

Who Are We?

Our organization began in 1986 on Treaty 1 Territory in what is now known as Winnipeg. The grass roots group formed in response to the passing of a 2spirit youth, and in recognition that safer 2Spirit & Indigiqueer (2SIQ) spaces were needed in the city. After many years of small-scale community support, we incorporated in March of 2006.

2Spirit Manitoba Inc. is now a community-based organization that focusses on helping 2SIQ community members across Manitoba to holistically improve their lives. We currently do this by advocating to prevent 2SIQ discrimination, hosting community events, providing educational workshops and presentations, as well as collaborating and partnering with sibling and allied organizations and initiatives to enhance their services and inclusion for 2SIQ participants.

2Spirit Manitoba Inc.

**301 - 286 Smith Street
Winnipeg, MB, R3C 1K4**



info@twospiritmanitoba.ca
www.twospiritmanitoba.ca

2SPIRIT MANITOBA INC.





2Spirit Identity

In brief, 2Spirit is a culturally affirming umbrella term for Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ peoples that was created so that English speakers would have a respectful word to refer to 2Spirit & Indigiqueer (2SIQ) people. However, to fully understand the term, we must talk about traditional Indigenous cultural understandings of 2SIQ.

Prior to colonization many Indigenous nations naturally included 2SIQ kin and honored them with important roles and responsibilities. Someone who is 2Spirit is considered to have both masculine and feminine spirits present within themselves, and thus carry the teachings of each. Because queer identity was woven into common understandings, there was not the same need to identify sexuality and gender as there is now. Instead, your role within the community was the most important aspect of your identity.

Because 2Spirit people carry all teachings they were given important and honored roles within their nations. Traditionally 2Spirit people were leaders, visionaries, mediators, advocates, change-makers, and care givers. It is also important to note that different Indigenous nations have specific words in their languages to refer to 2SIQ people both on Turtle Island and around the world.

To Identify as 2Spirit is to identify with the cultural context of your nation, and the responsibilities that come with it. Therefore, not all Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ people identify with this term, and many 2Spirit people identify with other labels on the LGBTQQIA+ spectrum as well.