

Global Centre for Pluralism announces finalists for 2021 Global Pluralism Award

10 global finalists selected for contributions to advancing pluralism and respect for diversity worldwide

November 08, 2021, Ottawa, Canada – The [Global Centre for Pluralism](#) today announced the 10 finalists for the 2021 Global Pluralism Award, an honour that celebrates excellence in the field of pluralism. The Award is presented once every two years to individuals, organizations and governments around the world for exemplary achievements in building more inclusive societies where diversity is protected.

“The Centre is inspired by the creativity and resilience of this year’s finalists, whose achievements offer tangible, inspiring examples of the power of pluralism in today’s world,” said Meredith Preston McGhie, Secretary General of the Global Centre for Pluralism. “Amidst troubling global trends of division and reduced civic space, these finalists are doing incredible work to raise awareness, build connections, and change minds, narratives, and structures.”

The Global Centre for Pluralism received 500 nominations spanning 70 countries for the 2021 Global Pluralism Award. Nominees undergo a rigorous review process and are selected by an independent, [international jury of experts](#) from disciplines related to pluralism.

“Pluralism is a description of the respect, co-operation and shared purpose which make communities work,” said the Right Honourable Joe Clark, former Prime Minister of Canada, and Jury Chair. “These finalists have made a remarkable contribution to pluralism. They show originality and courage in dealing with challenges of injustice, inequality and exclusion in today’s world.”

In Afghanistan, the Dominican Republic, Kosovo, Israel, India, Kenya, Hong Kong, Canada, Malawi, and globally—the 2021 finalists have made extraordinary strides to advance pluralism through education, community building, socio-economic development, and the arts.

“Pluralism is what will bind us together and help us maintain our diversity and our communities,” said Kim Ghattas, Emmy-Award winning journalist and Juror of the 2021 Global Pluralism Award. “The Global Pluralism Award reminds us of the incredible work that so many people are doing to advance pluralism across the globe. The sheer courage of these finalists is humbling and gives me a lot of hope.”

Three Pluralism Award winners will be announced at a virtual ceremony in February 2022. Each winner will receive a prize of CAD \$50,000 to further their work in support of pluralism.

Meet the 2021 Global Pluralism Award finalists (alphabetical):

- **All Out (Global)** is a global LGBT+ movement committed to creating a world where nobody has to sacrifice their family, freedom, safety or dignity because of who they are or who they love. Their work contributes to pluralism and the respect for diversity by building positive narratives about LGBT+ lives around the world, changing hearts and minds among potential allies and ultimately contributing to better lived experiences for LGBT+ communities.

- [ArtLords \(Afghanistan\)](#) combines street art and activism to facilitate social transformation and trauma healing. Founded in Afghanistan, ArtLords' collective of 'artists' have painted over 2,000 murals across the country's bomb-blast walls, spreading messages of peace, justice and tolerance. ArtLords is also pivoting their work to new global contexts, including Afghan refugee communities, with a vision to one day hold exhibitions around the world.
- **Ms. Carolina Contreras (Dominican Republic)** is a social entrepreneur who empowers Afro-Latinxs by redefining beauty standards through [Miss Rizos](#) (in English, "Miss Curls"), a global movement that seeks to normalize and celebrate natural hair. With natural hair salons and youth empowerment initiatives in Santo Domingo and New York City, Ms. Contreras is empowering thousands of women and girls to celebrate diversity, challenge stereotypes and rewrite a deeply embedded colonial narrative about what it means to be beautiful.
- [Community Building Mitrovica \(Kosovo\)](#) is a grassroots organization that creates safe spaces for dialogue and relationship-building across ethnic lines in northern Kosovo. Working in Mitrovica, a city known for its ethnic diversity and ethnic divides, the organization connects Serbian and Albanian communities that have been separated by war and mistrust. By gathering citizens around issues of peacebuilding, human rights and economic development, Community Building Mitrovica builds links of trust and contributes to advancing a pluralist society.
- [Hand in Hand: Center for Jewish-Arab Education in Israel \(Israel\)](#) is a network of integrated, bilingual and multicultural schools equipping a new generation to live together in cooperation and respect. In these schools, Hebrew and Arabic languages have equal status, as do both cultures and national narratives. With over 2,000 students and supported by a community of active citizens who come together in solidarity and dialogue, Hand in Hand is working to build a shared, inclusive society.
- **Mr. Lenin Raghuvanshi (India)** is a human rights defender working to advance the rights of India's most marginalized communities. He is co-founder of the [People's Vigilance Committee on Human Rights](#), an inclusive social movement that challenges the patriarchy and the caste system. Mr. Raghuvanshi works at the village level across 5 states in northern India to strengthen local institutions, promote human rights and to build connections across the society.
- [Namati Kenya \(Kenya\)](#) uses legal empowerment to aid historically excluded communities who lack national identification documents needed to access even the most basic services. Since 2013, Namati Kenya has supported more than 12,000 Kenyans in efforts to obtain these legal identity documents. Through a network of community paralegals, the organization builds legal awareness, aiming to empower communities to overcome discrimination and cultivate inclusivity and belonging.
- [Ms. Puja Kapai \(Hong Kong\)](#) is an academic, lawyer and social justice advocate who challenges gendered and racialized cultural norms and champions equal rights for Hong Kong's ethnic minorities. Through an intersectional approach that combines research, advocacy and grassroots mobilization, Ms. Kapai has garnered unprecedented attention to the status of ethnic minorities

in Hong Kong, contributing to the abolishment of racially segregated schools for ethnic minority children.

- **Ms. Rose LeMay (Canada)** is an educator from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the CEO and founder of [Indigenous Reconciliation Group](#). Through her organization, Ms. LeMay works to change the mindsets of non-Indigenous Canadians, encouraging them to take the first steps towards reconciliation. Ms. LeMay has spent her career advocating for Indigenous inclusion and has educated and coached thousands of Canadians on cultural competence and anti-racism.
- **Mr. Trésor Nzengu Mpauni (Malawi)**, also known as Menes la Plume, is a Congolese hip-hop artist and slam poet living in Dzaleka Refugee Camp, who uses his talents to raise awareness on issues surrounding refugees. Mr. Mpauni is the founder of [Tumaini Festival](#), the only international arts and music festival based at a refugee camp, promoting intercultural harmony and greater understanding of the refugee experience. Since 2014, he has attracted hundreds of performers and thousands of attendees from around the world to what is today one of Malawi's premier festivals.

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About the Global Centre for Pluralism

The Global Centre for Pluralism is an independent, charitable organization founded by His Highness the Aga Khan and the Government of Canada. The Centre works with policy leaders, educators and community builders around the world to amplify and implement the transformative power of pluralism. For more information, visit www.pluralism.ca

About the Global Pluralism Award

The Global Pluralism Award recognizes pluralism in action. It celebrates the extraordinary achievements of organizations, individuals and governments who are tackling the challenge of living peacefully and productively with diversity. For more information, visit <https://award.pluralism.ca/>