ANNUAL REPORT
RAINBOW RESOURCE CENTRE

1973-2023

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MESSAGE

Chair of the Board



As a resident of West Broadway, the new home of Rainbow Resource Centre—on the corner of Broadway and Good Street—has become a regular part of my week. On the walk to work, driving to get groceries, or as I wander the neighbourhood to meet friends, passing the Centre is now an almost-daily event.

Over the course of the year, I've watched carefully as the first phase of construction for Place of Pride took shape. At first it was digging, and then it was a foundation. Lumber, steel, concrete, and glass, noise and quiet, and yet more noise: a new structure was coming into form. Wilson House, too, has evolved as staff moved from one facility to the other, changed signage, and began to make this historic house a home for our communities.

Changes on the site were uneven—at moments it seemed as though nothing was happening, and at other times the pace of progress seemed unimaginably fast. Alongside moments of joy and anticipation were moments of doubt and

uncertainty—as funding continues to come together and we work with our partners at Westminster Housing to realize an ambitious vision for the site, there were days where I've wondered if construction would continue, or if we'd be forced to walk back the progress we'd achieved.

So too was it for our communities over the past 50 years. Ups and downs, triumphs and set backs. There were years when we quietly delivered programs and services with stability and humility, and there were years where we proclaimed our presence loudly and demanded progress—and there have also been times where we've wondered if we'd be forced to walk back so much of the progress we've achieved.

And so this past year, as we celebrate our 50th anniversary, we watched as the painstaking efforts of our volunteers, staff and Board members past and present have physically manifest on Broadway, steps from where our community has protested—and no doubt will protest again—so that 2SLGBTQ+ communities have spaces, and places, where we can thrive.

Our work together isn't done, but thanks to the contributions of countless supporters and champions, friends and allies, this year marks the first time in our 50-year history that we have a place to call home. Here's to what we will achieve together in our next 50 years!

MATTHEW CUTLER

Chair of The Board

A MESSAGE FROM THE

Executive Director

In 2022-23, Rainbow Resource Centre marked our 50th anniversary. Together, we reflected on this organization's five-decade journey of 2SLGBTQ+ identity, advocacy, and community. We recognized the struggles and triumphs of the early activists who fought for equality and memorialized the evolution of Rainbow's own identity, from a student group at the University of Manitoba to a fledgling organization that supported the community with a single phone line, and the long struggle to become a social service whose programs and services are determined by community. Rainbow is the longest running queer and trans centre in Canada and today, we are the leader in 2SLGBTQ+ space, services, and advocacy.

Amidst this reflection, we began building and planning our move to Rainbow's new home in the West Broadway neighbourhood. Place of Pride will be a complete campus of queer services that includes the country's first affordable independent living for queer and trans seniors. After 50 years, we will finally have a permanent home and a purposely designed queer space for community to belong.

We have seen a distinct rise in hate and anti-queer and trans rhetoric. We are finding ourselves addressing the many issues 2SLGBTQ+ people have faced over the years—hatred, misinformation, and threats to our hard-won basic rights. In our 50 years at the forefront of the fight for 2SLGBTQ+ rights and equality, we remain



steadfast in the face of this renewed adversity. We will continue to stand against oppression, and we will continue to advocate for a future where 2SLGBTQ+ people thrive.

I have spent the last year reflecting on the journey of our community. How far we've come, how much there is to lose and how powerful it is when we speak with one voice. Rainbow is proud of its place at the heart of Manitoba's 2SLGBTQ+ community. We embody the boundless spirit of resilience and united in pride, we will continue to fight for and celebrate queer & trans joy. The next 50 years starts now!

NOREEN MIAN

Executive Director

THIS PAST YEAR AT RAINBOW:

43 volunteers

contributed nearly **1350 hours** to support Rainbow and Manitoba's 2SLGBTQ+ community.

