

ANNUAL REPORT



PRIDE CENTRE OF EDMONTON



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

in 2024, we tended to the seeds we planted the year before – we welcomed Erin Davis and Craig Kallal, two highly-skilled and passionate individuals, to the board. We also bid farewell to Shalini Sinha, Connie Thompson, Sean Malden, and Rhea Ross. Thank you all so very much for the care and time you dedicated to the Pride Centre of Edmonton (PCE).

We collaborated with the Executive Director, staff, and stakeholders, to build a stable and strong foundation for our seeds to grow upon. We established transparent and strategic systems for decision making and risk management, processes for communicating priorities and accountability, and good governance and financial practices.

As board members, we take on the responsibility to serve as stewards of the Pride Centre. We commit to supporting the mission, community needs, and operational goals of the organization. We acknowledge the history of PCE, which has existed in many forms for over 50 years, and the importance of adapting to meet the needs of the most marginalized communities. We realize the urgency of the moment, as fascism, white supremacy, homophobia - systems of oppression - are displacing and harming hundreds of thousand of people across the world. We see the impact of policy failures and violence in our own communities, and across the lands of Treaty 6. But we also know that together, we are powerful. Together, we can hope and resist and dismantle and rebuild.

“Rarely, if ever, are any of us healed in isolation. Healing is an act of communion.” – bell hooks, *All About Love: New Visions*

Jamelie Bachaalani

Chair, Board of Directors | Pride Centre of Edmonton



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jamelie Bachaalani

- Chair of Board of Directors
- PCE board member since 2022

Myles Dykes

- Treasurer
- PCE board member since 2023

Rosa-Eva Forgues-Jenkins

- Secretary
- PCE board member since 2019

BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

Sahana Parameswara

Erin Davis

Craig Kallal



2024 PCE TEAM MEMBERS

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Esjay LaFayette

GENDER DIVERSE & TRANS COORDINATOR

Shawndy Kowalchuk

YOUTH SUPPORT NAVIGATOR

Karen Pinkoski

RESOURCE CO-ORDINATOR

Lisa Whitney

OUTREACH DIRECTOR

Corey Wyness

EXPAND PROGRAM AND CYC SPECIALIST

Jaime Harnett

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Jude Keehn



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Dear Community,

2024 was a profound year that exposed with painful clarity the brutality carried out by those in power and the systems they uphold. On every scale, from global to local, we continue to witness how human-made structures, built on violence, exploitation, corporate greed, and control, shape our daily lives. We see this in the impacts of armed conflict, political violence, and militarization. These conditions are created and sustained by global power imbalances, economic exploitation, and external interests. We also see it in forced migration, economic instability, the systemic erosion of rights, the accelerating climate crisis, and relentless violence against marginalized people. Taken together, these crises reveal different expressions of the same systems of power and are all manifestations of human-created suffering. These are not accidents of history but unavoidable outcomes of systems where control and profit are the number one priorities. These realities touch everyone, but they have the most direct impact on those already pushed to the margins. Here at Pride Centre, we have seen this truth in sharper focus than ever.

We work on the front lines, alongside people who come to us for far more than identity-based support. We meet community members in moments of hunger, housing insecurity, mental health crisis, and deep isolation. Yet in the midst of this, we also witness joy, resilience, and connection, the kind that defies and resists the systems that seek to diminish us.

Looking back on the year, I want to acknowledge the extraordinary work of our very small team of 5 full-time and 2 part-time staff, as well as our dedicated volunteers. Together, they made it possible for us to work with countless community members through the Josh Brown Wellness Space, youth programming, trans and gender-diverse drop-ins, and Horizon Outreach. These programs carried forward not because of vast resources but because of the steadfast commitment of individuals who showed up week after week.



Our team members are themselves part of the community we serve, and their dedication includes not only caring for others but also tending to their own wellbeing as part of their journey. Their care, creativity, and persistence are what sustain this place, and I hold deep gratitude for their labour.

This work is humbling. It reminds us daily that dismantling the violent systems of oppression we have inherited, from colonialism and white supremacy to patriarchy and ableism, requires sustained, imperfect, individual and collective effort. It calls us to continually examine our own biases, and to have both self compassion and the ability to hold ourselves accountable to the ways these systems have shaped us and continue to influence our perspectives and behaviours. It asks us to show up with humility, to make mistakes, to listen deeply, and to be willing to change over and over again.

