About Pivot Legal Society

Pivot works in partnership with communities affected by poverty and social exclusion to identify priorities and develop solutions to complex human rights issues. Our work is focused in four policy areas: ending homelessness, drug policy reform, sex workers’ rights, and police accountability.

In 2001, we opened our doors in response to a health and human rights crisis in Vancouver’s Downtown Eastside. Since then, we have worked in partnership with marginalized people and grassroots organizations to challenge legislation, policies, and practices that undermine human rights, intensify poverty, and perpetuate stigma. We strategically focus our efforts on the most tangible human rights violations in order to improve the immediate situation of the people we work with, while creating lasting change that resonates across the country.

Territorial Acknowledgement

Our office is located on the stolen lands of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səl̓ílwətaʔɬ (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations. We are grateful to Indigenous Peoples for their continuous relationship with their lands. We recognize that the legal tools that we use are colonial legal tools which have been weaponized against Indigenous peoples since colonization and continue to disadvantage Indigenous peoples and ignore the existences of Indigenous peoples’ own laws. We are committed to learning to work in solidarity as accomplices in shifting the colonial default.

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Greetings and taanishi to dear friends, members, and allied community groups and organizations who stand with the communities we serve and work alongside. As the Executive Director and Board Chair of Pivot Legal Society, we are pleased to present Pivot’s 2020 Annual Report.

2020 has been a severe and devastating year, resulting in a social reckoning that simply cannot be ignored by government actors.

The COVID-19 pandemic persists and continues to add fatal consequences to a landscape rife with injustice. Amid overlapping public health emergencies, Pivot’s legal advocacy objectives in the areas of homelessness, drug policy, sex workers’ rights, and criminalization and policing has become ever more pressing and urgent – and we remain steadfast in our commitment to fight for the health and human rights of people who contend with the daily reality of poverty and social exclusion.

During this heightened crisis, Pivot was humbled and grateful to work in coalition with other Downtown Eastside community groups to mobilize safe smoking supplies, food, PPE, and other much needed resources. As the state implemented emergency powers, our staff lawyers provided legal analysis to understand people’s human rights and produced accessible public legal information for community members and frontline service providers.

This past year, we were also able to take some important steps forward. Pivot participated in joint calls for our cities to take transformative action to divest from harmful policing institutions and to instead invest in community-led programs. We strengthened our coalition efforts to strategically leverage short-term emergency measures, such as safe supply, and to fortify the case for long term change. In the fall, we released our report Act Now! Decriminalizing Drugs in Vancouver. This report, along with a petition signed by hundreds of advocates, played a part in leading Vancouver City Council to apply for an exemption from Health Canada for simple drug possession.

Amid overlapping public health emergencies, Pivot’s legal advocacy objectives has become ever more pressing and urgent

We were only able to accomplish this with your support.

Our team continues to examine our own internal practices with rigor and humility. As a legal society, we recognize that Pivot is entrenched and complicit in colonial structures which continue to disadvantage Indigenous peoples and ignore the existence and legitimacy of Indigenous law, legal systems, and systems of governance. These colonial structures similarly disadvantage racialized communities and people who experience poverty. Our board and staff continue to take up organizational work related to decolonization, equity, diversity, and inclusion. As an organization that has predominantly been led by white settlers, we understand that our team has a long way to go to truly be accomplices to Indigenous peoples in shifting the colonial default, and we are committed to ongoing learning across our organization.

Our immense gratitude to Pivot staff for their tremendous dedication, leadership, and resilience throughout an extraordinary time, and to all of you for continuing to stand with us.

In solidarity, maarsii,

Stephen Mussell
Board Chair

Drew Dennis
Executive Director
Pivot staff and board joined the team at Decolonizing Practices with Ta7taliya Michelle Nahane in a facilitated workshop that included a game of Sínulhkay and Ladders [February 5, 2020]
In 2020 Pivot staff developed action-based digital campaign and community resources related to COVID-19. We engaged lawyers, healthcare workers, students, government actors, and service providers in workshops and presentations. We use a combination of direct government advocacy, public education campaigns, and litigation to challenge laws and policies that discriminate against and deny human rights to people who use drugs, sex workers, people who are unhoused, and criminalized communities.
Campaigns

Housing action at Main & Hastings in the Downtown Eastside [September 5, 2020] Photo by Priscillia Tait
COVID-19 Response

The global pandemic caused by COVID-19 continues to have an unquestionable impact on our society. Amidst multiple public health crises, including dismal housing affordability and the dual provincial health pandemics of COVID-19 and the ongoing drug poisoning crisis, Pivot worked alongside directly-impacted communities to continue challenging laws and policies that enshrine inequality, and further complicate their health, safety and human rights. People with lived and living experience continue to assert their rights, safety, and autonomy in the overlapping challenges of public health and safety risks, lack of affordable housing, institutional racism, police violence, and the criminalization of sex workers. Despite the additional impact and barriers that COVID-19 presented, we continued to fight alongside the communities we serve.
Drug Policy Reform

