



THE QUEER AND TRANS RESEARCH LAB (QTRL)

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Our Vision

Overall, the QTRL seeks to ask: How do methods from queer, trans, and sexuality studies, across disciplines as well as across creative, activist, and scholarly research practices, bring innovative approaches and solutions to entrenched and emerging social and political problems affecting LGBTQ2S+ and BIPOC lives and communities?

Approaching this question requires crossing the disciplinary boundaries that tend to separate scholarly research objectives. It also entails bridging the equally troublesome divides between the university and our communities. The QTRL will thus serve as an incubator for cross-disciplinary conversations in order to create and promote more collaborative research opportunities that focus on sexuality studies broadly construed; simultaneously, it will strengthen the Bonham Centre's existing relationships with LGBTQ2S+ communities and with political initiatives outside the university—as well as enable us to build new ones.

The Queer and Trans Research Lab (QTRL) will be committed to:

- 1) **Providing an interactive, creative space** for scholars, students, artists, and social justice leaders to work collectively on their projects with the vital support needed to undertake them and building the necessary infrastructure for this work to successfully evolve.
- 2) **Attracting scholars, artists, and LGBTQ2S+ social justice leaders** from across the country and around the world to conduct their work both at the university and in

the community through talks, workshops, symposia, performances, and exhibitions.

3) **Creating new research and study networks** by providing its members with the opportunity to collaborate on complex issues in queer and trans studies and to imagine new approaches to research partnerships that will improve the lives of people in their, and our, communities.

4) **Encouraging queer and trans research creation and community-engaged research initiatives.**

5) **Creating public-facing, accessible materials and knowledge delivery methods** that stage and reflect the on-going research collaborations as they take place at the lab, including the creation of a QTRL podcast, annual exhibitions, and a new slate of public programming.

Description & Composition

The QTRL's mandate will be to foster vibrant and engaged research, art, and activism, supporting the work of scholars, artists, and community leaders to create new knowledge that advances dialogue around gender and sexual diversity, LGBTQ2S+ organizing, and intersectional queer analyses. We will cultivate collaborative and accountable relationships between scholars, community organizations, activists, and cultural workers across Canada and transnationally.

The QTRL, in its initial stages, will consist of an interactive cohort designed to develop new research, creative, and community collaborations:

1) **Postdoctoral Fellow:** This fellowship will support scholars from any disciplinary field pursuing research in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, two-spirit, and queer studies. These positions will advance the goals of the QTRL by bringing in premier scholars in queer and trans studies to work closely with faculty, students, and others in the cohort to foster interdisciplinary scholarship and enhance student research opportunities.

2) An **Artist-in-Residence:** This residency provides financial, research, and other material support for artists working in any medium (photography, sculpture, media arts, theatre, writing, etc.), whose work centres on LGBTQ2S+ lives, communities, histories, and cultures and expressly concentrates on the role art plays in expanding how we think about and teach sexual diversity. The residency will

culminate in an annual exhibition, reading, or performance of the resident's work-in-progress. This position will advance the goals of the QTRL by fostering collaborations between creative and scholarly methods and practices, highlighting the political and structural importance of LGBTQ2S+ expressive culture, and provide students with the opportunity to work with and learn from the LGBTQ2S+ artist community.

3) A **Community Leadership Residency**: The residency will provide fellowships with financial, research, and other material support to visionary LGBTQ2S+ activists and community leaders to share, develop, circulate their work, as well as to establish connections with students, teachers, and researchers at the university. This will aim to strengthen the relationship between academics and advocacy (ie: research methods and political practices) and deepen understandings within the university of the community relevance of their work.

4) Multiple undergraduate and graduate student **Research Assistantships**: These positions will allow us to assign RAs to each member of the QTRL cohort, and help provide crucial training to our students in event planning, organization and promotion, research practices, social justice collaborations, community outreach initiatives, database development and management, public relations, and digital skills development.

5) Two **Faculty Fellows**, one each for pre- and post-tenure faculty. These fellowships will provide a 12-month course release for University of Toronto faculty members working on any aspect of queer and trans studies at any rank, teaching status, discipline, or campus. They will participate in all QTRL activities, have the much-needed opportunity to carry on their own research or creative agenda, and collaborate with others in the QTRL cohort on the development of networked research, as well as creative, curricular, and pedagogical practices.

6) Participating **Collaborators** at the university: QTRL collaborators will consist of the active members of the lab, including students and faculty from across University of Toronto's three campuses. Both weekly and monthly activities will provide graduate and undergraduate students with opportunities for one-on-one interaction with the QTRL cohort, encourage collaborative scholarship across academic boundaries, stimulate interactive scholarship, and provide the impetus for innovative teaching and research projects.