAVE TO BE FREE. PEOPLE ARE READY TO PAY FOR VIRTUAL EVENTS IF THEY’RE OF QUALITY.”

MYRIAM,
ELLES DE LA CONSTRUCTION

Activities tailored to the COVID-19 situation

- More frequent webinars (maximum 90 minutes long).
- Online lectures: free or paid using the formula of a minimum donation rather than a set price.
- A forum instead of a conference: easier to put into place virtually (reaches a lot more people from the most remote regions).
- Friendly check-in calls 15 or 20 minutes long to keep up contact with members.
- Increased frequency of knowledge exchange types of workshops.

During this pandemic time, apart from 5 à 7s, which have gone virtual, more festive types of activities have all been put on pause since gatherings are not permitted. All the organizations we consulted very much wanted to hold in-person events with their members to celebrate a return to a more normal-seeming life. However, a number of virtual practices that were set up during the pandemic (ex. for lectures, forums and discussion groups) will become more standard post-COVID in order to reach members in rural regions.

Recommendations

- Hold interactive activities such as lectures, webinars and other virtual discussions on various topics.
- Use the webinar format sparingly, to avoid boredom; it doesn't foster interaction and must, as much as possible, last under 90 minutes.
- Put into place hybrid technologies (for virtual and in-person meetings) to help us reach members in different regions simultaneously.
- Survey members about their interests and needs a number of times during the year in order to plan relevant activities.

- Ensure people's commitment to some activities by charging participation fees.
- Organize on-theme activities in relation to our funding and donation campaigns.
- Partner with the Maisons de la culture to reach different audiences than we might normally.

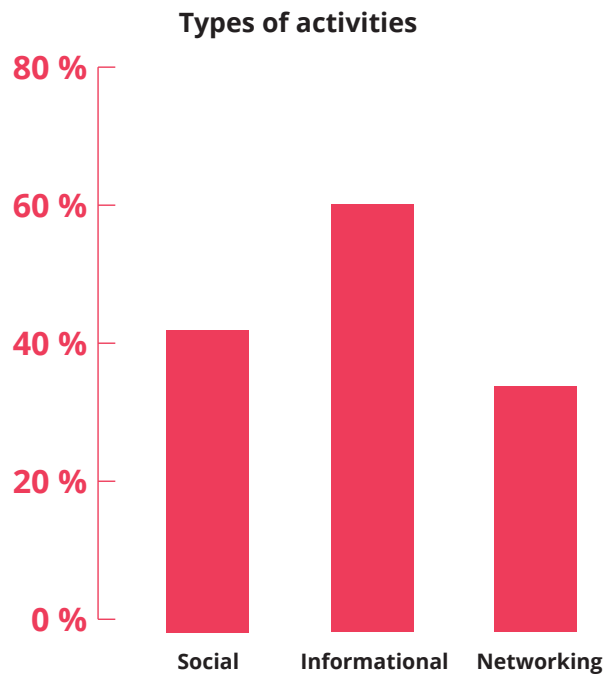
Ideas inspired by the interviews

- Since there are special days in the calendar for almost everything, why not seek to have a day for LGBTQ2+ families?
- Create different questionnaires for parents and future parents.
- Emphasize the question “Do you have suggestions for our calendar of activities?” on the Coalition’s membership sign-up form.
- We need to make sure we keep a number of activities accessible to people in more rural regions post-pandemic. Online lectures and discussion groups are examples of activities we could keep.

3.4. Stimulating activities in rural regions

Analysis

- Eight of the 16 organizations advised us to have ambassadors in each region to have representation and do social promotion (promotion on social media, presence at booths, shows and campaigns, etc.).
- Nine of the 16 organizations said they held regional visits (an excellent way to meet with members, elected officials and decision-makers).



“WE TELL CERTAIN CHOSEN ORGANIZATIONS THAT WE’LL PROVIDE INFO IN A PRIVILEGED WAY TO YOU. IT’S YOURS TO SHARE WITH YOUR REGIONAL NETWORK. AND, IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION, TO CIRCULATE IT TO KNOW WHAT THE SITUATION IS ON THE GROUND IN THE REGION. BECAUSE IN MONTRÉAL WE’RE DISCONNECTED FROM THE REALITY IN GASPÉSIE.”

ÉLISE, RÉSEAU QUÉBÉCOIS D’ACTION
POUR LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES

“WE REALLY HAVE A THREE-PART TOUR, WHERE WE WANT TO, ONE, GET ELECTED OFFICIALS TOGETHER. WE WANT TO MEET WITH PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE CITY AND THE NEIGHBOURING MRCS. AND THIRD, DECISION-MAKERS, TO GET TOGETHER ALL THE ACTORS WHO MADE DECISIONS. IT’S REALLY CONCENTRATED ON ALL THE REGIONS OUTSIDE MONTRÉAL AND QUÉBEC. GOING LOCALLY, IT REALLY MEANS TALKING ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES AND THEIR LOCAL REALITIES.”

CHLOÉ, PIÉTONS QUÉBEC

- Eleven of the 16 organizations have ties with key people or organizations in given regions in order to make sure they understand the terrain, exchange information and maintain a direct link with the realities in the regions.
- Eleven of the 16 organizations have established partnerships with an organization in each region to give them visibility and privileged information and to ensure reciprocity of promotion in the community.

“WE TRY, WITH THE TOUR, TO GO MEET WITH PEOPLE IN RURAL REGIONS. THAT’S WHY THE TOUR HAS REGIONAL ACTIVITIES MARKED AS TOUS PIÉTONS, BUT ORGANIZED BY REGIONAL PARTNERS.”