Pivot’s drug policy work in 2020 grappled with dual public health emergencies. With COVID-19 exacerbating an already astronomical death rate due to drug toxicity and government inaction, the year was a challenging one. Alongside people who use drugs, we fought the War on Drugs at every level of government. Decriminalization and access to a regulated drug supply remain at the heart of our drug policy campaign, and both must be delivered to affirm the autonomy and wisdom of people who use drugs - the foremost experts in this realm.
Act Now! Pivot’s report calls for local decriminalization

In September, Pivot released *Act Now: Decriminalizing Drugs in Vancouver*, a report with one recommendation: That non-federal orders of government implement decriminalization locally by applying for a federal exemption against simple possession offences.

After we released *Act Now*, Vancouver Mayor Kennedy Stewart introduced a motion to “fully embrace a health-focused approach to substance use in the City of Vancouver by decriminalizing simple possession of all drugs through a federal health exemption.” Council passed the motion without amendment, as we urged in a November joint statement with the Canadian Drug Policy Coalition (CDPC) and the HIV Legal Network. This brings Vancouver one step closer to being the first city in Canada to decriminalize drug possession.

Though the “Vancouver Model” is progress, we’ve kept pressure on the City and Health Canada to ensure it is crafted by and for people who use drugs. With the Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users (VANDU), we’ve issued statements and letters to steer the model toward success. In November, we urged against the use of administrative or other regimes to medicalize, pathologize, or penalize drug use. In March, we issued a joint statement about needing to reflect real patterns of drug possession and purchase in decriminalized drug quantities.

R v Zora

In June 2020, we saw a positive decision from the Supreme Court of Canada in *R v Zora*, a case in which Pivot intervened. The Court held the government to a higher standard when prosecuting someone for breaching bail conditions. As we argued, proving a breach must be a tailored exercise—one that takes into account the lived experience and subjective circumstances of the accused.

Simons et al. v Minister of Public Safety et al.

Unfortunately, we also received a disappointing ruling from the Ontario Superior Court of Justice on the case of Steven Simons. We intervened in that case alongside VANDU and West Coast Prison Justice Society, arguing that the inadequacy of Canada’s prison needle exchange programs violates the life, liberty, security, and equality rights of prisoners under the *Charter*. Though the Court did not find in our favour, we continue to push for equality under the law and an end to state-sanctioned violence across Canada, which takes all forms, including the denial of healthcare to vulnerable prisoners.

Collaborating with legal and civil society groups

2020 marked tremendous collaboration with organizations we are proud to work alongside, whose efforts advance the rights of people who use drugs locally, nationally, and internationally.

In May, Pivot, CDPC and the HIV Legal Network released a statement endorsed by over 160 organizations. The statement, which we renewed in July (and continue to advocate for), calls on the federal Health Minister to grant a nationwide exemption against the offence of simple possession.

In October, Pivot presented oral submissions and a joint brief with CDPC to Vancouver’s Mayor and Council in support of an overdose prevention site planned for the Yaletown neighbourhood. We made the argument we helped establish in law just last year, as intervenors in Chinatown & Area Business Association v Canada: that public health is paramount over community input in the approval process for harm reduction services. Council approved the site, and the right of drug users not to be unlawfully deprived of crucial health services is further cemented.
Onwards and Upwards: Continuing the Fight for Healthcare in Prisons after a Disappointing Ruling
May 13, 2020

Victory at the Supreme Court of Canada in R v Zora
June 26, 2020

Civil Society Organizations Renew Call for Drug Decriminalization
July 10, 2020

Act Now! Pivot’s new report urges local drug decriminalization to address record overdose deaths
October 1, 2020
Homeless People’s Rights

In 2020, most people were home more than they had ever been before. Some folks were making sourdough starters, some folks were sewing masks, and some folks were dreaming up mutual aid networks. For people without safe, accessible and permanent housing, the COVID-19 public health emergency presented insurmountable challenges and questions: how do you social distance in a tent city? How do you self-isolate when you don’t have a door?
Tent City Advocacy

The role of tent cities and networks of care for people who rely on public space cannot be underestimated as public health interventions. Tent cities often involve informal harm reduction programming, including access to naloxone and peer-witnessing. People who rely on public space can quickly communicate about unpredictable changes to the drug supply and respond when people experience adverse reactions. Our work throughout 2020 partnered, first and foremost, with people who rely on public space. Across BC, tent cities were subject to intensifying scrutiny and stigmatizing rhetoric, emboldened by political actors targeting homeless people during a snap election.

