



2022

ANNUAL
REPORT



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KEY EVENTS

STATEMENT ON TITUS LOW

We stood in solidarity with Titus Low in January. He is now believed to be the first Onlyfans creator in Singapore to be prosecuted under Section 292(1)(A) of the Penal Code.

ART THERAPY SESSIONS

In February, Project X officially began offering art therapy sessions for sex workers in Singapore with our art therapist Michelle Baraba. Thank you Temasek Trust for funding this initiative!

CNA DOCUMENTARY

In April, Channel News Asia released *Sing City: What Drives Singapore's Underground KTV Industry*. Project X was invited to share our insights.

REBRANDING

Project X turned 14 years old this year. In September, We got a brand new logo to mark our renewal!

WEBSITE REVAMP

What's a rebrand without a website revamp? We hope that with our fresh new site, both adult service providers and allies can access our services easier.

ORGANISATIONAL STATEMENT

By December, we released a statement for International Day To End Violence Against Sex Workers on our blog.

KEY PROGRAMMES

ART DISTRIBUTION

In 2022, Singapore worked towards the easing of Covid-19 pandemic restrictions. We distributed ARTs to sex workers as more of them returned to work.

LEGAL WORKSHOP

Legal workshop was conducted to familiarise adult content creators with the law and how they can protect themselves.

ART THERAPY

In 2022, we conducted 12 sessions of group art therapy and provided 64 individual sessions. Like everyone else, sex workers need mental health support.



ABOUT US

Management Team

Project X is a local non-profit organisation that provides social, emotional, and legal support to sex workers in Singapore. We envision a society where sex workers no longer face violence and discrimination.

Formed in 2009, we have been governed by the Sunshine Initiative (Singapore) - a registered society in Singapore - since 2014.

MISSION

Project X plays a pivotal role in addressing the unmet needs of sex and entertainment workers in Singapore. We contribute to the fight for human rights and better quality of lives of sex workers by channelling key resources, evidence-based advocacy, key population research, community building and strategic partnerships.



VANESSA HO
Executive Director

SHERRY SHERQUESHAA
Community Relations and Engagement

WANY DEE
Outreach Director

NOR
Programmes Manager



Foreword



2022 definitely felt like yet another rollercoaster ride. It started with a slew of distress calls from adult content creators who were absolutely shocked by the arrest of Titus Low. They were wondering what would happen to them, and what to do with all the **blackmail threats** they were now receiving - “**send me free nudes or I'll report you to the police**”.

We were constantly grappling with how the law sometimes fails to protect the people who most need it. Many of the high-profile cases from this year served to illustrate this concern. Titus was a victim of having his contents leaked - yet the one who leaked his content did not face any repercussions. We also bore witness to the case of Ms Chen, a 50-year old masseuse who was entrapped by the police. She was jailed for 4 days after claiming trial without a lawyer. When we met her, it was too late to engage a lawyer as the trial had already concluded. **It was heartbreaking to watch her cry, thinking of the hard life she has had raising her disabled daughter.**



Foreword



Thankfully, some of our cases saw positive outcomes. A case of cheating that happened in 2021 finally saw the man jailed for 9 years. That said, we were still deeply disappointed that it was not classified as a case of rape. **Cases such as this, where consent was obtained through deception, and where sex workers are refused compensation for their services, should be considered rape.** It sets a worrying tone that one can be deceived into giving consent without reparations, and that perpetrators can get away with a lighter sentence.

Another significant setback we faced was the further rejection of Orchard Towers as a red-light area. While it has not always been a red-light district, Orchard Towers has grown to become a safe space for sex workers. However, complaints and fights started by non-sex workers have led to the police's decision to not renew the licenses of the entertainment establishments in the building come May 2023. The management has also taken it into their own hands to threaten all massage parlour workers who dress promiscuously. They were asked to either to leave the building or face legal action. **This disregards the dispersion effect such measures will have, and negatively impacts the workers' lives and their dependents.**



Foreword



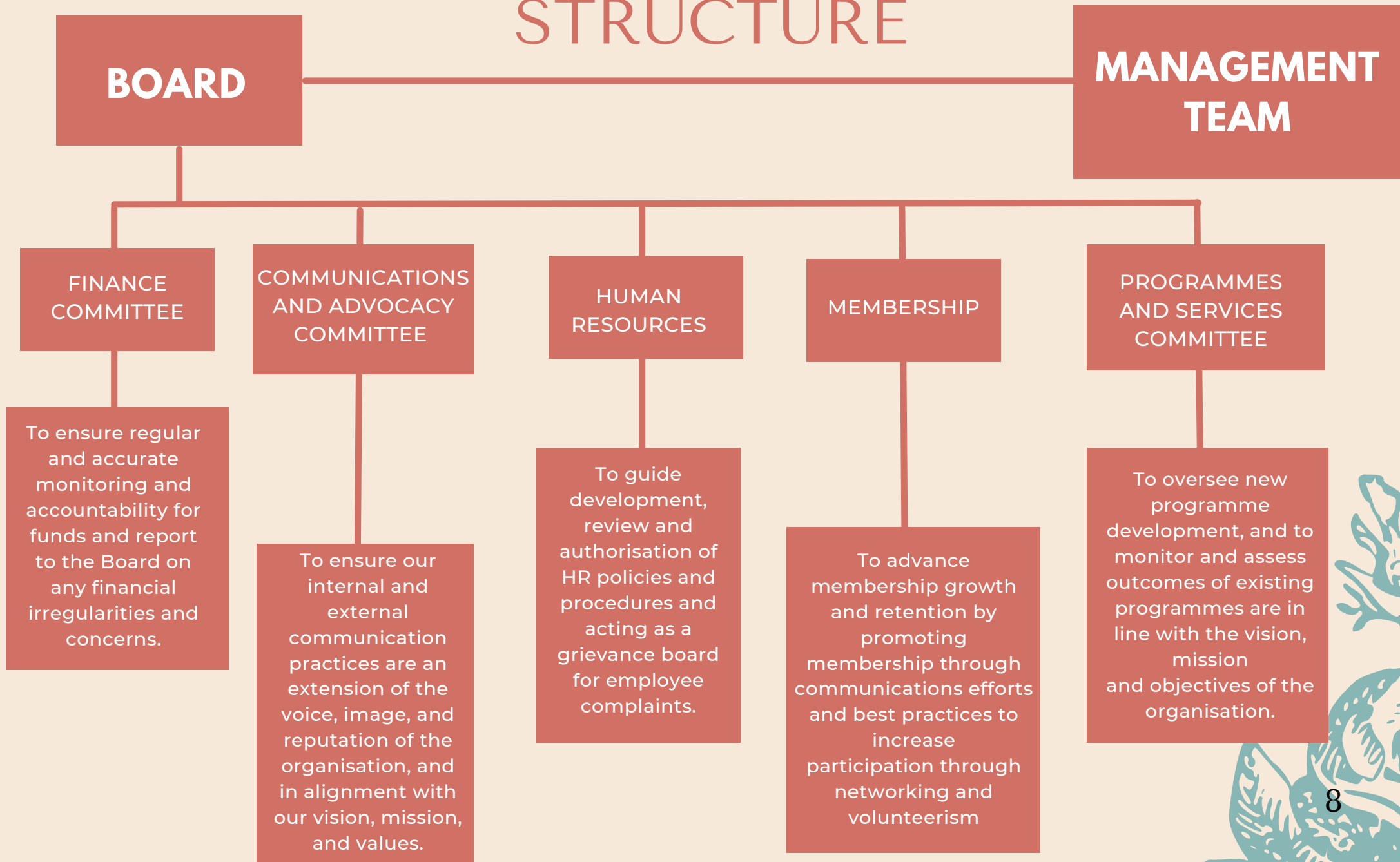
It can all get really upsetting and stressful, and we are thus constantly seeking out ways to bring a sense of justice to sex workers outside of the justice system. And for that, we are thankful, for all the volunteers, interns, and donors who have stepped forward to lend their support to the cause. Both sex workers and allies have played a crucial role in conducting outreach, spreading the word about Project X, lending a compassionate listening ear to those who have faced injustices, and being there for each other in times of distress.

We are grateful for the 10 interns who have joined us this year - some of whom were from the Youth Corps Community Internship Scheme - and the new volunteers who were trained. We are grateful that a past intern has returned as a research assistant for a project funded by the National Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCID); and we are grateful to the SGUnited Traineeship Programme for allowing us to finally hire our fourth full-time staff member, Nor.

We look forward to having you join our team to help end violence and exploitation against sex workers in Singapore!



ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE



Board Members



RAYNER TAN
(he/him)

President

- Chair of Communications & Advocacy Committee
- Member of Memberships, Human Resource, Programmes and Services Committees



JASMINE SEAH
(she/her)

Treasurer

- Chair of Human Resource Committee
- Chair of Finance Committee
- Member of Communications & Advocacy Committee



**PAVARNE SHANTTI
SIVALINGAM V M**
(they/them)

Secretary of the Board

- Chair of Membership Committee
- Member of Human Resource Committee



MAYA RIZZIANTE
(she/her)

Ordinary Member

- Community Representative and former employee of Project X



TANIA HAYDEN
(she/her)

Ordinary Member

- Community Representative
- Previously represented Project X at the CEDAW training organised by APNSW and IWRAW



RAKSHA MAHTANI
(she/they)

Vice President

- Chair of Programmes & Services Committee
- Member of Communications & Advocacy Committee



ERVIN TAN
(he/him)

Vice Treasurer

- Member of Finance, Communications & Advocacy and Human Resource Committees



QUEN WONG
(she/her)

Vice Secretary

- Member of Memberships and Programmes and Services Committees



EUNICE OLSEN
(she/her)

Ordinary Member

KEY FIGURES

216,997 condoms
distributed



340 free STI tests
for Chlamydia and
Gonorrhoea
provided

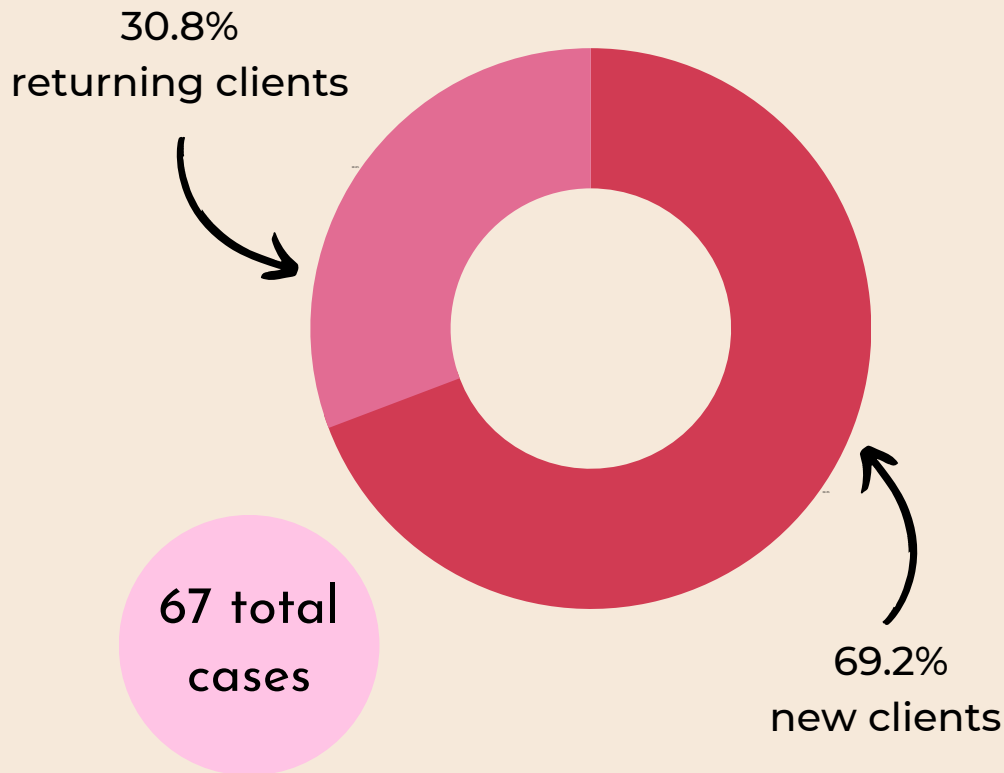
537 free HIV
tests
administered

67 cases received
through our case
management
system



Casework

Project X began our case management system in 2015. To date, we have assisted close to 700 sex workers in distress. We assist to the best of our abilities and make referrals to the appropriate social, health, and legal services.



LEGAL



Civil, criminal

FINANCIAL



Income instability, insurance

HEALTH



Mental, physical, sexual

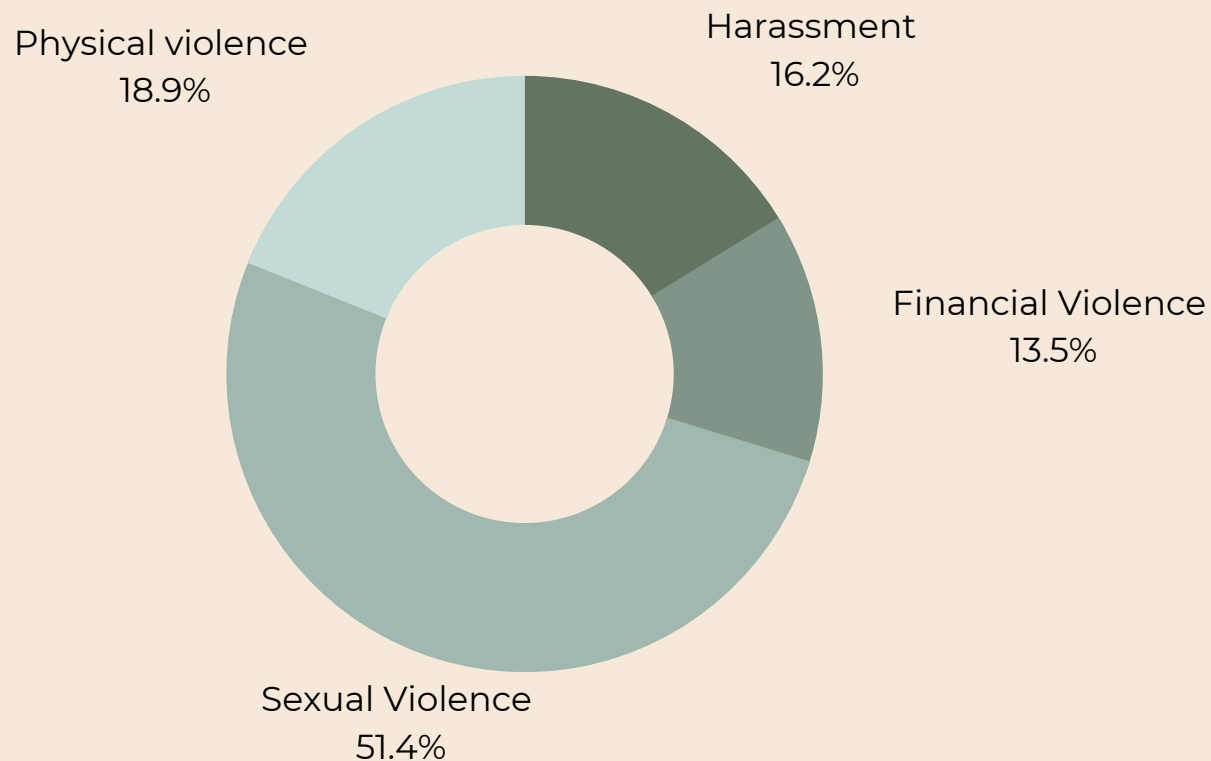
SOCIAL



Emotional, training, education

42 cases involving abusers

Based on our case intakes, we identified that **sexual violence** and **physical violence** rank as the top 2 forms of violence amongst workers.



