

ACT
TOGETHER
FOR
INCLUSION
FUND (ACTIF)



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

***GUIDELINES
FEBRUARY 2021***

educate. empower. change.

Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF)

Around the world, people face human rights violations due to their sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC). Activists have made significant advancements to protect and fulfill the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit and intersex (LGBTQ2I)* persons. But where important gains have been made on some fronts, the recognition and protection of rights remain uneven, particularly for two-spirit, trans, and intersex persons, as well as for bisexual, queer, and lesbian women. Human rights violations persist – including violence, stigmatization, restrictions on freedom of expression and association, and discrimination in access to health services, education, and decent work.

ACTIF is an outcome of significant efforts made by Canadian civil society, coordinated by Dignity Network Canada (DNC), to advocate for greater Canadian support for advancing the human rights of LGBTQ2I people internationally. The launch of the **Act Together for Inclusion Fund (ACTIF)** therefore marks a highly anticipated and historic moment for Canadian funding for international LGBTQ2I initiatives. Funded by **Global Affairs Canada** and managed by Equitas in partnership with DNC, **ACTIF aims to enhance the respect, protection and fulfillment of the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit and intersex (LGBTQ2I) persons in countries in the Global South, and specifically those eligible for Official Development Assistance.** ACTIF will strengthen a network of Canadian LGBTQ2I organizations and build solidarity with local LGBTQ2I civil society organizations by providing additional, or previously inaccessible, opportunities to implement programming in the Global South.

*Limitations exist in using the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, two-spirit and intersex. There is a spectrum of gender identity and sexual diversity both in Canada and around the world and there are many other words in various languages to describe this diversity, reflecting the culturally and historically-specific ways in which sexual and gender identities are recognized and expressed. For example, in Canada, the term “two-spirit” is used by and within Indigenous communities, reflecting the history among some peoples of describing those who differed from gender norms and crossed gender boundaries as carrying both male and female spirits.



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Equitas and Dignity Network Canada

Equitas advances equality, social justice and respect for human dignity through transformative human rights education programs in Canada and around the world. To deliver on its mission, Equitas' programming contributes to the empowerment of individuals and groups that face discrimination, exclusion and other forms of human rights violations to challenge inequality and discrimination and take action to respect, protect and defend human rights. Equitas has a significant track record implementing programming on LGBTQI rights, including in Haiti with Kouraj, and in East Africa with the East African Sexual Health and Rights Initiative. Equitas supports a network of 4000+ human rights defenders, including many LGBTQ2I human rights defenders.

Dignity Network Canada (DNC) is a network of civil society organizations across Canada involved in supporting the human rights of people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and sex characteristics (SOGIESC) globally. DNC believes that Canada and Canadians play a role in the world in supporting movements involved in advancing the human rights of LGBTQ2I people. Our vision is a world where LGBTQ2I people everywhere enjoy full human rights and socio-economic well-being.

Participatory and Feminist Approach

Equitas and Dignity Network Canada recognize how power and privilege are inherent to global grant-making and the importance of destabilizing colonial funding dynamics. This is why we are strong proponents of feminist and participatory approaches that shift the power of decision-making to communities themselves. In line with the principles of “nothing about us without us” and “the process is as important as a result”, ACTIF believes that local LGBTQ2I human rights defenders and organizations are experts of their own realities and should be at the heart of decision making.



Engaging a diversity of Southern LGBTQ2I communities in funding decisions is critical to more robust LGBTQ2I networks, trust, and solidarity — the building blocks for powerful collective action and vibrant movements. The leadership of LGBTQ2I activists and grantmakers in the Fund’s governance also allows for more informed, equitable, and effective investments and outcomes under ACTIF.

With this in mind, Equitas and DNC established the **ACTIF Advisory Committee** and ACTIF Project Selection Committee. The ACTIF Advisory Committee is made up of 10 individuals with lived experience, skills, and expertise in LGBTQ2I-related activism and international grantmaking. This Committee advises on and validates the strategic direction of the Fund, monitors its implementation, and advises on adaptations in response to dynamic contexts and needs.