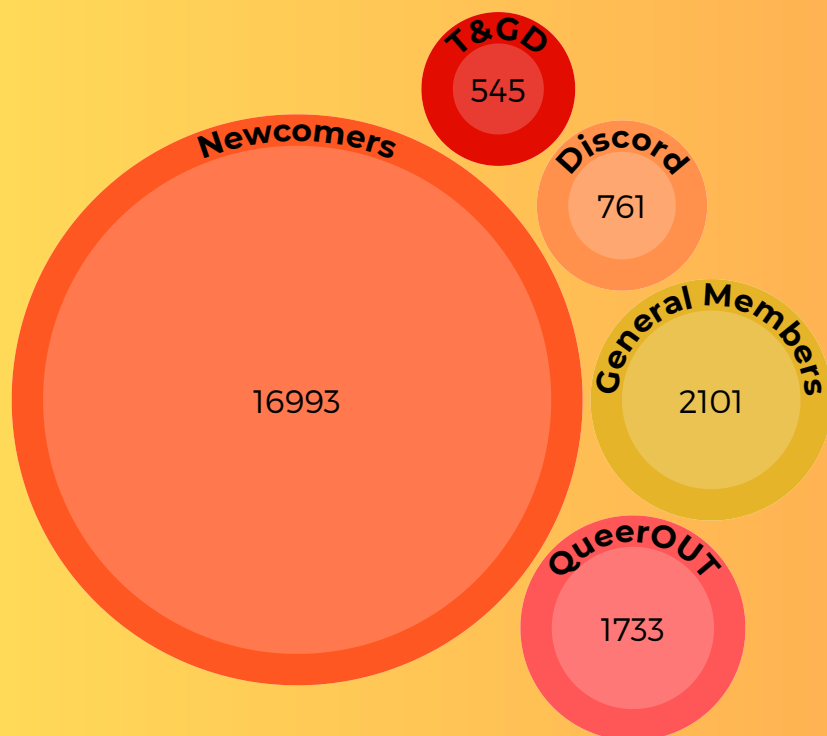
And still, I remain hopeful. Because I have seen, time and time again, how community can transform the impossible into possibility. I draw strength from the long tradition of resistance carried forward by those who are currently resisting and those who came before us, from queer ancestors to Indigenous and Black communities who have always shown us what it means to resist and to reimagine. History is full of moments when ordinary people rose up against oppression and dared to envision and create new pathways forward, and it reminds me that we are never starting from nothing. I also take grounding in natural law, which teaches us reciprocity, our connection and responsibility to all our relatives, and our inherent interdependence. These teachings keep me steadfast in believing that change is not only necessary but possible. As we look ahead, our commitment remains to center dignity, safety, and belonging, and to keep co-creating and envisioning, together, a world where we live in economies rooted in care for all our relations.

With gratitude and resolve,

Esjay LaFayette (he/him)
Executive Director

PCE AT A GLANCE

22,133 Total Visits to the Pride Centre in 2024



*Newcomers denotes folks who are new to Canada and need an immigration support letter from PCE.

*General Members includes Newcomers who no longer need an immigration support letter.

Our 2024 Numbers

- 850+ Newcomers became members (1200+ total since August 2023)
- 223 Individual Youth came to QueerOUT
- 93 Individual Youth participated on Discord
- 113 individuals came to T&GD 18+ drop-in
- 48+ Individual Rainbow Folk served through Horizons OUTreach with a total of 771 touchpoints
- 38,042 Total touchpoints through JBW

*Touchpoint = a point of contact or interaction with a PCE community member

JOSH BROWN WELLNESS SPACE

The Josh Brown Wellness Space (JBW) serves as the heart of day-to-day support and care, meeting immediate needs while connecting individuals to longer-term supports. It provides a stable base for the consistent delivery of basic needs services and safe, coordinated referrals across all PCE programming. Within the PCE space, we also distribute bus tickets, emergency food hampers, and harm reduction supplies to community members accessing any program. There were **38,042 total touchpoints** in JBW in 2024.