CHLOÉ, PIÉTONS QUÉBEC

- Fourteen of the 16 organizations mentioned that it’s important to have a physical presence in rural regions, at several moments of the year, even if digital makes activities easier.
- Thirteen of the 16 organizations underscored that it’s crucial to understand that the realities in rural regions are totally different than those of major centres.
- Fifteen of the 16 organizations indicated that the digital pivot imposed by COVID-19 helped them reach more members in rural regions.

“WE HAD A QUÉBEC REGION COMMITTEE. WE CHANGED IT TO PROVINCIAL OUTREACH. THAT COMMITTEE AIMS TO KEEP IN MIND THAT IT WILL SERVE ALL THOSE WHO ARE OUTSIDE THE MAJOR CITIES, WHO HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS. BEING ABLE TO REACH MEMBERS EVERYWHERE, UNDERSTAND THEIR NEEDS. YOU CAN’T DO THAT IF YOU DON’T HAVE MEMBERS IN THOSE REGIONS. IF YOU THINK ABOUT THINGS WITH MEMBERS IN MONTRÉAL, YOU CAN BE SURE THE MONTRÉAL MEMBERS DON’T UNDERSTAND THE REALITIES OF PEOPLE IN THE RURAL REGIONS.”

MARTINE, ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES EN FINANCE DU QUÉBEC

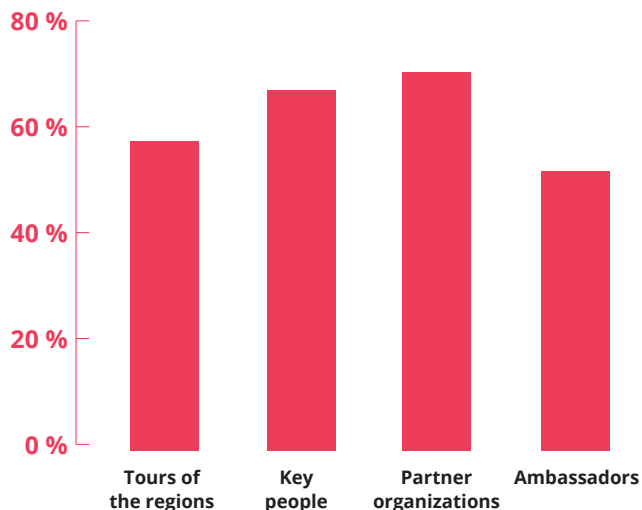
Recommendations

- Establish or maintain solid partnerships with one or more LGBTQ2+ organizations in each region to understand their experiences and share expertise.
- Collaborate with local organizations for major projects, campaigns and political actions to create greater strength and visibility.
- Give visibility to partner organizations in return.
- Partner and share experiences with non-LGBTQ2+ organizations or individuals who share similar values, both in Montréal and in rural regions.
- Target one or more key people for each regional organization to whom we should share information in a privileged way. These key people, in counterpart, should share information with us about the situation in their region (understand and report people’s experiences, report on situations and needs, etc.).
- Work with key people to ensure that communications are disseminated.
- Create regional committees (between organizations) to adapt the Coalition’s services to the needs and realities particular to each region.
- Hold a tour of the regions, in person, several times a year to meet with organizations, members, families and elected officials as well as decision-makers.
- Choose an ambassador per region that has a common emotional tie to a cause (they will handle promotion on social media and provide visibility to a broad audience, which will showcase our campaigns).

Ideas inspired by the interviews

- Choose a key person employed by an organization rather than a volunteer member, in order to ensure continuity.
- The ambassadors do not necessarily have to be members of the LGBTQ2+ community and can simply be natives of the regions in question. They only take action when causes and campaigns arise in order to ensure greater visibility and influence on the population.

Strategies to increase visibility in rural regions



3.5 Catégorisation des memberships

Analysis

- One of the 16 organizations has no memberships, but asks people to make donations of \$10-15-20 several times a year.
- One of the 16 organizations offers a membership with each donation.
- Two of the 16 organizations have a lifetime membership in addition to their annual membership.
- Four of the 16 organizations have a two- or three-year membership in addition to their annual membership.
- Fifteen of the 16 organizations have an annual membership.
- Three of the 16 organizations we spoke with offer a special membership for supporters (ex.: men* in the case of an organization for women*; people who are not disabled, in the case of an organization for people with disabilities, and so on).
- Four of the 16 organizations offer a special membership for students.
- Five of the 16 organizations offer a privilege or VIP membership in addition to a regular membership, which is free.
- Six of the 16 organizations offer a family membership.
- Eight of the 16 organizations also offer a corporate or association membership in addition to the individual membership. These businesses or associations can extend their member benefits to their employees.

* Men and women, here, are terms employed without offense to the plurality of genders in LGBTQ2+ communities, particularly non-binary people; they were used by people whom we were interviewing in a non-LGBTQ2+ setting and who are sometimes not very familiar with the realities of these communities. By necessity, we are reporting statements as they were said.

Various membership payment methods were listed:

- Online with a PayPal button saying "Become a member / renew."
- By cheque or cash.
- Using Interact e-transfer.
- Using another online payment solution.

"IT'S ALWAYS A CHALLENGE, EACH YEAR. WE NEED TO ISSUE SEVERAL REMINDERS, IT DOESN'T HAPPEN ON ITS OWN. SOME PEOPLE RENEW AUTOMATICALLY, THAT'S MAYBE 50% OF OUR MEMBERS WHO ARE LOYAL. FOR THE BALANCE, WE NEED TO GO AFTER THEM ALMOST ONE BY ONE. WHAT HAS HELPED US A LOT IS THE CORPORATE MEMBERSHIP."

