

# Team

## Board

2023 – 2025

Dinah Bons

She/Her · Netherlands/France · Co-Chair

Toggle Accordion



Dinah Bons (she/her) is a trans politician, chair of [ESWA](#), [Trans United Europe](#), part of the Amsterdam-based [H team](#), and also works as an actor and creative strategist for [Female Economy](#).

Dinah is specialist on diversity and inclusion, decolonisation, and anti-racism. She feels strongly connected to the trans, sex worker, and HIV communities, and works with passion on intersectional decision procedures and out of balance power mechanisms.

Sara R Phillips

She/Her · Ireland · Co-chair

Toggle Accordion



Sara Phillips (she/her) is a trans woman from Ireland and the current Co-Chair of the International Trans Fund. She is also a board member of the National Women's Council of Ireland.

She a seasoned leader with over 30 years of experience in activism, advocacy, corporate and financial management, and community development within diverse trans communities globally.

Hmayak Avetisyan

He/They · Armenia · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



Hmayak Avetisyan (he/they) is a trans activist and current Programs Manager at NTC in Armenia. He has coordinated dozens of projects and is the national coordinator of “Trans\* Map in EECA” regional project.

He is a member of CCM Armenia and part of several national, regional, and international coalitions working on LGBTIQ human rights, gender justice, peace and security, sustainable development, and social justice.

Pip Gardner

They/Them/Ze/Zir · UK · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



Pip Gardner (they/them or ze/zir) is a queer and trans activist based in the UK. They are the Chief

Executive of The Kite Trust, supporting LGBTQ+ youth in the East of England. They were previously part of UN Women's Generation Equality Youth Task Force and volunteer with Gendered Intelligence's youth groups.

Purity K Tumukwasibwe

She/Her · Sweden · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



Purity is a trans woman and trans activist from Uganda residing in Sweden.

She's a social scientist, an intern with Civil Rights Defenders -Sweden, a task force member of IGLYO Anti-racism Task Force, Board Member of Rainbow Refugees Sweden, co-founder of Refugee trans Initiative-Kenya, actress with National Black Theatre of Sweden, and a group leader of a BIPOC trans persons group in Stockholm- Sweden.



Raevynna El Messaoudi

She/Her · Ireland · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



Raevynna El Messaoudi (she/her) is a biracial trans woman living in Ireland, of Moroccan & Afrikaans descent.

Originally from South Africa, she is currently one of the facilitators for Trans Limerick Community and a consultant in the area of Digital Innovation and Business Transformation.

Her focus includes Technology, Strategy, Diversity and Governance.

Suma Abdelsamie

She/Her · Germany · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



Suma Abdelsamie (she/her) is a trans woman of colour with experience of seeking asylum.

Originally from Egypt and resettled in Berlin, Germany, she is a community expert in organising for trans refugee rights transnationally, as well as a public speaker, educator and support group leader.

Suma is an advocate for LGBTQI+ refugees rights with main focus on trans refugees.

vreer verkerke

They/Them · Netherlands · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



vreer verkerke is the founder of trans health advocacy collective Principle 17 (for non pathologising health care based on informed consent).

With their history in advocating for depathologisation in the ICD-11 and SOC-8 they have a long history in fighting for health care rights.

They also co-founded Transgender Network Netherlands and the first genderqueer collective in the Netherlands.

Willemijn van Kempen

She/Her · Netherlands · Board Member

Toggle Accordion



Willemijn van Kempen (she/her) is a lesbian trans woman, born in 1961 in a rural, Dutch, linguistic minority region.

Survived conversion in her teens, sterilisation, loss of work after transition, and depression.

She holds a BA in physical therapy and in fine art. She developed and renewed herself in a long time commitment to trans activism.

Currently, she is a research and advocacy associate with Transgender Network Netherlands focussing on trans asylum procedures and leading CuraTim, seeking recovery for trans and intersex persons from



harmful practices.

