



Annual report 2023

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Brava combats violence against women and sexism in Switzerland.

In so doing, we pay special attention to people in particularly precarious situations, such as women refugees.

Our vision is a just society where all people, regardless of gender, live free of violence and in a self-determined manner.

## Editorial

2023—It was an important year for us: Brava has turned 20!

Similar to someone in their early 20s, we had the urge to let go of old and discover new things this year. At the same time, we had to ask ourselves if we were up to these changes. We tackled this great challenge that is part of change and movement with an organisational development process.

The intensive internal processes did not diminish our work externally: in 2023, we and our allies wrote history with the reform of the law governing sexual offenses. It was also the year where the participants of our project “Voices of refugee women” met with Federal Councillor Elisabeth Baume-Schneider. Furthermore, we ensured that the voters took into account the work against violence at the Federal elections, and we celebrated our 20th anniversary with more than 100 supporters. Our daily business continued apart from these highlights: we counselled, raised awareness, held workshops and trainings, marched, posted, fundraised, debated and did media work.

We also had to face some challenges: the general global situation with wars and humanitarian crises also posed a major challenge to our team. At the end of the year, two long-standing project participants and their families were forcefully deported to Sri Lanka. Our work for people who experience violence abroad (Tatort Ausland) was difficult, and the result of the Federal elections will make our work against violence more complicated.

These setbacks show how important and relevant our work is, also 20 years after the foundation of TERRE DES FEMMES Schweiz (2003).

After an intensive, exciting, and successful year we are keenly looking towards the future. Newly structured and highly motivated, we are ready to face the next 20 years. As a feminist, intersectional and antiracist voice against gender-based violence.

Happy reading!



Aina Waeber, board member

## The year 2023 in numbers

Held 9 empowerment workshops with 123 migrants

Reached 140 experts and volunteers with trainings

Organized 15 meetings for Voices project

Counselled 40 persons affected by violence

Attended 4 parliamentary sessions and 1 extraordinary session

Met with 1 Federal Councillor

Celebrated 20 years of Brava

Distributed Brava tattoos to 1 000 people

Was mentioned 21 times in the media

Delighted 20 000 people on the Bundesplatz with a speech during the strike

Reached 125 000 followers with the bravaspider



Participants at a workshop on media consumption of children, June 2023.

In the autumn, the key persons went to a training on racism and discrimination by Mandy Abou Shoak. F.I.t.r. Tahmina Taghiyeva, Amal Naser, Mandy Abou Shoak, Hayat Ismail, Fatma Leblebici, Safiyo Hussein Abdi.

## Empowerment workshops

2023 was a successful year for our empowerment project. We held nine workshops for 123 migrants, refugee women and women groups from Türkiye, Somalia, Eritrea, and Kurdistan. The past year has shown that the long-term work with existing women's groups pays off. The participants were comfortable in the created settings, which enabled them to talk about more difficult issues such as trauma, discrimination or gender-based violence.

Apart from the project leader Fatma Leblebici, the key persons Safiyo Hussein Abdi, Hayat Ismail, Nur Hasanova, and Amal Naser fulfil an important function in the workshops. They are the ones who stay in contact with the participants and define the time, place and content of the workshops with them.

The issues of the workshops reflect the diverse needs and challenges of the participants. They discussed relevant issues such as career start, asylum and migration law or discrimination, media (with regard to children), and gender-based violence. Experts of organisations like Pro Juventute, educational psychologists of Winterthur and the specialised service on domestic violence Bern enriched the workshops with their knowledge and contributed to the success of the project.

**“Thank you very much for this setting. It was very good for me to be with so many women. I haven't been listened to so attentively for seven years.”**

Voice of one of the participants

# Trainings

In the past year, there were more reports in the media about the precarious situation in asylum centres. This is an issue that Brava has been highlighting for years. The structures further violence and do not offer security, in particular for women affected by violence.

Often, the supervisors in asylum centres are struggling and helpless when faced with domestic violence or persons traumatised by violence. They are not sure how to react adequately or where they can find support, because institutions on all levels are often not sufficiently aware of the issue.

