

2024 Global LGBTI Seed Grant Recipients

The Williams Institute's Global LGBTI Seed Grants Program is designed to encourage new empirical research focused on LGBTI populations in the Global South (Latin America, Caribbean, Sub-Saharan Africa, Middle East/North Africa, Asia, and Pacific Islands) as well as amplify voices of researchers from those regions.

In 2024, the Williams Institute partnered with [SAGE](#) to offer an additional grant to foster research and data collection specifically on LGBTI older adults (ages 50 and above) in the region.

We are pleased to announce that seven proposals have been selected to receive awards.

[Southern African LBQ Women's Mental Health and Experiences of Violence](#)

The “Are we doing alright?” project, headed by Professor Alex Muller at the University of Cape Town/Charité Center for Global Health, investigates experiences of violence, mental health outcomes, and access to healthcare among LGBTQI persons in nine African countries: Botswana, Eswatini, Ethiopia, Lesotho, Malawi, Kenya, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Except for Lesotho and South Africa (and Botswana since June 2019), these countries retain colonial-era laws that criminalize same-sex sexuality, though the implementation varies greatly from country to country. The aims of this project are to describe levels and types of violence experienced by LGBTQI persons, to describe levels of depression, anxiety, suicidality, and substance use among LGBTQI persons, and to describe access to healthcare among this group. For the small grant, we will focus on the population of LBQ women to describe experiences of violence and mental health outcomes.

Alex Muller M.D., Ph.D., Professor, University of Cape Town/Charité Center for Global Health

[Intersex in Serbia's Health System](#)

This project aims to comprehensively analyze the status of intersex persons in Serbia through a quantitative examination of relevant health statistical yearbooks from 2010 to 2018, provided by the Institute of Public Health “Dr. Milan Jovanović Batut.” The research seeks to address the following key questions:

- What is the prevalence of intersex variations in Serbia within the specified diagnostic categories (ICD 10) from 2010 to 2020?
- How has the representation of intersex variations evolved over the nine years in primary health care and childbirth/abortion statistics?
- Are there regional variations in the incidence of intersex variations, considering data from the Republic of Serbia, Vojvodina, Central Serbia, and Kosovo and Metohija?

The project aims to emphasize the importance of accurate and systematic data collection on intersex persons, promote awareness within the professional and scientific community, and encourage the adoption of patient-oriented models for reports.

Kristian Randelović, intersex and trans activist, Serbia

[Love, Understanding, and Acceptance: A Journey into Indonesian Parents' Acceptance of Transgender Children](#)

This participatory research aims to explore the sociocultural factors that assist Indonesian parents in accepting their young transgender children (aged below 30 years old). The project intends to conduct ten in-depth interviews to delve into the experiences, challenges, and perspectives of parents within a cultural context where transgender individuals are often marginalized. Indonesia, being Southeast Asia's most populous and conservative country, provides a unique setting for this study. The research questions will focus on 1) How Indonesian parents perceive and navigate their child's transgender identity, 2) Sociocultural dynamics that influence their acceptance process, and 3) Their needs as parents of young transgender individuals. The goal is to illuminate the complexities and nuances of parental acceptance in traditionally conservative settings, thereby offering insights that can inform support mechanisms and interventions for families of gender-diverse individuals.

Alegra Wolter, Physician and Advisory Board Chair, Suara Kita

Benjamin Hegarty, Medical anthropologist and senior researcher, The Kirby Institute at UNSW Sydney

Surilena Hasen, Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences, Atma Jaya Catholic University of Indonesia



Lifetime Experiences of Conversion Therapy and Efforts, Mental Health Care Seeking, and Psychosocial Outcomes Among LGBTIQ+ People in Vietnam

Conversion therapy practices (CTP) are an alarming public health threat to LGBTIQ+ people in Vietnam. Yet, no related qualitative or quantitative data exist. In 2022, the Vietnam Ministry of Health (MoH) issued an official dispatch recommending the end to such practices among all health care providers. Yet, the government has unclear plans to pass a full-effect banning legislation due to the absence of scientific data on the phenomenon.

Therefore, our project's chief purpose is to provide empirical data on the prevalence of CTP as a foundation for law advocacy. Our project will pursue three main research aims: 1) Explore narratives of lived experiences of LGBTIQ+ survivors of CTP and sexual orientation and gender identity change efforts (SOGICE) in Vietnam, 2a) Determine the self-reported prevalence, 2b) Investigate their relative risks categorized by sociodemographic profiles, and 3) Examine the relationships between CTP, SOGICE, mental health help-seeking, and psychosocial outcomes.

Viet (Mason) Trinh, Chair, LGBTIQ+ Mental Health Network

Economic Empowerment of Grassroots Transgender Community in India in the Aftermath of COVID

This project aims to produce an economic profile of the grassroots transgender community in West Bengal, an eastern state in India, from the lens of economic empowerment. Key research questions are: 1) What are pathways by which the grassroots transgender community is seeking economic empowerment, especially in the aftermath of COVID-19-lockdown-induced disruptions? 2) What are structural-cultural-institutional barriers and costs that the grassroots transgender community faces/bears when they pursue economic empowerment? 3) What are the supports for the grassroots transgender community in seeking economic empowerment? Here, economic empowerment includes income generation and access to public goods such as education, medical, legal, banking, and government welfare schemes. This project thus aims at community-led production of policy-relevant knowledge for community empowerment through dialogue and advocacy.

Raina Roy, Founding Director, Samabhabona
Sintu Bagui, Founder and Secretary, Kolkata Anandam for Equality and Justice

Global LGBTQI+ Aging Small Grants Program

Family Ties: Understanding Kinship and Caregiving Roles in Aging LGBTQI+ Mexican Population

This project will examine the kinship ties and caregiving roles among aging LGBTQI+ Mexicans living in Guadalajara, Mexico; focusing specifically on understanding how members of this population establish and define familial relationships in the absence of traditional biological family connections, what cultural and gender norms around care may be challenged and reimagined when familial caregivers come from LGBTQI+ communities, what stresses and strains or sources of resilience may shape the caregiving experiences, the relationship between health outcomes and availability of culturally competent and inclusive caregiving support from either biological family or chosen family. Guiding research questions will ask: How do aging LGBTQI+ Mexicans construct and conceive family? What cultural values and norms around gender, relationships, and care are reproduced or challenged through diverse kinship ties? What resources exist for accessing aging care in this community, and what barriers remain?

Arcelia Paz-Padilla, Postdoctoral Fellow, the University of Guadalajara

Stepping out from Invisibility and Isolation: Experiences of Older Lesbians and Creating a Community

Older lesbians face intersectional discrimination based on their sex/gender, age, and sexual orientation, and in many cases, race, ethnicity, and class discrimination. Their existence is invisible and denied, and same-sex sexuality is considered a fad of new generations. Society is not aware of lesbians' existence, whereas they live invisibly and isolated.

The aims:

- a better understanding of the experiences and needs of older lesbians, but also intersectionality of sexual orientation, gender, and age;
- to include age as the relevant aspect in further policy for LGBT+ rights, especially as the advocacy tool for same-sex units' legalization in Serbia;
- to encourage LGBT+ organizations to design and implement activities for older LGBT+ people.

The questions:

- What are the special forms of discrimination against older lesbians?
- What measures can be taken in order to break the isolation of older lesbians?
- In which way can lesbians and GBT+ organizations improve their activities?

Vera Kurtic, Sociologist, activist, researcher, and NGO consultant, Serbia