

# IRIS QUEER COLLECTIVE

## 2022-2023 REPORT

### 1. Enigma - Observing International Asexuality Day

Iris blazed the trail by hosting their first offline event, "Enigma," on the 6th and 7th of April 2022, which was a celebration of pride and acceptance. The goal of this event was to raise awareness of National Asexuality Day, which is celebrated on April 6th. Enigma means a person or a thing that is mysterious or difficult to understand and that is what people believe asexuality is. We chose "Enigma" as the title of our event because Asexuality is NOT enigmatic.

In recognition of National Asexuality Day; members of Iris banded together displaying various personalized things like bookmarks made by Ekta, Tushti and Maria, digital moodboards, made by Priyanka and Divyanshi, crosswords by Divyanshi, playlists by Ekta, Divyanshi, Tushti and Priyanka, poems written by Divyanshi and Ekta. The team also put up cookies and brownies made by Geetali, greeting cards made by Maria and Pallavi, customized jewelry made by Maria and glitter bags made by Ishika Sugandha for nominal prices. We had the customized products delivered within a week. We also circulated flyers disseminating information about Asexuality to everyone who visited us.



While individually the team contributed by offering their talents to be capitalized, the Event Management Team organized the event, the Media Team prepared the posters to be circulated on our various social media handles and the PR Team handled the google form maintained for placing the orders.



Along with the stall, the team ideated a lucky draw and put up a donation box on the second day of Enigma. The event was a success. We met our target of selling over 100 products and generated a profit of over 4000 Indian rupees. Students from all courses visited our stall and purchased various items. Even the teachers paid us a visit and placed an order.



Enigma was a fantastic experience for the crew, as well as a step forward in portraying Iris as a responsible and active community. The audience showed us a lot of love, admiration, and positivity. We were thrilled to see 'Enigma' turn into a successful era for us.

## 2. Horizon'22 - Creating a Safe Space for the Marginalized Communities

Pride Month is a time for each individual to be proud of who they are and the unique offerings they have to bring to the world. June is considered to be an important month, one that details the history of the LGBTQPIA+ community finding acceptance in the world. It's more widely accepted today than ever before.

Celebration of various love can be expressed in various ways. Drawing inspiration from the idea of various celebrations, Iris Queer Collective organized its first annual 3 day event called Horizon. The broad theme chosen for the celebration this year was **'Creating a Safe Space for the Marginalized Communities.'**

It comprised of the following sub-events :

- A Seminar on How to Be Good Allies to the LGBTQ+ individuals conducted by speakers from Nazariya Foundation. (Day 1)
- Online Movie Screening of the short film Sisak. (Day 1)
- Gay all Day: Open Mic and Bonding Event (Day 2)
- Drama Based Therapy Workshop (Day 3)

These sub events were organized over the course of 3 days - 16th, 17th, and 18th June 2022.

All the events were a success - full of positive responses and fruitful discussions, leading to a room full of conversations and exchange of knowledge in a fun way making everyone cheerful.

### Day 1

Pride month celebration spreads its joy in different ways; be it pride parades or awareness programmes, pride is a festival in its own way full of love, courage, acceptance and freedom. Pride month also paves the way to learn new things about the LGBTQ+ vast community.

Keeping the immensity in mind, Iris Queer Collective organized a **Seminar and Online Movie Screening** on 16th June, marking the first day of Horizon'22.