In the past year, Brava continued to offer support: in 2023, Flurina Peyer und Mandy Abou Shoak held nine trainings on gender-based violence with 140 experts and volunteers. Clients were, among others, the Canton of Schaffhausen, the Swiss Red Cross, the Asylum Organisation Zurich (AOZ), the Salvation Army and Solinetz Bern.

Our work is effective: more and more supervisors from federal asylum centres and other asylum structures were proactively asking for support from our counsellor, thus not leaving persons affected by violence alone.

“How do I recognise that a woman needs help?”

Question of a participant

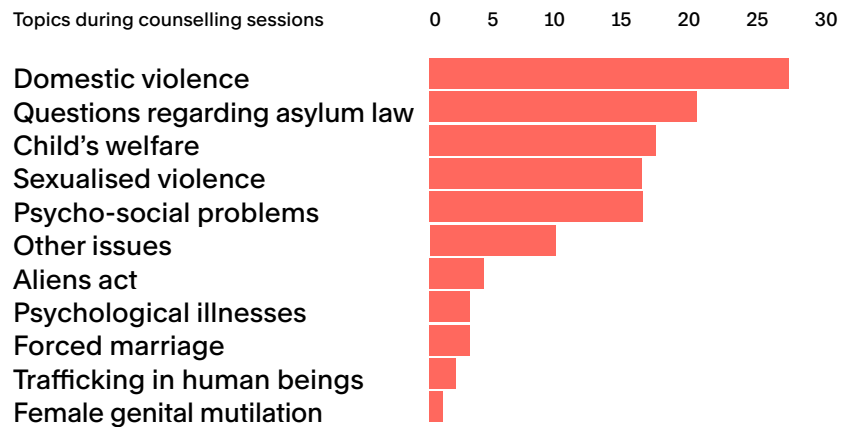


The direct exchange and room for questions are essential: Mandy Abou Shoak speaking with a participant.

Sharing knowledge on gender-based violence is part of the trainings. Flurina Peyer at a training for AOZ in January 2023.

# Counselling

2023 was very intensive for our counselling department. The requests were very demanding and we worked hard on concepts for our project. Over the past year, Brava counselled 40 persons affected by violence. 22 of them could be referred to adequate expert services. 18 women received long-term support. Those were mainly women in the asylum procedure who survived violence during their journey or abroad. According to the current law on victim's support they have no right to be supported by the victim's support offices. With the knowledge Brava gained over the last few years concerning "Tatort Ausland", we also tried to fill this structural gap in the support of persons affected by violence. At the same time, we worked on a political level to change the law concerning support for victims (see more on p. 21).



The categories should not be considered in isolation. Most requests touch on several issues simultaneously.

A great challenge for our counsellor Rozë Berisha is the wide range of issues to deal with in the counselling sessions. Counselling requires comprehensive knowledge in various areas (for example the legal situation, psycho-social counselling or trauma-sensitive approaches). At the same time, a good network of lawyers, victim support services, solidarity structures, and other organisations is very important. To fulfil this complex task and continue to ensure the quality of our counselling services, we have decided to create a second position in the counselling department starting in 2024. We will welcome our new counsellor in March 2024.

**“You helped me so much by giving me hope and carrying my suffering with me. You were there for me in the most difficult moments and simply accepted me.”**

Feedback of a client

# “Voices” project

In 2023, the project “Voices of refugee women” had a significant upturn. In total, 15 meetings with 40 women were held. In order to strengthen the relationships between the participants, social activities such as yoga sessions, photo projects and picnics were organised. A particular highlight was the event “Knowledge is a resource—lets listen to refugee women” during the Action Week against Racism of the city of Berne, as well as the participation in the feminist strike, where the project participants and the Brava team took the demands of refugee women to the streets.

The “Voices” project gained more public interest over the last year thanks to many activities and events. The media was very interested, new co-operations with various organisations were forged and project manager Tahmina Taghiyeva spoke about the concerns of refugee women at various panels. At the end of the year, the project received the “Thank you-award” of the NCBI refugee parliament.

Political activities were continued by meeting with politicians and pertinent public agencies. Highlight of the year was doubtless the meeting with Elisabeth Baume-Schneider on 10 November, where the project participants could highlight their demands with the Federal Councillor.

**“Imagine you have just given birth and seven days later you are deported.”** !

This and other statements could be read on the flyers that they distributed together with the demands of refugee women on 14 June.



