Checklist for Assessing LGBTQ+ Inclusive Programs
For Granters and Foundations

OUT maine — LIFTING UP MAINE'S QUEER YOUTH

The following checklists can be used to assess a program or organization for its ability to include, affirm, and protect LGBTQ+ participants, and therefore assess the potential positive impact toward a more just and inclusive culture. Quotes below each section are suggestions for how to ask the questions that will result in the needed information, followed by rationales for each question.

Leadership, Location, and Alliances

	Are there LGBTQ+ people in leadership positions?
	If not, are there letters of support from LGBTQ+ stakeholders?
	Are any stakeholders that represent marginalized groups compensated?
	If there are similar programs offered by LGBTQ+ organizations in the same area, does this program offer something unique?
	Does the organization have a partnership with and/or awareness of local LGBTQ+ organizations?
	If the program is in a rural area, is there an outreach plan that includes outreach to LGBTQ+ youth?
	Do staff and stakeholders have access to up-to-date learning opportunities regarding the importance of inclusive policies and practices?

"Without sharing the personal details of any individual staff members, are there LGBTQ+ individuals in leadership positions? If not, can you provide letters of support from LGBTQ+ organizations or stakeholders?"

"Are these stakeholders compensated in any way?"

"Do you have any form of partnership or connection with any LGBTQ+ - focused organizations?"

Rationale: LGBTQ+ individuals have historically been underrepresented in leadership positions.
Rationale: LGBTQ+ leaders are more likely to be aware of the unique needs of LGBTQ+ youth in their programming, and are more likely to be sensitive and responsive to the increased need of safety and intentional inclusion of LGBTQ+ youth.

Rationale: Any consultants that represent a minority identity should be adequately compensated for their consultation and support. Not compensating individuals for their lived experience or expertise is exploitation.

Policies and Procedures

	Is there an anti-discrimination policy?
	Does it include examples of discrimination in plain language?
	Does it include procedures for reporting and addressing discrimination?
	Is there an anti-harassment or anti-bullying policy?
	Does it include examples of bullying or harassment in plain language?
	Does it include procedures for reporting and addressing bullying or harassment?
	Is there a confidentiality policy?
	Will anyone outside of the program be alerted of a participant's LGBTQ+ status?
	Is there a policy covering bathrooms, housing, or other gendered spaces?
	Does it state that transgender and non-binary participants can use the facility that most aligns with their gender identity asserted during the program?
	Is there a policy ensuring the correct use of names and pronouns?
	If there is a dress code, is it inclusive of all genders and gender expressions?
	Are these policies accessible on the organization's website or handbook?

"Please share the following policies if applicable for your organization - anti-discrimination, anti-bullying, anti-harassment, dress codes, and any policies regarding bathroom and housing access for transgender and non-binary participants."

Rationale: Participants need to understand what is covered by the policies, and not many people would know what constitutes discrimination or harassment without examples.
Rationale: Procedures help participants as well as know what to expect from the policy and reporting concerns.
Rationale: Correct names and pronouns affirm the identities of participants and is case law in Maine. Using the wrong name and pronoun for transgender and non-binary youth greatly increases the risk of suicide.
Rationale: Maine case law states that people can use the bathroom, housing, or gendered facility that most aligns with their gender. LGBTQ+ youth often report avoiding eating and

drinking to avoid going to the bathroom, as the majority of anti-LGBTQ+ assaults and harassment happen in the bathroom. Gender-inclusive facilities can be beneficial for many participants, not just transgender and non-binary youth. If there are concerns about sexual activity or sexual predation, those concerns should be addressed through supervision and education.

Outreach Materials and Intake Forms

	Do registration forms have options to share names and pronouns? (and avoids the use of the word "preferred" when referring to pronouns)
	Are these optional?
	Do registration forms provide more than two options for gender?
	Do outreach materials such as websites, posters, or brochures include visuals that challenge gender norms?
	Do outreach materials such as websites, posters, or brochures include visual representation of diverse families?
	Do outreach materials such as websites, posters, or brochures avoid gendered language and use inclusive language such as "participants", "attendees", or "youth"?
	Does the website share staff pronouns?
	Do outreach materials such as websites, posters, or brochures share a verbal statement of inclusion and welcome?
	Do outreach materials such as websites, posters, or brochures include a rainbow flag or safe space graphic?