## **Staff**

2023 – 2025

Miles Tanhira

He/Him · Senior Programmes Officer

Toggle Accordion



Founder of Queerston Media, Miles (he/him) is a journalist and brings over 10 years of experience within media & communication, LGBTQ and migration activism.

Miles holds a Masters in International Migration and Ethnic Relations, BSc in Political Science and a BA in Communication Science.

He has worked previously for RFSL as coordinator for a Global LGBT Leadership training Rainbow Leaders as well as Editor for Soginews global LGBT news site.

Miles wants to amplify the voices of further marginalised trans communities particularly trans migrants in

Europe through an intersectional perspective.

Languages: English, Shona, and Swedish.

Vanya Solovey

He/Him · EECA Advocacy & Programme Officer

Toggle Accordion



Vanya (he/him) has previously worked with TGEU as a translator and interpreter, and will now join as EECA Officer. He comes from Russia and has experience in grassroots leftist, feminist, queer, and trans activism.

With a background in linguistics and gender studies, Vanya has written his doctoral thesis on the feminist movement in Russia.

Languages: English, Russian, German, French, and some Czech.

Daniyar Orsekov

He/Him · Senior EECA Programme Officer

Toggle Accordion



Daniyar (he/him) started his activist journey in 2004 in Kyrgyzstan, Central Asia. In 2009, Daniyar became the founder of national LGBT organisation Kyrgyz Indigo and worked for 10 years as its Executive Director.

Since 2020 Daniyar has been working at international organisation ECOM as an advocacy coordinator and contributed to capacity building and expert agency of transgender people of Eastern Europe and Central Asia.

Languages: English, Russian, Kyrgyz.

Richard Köhler

He/Him · TGEU Expert Advisor & Senior Policy Officer

Toggle Accordion



Richard Köhler (he/him) built up TGEUs policy and advocacy work at the European level and has been a trans activist for two decades.

Richard leads on TGEUs work for self-determined legal gender recognition procedures and successful strategic litigation to help advance and protect trans people's rights in the courts.

Richard holds a degree in International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (LL.M). He also has a background in International Business Administration with specialisation on NGOs in Russian-speaking countries.



Languages: German, English, Russian, some French.

Francesca Sanders

She/They · Senior Policy Officer

Toggle Accordion



Francesca's (she/they) work at TGEU cuts across a variety of topics including combating anti-trans violence and the protection of trans people in the labour market.

Originally from Australia, Francesca's background is in macroeconomics.