We continue to build relationships with service providers to expand our resource bank of safe referrals for services beyond our scope—such as housing placements, income and addictions support, medical care, and legal advocacy—ensuring that individuals are connected to respectful, inclusive care at every level.



Some of our JBW services...



9512 meals/snacks served
6714 emergency food hampers distributed



2389 mental health check-ins
1178 addictions support
2016 harm Reduction services
140 suicide interventions



255 outbound referrals



516 employment support
346 housing support
193 income support



*I think about it all the time –
I have no idea where I'd be
without the support I got
here*

*I have no idea where I'd be
without this place...
income, housing, ID, a
doctor. We got [access to]
it all here.*

- T. re: our appointments



TRANS & GENDER DIVERSE



The Pride Centre of Edmonton offers a holistic range of gender-affirming supports for trans and gender diverse (T&GD) individuals. Our team fosters safe access to care by collaborating closely with service and resource providers to meet the urgent and nuanced needs of the T&GD community. The Gender Gear Exchange Program and Community Closet reduce material barriers by providing free affirming clothing and gear.

In May, a twice-weekly T&GD 18+ drop-in was launched, allowing T&GD programming to expand in both reach and depth. With consistent time and support at PCE, we witnessed a deepening of collective trust within the group that expanded to **113 individuals**. As a result, natural leadership emerged, with participants not only uplifting one another through peer support but also navigating crises together with love and grace. The group now moves with a sense of safety, strength in numbers, and a deepened connection to community.



*I was angry when I first came here.
Now, I don't hate myself. It's easier to
let go of the anger.*
- long-time TGD community member

*It's been fun finding God in
the places the church told
me not to look.*
- Quote from art shared
during group



Highlights:

- Facilitated over **150 touchpoints for gender-affirming gear**, including binders, tapes, post-op supplies, either gently used and provided from community donations to the Gender Gear Exchange Program, or through new items provided through the Trans Community Fund via the Quiltbag.
- The Community Closet** was revitalized through dedicated volunteer leadership from Lisa Lunn and their Drag community. Through Lisa's careful management, they enriched the quality of clothing by widening the donor bank and curating the closet itself which makes for a better "shopping" experience for community members.
- Collaborated with local inclusive body-care providers to offer affordable, affirming hair removal services.

YOUTH PROGRAMMING



In 2024, **316 individual 2SLGBTQ+ youth** engaged with QueerOUT, the Pride Centre's in-person programming, and online programming through our Discord server, with an **average attendance of 28 youth per session**.

Youth played a central role in shaping the culture and rhythm of both programs. They made it clear: they wanted a space that centered joy, gender euphoria, and connection—not trauma or rigid programming. With support from staff, practicum students, and volunteers, the community co-created a welcoming, affirming environment where youth feel safe to show up and express their authentic selves.

For those who couldn't attend in person, due to transportation challenges, geographic distance, or safety concerns, our Discord-based online programming served as a vital lifeline. This virtual space provided identity-affirming support, met youth where they were at, and helped reduce isolation.

PCE also provided support for Edmonton's Queer Prom in 2024. In the lead-up to the event, we hosted a prom wear exchange through our Community Closet to provide barrier-free formalwear for youth, and staff played an active role on the organizing committee. Both staff and practicum students offered vital support on the day of the event, May 3rd, by tabling at the resource fair and volunteering in key roles. A total of **283 youth attended Queer Prom in 2024**.



*We pride ourselves on queer joy. We want to create
a more positive and social environment where we
CAN exist in a beautiful harmonious space*

- Discord youth participant

*I might already have a house
but this is my home*

- QueerOUT Youth Participant





NEWCOMERS

In 2024, the Pride Centre of Edmonton continued to see a steady rise in visits from refugee claimants. Many accessed support through our Tuesday and Thursday General Drop-In, where PCE became a vital point of connection. Here, newcomers were able to experience belonging within an LGBTQI+ community, access memberships, and safely express their sexual and gender identities—often for the first time.

Over the course of the year, we recorded **16,993 total visits from newcomers**, averaging **128 individuals per drop-in session**. We issued over **850 memberships** and provided **502 immigration support letters** to assist with individual refugee claim hearings.