We know that housing keeps people safe, and indeed it keeps people alive. We need housing programs that respect people’s autonomy and don’t manage them through paternalistic policies. And for the thousands of people who experience homelessness and precarious housing, we must eradicate the laws and policies that criminalize their survival.

In 2020 Pivot Legal Society provided advocacy and movement legal support to residents of tent cities at Oppenheimer, CRAB Park and Strathcona Park. This support included public advocacy and government relations, with the goal of preventing displacement and park closure during multiple overlapping crises - a pandemic, drug poisoning epidemic, and housing crisis. Pivot also provided a number of Know Your Rights and Legal Observer training sessions to both residents and supporters to better enable unhoused people and their advocates to engage in collective action and resistance to the ongoing violence of forced displacement.

Pivot convened lawyers and advocates in BC and nationally. Pivot launched a tent city advocacy listserv in furtherance of this work. The purpose of these networks is to share strategies and lessons learned, in order to support and strategize alongside the growing community of advocates and supporters of tent city residents.

We know that housing keeps people safe, and indeed it keeps people alive.

Pivot has continued to engage in public education and media projects to advance the rights and dignity of unhoused people.

Through the Homelessness Services Association of BC (HSABC), we provided a series of webinars for service providers across BC. Sessions were co-facilitated by Pivot staff and peers with lived and living experience. Workshops included Stigma, Social Condition and Discrimination; Police Powers in Housing Spaces; and Rights-Based Housing.

Pivot was a reviewer in the critical resource "A National Protocol for Homeless Encampments in Canada", issued by then Special Rapporteur on Homelessness, Leilani Farha, and then Lead Researcher, Kaitlin Schwann.

Pivot continues to represent a group of unhoused people living in Abbotsford who had their belongings destroyed and taken by City and Police. They are pursuing a human rights complaint, with one goal being to establish that unhoused status is a “place of origin” for the purposes of the Human Rights Code.
Homeless People’s Rights

Campaign Highlights

Why People Without Housing Still Need Heat: The Limits of the City’s Winter Response Strategy
January 26, 2020

HSABC & Pivot Legal Webinar – Engaging with the Provincial Encampment Guidelines
June 30, 2020

Joint letter to Vancouver Park Board on by-law amendment regarding sheltering in parks
July 27, 2020

How BC's majority government can enshrine human rights protections for people living in poverty
December 10, 2020
Criminalization & Policing

2020 marked an unprecedented year of uprising and resistance to the global violence of policing and criminalization. Initially, COVID-19 brought new concerns about policing the pandemic, specifically police violence and the continued targeting of poor, racialized and criminalized communities.

This monumental shift was sparked by the murder of George Floyd, and the subsequent police-involved deaths of multiple Black, Indigenous and racialized people in Canada. Over the course of 2020, the seeds of a new movement were planted, one which calls on all levels of government to defund and abolish the police.

Throughout 2020, Pivot worked alongside people who are pushed to the margins due to poverty, disability, social condition, and race. From these folks, we hear persistent concerns and complaints about over-policing, and the mishandling of socioeconomic oppression through the criminal justice system. This year, we used our tools and platform to address the criminalization of poverty and hold law enforcement responsible for discrimination and use of force.
Policing the Pandemic

COVID-19 added a new dimension to everyday experiences of injustice and indignity. Last March, Pivot staff and campaigners were gearing up to address the continued use of street stops by police forces throughout the province.

The announcement of the COVID-19 public health emergency, however, necessitated a quick shift in our work. In early April, Pivot campaigners wrote to the Vancouver Police Department (VPD), identifying grave concerns about law enforcement practices in the Downtown Eastside and imploring the VPD to undertake evidence-based responses to public health crises and cease enforcement activities that jeopardize access to health, safety, and dignity. Both the COVID-19 and the poisoned drug supply intersect with the realities of criminalization, and Pivot campaigners spoke about these intersections at local, national, and international panels.

Defund the Police

May 25, 2021, changed the world. Foremost, for the family of George Floyd, who lost his life to a terrible act of police violence. The murder of George Floyd by police officer Derek Chauvin set off global change, and a summer of resistance. While Canadians pride themselves on the mythology of a “kinder, gentler system,” police violence is an international struggle. In 2020, the deaths of Black, Indigenous, racialized, and mentally distressed people could not be ignored. The cries of grief that rang out in response to deaths turned to demands for actual policy change, including an urgent need to reinvest police budgets into root-cause solutions. Pivot continued to provide analysis and expertise, based on our longstanding policing campaign, as well as recent reports such as Project Inclusion: Confronting Anti-Homeless and Anti-Drug User Stigma in British Columbia.

While Canadians pride themselves on the mythology of a “kinder, gentler system,” police violence is an international struggle.