1064 information or support calls

SOCIAL SUPPORT GROUPS

704 People received counselling

HOSTED THE BIENNIAL GSA CONFERENCE

ATTENDED BY 200 YOUTH



308 OLDER ADULTS ATTENDED OVER THE RAINBOW

Delivered 68 school workshops

AND VISITED 44 GSAS

DELIVERED workplace workshops + 5 workplace consultations



Welcoming and Non Judgemental Client Care

Counselling continues to be one of the most requested services we provide at Rainbow, as we strive to meet the mental health needs of the 2SLGBTQ+ community. We have been able to add an additional counsellor to our team, Tia Oberoi. Tia is present at all youth programming events and provides short-term counselling to youth ages 10–21. We also received additional funding to welcome Chrystal Neault-Lount as a permanent part of our counselling team. With the additions of Tia and Chrystal, our capacity to support the mental health needs of youth, their families, and older adults has grown significantly.

We continue to offer virtual and telephone counselling sessions to clients outside the city perimeter, including rural and Northern communities. Those located nearby Brandon can book an in-person session with our counsellor, Amanda Trelford.



"I feel like I really grew into the person that I wanted to be"

- COUNSELLING CLIENT

"Being in a counselling space with a queer trans counsellor was really meaningful for me. It allowed me to open up in ways that I have always struggled with. I felt like all of me was really able to be in the room."

- COUNSELLING CLIENT

To manage the demand for our free counselling services, we developed three counselling intake sessions per year where we triage counselling applications. We understand that not everyone has equal access to services and that, historically and presently, many population groups have been underserved. We strive to remove barriers by making our intake process equitable. We identified six population groups who we prioritized during our triaging process, including those who:

- Identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or a person of colour.
- Are a person with a disability.
- Are residing in a rural or Northern community.
- Are a youth (aged 21 and under).
- Are an older adult (aged 55±).
- Are financially insecure.

This change has allowed us to offer our counselling services in a more equitable way to address and support the greatest need in our community.

We continue to consult and collaborate with external agencies, schools, and service providers to help build capacity in these fields to support 2SLGBTQ+ clients, participants, and students. This collaborative approach ensures that external service providers and agencies are using best practices in service delivery and providing continuity of service for community members. We strive to ensure that 2SLGBTO+ identities, experiences, and relationships are seen, understood, and respected in systems and agencies outside of Rainbow.

Rainbow's counselling has had a positive impact on members of the 2SLGBTQ+ community and has played an important role in supporting community members moving forward in their healing journeys.

"I love how welcoming and non judgemental the staff here are. Its a beautiful place with beautiful people. I always looked forward to coming here every two weeks."

- COUNSELLING CLIENT

Safe, Accessible, and Supportive Programming and **Events for Youth**

The goals of the Youth Program are to foster resilience, improve mental wellness, and encourage positive relationships to self, others, and the wider 2SLGBTQ+ community. This year the Youth Program expanded our reach by adding a new age group for youth 10-13 years old. In addition to this, we changed our older youth groups to 14-17 and 18-21 to better meet the needs of our participants. Our "Ages 10-13" group quickly became our most well-attended programming night!

We were pleased to offer a variety of programming options for 2SLGBTO+ youth this year, including slime making, identity collages, rock painting, and discussion nights. This year, Youth Program facilitated many thoughtful discussions around topics such as "Accessibility in Pride", "Queer

"I feel better connected to the community when I'm at Rainbow."

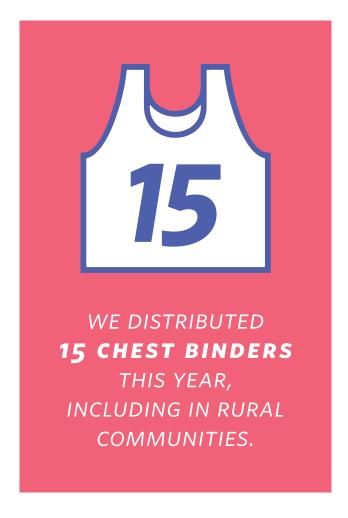
- YOUTH PROGRAM PARTICIPANT

Representation in Media", and "Gatekeeping in the 2SLGBTQ+ Community". We were also happy to run an 8-week Food Program with Owen Campbell for youth to learn kitchen skills. As a finale for the Food Program, participants cooked an Intergenerational Winter Meal for the Older Adult Program and were each given a bundle of common kitchen and cooking utensils.

