



A WORLD OF

DIVERSITY AND RESPECT

YEARLY REPORT 2016

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RFSL's president Frida  
Sandegård

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RFSL – ANNUAL REPORT 2016

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“BUILDING, STRENGTHENING  
AND CREATING SUSTAINABLE  
LGBTQ-MOVEMENTS”

Miles Tanhira, RFSL's international projects



“PROUD STRUGGLE

AND BRIGHT FUTURE”

**RFSL works for a society marked by diversity and respect for people's differences, where everybody, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression, should have the same rights and obligations and possibilities to live and work. In short, we are here to make the world better for LGBTQ people.**



**FROM MY FIRST YEAR** as president I remember all the meetings with young LGBTQ people who see a bright future as a given. And the elder who proudly see that their struggle and tireless work has led to that we can live more openly and safer today.

RFSL has taken big steps towards a world of diversity and respect since we were founded 66 years ago. But we still have important work ahead of us. Our strategic focus is now on asylum rights, international cooperation, health issues and family politics.

#### SAFE WAYS IN

The protection of LGBTQ refugees that have come to Sweden must be strengthened and secured. The temporary asylum laws that the government instated in 2016 especially affects LGBTQ people. RFSL wants to see the ways into the EU to be more protected by law.

#### IN THE FOREFRONT OF INTERNATIONAL MOVEMENT

Internationally, RFSL is a strong actor with direct cooperations with partner organisations in many countries. We work for increased knowledge about LGBTQ people's living conditions and how they connect to the development cooperation of embassies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, human rights organisations and other actors.

#### HEALTH IS A RIGHT

LGBTQ people should have the right to the same health status as the population in general. Today that is not the case. As a result LGBTQ people are subject to increased vulnerability and a risk of increased vulnerability in the form of threats, persecution, discrimination and violence, as well there's an increased risk of substance abuse, mental ill-health, mortality and suicide.

The work with health improvement is closely linked to rights issues, and our work ranges from trans people's rights to senior LGBTQ people, people who live with HIV and research about LGBTQ people's alcohol consumption habits, to name a few examples.

#### ALL DIFFERENT FAMILIES

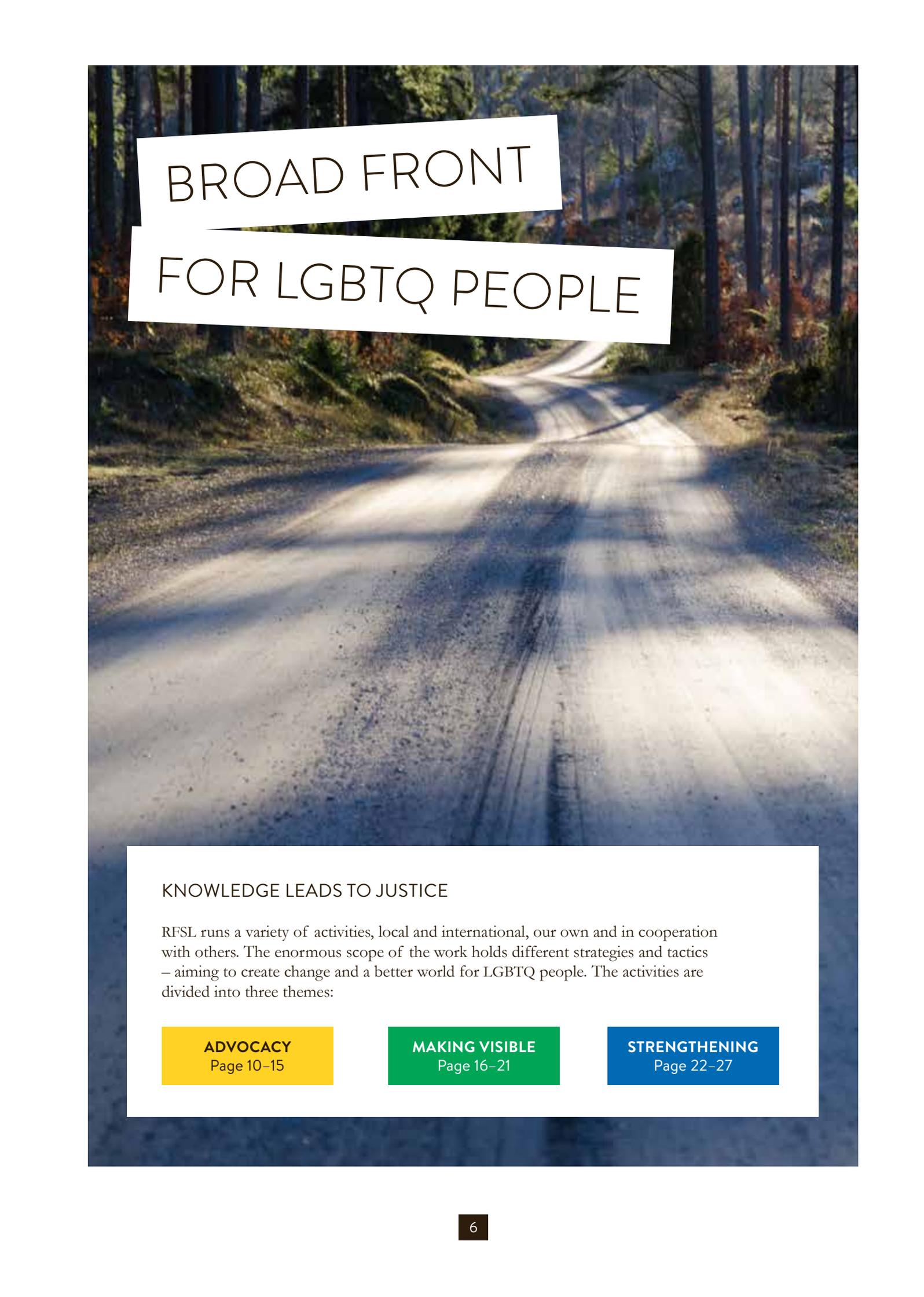
Families look different and RFSL works for integrating an LGBTQ perspective in Swedish family politics. The parent code needs a thorough review, but before that RFSL wants a gender-neutral parental presumption to become a reality. This means that the non-pregnant person in an LGBTQ couple becomes the child's legal parent, regardless of gender.