As a response to mass mobilizations regarding police violence, Pivot supported organizers on the ground and wrote to provincial and municipal governments to outline tangible policy recommendations. This included a letter to provincial leadership addressing anti-Black racism in policing, a letter to the Vancouver School Board supporting the “Police-Free Schools are Safer Schools” Petition, presenting to Vancouver City Council in support of decriminalizing poverty, and requesting transparent budget information from the VPD.

In many ways, the call to defund the police brings together campaign goals that Pivot has worked on over the past two decades. Throughout 2020, we were able to speak to media, classrooms, digital teach-ins, and allied organizations about how to strategically advance the goal to divest from police and invest in communities.

Access to Justice & Police Accountability

Throughout 2020, Pivot advanced several Service & Policy Complaints related to harmful policing practices. Pivot, VANDU, and Western Aboriginal Harm Reduction Society (WAHRS) submitted a joint complaint to the VPD regarding the creation and deployment of the VPD Neighbourhood Response Team (NRT), due to concerns that the newly fashioned team would intensify disproportionate and discriminatory policing of people who rely on public space. While the VPD and Police Board did not affirm these concerns in their subsequent investigation and response, the NRT was ultimately shuttered after 42 days.
Downtown Eastside Group Police Complaint

In 2019 Pivot filed a complaint on behalf of 17 complainants who allege abuse by two Vancouver Police officers. This "group complaint" was and continues to be the first-of-its-kind making its way through the Office of the Police Complaint Commissioner (OPCC). A group complaint is an innovative procedural tool for bringing multiple complaints, aimed at increasing group safety and the efficiency and effectiveness of the complaint process.

In 2020 Pivot supported the complainants in preparing for and participating in a mediation with the two officers. Pursuant to the Police Act the mediation is confidential and nothing that was said can be shared. Pivot supported the complainants who chose to attend in person to prepare their submissions, many of whom spoke bravely to the officers concerning the impact of their conduct. There were extensive post-mediation negotiations which carried on into 2021. In the end, the complainants did not feel the two officers negotiated in good faith or were prepared to agree to a meaningful resolution. As a result, the mediation failed, and the complainants were returned to the investigative process where Pivot continues to represent their interests.

In 2019 Pivot also filed a Service & Policy Complaint concerning the selection and training of VPD officers in the DTES more generally. There was some discussion between Pivot and the VPD along with initial disclosure. At the end of 2019 Pivot wrote to the VPD requesting more substantial disclosure concerning the VPD's current selection and training procedures. The VPD responded by applying to the Police Board to close the complaint, which the Board did. Pivot appealed this decision to the Police Commissioner who recommended that the Board reopen the Complaint. Despite this request the Board refused. Neither the VPD nor the Board committed to any changes in response to our complaint, reflecting a lack of accountability within current systemic processes of review.
BC’s new policing standards are not a moratorium on “street stops”  
February 5, 2020

Pivot Legal calls for the VPD to immediately cease undermining public health in DTES amid COVID-19  
April 2, 2020

Freedom of Information Request to the Vancouver Police Department  
October 22, 2020

Joint Complaint opposing New VPD Neighbourhood Response Team  
November 16, 2020

Vancouver Budget: Defunding the Police to Fund Community Care & Services  
December 1, 2020

Community Groups Respond to the Shuttered VPD Neighbourhood Response Team  
December 21, 2020
Sex Workers’ Rights

2020 posed new and distinct challenges to sex workers, globally due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The impacts on their safety, wellbeing, and security have been devastating.

In Canada, sex workers were excluded from governmental supports available to other workers, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). In the face of reduced income, increased criminalization, and the threat of COVID-19, many sex workers dealt with dire precarity and heightened risks of violence. Sex workers that are street-based, trans, disabled, racialized, and with precarious immigration status were particularly impacted by state negligence and repressive policing.

Despite this, sex workers and sex work organizations across the world tirelessly advocated to provide mutual aid and care for their communities.
Pivot has continued to work alongside sex workers in the face of these new challenges. In 2020, we consulted with sex work communities and community-based sex work organizations and coordinated financial support for sex work organizations we work alongside. With funding from Canadian Women’s Foundation, Pivot was able to support WISH Drop-in Society, PACE, and SWAN-Vancouver.

In addition to providing financial supports, we continued to engage in research and advocacy with local sex workers’ rights groups to support workers during the overlapping crises of COVID-19, poisoned drugs, and housing unavailability. In 2020, we developed a resource list for sex workers during COVID-19.

Despite limitations brought on by a pandemic world, we continued to give talks at UBC’s Allard School of Law, Langara College, and Concordia University about the complex relationship between Canadian law and sex work, and the ways stigma and criminalization against sex workers have worsened under COVID-19.