The BIPOC Youth Program is an extended branch of Youth Program intended for 2SLGBTQ+ youth who identify as Black, Indigenous, and/or people of color. Within the BIPOC Youth Program, youth learned life skills and teachings that focused on the intersections of their identities. Youth participated in creative programming, such as rock painting, BIPOC identity pin making, documentary screenings, and discussion nights. The BIPOC Youth Program has been described as an essential space for youth to flourish, grow, and take up space. We strive to meet the unique needs of queer and trans BIPOC youth to allow them to show up as their most authentic selves.

In addition to our in-person Youth Program, we continue to provide support to over 100 youth on our Discord server. Due to the popularity of our Discord server, we changed the ages to reflect our in-person programming. This change allowed youth to connect more with their respective age groups and allowed us to support needs specific to their age groups.

We met with guidance counsellors in Winnipeg and surrounding communities to distribute essential gender-affirming items to students who requested them. In addition to distributing gender-affirming gear, we were able to meet youth's individual needs by distributing safer sex supplies, menstrual care items, safer substance use supplies, HIV self-tests, and pregnancy tests.



The combination of Instagram, Discord, and in-person programming have aided youth in seeking peer support and assistance from staff. Programming staff have supported youth with their mental wellbeing, building relationships, and navigating inclusivity in healthcare and education. Youth Program staff provide accessible and safe mental health counselling support to 2SLGBTQ+youth, their families, and other service providers.

Big Thanks to Our **Dedicated Team of** Volunteers

As we moved through 2022 and the early months of 2023, Rainbow focused on rebuilding our volunteer base and continuing to support our existing groups as we re-opened to the public and prepared to move to a new location in 2023. Our dedicated team of support group facilitators worked throughout the year to keep the support groups up and running, see that their participants' needs were met, and ensure that their groups were prepared to move into a new programming space.

CASUAL EVENT POOL

The Centre has a pool of volunteers who assist us in planning and facilitating events. This includes doing prep work, tabling at off-site events such as sports games and community festivals, and helping with large scale events such as Winnipeg Pride and the Gala.

RAINBOW REPS

This year, the Centre launched its Rainbow Rep program. Rainbow Reps are volunteers that cover the front desk at times when staff is otherwise

unavailable, assisting during the day as the first point of contact for people coming into the Centre, and during the evening with welcoming guests and participants.

LIBRARY

As Rainbow prepared to move to its new space, library volunteers played a vital role in sorting and weeding the library collection. This is an ongoing project, and library volunteers have an important role ahead in maintaining the collection once it has been set up at the new location.

GROUP FACILITATORS

Rainbow has seven support groups, which could not exist without the help of the group facilitators. Facilitators work throughout the month to plan and execute group activities, answer questions from participants, connect them with resources, maintain the group's social media, and work with Rainbow staff to ensure that the group's needs are being met.

NEW PRIDE OF WINNIPEG

A social and support group for newcomers to Canada. The group meets once a month, creating a safer space for 2SLGBTQ+ newcomers to meet others in the community and share their experience, as well as providing a resource for them to find support with the unique challenges they face as newcomers to Winnipeg.

THE TRANSFEMININE CIRCLE:

A support group for people who identify as transfeminine or are questioning/exploring their gender. The group meets in-person once a month and maintains a chat where they keep in touch online, offering an important lifeline and source of support and community for those in search of it.

TRANSMASCULINE MANITOBA:

A support group for people who identify as transmasculine or are questioning/exploring their gender. The group meets monthly, offering a safer space for individuals to share experiences and advice, find resources in the city, and meet people in the community.

RAINBOW ALLIANCE FOR MEN (RAM):

A social group for community members who identify as male, or otherwise have a personal relationship with masculinity/male identity regardless of where they are on the gender spectrum. The group meets twice a month, with a mix of onsite, offsite, and online programming.

BLINK:

A play group for transgender and gender creative children that meets once at the centre on Sunday mornings. Parents bring their children to participate in a craft activity and it provides a chance for both kids and parents to socialize and meet other families like themselves. The name is a mix of blue and pink, meant to signify the phrase "not only blue, not only pink" to capture the fluidity of gender.

PARENTS, FRIENDS, AND FAMILY OF TRANSGENDER INDIVIDUALS (PFFOTI):

A support group for families and allies of individuals who fall anywhere under the trans, non-binary, and gender diverse umbrellas. The group meets twice a month, sharing lived experiences, developing connections, and learning how to best support their loved ones.