"Please share copies of your registration forms."
"Please share any common outreach materials you use such as posters or brochures."

Rationale: Due to the historical erasure and exclusion of LGBTQ+ people, it is important to explicitly show that an organization thought of LGBTQ+ individuals when creating these programs
Rationale: If there are no options to share names beyond legal names or pronouns, then transgender or non-binary individuals will have to lie on your registration form.
Rationale: Sharing the pronouns of staff on your website is a green flag that the pronouns of participants will be respected.

Inclusive Programming

	Are participants ever divided by gender?

	Is there a plan for addressing the needs of transgender and non-binary youth in those situations?
	Are there examples of how gender norms are challenged in the program? Examples of this are: women's climbing night, encouraging male participants to engage in the craft room, a fashion design workshop that is led by a male instructor
	Do staff have training on addressing derogatory or exclusionary language by participants?
	Are there restorative or disciplinary procedures in place for addressing anti-lgbtq+ comments or actions?
	Are staff provided regular training on LGBTQ+ identities and inclusion?
	Are staff provided opportunities for implicit bias training?
	Are staff prepared to keep all participants safe? ☐ CPR/First Aid trained ☐ Narcan/overdose prevention ☐ Anti-bullying, bystander intervention training
	Are staff prepared to address any community pushback regarding LGBTQ+ inclusion?
	Are administrators prepared to address any community pushback regarding LGBTQ+ inclusion?

"Are participants of this program ever divided by gender? If so, is there a plan for how transgender and non-binary participants will interact with those activities?"

"Please provide examples of how gender norms are challenged examples in your program. Examples of this are a women's climbing night, explicit encouragement of male participants to engage in the craft room, or a fashion design workshop that is led by a male instructor."

"What training is provided to staff regarding the creation and maintenance of programming that is inclusive of LGBTQ+ identities and meets the unique needs of LGBTQ+ participants?"

"How will any derogatory or exclusionary language be addressed by staff? Please be as specific as possible regarding immediate response as well as any restorative or disciplinary procedures."

"Are there clear expectations and training for staff to handle anti-LGBTQ+ comments such as using the word "gay" as an insult by youth participants?"

"What policies, procedures, and training do staff and leadership have in regards to addressing any community pushback of your inclusive programs?"

Rationale*:* Dividing a group by gender is an antiquated practice. Keeping boys and girls seperate only serves to perpetuate gender divides while further isolating transgender and non-binary participants.

Rationale: Gender norms harm everyone, and need to be intentionally disrupted. Allowing gender norms to go unchallenged perpetuates unfair gender expectations for all genders.

Rationale: Programs are rarely inherently inclusive, and need to be intentionally designed to break down barriers that have historically resulted in the exclusion of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Rationale: Anti-LGBTQ+ comments and slurs are on the rise and are common in many youth programming. Staff need training on how to effectively address these comments in a way that does not cause more victimization of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Rationale: Anti-LGBTQ+ pushback by community members and the public is on the rise and is common in any program that is intentional about including and protecting LGBTQ+ participants. Staff and administrators need training on how to effectively address this pushback in a way that does not cause more victimization of LGBTQ+ individuals.

Facilities

	Are there gender-neutral bathrooms?
	Are they close to the other bathrooms, and are they open and accessible?
	If there are only binary bathrooms, is there a policy in place to protect the rights of transgender and non-binary youth using binary bathrooms?
	If there are only binary bathrooms, is there a policy with procedure, and associated training to address any concerns that arise about sharing a bathroom with transgender people?
	If this program includes overnights, are there gender-inclusive housing options?
	If there are only binary housing options, is there a policy in place to protect the rights of transgender and non-binary youth in binary housing?
	If there are only binary housing options, is there a policy with procudure, and associated training to address any concerns that arise about sharing housing with transgender people?
	If this program includes overnights, can participants change binary housing without parental involvement?

Rationale: Maine case law states that people can use the bathroom, housing, or gendered facility that most aligns with their gender. LGBTQ+ youth often report avoiding eating and drinking to avoid going to the bathroom, as the majority of anti-LGBTQ+ assaults and harassment happen in the bathroom. Gender-inclusive facilities can be beneficial for many participants, not just transgender and non-binary youth. If there are concerns about sexual

activity or sexual predation, those concerns should be addressed through supervision and education.

Rationale: Parental involvement is best practice, but not if the involvement of family members will cause significant distress or any harm to the participant.