Case Types

6 Harassment

5 Financial Violence

Non-payment, scam, robbery

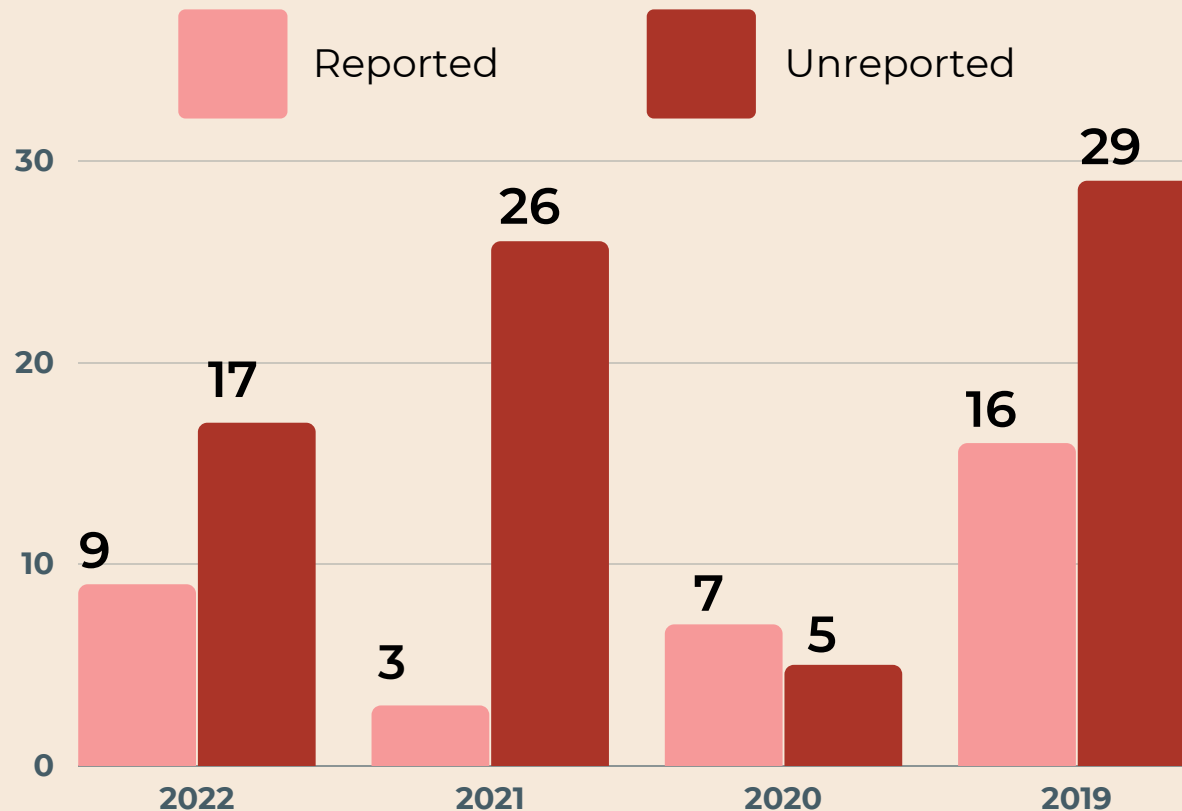
19 Sexual Violence

Stealthing, rape, tech-facilitated

7 Physical Violence

Crimes Reported

OUT OF THE CASES REPORTABLE TO THE POLICE, HOW MANY WERE **NOT** REPORTED?

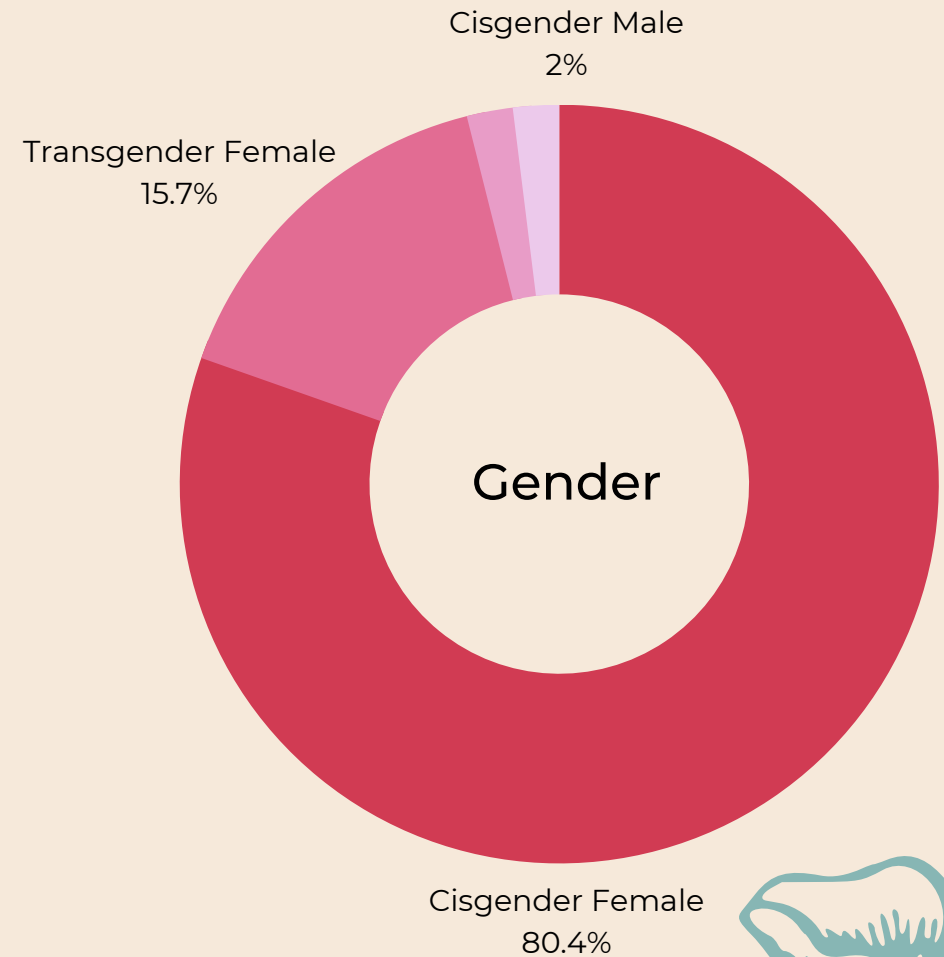
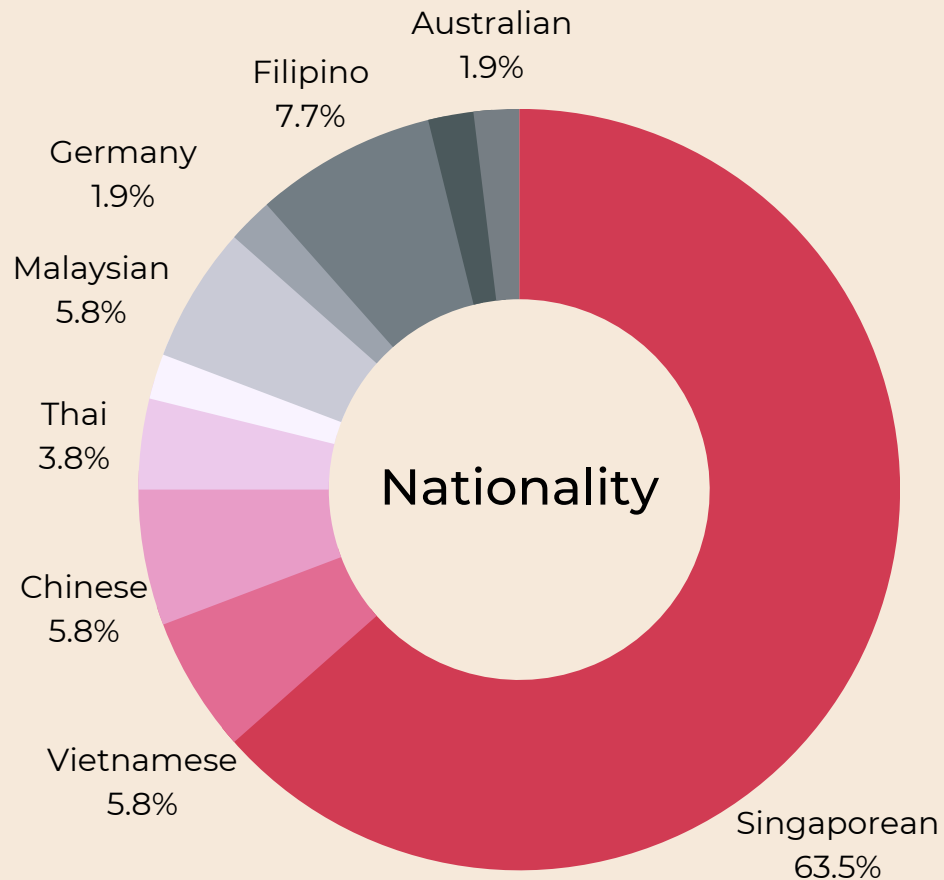


Of the cases we worked on that were reportable to the police, we found that 17 cases out of a total of 26 went unreported in 2022. This means 65% of such cases were not brought to justice, compared to 89% in 2021, 42% in 2020, and 64% in 2019.



