

LGBTQI2SA + Safe Spaces

Toolkit



YORKVILLE
UNIVERSITY

Toronto
Film
School

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Diversity, Equity and Inclusion at Toronto Film School and Yorkville University

Toronto Film School and Yorkville University are committed to ensuring that all members of our community feel welcome and included in the workplace and academic environments. We will promote and support LGBTQI2SA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, Two-Spirit (2S), Asexual +) inclusion in our policies, procedures, programs and services to reflect and respond to the needs of our faculty, students and staff. We strive to create work and learning environments in which individuals can participate, maximize their contributions, and achieve their full potential. This includes promoting environments where a plurality of lived experiences are embraced and barriers to inclusion are eliminated.

This LGBTQI2SA+ Safe Spaces Toolkit serves to provide educational information about LGBTQI2SA+ lived experiences, guidance on how to facilitate safe spaces (both in person and online) that affirm LGBTQI2SA+ identities at our school, allow people that identify as LGBTQI2SA+ to build a shared sense of community, and to provide LGBTQI2SA+ community resources and supports.

“Without community, there is no liberation.”

— **Audre Lorde**



Terminology

Agender – Individuals who do not consider themselves having a gender.

Ally/Allyship – An ally is a person who works to end a form of oppression that gives them privilege(s). Allies listen to, and are guided by, communities and individuals affected by oppression. Forms of oppression include ableism, ageism, classism, biphobia, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, racism, anti-Black racism, anti-Indigenous sentiment, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, and others.

All-Gender – A label used to indicate that a good, facility, benefit or service is equally available to all persons regardless of their gender identity and/or gender expression.

Barrier – Physical, attitudinal, procedural, technological, information and communicational impediments to full access and participation. Barriers may be systemic or individual in nature. Systemic barriers can be described as patterns of behavior, policies or practices that are part of the structure of an organization, and which create a perpetual disadvantage. Individual barriers can be described as impediments that are not system-wide/related to the system.

Bigender – Individuals who have two gender identities.

Biphobia – negative attitudes, feelings, or irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of bisexual people and their communities, or of behaviors stereotyped as bisexual, leading to discrimination, harassment or violence against bisexual people.

Birth-assigned sex/gender – Refers to the classification of an infant's sex at birth. It is often determined by the observational inspection and appearance of external anatomy when an infant is born. However, classification of sex is more complex and includes a combination of bodily characteristics including chromosomes, hormones, internal and external reproductive organs, and secondary sex characteristics. A person's gender identity sometimes matches their birth-assigned sex, but sometimes a person's birth-assigned sex does not match their gender identity. For example, a vulva-bearing child is typically assigned female at birth, or AFAB, for short. A penis-bearing child is typically assigned male at birth, or AMAB.

Chosen name – The name an individual chooses to use which differs from their legal name and which they feel is essential to their identity and safety. This is not simply an optional 'preference'. It is the only name to be used for the individual and it is essential to their identity. It is especially important for transgender and non-binary individuals, whose workplace and learning environment experience and well-being are negatively impacted when their preferred/chosen name is not used.

Cis/Cisgender – A person whose gender identity is in alignment with the sex they were assigned at birth.

Coming out – The ongoing process that an LGBTQI2SA+ person goes through, to recognize their own identities relating to their sexual orientation and/or gender identity/expression, and to be open about them with others. One does not have to ‘come out’ to be considered LGBTQI2SA+.

Diversity – The wide range of human characteristics including but not limited to disability, marital status, family status, Indigenous identity, race, ancestry, place of origin, color, ethnic origin, national origin, citizenship, language, creed/religion, sex (including pregnancy and breastfeeding), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, political belief or activity, social condition, socioeconomic status, educational background, literacy level and geographical region.

Equity – Acknowledging that equal access to opportunities and services may require treating particular individuals and groups differently through the removal of barriers that marginalized equity-seeking communities experience in trying to obtain this access.

Gender identity – Each person’s internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being a woman, a man, both, neither, or anywhere along the gender spectrum. A person’s gender identity may be the same as or different from their birth-assigned sex. Gender identity is fundamentally different from a person’s sexual orientation.

Gender expression – How a person publicly presents their gender. This can include behavior and outward appearance such as dress, hair, make-up, body language and voice. A person’s chosen name and pronouns are also common ways of expressing gender.

Gender pronouns – These are pronouns that a person uses when addressing themselves/being addressed by others [e.g., he, she, him, her, they, them, ze, hir (ze/hir are gender neutral pronouns that can be used instead of gender specific ones) etc.] verbally and in all written documents and correspondence.