YVON, MENTORAT QUÉBEC

"WE COULD SEE THERE WERE REALLY SOME GAPS IN OUR MEMBERSHIP. THAT'S HOW WE CREATED THE TWO MEMBERSHIPS. REGULAR MEMBERSHIP AND PRIVILEGE MEMBERSHIP. THAT ONE IS GOOD FOR A YEAR, AND IT GIVES PEOPLE ACCESS TO THE RESERVED AREA ON OUR WEBSITE, TO OUR JOURNAL, TO LITTLE ADDITIONAL SERVICES. WE DEFEND ALL OUR MEMBERS, AND REFER THEM TO RESOURCES, BUT PRIVILEGE MEMBERS GET A LITTLE SOMETHING EXTRA."

ANNE-MARIE, FÉDÉRATION DES PARENTS
ADOPTANTS DU QUÉBEC

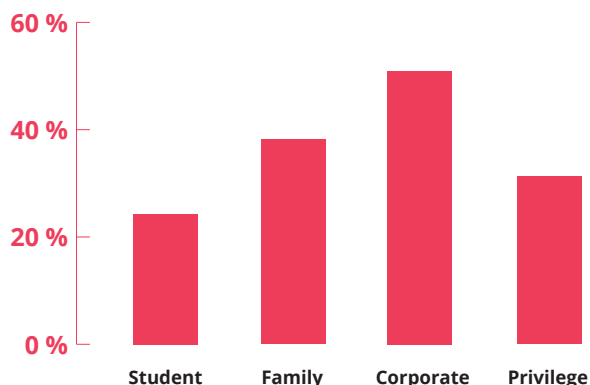
Recommandations

- Opt for online fee payments.
- Continue family-type memberships.
- Consider creating another type of membership to meet the needs of sub-categories of members (ex.: parents vs future parents).
- Provide equitable access to membership.

Ideas inspired by the interviews

- Offer a special price when the fee is too high for certain people or families.
- Be aware of the possible disparities in family incomes, and with that in mind, don't create a hierarchy of memberships.
- Create a distinct option for future parents who wish to join so they can answer questions that are more representative of them. Having two distinct types of members is not about creating a hierarchy between families (with vs without children), but will make it possible to get a more precise idea of the needs of each group.
- Offer a corporate or association membership to give allies or other LGBTQ2+ organizations the option to be associated with our cause.

Types of membership



3.6. Campagnes de membership

Analysis

- One of the 16 organizations recommended that we increase our membership in order to have greater weight with governments.
- Five of the 16 organizations interviewed have a presence at trade shows, booths and events to recruit their members instead of having an annual membership drive.

“WE DO BOOTHS AT BREAST- AND CHEST-FEEDING EVENTS. EVERY TIME, WE DISTRIBUTE PACKAGES TO SOME TWENTY PEOPLE. I ASK THEM IF THEY PREFER TO GET IT BY EMAIL. I HAVE A SHEET AND I SAY TO PEOPLE, ‘WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO SIGN YOU UP FOR THE NEWSLETTER?’ IF YOU GIVE THEM A SHEET AND SAY, ‘SIGN UP FOR OUR NEWSLETTER,’ NOBODY WILL DO IT. AT THE BOOTH, YOU NEED CHOCOLATES! IT’S WORKED VERY WELL FOR US.”

RAPHAËLLE, MOUVEMENT ALLAITEMENT DU QUÉBEC

- Six of the 16 organizations said they hold a membership drive by calling their current members and distributing information via their newsletter or social media using different mediums.
- Nine of the 16 organizations said that it's important to include members in the membership drives (creative work, distribution, sharing, etc.).
- Ten of the 16 organizations underscored the popularity of video and the importance of including it in communications and their various types of membership drives (two of the 16 organizations said their best membership drives are done using videos). According to these organizations, this tool is very popular and it's what people most want to see.

“WE HAD A SMALL BUDGET. WE THOUGHT, LET’S DO A VIDEO CAMPAIGN, WE’LL SHOWCASE OUR MEMBERS AND ASK THEM WHAT BENEFITS THE RÉSEAU BRINGS THEM. IT REALLY WORKED WELL! WE TRIED TO GET A DIVERSE RANGE OF OPINIONS, A RANGE OF AGES AND BODY TYPES. WE TRIED TO MAKE IT SO DIFFERENT MEMBERS WOULD RECOGNIZE THEMSELVES.”

CAROLINE, RÉSEAU DES FEMMES EN ENVIRONNEMENT

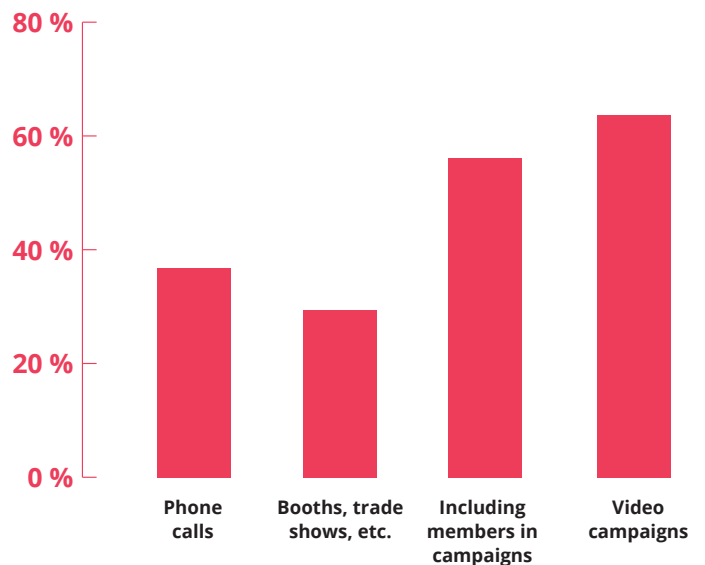
Recommendations

- Have a presence at events related to families or LGBTQ2+ communities: Parents and Kids Fair, Salon de la famille in Abitibi, Salon de la famille des Laurentides, and continue to be present at Pride celebrations, community days and so on.
- Use video testimonials from member families, other organizations, Coalition employees and members of the board of directors or the training team for our membership and donation drives.