#### GUARD OUR GAINED RIGHTS

The support for LGBTQ political issues and LGBTQ people's human rights is strong. We see it in manifestations around the world, we see it in politician's intentions, in the media and not least in civil society. At the same time those rights cannot be taken for granted. We risk quickly taking many steps back if the conservative voices that are gaining ground stick around.

For the generation that comes after us are to be able to live without fear, persecution or violence we cannot take our rights for granted. We will always keep trying to find the ways to secure human rights for all LGBTQ people.

FRIDA SANDEGÅRD  
PRESIDENT RFSL



BROAD FRONT

FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE

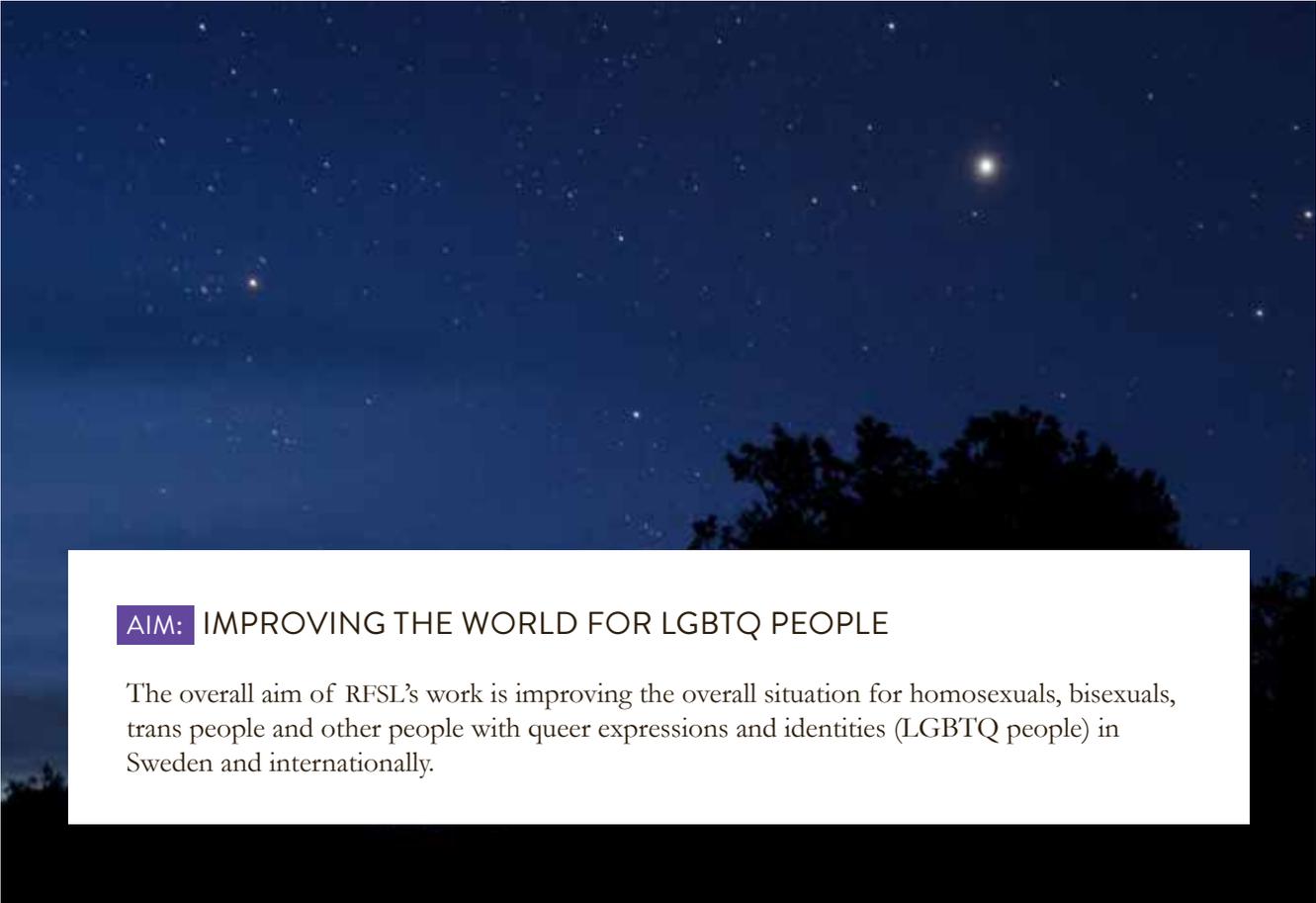
## KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO JUSTICE

RFSL runs a variety of activities, local and international, our own and in cooperation with others. The enormous scope of the work holds different strategies and tactics – aiming to create change and a better world for LGBTQ people. The activities are divided into three themes:

**ADVOCACY**  
Page 10–15

**MAKING VISIBLE**  
Page 16–21

**STRENGTHENING**  
Page 22–27



**AIM:** IMPROVING THE WORLD FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE

The overall aim of RFSL's work is improving the overall situation for homosexuals, bisexuals, trans people and other people with queer expressions and identities (LGBTQ people) in Sweden and internationally.



**VISION:** A WORLD OF DIVERSITY AND RESPECT

A society marked by diversity and respect for people's differences, where all people, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity and regardless of how they choose to express it, should have the same rights, possibilities and obligations to live and work.





