

## 2018 APIENC Priorities and Directions

### *a document guiding APIENC's programs, events, and initiatives*

*drafted 12/29/2017*

#### **Introduction**

In the past four years, APIENC has experimented with programs, organizational structure, initiatives, and trainings. Through these experiments, we have deepened our analysis of the experiences of LGBTQ API people in the Bay Area (and beyond), and strengthened our relationships with community members and those across social justice movements. We have grounded ourselves as a political home for LGBTQ API leaders, a hub for young people and TGNC API folks, and a convening point for intergenerational connections. Our core work has become that of transformation: transforming through our ancestral and collective traumas, transforming into abundance mindsets, and transforming our politics to be internationalist, abolitionist, and grounded in the day-to-day experiences of our people.

At APIENC, we want our work to steadily transform and grow our human capacities, enabling us to make clear, intentional decisions and have full agency over our lives. To be able to do this, we need to build tools for our communities to claim our power and exercise self-governance, interdependence, and self-determination everyday. Working towards our collective liberation means developing healthy relationships, healing from our traumas, understanding our histories, and organizing our people on the ground.

In the next three years, it is our intention to ground in this vision, and grow with the needs of our community and movement. Below, you can find our priorities (the people and issues centered in our work) and our directions (the initiatives, types of work, and tactics we will try on in the next year).

#### **Priorities → The people and issues that we center in the work**

In the next three years, we will continue our commitment to intersectional social justice. For us, this means rooting our work through lenses that are anti-racist, queer and trans centered, grounded in disability justice and immigrant rights, ecologically just, and internationalist (though not an exhaustive list). Specifically, we want to prioritize...

- **Work led by and centering LGBTQ Asian and Pacific Islander people:** As an LGBTQ API organization, we want to ensure that our overall vision, main programs, and collaborations serve the needs of LGBTQ API people.
- **Accessibility and power for those who are underserved in our communities:** The LGBTQ API community is vast. When we are not specific, we know that people may be pushed further into the margins. We want to increase our ability to serve and center those who are typically underserved and invisibilized in LGBTQ, API, and LGBTQ API spaces. These folks being: young people, poor folks, trans and GNC community members (especially trans femme people), formerly incarcerated people, immigrants and undocumented people, disabled people, and South Asian and Pacific Islander people. It is a priority to follow the leadership of these community members, create



grounded relationships, and avoid the tokenization that flattens our different experiences within the world.

- **Long-term collaborations rooted in our values:** As a small, grassroots organization, we must think strategically about the ways that we build partnerships with other groups, and prioritize collaborations that are working towards long-term change. We are not interested in one-time collaborations. We're interested in and committed to partnerships that build trust, create accountability, strengthen movements, and work towards long-term visions of social change. In the coming years we are invested in bringing more APIENC members into our partnerships, to distribute our relationships and connections.

While we cannot list all of our priorities, this list serves as a decision making criteria and vision of leadership. This is important because we understand that identity does not equate to politic. Even when people share an identity, they may not share an understanding of the world or set of values. When we center certain people or issues, it is about understanding the unique position that our communities are in because of historical oppression and resistance, current political contexts, and future visions of the world. Our work is about illuminating the issues that our people face, building solutions, and unifying around an ever-evolving politic.

### **Directions → The initiatives, types of work, and tactics we will try**

Our priorities are our decision-making criteria, and our directions are the experiments and projects that we are trying. In the next three years, APIENC's work will grow in the following strategic directions:

- **Developing skills of APIENC members and volunteers, and the LGBTQ API community at large:** Within movement building, APIENC must offer experiences that build our strategic capacities, or critical skills, to organize against the bad and build the new. This means offering trainings in organizing, outreach, fundraising, strategy building, political analysis, conflict resolution and transformative justice, API languages, and more. These trainings act as a foundation for not only our work, but also for strong relationship building within our community.
- **Healing from the traumas of our ancestors and of our present experiences:** The traumas of war, imperialism, migration, and exploitation experienced by our ancestors live in our bones, made to be worse as these violent cycles continue. APIENC will focus on programs, trainings, and spaces that challenge us to acknowledge these traumas and begin healing from them. Through specific spaces for youth, TGNC people, and immigrants, we will shape emotional and material support systems that enable a transformative healing process.
- **Building interdependence within and between people and movements:** In order to build community-centered alternatives to the current systems that do not serve us, we must learn how to work with, trust and show up for one another like our lives and liberation depend on it. From work inside our of community, like through our

intergenerational Dragon Fruit Network, to deep work with other organizations working on abolition and immigrant rights--we want to build deep relationships that encourage asking for help, vulnerability, and naming our needs.

- **Growing our work:** We're at an especially critical time in our histories. To continue to do this work in a sustainable and intentional way, we will need financial and material resources to grow our work. In the next few years, APIENC will concentrate on raising funds and establishing partnerships that help grow our staff team and provide support for community members wanting to do this work.

**Which means, in the next year, we will...**

[See the proposed 2018 calendar HERE!](#)

