



The Feminist Conversations



2024-2025

Annual report

Building safe, inclusive spaces
to empower feminist leadership in Ottawa.

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ABOUT THE FEMINIST CONVERSATIONS

A decade of conversations and impact

The Feminist Conversations (formerly Ask Women Anything) is a federal non-profit organization dedicated to amplifying the voices of all women, particularly those of racialized and Indigenous communities, as well as 2SLGBTQIA+ communities across Ottawa. For more than a decade, we have created warm, inclusive, and trauma-informed spaces where feminist leaders share their expertise, lived experiences, and stories. The growth of our audience and the depth of engagement across our events and digital platforms reflect the trust we have built and the strong relationships we hold within the communities we serve.

Grounded in intersectional and anti-oppressive values, our work strengthens community connections, raises awareness of equity issues, and uplifts underrepresented voices. Guided by community feedback and participation trends, our programming has evolved toward deeper, experience-driven engagement that offers practical value and lasting impact. Through dialogue, leadership, and collective learning, we support individuals in shaping more inclusive and equitable communities.

As we enter a new phase in 2026, The Feminist Conversations will expand its impact through training sessions and workshops designed to deepen engagement, build practical skills, and strengthen feminist initiatives across Ottawa. This next chapter reflects our commitment to sustainable growth, community-centred impact, and a future guided by care, intention, and meaningful change.

VISION

We envision a future where women, Indigenous communities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ individuals are empowered, celebrated, and heard. Through safe, community-led conversations, we amplify underrepresented voices, spark critical learning, and inspire meaningful change. Our goal is a society where equity, inclusion, and intersectionality guide progress—and where those most impacted are leaders shaping the future.

MISSION

The Feminist Conversations is a community-led organization dedicated to empowering women, Indigenous communities, and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities by amplifying underrepresented voices in Ottawa. Through safe, inclusive, and trauma-informed discussions, we foster education, allyship, and leadership, working toward a more equitable and inclusive future where every voice is valued and heard.

VALUES

At The Feminist Conversations, we are guided by our core values of

EQUITY

EQUALITY

JUSTICE



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD



As I look back on this year, I am deeply proud of how far The Feminist Conversations has come and even more grateful for the community that makes this work possible. What started many years ago as a small, volunteer-run gathering has now grown into a network of women and gender-diverse people who continue to show up for each other, learn together, and build each other up. And this past year marks an important milestone: we're now officially incorporated as a not-for-profit organization.

For me, this work has always been about opening space—for listening, healing, growing, and challenging systems that have held too many people back. Through our three pillars—networking, education and training, and building awareness—we have helped people strengthen their skills, expand opportunities, and feel more confident stepping into leadership in their workplaces, communities, and families.

I continue to be moved by the courage people bring to these conversations. I see people arrive uncertain and leave connected, informed, and empowered. That transformation is exactly why we do this work.

Thank you—for showing up, for sharing your voices, and for believing in what is possible when we hold space for each other.

With gratitude,

Amanda Parriag

Founder
Chair of the Board

OUR TEAM

Meet the dedicated team behind The Feminist Conversations—passionate leaders committed to equity, inclusion, and community empowerment. Together, we bring diverse expertise and shared purpose to drive meaningful change.



Jennifer

Board Member



Vanessa

Board Member



Amira

Program Coordinator

COMMUNITY PANELS

In 2024–2025, The Feminist Conversations continued its core mission of amplifying women, feminist, Indigenous, BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ voices. Through our community-led panel series, we created safe spaces for learning, storytelling, and empowerment—reaching hundreds across Ottawa and strengthening the city’s feminist community.

The challenges and successes of today's students

October 18, 2024

This unique panel by The Feminist Conversations highlighted the barriers enrolled students face throughout their academic journeys in Ottawa. Panelists—including an international student, an Indigenous student, and a student with lived experience of mental health challenges—from diverse fields and backgrounds shared their personal experiences navigating post-secondary education. Through honest and eye-opening conversations, they explored the academic, financial, social, and cultural obstacles students encounter, as well as the complexities of educational bureaucracy within postgraduate institutions. Their reflections created a meaningful space for learning, empathy, and collective understanding.

A discussion on politics and hope.

November 28, 2024

We Don't Give Up! brought together Catherine McKenney, MPP and co-founder of CitySHAPES, and Rachel Décoste, writer, educator, and social policy expert, for a timely discussion on politics and hope. The panel explored the state of bodily autonomy and rights in Canada, with particular attention to how political decisions affect marginalized communities. Through thoughtful dialogue, the speakers examined Canada's current political landscape, questioned the extent of U.S. political influence on Canadian policies, and reflected on its impact on communities across the country. Grounded in lived experience and policy expertise, the conversation offered clarity, resilience, and a renewed sense of collective responsibility in uncertain political times.



COMMUNITY PANELS

Honouring Black Entrepreneurs & Leaders

February 28, 2025

Panelists shared the barriers they face as Black entrepreneurs in Ottawa and reflected on their journeys of overcoming these challenges. Through powerful storytelling, they offered practical insights, tips, and guidance for entrepreneurs from diverse professional backgrounds, creating a meaningful space for learning and inspiration.

Celebrating Indigenous Women's Contributions

March 27, 2025

This panel explored the lived realities of Indigenous communities in Canada, with speakers reflecting on the deep impact of intergenerational trauma and the ongoing challenges of uplifting their people. They spoke about the vital need to reconnect with their culture, language, and traditions, and emphasized how honest education and access to the full truth are essential for meaningful change. Panelists also highlighted the strength, resilience, and leadership of Indigenous communities, who continue to face stereotypes while working to build empowered futures for themselves and their communities.