FOR LGBTQ PEOPLE

“LGBTQ people’s human rights  
are the main cause and the core of  
all our work.”

Magnus Kolsjö,  
vice president  
RFSL



# KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO JUSTICE

# ADVOCATE



**10**  
COMMENT LETTERS

Comment letters are a formal dialogue with lawmakers, but RFSL also engages politicians and government officials in informal dialogue about human rights.

→ *“If your freedom is limited it is up to all of us to defend it. Hate crimes and attacks must become as unthinkable in reality as they are in our hearts. To all those who fear the hate and violence, you are not alone. We are strengthening the efforts against hate crimes and we provide more resources to LGBTQ organisations.”*

Stefan Löfven, prime minister (s), at RFSL:s manifestation in June 2016



**35**  
press releases

→ more Swedes (63%) than the average European (58%) understand that discrimination based on sexual orientation is a widespread problem

→ more Swedes (69%) than the average European (56%) understand that discrimination based on gender identity is a widespread problem

Source: ILGA-Europe Annual Review 2016



**200+**  
conferences and speaking opportunities



**72**  
certified organisations



**890**  
Web-based trainings



**54**  
short trainings



**3000**  
people

**126**  
organisations

↓  
have a raised capacity in LGBTQ issues in practice



**2,5** million

IN PROFIT FOR RFSL MEDIA & INFO AB



**5000**  
hours of work for RFSL's members

RFSL changes the world by influencing laws, policies and practises at a global and local level. Through our expertise knowledge we influence decision makers to guard LGBTQ people’s rights – in politics, at the workplace, in everyday life. Among other things we educate organisations all over Sweden in norm criticism and stress the importance of protecting diversity. We demand restitution for LGBTQ people who have been badly treated and work against the forces in the world that want to limit our rights.

# THE INTERNATIONAL WORK



## STRENGTH IN NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL ADVOCACY WORK, WHERE RFSL IS REPRESENTED, AMONG OTHER THINGS:

- *The commission against discrimination: Frida Sandegård/Lisa Olsson*
- *National cooperation body for HIV and STI: Frida Sandegård/Christian Antoni Möllerop*
- *ILGA Europe board: Micah Grzywnowicz*
- *Common forum (advising coordinating organ for civil society instated by the authority MUCF): Christian Antoni Möllerop*

## CONCRETE RESULTS ON THE GLOBAL ARENA

1. June 30<sup>th</sup>, UN’s human rights council adopted a new resolution: **”Protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity”** and instated an independent expert. RFSL together with other organisations took part in the instating through expert knowledge, moderating and networking.
  - *External observer: “RFSL definitely contributed to the adoption of the resolution by working strategically with diplomacy and advocacy.”*
2. UN’s Commission on the Status of Women kept the text on SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) to the last hearing, which is an improvement from earlier years. RFSL’s representative contributed to raising the awareness in the issue by networking, support for linguistic formulations and by organising workshops about sexual orientation and gender identity and LGBTQ.
  - *External observer: “Excellent!”*
3. The text in Agenda 2030 kept an open phrasing about anti-discrimination. That means that it opens up for discussion about LGBTQ people being included in the document. RFSL is now active in producing indicators to guard the SOGI aspects of the work.

# MILESTONE IN THE STRUGGLE FOR RESTITUTION

In April 2016 it was decided that Sweden, as the first country in the world, will compensate the transsexual people who were subject to undergo forced sterilization in the process of changing legal gender. RFSL had advocated the issue for several years, and the work is not yet done.

**IT WAS FINALLY** prohibited to forcibly sterilize trans people who change their legal gender in 2013. As a part of that work RFSL decided to sue the state and demand financial compensation for the trans people who had been violated. Together with the solicitor Kerstin Burman we gathered 160 trans people that would consider being part of a legal process.

–This is a group that has been very badly treated by society. Even when other groups got restitution the forced sterilization of people based on their gender identity

continued in Sweden. It's important that they get an apology from the state because of how they've been treated in modern times, says Kerstin Burman.

The new minister Gabriel Wikström appointed a group to investigate the demands of compensation for forcibly sterilized trans people. At the same time RFSL prepared to take their case to the district court.

– We chose eight people of the 160. Their cases together gathered all experiences, they were of different ages, the sterilizations had been

done at different times and they had different experiences that we wanted to capture. We reasoned that if we win with these cases everybody will get compensation, says Ulrika Westerlund, previous president of RFSL, and continues:

– And then a dramatic day in April, just as Kerstin and I put down all subpoenas in an envelope to send to the district court, my mobile phone rings. It is Gabriel Wikström's political advisor that says that they voluntarily will pay compensation!

## 2010

### How the sterilization of trans people was prohibited in Sweden

RFSL courts politicians and organises a party leader's debate at Pride. Reinfeldt changes Moderaterna's stance in the middle of the debate and divides the government in the issue, something that gets a lot of attention in the media.

## 2011

Solicitor Kerstin Burman works on a case with a person that doesn't want to be sterilized but wants to change their legal gender and wins in the administrative court.



ULRIKA WESTERLUND AND KERSTIN BURMAN

Now the forcibly sterilized are waiting for the government's bid, how big the compensation for each of them will be. RFSL has suggested that the sum should be 300 000 SEK per person, and that is based on how other forcibly sterilized groups earlier have been compensated in Sweden and in the European Court. But RFSL's job is not done.

– We have to make sure that everybody is included in the decision about compensation, says Kerstin Burman.

There are great risks in letting the process take too long, especially since many of the forcibly sterilized are getting older. Some of the people are nearly 80 years old.

– They want restitution before they die. We can't wait for an investigation that takes ten years, says Ulrika Westerlund.