**Full decriminalization of consensual adult sex work is the path to safer working conditions for sex workers**

We continue to hold steadfast in our belief that full decriminalization of consensual adult sex work is the path to safer working conditions for sex workers, and affords them the agency to access support without fear of criminalization or violence.

**Guest Ban Policy During COVID-19**

COVID-19 precipitated yet another restrictive policy that prevented sex workers from being able to protect themselves and created risky working conditions. Guest bans, a public housing prohibition on allowing guest access to tenants’ homes, adversely affected sex workers in 2020. These unfair policies forced sex workers into the streets instead of the privacy and safety of their homes for fear of punishment from their housing providers. We worked in partnership with advocacy groups across the province such as the Community Legal Assistance Society, First United Church Community Ministry Society, Tenant Resource Advisory Centre, and Together Against Poverty Society, to develop and distribute a template letter tenants can send their landlord, property manager, or housing provider explaining that, under residential tenancy laws, a landlord cannot unreasonably restrict access to tenants’ guests. We are exploring further action, including litigation.

**Stigma and Criminalization of Sex Workers**

2020 marked the 6th anniversary of the implementation of Canada’s current sex work legislation, the Protection of Communities and Exploited Persons Act (PCEPA).

In the tragic case of Marylène Levesque’s murder in 2020, we witnessed again the consequence of stigma and criminalizing sex workers. This case clearly demonstrates the harms of Bill C-36 on sex workers in Canada and the profound harms of criminalization in general. Pivot continues to argue that these laws must be amended to protect the constitutional rights and safety of sex workers.

Despite the difficulties of 2020, sex workers across Canada celebrated a noteworthy victory: on February 21, 2020, an Ontario case involving two owners of an escort agency resulted in the first successful challenge to PCEPA. This ruling found three prostitution-related laws unconstitutional and was a tremendous win in fighting unfair prostitution laws and Criminal Code offences. This victory proved that it decreases violence and increases safety to provide sex workers with services and a safe workplace.

Pivot demanded that the Vancouver Police Department stop criminalizing and minimize disruptive policing of informal economies such as adult consensual sex work. We also pushed the VPD to respond to sex workers in a manner that prioritizes their safety, health, and right to work.

Pivot remains hopeful in the fight against criminalization of sex work, and we continue to push against oppressive legislation like PCEPA to ensure that sex workers are afforded safe and fair working conditions.
Stigma and Criminalization of Sex Work Facilitated the Murder of Marylène Levesque

February 15, 2020

Landmark Ontario Case Rules Certain Sex Work Laws Unconstitutional

March 5, 2020
Community & Public Legal Education

Despite COVID-19's challenges, our work of conducting outreach, producing and distributing public legal education materials, and working alongside peer workers and facilitators continued. Pivot staff presented at national and provincial conferences and workshops with stakeholders in healthcare, education, and law, as well as ongoing outreach and advocacy to government agencies and lawmakers.

A full house at Massy Books for Pivot's solidarity fundraiser for the Wet'suwet'en people’s legal defence and frontlines [January 23, 2020] Photo by Patricia Massy
Throughout 2020, Pivot staff presented as keynotes, on panels and in workshops. We regularly present on our campaign areas, our 2018 report *Project Inclusion*, and more broadly on stigma and inclusion as it relates to criminalized communities. Our audiences are decision-makers, practitioners and students in health care, law, as well as frontline workers and advocates.
In the summer of 2020 TJ Felix joined our team as our new Community Educator. TJ is a 2spirit Secwepemc artist and educator, with lived and living experience in our field of work. They bring a fresh approach to Pivot’s campaign work by developing more culturally safe, trauma-informed ways of working with, and for, Indigenous elders, youth, and knowledge keepers. TJ has also been developing an arts-based approach to peer work with the intention of acknowledging all the different ways that people hold and share knowledge, while also emphasizing the intersections of art and advocacy in communities directly impacted by our campaign areas.

The challenges of COVID-19 mean that remote work’s severe limitations disconnected us from many communities we work with due to a lack of technology and resource access. However, the remote nature of virtual webinars means we could reach others who couldn’t attend in-person workshops due to various access needs. Pivot continues to strive for greater accessibility and access, and part of our work in doing this was distributing funds and technology to partner community organizations. In 2020, we received grants from the Provincial Health Services Authority and the Vancouver Foundation that enabled us to support directly-impacted communities with harm reduction supplies, personal protective equipment, and IT infrastructure such as tablets, laptops, and cellphones.

Pivot’s community education campaign continued to disseminate analysis and recommendations from Pivot’s 2018 report Project Inclusion. In 2020, we developed new and exciting approaches to this work that fairly stipends, amplifies, and centers the needs of those with lived and/or living experience.