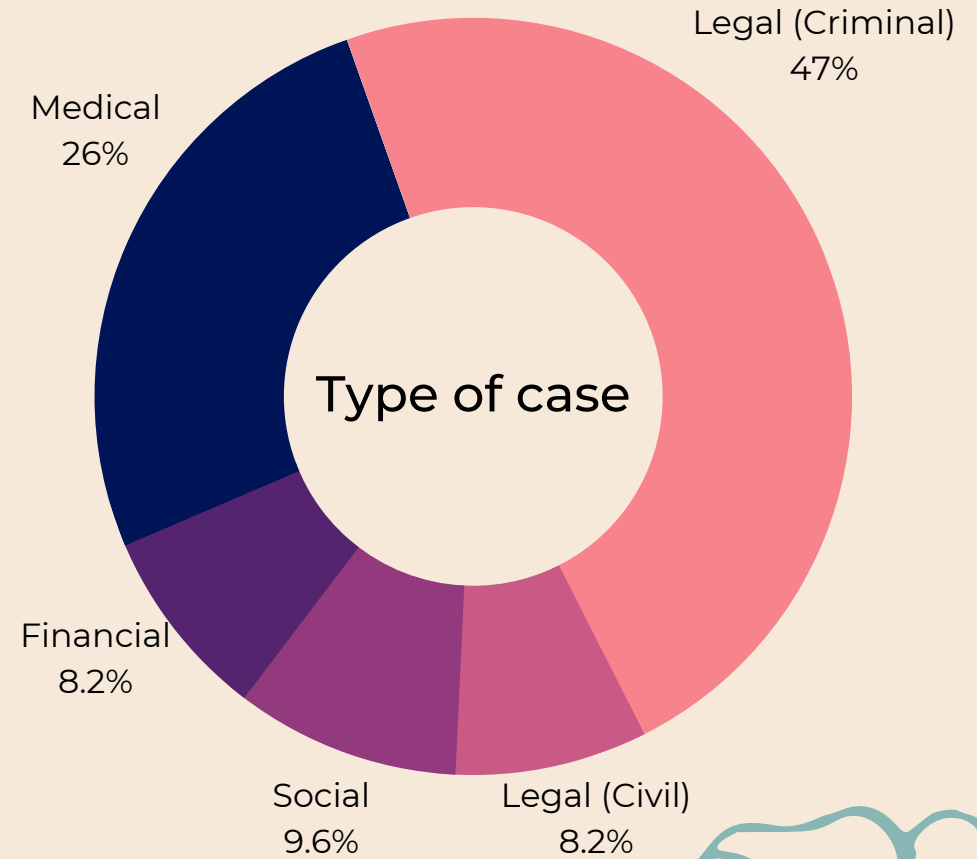
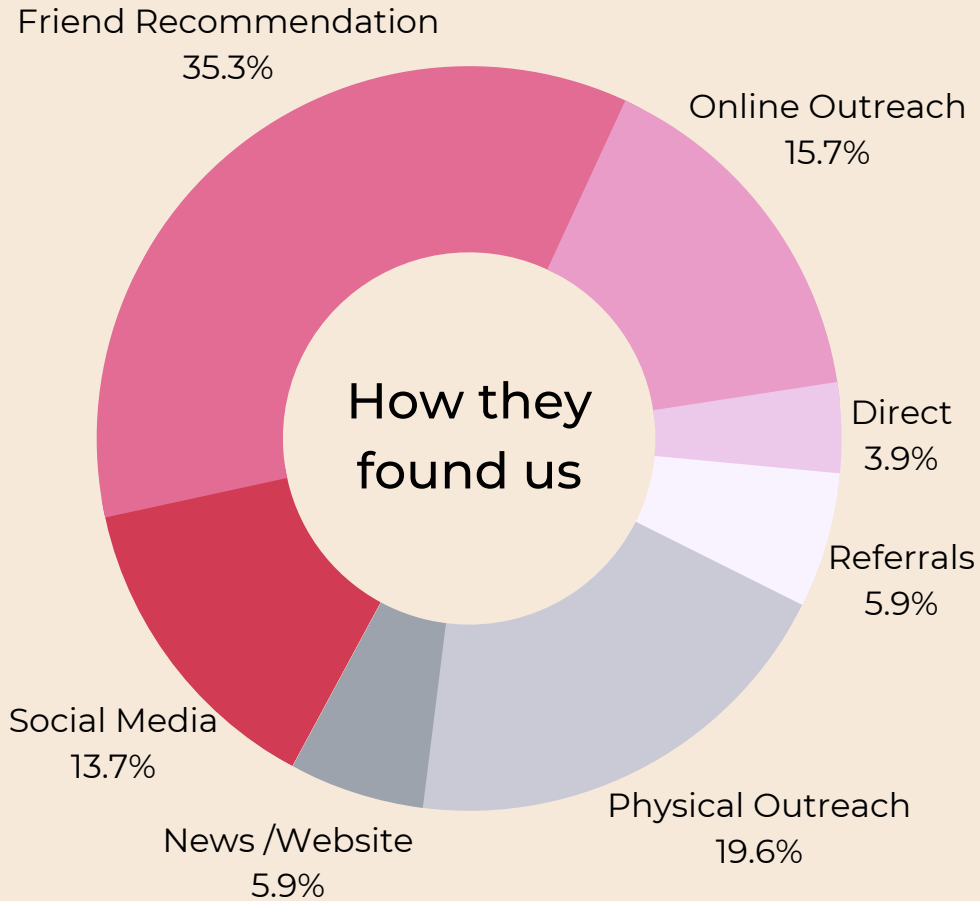
Case Breakdowns

DEMOGRAPHICS

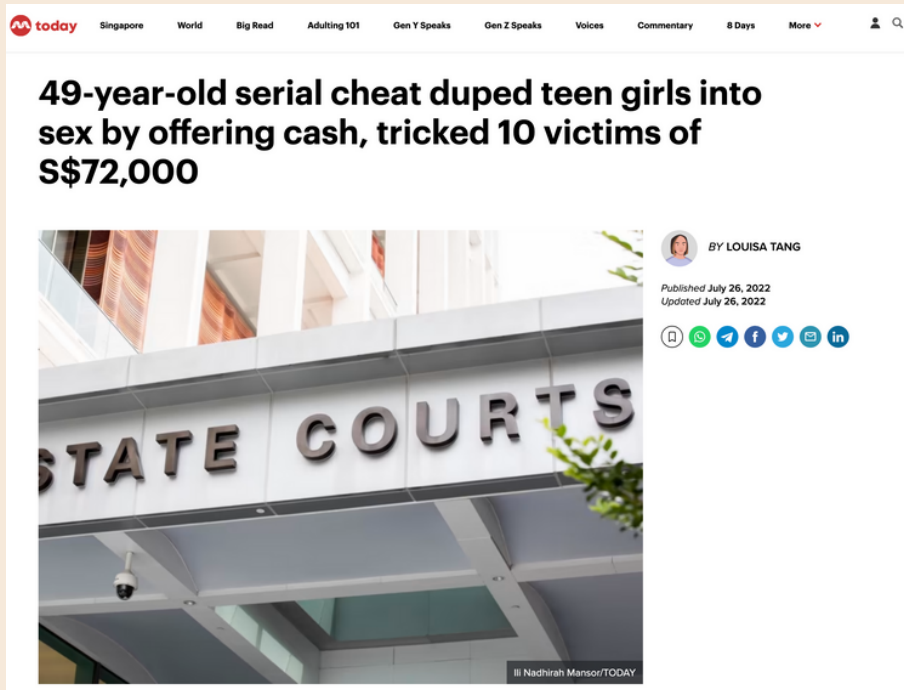


Case Breakdowns

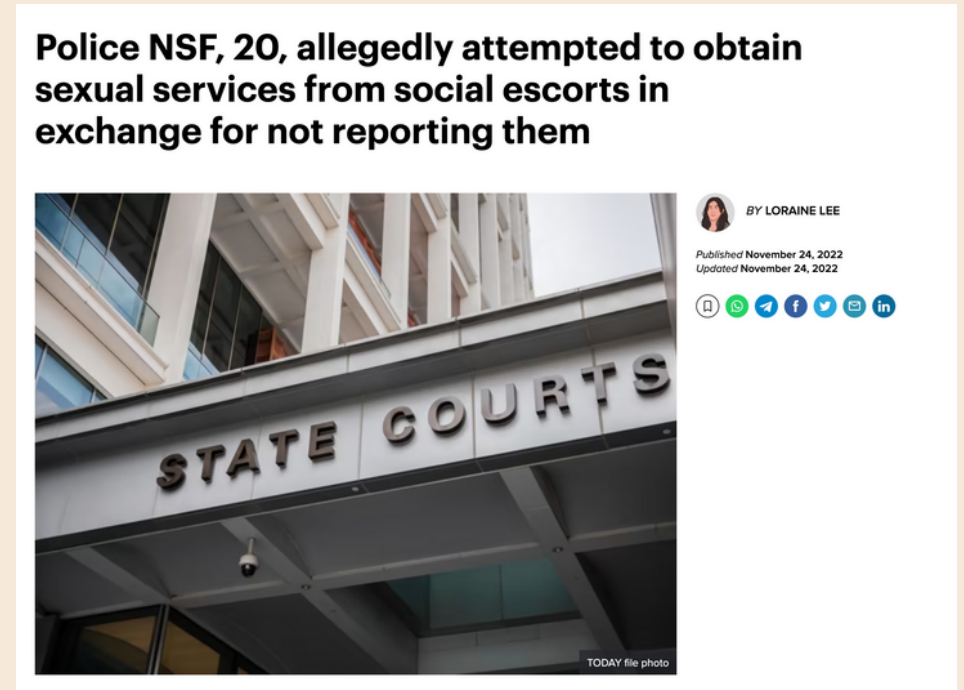
DEMOGRAPHICS



We saw the successful conviction of 2 of our cases!