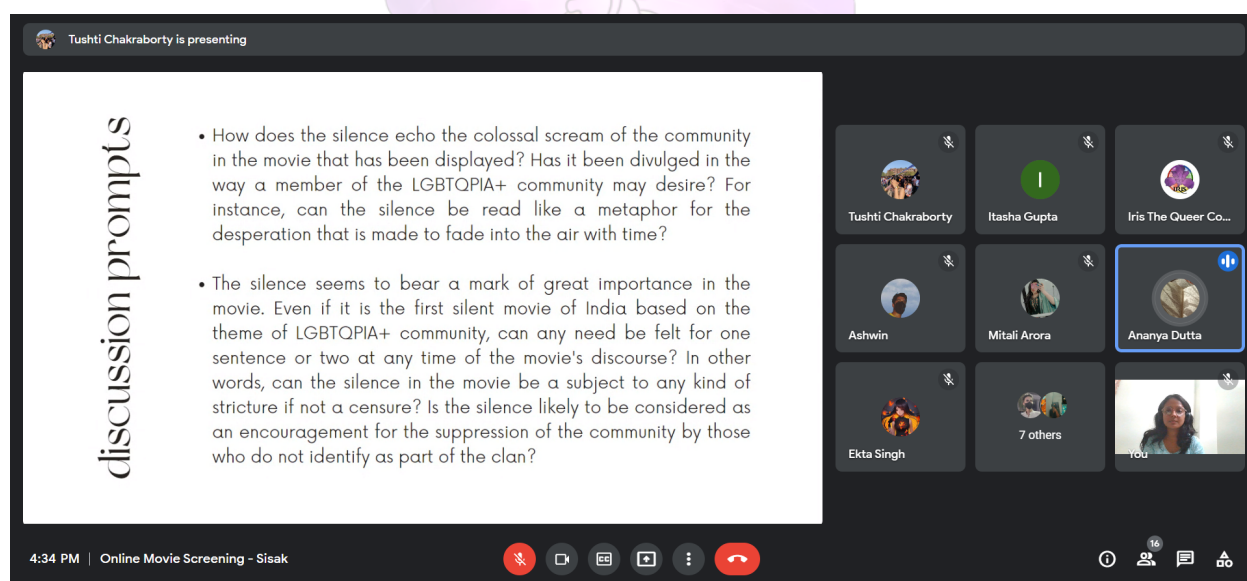
With support from our teachers and respected principal ma'am, we welcomed **Varsha Verma** and **Nicholas Paul** from **Nazariya Foundation** who enlightened us on 'How to be a Good Ally for the LGBTQ+ community' in the Seminar Room. The event began at



10 AM and went on until 11.30 AM. Through engaging videos and numerous examples, both of them imparted the fundamentals which were both helpful and eye opening for everyone.



With a thorough seminar full of discussion and active participation, chapter one of the event was halfway complete. The other half began in the evening with the **online screening (over Google Meet) of the short film ‘Sisak- India’s First Silent LGBTQ Love Story’**, igniting sparks of fruitful discussion on how Sisak communicates the hesitation of two lovers without any words, owing that it is different from other films. Showcasing the side of how homosexuals are trapped in heterosexual relationships due to lack of acceptance.



After an impactful conversation the first day of the event came to an end. With an overwhelming positive response and support, the event was concluded to be eminent with plenty of new knowledge gained.



## Day 2

*"Openness may not completely disarm prejudice and hatred , but it's a good place to start."*

*-Jason Collins, first openly gay athlete in U.S. pro sports.*

Keeping in mind the theme of openness and creating a safe place for everyone to be their true self and express their feelings, Iris took a step ahead by **organizing an Open Mic and a Bonding Event** on **June 17th** under their first annual event *Horizon'22*.

The open mic received plenty of responses and showcased the emotions of the LGBTQ+ community members and allies using poetry as the major art form. All the participants expressed a spectrum of emotions ranging from bewilderment to happiness with a pinch of hatred they face, unconcerned about the societies' fixed point of view and to be free and content in being who they are.



A bonding event took place shortly after the open mic, which reignited the participants' playful spirit with fun games. It served its purpose of making the members feel accepted and validated by the society, a feeling for which they had to endure numerous struggles.

Both the events took place in the **Seminar Room**, on the **17th of June, 2022**. The event started at 10 AM and ended at around 2.30 PM.

Stalls by small businesses by queer individuals were also put up in the **Saraswati Area**.



It was a wonderful experience for the team, paving their way forward as an active society full of ideas. With lots of love, happiness and positivity received, the event was a success.

### **Day 3**

Iris Queer Collective, the LGBTQ+ cell of Bharati College, University of Delhi organized its first annual event called 'Horizon 22' in the month of June, 2022.

18th June, 2022 marked the third and final day of the annual event. Iris, in collaboration with the LGBTQIA+ Affirmative of Sri Guru Gobind Singh College of Commerce, University of Delhi organized a mental health workshop conducted by ManoShala.

ManoShala is an organization that works towards bringing multiple evidence based therapies from CBT, REBT, music, color, storytelling, dance, movement, mindfulness and others under one platform.

It is commonly recognised that members of the LGBTQ+ community are more prone to mental health problems since they experience a great deal of stigma and trauma from society, their peers, and their families. They additionally experience discrimination from healthcare professionals, which postpones their treatment. This workshop was specially designed for individuals who seek ways of exploring self-expression, coping

with their emotions and feelings of anxiety. Iris intended to host this session in order to reduce the stress queer people have in their daily lives.