**Amplifying Black and Indigenous-Led Movements**

As a part of our ongoing work, Pivot staff are committed to continue supporting and platforming criminalized communities. During 2020, longstanding systemic and structural oppressions became acutely visible and front of mind. Across many communities, people rose up to these injustices, despite the shifts required due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the year, we continued to reach out to the public and our community of supporters with public education materials, calls to action and amplifying fundraising efforts of Indigenous and Black communities.

**Indigenous Lands & Governance**

At the beginning of 2020 we witnessed wholesale disregard for Indigenous Rights and Title as the RCMP invaded the unceded and unsurrendered Wet’suwet’en Yintah (territories) at the behest of industry. This attack on Indigenous sovereignty sparked global actions. Pivot staff developed a resource, Legal Information for People Attending Wet’suwet’en Solidarity Actions, and also organized a solidarity fundraising event in support of Unist’ot’en and Gidimt’en land defenders, held at Massy Books.

Later in the spring of 2020, we published a feature interview with Pivot Board Chair Stephen Mussel. This interview highlighted the ongoing harms of Canada’s colonial legal system on Indigenous communities. Our approach to public legal education tools reflects our increasing focus on decolonizing and supporting Indigenous movements.
Anti-Black Racism

In June 2020, a global uprising ignited in defence of Black lives and against police brutality, sparked by the murder of George Floyd by a Minneapolis police officer, Derek Chauvin. As a legal organization that has worked on police accountability for 20 years, we reckoned with the ways anti-Black racism permeates reformist attempts at police accountability. We heard the calls for abolition and joined the movement to defund police.

We also supported fundraising efforts for Hogan’s Alley Society, the Emergency Black Community COVID-19 Fund and the Vancouver Black Therapy & Advocacy Foundation.

In the wake of June 2020, we wrote to provincial law and policy-makers, including the Attorney General, Solicitor General and Director of Police Services. Throughout 2020 we highlighted concrete recommendations related to policing and systemic racism, including recommendations aimed to increase access to justice, support of survivors of police violence and their families, and defund the police.

States of Inequality: Pivot’s Response to COVID-19

Informed by findings from our Project Inclusion report, Pivot hosted a webinar to discuss systemic inequality, lack of resources, and public health and safety emergencies being exacerbated under COVID-19. We discussed stigma in governmental and societal response to existing overlapping crises, such as the drug poisoning emergency, a many decades-old affordable housing disaster, the incessant public safety threat of police violence, and the systemic neglect of sex workers.

Screencapture from Pivot’s public webinar: States of Inequality – Pivot’s response to COVID-19 [July 7, 2020].
Our People

Staff
Anna Cooper
Asha Nygra
Caitlin Shane
Carrie Robinson
Drew Dennis
Emily Capel-Shyu
Kaymi Yoon-Maxwell
Kerry Porth
Kristin Cheung
Lyndsay Watson
Meenakshi Mannoe
Sozan Savehilaghi
TJ Felix
Vyas Saran

Associate Staff
Nina Taghaddosi
Herb Varley
Tara Taylor
David Marshall Richards
Meredith Burney

Board
Mebrat Beyene
Amanda Burrows
Nicolas Crier
Julie Guenkel, Treasurer
Naomi Moses, Vice Chair
Stephen Mussell, Chair
Aaron Samuel, Secretary

Board members who served up until our June 2020 AGM
Siobhan Aspinall
Don Rosenbloom

Both Don and Siobhan have contributed a great deal of energy to Pivot with many years of service to the wellbeing of the organization. We thank them for their unwavering support.

Staff enjoying the sun on the Pivot roof! L to R: Kristin Cheung, Emily Capel-Shyu, Caitlin Shane, Sozan Savehilaghi, Meenakshi Mannoe, Kaymi Yoon-Maxwell, Asha Nygra, [April 2020]
Our Community

Our fight is a collective effort:
Thank you for making our work possible

Pivot’s work is truly a collective labour. From the foundations who continue to support us year after year, to the peer experts who inform our projects, our legal, policy and education campaigns would not be possible nor effective without each of our community members. We are indebted to everyone who continues to stand with us to ensure that we can push back against bad laws and policies, and build stronger, healthier communities.

