



**INSTITUTE FOR  
INTERNATIONAL  
WOMEN'S RIGHTS  
MANITOBA**

**ANNUAL  
REPORT 2022**



The Institute for International Women's Rights Manitoba acknowledges that we gather on Treaty One Territory, and is the ancestral lands of the Anishinabe, Cree, Oji-Cree, Dakota, and Dene. These lands are the heartland of the Métis Nation. We acknowledge that Winnipeg's water is sourced from Shoal Lake 40 First Nation.



# 2022-2023 Board of Directors

Director Position	Name
Co-Chair	Christine Williams
Co-Chair	Teruni Walaliyadde
Secretary	Fiona Vowell
Treasurer	Camila Navarro
Chair of Fundraising	Samantha Therrien
VP Admin	Angeline Rivard
VP International Initiatives	Jessica da Silva
VP International Initiatives	Laura Antymniuk
VP Youth & Local Initiatives	Sarah Bonner-Proulx
Co-Chair Advocacy	Micaela Crighton
Co-Chair Advocacy	Leah Wilson
Co-Chair Communications	Molly Karp
Co-Chair Communications	Marley Peters
Indigenous Liaison	Renata Meconse*
Member at Large	Meara House
Member at Large	Angela Dawn Earl
Member at Large	Isabelle Hodgson

\*stepped down during the year\*

# Co-Chairs Report

Greetings and welcome to the Institute for International Women's Rights-Manitoba's (IIWR-MB) 10th Annual General Meeting! Please join us as we celebrate a decade of advocacy, education, creating awareness and collaborating with members, community organizations and other agencies, both locally and internationally.

This year, as in years past, our goal has been to create a world where dignity, gender equity and justice are actualized for all people. While this year was particularly challenging, the IIWR-MB has remained committed to that goal through big and small dedicated action.

In this 2022-2023 Annual Report, you see a glimpse of the IIWR-MB's work this past year. Our highlights include:

- Our first paid contractor due to the generous grant received by Women and Gender Equality Canada;
- 16 Days of Advocacy;
- Two webinar trainings on the United Nations & our ECOSOC Status; and
- Our delegation to the Commission on the Status of Women

We invite all our members to read about the fabulous contributions our various committees have made throughout the year! As always, all members are welcome to attend our monthly board meetings, which occur on the second Saturday of every month, and to join our Slack channel.

The IIWR-MB would also like to take this opportunity to thank all of our members for their continued support throughout these past ten years. While this year was incredibly rewarding for the IIWR-MB, it was also uniquely challenging. Volunteer work has always forced a balance between working selflessly to better your community and feeling as though you are not doing enough for that very same community. This year, due to the fall-out from the COVID-19 pandemic, added social and personal pressures and an increase in community need, our members and our Board of Directors have felt that challenge more so than ever. The IIWR-MB and all its stakeholders have fearlessly walked a tightrope between satisfaction and burnout. The Co-Chairs would like to take this moment to firmly acknowledge that burnout is real, significant, and worthy of addressing for our members, volunteers and our Board of Directors. We know that this experience is not felt by the IIWR-MB alone, it is shared by many non-profit organizations across the globe. The Co-Chairs therefore urge all those involved in volunteer work to continue practicing self-care, to share their struggles with trusted friends and to seek the tools necessary to continue doing this work. Though this work is vital, it is impossible without volunteers

That being said, and in celebration of 10 years of meaningful work, the IIWR-MB's vision for the upcoming 2023-2024 year is to spend time looking inward in an effort to re-evaluate and restructure our systems to better serve our communities. We would greatly appreciate your continued support with engagement and patience as we aim to strategically improve the IIWR-MB moving forward.

Christine Williams & Teruni Walaliyadde  
Co-Chairs of the IIWR-MB

# Advocacy Committee

## Report

Advocacy Co-Chairs: Micaela Crighton, Fiona Vowell (acting), Leah Wilson (on leave)

Committee Members: Aimee Tymkin, Angela Zajnyziak, Christine Williams, Fiona Vowell, Katie Campbell, Mary Scott, Meagan Malcolm, Nic Catalano, Sarah Bonner-Proulx.

The Advocacy Committee has been busy this past year, and we would like to thank our tireless committee members who volunteer to make this work possible!

Our major project this year has been launching our Bringing a Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) to Manitoba Project funded by Women and Gender Equality Canada. As a result, IIWR-MB welcomed our first paid staff Meagan Malcolm, who worked on bringing the project to reality for the past year through research that involved a Manitoba-wide survey and the development of community consultations. This work has taken up the majority of the year for the committee, and we are excited to share the fruit of this labour in the coming months with our community! We plan to release our findings in a report in the late spring and are hoping to partner with like-minded community members to bring the findings to the new legislature in late 2023. We would like to thank Meagan for their dedicated work throughout the past year, as their term ended on March 3, 2023, and wish them the best in their future endeavours!