The **ACTIF Project Selection Committee** is a separate and autonomous committee that is responsible for making decisions on applications submitted for funding. The Project Selection Committee includes individuals with deep experience in LGBTQ2I human rights work globally. Equitas and DNC sit on this Committee as non-voting members. The Project Selection Committee is tasked with reviewing proposals and selecting projects. Equitas and DNC have a right of refusal should a project not meet the requirements of Global Affairs Canada. This Committee also reports on the outcomes of its deliberations, processes, and lessons learned to the Advisory Committee, DNC, and Equitas.



Guiding Principles

Intersectionality

ACTIF recognizes that it is not only transphobia, biphobia, and homophobia that impact LGBTQ2I people. Rather, these systems of power intersect and compound with colonialism, racism, classism, patriarchy, ableism, and ageism, among others. These power systems exist both within and between LGBTQ2I communities, partners, and funders, as well as within society in general. The Fund and its projects aim to integrate an intersectional analysis and approach to addressing the human rights of LGBTQ2I persons.



Inclusion

Historical and current power dynamics and inequalities within LGBTQ2I communities require intentional measures to ensure marginalized groups inform, access, and benefit from the Fund. ACTIF maintains a commitment to deliberate practices of inclusion and power redistribution through its operations and in its portfolio. In particular, ACTIF prioritizes the leadership of two-spirit, trans, and intersex people, as well as bisexual, queer, and lesbian women from around the world in its governance and programming.

Indivisibility of Human Rights

ACTIF affirms the indivisibility of human rights. Civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights are all human rights inherent to every person's dignity, regardless of SOGIESC. These rights are equal in status, and one cannot be prioritized over another. Work to advance specific rights under ACTIF must not undermine other rights.

'Do No Harm'

The Fund is guided by the principle of 'do no harm' in both partnerships and programming. ACTIF aims to challenge colonial funding dynamics and work in solidarity with marginalized LGBTQ2I groups in both Canada and the Global South to minimize harm. ACTIF will also pay particular attention to the security and well-being of Canadian partners, Southern partners, and local communities to ensure that activities do not exacerbate risks of discrimination or violence. Information about project partners and individual activists will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.



Call for Proposals

Delivered over seven years, the Fund will support multi-year projects designed and implemented by Canadian CSOs and Southern partners. Four calls for proposals will be launched throughout the life of the Fund:

Schedule of Call for Proposals

- **1st Call: February 2021**
- **2nd Call: 2022**
- **3rd Call: 2023**
- **4th Call: 2024**

ACTIF will accept applications for projects to advance the human rights of LGBTQ2I people. The duration of projects can be between 12 to 36 months. Organizations may apply for funding between \$200,000 CAD and \$500,000 CAD.

The Fund aims to finance projects that integrate an intersectional and human rights-based approach (HRBA), as well as projects presented by two-spirit, trans, and intersex organizations, as well as bisexual, queer, and lesbian women, to ensure the participation and leadership of marginalized groups within LGBTQ2I communities. ACTIF recognizes that some of these groups may not be equipped to participate in this first call for proposals. This is why a thorough capacity building program will be put in place in 2021 to accompany more modestly-sized organizations in developing proposals for the second call in 2022, and to support organizations receiving funding from ACTIF.

Mechanisms are also integrated to evaluate the applicant experience of each call for proposals so that each process is adapted and improved to better to meet the needs and realities of LGBTQ2I organizations. This iterative structure will support learning and the evolution of ACTIF grantmaking and implementation over the life of the project.

Funding Priorities

ACTIF's ultimate objective is to increase the respect, protection and fulfillment of human rights and socio-economic outcomes for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, two-spirit and intersex (LGBTQ2I) persons in the Global South.

In order to contribute to this ultimate objective, ACTIF will fund projects that respond to one or more (maximum three) of the following intermediate outcomes. Projects do not need to contribute to all intermediate objectives. Rather, the list is meant to be representative and inclusive of various LGBTQ2I organizations in Canada and in the Global South, as well as the diversity of strategies employed to advance the human rights of LGBTQ2I people. Organizations can adapt these outcomes to better respond to the priorities identified with their partners.

