Assessing Our Organizations

This Organizational Assessment — an adaptation of a longer self-evaluation tool created for groups to look at their organizations around race — offers a place to start. This sampling of questions is designed to help you examine and change the ways your organization currently deals with LGBTQ equality, a well as some places to start looking within the organization for some first steps.

Program: How does your organization work on the issues?

1) Does the organization talk about LGBTQ issues in general?
2) Does the organization talk about your issues in ways that include potential LGBTQ constituents or how LGBTQ constituents are disproportionately impacted by the issues you work on?
3) Does your organization advocate for the participation of LGBTQ issues when working in coalition with other groups?

As an organization made of primarily straight allies we must actively develop our issues in ways that incorporate our LGBTQ constituents; this task is essential and requires constant attention.

Power: Who makes decisions in your organization?

1) Is your organization accountable to LGBTQ individuals within your own community?
2) Does the organization seek leadership from LGBTQ leaders within your community?
3) Does the organization have openly LGBTQ board members?

Organizations committed to supporting LGBTQ equality develop the leadership of staff and members so that power can be shared in a meaningful and accountable way. Organizations made of primarily straight allies must create a decision-making processes that incorporate LGBTQ members, individuals, and organizations.

Policies: How are the policies of the organization created?

1) Does the organization have anti discrimination policies that explicitly prohibit harassment of LGBTQ members of the organization?
2) Does the employee benefits package incorporate the needs of LGBTQ staff members (i.e. domestic partner benefits and insurance?)
3) Does the organization have gender accessible bathrooms?

Policies and practices of organizations are often overlooked areas, but play a critical role in supporting LGBTQ members of our groups. Organizations policies and practices should

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ensure that all employees are treated equally and fairly, regardless of their orientation or gender identity.

People: Who are the people within your organization?

1) Is gender identity and sexual orientation part of the diversity that your organization seeks among its staff, leadership and members?
2) Are staff and key leaders trained to address issues of homophobia and gender oppression as they arise in work with members?
3) Are there regular trainings and discussions at the member, staff and board level about dismantling homophobia and gender oppression?

An organization committed to LGBTQ equality will provide training and encourage discussion about homophobia and gender oppression with board, staff and members. LGBTQ individuals within the organization will have specific opportunities to understand and dismantle internalized oppression, while straight people are charged with understanding and dismantling heterosexual privilege.

Culture: What is the culture of your organization?

1) Does the organization have LGBTQ identified members that are public about their sexual orientation or gender identity?
2) Is heterosexual culture treated as the norm? Do art and activities reflect the LGBTQ community?
3) Is discussion of homophobia and gender oppression normal and encouraged or seen to distract from "the real work?" Do people in leadership positions participate in and support discussion of power and oppression issues?

These questions reveal whether the day-to-day experience of the organization reflects the lives and cultures of queer people. Groups committed to addressing homophobia and gender oppression must examine the ways that we communicate, the space in which we work, and the activities we share.

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Directions: For each question, choose one of the following:
- Red Light: Our organization has not gone there
- Yellow Light: Our organization has started conversations about this or taken some first steps
- Green Light: Our organization is fully on board and has completed this action

	Red Light	Yellow Light	Green Light
Program			
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3) Does your organization advocate for the participation of LGBTQ issues when working in coalition with other groups?			
Power			
1) Is your organization accountable to LGBTQ individual within your own community?			
2) Does the organization seek leadership from LGBTQ leaders within your community?			
3) Does the organization have openly LGBTQ board members?			
Policies			
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