High-ranking visitor: on 10 November the participants had the opportunity to exchange views with Federal Councillor Elisabeth Baume-Schneider in a small setting.





## Digression: 20 years against violence

2003 The association is founded  
On the International Day against Violence against Women, TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland is officially founded as an association with a focus on sexism, violence in the name of honour, forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

2004 Small, but effective!  
We launch a campaign against crimes in the name of honour, create an emergency fund for refugee women and work against female genital mutilation in Switzerland.

2005 Cooperation for prevention  
In cooperation with the Federal Office for Public Health, we and other actors begin working on the issue by developing a prevention brochure on female genital mutilation and the legal situation in Switzerland.

2006 Headwinds  
We are active in the election campaign against restrictive legislation concerning the law on foreigners and asylum.

2007 Consolidation  
We consolidate our organisation and create specialised departments for sexism in the public space, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.



2008 Media coverage against trafficking of women  
We organise an expert seminar on the issue and co-launch the campaign “Euro08 against trafficking of women”.

2009 Consolidated  
Thanks to a generous donation we can surmount financial difficulties and start the awareness-raising campaign “Reality Check” against sexism in advertising.

2010 Awareness-raising indispensable  
We take a stand against the prohibition of burkas and work towards a well-founded discourse on sexism rooted in society. We bring to life the feminist event series “Voix des Femmes”, that will continue until 2017.

2011 One year, two anniversaries  
40 years of women’s suffrage and 30 years of the law on equality. We reflect on the steps towards equality and publish a study on women-specific grounds for asylum.

2012 Together against forced marriage  
The Parliament approves the Federal Law against forced marriage. We assume the coordination for pilot projects on the issue and build an information and networking platform called “zwangsheirat.ch”.

2013 Let’s Party!  
We celebrate our 10th anniversary and finish a survey on existing measures against female genital cutting.

2014 A sympathetic ear  
We create an easily accessible counselling service concerning gender-based violence and expand our training offers. We also publish a study on accommodation for refugee women in collective housing.

2015 Lack of gender equality in Switzerland  
We reflect on how violence against women is instrumentalised for racist purposes based on the events during New Year’s Eve in Cologne. The 8th edition of “Voix des Femmes” centres around the lack of equality and gender-based violence in Switzerland.

2016 Networking against female genital cutting!  
A great success is the the foundation of a Network against Female Genital Cutting Switzerland. Brava starts an official counselling service for persons affected by gender-based violence.

2017 Institutionalise!  
Switzerland ratifies the Istanbul Convention and we initiate the Civil Society Network Istanbul Convention with organisations and specialised services from all over Switzerland.

2018 Solidarity with refugee women  
While the world is moved by #MeToo we direct the focus onto the gaps in the Swiss asylum system. Additionally, we publish a guide on the issue of domestic violence and sexualised violence in the area of asylum.

2019 Feminist strike 2.0  
together with hundreds of thousand others we take to the street on 14 June. With the online campaign “Ausgeliefert statt angekommen” TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland demands protection and justice for displaced women. We also decide to change our organisational structure: a modern circle organisation with flat hierarchies and shared leadership is born.

2020 #StayHome  
We increase our awareness-raising on femicides in Switzerland. With the online series “Against violence against women—a feminist view” we share our feminist knowledge and memory.

2021 Hello Brava!  
We launch our new brand Brava and successfully campaign for 24-hour counselling for persons affected by violence throughout Switzerland. We streamline our profile and focus on gender-based violence, sexism and refugee and asylum.

2022 The “Voices” project is starting to take off!  
Our political project with refugee women gets its own project manager. We publish a brochure on the issue of violence against women and intensify our political activities concerning the implementation of the Istanbul convention.

2023 20 years against violence!  
We celebrate the revision of the law governing sexual offences, offer a resource for the elections with Bravaspieler, meet Federal Councillor Elisabeth Baume-Schneider and celebrate our 20th anniversary!

## Political activities

It was a successful year for our work at the political level. Already during the spring session, one of the issues that we worked hard for was passed: regional crisis intervention centres in the whole of Switzerland will become reality and psychological and medical first aid for persons affected by violence will be secured.