We took action on a number of items as well:

- We co-hosted the 2022 Women's March Winnipeg, focusing on Women and War.
- As in years past, we hosted a very successful 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence campaign.
- Signed onto the BC Reproductive Justice Manifesto.
- IIWR-MB is one of the many organizations endorsing Choosing Real Safety: A Historic Declaration to Divest from Policing and Prisons and build safer communities for all. By signing this community-led declaration, IIWR-MB reiterates our continued commitment to the Black Lives Matter movement and to supporting communities in more tangible ways.
- We endorsed Women's Shelters Canada Priority Actions required for the full implementation of Canada's National Action Plan on GBV
- IIWR-MB has endorsed the Migrants Rights Network Vaccines for All statement in support of ensuring vaccines are given to all people unconditionally.
- Our co-chairs appeared on Global News, speaking about the federal budget and Radio Canada discussing Women and War and the rescinding of Roe vs. Wade.
- Our co-chairs were recipients of the Fierté Canada Pride Scholarship to attend the Fierté Canada Pride Human Rights Conference from June 1-3, 2022, where they were able to connect with 2S/LGBTQIA+ organizers and activists from across the country.

Advocacy, as we all know, is personal, rewarding, joyful and exhausting work. We continue to be thankful for those willing to share in the work with us and want to take a moment to encourage rest and care for our community as we enter our new year. Not disengaging, but rather taking time while engaged to ensure that there continues to be joy and community and rest. This is the spirit which we hope to bring to the 2023-24 year.

# Communications Committee Report

In 2022, communications efforts at the IIWR-MB revolved around key annual campaigns, such as 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Based Violence, as well as new initiatives like the Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) survey. We also focused on strengthening our internal communications systems and working towards improving the cadence of our communications outputs, such as our newsletter.

As part of the 16 Days of Activism campaign, IIWR-MB Board Members and team members shared stories and opinions connected to gender based violence (GBV) as a way to amplify the voices and perspectives impacted by GBV, and underscore the importance of the movement. For example, Board Members Micaela Crighton and Fiona Vowell wrote an article introducing the 16 Days of Activism Campaign and why the historic cry, “our bodies, our choices” is as relevant and critical today as it has ever been. These articles were published on our website and promoted through our social media channels, with a focus on Instagram where the bulk of our campaign activity took place. During this period, we also organized an Instagram takeover with Human Rights Hub Winnipeg which helped promote our articles and our organization to new audiences. During the campaign, we had a Facebook reach of 572 and Instagram reach of 2,310. We gained 9 new followers on Instagram and 3 on Facebook during the campaign.

The Communications Co-Chairs supported the Gender Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) survey by leveraging IIWR-MB’s social media channels, website and mailing list to encourage Manitoban’s to complete the survey and share their experiences accessing resources during the Covid-19 pandemic. This support also involved preparing and disseminating a media release about the initiative and creating social media ads to ensure information about the survey reached beyond our established community.

Communications Co-Chair, Marley Peters also focused on building IIWR-MB’s internal systems to help strengthen and streamline the organization’s communications activities. This involved building a number of email templates to help standardize responses to common inquiries received by IIWR Board Members, and others responding on behalf of the organization.

Moving into 2023 – IIWR-MB’s Strategic planning year – the Communications Co-Chairs will continue to build on and strengthen IIWR’s communications outputs by reintroducing a quarterly newsletter and other email marketing initiatives, updating the IIWR website, and creating additional templates to support the work and activism of other Board Members, and IIWR-MB’s members at large.

We’ve begun keeping track of analytics so we can better analyze strategies going forward. Here is a snapshot of engagement and growth on our key communications channels in 2022:

Year	Instagram Followers	Twitter Followers	Facebook Followers	LinkedIn Followers	Mailing List Subscriber
2022	865	335	1,279	122	146

# International Initiatives Committee Report

VP International Initiatives: Jessica da Silva and Laura Antymniuk

IIWR-MB's Contribution to the UNCSW: Parallel Event & Written Statement

## Parallel Event

In partnership with MCIC, on March 24th, 2022, IIWR-MB hosted its second virtual parallel event, “Indigenizing Climate Justice: Ancient Wisdom to Tackle Climate Change.” This event sought to elevate the traditional wisdom and voices of Indigenous peoples by drawing upon their unique ancestral knowledge systems of healing, community care, climate action and justice.