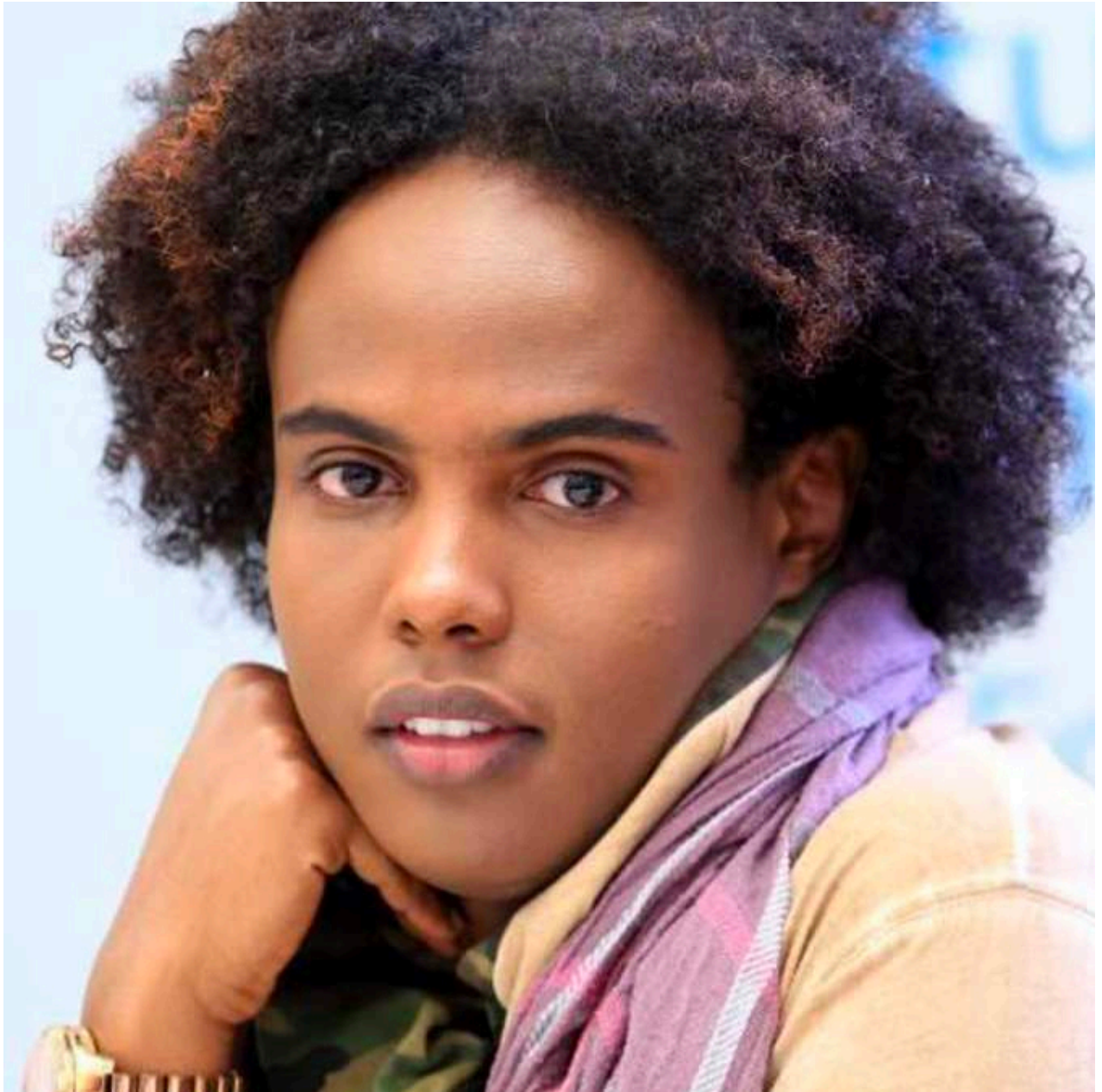
Prior to joining TGEU, their work focused on international development policy, gender equality in the labour market, and Australia's engagement with international financial institutions. She studied at the Berlin School of Economics and Law, the Australian National University, and Hitotsubashi University in Tokyo, Japan.

Languages: English, German, some Japanese.

Farah Abdi

She/Her · Policy Officer, Asylum

Toggle Accordion



Farah (she/her) came to Europe in the end of 2012, fleeing fear of persecution because of her gender identity. Her work as an activist began as a way to combat the rise in xenophobia, racism, islamophobia, and other forms of discrimination.

Farah has worked relentlessly over the last 8 years to tell the unheard stories of refugees. She wrote and published her first autobiography, "Never Arrive," in 2015. She has also written columns on immigration for publications like Malta Today and the New Internationalist.

Farah looks forward to contributing to TGEU and bringing a new perspective.

Languages: English, Kiswahili, and some German.

Deekshitha Ganesan

She/Her · Policy Officer, Health & Anti-gender Movement

Toggle Accordion



Deekshitha (she/her) is originally from India and is a lawyer by training. Prior to joining TGEU, she worked as a research and litigation associate at the Centre for Law and Policy Research in India, focusing on transgender rights, disability rights, and equality and non-discrimination.

At TGEU, Deekshitha works primarily on the portfolios of health and responding to the anti-gender movement.