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- **Stronger and more resilient Southern LGBTQ2I organizations** - Improved sustainability of local LGBTQ2I's rights organizations in the Global South.
 - **Stronger and greater reach of LGBTQ2I movements in the Global South.**
 - **Increased collective and self-care for LGBTQ2I activists and organizations**, which in turn will strengthen movements.
 - **Increased participation and leadership of trans, two-spirit, and/or intersex people, and/or bisexual, queer and lesbian women** or targeted approaches addressing their needs.
 - **Changing social norms or community acceptance on LGBTQ2I issues.**
 - **Increased advocacy, influence and allies** with government and other sectors leading to change in policy or practice.
 - **Reduced discrimination and violence** or increased mechanisms of prevention, protection and response to SOGIESC discrimination and violence.
 - **Increased economic opportunities and resilience**, and access to decent work for LGBTQ2I persons.
 - **Increased access to a full range of sexual and reproductive health services.**

Eligibility Criteria

Projects are required to meet the following four criteria in order to be eligible for ACTIF:

1. Legal status and governance of Canadian applicants

- The applicant is a registered non-profit organization or charity in Canada.
- The organization has been in operation for at least one year.
- The organization has a mandate or board authorization to work internationally.

Additionally:

- Please provide audited financial statements. If these are not available, an attestation by the Board Treasurer will be required.
- All organizations receiving funding from GAC must have a policy on preventing sexual exploitation and abuse. Please provide a copy of this policy if you have one. If you do not, you may sign on to Equitas' policy on Preventing Sexual Violence, Harassment and Discrimination.

2. Legal status and governance of Southern applicants

- The lead* Southern organization is registered in a country eligible to receive Overseas Development Assistance.
- The organization has been in operation for at least one year.

3. Capacity of Canadian and Southern organizations

- Organizations have experience working with international partners or managing international projects. The selection committee will consider any capacity building needs for organizations with modest experience.
- Organizations have the capacity to manage the size of the requested budget. The selection committee will consider the overall size of the organization's operating budget in relation to the requested budget.

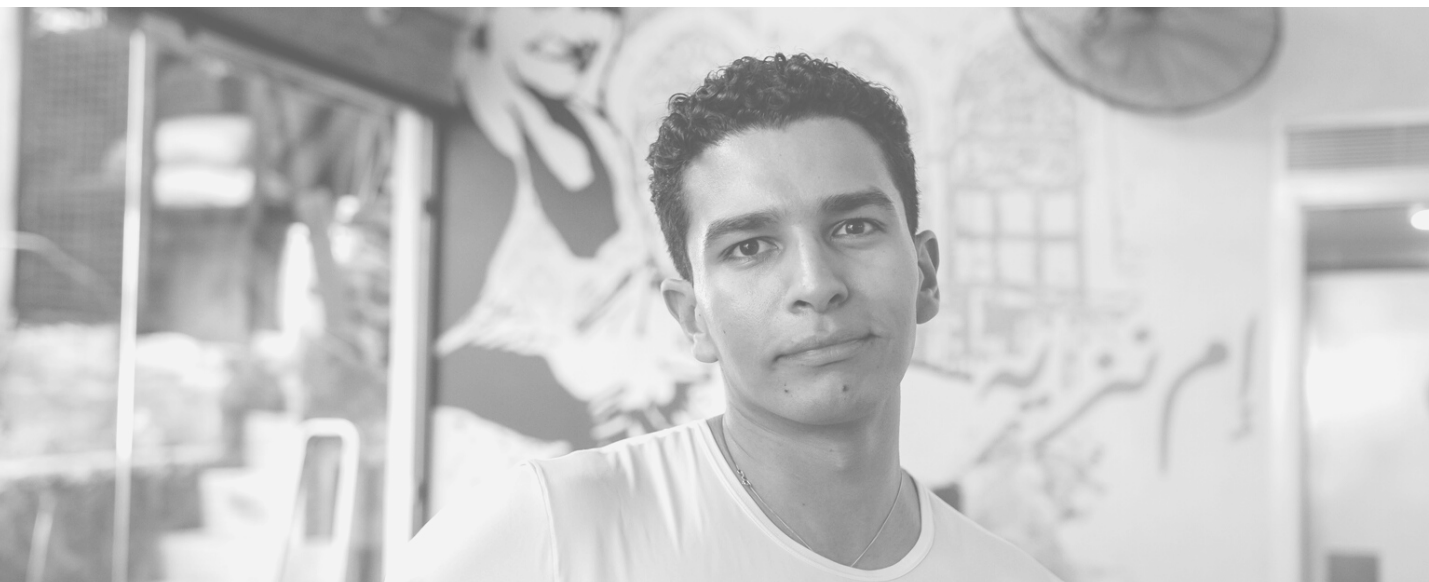
*ACTIF defines a lead organization as a partner that will sign onto a partnership agreement with Equitas or sub-agreement with a Canadian organization. A lead Southern organization is required to submit a registration certificate. Additional Southern partners are not required to submit a registration certificate. It is possible for additional unregistered Southern organizations to receive funding through the fiscal sponsorship of a lead Southern organization.