At this event, we were able to share space with and learn from three amazing Indigenous women, namely:

- Elder Mary Maytwayashing;
- Chantel Henderson; and
- Melissa Houtain.

Click here to watch this amazing and exciting webinar!

<https://www.facebook.com/InstituteInternationalWomensRightsManitoba/videos>



# International Initiatives Committee Report

## CSW 67 Written Statement

In November 2022, we submitted the following written statement on behalf of IIWR-MB to the Commission on the Status of Women:

“The Institute for International Women's Rights - Manitoba (IIWR-MB) acknowledges that innovation and technical change are instrumental to the development and achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls. Though new technologies are constantly emerging, digital literacy on a global scale continues to be thwarted by inequitable access to technology. Further, access to digital technology is a democratic right, wherein individuals and groups can access and share information, participate in civic engagement and expression, and connect with others. Digital technology is also a crucial link for education, especially in rural and remote areas. However, access to digital technology and digital literacy is barred by a gender divide, in which women are disadvantaged by fewer opportunities to educate themselves and engage in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. We must build, support, and create platforms that allow women and girls opportunities to receive equitable access to digital technology, which is an essential component to overcoming gender inequality. We must amplify spaces that provide safe and affordable access to digital literacy and engage with stakeholders that empower women and girls' full participation in the digital economy. Through systems of free, prior, and informed consent and self-determination, our work must support women and girls to not only have equitable access to technology and digital literacy, but to amplify their voices and empower them to drive change. Finally, the digital inequity experienced by Indigenous Peoples is mostly due to the long legacy of colonial practices and policies that fail to recognize and respect Indigenous rights. It is essential to understand that due to the wide-reach and influence technology has on our lives, digital inequity has the ability to increase the existing socio-economic gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people that persists in every sector from housing, to education, to child welfare, to economic and food security, and more. Technology weaves through nearly every aspect of our lives. Indigenous Peoples must have influence over the design and future of technology and must be at the decision-making table. To date, they have been largely excluded, this has prevented them from equitably engaging with technology or from participating in the technology sector.



# International Initiatives Committee Report

## Recommendations:

- Equip and train women and girls with the skills needed to participate and thrive in the digital transformation and to curb socio-cultural norms that discriminate against women and girls questioning their ability to perform STEM and ICT-related jobs.
- Create awareness campaigns that will convey the message that female leadership and presence is as “normal” as male leadership and presence in STEM and ICT-related jobs and digital transformation.
- Foster private-public partnerships, including between academia and the private sector, to identify and develop the skills that are demanded by the labour market in the digital era, including STEM skills.
- Increase online safety for the full participation of women and girls in the digital economy, by prohibiting gender-based violence in digital spaces and protecting women and girls’ rights to participate in an environment free from violence.
- Promote diversity in entrepreneurship for girls and women providing them with the skills, financial support and network to develop innovative ideas which can represent an important step towards greater gender equity and justice.
- Collect gender-disaggregated data to inform digital policy. This will allow policy makers to assess the situation and develop appropriate, evidence-based responses and policies. It is vital to tailor any analysis to the local context, including by analysing local data. This can be done by involving national or local gender experts, consulting civil society organizations – especially women’s organizations – making use of national research, and triangulating information.
- Ensure digital equity to all Indigenous Peoples. Digital equity is defined as a state in which every Indigenous person, community and Nation is fully equipped to access and effectively use technology to contribute, thrive, and succeed in today’s digital society while preserving self-determination. IIWR-MB knows that digital equity is more than just access to computers and the internet, it is about influence over the trajectory of technology and its impacts on society. Digital equity is a prerequisite for innovation, self-governance, entrepreneurship, education, economic and cultural wellbeing, and nearly all aspects of rights implementation in the digital age.”

# International Initiatives Committee Report

## CSW67 Training Series

Recognizing that United Nations systems can be overwhelming, in February 2023, the International Initiatives Committee hosted two training sessions to help community members to build their capacity to advocate for their rights, efforts, and global gender equity and justice at the CSW.

On February 7th, 2023, Mary Scott presented a brief overview of the UN, the evolution of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW), and where IIWR-MB fits into the CSW.