Gender spectrum – The representation of gender as a continuum, as opposed to a binary concept. The gender binary system classifies people within either one of two genders: “man” or “woman.” These genders are expected to correspond to birth sex: male or female. In the gender binary system, there is no room for living between genders or for transcending the gender binary. The gender binary system is rigid and restrictive for many people whose sex assigned at birth does not match up with their gender, or whose gender is fluid and not fixed.

Heterosexism – a system of attitudes, bias and discrimination in favor of female-male sexuality and relationships.

Homophobia – negative attitudes, feelings, or irrational aversion to, fear or hatred of members of the **LGBTQI2SA+ community**. It is used to signify a hostile psychological state leading to discrimination, harassment or violence those who identify as **LGBTQI2SA+**.

Inclusion – Ensuring that individuals feel welcomed in the academic and workplace environments, and that they can bring their authentic selves to the educational and work spheres.

Inclusive language – Terminology/words that treat diverse individuals and communities with respect and dignity. Inclusive language focuses on the words that the specific individuals and communities in question would like others to refer to them as. Inclusive language also includes using the appropriate self-identified gender pronouns/titles that individuals/communities choose for themselves. A commitment to using inclusive language requires reflection and sensitivity to the impact of potentially derogatory words and labels on diverse groups. When in doubt, ask someone how they would like to be addressed.

Intersectionality – Refers to the fact that our identities as individuals have multiple intersecting dimensions (which include but also go beyond prohibited human rights grounds) like race, gender, socioeconomic status, etc. As a result, the manner in which an individual experiences inequities or barriers to opportunity is similarly complex and multi-layered depending on the interplay of these intersecting dimensions. Intersectionality needs to be taken into account when assessing equity impacts on an individual or group.

Intersex – Refers to a person born with reproductive or sexual anatomy, chromosomes and/or hormones that do not fit the traditional or binary classification of male or female. Some individuals who are intersex may identify with their birth-assigned sex, while others may not.

LGBTQI2SA+ – Acronym for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or Questioning), Intersex, Two-Spirit (2S), Asexual (or sometimes Ally). Two-Spirit refers to Indigenous people that are gender-variant and identify as having both male and female spirits. The ‘+’ is for all the new and growing ways that people identify their sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression.

Non-binary – An umbrella term for gender identities that fall outside of the man-woman binary.

Pangender/Polygender – Individuals whose gender identity is not limited to one gender and who may identify with numerous (or all) genders

Privilege – Economic, political and/or social power, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities that an individual or group has as a result of identity aspects such as race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, religion, etc.

Safe space – The organizational facilitation of space (on-campus and online) where members of equity-seeking groups can feel comfortable and physically, emotionally, and socially safe enough to talk about sensitive topics/lived experiences that relate to their unique and intersectional identities. These are spaces where they feel no assault, challenge, or denial of their identity, of who they are, and what they need to thrive and reach their potential. Safe spaces can also be explicitly demarcated by the use of inclusive signage, symbols, art, ceremonial spaces, language and inclusive cultural practices and protocols. These spaces also represent affirmation, empowerment and courage.

Transgender/Trans – An umbrella term referring to people with diverse gender identities and expressions that differ from stereotypical gender norms. It includes but is not limited to people who identify as transgender, trans woman, trans man, transsexual, cross-dresser, gender non-conforming, gender variant, gender-fluid, or genderqueer.

Transitioning – Refers to the process an individual takes to change their birth-assigned gender to the gender with which they most identify. The process can involve some or all of the following changes: dress, appearance, grooming, name/gender pronouns, medical, legal, social and/or personal. An individual does not have to formally transition in this way in order to be transgender, and intrusive inquiries into this aspect of the person's life should be avoided.



Transphobia – the aversion to, fear or hatred of transgender people and communities

Safe Space Guidelines

Regardless of the form and frequency of the safe spaces you are organizing for LGBTQI2SA+ and allies to come together and support one another, these guidelines are recommended to be followed in order to ensure respect for diversity, equity and inclusion.