Project X was in communication with one of the victims whilst under quarantine in 2021. We persuaded her to make a police report and liaised with the police at the same time.



Project X rendered financial aid, accommodation, and therapy to the victims. They were very afraid of the entire investigation process. Pending investigation, they were also arrested for sex work.



Programmes and Events



Art Therapy by Michelle Baraba



- 12 group therapy sessions and 64 individual sessions conducted for 22 workers.
- Focused on and supported the mental health and interpersonal struggles of sex workers in Singapore.
- Art therapy approaches the parts of the unconsciousness that words cannot describe but creative expression can. It promotes self-reflection, emotional regulation, to normalise mental health struggles. It enhances coping skills, and is an effective stress-management strategy. It also helps to improve social and communication skills, build community, and strengthen connections with peers through the creative process.
- Clients were able to receive the art psychotherapy services at their own convenience and availability.

Outreach and Education



Sexual Health Testing and Treatment



Events for Sex Workers



Community Events

17 MAY : MEMBERS NIGHT

Celebration of Hari Raya and International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia



31 AUGUST:

WORLD HUMANITARIAN DAY & REPEAL OF 377A PARTY

14 SEPTEMBER:

SEX WORKERS' PRIDE

Community Events



21 OCTOBER:
PROJECT X HALLOWEEN

23 NOVEMBER:
TRANSGENDER
REMEMBRANCE DAY



11 DECEMBER: MEMBERS
LUNCH WITH SPECIAL
GUEST JULES KIM



Public Education & Collaborations



IN 2022,

19

**TALKS AND SHARINGS
CONDUCTED**

8

**CONDUCTED AT
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS**

4

**CONDUCTED AT HEALTH
INSTITUTIONS**

5

**CONDUCTED AT COMMUNITY
ORGANISATIONS**

2

**CONDUCTED FOR
CORPORATIONS**

8 MARCH:

LECTURE BY VANESSA HO AT NTU

29 MARCH:

LECTURE BY VANESSA HO ON IDENTITIES IN ASIA AT NUS



5 MAY:

TALK BY VANESSA HO, SHERRY SHERQUESHAA AND VOLUNTEER SUIYUAN FOR NUS MEDICAL STUDENTS

12 MAY:

LECTURE BY SHERRY SHERQUESHAA ON RACE X SOGI (SEXUAL ORIENTATION & GENDER IDENTITY) FOR ELSEVIER

28 MAY: HIV EDUCATION SERIES 2022 MODULE 2: WORKING WITH PLHIV



HEALTH CARE WORKER HIV EDUCATION SERIES 2022

MODULE 2: WORKING WITH PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV (PLHIV)

DATE | 28 May 2022
TIME | 1pm - 4pm
VENUE | Zoom Meeting
Register at:
<https://form.gov.sg/603d9f4fb3f2b10012a1fe11>

The Health Care Worker HIV Education Series, comprising 4 sequential modules, aims to improve the knowledge and skills of healthcare professionals working with people living with HIV (PLHIV) in Singapore.

OBJECTIVES

- Improve the knowledge of HIV and its related conditions
- Improve the knowledge of HIV treatment and care
- Better understand the lived experiences of PLHIV in Singapore
- Showcase best practices in clinical management and improving care for PLHIV

TOPICS AND SPEAKERS

Communications and counselling basics

Ms Vanessa Tan
Senior Medical Social Worker
Department of Care and Counselling
Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Mental health management of PLHIV

Dr. Chen Lai Chien
Senior Consultant
Psychological Medicine
Tan Tock Seng Hospital

Working with diverse community

Mr. Daniel Le
Programs Manager
HIV Programme
National University Hospital

WHO SHOULD ATTEND

Doctors, nurses, pharmacy, allied health professionals, volunteers and other healthcare professionals who work with or are keen to work with PLHIV.

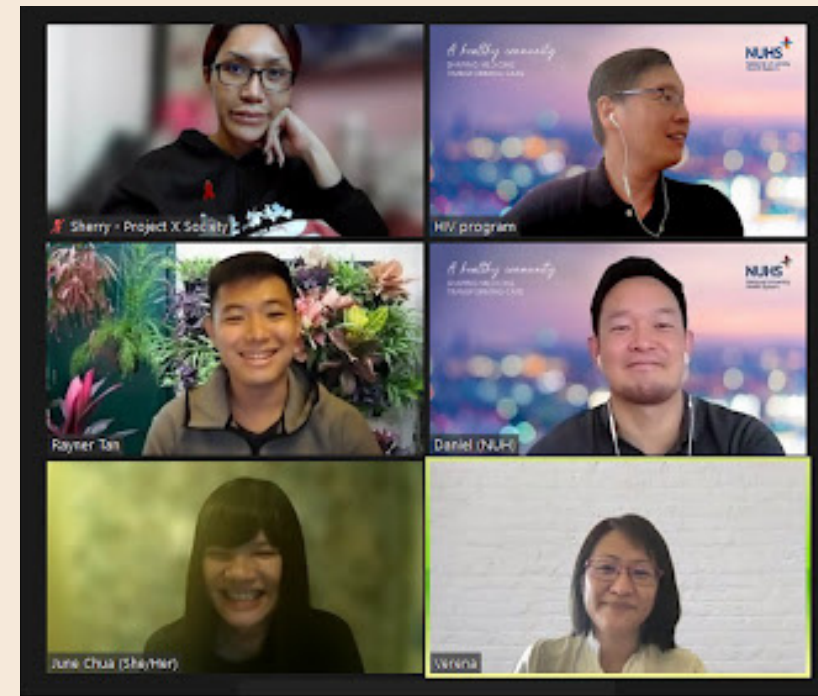
CPE points available.

Jointly organised by:

National University Hospital
A member of the NUHS

National Centre for Infectious Diseases

Singapore General Hospital
SingHealth



2 JUNE: TWILIO INFO SESSION BY VANESSA HO AND INTERN AMELIA

2 JUNE:

PANEL DISCUSSION BY SHERRY SHERQUESHAA WITH MIDNIGHT BLUE (A HONG KONG BASED MALE AND TRANSGENDER SEX WORKER ORGANISATION) AND KUROVERSE



16 JUNE:

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION WITH SHERRY SHERQUESHAA AND INTERN YINNYI AT THE SAW SWEE HOCK SCHOOL OF PUBLIC HEALTH (NUS)