4. Credibility of Canadian applicants and inclusiveness of the project

- ACTIF will give priority consideration to projects submitted by Canadian organizations with significant representation (75%+) of LGBTQ2I staff in senior management and on the Board.
- A track record of working on LGBTQ2I rights is required, whether in Canada or internationally.
- Inclusiveness of LGBTQ2I people, organizations and communities, particularly those that are typically excluded from funding opportunities.

5. Southern capacity and voices

- Organizations will be asked to demonstrate how LGBTQ2I persons from the targeted communities and Southern partner organizations engaged in or led project design and decision making and how the project is responding to Southern LGBTQ2I community priorities. Southern LGBTQ2I organizations and communities should identify needs and strategies to respond to these needs.
- Priority will be given to projects where a significant percentage of the budget is managed by Southern organizations.
- Priority will be given to Southern organizations with significant representation (75%+) of LGBTQ2I staff in senior management and on the Board.
- Priority will also be given to Canadian organizations that have existing partnerships in the South.



Please use this tool which allows organizations to self-orient their eligibility to ACTIF. In the table below, organizations can be considered for funding if they score high (better or best) in at least one of the two columns. You can also fill out our [Eligibility Quiz](#) [here](#).

	Credibility and Inclusion	Southern Capacity and Voices
<u>Best</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization has significant representation (75%+) of LGBTQ2I staff in senior management and on the Board. Primary focus of organization's work is with LGBTQ2I communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern organization with significant representation (75%+) of LGBTQ2I staff in senior management and on the Board. A significant portion of the budget is managed by Southern LGBTQ2I organizations. Southern LGBTQ2I communities were involved in or led project planning & design.
<u>Better</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization with significant programming on LGBTQ2I rights, such as sexual health and HIV programming. Initiatives are led from within the LGBTQ2I community, in open consultation and with accountability to LGBTQ2I communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern LGBTQ2I communities or organizations were involved in project planning and design. At least half of the budget is going to Southern LGBTQ2I organizations.
<u>Fair</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization with prior experience partnering with LGBTQ2I organizations for rights-based programming. Mission demonstrates strong feminist and inclusive values and approaches. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southern LGBTQ2I partners were consulted in project planning and design. Very modest percentage of the budget is for activities in ODA countries.
<u>Does not meet criteria</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations with no track record working on LGBTQ2I issues or experience partnering with LGBTQ2I communities in Canada or overseas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Southern partners have been identified. Budget is largely or exclusively for Canadian organization and their staff.

Who is not eligible for funding?

- Canadian organizations applying to the Fund without a Southern partner
- Southern organizations applying directly to the Fund without a Canadian partner
- University, college, or other academic institutions
- Individuals

What is not eligible for funding?