Through strengthened relationships with Legal Aid Alberta lawyers specializing in refugee and immigration law, and a close partnership with the Edmonton Newcomer Centre's Rainbow Refuge program, we gained deeper insight into both the systemic and personal barriers LGBTQI+ newcomers face. This informed a shift from a crisis-driven response to a more structured, safety-focused drop-in model that centres on belonging, dignity, and affirming community support.

In collaboration with Streetworks, we introduced monthly STI testing on-site at the Centre. Nurses engaged community members through interactive, stigma-reducing games that promoted health education and access.

Volunteers from within the newcomer community contributed meaningfully by assisting in the kitchen, cleaning, and covering the front desk, reinforcing a sense of shared ownership and care.



The Pride Centre is my home and the staff are my family... I am Canadian, I am me, and I am safe!

- a newcomer

Here, we get to be lesbians, to love and laugh.

- Kitchen group member

I was waiting for my Permanent Resident status, and it was scary. But I had faith with my family at PCE. Today, I am Canadian, I am safe.

- Newcomer community member





HORIZON OUTREACH

In 2024, the Horizon Outreach program began building community and hope for Rainbow Folk in Edmonton's inner city who face houselessness, mental health challenges, poverty, and substance use. With 26–41% of homeless youth identifying as 2SLGBTQI+, targeted outreach is essential. In response, and in partnership with Tawâw, PCE formed an outreach collective, rooted in Indigenous harm reduction, compassion, and a human-centred approach to care. Through weekly street outreach and "Pop-Ups in the Park," the program provided essential supplies and social support to **48 rainbow individuals with 771 touchpoints within the broader inner city community.**

This work is deeply relational, fostering trust, safety, and pride. Stigma toward 2SLGBTQI+ folx in the inner city is reduced by the visible presence of a queer outreach worker, rainbow flags flying openly, and community members recognizing Corey with affection as "that gay guy." These connections have built a strong, affirming presence for PCE Outreach in the inner city, where individuals feel seen, can take pride in their identities, and find a growing sense of belonging.

Highlights:

- **Weekly street outreach** with a dedicated team of **26 volunteers** who are trained by Tawâw outreach workers.
- **Pop-Ups in the Park:** We bring our outreach to inner-city parks like Kinistinnâw and Mary Burlye with smudge supplies, good food, harm reduction supplies, and the rainbow flying high. It's a simple gathering with a diverse blend of folx who come together to share a meal, some laughs, and a sense of belonging.
- **Check-ins with local businesses:** The team builds relationships with inner-city businesses through regular check-ins, supporting interactions with marginalized community members and identifying emerging community challenges to strengthen business-community connections.



*When I see you guys
coming, I know I got
someone*

*Can I have a hug?
I need a rainbow.*

*I know I'm not alone
when I see you out
here.*





STUDENTS

This year saw strong student engagement and learning with **12 practicum students** from five institutions, with over **3225 student hours** accumulated. We send deep appreciation to our practicum students from 2024.

**The PCE Student program has benefitted from support from
the following Institutions and Programs:**

MacEwan University:

Social Work Diploma
Bachelor of Social Work
SOWK 403 Human Service Leadership class

Norquest College:

Child and Youth Care Diploma

University of Calgary:

Master of Social Work

Yellowhead Tribal College:

Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work

University of Alberta:

Community Service Learning from
GSJ 501 Social Justice Workshop class

Student Highlight: Jaime Harnett

Over the past year, we had the privilege of witnessing remarkable growth in one of our Child and Youth Care Diploma student practitioners, Jaime Harnett. For our youth programming, we were working intentionally to ensure that queer joy was at the center. Jaime's personal transformation—shifting from bracing for trauma to leaning into strengths and play—personified that cultural shift. Jaime began showing up with ease, playfulness, and confidence, embodying the joy we hoped to cultivate across the program.

Jaime's self-care plan became a standout—so thorough and effective it is now used as a teaching tool for other practitioners. More importantly, Jaime lived it. Healing didn't just happen around them—it happened within them.

