Keshet Strategic Priorities and Goals for 2018-2020

Keshet works for the full equality of all LGBTQ Jews and our families in Jewish life. We strengthen Jewish communities. We equip Jewish organizations with the skills and knowledge to build LGBTQ-affirming communities; create spaces in which all queer Jewish youth feel seen and valued; and advance LGBTQ rights nationwide.

INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE
Keshet training and resources on LGBTQ inclusion for Jewish community organizations lead to stronger, more vibrant Jewish communities for all of us, including LGBTQ Jews and our families. As a result of Keshet’s institutional change programs, Jewish community leaders will articulate and pursue a vision for LGBTQ inclusion, will better understand the needs of LGBTQ members, and will have LGBTQ-affirming programming, policies, and organizational culture.

In the course of this strategic planning period, we will expand and deepen our engagement and partnerships with major national Jewish organizations, and for the first time, explore options for supporting LGBTQ inclusion in Jewish organizations that serve LGBTQ elders. We will continue to improve our ability to provide resources and tools that help organizations achieve sustainable change in the area of LGBTQ inclusion and equality.

From 2018-2020, Keshet will:

1. Expand and deepen institutional change work by engaging significantly more leaders and more institutions, across a wide range of traditions and backgrounds, with a continued focus on institutions serving families and young people.
2. Invest in improved tools for Jewish organizations’ continuous learning and sustainable change as well as distribution systems to disseminate these resources widely.
3. Strengthen partnerships with major national and national network Jewish organizations.
4. Explore options for Keshet to support LGBTQ inclusion in organizations and communities serving Jewish elders.

TEENS
Keshet teen programs support LGBTQ and ally Jewish teens in integrating their LGBTQ and Jewish identities, increase teen engagement in and connections with Jewish community, and promote teen leadership in taking action for LGBTQ equality and inclusion in their home communities.

In the course of this strategic planning period, we will expand the number and variety of our programs and increase the number of new teens served.

From 2018-2020, Keshet will:

1. Increase the number and type of Shabbatonim to focus on different interest areas, geographies, and identity groups.
2. Deepen and complement the transformative impact of the Shabbaton experience through additional strategies for teen engagement, which may include online technologies and year-round local programming in key cities.
ADVOCACY
Keshet engages in public advocacy activities where and when our voice can add clear value in mobilizing the Jewish community in support of LGBTQ civil rights and bring a Jewish perspective to secular LGBTQ organizing efforts. Our desired impact is for Jewish communities to stand clearly on the right side of history in these critical times and help protect and advance LGBTQ civil rights.

Since the need for Keshet advocacy efforts is likely to remain at historic highs during the course of this strategic plan, we will focus on advocacy as one of our core areas of work in the coming period.

*From 2018-2020, Keshet will:*

1. Deliver compelling and effective advocacy messaging and strategic organizing of Jewish communities for LGBTQ rights.
2. Develop the human, financial, and technological resources to provide a robust platform for this work.

COMMUNITY BUILDING
Many Jewish institutions and communities have become more accepting and even fully inclusive of LGBTQ Jews over the past several years, reducing the need for stand-alone LGBTQ Jewish community-building programs initiated by Keshet. While such progress is not uniform throughout the country, we believe that in Boston and the Bay Area, the two cities where we do engage in LGBTQ Jewish community-building work, the need for such work has become far less urgent, whereas the current need for Keshet’s continued investment in institutional change, teens, and advocacy is more critical.

Therefore, during the course of this strategic planning period, we will reduce investment in community building and invest more deeply in other core areas of our work.

*From 2018-2020, to facilitate this major organizational shift, Keshet will:*

1. Develop and implement a plan for orderly scale-down and “exception criteria” for any continued investment in community building.
2. Identify new organizational owners for Keshet community programs as possible.

ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY
Amidst dramatic growth in programs, impact, and visibility, Keshet will increase investment in organizational infrastructure in the course of this strategic planning period to ensure organizational sustainability, continued effectiveness, and growth.

*From 2018-2020, Keshet will:*

1. Make a major investment in communications to strengthen Keshet’s capacity as a thought leader and go-to resource on LGBTQ issues within the Jewish community, increase the visibility of Keshet programs, and reach new donors and supporters.
2. Build internal financial resources including targeted reserves.
3. Build internal human resources including retention and recruitment of top level staff and creation of leadership transition plans for executive staff positions.
4. Invest in information and data systems, processes, and human resources to support program goals.
5. Invest in volunteer coordination, engagement, and leadership development to increase program effectiveness, maximize efficiency, and expand impact.