18 JUNE:

PINK DOT 14



1 JULY:

LECTURE BY SHERRY SHERQUESHAA
FOR NCID HIV SENSITIVITY TRAINING
WORKSHOP



10 AUGUST:

LECTURE BY INTERN QARINAH FOR DIPLOMA IN
HEALTH MANAGEMENT STUDENTS AT REPUBLIC
POLYTECHNIC

18 OCTOBER:
GUEST LECTURE BY
VANESSA HO FOR
SP9008 INVISIBLE
HEALTH MODULE IN
NTU



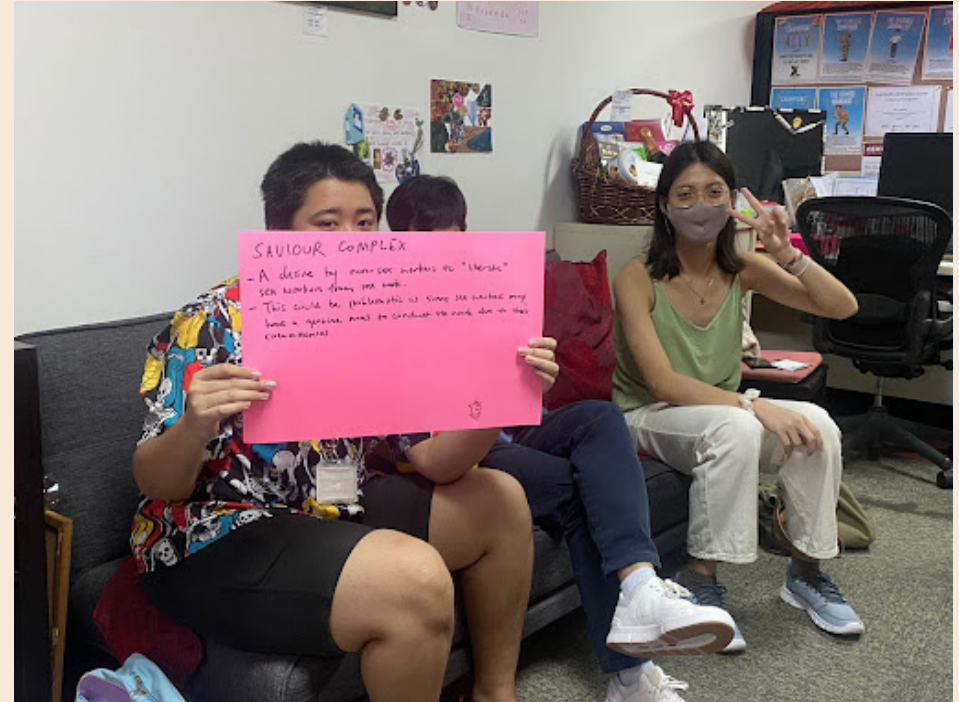
25 OCTOBER:
TALK BY SHERRY SHERQUESHAA FOR
POPPING THE BUBBLE



31 OCTOBER:
GUEST LECTURE BY VANESSA HO
NUS GENDER AND SEXUALITY: A
SINGAPORE HISTORY

3 SEPTEMBER:
SGRAINBOW CHECK-IN AT
PROJECT X DROP-IN CENTRE

17 NOVEMBER:
TALK BY VANESSA HO
AT RAFFLES INSTITUTION



26 NOVEMBER:
SGIFF PANEL FOR THE SCREENING OF
BOI KWONG'S GEYLANG FILM,
MODERATED BY SHERRY SHERQUESHAA

30 NOVEMBER:
ASIA PACIFIC HIV PRACTICE COURSE
(APHPC) SITE VISIT



10 DECEMBER:
SHERRY SHERQUESHAA SPEAKS AT 13TH
SINGAPORE AIDS CONFERENCE (SAC)

Research & Advocacy



Annual Sexual Health Survey

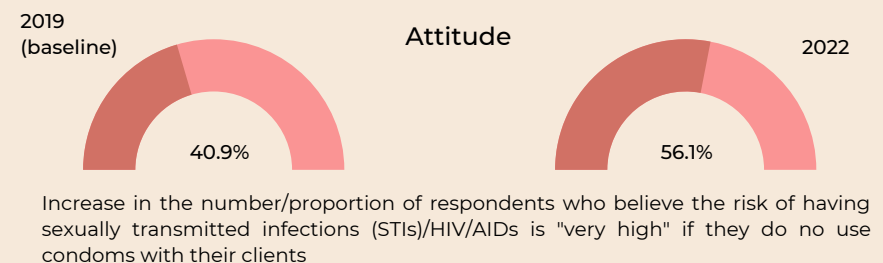
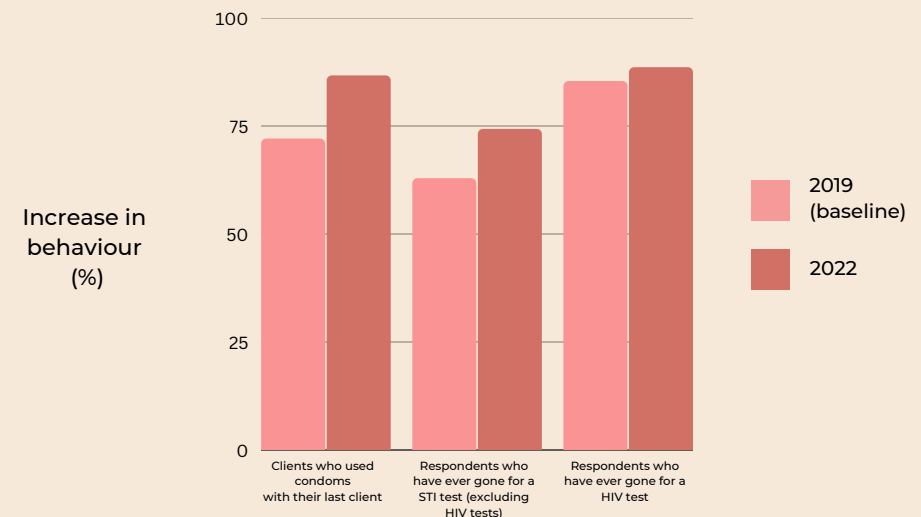
Project X carried out its Annual Sexual Health Survey from 10 February 2022 to 24 March 2022. With the help of volunteers, interns and staff, we garnered 369 responses from the sex and entertainment worker community.

Aims

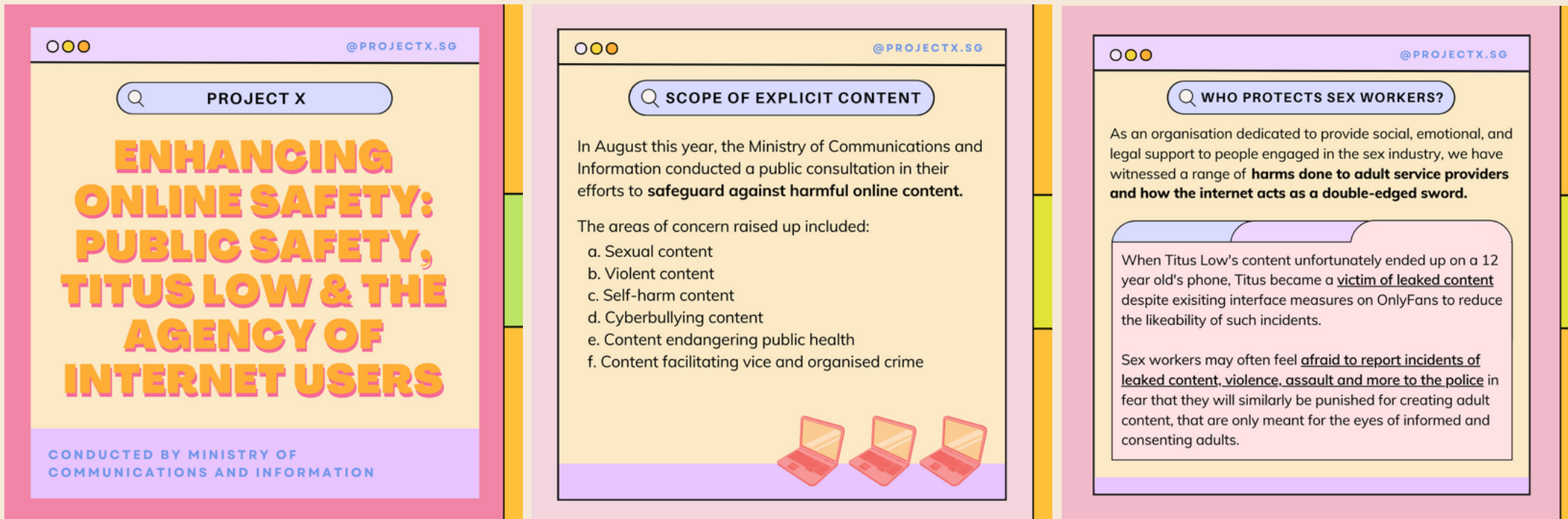
The Sexual Health Survey aims to examine the effectiveness of Project X's past year of outreach and programmes implemented for the community, with the purpose of raising awareness of safer sex and routine testing for Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs) and Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). The survey questionnaire involved questions regarding condom usage, STI and HIV literacy and sexual health in general. Notwithstanding the change in demographics as a result of the pandemic backdrop, it is still worth to commend Project X's past year of outreach and programmes to raise awareness in the importance of sexual health.