THE DEN (DIVERSIFYING THE ENBY NETWORK):

A social group for non-binary, gender diverse, and gender-questioning folks that offers a safer space to explore gender through community connection during group discussions, gender-affirming clothing swaps, and restaurant outings. Each month, the group has one on-site meeting, one online meeting, and one off-site meeting.





Many Opportunities for Meaningful Discussions

The Training and Education Coordinator provides workshops, presentations, and consultations for workplaces in the not-for-profit and corporate sectors, industry, labour, and post-secondary institutions across the province.

In 2022, we began offering our first in-person workshops since the pandemic. This created more opportunities for meaningful discussions with participants. The energy and desire for learning has been palpable during in-person sessions. We also continued to offer virtual workshops to ensure we could reach folks from broader regions.

Many informal consultations took place over the phone or by email. These consultations work to create safer spaces relating to hiring practices, signage, policies, and inclusive language. These consultations build relationships and often lead to new workshop bookings.

Participant evaluation forms indicate that we exceeded expectations and that participants can apply the knowledge they have gained from our workshops to their workplaces and personal lives. Participants frequently cited our workshops as engaging, the presenter passionate, and the information important.

"Both of the training sessions that [Rainbow Resource Centre] did for us are invaluable to our workΓ.7 I appreciate your knowledge and the sharing from both of you. I recommend this training to all of our staff." - workshop participant

"I left today's session a much better version of myself. I look forward to continuing this learning journey with all my newfound knowledge and understanding."

- WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT



CAMPAURORA

August 14-17, 2022 @ Camp Brereton

This year Camp Aurora was finally back inperson after running virtually for two years. Fifty 2SLGBTQ+ youth from across the province (ages 14 to 19) joined us at Camp Brereton in the Whiteshell to learn new skills, make new friends, and build memories. While most campers were located within Winnipeg, some youth joined from other parts of Manitoba such as Gillam, Steinbach, Swan Lake, Selkirk, and Moosehorn.

Throughout their time at Camp, campers noticeably transformed. Youth were expressing themselves through clothing, makeup, new pronouns and new names, and used their voices to share their opinions, ideas, and personal experiences.

Each day started with an Intersex Inclusive Progress Pride flag raising where Campers set their intentions for each day and participated in a smudge led by Two-Spirit and Indigenous leaders in our community. At Camp, campers were able to: engage in conversations centered around consent, healthy relationships, and boundaries; express themselves through the mindful art practice of rock painting; bead with a local Indigenous artist; create stop-motion videos that were shown to Camp as a "film screening" before our drag show and dance; learn about 2SLGBTQ+ history globally, and the history and culture of Drag in Winnipeg; learn how to apply drag makeup; and participate in two identity-based spaces (Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer Space and the BIPOC Circle of Support).

The BIPOC Circle was a space that allowed youth to celebrate their intersecting identities, while also talking about the additional challenges they face. Youth were able to connect and share stories about their experiences.

The Two-Spirit (2S) and Indigiqueer Space

connected campers with 2S and Indigiqueer Knowledge Keepers and Elders. Youth received teachings around sacred medicines and plants, and were provided little moccasins when receiving teachings about grief. The youth expressed admiration and gratefulness for the 2S and Indigiqueer space, and the facilitators were gifted tobacco.

The youth put on an incredible performance at the talent show. There was singing, poetry, origami, drag performances, and so much more! The entire room was filled with cheering and clapping in support of those that decided to show off a special skill. Camp Aurora hosted a dance on the last night where local drag queens performed and brought a heightened energy to the entire Camp experience. Youth danced the night away, feeling free and without judgement!

Camp concluded with farewell activities, which gave time for campers to reflect on their time at Camp Aurora and how it was an unforgettable experience filled with magic and joy.

"I learned I'm accepted for who I am as a person"

- CAMP AURORA 2022 CAMPER

"The camp leaders made me feel hopeful and valid. The indigenous leaders inspired me to start my reconnection journey"

- CAMP AURORA 2022 CAMPER

"I gained useful advice and affirming connections that will benefit and influence my future"

- CAMP AURORA 2022 CAMPER

"I learned my name, my pronouns and my sense of self worth"

- CAMP AURORA 2022 CAMPER



We Create Safe **Opportunities for** Honest, Meaningful Discussions with **Participants**

The School Equity & Inclusion Coordinator provides workshop, outreach, and consultation with schools, child- and youth-serving organization, First Nations communities, and Indigenous organizations across the province.