“Having ECOSOC status means we are able to have an opportunity to influence the wording of the final document. We do that by working with the official Canadian delegation, who have the responsibility to negotiate on behalf of Canada. The Agreed Conclusions, from CSW, while not binding, can be helpful in reminding governments of approval they have given.” – statement from Mary


We also had the pleasure of hearing from Abel Koka, IIWR-MB Practicum Student, who shared his experience with the Generation Equality Forum – a civil society-centered, global gathering for gender equality, convened by UN Women and co-hosted by the governments of Mexico and France. This gathering kicked off in Mexico City, Mexico and culminated in Paris, France in the first half of 2021. The Forum launched a set of concrete, ambitious, and transformative actions to achieve immediate and irreversible progress towards gender equality. [Click here for more information.](#)

On February 14, 2023, Senator Marilou McPhedran presented on the UN and ECOSOC status, addressing fundamental challenges associated with UN structures and systems while illuminating how ECOSOC status can be utilized by members of civil society as a vehicle for change.

# International Initiatives Committee Report

## CSW67 Delegation

We are excited to announce that a small delegation will be attending the upcoming meetings of the CSW at the United Nations in a few weeks' time, this year's theme being Innovation and Technological Change and Education in the Digital Age for Achieving Gender Equality and the Empowerment of all Women and Girls. We are particularly excited that IIWR-MB member Aimee Tymkin will be part of the official Canadian Delegation. We intend to raise the issue of access for northern, Indigenous, rural and remote sisters as well as prohibitive access costs. Delegation members include the following individuals:

- - Abel Koka;
  - - Amy Tung;
  - - Florence Okwudili;
  - - Jessica da Silva;
  - - Laura Antymniuk;
  - - Mary Scott;
  - - Meagan Malcolm; and
  - - Samantha Therrien
- 

# Youth and Local Initiatives

## Committee Report

### VP Youth & Local Initiatives: Sarah Bonner-Proulx

The Youth Council is designed as a safe space for members of IIWR-MB between the ages of 16 and 30 to engage in current human and women's rights topics. It is also a space where young people who may be new to advocacy and human rights spaces to begin exploring how, as a young person, they can engage in these areas and have their voice heard.

This year the IIWR Board and Youth Council paused its activities, including meetings throughout the summer months and resumed its work in the Fall (September).

In the remainder of 2022, The Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba Youth Council, focused on recruitment of council members, particularly those between the ages of 16-18 to promote engagement early on and diversify the perspectives of the council. This year, we successfully recruited three new youth council members from this age cohort.

The Chair of the Youth Council, Sarah Bonner-Proulx, authored the piece: "We Can Make Change –Our Responsibilities on the Path from Violence to Empowerment" as part of the 16 Days Campaign addressing Gender-Based Violence. The article addressed forms of GBV and the work that must be done in order to prevent violence in the future.

The Youth Portfolio assisted in the coordination of IIWR's Gender Based Analysis+ (GBA+) northern community consultations. The Youth portfolio also worked to expand our social media reach and following and continued to offer and promote opportunities for Youth Council members to expand understanding and engagement within the topic of human and women's rights.

Twitter: @iiwrmb\_youth

Instagram: @iiwrmb.youth

# Practicum Student:

## Abel Koka



Abel Koka is a young feminist from Tanzania. He is pursuing a Master's in Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Manitoba. Abel is volunteering as a member of the Leadership Steering Committee with Canadian Women in Global Health, where he is advocating for the advancement of the well-being and rights of women and girls. He is also serving as a member of the Institute for International Women's Rights – Manitoba (IIWR-MB).

For the past five years, Abel has unleashed youth power to conduct data-driven accountability against decision-makers to improve access to Youth Friendly Reproductive Services and make gender equality a reality. Abel has continued to challenge social norms and policies perpetuating child marriage, teenage pregnancy and denying girls access to education. He has built the capacity of hundreds of boys and girls in schools and communities to understand and demand their right to grow, learn and succeed. Abel has participated in several gender equality forums and played a critical role in amplifying the voices of women and girls in the future they want.

Abel is happy to join IIWR-MB as a Practicum Student from January to April 2023. He is passionate about contributing to enhancing the rights and well-being of women, girls and marginalized groups in Manitoba and across Canada through the skills and knowledge he attained during his studies. Abel is keen to gain more practical experience on how access to social justice and attainment of a just and equal community contributes to achieving Positive Peace which is the foundation of any developed community.

# **2023-2024 Slate**

## **Board of Directors**

Co-Chair: Micaela Crighton

Co-Chair: Angela Earl

Secretary: Fiona Vowell

Treasurer: Camila Navarro

VP Administration: Christine Williams

VP Youth & Local Initiatives: Sarah Bonner-Proulx

VPs International Initiatives: Jessica da Silva

VPs International Initiatives: Laura Antymniuk

Chair, Advocacy: Vivienne Ho

Chair, Communications: Marley Peters

Chair, Fundraising: Samantha Therrien

Indigenous Liaison: Renee Yetman

Member At Large: Isabelle Hodgson

Member At Large: Meara House