Ideas inspired by the interviews

- To help membership drives better appeal to future users of their services and encourage existing members to renew their memberships, the Coalition should include its members in the creation of membership drives (ex.: by sharing their testimonials or their expertise in communication and video editing; by getting them involved in brainstorming; or by all other relevant means).

Membership drives



3.7. Communications

Analysis

- One of the 16 organizations underscored the importance of having a call to action in each newsletter, to focus readers' attention.
- Ten of the 16 organizations suggested adding a blog section on our website. The importance of regularly updating the blog was also mentioned.
- Five of the 16 organizations share the task of writing blogs with their members from time to time to give them a platform and visibility.
- Six of the 16 organizations noted the importance of not only focusing on self-promotion in communications, but also foregrounding members.

“YOU CAN’T JUST DO SELF-PROMOTION, BECAUSE THAT’S NOT VERY INTERESTING. WE USE A LOT OF SOCIAL MEDIA TO SHOWCASE OUR MEMBERS. WE ALWAYS MAKE THE MEMBERS THE STARS, WE DO A LOT OF PROMOTION OF OUR MEMBERS. PEOPLE REALLY LIKE IT. AND IT SNOWBALLS. IF I SHOWCASE YOU, THEN YOU’LL SHARE IT ON YOUR NETWORK, YOUR FAMILY WILL COMMENT. THE NAME AFFQ CIRCULATES AUTOMATICALLY THAT WAY.”

MARTINE, ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES
EN FINANCES DU QUÉBEC

“WITH BLOG POSTS, WE COULD DEVIATE FROM THE OFFICIAL POSITIONS AND GO MORE AD-LIB ON PEDESTRIANS’ RIGHTS. IT PROVIDES MEMBERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES ON THE SUBJECT. IT GOES BEYOND JUST SHARING OUR ACTIVITIES OR THE ARTICLES WE FIND INTERESTING.”

CHLOÉ, PIÉTONS QUÉBEC

- One of the 16 organizations said they co-create content with their project partners in order to create engagement for both parties.
- Five of the 16 organizations said they try as much as possible to use inclusive language and while it's not yet automatic in all their communications, they are working on it and holding discussions on the subject.
- Eight of the 16 organizations we met with mentioned that surveying members in their communications is essential. In their view, surveys can get a lot of engagement.
- Eight of the 16 organizations mentioned having a member zone on their website. Most of these member zones are used to handle membership renewal, payment, and contact information updates.
- Seven of the 16 organizations underscored that weekends are a good time to publish articles or podcasts that get people thinking and aim to create engagement on social media and websites: a sort of regular column (on a range of topics) that will become a thing people do on weekends, and will boost engagement.
- Nine of the 16 organizations use member portraits in their campaigns.
- Twelve of the 16 organizations have a member newsletter and a non-member newsletter.
- All 16 organizations underscored that one person should be chiefly responsible for communications.
- All 16 organizations reported that communications should take at least ten hours a week in order to be effective, relevant and impactful.
- All 16 organizations insisted on the importance of keeping a website concise, easy to understand and easy to navigate.

“IT’S REALLY MORE ABOUT TARGETING THE TYPES OF CONTENT AND POSTING REGULARLY. THIS IS WHAT WE CALL THE ‘MORNING COFFEE’ ARTICLE, ON SATURDAY OR SUNDAY, I PUT A COFFEE EMOJI NEXT TO IT: IT’S OUR ARTICLE THAT WILL REACH A QUARTER OF OUR FACEBOOK COMMUNITY. PEOPLE LIKE IT. IT SHOWS OUR ENGAGEMENT ON FACEBOOK.”

CHLOÉ, PIÉTONS QUÉBEC

“OUR WEBSITE HAS TO BE IMPACTFUL. MORE WITH IMAGES AND POINT-FORM CONTENT. WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS YOU’LL GET? YOU’LL NEVER SPEND AN HOUR READING A WEBSITE. IT HAS TO BE VERY CLEAR, VERY IMPACTFUL, AND YOU NEED TO GET WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW IN TWO OR THREE CLICKS.”

MARTINE, ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES EN FINANCES DU QUÉBEC

Recommendations

- Hire a person to be responsible for communications.
- Use member portraits to create engagement and a sense of belonging.
- Boost members’ visibility using blogs, social media, podcasts and videos. Redo our website so that it’s clearer, more concise and attractive with accessible information provided in plain and inclusive language.
- Create a website that’s compatible with smartphones and tablets.
- Use the newsletter to welcome new members.
- Create a blog section on the website and invite members to contribute. Posts could be submitted to the communications person, who could then handle selection for the blog.
- Use information gathered via member surveys to perfect our communications.

- Publish a column (on weekends) on social media to create engagement.
- Work with Coalition partners to create content in order to increase engagement.

Ideas inspired by the interviews

- Create a member zone on our website. If we do plan a member zone, what would go there? Would this member section be used to handle renewals, to create a directory or to provide access to privileged information?
- The opportunity to submit articles for the blog would be a benefit exclusive to members.
- Target communications based on two groups, future parents and current parents, or based on the ages of children.
- Member newsletters should contain privileged information.

Create four types of newsletters:

- Two newsletters for members: one for future parents and one for current parents. Targeting the information would help keep the different audiences interested and provide them with messages tailored to their distinct situations.