The workshop was conducted by Shruti Garg, a queer affirmative therapist who is HCPC certified and UK registered. They were accompanied by Ms. Tamanna Rajpal, a behavioral psychologist.

We received a total of over 25 registrations.

Time : 2 - 4 PM

Venue : Seminar Room

The workshop proved to be fruitful in terms of facilitating participants to engage in role play, music, improvisation, and story making for their own wellbeing and self-regulation.



## - Publications



- Iris was mentioned in an article published by Times of India on Jun 15 2022, titled: ***Queer collectives still some way off finding pride of place in Delhi University.***



- **Horizon'22** was featured in an article of Hindustan Times on Jun 26 2022, titled: ***Rainbow shines bright on DU's horizon***



### 3. Persona

In honor of **Bi Visibility Day**, Iris Queer Collective of Bharati College, University of Delhi, organized an intercollegiate monologue competition titled **Persona** on 23rd September 2022. This event was an entertaining session of monologues, it will also encourage the participants and the audience to support the community. The winner was awarded with a certificate and Iris's merchandise.



## 4. Transgender Awareness Week

Iris Queer Collective initiated 2 events, which were 2 days full of love, acceptance, courage, joy, learning and spreading awareness. Under Transparent, Iris conducted an event on 15th November, named Trace in collaboration with Redstockings. Trace was all about love and kindness as people wrote encouraging and lovely letters for transgender people, which was followed by a group learning session where flyers and basic information regarding the trans community were shared. Day 2, the other event held on 16th November was to show solidarity and support. The team of Iris put together personalized art on display such as earrings, bookmarks, keychains, cards etc. With overwhelming love and response the event was successful. Iris achieved its goal of spreading awareness about the transgender community.

### Day 1, Trace

On 15th November, Iris organized Trace (as a part of Transparent) to celebrate transgenders awareness week. It was the first event of Transparent, held in Central Lawn. The transphobia and rigid views of the society are apparent, and their effect lasts long. This Trace celebration is for the trans life that led the movement towards a more receptive future and in memory of those who faced transphobia. In collaboration with Redstockings, Iris initiated to write letters full of encouragement and love with all sorts of positivity to transgenders. To show them that they are not alone, and iris supports them along with millions of others.



People were eager to learn about the transgender community and they attentively listened and took part in the discussion. With efficient speaking, the pains and strengths of transgender community were communicated. With eagerness to



participate and understanding they wrote letters to express their views. The response was filled with acceptance, thankfulness, positivity and full of love.



## Day 2

On 16th November, Iris organized day-2 of Transparent in Central Lawn. To celebrate the spirits of Transgender Awareness Week, Iris further paved its way by displaying personalized art. The members of the team displayed various items such as badges, tote bags, polaroids, bookmarks, keychains, earrings and cards.

The goal was to showcase solidarity and support, which was fulfilled by people's engagement with our team members. The students were enthusiastic to learn more and support the transgender community. With the help of their immense response, the event turned out to be successful.



## 5. No Name Calling Week (16th January to 22nd January)

Members of Iris went class to class and spread awareness about the basic terms, do's and don'ts while addressing a person and to be inclusive. They went around with posters with slogans like: *"Even though we are in Bharati Mahila College, Not Everyone is a Mahila"*



## 6. Seminar on HIV/AIDS and Its Related Facets

On 19th January 2023, Iris conducted a seminar-cum-workshop on the topic HIV/AIDS and its related facets.



Iris recognises the need to dispel the darkness around HIV/AIDS and hence moved ahead by organizing such a useful and engaging seminar. The speaker, Dr. Aparna Bhattacharya - visiting faculty of psychology in University of Delhi, presented an interesting insight regarding such a taboo topic. With information and proper statistics she communicated the difference between HIV and AIDS, its symptoms, how it can be cured and various other aspects.

With approximately 60 students as audience, the seminar proved to be informative and quite engaging. With an interesting outlook and thought provoking questions the seminar went on quite enthusiastically. At last some students asked questions to the speaker, she answered every query carefully. The seminar turned out to be successful and informative with an engaging and attentive audience.