Our workshops allow folks to learn more about their families, their staff, their students, and themselves.

"I learnt more about how my children are feeling inside and how I can make them more comfortable to be them!"

- PARTICIPANT

"I really appreciated the safe space provided to our group by the facilitator. In discussing 2SLGBTQ+, it can be almost stressful and worrisome for me to ask questions with a worry of being offensive or not saying something correctly."

- PARTICIPANT

We are a Strong and Awesome Community

The 2022-2023 year has seen Over the Rainbow (OTR) emerge from the pandemic, grow in capacity and membership, and secure ongoing provincial funding that ensures OTR will continue to flourish indefinitely.

OTR is a mix of virtual and in-person programming, as well as special events and field trips, with programming occurring three to five times a week. OTR currently has 160 active

"For me, the best part of OTR is connecting with other members of the community, so I feel less isolated. The informational programming is great. I learn a lot that I probably wouldn't research."

- OTR PARTICIPANT

members who receive a monthly newsletter and weekly updates, plus 102 "ally" subscribers who receive only the monthly newsletter.

For virtual programming,

we continued our partnerships with community members and organizations:

- WRHA's Healthy Aging Resource Team: presentations on topics related to healthy ageing and community resources.
- Canadian Mental Health Association's Well-Being Learning Centre: presentations on topics related to self-care and wellness.
- Lunch & Learns: we concluded the 18-monthlong Indigenous Voices series, where we heard from Jennine Krauchi, Jessica Canard, Sommer Bousquet, Allen Sutherland, Anita Stallion, and more. In January, we shifted our Lunch & Learn series to Global Voices, to hear from voices of the global BIPOC 2SLGBTQ+ communities.

"I have been going to [Rainbow's] programs/ events since the 1990s when you were located at Confusion Corner. I was younger then and now, at 64, I really appreciate all the OTR programing." - OTR PARTICIPANT

Other programming included:

- "OTR Goes...": a monthly field trip to popular destinations, like Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra, Royal Manitoba Theatre Centre, Manitoba Legislative Assembly Building, Ukrainian Labour Temple, and regular bowling trips to Park Alleys.
- Virtual Coffee & Chat: a pillar of OTR, the conversations run from sharing of community knowledge and resources to deeply personal, supportive stories.
- In-Person Coffee & Chat: a pillar of OTR with different participants than the Virtual Coffee & Chat. Again, the sharing of knowledge and personal storytelling make this a safer space where participants learn and share aspects of themselves in ways that they might not be able to in heteronormative groups.
- Other aspects of our programming included: Peer-to-Peer Phoneline, with 175+ hours of volunteer calls made: Rainbow Resource Centre's DEI workshops; drop-in hours, which is dedicated one-on-one time with participants to assist with resource navigation; and marching in the Pride Parade.

In the last 12 months, OTR also hosted two special events:

- Legends of Pride (Pride 2022): a free, five-day virtual lunch-hour series, featuring five "legends" of Manitoba's 2SLGBTQ+ community sharing powerful stories about their journey and the history of the 2SLGBTQ+ community in Manitoba. Speakers included: Phil Graham, Syndee Thiebert, Barbara Bruce (OM), Shandi Strong, and Allen Morrison.
- Planning With Pride (November 2022): a three-day national, virtual conference designed to engage 2SLGBTQ+ older adults and those who support them in important conversations about healthy ageing, long-term care, housing, end-of-life, and grief. We hosted 45 speakers, representing 30+ organizations and universities, with 25+ breakout sessions, and focused on unique opportunities to mix community leaders with academics. Approximately 250 participants attended nationally.

As we closed out the fiscal year, as part of the province's Manitoba, A Great Place to Age: Provincial Senior Strategy, Rainbow Resource Centre and OTR received ongoing funding that will secure OTR programming indefinitely and includes funding to support a new member of the education team that will focus on training in long-term care across the province.