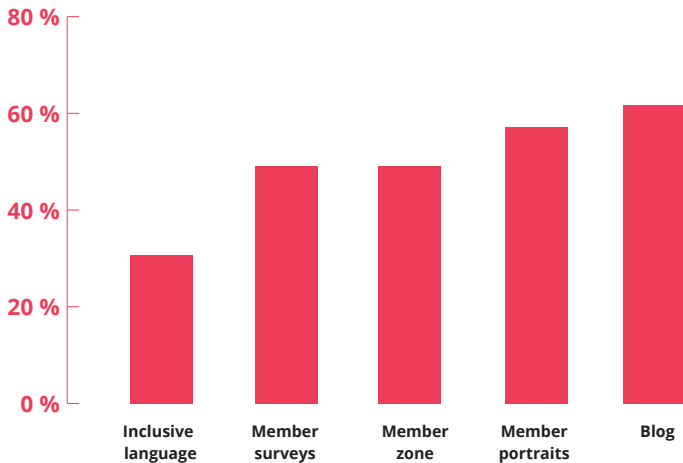
- A newsletter for non-members, who would receive information about lectures, but not about discussion groups; they would also receive information a bit later than members (not the same information).
- A newsletter for key people in the rural regions, to whom we would provide Coalition news as a priority (at the same time as the member newsletter) so that these people can share it with their communities.

3.8. Gaining member loyalty

Analysis

- One of the 16 organizations offers a free membership during parental leave.
- Three of the 16 organizations hold meetings with members to explain their benefits.
- Seven of the 16 organizations said they send holiday or New Year’s cards with a renewal form, or simply to wish members happy holidays or happy New Year.

Communications



“WE OFFER FREE MEMBERSHIP DURING MATERNITY LEAVE. WE SAY TO THEM, ‘WE UNDERSTAND YOU WANT A BREAK, BUT WE WANT TO KEEP YOU. WHEN YOU’RE READY, YOU CAN COME BACK.’ IT’S WILD, BECAUSE PEOPLE REALLY SEE IT LIKE IT’S A GIFT. WHEN IT’S CONVEYED WITH GOODWILL, PEOPLE ARE HAPPY.”

MARTINE, ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES EN FINANCES DU QUÉBEC

- Three of the 16 organizations hold meetings with members to explain their benefits.
- Seven of the 16 organizations said they send holiday or New Year’s cards with a renewal form, or simply to wish members happy holidays or happy New Year.
- Eight of the 16 organizations say they conduct an annual member satisfaction survey.

- Eleven of the 16 organizations we met with mentioned the importance of taking the pulse by consulting members on important decisions.
- One of the 16 organizations noted the importance of making sure that members are there for the mission and not only for the discounts offered by partners.
- All 16 organizations established that their priorities in terms of building loyalty are about centring members, listening to them and developing their sense of belonging.

“TWO YEARS AGO, WE DECIDED TO CONDUCT AN ANNUAL SATISFACTION SURVEY. ARE THEY SATISFIED WITH THE SERVICES THEY RECEIVE, ARE WE HELPING THEM? ARE WE REACHING THEM? WE MANAGED TO GET 200 RESPONSES (OUT OF 600).”

CAROLINE, RÉSEAU DES FEMMES EN ENVIRONNEMENT

“LAST YEAR, I ORDERED 200 CARDS. WE PUT IN A SMALL WORD, WE INCLUDE THE RENEWAL FORM, AND HONESTLY RENEWAL HAS NEVER BEEN STRONGER THAN THAT YEAR!”

ÉLISE, RÉSEAU QUÉBÉCOIS D’ACTION POUR LA SANTÉ DES FEMMES

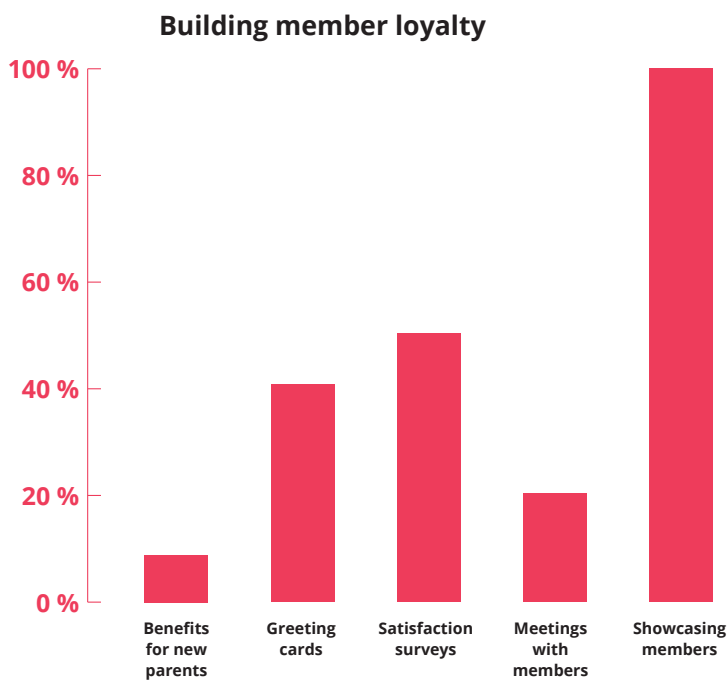
Recommendations

- Develop a sense of belonging among members by getting them involved in committees, having them contribute to blogs, or regularly soliciting their opinions. Anchoring members’ sense of belonging in the Coalition is the best way to achieve their loyalty.
- Send a greeting card during the holidays with the renewal form or a link to an online form. If renewal time isn’t at the holidays, it’s still nice to get a little holiday greeting from the association (sometimes, ties with the Coalition may be someone’s only ties, if we think about people living alone).
- Offering free or half-price membership during parental leave is a marketing win that will help show member families (including foster families) that they’re important to the Coalition and that we want to celebrate the arrival of their children with them.

- Plan a meeting (virtual or otherwise) and offer a welcome kit to new members.
- Hold an annual meeting with all members to take the pulse and remind them of their benefits, among other things.
- Conduct an annual member satisfaction survey. This would help the Coalition continue on its path or adjust as needed, and to learn about our strengths and weaknesses.