1. All discussions and interactions within the Safe Space must adhere to all TFS and YU policies (including those related to Student Conduct and discrimination and harassment). Discussions and interactions are to be conducted in a respectful, equitable and inclusive manner affirming the diversity of all intersectional identities. Any violations of TFS and YU policies will be subject to corrective action and/or discipline in accordance with the provisions of those policies.
2. Email communications to members of the Safe Space will have all of the recipient members blind carbon copied so as to preserve the anonymity of members and their autonomy over their level of being 'out' about their LGBTQI2SA+ identity. Leaders and members of the Safe Space will take care to ensure that no disclosure is made about the LGBTQI2SA+ identity of a member unless the member has explicitly consented and identified that they are publicly 'out' in the workplace or school environment. The same care will be taken to ensure that any in-person Safe Spaces are also conducted in a confidential manner as required by the preferences of the members and the circumstances.
3. Leaders, members and allies of the Safe Space may identify that they are supporters of these spaces and the LGBTQI2SA+ community by displaying a LGBTQI2SA+ Safe Space icon physically in their office space or in their online Zoom background, etc. in order to identify that they assist in the development and implementation of Safe Spaces.
4. Chosen names and gender pronouns that an individual identifies must be respected in all communications and interactions. Safe Space meetings will allow an opportunity at the beginning of the meeting for everyone to identify their name and gender pronouns. The beginning of meetings will also have an Indigenous land acknowledgement read. Please see Appendix A for guidance on this.
5. Discussions within the Safe Space are confidential, and this must be respected unless there is a rationale related to health and safety and/or legal obligations which require disclosure, and this will be made explicit to the affected individuals in the event that disclosure is required.
6. Allies are welcome to join Safe Space activities, however there may be situations in which events are closed to LGBTQI2SA+ members due to the sensitivity of the matters

discussed and the need to facilitate a space in which these members feel comfortable fully exploring their identities and lived experience.

Guidance for Allies

- 1 – Listen mindfully and show empathy when someone from the LGBTQI2SA+ community discloses their experiences and feelings to you
- 2 – Respect the confidentiality and safety of members of the LGBTQI2SA+ community
- 3 – Understand your own identity, privilege, biases, reflect on how that might impact someone from the LGBTQI2SA+ community, and how you can use your privilege to help
- 4 – Educate yourself on LGBTQI2SA+ history and experiences
- 5 – Sit with the discomfort if someone from the LGBTQI2SA+ community tells you that as an ally you are wrong about something. It's okay to explore this discomfort outside of the Safe Space with others such as experienced counsellors. However, in the Safe Space allies should not be defensive if they have made honest mistakes (such as using the wrong pronouns for someone, using outdated/misinformed terminology, making assumptions, etc.). This is an opportunity for learning and growth.
- 6 – Speak up when you see homophobia/biphobia/transphobia
- 7 – Provide referrals to helpful LGBTQI2SA+ affirming community support and resources to those in need

For more information visit: <https://egale.ca/awareness/how-to-be-an-lgbtq-ally/>



Community Support and Resources

Internal Support Resources

Primary student contact for LGBTQI2SA+ Safe Spaces: TFS Film Production Program Advisor - Zac Schraeder zschraeder@torontofilmschool.ca

Please feel free to bring forward questions/thoughts/feedback regarding diversity, equity and inclusion at TFS and YU to:

TFS/YU Diversity Consultant - Thamina Jaferi tjaferi@yorkvilleu.ca

[TFS Faculty and Staff Diversity Advisory Council/TFS Student Diversity Advisory Council](#)

[YU Faculty and Staff Diversity Advisory Council/YU Student Diversity Advisory Council](#)

Mental Health and Wellness

Free, confidential mental health counselling for students:

TFS students <https://tfs.janeapp.com/>

YU students <https://yorkvilleu-bc.janeapp.com/>

Free, confidential counselling for employees through the Employee Assistance Program:

Call Toll-free 877 847 4525, Call-Back at +1 416 956 2979

E-mail: support@resourcesforyourlife.com, SMS Texting: +1 647 624 2840, ICONNECT YOU app (Passcode: TLGeap)

www.resourcesforyourlife.com

Community Resources

The Canadian Centre for Gender and Sexual Diversity

<https://ccgsd-ccdgs.org/>

PFLAG Canada

<https://pflagcanada.ca>

Positive Spaces Initiative (Community links, referrals, Francophone resources and tools)

<http://positivespaces.ca/find-resources>

Egale

<https://egale.ca/>

The LifeLine Canada Foundation

<https://thelifelinecanada.ca/suicide-prevention-resources/lgbtq/>

Art Reach LGBTQ+ Resources

<https://www.artreach.org/lgbtqresources>

The It Gets Better Project

<https://itgetsbetter.org/>

Trans Pulse Project

<https://transpulseproject.ca/>

LGBTQI2SA+



The 519 Programs

416-392-6877, 519 Church St. · Toronto, ON

Programs serving the LGBTQI2S+ communities in Toronto and beyond

<https://www.the519.org/programs>

Access Alliance LGBTQ+ Programs

<https://accessalliance.ca/programs-services/lgbtq-programs/>

Two-Spirited People of the First Nations

416-944-9300, 14 College St · 4th floor · Toronto, ON

Counseling, information, and support for LGBTQ individuals of the First Nations community.