## “They want restitution before they die”

KERSTIN BURMAN, SOLICITOR

## 2012

RFSL starts an intensive campaign that includes a big demonstration, digital petitions and several letters from international organisations to the government. Kristdemokraterna say that they have changed their minds through a debate article in Dagens Nyheter. Kerstin Burmans case has reached the administrative court of appeal, where we win again. "Forced sterilization goes against the form of government, the European Convention and is discriminatory," concludes the administrative court of appeal.

## 2013

The administrative court of appeal's verdict came into effect in January 2013. It takes time for politicians to change the words of the act. This comes in July. RFSL, RFSL Ungdom, the trans organisations King and FPES decide to pursue the issue of compensation for the forcibly sterilized trans people.

## 2016

In April 2016 it was decided that Sweden, as the first country in the world, should compensate those who had been subject to forced sterilization when changing legal gender.



ORGANISATIONS

THAT TAKE RESPONSIBILITY

Since 2008 RFSL has certified more than 300 organisations all over Sweden. By educating norm criticism and focusing on LGBTQ people's situation, we want to create a more inclusive working life.

**- IT HAS BECOME CLEAR** that diversity within organisations strongly contribute to the positive economic growth and development at the same time as the risk of ill-health increases considerably in environments where prejudice and harassment are present. To actively advocate openness, inclusion and understanding is therefore important for all organisations that want to grow into the future. RFSL's LGBTQ certifications are an important part of that process, says Gustaf Hedman, educational director at RFSL.

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**300+** ORGANISATIONS CERTIFIED IN SWEDEN

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The road to certification goes through educating the staff. They get an increased knowledge about LGBTQ, society's norms and what consequences these have on the health and living conditions for LGBTQ people. At the same time the organisation starts a work on implementing changes for a more open working environment, where everybody should feel included and welcomed. LGBTQ certification is for both private and public organisations. All the profits from the trainings go back into RFSL's work.



**LGBTQ CERTIFICATION: HOW IT WORKS**  
The LGBTQ certification is divided into several training sessions, workshops and group meetings. RFSL trains staff, looks at norms and risks in the organisation and produces an action plan for continued work with inclusion and norm criticism at the workplace. The certification is valid for three years.

# THE WHOLE WORLD

RFSL's international unit works with addressing LGBTQ people's rights all over the world. Together with the partner organisations we work with influencing big international organisations to guard LGBTQ people's rights in all instances.

**THE BIGGEST EFFORT** during 2016 has been to work for that the UN Human Rights Council appoints an independent expert on violations and discrimination connected to LGBTQ. In this work RFSL has mobilized and coordinated LGBTQ movements from all over the world, lobbied against states and influenced individual officials. A strong opposition worked against us all the way, but finally the decision was confirmed in UN's general assembly.

– There has been a very creative resistance to undermine this important position, that the movement has one person within the UN that handles these violations and communicates with states. It's a very concrete result of our work that we finally made this happen, says Kajsa Boredal, international director of RFSL.

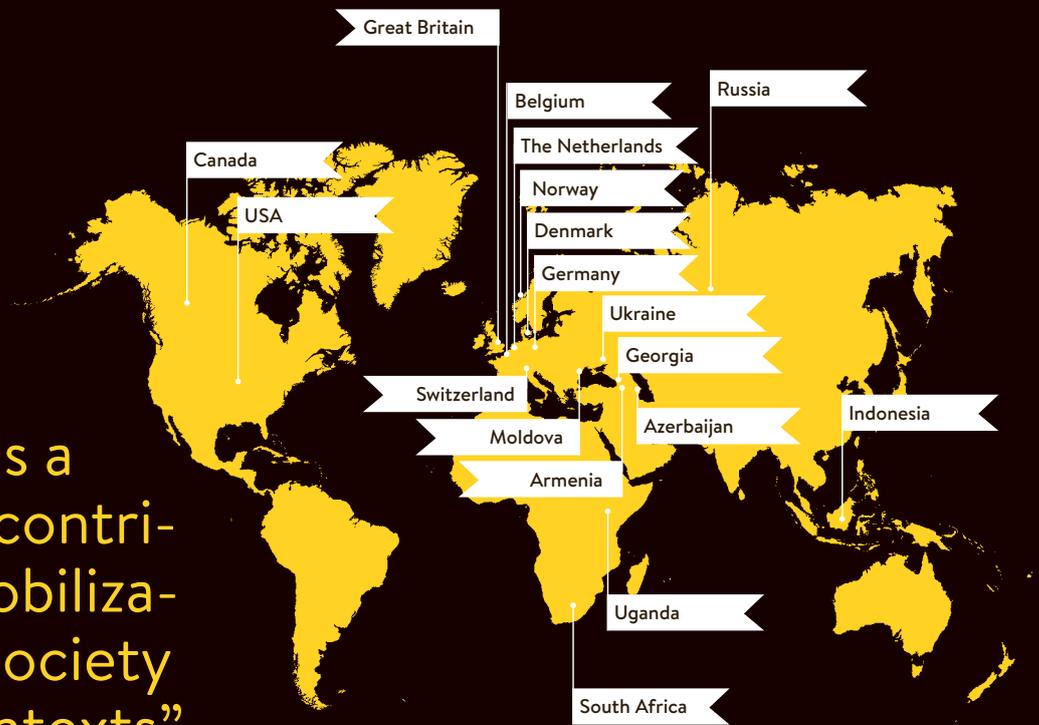
She points out that globally there are forces that want to restrict civil society's space

and freedoms. Forces that work hard to push back the many progresses the global LGBTQ movement have achieved in recent years.

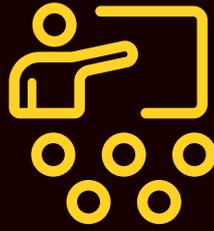
– A lot of our advocacy work is that things shouldn't get worse for LGBTQ people. To be a watchdog. We defend that our target group aren't erased from UN's documents, that they are in different resolutions, says Kajsa Boredal.