“WITH US, EVERYTHING WE PUT FORTH IS FOR OUR MEMBERS. AND WHEN WE CENTRE ANYONE, IT’S ALWAYS OUR MEMBERS. WHEN WE HOLD AN EVENT, IT’S ONE OF OUR MEMBERS WHO PRESENTS THE EVENT. IT’S IMPORTANT, THIS KIND OF TURNING TOWARD THE MEMBERS.”

MARTINE, ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES EN FINANCES DU QUÉBEC



3.9. Volunteers

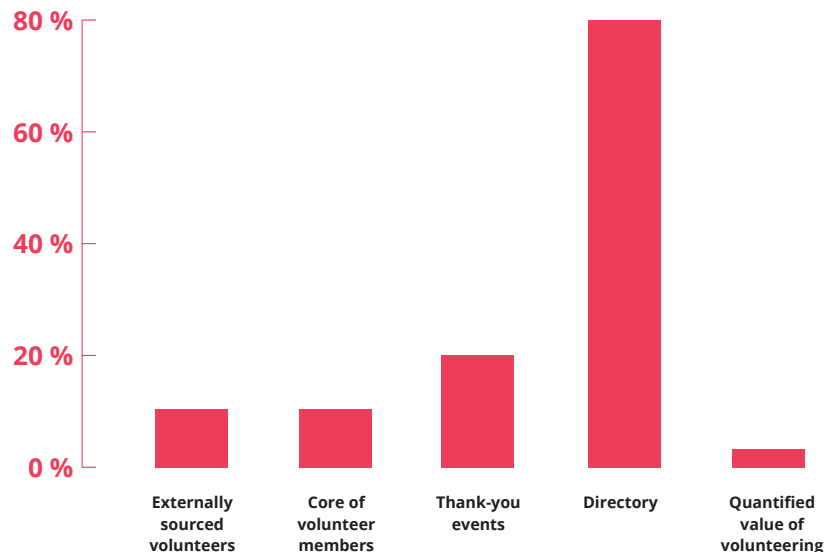
Analysis

- Two of the 16 organizations have volunteers that come from external organizations, such as volunteer organizations or partner organizations.
- Two of the 16 organizations have a strong, solid core of members who are very dedicated to the organization’s mission and get involved as volunteers at every event.
- Three of the 16 organizations hold a volunteer recognition event (a dinner, a lunch or a cocktail with little thank-you gifts).
- Six of the 16 organizations said their volunteers come only from within their membership.
- Eight of the 16 organizations recruit their volunteers when they show up and offer to help.
- Thirteen of the 16 organizations underscored that it’s important to have a directory with contact information for volunteering.

Recommendations

- Hold an annual thank-you event for Coalition volunteers, where a meal and drinks will be served. This type of activity could encourage volunteers to stay for a few years longer and would encourage new people to get involved.
- Communicate the need for volunteers for certain activities through our social media and newsletters.
- Create a bank of volunteers with their contact information. This would help us find volunteers quickly if an activity comes up, and could serve as a list of people to thank and showcase when the occasion arises.
- Create a volunteer form that lists skill categories.

Volunteer practices



3.10. Funding

Analysis

- One of the 16 organizations holds an annual online silent auction.
- One of the 16 organizations does not do membership drives, but runs a donation drive where it creates personas (a marketing technique) in order to target different groups of people for different types of messages.
- One of the 16 organizations suggested going to see the Imagine Canada website for tools and scales for donations with a charity number.
- One of the 16 organizations is thinking about offering the option of a monthly support donation. For example, making a donation of up to \$5 monthly.
- One organization attributes a monetary value to volunteer hours, which are added into their annual report (according to them, this makes a good impression on funders).
- Two of 16 organizations self-fund by selling promotional objects or products at reduced prices.

“NOW IT WORKS AS FUNDING. PRIVILEGED ACCESS TO OLIVE OIL FROM A COOPERATIVE FROM SOUTHERN CATALONIA. AND NOT ONLY CAN THEY GET IT AT A VERY GOOD PRICE, BUT IT ALSO SERVES AS SOCI-FUNDRAISING FOR OUR ORGANIZATION.”

“WE ALWAYS TRY TO JOIN FORCES WITH OTHER CULTURAL PARTNERS. WE ARE PART OF THE GROUP. WE’VE GRAFTED OURSELVES ONTO MANY ELEMENTS. IT HAS GIVEN US A LOT OF STRENGTH AND PRESTIGE, TO ASSOCIATE OURSELVES WITH THESE ORGANIZATIONS. THE MAISONS DE LA CULTURE ARE VERY OPEN TO PARTNERSHIPS. WITH AN ORGANIZATION LIKE YOURS, WITH YOUR VALUES, IT WOULD BE SUPER EASY. FOR YOU, IF IT’S A FILM YOU WANT TO PRESENT, OFTEN THE MAISONS DE LA CULTURE ARE VERY OPEN.”