	2019 (baseline)	2022
Increase in STI knowledge mean scores	60%	69%
Increase in HIV knowledge mean scores	60%	79%
Increase in respondents who have been exposed to sexual health programmes for the last 12 months	50.7%	60.7%

Health-seeking behaviour/practices

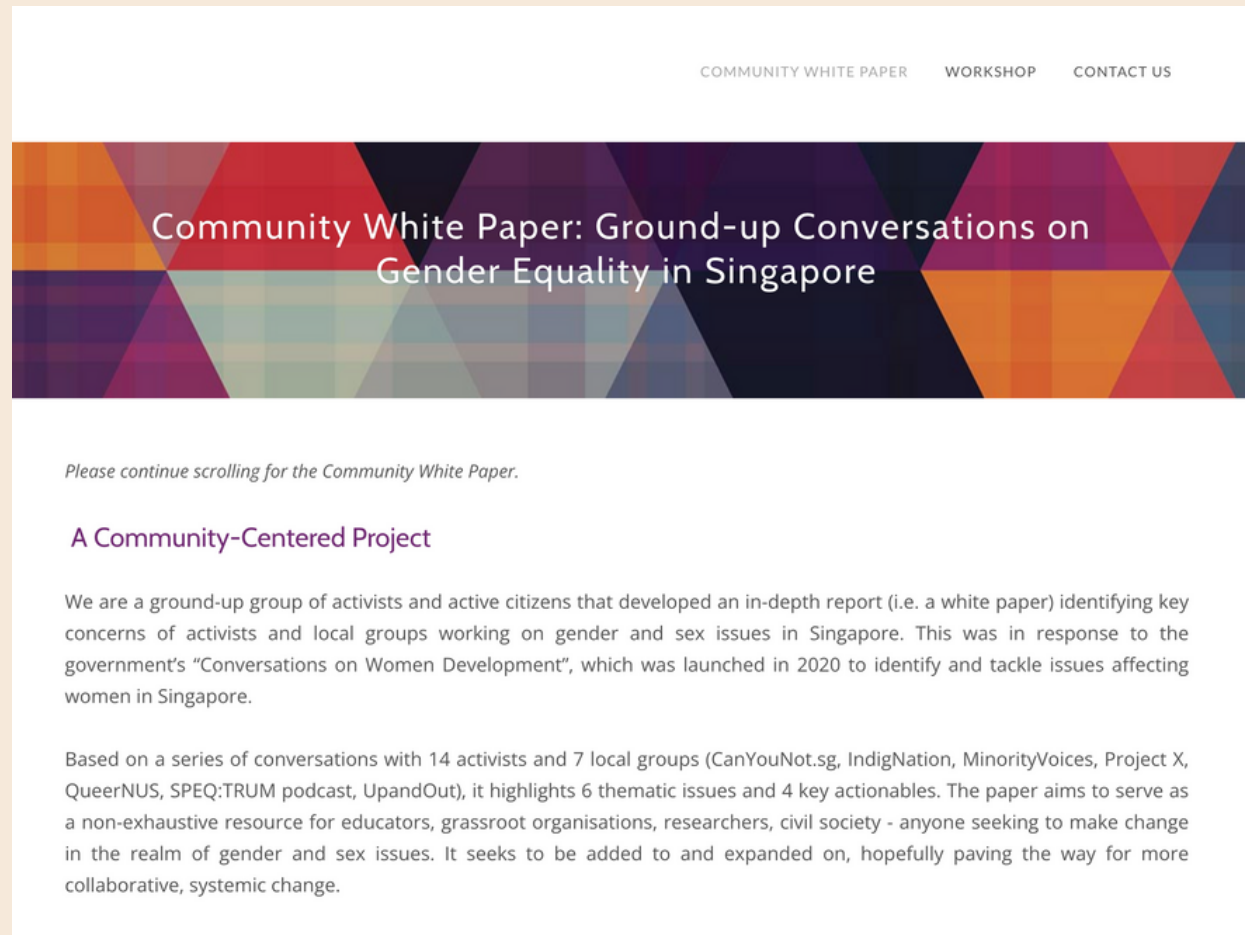
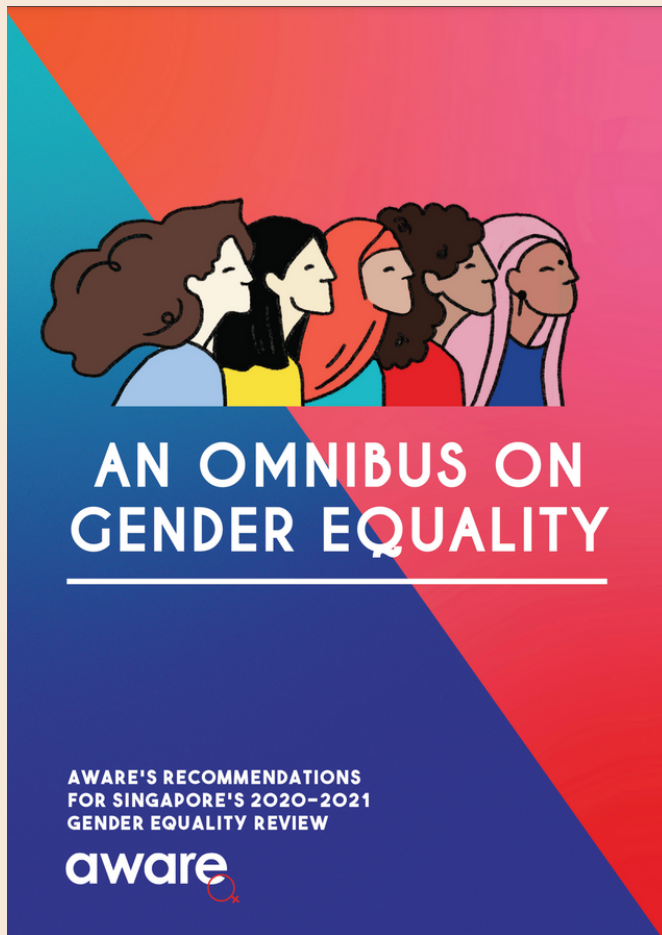


REACH Public Consultation on Online Safety



In August, we did a roundtable discussion with sex workers wherein 8 sex workers joined us to talk about how many youths are clueless about sexuality and how a blanket ban on sexual content is not useful. Read our recommendations [here](#).

Women's Development White Paper



Project X was invited to contribute to AWARE's Recommendations for Singapore's 2020-2021 Gender Equality Review. We made a recommendation for the definition of sexual violence to include the non-payment of sex workers.



NCID RESEARCH

Project X conducted 5 focus group discussions and over 50 in-depth interviews (IDI) with sex workers. It is currently still a work in progress and results should be published soon! What was special about this project was that sex workers were recruited as interviewers for the IDIs.



Institutional Capacity Building

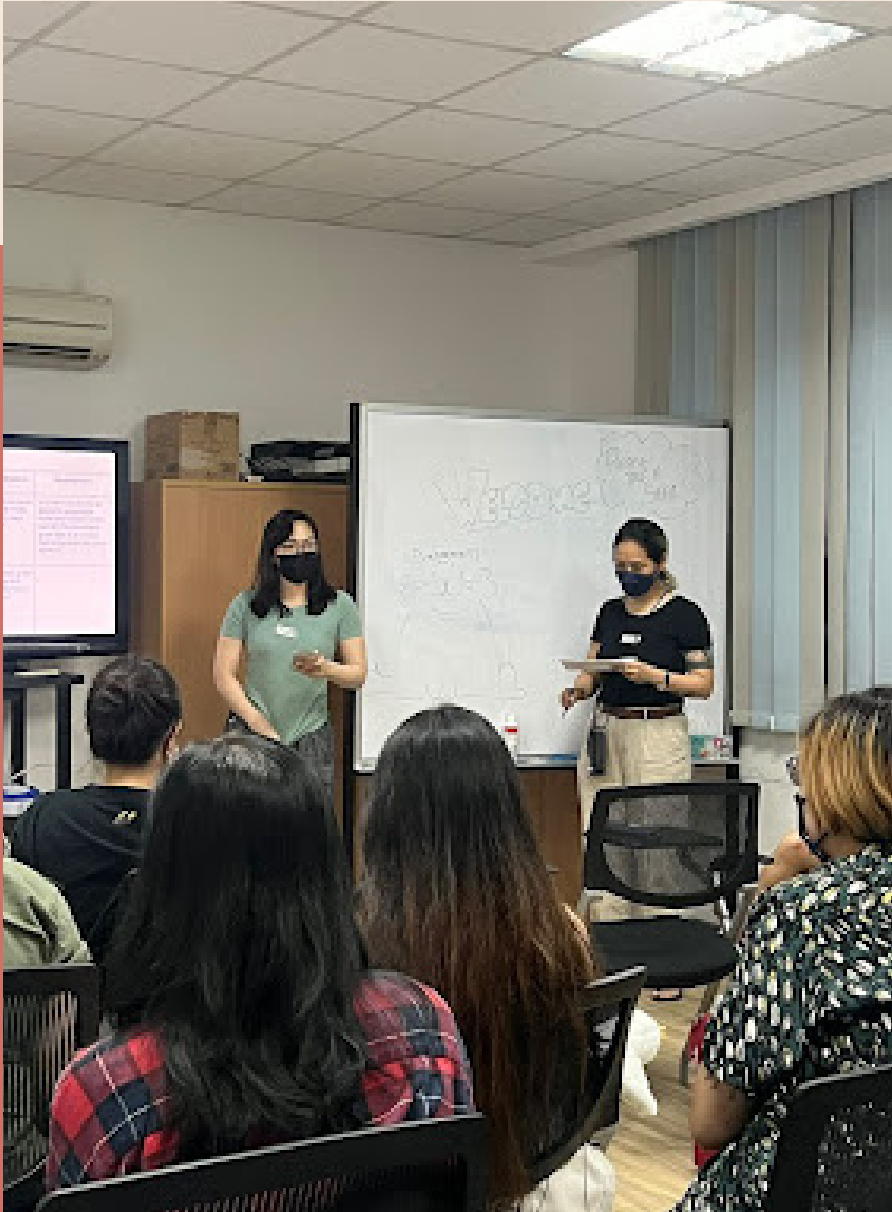


Institutional Capacity Building

- In March, we welcomed our Programmes Manager, Nor
- On 4th May, the full-time staff, peer educators and interns attended Project X's Team Cohesion & Bonding event, sponsored by our Board Members.
- We also held a members recruitment drive on 17th May.