Since graduating, Jaime has joined the PCE team part-time and continues to do incredible work. In addition to supporting youth programming, they now represent the Pride Centre through **the Expand Project**, a national initiative creating space for conversations about commercial tobacco and nicotine use within queer and trans youth ages 18 to 29. Jaime's particular glitter shines bright—they lead by example, and their joy, enthusiasm, and grounded presence uplift every space they enter.

VOLUNTEERS

In 2024, the Pride Centre of Edmonton's volunteer program thrived, with **115 individual volunteers who logged an incredible 3,542 hours** across all program areas. Despite not having a formal volunteer coordinator, the program grew into a robust and active network of care.

Volunteers supported nearly every aspect of the Centre's operations, from food preparation and cleaning, to event organization, youth programming, and staffing key drop-in positions. Others helped run the Library, cared for all the PCE plants, managed the Community Closet, and drove to the food bank and other food collection points. Volunteers also supported out in the community through tabling at PrideFest and other community events.

Volunteer Highlight: Serenity Kuntz

In May 2023, Serenity joined PCE as a volunteer and for the next 14 months, they were a steady and joyful presence at our General Drop-in and QueerOUT sessions. Coming from a community with limited 2SLGBTQI+ connection, they quickly embraced the drop-in as a space of belonging—and in turn, became a key part of what made it welcoming for others. They attended every single drop-in through August 2024, offering consistency, care, and a quiet kind of leadership as the Centre navigated a sudden rise in participants and shifting community needs.



In Serenity's time with us, they logged an incredible **445 hours—representing 10% of all volunteer hours across 2023 and 2024**. But more than just their time, Serenity brought heart. They've shared how volunteering helped them grow: learning how to talk to new people, stepping out of their shell, and finding confidence in themselves. Those experiences helped them decide on their path to become a teacher, and they are now entering their second year of a Bachelor of Education program.

The fact that newcomers still recognize and greet them when they return to visit speaks volumes. They've left a lasting impact, and we're so proud to have been part of their journey.

PCE IN THE COMMUNITY



We continued to build relationships, educate service providers, and promote 2SLGBTQI+ visibility through events, tabling, presentations, and collaborations throughout 2024.

- **Tabling:** PrideFest, Camp Fyrefly, GSA Conference, Mayor's Pride Brunch, KDays, Poundmakers Lodge, Resource Fairs (Youth Connect, REACH REConnect, BSEC Service Fair, Wellness Collective at Norquest), Fringe Festival, Startup TNT, Ikea
- **Presentations:** Various teams at CASA Mental Health, PCL Construction, Children's Services, Alberta Hospital, The Today Centre; Department of Justice, Government of Canada, Edmonton Branch
- **Lectures:** MacEwan University Faculty of Social Work, University of Alberta Department of Gender and Social Justice Studies



SERVICE CO-ORDINATION

Ensuring safe pathways of care for the 2SLGBTBQI+ could not happen without the wonderful work of other service providers. **With deep appreciation to the following organizations who have provided amazing support for the PCE Community in 2024:**

T&GD: Skipping Stone, UofA Gender Program, Foria Clinic, Queer and Trans Health Collective (QTHC), QUILT BAG, Tickle Trunk, Centre for Sexuality, inclusive salons

Youth Program: CASA Mental Health, okimaw kihêw mêkwanak/tapahtêyimôkamik - the humble lodge, CHEW Project YEG, Queer Prom YEG, Youth Agency Collaboration, Rainbow Alliance for Youth Edmonton, The Expand Project

Newcomers: Edmonton Newcomer Centre Rainbow Refuge, Alberta Legal Aid,

Horizon Outreach: Tawâw, Nekem, AAWARE, Edmonton's Food Bank, QTHC Spectrum Drug Testing, City Centre Clinic, Streetworks

JB Wellness: Edmonton Transit System TAG and PATH programs, Edmonton's Food Bank, The Leftovers Foundation, Streetworks, HIV Edmonton, The Family Centre

Food at PCE

In 2024, PCE accessed **19,570 KG of food with a monetary value of \$154,407** from Edmonton's Food Bank. This food, along with donations from Shoppers Drug Mart (117 st and Jasper Ave), Sav-on-Foods Bakery (109 St), Cobs Bakery (Brewery District) and Doughnut Party (Brewery District), provided snacks for all of PCE drop-in programming, emergency food hampers, meals for youth programming, street outreach and Pop-ups in the Park.