ÈRIC, CERCLE CULTUREL CATALAN

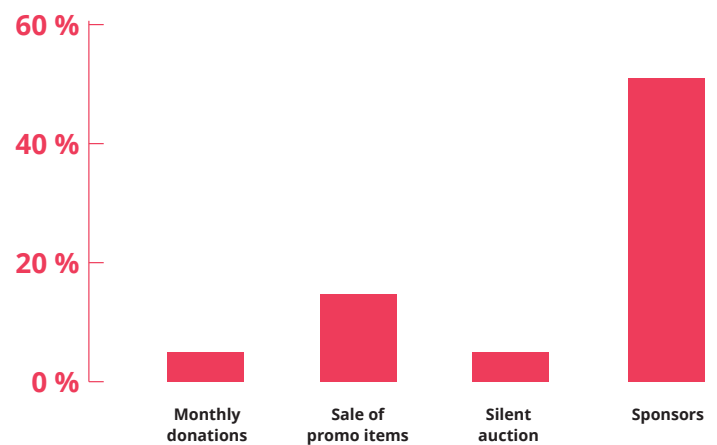
Recommendations

- Find sponsors and partners for events organized by the LGBT+FC, to reduce certain expenses such as room rentals, as well as for draws, gifts and more.
- Use the Imagine Canada website for information on charitable organizations.
- Organize an annual fundraising event. For example, this event could take the form of a silent auction, a spaghetti dinner, a benefit show or any other idea discussed within the Coalition team.
- Offer the option for one-time or recurrent (monthly) donations.
- To increase people's desire to give, place a "Donate" button very visibly next to impactful items on our website and in our newsletters.
- Create permanent marketing personas for fundraising campaigns in order to best reach our target audiences.
- Explain the usefulness of donations (why is giving important?). Even if the Coalition is leaning toward the possibility of offers and rebates with partners, we need to make sure we continue to raise members' awareness about our primary mission in order to make sure they're mainly interested by the fundamental elements of the mission above all.

Ideas inspired by the interviews

Place a "Where is your money going?" diagram on the website for transparency purposes for our donating members and other funding partners as recommended by Imagine Canada.

Organizational funding



CONCLUSION

We can say that the first step of the project has been a real success, as the various organizations we met with gave us many excellent ideas to think about when it comes to ways of reaching members of the LGBT+FC, whether they're in major centres or rural regions, and ways of boosting their loyalty.

The final word for this part of the project is definitely that we want to create a sense of belonging among members of the LGBT+ Family Coalition. To do this, it's important to centre them in our various communications and activities, whether by conducting regular satisfaction surveys, providing them with visibility through participation in the association, giving them a platform on our social media and website, presenting member portraits, or providing them with exclusive benefits.

As well, it seems crucial to establish partnerships with key people in each rural region to ensure that we adequately respond to requests and meet the needs of families in those regions, and to make sure services are as accessible for these families as they are for families living in major centres. In the future, it will be important to enhance our services, activities and communications, among other things, in order to better anchor LGBT+FC as a core resource for families in LGBTQ2S+ communities across the entire province of Québec.

Seeking out partnerships with other organizations, LGBTQ2+ or otherwise, would also help establish the Coalition not only as a rights organization but also as a services organization that helps break isolation and create a greater community of LGBTQ2+ families.

In the next step of the project, in which we meet with LGBTQ2+ organizations working in the various regions of Québec, it will be important to understand how to establish a solid and lasting partnership in order to jointly meet the needs of LGBTQ2+ families in Québec

APPENDIX

5.1 Organizations contacted

*Organizations interviewed

Name of organization	Date of interview
Amicale des Sommeliers du Québec	
Association of Québec Women in Finance	11/11/2020
Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale	11/11/2020
Association multiethnique pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées	5/11/2020
Quebec Lung Association	
Association Québécoise des Fauconniers et Autoursiers	
Association québécoise des parents d'enfants handicapés visuels (AQPEHV)	4/11/2020
Québec Association for Home-Based Education	12/11/2020
Au coeur des familles agricoles	
Canot Kayak Québec	
Cercle des fermières du Québec	
Cercle culturel catalan	26/10/2020
Courtepointe Québec	
Diabète Québec	
Elles de la construction	3/11/2020
Fédération des femmes du Québec	
Fédération des parents adoptants du Québec	5/11/2020
Fédération québécoise de camping et de caravaning (FQCC)	
Fédération québécoise des chasseurs et des pêcheurs	
Fédération québécoise du loisir littéraire	
Fédération québécoise pour le saumon atlantique	
Québec Native Women	
Girl Guides	
Help and Information Center on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace (GAIHST)	25/11/2020
Groupe Femmes, politique et démocratie	
Black Coalition of Quebec	
Mentorat Québec	28/10/2020
Migraine Québec	
Mouvement allaitement du Québec (MAQ)	17/11/2020

Moelle épinière et motricité Québec	
Oxfam-Québec	17/12/2020
Piétons Québec	29/10/2020
Première Ressource	
PROMIS	
Rando Québec	19/11/2020
Regroupement du conte au Québec	
Réseau des femmes en environnement	18/11/2020
Réseau Québécois d'action pour la santé des Femmes	12/11/2020
Vélo Québec	

5.2 Information about the organizations interviewed

Organization	Description	Number of members	Number of Facebook followers
Association of Québec Women in Finance	The AFFQ brings together professional women working in senior positions in the field of finance in Québec.	850	1,075
Association féminine d'éducation et d'action sociale	The AFEAS defends the interests of Québécoise and Canadian women in various areas.	8,000	2,000
Association multiethnique pour l'intégration des personnes handicapées	The AMEIPH contributes to developing the full potential and increasing the agency of immigrants with disabilities and their families.	118	834
Association québécoise des parents d'enfants handicapés visuels	The AQPEHV is an organization funded by the ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec that provides services to parents of children with vision impairments.	708	N/A
Association québécoise pour l'éducation à domicile	The AQED is a citizen and volunteer organization founded in 1997 by homeschooling families that want to better support each other in their homeschooling projects.	2,000	6,789
Cercle culturel catalan	The Cercle culturel catalan is the official association for Catalans and catalanophiles, dedicated to strengthening the ties between Québec and Catalonia.	305	4,518
Elles de la construction	The Elles de la construction aims to promote the rights and interests of women working in the field of construction.	220	2,757
Fédération des parents adoptants du Québec	Since 1986, the Fédération des parents adoptants du Québec has informed, equipped, supported and defended adoptive families.	500	872