Peer Collaborators & Community Leaders

Tonye Aganaba
Chrissy Brett
Joshua Goldberg
Delilah Gregg
Earl Greyes
David Hamm
Mackenzie Joe
Synthia Kavanagh (Rest in Power)
Ron Kuhlke (Rest in Power)
Ann Livingston
Samona Marsh
Lama Mugabo
Flora Munroe
Chloe Nor
Vince Tao
Erica Thompson
Fiona York

Decolonization & Equity Consultants

Natasha Aruliah
Q Lawrence
Ta7taliya Nahane
Natasha Tony

Collaborating Organizations

BC Civil Liberties Association
BC/Yukon Association of Drug War Survivors
Canadian Drug Policy Coalition
Friends of Carnegie Community Action Project
Coalition of Peers Dismantling the Drug War
Community Legal Assistance Society
Defund 604 Network
Drug User Liberation Front
First United Church Community Ministry Society
Gallery Gachet
HIV Legal Network
PACE Society
Schools Not Cops
SWAN Vancouver
The Shift
Together Against Poverty Society
Union of BC Indian Chiefs
Vancouver Area Network of Drug Users
WISH Drop-In society

External & Pro-Bono Counsel

Jordanna Cytrynbaum
Jennie Cunningham
Marguerite Ethier
Frances Mahon
Naomi Moses
Sarah Runyon
Thank you!

Members

Pivot Legal Society members are people who are interested in Pivot’s work and invested in the wellbeing of the organization. Members are eligible to vote at Pivot’s Annual General Meetings. All Pivot Legal Society members agree to uphold Pivot’s Constitution and Bylaws.

You can apply to become a member at pivotlegal.org/membership_signup

The following individuals served as members of Pivot at some point throughout 2020.

Sally Aagaard  Evan Gaensbauer  Peter Mortifee
Daniel Alderman  Stephanie Garicsak  Naomi Moses
Lucinda Atwood  Joanna Gislason  Lama Mugabo
Affan Bajwa  Julie Guenkel  Ian Munro
Sandy Bauer  Frank Harris  Stephen Mussell
William Baxter  Carrie Hill  Wendy Nahanee
Darcie Bennett  Tanya Hiltz  Sarah Negrin
Mebrat Beyene  Miranda Hlady  Juliana Pace
Laura Bisaillon  Todd Huang  John Pacey
Douglas Bjorkman  Martha Kerr  Katrina Pacey
Nicole Blanke  Moad Laakrout  Aaron Peterson
David Bouvier  Nicolas Leech-Crier  Lori Petryk
Georgia Bradley  Ann Livingston  Shea Riley
Lynne Bright  Christopher Kerr  Mina Sahi
Amanda Burrows  Ann’s Koats’a  Aaron Samuel
Quinn Candler  Livingstone  Arnold
Jacqueline  Christopher  Schenderling
Carstensen  Uk’s Koats’a  Emily Sollows
Grady Chalmers  Livingstone  Guriqbal Thind
Cloe Chevalier-Fortin  Kevin Lowe  Kevin Tjia
Jae Phil Steve Chong  Maddi Mackay  Jack Vincent
Chong  David MacNab  Mark Walton
Randall Cohn  Samona Marsh  Micah Waskow
Joan Cubbon  Scott McAlpine  Christina
Monica Dare  Lyra McKee  Wlodarczyk
Samantha Davis  Dean McMillan  Sam Wong
Samantha Dawson  Hayli Millar  Kaymi Yoon-Maxwell
Joey Doyle  Benjamin Milier  Amina Younas
David Fai  Veronique Mireault  Leo Yu
David Fai

Sustaining Donors have committed to donations over a period of at least three years. This is the most effective and efficient way to support our work.

Sustaining Funders

Open Society Foundation
Provincial Health Services Authority
Vancouver Foundation
Susan Adams
Illahie Foundation
James Pond
McGrane Pearson Fund through
Vancouver Foundation
North Family Foundation
Somerset Foundation
Unbounded Foundation

Annual and Project Funders

Canadian Women’s Foundation
Emergency Community Support Fund
Law Foundation of BC

We acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia.

How to Donate

You can contribute to Pivot’s work by becoming a monthly donor, making a one-time gift, and making a 3-year commitment with your sustaining gift. Please visit: www.pivotlegal.org/donate

For more information about giving to Pivot Legal Society, contact Drew Dennis.

Email: donate@pivotlegal.org
Phone: 604.255.9700 x 166
### Sustaining Donors (Mthly)

- Michael & Margaret Asch
- Alexandra Blue
- Jeremy Brown
- Amanda Burrows
- Neil Connatty
- Tess Conrad
- Anthea Darychuk
- Mike Doaga-Diaconescu
- Carey Doberstein
- Annabree Fairweather
- Sara Farquharson
- James FitzGerald
- Kevin Hollett
- Gary Ip
- Pauline Kendall
- Seth Klein
- Sean Konrad
- Svetlana Kozlova
- Krisztina Kun
- Sarah Leavitt
- Jan Lintag
- Clayton MacKay
- Scott Mahr
- Richard Marcuse
- Brianna Mau
- Kaylee Misener
- Dr John Pacey
- Michael Penney
- Amritpal Randay
- Theresa Riley
- Julia Scharnberg
- Zena Sharman
- Byron Sheardown
- Forrest Silver
- Lisa Slater
- Sheena Starky
- Fiona Steele
- Christianne Wilhelmson
- Emma Winkelmann
- Michelle Yung