Rainbow Health Ontario - Sherbourne Health Centre

416-324-4180/416-324-4100, 333, Sherbourne St. · Toronto, ON

Serving LGBTQ people, Homeless and under-housed individuals, Newcomers to Canada

<http://sherbourne.on.ca/counselling-services/>

info@rainbowhealthontario.ca

The Hassle Free Clinic

416-922-0566, 66 Gerrard Street East · 2nd Floor · Toronto, ON

A Women/Trans & Man/Trans Clinic for Sexual assault/Domestic violence crisis support
Offers: Doctor visits; HIV & STI testing and treatment; Birth Control Prescriptions; gynaecological-concerns; expert led discussions; One-on-one nursing consultations; counseling support for sexual assault/violence, pregnancy, abortion, sexuality/trans issues, and HIV Positive women and trans women.

<http://www.hasslefreeclinic.org/ProgramsWomen.php>

YMCA Sprott House

(647) 438-8383

YMCA Sprott House - Walmer Road Centre provides affordable and supported residential living for up to 25 young people between the ages of 16 to 24. It first opened its doors in September 2007 and is now the first LGBTQ2S and allies transitional housing program for youth in Canada

<https://ymcagta.org/youth-programs/youth-housing>

Qmunity: BC's Queer Resource Centre

604-684-5307

www.qmunity.ca

New Brunswick Policies and LGBTQ Resources

<https://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/ed/pdf/K12/LGBTQ/9-NBPoliciesAndLGBTQResources.pdf>

Helplines

Good2Talk

General hotline that provides confidential support services for post-secondary students in Ontario and Nova Scotia.

1-866-925-5454, Text GOOD2TALKON to 686868 (Ontario)

1-833-292-3698, TextGOOD2TALKNS to 686868 (Nova Scotia)

<https://good2talk.ca/>



Trans Lifeline Hotline

877-330-6366, 10 am to 4 pm Eastern Standard Time

<https://www.translifeline.org/>

Lesbian/Gay/Bi Youth Line

416-962-9688 / 1-800-268-9688, Call-in only.

Provides support and information, as well as hate crime reporting, for members of the queer community.

<https://www.youthline.ca/get-support/links-resources/>

LGBT Referral Line

416-925-9872, Call-in only.

Many LGBTQ resources available through this umbrella hotline, including LGBT Muslim resources (extension 2209) and Gay Latino resources (extension 2850).

Prideline BC

1-800-566-1170 toll-free in BC or 604-684-6869 in the Lower Mainland

Peer support, information and referrals for anyone in BC

Available weeknights (Monday to Friday) from 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm

Appendix A: Indigenous Land Acknowledgement

Toronto Film School and Yorkville University are committed to ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion are an integral part of our culture. This includes removing barriers to inclusion for Indigenous faculty, students, staff and guests at our events. Land acknowledgements are the first step towards the continuous journey of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. They are encouraged to be read at the beginning of TFS and YU events and meetings including graduation ceremonies, courses, webinars and presentations.

Pronunciation of names of Indigenous communities:

Anishnabeg: Awe – Nish – Nah - Beck

Haudenosaunee: Hoe – De – Nah – Show - Nee

Chippewa: Chip – A - Wah

Wendat: When - Dat

Inuit: Ee- nu - eet

Métis: May – Tee

Qayqayt: Qiqéyt/Kuh-kite

Kwikwetlem: Kway-quit-lum

Mi'kmaq: Mi'kmaw/Micmac

Maliseet: Malecite

Wolastoqiyik: Wolastoq/Wulustuk



Land Acknowledgment

| TFS | YU |
|---|--|
| <p>Downtown Toronto campuses:</p> <p>"We acknowledge the land Toronto Film School operates on is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis. We also acknowledge that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.</p> <p>We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures."</p> | <p>Ontario (2000 Steeles campus):</p> <p>"We acknowledge the land Yorkville University operates on in Ontario is the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis. We also acknowledge that the applicable treaty for this region is referred to as the Toronto Purchase.</p> <p>We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures."</p> <hr/> <p>British Columbia (New Westminister campus):</p> <p>"We acknowledge that the land Yorkville University operates on in British Columbia is the traditional unceded territories of the Coast Salish Peoples of the Qayqayt and Kwikwetlem First Nations.</p> <p>We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures."</p> <hr/> <p>New Brunswick (100 Woodside location):</p> <p>"We acknowledge that the land Yorkville University operates on in New Brunswick is the traditional territory of the Wabanaki Confederacy, the Mi'kmaq, and the Wolastoqiyik-Maliseet First Nation. We also acknowledge that the applicable treaties for this region are referred to as the Peace and Friendship Treaties.</p> <p>We do this to reaffirm our commitment and responsibility in improving relationships between nations and to improving our own understanding of local Indigenous peoples and their cultures."</p> |