DONORS AND PARTNERS

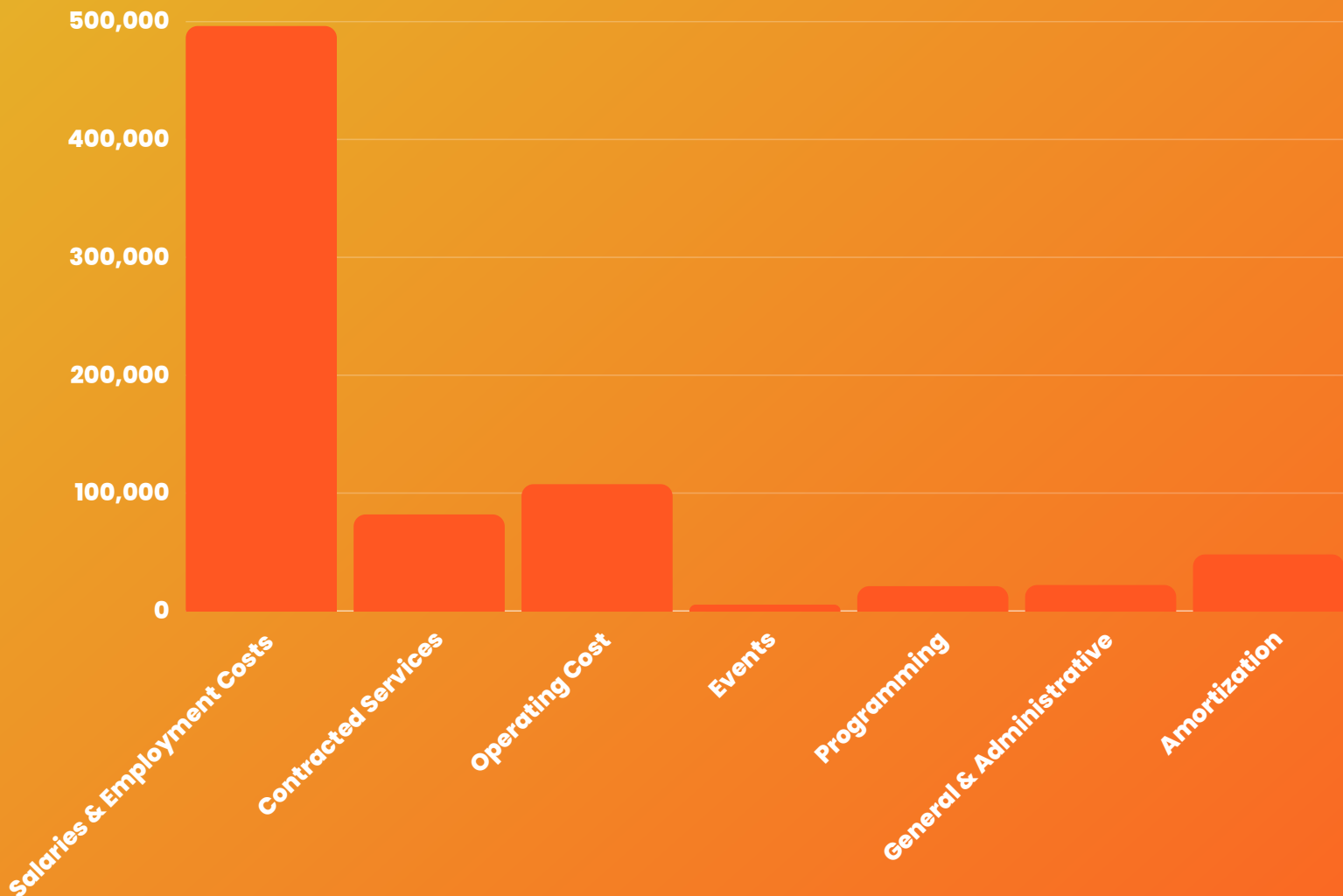
We could not do our work without the support of our financial donors and community partners. With many thanks to the following:





FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

EXPENSES





FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

REVENUE