“RFSL fills a vacuum and contributes to a mobilization of civil society in the UN contexts”

INDEPENDENT OBSERVER AT THE UN COMMISSION'S MEETING "STATUS OF WOMEN" 2016



# 12



lectures and workshops on sex, safer sex and HIV/STI at World Aids Day, in local branches and Pride festivals

→ 100% of participants say they benefited from the information

2016 → 382

2015 → 229

2014 → 334

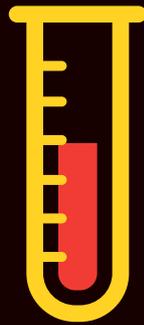
tested during Pride Park and Pride Ung in the Preventhiv collaboration

# 618

TESTS CONDUCTED AT SIX AREAS THROUGH TESTPOINT

- 387 people at RFSL's premises
- 90 people at the nightclub Candy
- 11 people at the video club Basement
- 38 people at the sauna club Texas
- 34 people at the cruising site Frescati
- 58 people have gotten tested in connection with the five temporary testing points outside Stockholm

→ 92% of the visitors say that they are happy with their visit



# 166



chat opportunities with Sexperterna, 8 newly trained Sexperter

→ 100% perceived knowledge and meaning

# 4



KIT films for the Smittfri HIV project

- 96 088 saw the films in their flow
- 153 849 saw the film through KIT

## COLOUR OF LOVE

### 6 BIG FESTIVALS

- 7 736 conversations held
- 24 540 condom kits + 2 000 condoms handed out
- 45 new informers trained

LGBTQ people have increased knowledge about HIV and STIs ←

Reduced stigma and discrimination of people living with HIV ←

During 2016 the national Smittskyddsläkarföreningen have updated the disease control leaflet and taken many of RFSL suggestions on board ←



### DURING 2016 WAS SUBMITTED

→ One motion from Liberalerna and one motion from Socialdemokraterna about boys' right to HPV-vaccination

→ Five motions were submitted about the reviewing/investigation of the communicable diseases act/removing the duty to inform

→ One motion was also about blood donation for men who have sex with men

→ All new motions are in line with what RFSL has brought to light and communicated in political advocacy

KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO JUSTICE

MAKING VISIBLE

An important part of RFSL's mission is to show an alternative to the normative; that behind different lifestyles, disabilities or stigmatized illnesses there are people that have equal worth and the same rights as everybody else.

By the wide range of experience that is in our network, different meeting places and contact surfaces are created and there is spreading of information that changes society, both for LGBTQ people and others.



### PRIDE FESTIVALS

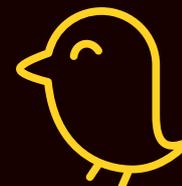
8 organisations that have received money through the project "En blommande Priderörelse"

- Falu Pride 150 000
- Sundsvall Pride 150 000
- Jönköping Qom Ut 150 000
- Luleå Pride 250 000
- Växjö Pride 250 000
- Malmö Pride 250 000
- Westpride 300 000
- Stockholm Pride 650 000

900 insured Pride volunteers through RFSL's insurance



Strengthening a public free zone for LGBTQ people



## FUNKIS

FUNKISPROJEKTET FOCUSES ON DISABILITIES WITHIN THE LGBTQ MOVEMENT - AND LGBTQ ISSUES WITHIN CARE

- Works against oppressive norms connected to norm breaking disability and sexuality
- Increases knowledge among staff and members
- 99% of the trained organisations for persons with disabilities would recommend the LGBTQ training
- 95% of the trained LSS-organisations would recommend the LGBTQ training
- "Life changing" is the grade from the participants of the LGBTQ hangouts for persons with disabilities

A portrait of Mikael Jonsson, a man with short dark hair and a beard, smiling. He is wearing a black t-shirt. The background consists of large green leaves, possibly from a plant like a peace lily. Two purple rectangular boxes are overlaid on the image, containing white text.

## HIV PREVENTION

## AN AREA IN CHANGE

Since the 1980s RFSL has worked actively with securing equal health for LGBTQ people. HIV prevention has been a corner stone in the organisation since then. In spite of big successes we see a continued need to prevent spreading and to counteract discrimination and stigma.

MIKAEL JONSSON, DIRECTOR HEALTH & HIV, RFSL

**FOR A LONG TIME** Sweden has had an ambitious agenda for HIV prevention and is the first country in the world who has achieved goal 90-90-90. That is that 90 per cent of those who live with HIV in a country know their status, of them 90 per cent should have access to treatment and 90 per cent of them should have such a treatment that their viral load is undetectable.

– The reason it goes so well is due to the close cooperation between many non-profit and public actors, in combination with meeting the target groups on their terms, says Mikael Jonsson, director of Health & hiv, RFSL.

The grants for HIV and prevention of STIs went from 146 million SEK to 75 million SEK in the government’s budget for 2017, nearly reducing to half the money. This puts a lot of pressure on municipalities and county councils to run HIV prevention within budget.

During 2017 the government will present a new strategy to combat HIV, AIDS and some other STIs. It’s a welcomed initiative, but many fear that the cutbacks signal a lowered level of ambition in the preventative work.

– The prevention can never stop, never to be neglected or be taken for granted. RFSL keeps working for an HIV free world and equal health for all, says Mikael Jonsson

“There’s an incredible amount of stigma and ignorance connected to HIV.”

