The PRISM Fund

2022-23 Pilot Program Progress Report

PFUND FOUNDATION
The PFund Foundation Board of Directors approved 17 general operating grants totaling $125,000 to organizations from the upper Midwest that are located in or serve rural LGBTQ+ communities. Supported with funds from the PRISM (Promoting Rural Interconnections for Sexual Minorities) Fund, these grants were used to boost organizational capacity and build networks of rural-serving queer organizations across Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, Iowa, and the First Nations therein.

**IOWA**
- Lavender Legal Center | Cedar Rapids, IA | $12,500
- LGBTQ Iowa Archives & Library | Iowa City, IA | $5,000
- GLBT Youth in Iowa Schools Taskforce (Iowa Safe Schools) | Des Moines, IA | $7,500

**MINNESOTA**
- New Prague Area Chapter of PFLAG | New Prague, MN | $4,000
- PFLAG Marshall Buffalo Ridge | Cottonwood, MN | $4,000
- QUEERSPACE collective | Minneapolis, MN | $7,000
- Gender Justice | St. Paul, MN | $10,000

**NORTH DAKOTA**
- North Dakota Human Rights Coalition | Fargo, ND | $10,000
- QSpace Bismark | Bismark, ND | $10,000
- Welcome Connection | Fargo, ND | $5,000

**SOUTH DAKOTA**
- Uniting Resilience | Rapid City, SD | $12,000
- The Transformation Project | Sioux Falls, SD | $10,000
- LGBTQ+ Family Connections Center, Inc. | Box Elder, SD | $3,000

**WISCONSIN**
- LGBT Center of SE Wisconsin | Racine, WI | $3,000
- Chippewa Valley LGBTQ+ Community Center | Eau Claire, WI | $10,000
- Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools Inc. | Madison, WI | $9,000
- Philadelphia Community Farm | Osceola, WI | $3,000
PFund awarded its first-ever round of PRISM grants in fall 2022 to 17 queer organizations located across the foundation’s five-state service area. Grantees received funds to support capacity building and professional development. Grantees also participated in eight PRISM Alliance virtual trainings plus an online virtual intensive in August 2023.

All demographic information shared here is taken either from grantee application materials or from mid-program evaluation surveys that representatives from PRISM grantee organizations completed in summer 2023. All figures have been rounded to the nearest percentage point.

**Racial & Ethnic Background**

2022-23 PRISM Alliance Participants

- White: 87%
- Multiracial: 13%

**Sexual Orientation**

2022-23 PRISM Alliance Participants

- Bisexual: 13%
- Gay: 13%
- Straight: 27%
- Lesbian: 20%
- Queer: 27%

**Gender Identity**

2022-23 PRISM Alliance Participants

- Cis woman: 53%
- Cis man: 13%
- Trans man: 13%
- Gender Expansive: 20%

**Age**

2022-23 PRISM Alliance Participants

- 51-65: 26%
- 25-34: 33%
- 35-50: 20%
- 18-24: 13%
- 66+: 7%

**Rural serving vs. rural located**

2022-23 PRISM grantee organizations

- Rural Located: 83%
- Rural Serving: 17%
For the first year of the PRISM grants program, a total of $125,000 was distributed to 17 grantee organizations.

Representatives from each PRISM grantee organization attended a total of eight virtual training sessions (most were led by professionals from the Nonprofit Center at LaSalle University) and two days of summer intensives held remotely in August 2023.

PRISM grantees organizations reported using funds to support a variety of activities, including:

- The New Prague chapter of PFLAG hosted an event featuring author, advocate, and parent of a transgender child Jo Ivester. The group also donated $1,000 in LGBTQ books to its local public library.
- Iowa Safe Schools held its annual Governor’s Conference on LGBTQ Youth.
- GSAFE used funds to support bringing in indigenous queer and two-spirit speakers to its Middle School Conference held in March 2023.
- The Chippewa Valley LGBTQ+ Community Center used funds to increase volunteer recruitment for the organization and expand its youth programming.
- Lavender Legal was able to conduct outreach targeted at rural areas to build awareness of its pro-bono legal work for queer people.
- The Marshall/Buffalo Ridge chapter of PFLAG held a Lavender Graduation dinner for local queer high school students.
- The LGBTQ Iowa Archives and Library was ever to hold its first-ever fundraising event.
- Family Connections Center opened a drop-in and transitional housing center.
- St. Mark’s Lutheran Church funded a transgender peer support group for local residents.

86% of PRISM Alliance members reported making meaningful connections with other LGBTQ+ organization in the region as a result of PRISM.

100% of PRISM Alliance participants reported a stronger sense of connection to the Upper Midwest’s LGBTQ+ ecosystem as a result of participating in the program.

93% of PRISM Alliance participants reported that the virtual training sessions taught them new things and increased their understanding of resources available to their organizations.

100% of PRISM Alliance members reported that networking activities undertaken as part of the PRISM grants program facilitated them connecting with others.

In addition to PRISM grants and the PRISM Alliance, PFund conducted two virtual focus groups with LGBTQ+ individuals living in rural communities in the Upper Midwest in November 2023. Focus group participants reported difficulty in pursuing higher education or securing gender-affirming medical care, but also reported a variety of coping strategies and resilience in the face of discrimination. The full focus group report can be found on PFund’s program evaluation page.
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