

# Telling Queer History

## 2022/2023 Annual Report



Brain Bose in left of frame participating in a group cheer with volunteers, performers and staff at our 10th anniversary celebration *Legacy* on June 3rd, 2023.

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### Letter from our Executive Director

We began our ninth program year in October 2022 dancing with grief, death, and remembering at our first storytelling gathering in Powderhorn. Ironically I was isolated at home a few blocks away, sick with COVID-19.

We are still in a time of collective grief, an airborne pandemic, where some people want to forget the long term effects, forget that we are still passing COVID-19 back-and-forth, and that it is evolving with us. I want us to remember we are responsible for each other's well-being, and that each breath we take is interconnected with the breath of another. That's why we created a space for collective grief.

Last year, we experimented with additional gatherings outside of storytelling, including a LGBTQ+ history walking tour and a workshop on end of life paperwork. *How are you preparing for your end of life and for the next generation? As part of your preparations, please consider leaving a bequest for Telling Queer History.*

We closed the program year with a sweet celebration called Legacy on the tenth anniversary of our first gathering. It was a beautiful, love-filled day in the oasis of the Wilder Foundation's backyard. There was storytelling, poetry, dancing, intergenerational conversations, and delicious food. It felt like a reunion; many of our past storytellers and planning team members attended. At our ideation station, we heard creative ideas from many people about how you'd like TQH to evolve through programming and community engagement. Over 20 volunteers dedicated their time and talents to make Legacy a success. Thank you!

We reflected on our internal structures and conducted a LOT of behind the scenes work. Our five main areas of effort were:

1. digitizing and organizing our archives;
2. creating digital LGBTQ+ history timelines;
3. assessing TQH's impact to-date;
4. implementing a comprehensive review and update of communication and marketing strategies; and,
5. activating an entirely new supporter management system that coalesced 10 years of data.

As part of our archival stewardship, we reconnected with past storytellers and gave each an extra financial gift, thanks to a taxpayer-funded legacy grant distributed by the Minnesota Humanities Center.

Our financial situation isn't a new story: most grant funding is time-limited and doesn't cover operational costs, specifically staff compensation. Many grants fund new, not existing, programming. Our team spends significant hours on grant management. Grant funding can be inconsistent; this year that inconsistency meant we needed to take short-term pay cuts.

To fill these funding gaps we rely on financial investments from our community. In response to our need, we started a new fundraising initiative asking for three-year commitments of larger gifts from TQH supporters. Four different households made that pledge. This creates stable funding that allows us to plan for the future and makes it easier to retain staff. Retaining staff is critical so we can keep momentum and keep showing up for our community. Currently, our three contract staff are part time and I am the only full time staff; none of us are employees. We four are working together alongside the board to maintain momentum and create more financial stability, diversify revenue, and build up a financial reserve so that we can shift to employee status in the near future.

I am both humbled and delighted that we're now half way into our tenth year of operations. To celebrate our longevity and expansion, we've doubled our program offerings. We've got fresh messaging, new programming, more streamlined operations, and LOTS of excitement to engage with you, as **together, we story our future!**

Thank you for all the ways you have participated, trusted us with your stories, and contributed. Thank you for resting when you needed to. Thank you for continuing to hold us accountable and to trust us with your resources. Thank you for sharing our work with your friends and families. Let's keep on **world building through joy.**

I hope that Telling Queer History can be **a nourishing place for you to build a community that holds you. TQH is here to remind you that we have survived, we will survive; we will do it together. We are resilient together.**

Love,  
Rebecca/RJ Lawrence (they/them)  
Founder and Executive Director

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## Storytelling in 22/23



“To sit here and think that a complete random stranger decided to help out a random person from across the globe just left me speechless. Keeping in mind that that that Minneapolis was also going through its own time of grief and loss; we're talking about summer 2020, this was following the onset of the pandemic and the death and the loss that occurred, and following the cold racist bloody murder of George Floyd and all of the destruction [in] the city...and even with that kind of difficulty, in Minneapolis people here found that within them to embrace me.”

