



March 18, 2025

Dear Committee Members,

[QUEERSPACE collective](#) is a Minnesota-based nonprofit dedicated to serving 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, and we strongly urge the committee to pass the Youth Intervention Programs (YIP) grant. This funding is essential for organizations like ours to continue providing critical support that fosters the healthy development of vulnerable youth.

Our mission is to create space for 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to feel safe and empowered to be their true selves. Our youth-centered approach not only reduces isolation and suicidal ideation but also fosters belonging, resilience, and empowerment. Our vision is for all 2SLGBTQIA+ youth to have a supportive community to help them develop a strong sense of pride in who they are, where they come from, and where they want to go.

Since our founding in 2021, we have supported over 5,800 youth and their families through intergenerational mentorship, group programming, and, most recently, the opening of our dedicated 2SLGBTQIA+ youth center in Minneapolis. The YIP grant would directly support this safe, inclusive space that ensures more young people have access to mentorship, resources, and affirming peers and adults.

The timing couldn't be more urgent: Queer youth are among the most vulnerable in our society, with over 85% experiencing harassment at school (GLSEN 2019) and thousands seriously considering suicide each year (The Trevor Project, 2021). Until now, the Twin Cities has lacked a dedicated 2SLGBTQIA+ youth center, leaving many without critical support.

Now, more than ever, we must show Queer youth that they are valued and protected. With the increasing rise of anti-LGBTQ+ legislation across the country, investing in their well-being is not just necessary, it is a commitment to their futures. We strongly urge the committee to support ongoing funding for the YIP grant and help ensure that all young people have access to the community and care they deserve.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

Nicki Hangsleben

Nicki Hangsleben (she/they)
Executive Director & Founder
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