- Projects in non-ODA eligible countries
- Private business or profit-making efforts (including business development)
- Individual projects (including graduate research and fellowships)
- Efforts that endorse candidates for public office (including political parties and election campaigns)
- Capital campaigns, endowments, or deficit financing
- Research projects or one-time events as the core purpose of the project
- Projects taking place entirely in Canada.



While some costs can be incurred in Canada, such as admissible program management costs, the majority of funding should be directed to Southern organizations and their work. Some activities taking place in Canada are eligible as long as they are complementary, and not the main objective of the project. Some examples include travel costs for LGBTQ2I human rights defenders who come to Canada to participate in public engagement activities, educational tours, or solidarity building with Canadian LGBTQ2I organizations and movements. However, this cannot be the main objective of a project proposal. Canadian CSOs will have to coordinate these trips to Canada with ACTIF and DNC to coincide with, or be complementary to ACTIF roundtable events.

*Organizations will only be funded for one project at a time in order to support as many organizations as possible. If organizations submit multiple applications, as a lead organization or otherwise, they will only be awarded up to one project.

Calendar

- ✓ **Launch of the call for proposals (Step 1):** February 15, 2021 (4 weeks)
- ✓ **Orientation webinars:** February 25, 2021 (English), February 26, 2021 (French) and Q&A on March 9, 2021 (Bilingual)
- ✓ **Organizational Profile deadline (Step 1):** March 12, 2021
- ✓ **Invitations to submit Proposal (Step 2):** April 1, 2021 (6 weeks)
- ✓ **Proposal Webinar (EN/FR):** Week of April 12, 2021
- ✓ **Proposal Q&A Webinar (EN/FR):** Week of April 26, 2021
- ✓ **Proposal submission deadline:** May 14, 2021
- ✓ **Project Selection Committee deadline:** June 7, 2021
- ✓ **Communications to applicants:** June 2021
- ✓ **Funding and partnership agreements:** June 2021
- ✓ **First Disbursements:** July 2021
- ✓ **Evaluation of application process:** June - July 2021



Funding Process



How to Apply

The application process will take place in two phases: Step 1 is an Organizational Profile, and Step 2 is the Project Proposal.

Multiple Canadian and Southern organizations may apply together. If there are multiple Canadian and/or Southern organizations, indicate which is the lead Canadian organization and the lead Southern organization. Please complete a profile for all main partners.

Step 1: Organizational Profile

- Canadian organizational profile(s)
- Southern organizational profile(s)
- Documents of Support
 - Audited Financial Statements or Attestation letter from Canadian partner
 - Letter of support confirming the partnership, signed by both lead organizations
 - Registration Certificate of lead Southern organization
 - Link to prevention of sexual violence policy (harassment, exploitation and abuse), if available.

Please submit your Organizational Profile online [here](#). The application form and this call for proposal document are available in English and French. To view the full list of questions in the Organizational Profile ahead of your Survey Monkey submission, [download the Word document here](#).

The deadline for Organizational Profiles is **March 12, 2021**. We recommend submitting your Organizational Profile a few days before the deadline in order to avoid the possibility of any technical issues. Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Information Sessions

Organizations considering applying can participate in an orientation webinar offered by Equitas. See the Calendar on page 13 for dates for English and French sessions. These sessions will allow organizations to better prepare their funding applications. The ACTIF team will provide an orientation to the application form and answer questions from participants. Webinars will be recorded and shared on Equitas' website if attendees consent.

Registration information will be posted on the Equitas website.

Support

The Equitas ACTIF team is available to respond to questions and clarifications. Please email nsinuco@equitas.org.

Step 2: Project Proposal Submission

Invited organizations will be provided with a full proposal form. Project proposals must be submitted electronically and consist of:

- Application Form
- Project Budget
- Documents of Support (if desired)



Canada

The Act Together for Inclusion Fund is funded by the Government of Canada through Global Affairs Canada.