“But one thing is for sure...I know that despite everything I was not alone. Around us is a beautiful community of people who care about us. And I feel that the biggest testament to that is me being-standing up here today, two years after coming to Minneapolis, to share my story.”

“Dozens of people came together to help somebody who they had never met before. That just shows the beauty of the community we have. Sometimes we're the ones who give help. And sometimes we're the 20-something year old queer cat and plant dad that was all the way across the globe with the two bags looking for help. Give and receive. There's many people who care for any of you. Many of whom you can name, but I bet you there's a thousand others who care about you that you do not know.”

**All quotes above:**

**Bas, storyteller, October 9, 2022 *Death, Grief & Remembering*, pictured above. Image of that gathering, below.**



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## Board Updates

**Deep thank you to everyone that has been part of the team over our 10 years.**

We wouldn't be here sharing stories and building connections without you. Thanks especially to these folks:



**Maddie Michaud** stepped down for self-care in August 2022

Thanks to **Rebecca Aylesworth** for 7 years of service! that finished in December 2022

**Jaymie Wagner** joined and quickly became our board chair in December 2022

**Teri Homan** joined in March 2023 and stepped down for self-care July 2023

**Harper Wicklund** joined as a board member in May 2023 after being our Media Manager in FY 21/22

**Gina Kaeppe** stepped down from board service to focus on family in June 2023



**Patricia Van Ert** went home to the ancestors shortly after attending the Legacy 10th anniversary celebration. She was part of the TQH team for many years before we became a nonprofit. **RJ got to visit her and reconnect in May 2023, pictured above.**

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# Program Updates



**In October 2023 we added two new program offerings.**

Pictured above is Katie Burgess (right), one of three live storytellers on our LGBTQ+ history walking tour of downtown Minneapolis in partnership with the MN Humanities Center. We also offered a learning workshop on end of life paperwork with three lawyers volunteering their expertise in conjunction with our Grief, Death, and Remembering gathering.

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# 10 year anniversary!

We had a fabulous time celebrating our Legacy at the Wilder Foundation's backyard space. More pictures are online. Thanks to Nance Musinguzi and Jual Visuals for the images. You can view the photos at: <https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.664210475741370&type=3>



