

Join in!

The Gathering Online 2021 is now open for contributions

In October 2021, ILGA-Europe is organizing the 2nd Gathering Online – a virtual event for the LGBTI movement and allies in Europe and Central Asia. Being a membership-based organisation, we host The Gathering Online as a space for all of us to be together, learn from each other, make sense of the shared concerns, celebrate accomplishments, discover ways forward, and show up for each other in solidarity.

We are now working on the programme that will reflect the needs and priorities of LGBTI groups and organisations, and will respond strategically to current trends, challenges and opportunities.

There is a vast amount of experience, knowledge, skills, and strategies in the LGBTI movement, and The Gathering Online will make space for it. We invite LGBTI groups and organisations from Europe and Central Asia to propose sessions for the ILGA-Europe Gathering Online 2021 to explore the main themes of the event.

The Gathering Online – what will it be this year?

This year, The Gathering Online will take place on 25-29 October 2021. It will buzz with workshops, panel discussions, connecting spaces, meet-up points, and fun moments – all of them happening online. We expect over 400 activists and allies to join the event.

This year's programme will be a deep-dive into various aspects of two big themes:

- **Resilience in the face of populism and growing opposition**
- **Racism, structural inequalities and socioeconomic justice**

You'll find more about The Gathering Online, its theme, purpose, and programme [here](#).

Having read this...

Does your group or organisation have experiences, stories, ideas, or questions that will help to explore these themes at The Gathering Online?

Do you know other LGBTI groups and organisations that would be a great voice to hear from along with you?

Can you come together with them to host a workshop or a discussion?

We reserved **8 sessions** in the programme for activists-led sessions, and we will be happy if you join in and send a session proposal!

What kind of a session can it be?

First off: we aren't expecting a polished concept note or a detailed plan in your proposal. We are looking for different takes on the topics of The Gathering Online – the takes that bring in different experiences and considerations from across the movement and make space for other groups and organisations to join the conversation.

Hands-on knowledge as the source of your input, awareness of diversity in the movement, and interest in connecting with other groups are more important here than a fancy methodology or a powerful turn of phrase in the session description.

The kind of sessions that will be particularly great for The Gathering Online are:

- Sessions that guide a reflection about shared concerns and ways forward for the movement;
- Sessions that bring up important, overlooked, and/or inspiring perspectives and experiences in relation to one of the key topics of The Gathering Online;
- Sessions that help generate ideas and learn from each other;
- Sessions that hold space for critical and challenging conversations about what we have to work on as a movement.

There are several parameters that are important for The Gathering Online. Please make sure you tick them off when proposing a session.

All session proposals need to:

- Be collaborative and cross-regional, i.e. be proposed by at least three LGBTI groups from different countries together;
- Address one or more larger topics of The Gathering Online and be aligned with the purpose of the event;
- Be relevant to other activists attending The Gathering Online and working in different contexts;
- Bring together speakers/ hosts who can share a diverse range of experiences;
- Contain an element that encourages connections or exchange of opinions and experiences between participants;
- Be open to all and any participants of The Gathering Online.

We may suggest merging some of the sessions in case there are similar or interconnected proposals coming from different groups or organisations.

How to join in and share a proposal

To make a proposal, please send us a brief session description using [this online form](#) by **Sunday, 4 July 2021 at 23:59 CEST**.

Never submitted a proposal like this before or have doubts about any of the parameters? Not sure how to present your ideas or use our template? We can help! Just send an email to gathering2021@ilga-europe.org.

If you know someone else in your LGBTI activist network whose experience and perspectives would enrich discussions The Gathering Online, we ask you to please share this invitation with them.

What can you expect from ILGA-Europe?

If selected, your session will become an integral element of our Gathering Online programme. It will be featured on the event platform and ILGA-Europe will make available to you all online event facilitation tools that will be used at the Gathering.

Your session will be yours to host, including planning, facilitation, working with your speakers, and holding the space for good conversations to happen. The Gathering Online participants will decide themselves which sessions they go to, but we plan to include discussion boards and chats within the platform, so you can encourage people to join.

Don't worry if you've never hosted a workshop on Zoom! In the months leading up to The Gathering Online, we will be there to support your preparations if needed. We will offer information or training on the use of online tools. In some cases we may be also able to support you in connecting to other groups working on your subject or to potential speakers, as well as help in structuring your session so that you get what you want out of it.

The sessions will take place through Zoom or a similar tool that enables work in smaller groups as well as plenary discussions and presentations. You can expect anywhere from 10 to 60 people attending. English<=>Russian interpretation may be made available but cannot be guaranteed because our resources are limited. All sessions should be primarily in English. If your session requires interpretation, please mention this in the form.

ILGA-Europe recognises that too many groups and organisations, especially those who are part of marginalized communities and excluded groups, do not have access to resources that would allow them to hire staff and compensate the work done by activists for the movement.

Often it is those same activists who experience intersecting exclusions who volunteer time to work on LGBTI rights, while too often being in a precarious situation in their other professional activities.

We strive to disrupt that reality to the best of our abilities, and will offer compensation to session hosts and/or speakers. An amount of 300€ per session will be made available to be split between engaged individuals as the hosts see fit. These payments will be made shortly after the Gathering Online to individuals (not organisations) who are contributing to the Gathering Online outside of their paid work (so those who are not paid staff of their organisations).

What happens next?

- **9 July:** we get back to everyone who proposed sessions with the outcomes of the selection
- **Throughout July-August:** hosts develop their sessions, join catch-ups with us for scheduling and coordination, receive technical briefings and support in facilitation
- **7 September:** closing date for all hosts to share a description of the session and bios of speakers for the programme
- **October:** we will schedule test-runs of the sessions with all hosts
- **25-29 October: Gathering Online!**

We are excited about all the ideas that will come our way!