We celebrated another success only two days after the feminist strike. On 16 June the historical decision concerning the reform of the law governing sexual offences was taken at the Bundeshaus: a “no means no” rule, including freezing, a gender-independent definition of rape and work with offenders. This milestone could only be achieved through years of collaboration with affected persons, activists, experts, NGOs, and politicians. Now, we focus on ensuring that the new law governing sexual offences will be consistently implemented everywhere.

In September we published our statement on a new criminal offence of stalking, thereby laying important groundwork to ensure that stalking can finally be clamped down on more consistently in the future. The signs are positive that we will be able to celebrate a success in this area, as well.

Our work on refugees and asylum was also successful. During the winter session, the National Council voted in favour of an improved legal residence situation for migrants affected by violence. In future, survivors of domestic violence may separate from their spouses without jeopardising their right of residence. We will continue to work closely with FIZ, CSP Vaud, and other allies to push through this important change in the law on foreigners and integration.



National Councillor Tamara Fumiciello, Sim Egglar (responsible political activities) and Agota Lavoyer (expert for sexualised violence) celebrate the decision concerning the law governing sexual offences.

Julia Meier (new responsible for political activities) and Sim Egglar follow the debates concerning the changes of the law in foreigners and integration at the Bundeshaus.

“Tatort Ausland” and financial difficulties

But there were also some setbacks: in August, the Legal Affairs Committee of the Council of States opposed the support of people who were victimised abroad. We can see the results of this legal gap every day in our counselling work. We will do everything possible during the next year to close this structural gap and that all persons affected by violence will finally get the support they need. Until then, we will take up the slack—which is why our counselling service for persons who experienced violence abroad (for example while they were fleeing) is essential.

In the area of prevention, we also experienced some challenges: at the end of the year, the Federal Council scaled back already promised funding for periodic national prevention campaigns against violence. Our reaction as one of 167 organisations who signed an open letter, made an impact: during the winter session: the Parliament went against the Federal Council and decided to allocate annually 1,5 million Swiss Francs for prevention campaigns.

This example shows how important it is to stay strong and to keep a close eye on the decisionmakers. We will not ease off.

# Campaigns

## Tattoos for the 14th of June

Supporters were able to tattoo their commitment against gender-based violence on their skin during the feminist strike on 14 June. At our stall at the Bundesplatz, we put Brava-Tattoos on almost 1000 people and provided them with information about our work against violence. Together with the women from the Voices-Project we also distributed flyers with the demands of displaced women.

## Bravaspider for the elections

Smartspider was yesterday: on 2 October we launched the Bravaspider as a feminist tool for the national elections in 2023. Nadia Lanfranchi, who is responsible for our political campaigns, analysed the voting behaviour of the national councillors on 19 issues concerning our core topics (including the reform of the law governing sexual offences, crisis intervention centres, and marriage for all) and visualised them along six axes. A huge success: on Instagram alone, we reached more than 125 000 people. The 19 second reel visualising the voting behaviour of the most relevant parties was watched for a total of more than 205 hours.

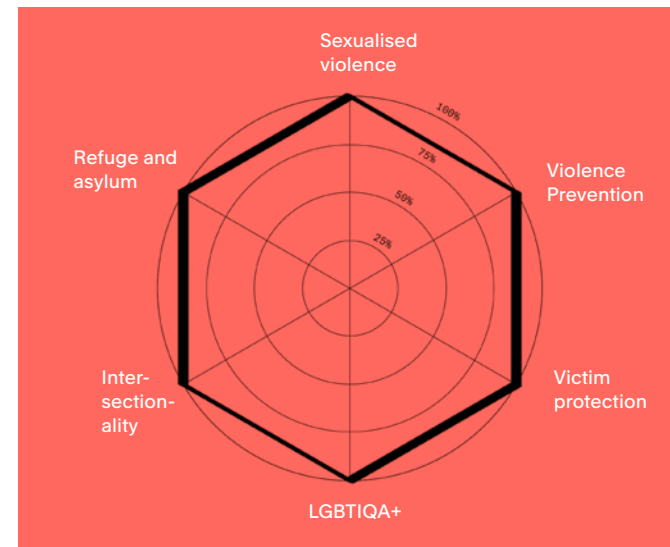
## 16 days against violence

During the 16 days against violence campaign focussing on psychological violence we published a photo series of participants of the Voices-Project. The portraits together with impressive statements about their real lives show the psychological violence that women in the Swiss asylum system are confronted with. A baked cake, an LGBTIQ flag or a busy street: condensed into a single moment, the protagonists show where the system is ailing and what gives them stability despite everything.