Beyond the traditional nuclear family

May 2, 2025

This panel explored the beauty of building families rooted in love within the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. Speakers shared the logistical, financial, and legal barriers they face when pursuing parenthood, from navigating complex processes to overcoming systems that do not easily recognize their family structures. The discussion highlighted both the challenges and the resilience required, underscoring the need for greater support and equitable policies for all families.



EMPOWERMENT THROUGH STORYTELLING

Asian Heritage Month:

Asian stories of creativity, leadership, and belonging

May 30, 2025

This panel celebrated the contributions of Asian communities to Ottawa, featuring remarkable panelists who shared achievements, personal stories, and the journeys that shaped their experiences in Canada. One musician offered powerful performances reflecting the challenges she faced growing up in Ottawa as an Asian Muslim Canadian. The discussion also included practical guidance from a professor on how international students can better integrate and navigate current job-market challenges.



Expanding Our Impact Through Skills-Focused Programming

Throughout the summer of 2025, The Feminist Conversations' board members explored new ways to structure their activities to better serve women and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities in Ottawa. They recognized that offering direct, immediate skill-building and meaningful experiences would provide the greatest benefit, especially as audience members from recent panels—particularly students and newcomers—expressed a desire for training opportunities and stronger networking support. In response, the organization agreed to expand its programming structure: alongside community panels, they will introduce networking sessions and skill-focused training workshops designed to meet existing and emerging community needs.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

In collaboration with

Navigating Today's Job Market

September 27, 2025

Following a summer period dedicated to strategic planning and program development, The Feminist Conversations launched its first training session of the new phase in collaboration with Women Power Lunch. This interactive, two-hour session focused on navigating and exploring the job market, featuring a recruitment expert who shared practical insights on accessing career opportunities. The training primarily served BIPOC participants and emphasized real-time engagement, offering attendees dedicated space to introduce themselves, share their professional journeys or businesses, and connect with one another. The session fostered skill-building, confidence, and meaningful community networking.



NETWORKING AND COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

Confidence & Identity Through Style

March 27, 2025

This panel brought together fashion design entrepreneurs and community members in Ottawa for an engaging discussion on diverse styles that celebrate identity and culture. The session featured experts including a professor from the Richard Robinson Fashion Design Academy—Canada’s only Haute Couture fashion design academy—and a leading local Ottawa designer, who shared professional insights and industry experience. Participants exchanged experiences, built connections, and took part in a free clothing swap, allowing them to refresh their wardrobes, discover semi-formal pieces, and leave with practical fashion tips in an inclusive and creative setting.

Growth and Progress in Women's Hockey

November 27, 2025

The final networking session of 2025 was a highlight of The Feminist Conversations’ programming. Centered on women in sports, the event was held in collaboration with the uOttawa Student Athlete Council and brought together hockey players from the Ottawa Charge and Ottawa Gee-Gees, alongside young players and fans. The 90-minute session focused on learning, mentorship, and shared experiences, and concluded with dedicated fan engagement time. Participants expressed deep appreciation for the space created, noting how it enabled meaningful community connection despite the demanding schedules of athletes.

In collaboration with



PARTNERS



Happy Goat Coffee Co.



Beandigen Cafe



Women Power Lunch



Student Athlete Council
uOttawa

REACH AND IMPACT



25

panelists contributed to TFC's hosted events



>150

attendees across TFC's events

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

In 2025, The Feminist Conversations significantly expanded its digital presence, reaching new audiences while deepening engagement with our core community.



+318%

reach on Instagram



+3,700%

increase in link clicks



+249%

website traffic growth





GROWING OUR COMMUNITY

In 2025, The Feminist Conversations used social media as an integrated ecosystem to build awareness, deepen engagement, and convert interest into participation. Instagram served as our primary community space, fostering meaningful interaction, storytelling, and dialogue—particularly among young women engaged in feminist and community-centered conversations. Facebook expanded our reach by introducing new audiences to our work and guiding them toward events and resources, often through quieter but intentional engagement. LinkedIn supported early-stage professional visibility, generating over 2,100 impressions—primarily in Ottawa—and positioning the organization for future partnerships and collaborations within the nonprofit, media, and communications sectors. Together, these platforms acted as our main traffic drivers, directing audiences to our website and events, and transforming online engagement into real-world participation.

PARTICIPANT TESTIMONIALS

“It was an honor to be part of such an empowering event. It was incredibly inspiring to be surrounded by great athletes and generous women. It was amazing to feel the energy and enthusiasm of the community. Thank you so much for this wonderful opportunity!”

BÉATRICE BILODEAU



“The Feminist Conversations offers a unique space to un-learn and re-learn. Having participated for a year, I am consistently impressed by the diverse topics discussed, as well as the personal stories of struggles and triumphs shared by panelists. Each session leaves me with new insights, spanning from politics to entrepreneurship to music, and beyond.”

Simarpreet Singh



“Participating in the Feminist Conversations series and moderating the event on supporting and empowering Indigenous communities was deeply affirming. It created a safe space to share stories of intergenerational trauma, systemic racism, and urban Indigenous experiences, while celebrating how we carry our cultures into everyday life. The experience helped me feel heard, build confidence, and recognize the power of collective storytelling and allyship.”

MONTANA MASSICOTTE

“I was among the guests on the panel for the Asian Stories of Creativity, Leadership, and Belonging: Heritage in Action back in May. I had such a lovely experience sharing as a musical artist. I was also very inspired by the fellow speakers. I felt warmly received by the audience and enjoyed the discussion.”

Audrey Saparno

THANK YOU

Thank you for being part of The Feminist Conversations community.

Your support makes it possible to create spaces where voices are heard, connections are built, and meaningful conversations lead to real impact. As we continue to grow and evolve, we remain committed to fostering inclusive dialogue, strengthening community ties, and shaping a more equitable future together.

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