We are Beyond Grateful

We want to express our sincere gratitude to our 473 donors, the heart of this community, for their generous support. Your contributions have played a crucial role in creating a sense of belonging, inclusivity, and acceptance within our community. Thanks to your support, Rainbow has been able to advocate for positive change, challenge discrimination, and promote diversity.

Throughout Pride month, over 30 local businesses showed their support for Rainbow by organizing fundraisers and generously contributing to our cause. In addition, Labatt Breweries made a significant donation of \$15,000 from a portion of the sales from their "Bud Light Pronoun Cans". We are grateful for the ongoing support from these businesses and their commitment to promoting inclusivity and diversity.

Our annual gala, themed "The Great Gatsby", made a triumphant return on Saturday, October 8th, at Fairmont Winnipeg. This year's event operated at half capacity, welcoming 362 guests. Our team and community were thrilled to support this fun-filled event once more. We extend our gratitude to RBC Royal Bank of Canada—our title sponsor—and all

our corporate sponsors for their continued support. Together, we raised just over \$105,000.

Giving Tuesday was another success this year, raising a total of \$17,480! We want to extend our sincere gratitude to all those who generously donated with a special thank you to Johnston Group for matching the first \$5,000 donated to this year's campaign.

FISCAL YEAR 2022-23



TRANS ID CLINIC

In partnership with Pro Bono Students Canada and the Law Society of Manitoba, the Trans ID Clinic assists trans, non-binary, and gender diverse individuals with name change and gender marker change applications in a space that strives to be trans-positive, non-judgmental, anti-oppressive, and inclusive. This partnership increases access to justice for trans, non-binary, and gender diverse individuals navigating legal barriers and the complex name change and gender marker change process.

For people who are transgender/non-binary/ Two-Spirit/gender diverse, having ID that correctly reflects their name and gender is not simply a matter of accuracy. For trans individuals, having an accurate ID is a matter of dignity. The lack of proper ID can pose barriers and create stigma when accessing medical care, receiving mental health services, applying for social assistance, securing housing and employment, opening bank accounts, voting, and travelling—all services and experiences that require proper government-issued identification.

Rainbow Resource Centre's Trans ID Clinic is held monthly and supported by four student lawyers from the Faculty of Law at the University of Manitoba and three supervising lawyers from the community. It is part of a network of eight other Trans ID Clinics held across Canada. In 2022/23, the Trans ID Clinic helped 109 community members to update their ID documents.

A bursary fund to support application fees associated with name and gender marker changes has been established thanks to the generous support of the City of Winnipeg and the OUTLaws from the University of Manitoba Faculty of Law.

THANK YOU TO THE SUPERVISING LAWYERS:

ELI MILNER MIRANDA GRAYSON MORGAN LAWRENCE KELSEY MCCUE BETHANY HUTLET



Creating Safer Spaces & Fostering Belonging

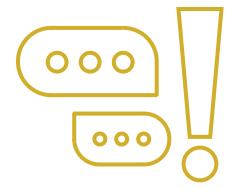
Our community relations initiatives focused on fostering belonging to the 2SLGBTQ+ community and creating safer spaces. We began with our first event: Drag Bowling at Park Alleys. The event surpassed expectations, selling out quickly and becoming a regular event. So far, we have organized three successful Drag Bowling events.

This year we released our annual calendar to celebrate our 50th anniversary; through archival photos, the calendar showcases the history of 2SLGBTQ+ activism in Manitoba and features Rainbow's history, including our evolving focus, transformation over the years, and participation in local events.

The Manitoba Moose, Winnipeg Jets, Winnipeg Goldeyes, and Blue Bombers partnered with Rainbow to enhance relationships with the sporting community. They prioritized creating a safer and more inclusive environment for 2SLGBTQ+ fans during their Diversity and Pride nights. The Moose and Jets distinguished

themselves by wearing Pride jerseys and organizing inclusive and educational events for all fans. Rainbow jerseys and hockey sticks were auctioned off, with proceeds benefiting Rainbow Resource Centre. These initiatives demonstrate the ongoing dedication of these sports teams to constant improvement.

We look forward to creating more opportunities for 2SLGBTQ+ folks to gather safely and connect with community!



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Black Market Provisions

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CFA Winnipeg Inc.

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& Knowledge Centre

Club 200

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