MIKAEL JONSSON,  
DIRECTOR HEALTH & HIV, RFSL

AMBITIOUS SWEDISH AGENDA FOR HIV PREVENTION HALVED

2016 —————> 2017

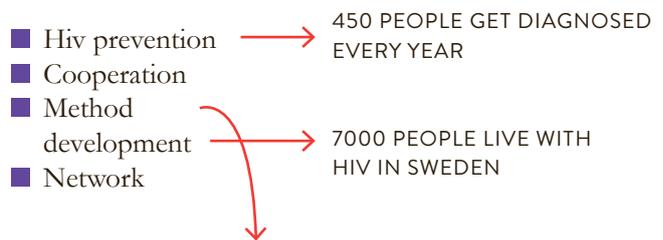
**146** MILLION SEK      **75** MILLION SEK

GOVERNMENT BUDGET POSTS

## TOWARDS BETTER

## HEALTH NUMBERS

LGBTQ people have poorer health condition compared to others in society but are far from a homogenous group. All have different health challenges depending on context. That means that RFSL’s health work is broad and we work with a lot of issues.



## TESTPOINT – NEW WAY TO

## WORK WITH HIV PREVENTION

During 2016 RFSL has offered HIV tests at new places. For example at RFSL’s premises, at the gay club Candy, the sauna club Texas Sauna, the cruising location Frescati and other places around the country.

Testpoint is a project aiming to develop a method for men who have sex with men to get access to testing outside healthcare, which is a new way of working with HIV prevention. That enables tests in the evening in places the target group visits. The aim is to help people who don’t know about their HIV find out about their illness, but also to defuse HIV testing and encourage the target groups to get tested regularly.

# “EN BLOMMANDE PRIDERÖRELSE”



During the last two years the Pride movement in Sweden has had an extra injection – and the result is a thriving movement from the north to the south.

**RFSL HAS, WITH** the support of Postkodlotteriets Kulturstiftelse, run the project “En blommande Priderörelse.” The goal has been to strengthen Pride organisations across the country through knowledge, support and networks.

During 2016 eight Pride organisations were chosen for a targeted financial support. The project has also helped the organisations work with norm criticism, targeting young people or cooperating with actors at their location.

– It’s been so cool to be able to help and support Pride organisations in building a stronger movement, says Kajsa Robin, project leader En blommande Priderörelse.

The venture has both strengthened the big festivals and supported the smaller actors in working with marketing and attracting visitors.

PRIDEKARTAN.SE

54 PRIDE FESTIVALS





# HBTQ-FUNKIS

99%

OF THE ORGANISATIONS WOULD RECOMMEND  
THE LGBTQ TRAINING

“Life changing”

THE REVIEW FROM THE PARTICIPANTS

**LGBTQ PEOPLE WITH** disabilities have long been invisible. But Funkisprojektet will change that. The project’s focus is norm critical trainings and social meeting spaces for LGBTQ people at daily activities or who live in group homes. An important part are the LGBTQ hangouts – meeting spaces that came about after the project’s reference group asked for a context where they could meet and talk to others with the similar situation.

– It’s important to meet others with the same situation as yourself, says Kristina Ullgren, project leader at Funkisprojektet, and goes on:

– We know from the daily activities and group homes that this is an issue that isn’t addressed. People with disabilities aren’t seen as people with a sexuality or gender identity.

## POP-UP SHOP

Newcomers Youth are running a volunteer driven pop-up shop for second hand clothes, where all money collected go to young asylum seekers and newly arrived LGBTQ people. During 2016 the shop has visited Pride and had premises at Södermalm in Stockholm. The shop has sold books and clothes for 50 000 SEK that has been distributed to over 100 people between 15 and 25 years old.

KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO JUSTICE:

STRENGTHEN

Together RFSL's members create platforms where we support each other, share experiences and meet. It's about building secure places together, regardless of if it's through a café meetings at one of the local branches, a sheltered living for someone subject to hate crime or legal counselling for one of the many LGBTQ people who seek asylum in Sweden.

The many experiences and identities that are gathered in RFSL is the organisation's strength. With the knowledge we share we build an inclusive movement to counteract discrimination, hate and threat, so that all LGBTQ people can be able to live on the same terms as everybody else.

## BRANCHES

 **37**  
communities

 **7287**  
members

### THE NATIONAL OFFICE'S SUPPORT TO THE LOCAL BRANCHES

→ "RFSL is a strong force in the work for LGBTQ people's rights. It's important that all people have the right to be and live how they want, in all parts of society and in all parts of Sweden and the world. The branches often seek advice from the national office in issues concerning their boards, members and other actors."

Helena Carlsson, president RFSL Luleå and northern Norrbotten's county.

→ "RFSL Örebro is a relatively large branch, but even large branches with a good economy need support. We have gotten the help we need and the support we've asked for from the national office. But as a larger branch we have supported smaller branches. We can't forget that cooperation makes us stronger"

Cristian Rehn, president RFSL Örebro

 **170**  
participants at the congress

 **70%**  
give the top grade at the autumn conference

 100 kr

**470 000** SEK  
member fees

# NEWCOMERS



**17**  
clubs around  
Sweden

Newcomers Boden/Luleå  
Newcomers Borås  
Newcomers Dalarna  
Newcomers Gävleborg  
Newcomers Göteborg  
Newcomers Halland  
Newcomers Kronoberg  
Newcomers Linköping  
Newcomers Malmö

Newcomers Piteå:  
Newcomers Skellefteå  
Newcomers Stockholm  
Newcomers Sundsvall  
Newcomers Umeå  
Newcomers Västmanland  
Newcomers Västervik  
Newcomers Örebro



**604**

members



**50**

volunteers

→ Support, guidance and information to newly arrived that they otherwise feel they lack

→ Create a safe meeting place to strengthen the identity, where you can share experiences, make contacts and see friends

→ A richer, more loyal Sweden

# THE CRIME VICTIM SUPPORT

**158**

people who have been seeking individual support or crises counselling, most have been subject to hate crimes or partner violence

Helps people who need sheltered living

Support and shelter for LGBTQ people who have been subject to violation, threat and violence

A knowledge centre for issues of violence and LGBTQ

Have supported many in reporting crimes to the police and been a support during the investigation

Opinion forming and making visible LGBTQ people's exposedness to violence in close relationships, hate crimes, sexual violence and honour related violence

**20+**

information efforts such as lectures, panel discussions and training efforts. Examples of trainings: the police's hate crime groups at Uppsala University and Södertörns Högskola



NETWORK FOR  
NEWLY ARRIVED

PATRICK BAZANYE, RFSL'S ASYLUM SOLICITOR.