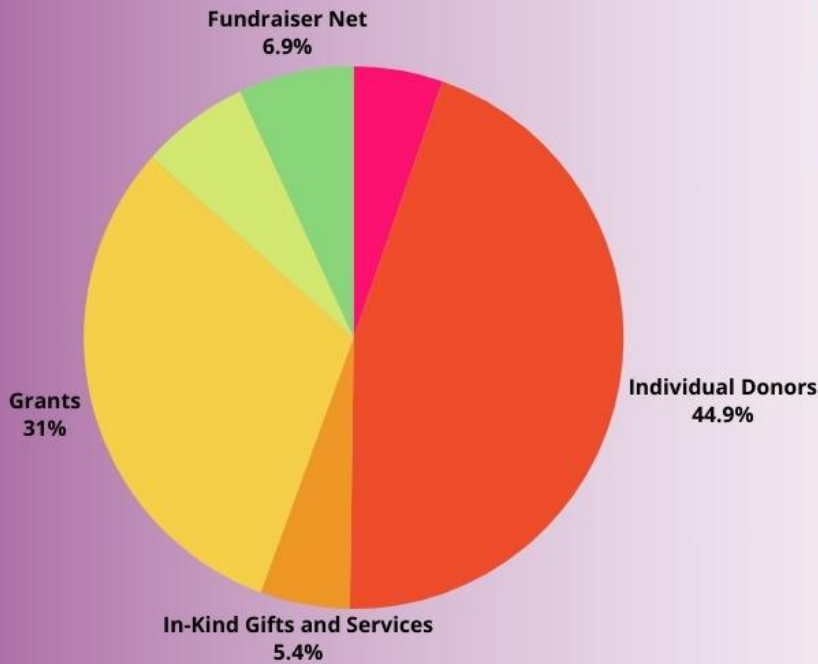






# Financial Report

## Income



### PROGRAM INCOME 5.3%

\$6,785 - Gatherings tickets, tours, and workshops

### INDIVIDUAL DONORS

\$56,979.25 - Combination of one time and monthly sustaining gifts

### IN-KIND GIFTS AND SERVICES

\$6,812 - Accounting and legal services. Auction items and other goods

### SPONSORSHIPS 6.5%

\$8,300 - 3M board match, PFund and Women's Foundation of Minnesota

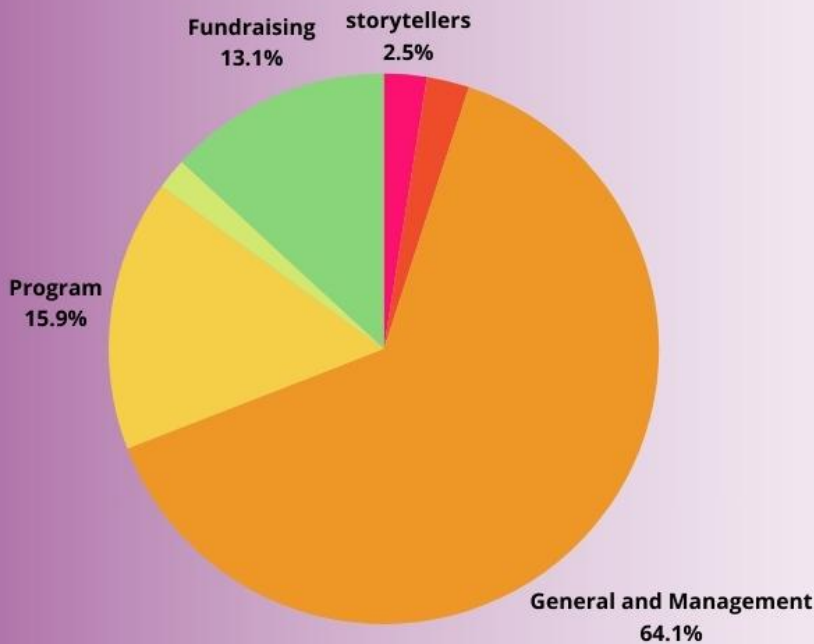
### GRANTS

\$39,320.85 - MN Humanities Center, Women's Foundation of MN, MRAC and PFund Scholarship

### FUNDRAISER NET INCOME

\$8,760.52 - Ticket sales and auction bids

# Expenses



## PROGRAM

\$19,009 - Task specifically related to our programming but not the gatherings themselves

## MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL

\$76,362 - Grant writing and reporting, accounting, marketing, donor management, and everything else. The bulk of our work running a business is behind the scenes building relationships and aligning details

## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT 2.5%

\$2,971 - Event tabling, fliers, workshops, etc.

## STORYTELLERS

\$3,000 - We pay each storyteller \$100 for their time

## FUNDRAISING

\$15,640 - Annual fundraiser celebrating 10th anniversary, Give to the Max day, and more

## ASL INTERPRETERS 1.8%

\$2,200 - We hire interpreters for each public event to ensure attendees can access the stories

Thank you to our 545 donors and 28 volunteers for investing in storytelling as a tool for building compassion, empathy, and healing!

# TQH 2022-23 YEAR IN NUMBERS

**413** TOTAL TICKETS SOLD

VOLUNTEERS  
SUPPORTING TQH

**28**

**545** INDIVIDUAL DONORS

STORYTELLERS  
FEATURED

**18**

**4** HOUSEHOLDS THAT MADE  
THREE YEAR PLEDGES

COMMUNITY PARTNERS  
THAT PROMOTED TQH  
GATHERINGS

**11**

**2** STAFF ADDED TO THE  
TQH TEAM



Lucinda (left), Jayce (right), and RJ (behind the camera) were on Fresh Fruit 24 hrs of Pride in June.



José Maria (right) and RJ (left) at the People's Pride in Powderhorn in June 2023.

**Thank you for being part of so much growth  
for Telling Queer History!**

We look forward to being with you in 2024.

Let us know how you want to be part of Telling Queer History, what reflections you have from 22/23, and how TQH can show up for you.

Email us at [hello@tellingqueerhistory.com](mailto:hello@tellingqueerhistory.com)