Institutional Capacity Building



- In **July**, we trained a new batch of volunteers.
- In **September**, Nor, our Programmes Manager attended the Gilead Life Beyond HIV Conference 2022 in London.
- In **October**, Sherry went to Mexico for the NSWP Annual Board Meeting. Sherry has been a board member representative for Asia-Pacific region at the Global Network of Sex Work Project since 2018.

Institutional Capacity Building

- By end of the year, Project X's Management team went for their **First Aid Training** refresher.
- Nor also attended the 2022 Asia Pacific HIV Practice Course (APHPC).
- This year, Project X continued to receive pro bono mental health support from **The Therapy Room**.





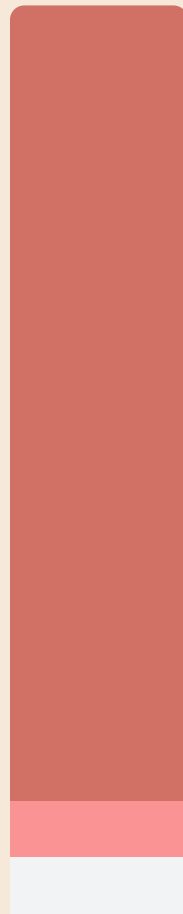
Finances



INCOME:
\$516,862.68

Grants for
Charitable
Activities
87.12%

Other 6.13%
Donations 6.75%



EXPENDITURE:
\$430,773.03

Charitable
Activities
76.89%

Others 6.51%

Governance 16.6%



Fundraising and Donations



Fundraising and Donations



- Hee Suhui raised Project X \$500 from her work *Other Faces*.
- InBadCo raised \$1000 from their PinkDot fundraiser event.

Fundraising and Donations

- In July, Club Chrome, a queer pole dance & creative collective, platforming and centering sex workers, organised a performance fundraiser. They raised a total of \$1000.



Project X in the Media



Project X in the Media

26 March

Sing City: What Drives Singapore's Underground KTV Industry? | Undercover Asia | CNA Documentary

4 April

A Singaporean erotic OnlyFans star faces months in prison – and sparks a debate | LA Times

30 May

Human Rights Defender Sherry Sherqueshaa on Crimes Against Sex Workers, Love, and her Muslim Faith | Nedla

24 June

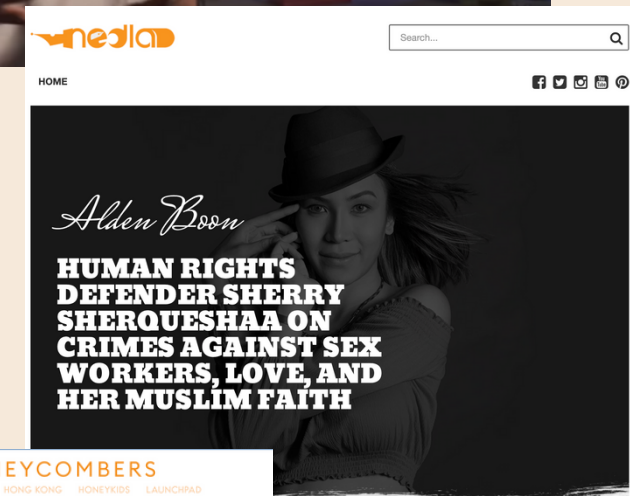
More than just a red-light district: We unveil the stigma and secrets surrounding sex workers in Singapore | Honeycombers

26 July

49-year-old serial cheat duped teen girls into sex by offering cash, tricked 10 victims of \$72,000 | TodayOnline

27 July

Advocacy groups caution against stigma in monkeypox messaging, say disease awareness should be for all | CNA



The Project X office, a hub of sunny vibes and positivity. Photography: Meenalochani

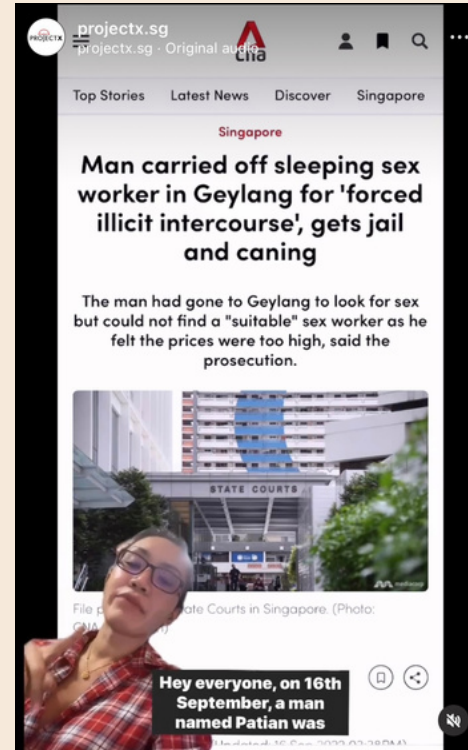
Founded in 2008, Project X is the only NGO in the city that fights for the welfare of sex workers and campaigns against exploitation. I enter their office to meet Sherry, who holds the position of human rights defender at the NGO. As I watch the tall, golden jumpsuit-clad transwoman strut in, I was struck by her presence, which she later accurately worded as "goddess energy".

Social Media Analytics & Popular Posts



Social Media Analytics

- In 2022, Project X posted a total of **25 posts**, which is **7 more** posts than the 20 posts we had in 2021.
- We gained **798 followers** this year. There was a drop in followers compared to 1,095 followers in 2022.
- As of 29 December 2022, we have a total of **6,174 followers** as compared to the 5,376 followers we had in 2021.



Our Instagram posts this year reported headlines in the news involving abuse towards sex workers, educated our followers on sexual health and affirmed time and time again of our stand towards the sex worker community in Singapore, regardless of gender, class or citizenship. We've also shared about the events we attended and our takeaways.

TESTIMONIALS BY VOLUNTEERS, INTERNS & SEX WORKERS



Volunteer and intern testimonials

Sophia Hyder

“Volunteering at Project X has been an incredibly fulfilling experience. My favourite things about Project X are that it is community-led and equitable, and I am delighted to be a part of an organisation that places great emphasis on creating a safe space. This is especially so for individuals that might find these spaces hard to come by. The outreach sessions and community events do a wonderful job of facilitating conversations and connections between sex workers, allies, and activists. Having been here almost three years, I'm grateful for the multiple opportunities to broaden my knowledge on sexual health, job welfare, advocacy, and community building. I am delighted to say that I've found a community here and I have no doubt that others will feel the same.”



Valerie Lim

“My internship at Project X has been a life changing and eye-opening one. As I learnt about the complex sociopolitical factors obstructing sex workers from having access to their rights, I also found a community that embraced me with love and care. Through outreach and casework, I discovered a myriad reasons why people may choose to do sex work and often, it is through doing sex work that they are able to reclaim their own narratives and personhood. This revealed to me that each individual has a lot more agency than I initially gave them credit for. Amidst the hardships and suffering, witnessing the amount of resilience, grit and love – within the community and in everyone’s stories – fills me with hope.”



Testimonies by sex workers



Charm

"Project X has been an amazing space and support for me, providing me with emotional safety and acceptance, a place free of stigma and judgment, and access to support and resources to work safely."

Amelia

"I think being with Project X allowed me to grow as an individual, to learn new skills from them and gave me so much opportunities that allowed me to be who I am today. The services at Project X helped me when I was at my weakest, and as I continue to learn and grow, I am happy to give back to them"