One of the groups that flee from oppression and persecution are LGBTQ people. But when they come here they often lack social meeting places, guidance and information about their rights. RFSL support them through the network Newcomers and legal counsels.

**NEWCOMERS IS A NETWORK** within RFSL for asylum seekers and newly arrived LGBTQ people. The 16 Newcomers organisations offer activities for their members with a common goal: to strengthen different voices and identities by creating meeting places, sharing experiences and meeting new friends. The Network organises café get-togethers, go swimming, cook together and partake in language classes.

– It's the meeting place in itself that is most valuable. To be able to meet other people who understand their living situation and can support, that's most important, says Jasminé Mehho, national coordinator for Newcomers.

But Newcomers also want to be opinion forming and strive to influence legal and political decisions that have

to do with asylum seeking LGBTQ people.

– Mental ill health and stress affects this group since they have a double stigma, both as immigrants and LGBTQ people. We want to work on their well-being and give them the support they need in their everyday lives, says Jasminé Mehho.

**ADVICE IN DIFFICULT ASYLUM PROCESS**  
To build a new life in Sweden you need a residence permit, and an important part of Newcomers' work is legal counselling. According to Swedish law asylum seeking LGBTQ people from countries that violate their rights have special reasons to stay. Despite that the process is often long and difficult.

– I'm in touch with over 100 people right now

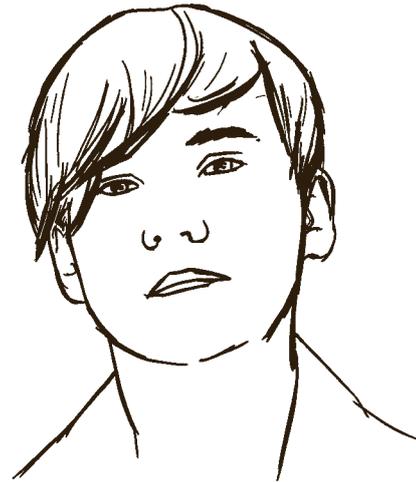


# 17

NEWCOMERS GROUPS  
ALL OVER SWEDEN

“I’m 47 and am a trans girl from Peru. Newcomers is the best thing that’s happened to me”

PAOLA RAFFO CALDERÓN,  
ACTIVE I NEWCOMERS



“Newcomers has given me a platform for my political expression. For some Newcomers is their last hope”

OLEG IVANOV,  
MEMBER OF NEWCOMERS

through phone, mail and meetings. Many are already in the asylum process but some contact me from abroad with questions because they think about coming to Sweden, says Patrick Bazanye, RFSL’s asylum solicitor.

STRICTER ASYLUM LAWS AFFECT INDIRECTLY Many don’t dare say that they’re LGBTQ people because in their home countries, that is dangerous information.

– We meet so many negative decisions every day, people who contact me and say their application has been rejected and hope that I will be able to help them, and sometimes I can’t. Then it feels very difficult and as if I can’t do my job properly, says Patrick Bazanye.

# 1000

1000 PEOPLE INVOLVED IN  
SWEDEN AND ABROAD



# THE CONGRESS 2016

## “TO SAVE LIVES”

“You should keep your head held high and feel proud. RFSL does an invaluable work.”

MINISTER OF CULTURE AND DEMOCRACY  
ALICE BAH KÜNKE (MP), VIA  
VIDEO LINK AT THE CONGRESS

**165 CONGRESS DELEGATES,** association board of trustees’ members, staff and members met in Malmö for three days of discussions, elections and decisions during RFSL’s congress in May 2016. During the congress Frida Sandegård was elected as a new president and Magnus Kolsjö as a vice president.

– RFSL for me is saving lives, saving lives and saving lives. The social exposedness is so tangible that the Pride flag is being burnt. But we will increase in numbers, strengthen each other and we will work for sustainability, said Frida Sandegård in her election speech about what RFSL means to her.

### HIGHEST ON THE CONGRESS’ AGENDA:

- Invest in older members’ involvement
- An anti racist action plan
- Developing the work with intersex issues
- Become better at forming alliances for everybody’s equal rights regardless of disability
- An expanded asylum political agenda

# “THE THRESHOLD FOR HATE CRIMES IS LOWERED”

Every year 200 people seek support from RFSL's Crime victim support, where you can turn to if you've been subjected to any form of violence as an LGBTQ person.

**SINCE 1998** the Crime victim support has been an important part of RFSL's work and now it's the hot-line in Sweden with the most experience in the LGBTQ field. Except for supporting crime victims the unit also works as an opinion former with the goal to highlight LGBTQ people's exposedness to violence in close relationships, hate crimes, sexual crimes and honour related violence.

– We see a trend in Sweden, Europe and the world where the thresholds for hate crimes against our target group are being lowered. Because of that we need to be better at describing what a hate crime is – that it's not just being assaulted on the street, but that it's those everyday things like derogatory comments, sexist remarks and harassment, says Carina Wrängebo, RFSL's crime victim support.

