

Designing an inclusive public engagement process for LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners

What We Heard Report

Background

We want to conduct a territory-wide public engagement process so that we can strengthen our legislation, policies, programs, services and practices to ensure we are meeting the needs and priorities of LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners. However, we recognize that there have been challenges in addressing issues that affect LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners. In order to design a safe and inclusive public engagement process, we decided to undertake a pre-engagement initiative to learn more.

To conduct this pre-engagement, we worked with a consultant from the non-profit organization QMUNITY, which is based in British Columbia. QMUNITY focuses on improving the lives of LGBTQ2S+ individuals and has expertise in working with LGBTQ2S+ communities.

QMUNITY reached out to Yukon LGBTQ2S+ community members and equality-seeking organizations, including youth, First Nations and women's groups. A primary consideration was on how to ensure participants feel respected and safe when providing input.

Engagement Process

Purpose – We asked how we could design a public engagement process so that people feel safe to tell us what issues and priorities are most important to them. This input will help us engage LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners in a way that is accessible, confidential and inclusive. We also asked what priorities they would like to discuss in the next phase of public engagement.

Process – Feedback from this pre-engagement helped design a public engagement process that will identify actions that will ensure our legislation, policies, programs and services are as non-discriminatory and inclusive of LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners as possible. We anticipate the next phase of public engagement will take place in stages over this winter.



What We Asked

- What are your priorities for LGBTQ2S+ inclusion in government services?
- How can we engage LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners in a way that is inclusive, respectful, confidential, accessible and meaningful?

What We Heard

Pre-engagement helped us learn more about what areas of government services to prioritize and how to best engage LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners in the future. Community members and allies identified seven priority areas for further discussion in the next phase of engagement:

- Health care delivery
- Education
- Creation of an LGBTQ2S+ advisor position
- Employment
- Identification and registration documents
- Business development
- Social isolation and connectedness.

Feedback also identified that a successful public engagement would include these features:

- A number of ways and formats to engage that are both accessible and safe, such as support to attend in-person dialogues with a travel subsidy, or to design the engagement to allow for more communities to participate in person through focus groups;
- Counselling and mental health supports at in-person engagement events;
- Ways to build local capacity to support LGBTQ2S+ inclusion and equity; and
- A discussion about gaps, barriers and inconsistencies in our services, policies and practices.

Analysis

QMUNITY recommended that in order to offer a safe and inclusive public engagement, we should provide a variety of opportunities to participate: written and in-person events.

QMUNITY also recommended that we could help meet the request to build capacity in the LGBTQ2S+ community by offering training opportunities for people to co-facilitate focus group discussions and act as note-takers. This will also help to ensure the focus groups are inclusive of northern LGBTQ2S+ Yukoners.

What's next?

We will conduct a full public engagement this winter using the advice we received from this pre-engagement. The public engagement will explore priorities for LGBTQ2S+ inclusion in government services and help inform an action plan. Participation will be safe, dignified and inclusive. We will provide several ways for people to participate.

Participation

Engagement Methods

QMUNITY received feedback from individual discussions with representatives from Dawson Pride, the Public Service Alliance of Canada North Yukon Regional Pride Committee, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Youth Drop-In, Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Yukon Human Rights Commission and the Yukon Women's Transition Home.

Participation by the numbers:

- In-depth discussions with representatives from seven organizations
- Two comments and three shares on the Facebook post
- Four retweets and nine likes on Twitter

Notification

QMUNITY sent emails to identified stakeholders, who were encouraged to share the invitation with other interested organizations and individuals.

A news release and Facebook and Twitter announcements directed people to Engage Yukon, with information about how to get involved.