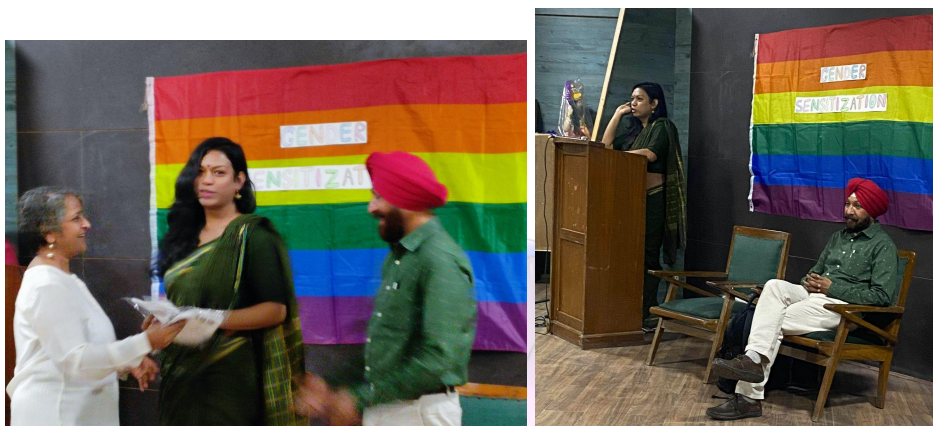




## 7. Gender Sensitization Session

Iris, the Queer Collective of Bharati College contacted the Naz Foundation for a sensitization seminar on LGBTQ+ issues on the campus of Bharati College. The session was conducted on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023, Wednesday, after considering that the greatest number of students should be able to reap the benefits of attending the seminar.

The speakers from Naz India, Ms. Kiran Tirkey and Mr. Sarabjeet Singh arrived at the college campus at 11:30 and were escorted to the theater room. They were honorably felicitated and the session began after a word from our convenor Ms. Mala Rani.



The speakers had an interactive session beginning with a discussion on the various identities that come under the umbrella of the LGBTQIA+ and the unique struggles they all face. They helpfully shared their foundation's helpline number and the conversation progressed to the different types of calls they receive and what different issues faced by the queer population of India can be inferred from those calls.

Different stereotypes related to Queer people in India were also discussed, most prominently the prevalent idea that queerness is a disease that can be medically treated. The conversation also branched upon judicial and constitutional matters such as the things required by the government for a transgender person to formally legalize their identity and the Supreme Court hearing cases pleading for the legalization of same-sex marriage in India.

The floor was then opened for questions and the session soon ended on a positive note with the students more aware and more supportive of the queer community than they were at the start of the session.

## Social Media Awareness

1. [International Asexuality Day, 6th April 2022](#)
2. [Lesbian Visibility Week, 25th April 2022 - 1st May 2022](#)
3. [Agender Pride Day, 19th May 2022](#)
4. [Pansexual and Panromantic Awareness Day, 24th May 2022](#)
5. [Pride Month, June 2022](#)
6. [International Non-Binary People's Day, 14th July 2022](#)
7. [Bi-Visibility Day, 23rd September 2022](#)
8. [Asexual Visibility Week, 23rd October 2022 - 29th October 2022](#)
9. [Transgender Awareness Week, 13th November 2022 - 19th November 2022](#)
10. [Aromantic Awareness Week, 19th February 2023 - 25th February 2023](#)



Miyoko, Iris' mascot  
(they, them)

## IRIS CORE TEAM 2022-2023:



*L to R:* Tushti Chakraborty, Treasurer of IQC, Divyanshi Dash, Vice President of IQC, Prof. Mala Rani, Convenor of IQC, Prof. Saloni Gupta, Principal of Bharati College, Ekta Singh, President of IQC

## IRIS TEAM 2022-2023

### President

- ★ Ekta Singh

### Vice President

- ★ Divyanshi Dash

### Treasurer

- ★ Tushti Chakraborty

### Media Team

- ★ Pihu
- ★ Priyanka

### PR Team

- ★ Geetali Gupta
- ★ Shruti Upadhyay
- ★ Richa Singh

### Event Management Team

- ★ Maria Darngawn
- ★ Ishika Sugandha
- ★ Sakshi Sinha
- ★ Devyani Yadav
- ★ Itasha
- ★ Gisum Romin

### Student Coordinators

- ★ Ananya Dutta
- ★ Mitali Arora

### Contact:

- email: [iris.queersoc@gmail.com](mailto:iris.queersoc@gmail.com)
- instagram: [@iris.queersoc](https://www.instagram.com/iris.queersoc)
- linkedin: [Iris Queer Collective](https://www.linkedin.com/company/iris-queer-collective)