Well received: the Brava tattoos at the Feminist Strike 2023.



Commitment at all levels: This is the perfect bravaspider



“Only I stood still.” The physicist Manahil Mohammed is one of four women portrayed for the photo series.





Impressions of the anniversary celebration.

## Public Relations

Brava was mentioned in over 20 media reports in 2023 and participated in numerous events and panels. In April, for example, we presented the documentary “Chaylla” at the Human Rights Day of the Human Rights Film Festival Zurich. This was followed by Rozë Berisha sharing her expertise on the topic of domestic violence with the audience.

Last year, we released three podcast episodes. The episode on the history of International Women’s Day on 8 March with the co-directors of the Gosteli Foundation was particularly well received.

### 20 years Brava

What started with a small group under the name of TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland became an organisation with 13 members of staff over the last 20 years, which has become indispensable as an intersectional, feminist voice against violence in Switzerland. On 15 December we celebrated our 20th anniversary with more than 100 allies at the queer feminist room in Bern. Susan A. Peter, Bleritë Berisha, Sim Egger, Theodora Leite, Fatma Leblebici, Safiyo Hussein Abdi and Sascha Rijkeboer shared their expert knowledge on gender, violence, and displacement in form of a living library with the guests. Afterwards, we ate cake, danced and cheered for the next 20 years.

## Balance sheet (in CHF)

ASSETS	2023	2022
Petty cash	46.60	56.20
Postal cheque	155 692.08	144 560.95
Banks	625 226.09	1 022 083.24
Forward investments	700 000.00	0.00
Liquid assets	1 480 964.77	1 166 700.39
Accounts receivable	10 751.25	0.00
Short-term loan	1 634.50	0.00
Accounts receivable	12 385.75	0.00
Inventory	1 792.70	3 566.00
Prepaid expenses and deferred charges	115 051.87	54 024.67
Current Assets	1 610 195.09	1 224 291.06
Fixtures and Fittings	339.00	678.00
IT, office equipment	880.00	2 095.65
Fixed assets	1 219.00	2 773.65
<b>Total assets</b>	<b>1 611 414.09</b>	<b>1 227 064.71</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>
Trade payables	108 647.50	47 138.65
Accrued expenses and deferred charges	403 964.54	143 068.40
Short-term borrowed capital	512 612.04	190 207.05
Short-term borrowed capital	512 612.04	190 207.05
Organization capital	1 098 802.05	1 036 857.66
<b>Total liabilities</b>	<b>1 611 414.09</b>	<b>1 227 064.71</b>

The full annual statement can be found on our website.

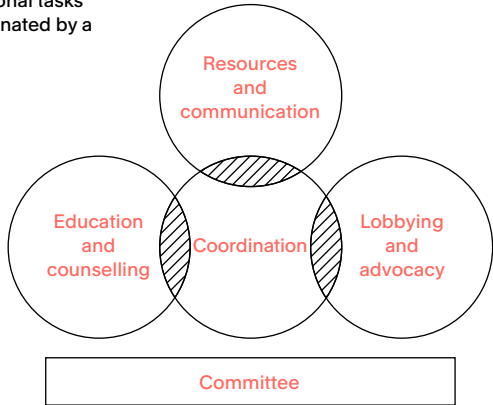
## Profit an loss account (in CHF)

