



Intersex-Inclusive Pride Flag: Backgrounder

June 2024

Created by:

Giancarlo Cerquozzi (he/him) – Manager of Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Data – Public Service Pride Network

Valentino Vecchietti (she/they) – Creator of the Intersex-Inclusive Pride Flag

Accessibility Review and Copy Editing Provided By:

Vivian Kotila (she/they) – Public Service Pride Network Member and Administrative Assistant, Emergency Management and Programs Branch – Public Safety Canada

In 2021, Valentino Vecchietti (she/they) — an award winning intersex equality campaigner of [Intersex Equality Rights UK](#), writer, artist, consultant and diversity speaker — adapted the Progress Pride flag design to incorporate the intersex flag, thereby creating the Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag.

In the spirit of all previous iterations of the Pride flag, the Intersex-Inclusive Pride Flag continues to represent persons with diverse sexual orientations and those with diverse gender identities and expressions, whilst now also explicitly including the intersex community.



As of 2024, the Intersex-Inclusive Pride Flag is the official Pride flag of the federal public service of Canada.

This flag — *our Flag* — is an important cultural symbol, creating space for and welcoming the broader [Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex and asexual \(2SLGBTQIA+\) communities](#). This flag exists so that we can celebrate and feel the joy of our existence, as well as allowing us to come together in solidarity and allyship, to uplift each other's voices, and to campaign for inclusion, equity, and representation in all spheres of society.

Since its inception, the Pride flag has been ever evolving to represent the voices, needs and lived experiences of the broader 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

The journey to the Intersex-Inclusive Pride Flag follows the efforts of other trailblazers who created prominent 2SLGBTQIA+ symbols to represent our communities. Valentino, in her redesign, has maintained the meaning and intentions of the creators of all previous iterations of the Pride flag, of which are further explored below:

1978 Gilbert Baker - The Rainbow Pride Flag:

The use of a rainbow, as a unifying symbol for the community, was a conscious, natural and necessary choice for Baker. He noted the rainbow came from the earliest recorded history as a symbol of hope, and perfectly countered the pink triangle (another symbol for the 'gay movement' but one closely tied to a dark chapter in the history of 'gay rights' during World War II).



Initially, the Rainbow Pride flag featured eight horizontal stripes of varying rainbow colours, but due to production hurdles and commercialization it was whittled down to six. In Baker's six-stripe flag, the red, orange and yellow horizontal stripes respectively represent *life, healing* and *sunlight*; the green, blue and purple horizontal stripes respectively represent *nature, serenity* and *spirit*.

More information about Baker's Rainbow Pride flag can be found at the [Gilbert Baker Foundation website](#) (English only).

1999 Monica Helms - The Trans Pride flag:

Trans (or transgender) is an umbrella term for those whose gender identity and/or gender expression does not correspond to their sex assignment at birth. Helms' five-stripe flag represents natural diversity in gender identity and expression, and uses horizontal pink and blue stripes to represent colours that have traditionally been associated with girls and boys, with a white horizontal stripe to represent people who are intersex, transitioning, or who do not have a defined gender.



2013 Morgan Carpenter - The Intersex Pride flag:



Intersex is an umbrella term for natural diversity in our primary and secondary sex characteristics. Primary sex characteristics are those we are born with, such as chromosome patterns and sex organs. Secondary sex characteristics are those we develop at puberty. Carpenter's flag is "comprised of a golden yellow field, with a purple circle emblem. The colours and circle don't just avoid referencing gender stereotypes, like the colours pink and blue, they seek to completely avoid use of symbols that have anything to do with gender at all. Instead the circle is unbroken and unornamented, symbolising wholeness and completeness, and our potentialities. We are still fighting for bodily autonomy and genital integrity, and this symbolises the right to be who and how we want to be."

More information about Carpenter's Intersex Pride flag can be found [on their personal website](#) (English only).

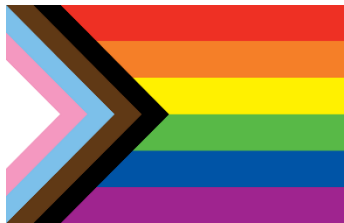
2017 Amber Hikes - The More Color, More Pride flag:

Hikes was the Executive Director of the Philadelphia Mayor's Office of LGBTQ Affairs when they introduced the More Colors, More Pride Flag. Building off of the Rainbow Pride flag, horizontal black and brown stripes were added to bring greater representation of people of colour to the 'LGBTQ movement.' An important part of this message was to recognize the struggle and barriers people of colour faced (and continue to face) within the community. The flag gained significant public attention, both negative and positive as it was the first time Baker's original flag design was modified in a



significant way, and effectively opened the door to further development of the Pride flag to be even more inclusive.

2018 Daniel Quasar - Progress Pride flag:



Through this re-envisioning, which saw an amalgamation of the Rainbow Pride, Trans Pride and More Color, More Pride flags, Quasar added greater emphasis and intentionality to the actual design of the Pride flag. The main section of the flag (background) includes the traditional six-striped Rainbow Pride flag, and has been left intact to honour the legacy of the meaning of the stripes (life, healing, sunlight, nature, serenity and spirit). The Trans Pride flag stripes (blue, pink and white) and marginalized community stripes (brown and black) were “shifted to the Hoist of the flag and given a new chevron shape. The arrow points to the right to show forward movement, while being along the hoist edge [to show] that progress still needs to be made.” Quasar also included an intention to represent those who have died of AIDS and those living with HIV through the black horizontal stripe.

Quasar notes that “this new design forces the viewer to confront on [sic] their own feelings towards the original Pride flag and its meaning as well as the differing opinions on who that flag really represents, while also bringing into clear focus the current needs within our community. You can’t avoid the message as it is right there in front of you.”

More information about Quasar’s Progress Pride flag can be found [on the Progress Initiative website](#) (English only).

2021 Valentino Vecchietti - Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag

Upon its release, Vecchietti’s Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag became a global viral sensation and was internationally welcomed as the new Pride flag, increasing ‘LGBTI+ allyship’ and intersex visibility, representation, and inclusion worldwide. Vecchietti maintained the meanings and intentions of the creators of all previous iterations of the Pride flags. The rainbow section of the Flag not only represents sexual orientations but also recognizes diverse orientations such as asexual and aromantic. Representation of natural diversity in sex characteristics has been extended to the intersex community through the inclusion of a golden yellow field, with a purple circle emblem into the Flag. The Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag also enshrines the international human rights framework found in the [Yogyakarta Principles plus10](#) known as *SOGIESC*, which recognizes and calls for protections from discrimination for those with natural diversity in: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity and Expression and Sex Characteristics (SOGIESC).



Use of the Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag is permitted. However, Valentino Vecchietti, the creator of the Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag, asks to be credited/acknowledged in association with its use. More information about Vecchietti’s Intersex-Inclusive Pride flag can be found [on the Global Inclusive Pride Flag website](#) (English only).

Additional Learning: Helpful links

- [Federal 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan 2022](#)
- [2SLGBTQI+ Secretariat](#)
- [2SLGBTQI+ terminology – Glossary and common acronyms](#)
- [Recommendations on gender-inclusive language](#)
- [Gender and Sexual Diversity Glossary](#)
- [Public Service Pride Network](#)
- [Guide for Two-Spirit, Transgender, Non-Binary, and Gender-Diverse Employees in the Federal Public Service](#)
- [Learn About Pronouns](#)