Languages: English, Tamil, Hindi.

Nadya Yu

Any pronouns · Senior Communications Officer

Toggle Accordion



Nadya (any pronouns) is communications strategist with over 15 years of experience in brand and community building, marketing leadership, and storytelling for impact initiatives, global consumer brands, and tech companies.

Proud intersex community member and advocate, Nadya draws on her media and creative background to explore new territories of culture, language, and technology and develop sustainable, human-centered narratives. Her projects have been featured in major publications such as the New York Times, Vogue, Forbes, and others.

Languages: English, Russian.

Nisha Damji

He/They · Communications Officer

Toggle Accordion





Nisha (he/they) is responsible for the TGEU's websites, social media channels, and newsletters. Nisha focuses on community-driven, engaging editorial content and accessible communication.

Originally from the UK, Nisha has a background in Sociology. After university, Nisha trained as a journalist and holds a diploma in strategic communications.

Languages: English, Gujarati, and German.

Paulie Amanita Calderon-Cifuentes

She/Her · HIV Project Officer

Toggle Accordion



Paulie Amanita is a Colombian researcher and activist openly living with HIV in Europe. With a background in molecular microbiology and biomedicine, Amanita conducted research in Plant pathology and Cell stress response for over 10 years.

Amanita worked as a consultant for Gilead Science as a specialist on HIV/AIDS advocacy and was the Chairwoman and project manager of TransAktion until winter 2021.

Languages: Spanish, English, and French.

Freya Watkins

She/Her · Research Officer

Toggle Accordion



Originally from the UK, Freya (she/her) is a researcher and activist with experience in disability, queerfeminist, union, and housing struggles.

With an academic background in linguistics and psychology, Freya collaborated closely with deaf and hearing sign language-using communities during her doctoral research. She previously worked as German-English translator and was on a Steering Committee researching queerphobic conversion practices within psychology.

At TGEU, Freya will use her data and research skills for trans rights, leading the Trans Rights Map and Trans Murder Monitoring projects, as well as contributing to other research.

Languages: English, German, British Sign Language, some French, Spanish, ASL, IS, DGS.

Alina Kolosova

She/Her · Grant/Operations Officer

Toggle Accordion



Alina (she/her) is trans rights activist, the co-founder of initiative in Tajikistan and FemAgora in Kazakhstan with more than seven years in human rights advocacy and over two decades working in finance, corporate governance, and grant management.

She worked for intergovernmental humanitarian, international post-war reconstruction and development organisations, private bank, public-private partnerships, and multilateral projects, for USAID among many.

Alina is an Economics, Tax Law, Audit, and Evaluation expert, particularly in institutional policy design, operational capacity-building, risk assessment, and development of a blueprint for organisation's financial sustainability.

Languages: Russian, English, Farsi, basic Uzbek.

Kalonde Mutinda

She/Her · Operations Officer

Toggle Accordion





With over eight years of experience in the financial services sector, Kalondu (she/her) uses her knowledge to contribute to sound and sustainable financial practices at TGEU.

Kalondu is a committed LGBT activist and serving board member of Rainbow Women of Kenya. She believes that our freedom is interconnected: no one is free until everyone is free.

Kalondu holds a Master's in Business Administration and a Bachelor of Commerce from the University of Nairobi. She is currently studying for a Master's in International and Development Economics at the University of Applied Science (HTW), Berlin.

Languages: English, Swahili, Kamba, and some German.

## **Consultants**

2023 – 2025

Sebastian Rowlands

They/Them · Senior Advisor on Resilience and Backlash

Toggle Accordion



As Senior Advisor on Resilience and Backlash, Sebastian will support TGEU to combat the anti-gender movement.

With eight years' experience in sexual and reproductive health and rights, HIV, global health, and LGBTQI+ rights, their interest lies in the intersection of gender and violence, sexuality, social norms, and marginalisation.