## RFSL'S CRIME VICTIM SUPPORT OFFERS:

- Occasional or several processing counselling sessions
- Information about LGBTQ people's rights
- Follow-along support in the contact with healthcare and authorities
- Support when reporting to the police and during the legal process
- Contact with complainant's counsel
- Sheltered living at a secret address in the Stockholm area

# 200

CRIME VICTIMS HAVE  
RECEIVED SUPPORT 2016

## FESTIVAL SUMMER

With conversation-based methods Colour of Love spreads information about safer sex at festivals and events around Sweden. The goal is that youth, young adults and men who have sex with men should get increased knowledge about sexually transmitted illnesses and facilitate reflection around their own strategies for safer sex. The campaign's message is that by practicing safer sex you keep that good feeling afterwards, because you don't have to worry about having given someone or gotten an illness.



# A BETTER WORLD FOR

# LGBTQ-PEOPLE

RFSL's organisation consists of three parts that all work towards the same goal – a world of diversity and respect. The national office has 37 local member organisations and many different projects, while the fundraising foundation collects money. RFSL Media & Info AB sells trainings and certifications to customers in the public and private sector.

Money ⇒  
Knowledge →

## RFSL fundraising foundation

+ REVENUE 0,5 MILLION +



- gifts
- contributions
- testament
- General public
- Foundations
- Businesses

### Board

PRESIDENT:  
HELENA WESTIN  
VICE PRESIDEN:  
FRIDA SANDEGÅRD



## RFSL Media & Info AB

EDUCATIONAL UNIT



- trainings
- certifications

### Board

PRESIDENT: NICLAS SANDIN  
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES: 10

### Customers

- The public sector
- Businesses

Owned  
to 100%  
by RFSL



2,5 MILLION SEK.  
PROFIT!

A better world for

# LGBTQ-PEOPLE

A world of diversity and respect

ORGANISATION

RFSL

37  
branches

7000  
members

Total  
turnover  
45  
million SEK.

Congress

Nominating  
committee      Accountants

Association board of trustees

PRESIDENT: FRIDA SANDEGÅRD  
VICE PRESIDENT: MAGNUS KOLSJÖ

Executive  
committee

National office      Director + 55 employees

Operations  
management  
• Operations  
director  
• Board of  
directors

Communi-  
cation

Economy

Members  
unit

Unit for  
health  
and HIV  
prevention

Inter-  
national  
unit

RFSL ungdom

PROJECT

Knowledge

For  
example  
Funkis-  
projektet

Project grants

SIDA

Postkodlotteriet

Arvsfonden

5,1 million  
IN GOVERNMENT  
GRANTS

# INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL

To be able to create a better world for LGBTQ people RFSL enlists the help of experts in different areas. Together we drive the movement forward by contributing with knowledge on structures, systems and experiences that affect LGBTQ people's lives. These experts carry the intellectual capital that takes us to the vision.



## JASMINÉ MEHMO

Expert on immigration issues and project leader for Newcomers

With her own experience as a Kurdish refugee from war, Jasminé works with RFSL Newcomers. She's fluent in Arabic and has worked with the non-profit organisation Ingen Människa Är Illegal and has long been politically active.



## HELENA WESTIN

Branding expert and trustee

Works part time as a board professional and advisor in the business sector and part time does non-profit work for among others RFSL. Helena's ambition is that RFSL should become more self sufficient and more economically independent to be a strong voice and force for all LGBTQ people who can't be heard.



## AINO GRÖNDAL

Asylum rights solicitor

Represents LGBTQ refugees by being appointed legal counsel for LGBTQ asylum seekers by the Migration Agency. Aino also works with educating the migration authorities about asylum seeking on LGBTQ grounds.



## KINA SJÖSTRÖM

Project leader RFSL's crime victim support and program coordinator for Individstöd

Works with collaboration, development and education in violence in close relationships and hate crimes, and has started RFSL's sheltered livings. Kina has worked with individual support to victims of violence within feminist organisations and has an extensive network in the field.



## CARLOS DÍAZ

Educator in LGBTQ certification

Educator at RFSL's educational unit and works with issues around sexuality, gender and ethnicity. Carlos is also active in anti racism and has lead many working projects, and written essays on intersectionality, gender, sexuality and ethnicity.



**MICAH GRZYWNOWICZ**  
Expert in international advocacy

Is a part of the international unit and focuses on the UN's work to ensure that Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity are a part of important documents and resolutions. Micah has earlier worked for Commissioner for Human Rights Council of Europe and is on ILGA Europe's board.



**VIERGE HÅRD**  
Expert in trans issues

Works with trans issues at RFSL and RFSL Ungdom. Is an expert in education, healthcare connections and net-based support for trans people. Vierge is a journalist and youth coach and has been active in sexual education and as a freelancing editor.



**JENNY SUNDBERG**  
International policy advisor

Works in the international unit with LGBTQ issues at a policy level through program development, development cooperations and project managing. Jenny has worked with capacity development of women's organisations across the world and with human rights at SIDA.



**JONAS JONSSON**  
Expert in health and HIV

Has six years experience of HIV preventative work, which started with voluntary work in Sexperterna. Jonas is interested in the issue LGBTQ people who have sex for compensation. He has brought a lot of knowledge on the subject and put it on the agenda.



**JOHANNA NYMAN**  
Project worker and educator in disabilities and accessibility

Has together with Emma Rasmusson created the concept LGBTQ-hangout and written the LGBTQ handbook, a very popular material for those who live or work in group homes or daily activities.



**JOHNNY FEDDERLY**  
Trustee

Is on RFSL:s Fundraising Foundation board and has a long experience of communications – including for UNICEF Sweden, Coca Cola Sweden and Riada. Johnny also works as an advisor for social entrepreneurs for Reach for Change.

BECOME A RAINBOW HERO!

AS RAINBOW HERO YOU DONATE MONEY

EVERY MONTH AND SUPPORT HUMAN

RIGHTS IN SWEDEN AND THE WORLD

[www.rfsl.se/engageradig](http://www.rfsl.se/engageradig)