Groupe d'aide et d'information sur le harcèlement sexuel au travail de la province de Québec	The GAIHST is a community organization established in 1980 that assists people who have been subjected to sexual or psychological harassment in the workplace.	50	1,200
Mentorat Québec	Mentorat Québec's mission is to foster and promote the culture of mentorship in Québec.	125	1,193
Mouvement allaitement du Québec	The MAQ works to make environments favourable to breast- and chest-feeding in the context of optimal child development and the well-being of women, families and society.	130	3,938
Oxfam-Québec	Oxfam-Québec works to mobilize the population of Québec in expressing its solidarity.	15,000	30,244
Piétons Québec	Piétons Québec is a provincial organization in the public interest representing the interests of pedestrians.	300	5,388
Rando Québec	Rando Québec promotes hiking and snowshoeing across Québec by providing tools to everyone who is active in developing these areas across the province.	3,600	28,866
Réseau des femmes en environnement	The RQFE brings together women committed to the environment, and contributes to capacity-building by and for women.	600	7,089
Réseau québécois d'action pour la santé des Femmes	The RQASF is committed to promoting and defending the rights and interests of women and taking a global approach to health.	140	2,402

5.3 Complete questionnaire

ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

- 1.1. Can you describe your organization in a few words?
- 1.2. About how many people contribute to your organization or association (employees, volunteers, board of directors)?
- 1.3. What types of employees do you have in your organization?
- 1.4. What is the organizational structure (hierarchy, co-management, internal committees)?
- 1.5. What are the accomplishments you're most proud of?

2. SERVICES TO MEMBERS

- 2.1. What services do you provide to your members?
- 2.2. Do you offer bilingual services?
- 2.3. How many members does your organization have?
- 2.4. Where are the majority of your members located?
- 2.5. What are the benefits of being a member?
- 2.6. Do you have a section reserved for members on your website?
- 2.7. If yes, what is this section made up of? Is it interactive?
- 2.8. Do you have a person responsible for the member zone?
Does it require a lot of work and time?
- 2.9. Do you think it's something that's an added value in your member services?
- 2.10. Apart from the member zone, how do you communicate with your members?
- 2.11. If you have membership cards, are they digital?
- 2.12. Do you provide a communication network among your members?
- 2.13. If yes, how does it work?
- 2.14. In your view, what is the priority in terms of member services? Why?
- 2.15. What kind of involvement do members have in your organization?
- 2.16. Do you want to add more information about your member services?

3. ACTIVITIES

- 3.1. What types of activities do you offer your members?
- 3.2. Do you do one-time activities? Recurring ones? What are your traditions?
- 3.3. What are your most popular activities? Are they different in rural areas?
- 3.4. Do you offer interregional activities? What about provincial activities (conferences, etc.)?
- 3.5. How will you rethink your activities so that they still meet your members' needs during the pandemic?
- 3.6. Do you charge for your activities? If so, what's the average cost per activity?

4. STIMULATING ACTIVITIES IN RURAL REGIONS

- 4.1. How does your organization manage to offer services all over Québec?
- 4.2. Do you succeed in serving the whole province of Québec?
- 4.3. How do you manage to reach the more remote regions?
- 4.4. In your view, what is the best way to extend your services all over Québec? Why?

5. TYPE OF MEMBERSHIP

- 5.1. Is membership a priority for you? Why?
- 5.2. What types of membership do you have at this time?
- 5.3. If you have several, which one do members prioritize and, in your view, why?
- 5.4. When your members pay a fee, how long does that cover their membership for?
- 5.5. Over the years, have you seen a fluctuation in your members in relation to any changes you've made to your procedures?

6. MEMBERSHIP DRIVES

- 6.1. How do you encourage people to become members?
- 6.2. Do you have an annual membership drive?
- 6.3. How does your membership drive work, if applicable?
- 6.4. How do you handle province-wide promotion? Who is in charge of it?
Do current members help you?
- 6.5. In your view, what is your best promotional tool? Why?

7. ORGANIZATIONAL COMMUNICATIONS

- 7.1. What are the various methods of communication you use to reach the general public (video clips, blog, website, etc.)?
- 7.2. What social media do you use (list)? Which ones are most popular and least popular?
- 7.3. How do you get followers on your social media?
- 7.4. How is your following different among different social media?
- 7.5. Do you have someone in charge of social media?
- 7.6. Do you have a newsletter? Is it reserved for members?
- 7.7. If yes, what's in your newsletter?
- 7.8. What's working well on your website? What's working less well?
- 7.9. If you had to redo your website, what would you do?
- 7.10. In your view, what are your communication priorities for reaching the population?
- 7.11. About how much time per week do you spend on managing communications?
- 7.12. In your view, what's the best way to communicate with the population? Why?
- 7.13. How has COVID impacted your communications and memberships?
- 7.14. Have you moved over to fully digital communication, or do you still do postal mailings?

8. BUILDING MEMBER LOYALTY

- 8.1. What is your member retention strategy?
- 8.2. How do you create a sense of belonging for members of your organization?
- 8.3. In your view, what's the best way to keep your members happy and involved? Why?

9. VOLUNTEERS

- 9.1. Does your organization have volunteers? If yes, about how many?
- 9.2. Do you have a heavy turnover among volunteers, or do the same ones often stay?
- 9.3. Are your volunteers mostly members?
- 9.4. How do you recruit volunteers?
- 9.5. What do volunteers like about your organization?
- 9.6. How do you ensure volunteer retention?
- 9.7. Do you have a volunteer recognition system?

10. FUNDING

10.1. Do you self-fund?

10.2. What type of donation form do you have (annual, twice-annual, seasonal, etc.)?

10.3. In your view, what's the best way to encourage donations or get funding?

10.4. What are your other strategies to encourage donations (Facebook, testimonials, etc.)?

10.5. Can donations be something other than money?

11. DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (CULTURAL, SEXUAL, GENDER, ETC.)

11.1. Does your membership campaign also include people from sexually diverse and gender-diverse communities?

11.2. Do you try to use inclusive language in your communications?

11.3. In your own words, what do you do to make your organization more inclusive?