	2023	2022
Membership contributions	2 500.00	6 700.00
Donations without a specific purpose	275 264.53	334 025.38
Donations for a specific purpose	0.00	4 427.00
Income from projects	378 102.90	408 669.15
Income from patrons	848 446.00	918 750.02
<b>Total income</b>	<b>1 504 313.43</b>	<b>1 672 571.55</b>
Labour expenditure	630 204.64	713 882.69
Travel and hospitality	2 655.30	7 711.05
Expenditure	186 401.16	206 556.79
Material expenditure	777.33	2 709.00
Direct project costs	820 038.43	930 859.53
Patron acquisition costs	291 367.22	312 397.23
Donation acquisition costs	75 798.43	147 367.57
Institutions acquisition costs	63 708.48	58 145.70
Fundraising	430 874.13	517 910.50
Labour expenditure	95 849.51	90 686.58
Travel expenses	13 968.26	11 316.32
Material expenditure/Further education	38 576.68	24 464.29
Maintenance costs	29 815.09	40 316.01
Collective costs	11 896.07	15 864.22
Depreciation	777.32	2 709.00
<b>Total Administrative Expenses</b>	<b>190 882.93</b>	<b>185 356.42</b>
<b>Operating Result</b>	<b>62 517.94</b>	<b>38 445.10</b>
Financial profit/Bank charges	-1 070.30	-4 842.60
<b>Total Financial Result</b>	<b>-1 070.30</b>	<b>-4 842.60</b>
<b>Result before adjustment of fund capital</b>	<b>61 447.64</b>	<b>33 602.50</b>
Allocated Funds	-38 000.00	-34 000.00
Withdrawn Funds	12 032.40	11 876.00
<b>Total Fund Adjustment</b>	<b>-25 967.60</b>	<b>-22 124.00</b>
<b>Annual Result</b>	<b>35 480.04</b>	<b>11 478.50</b>
Extraordinary Revenue	496.75	0.00
Extraordinary Results	496.75	0.00
<b>Profit for teh Year</b>	<b>35 976.79</b>	<b>11 478.50</b>

# About us

2023 has been an eventful year for the team of Brava. We improved and solidified our structures with an organisational development process. During this process, we decided to make the decision-making processes more efficient. From 2024 onwards, overall organisational tasks and decisions will now be coordinated by a separate circle. The coordinating circle consists of one delegate each from the three circles resource and communication, education and counselling and lobbying and advocacy. Any member of staff may become a delegate for the coordination circle and we will rotate the delegates. The new organisation chart.

Overall organisational tasks will now be coordinated by a separate circle.



Furthermore, we said goodbye to several long-standing members of staff and gained new committed people.

We very much thank Sim Egger, Simon Geiser, Ledwina Siegrist, Kathrin Beck, and Nicole Niedermüller (committee), who have played a key role in shaping the organisation with their commitment and work.

We welcomed the following people in 2023: Muriel Günther took over as responsible for fundraising in April, while Julia Meier took up the position of Head of political activities in December. Aina Waeber and Christine Hotz joined our committee in the spring of 2023. We are very happy that new people will join our team and our committee at the beginning of 2024.



The team at the anniversary in December: f.l.t.r. Rozë Berisha, Mandy Abou Shoak, Tahmina Taghiyeva, Aina Waeber, Nathalie Jufer, Flurina Peyer, Sim Egger, Muriel Günther, Julia Meier, Nadia Lanfranchi, Fatma Leblebici (missing are: Marwa Younes, My Hang Thai, Christine Hotz).



# Thank you

Only thanks to the support of our donors we can work every day against gender-based violence and sexism and ensure that, in future, all women in Switzerland will be able to lead a self-determined life without gender-based violence.

In order to reach this goal, we work with the following approaches:

- Counselling for persons affected by violence, their families or experts
- Political activities for concrete measures against gender-based violence
- Empowerment workshops with and for migrants
- Trainings for migration and asylum experts
- Campaigns and awareness-raising to make gender-based violence visible

“In the name of the whole team I would like to sincerely thank the almost 8 000 people and 30 institutions that have generously supported us. You enabled us to continue to fight for our mission, even with today’s global challenges. Your commitment and your solidarity are invaluable to us and give us the strength to continue our important work. Thank you very much for this continued support.”

Muriel Günther, Responsible fundraising



# Become a sponsor

Become a sponsor now and send a clear sign against gender-based violence and help us to implement concrete and comprehensive long-term projects for persons affected by violence. We thank you very much!



[www.brava-ngo.ch/donate](http://www.brava-ngo.ch/donate)

Do you have any questions?  
Please contact us: 031 311 38 79,  
[spenden@brava-ngo.ch](mailto:spenden@brava-ngo.ch)



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# Brava

## Ending violence against women together

Formerly TERRE DES FEMMES Switzerland



“Happy birthday to one of the bravest, wildest feminist organisation that we have!”

Tamara Funciello, National Councillor