### Annual Donors

- Stephen Aberle
- Helen Allen
- Lynell Anderson
- Jordan Bell
- Lindsey Bellman
- Douglas Bjorkman
- Alison Blais
- Adrienne Boon
- Jacques Bosse
- Cristina Bucci
- Carla Burton
- Rhett Cardinal
- Ryan Clemens
- William Cooey
- Alannah Copetti
- Drew Dennis
- Ross Denny-Jiles
- Rajdeep Dhaliwal
- Rachel Enns
- Heather Eytton
- Ileana Figueroa
- James Floros
- Doug Ford
- Paige Frewer
- Gift Pact Foundation
- Michael & Dianne Goldberg
- Erika Gondo
- Zoe Greig
- Brenda Grunau
- Jens Haeusser
- Corinna Hagel
- William & Gloria Hall
- Ellen Halliday
- Kevin Hamersley
- Houssian Foundation
- Tabatha Hughes
- Jason Hutchison
- All Purpose Creative Inc.
- Superclose Music Inc.

- Portia Karegeya
- Elizabeth Karunaratne
- Alexis Kellum Creer
- Ethel Kofsky
- Sharon Kwok
- Mark Lacroix
- Margaret Leighton
- Doreen Littlejohn
- Layne Loshny
- Kalena Macklewick
- Katie Mai
- Kerri Martens
- Shell & Kay Maude
- Charitable Foundation
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- Christopher Moralee
- Naomi Moses
- Patricia Murray
- Jacqueline Nash
- Maryka Omatsu
- Brandon On
- Kaidy Orchison
- David Ou
- Jacqueline Padua
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- Christie Pasby
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- Cory Petersen
- Jodi Pongratz
- Sharon Prescott
- David Prowse
- Katie Redburn
- Cathryn Redford
- Benjamin Reedijk
- Anna Ren
- Andre & Brock Rowland Foundation
- Derek Rodgers
- Sam Rogers
- Anita Romaniuk

If you made a donation to Pivot in 2020 and do not see your name here, please forgive us! We only list the names of individuals and organizations who have given express consent of public recognition. If you’d like to be acknowledged in our future annual reports, contact us by emailing donate@pivotlegal.org
## Financials

### Statement of Financial Position December 31, 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ASSETS (note 4)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cash</td>
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<td>616,543</td>
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<td>Term Deposits</td>
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<td>Accounts receivable</td>
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<td>174,082</td>
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<td>Prepaid expenses and deposits</td>
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<td>Property and equipment (note 5)</td>
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<td>12,239</td>
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<td>1,116,630</td>
<td>990,640</td>
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<td><strong>LIABILITIES</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Current</td>
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<td>Accounts payable and accruals</td>
<td>32,924</td>
<td>48,763</td>
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<td>Deferred contributions (note 6)</td>
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<td>335,939</td>
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<td>$ 581,262</td>
<td>$ 384,702</td>
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<td><strong>NET ASSETS</strong></td>
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<td>General fund</td>
<td>229,469</td>
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<td>Invested in property and equipment</td>
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<td>12,239</td>
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<td>Internally restricted contingency fund</td>
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<td>$ 535,368</td>
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<td>$ 1,116,630</td>
<td>$ 990,640</td>
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### Statement of Operation December 31, 2020

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenue</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Charitable foundation contributions</td>
<td>169,569</td>
<td>153,500</td>
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<td>Community group, union contributions</td>
<td>29,170</td>
<td>35,500</td>
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<td>Corporate contributions</td>
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<td>4,820</td>
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<td>Individual donations (note 8)</td>
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<td>Interest income</td>
<td>9,175</td>
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<td>Law Foundation grants</td>
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<td>Misc earned revenue</td>
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<td>Open Society Foundation grant</td>
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<td>Provincial grants</td>
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<td>Public Foundations grants</td>
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<td>68,938</td>
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<td>1,080,071</td>
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<td><strong>Expenditures</strong></td>
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<td>General</td>
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<td>Facilities</td>
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<td>Operation expenses</td>
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<td>42,868</td>
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<td>Professional fees</td>
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<td>Organization &amp; resource development</td>
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<td>Fund development</td>
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<td>Organizational development</td>
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<td>Programs</td>
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<td>Campaigns expenses</td>
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<td>Legal education</td>
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<td>Litigation expenses</td>
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<td>Communication and outreach</td>
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<td>120,310</td>
<td>106,086</td>
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<td>Wages &amp; benefits</td>
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<td>586,219</td>
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<td>Amortization</td>
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<td>1,150,641</td>
<td>1,007,763</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Deficiency of revenue over expenditures for year</strong></td>
<td>(70,570)</td>
<td>(33,621)</td>
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