

Young People Caucus Pre-Conference Report

Tuesday 28 February from 12.30pm to 2.3.00pm at Aerial UTS Function Centre, Building 10 – Level 7 – 235 Jones Street, Ultimo NSW 2000.

Facilitators: Cathrine Hansen, Charlene Liu (Shanghai Pride)

Number of Participants: 11 from different regions (North America, APAC), some of the participants left their email addresses in case you'd like to connect with them, please let me know.

Workshop Purpose: For young adults to share and learn from each other, realizing they are not alone, but also learn how they can help each other worldwide.

Format: Mini design thinking starting with an ice-breaker followed by grouping of the participants into 3 groups. The first task was for each group to identify the challenges young LGBT+ adults face in their country, region, or culture. The participants then vote for two top challenges to address. Each group then finds solutions to address the challenges and prepare for a presentation.

Presentation by Group 1 - The Queers
Category: National / Rural Australia

Challenge 1 is Education: There is a lack of education about queer history in sex education and about the LGBTQ community. We need more practical ways to move forward instead of just policy changes. While we want to support world community efforts such as WorldPride, we especially want to reach out to rural education.

Suggestions for more awareness and education at schools:

- Have queer focused events (sports, speaking sessions)
- Make queer studies and curriculum mandatory
- Have materials and policies created by queer people
- Require diverse seminars for more dialogue instead of forcing only Christian seminars
- Invite queer organisations to travel around the country to speak at schools, create the safe space and make it compulsory

How to make it happen:

- Engage and accommodate people who might refuse to participate
- Create / increase government funding for this work
- Push for a national standard curriculum

Challenge 2 is Access:

Access to resources, knowledge, security and medical is still limited to LGBTQ people. Medical professionals have limited knowledge on how to assist queer people, there is limited access for queer people to funding, there is limited online services specifically for queer people, and safety is still a major concern for queer people.

Suggestions for more access:

- More training for medical professionals
- Create more online services such as queer friendly ride share apps
- Safer space on public transportation
- Fairness in funding and medical benefits

Optimism about these solutions being implemented in the next few years: Quite optimistic 4 out of 5 (mostly from AU, US).

Presentation by Group 2 - Unnamed

Category: General

Challenge 1 & 2 are Finances and Access to Services: Both finances and access are interdependent. With financial wellbeing, there is better access. With access to services and opportunities, there is better financial wellbeing.

Suggestions to increase financial wellbeing and access for LGBT+ people:

- We want services to provide trainings to upskill people who are marginalized, create job opportunities for queer people, engage with inclusive employers, provide housing for the queer community, train more GPs to be queer friendly.
- We want more push for funding on research and evidence that supports the needs of the queer community. It will be a cycle of financing access to services: We want to diversify services for community members —> for that we need to get funding —> we need academic research —> and through this we can gain support for the community services.
- Overlapping services and competing resources might be teaching the same things, so we want to connect under one big community

Suggestions on how to achieve these solutions:

- By contacting media to cover more representation and discussion on the queer community in local and national TV stations, in order to reach diverse audiences.
- By involving commercial and state news to cover all communities locally, regionally and nationally, including the queer community.
- By reaching out to celebrities for promotion, and by advertising on public transport.

Optimism about these solutions being implemented in the next few years: Moderately optimistic 3 out of 5, we need to keep the pressure on (mixed group from Asia, AU, US).

Presentation by Group 3 - The Asians

Category: Across Asia

Challenges 1 & 2 are Participation and Safe Spaces:

The issues that youths are facing worldwide are meaningful youth participation and limited safe space for LBGTQ youth through health and education services. LBGTQ youths are being targeted and delegitimized in the political agenda by people running for office.

Suggestions to increase youth participation and safe spaces across Asia and globally:

- Include everyone, also queer members, in the educational level regardless of sexual orientation. Every young person has a right for education (but in countries like Indonesia they promise schools to be "LGBTQ free").
- Sexual health education and access to information for all young people including LGBTQ sex ed focused and accessibility, whether offline or online.

How to achieve these solutions:

- Go to UNICEF, EU, UN to put pressure on national governments
- Requesting support from special envoys
- Approach donors to push the LGBTQ agenda in APAC, such as Asian Development Bank
- Build bottom-up from grassroot level and target the local level before the national level, for example in Japan they recognize the civil union between same sex at the local level before the national level
- Connect with UN bodies and ASEAN People Forum

Optimism about these solutions being implemented in the next few years: Little optimistic 2.5 out of 5 for mainstream adoption but 3-4 out of 5 for youth leading the way because change is not happening fast enough in mainstream, but youths do have some support from our own resources within the community (Thai participant); Little optimistic 2 out of 5, change within 10-15 years can be possible (Indonesian participant).

Best Regards,
Charlene