

Mira Philips

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Contact Information

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Education

University of Pennsylvania, School of Social Policy & Practice

PhD, 2022-

Social Welfare

- Faculty Advisor: Dr. Amy Castro, PhD

London School of Economics and Political Science

Master of Science (with Distinction), 2016-2017

Social Policy and Planning

- Thesis: *Indigenous Women, Sex Work, and Discursive Colonization in Canada*
- Faculty Advisor: Professor Lucinda Platt

University of Toronto

Honors Bachelor of Arts (with High Distinction), 2010-2014

Political Science and Ethics, Society & Law

Research Interests

- Gender, race, and ethnicity, informal labor, precarious labor, political economy, gender-based violence, qualitative research methods

Qualifications

- Extensive work in rights-based research and advocacy surrounding gender and racial equity, and social policy
- Strong intercultural competency, and effective in analytical and strategic thinking
- Design, conceptualize, and carry out qualitative research projects
- Consult on and conceptualize non-profit organizational, programming, and fundraising strategy
- Manage day-to-day operations of projects, and support teams in reaching project deadlines, fulfilling deliverables, and fostering skills in leadership, creative thinking, relationship-building, and communications

Professional Experience

The Athena Advisors Consulting (Washington, DC)

2019-2022

Senior Consultant

- Prepared prospect briefings for European and U.S. non-profit organizations, requiring targeted research on high net-worth individuals, corporations, and foundations, and delineating their connections to our clients. Clients include the Thurgood Marshall College Fund (TMCf), the Center for Values in International Development, and the environmental non-profit Delterra.
- Researched and prepared trainings, briefings, and memos to build clients' capacity in donor cultivation, donor stewardship, fundraising ethics, data management, corporate social responsibility, and other key aspects of organizational performance
- Developed, executed, and analyzed qualitative surveys and focus group discussions to assess donor satisfaction with clients' programming and stewardship efforts
- Served as Project Manager on our engagement with TMCf's Payne Center for Social Justice and the Center for Values in International Development.

Broad Reach Foundation for Youth Leaders (Toronto)

2020-2021

Senior Project Manager

- Managed Broad Reach's government funded Ships2Shores project, valued at \$350,000, which is designed to connect youth with Canada's marine sector.
- Successfully pivoted the project from a largely in-person venture to focus mostly on virtual programming due to the Covid-19 Pandemic
- Led the project to directly engage 2,300+ youth across the country in activities covering arts & culture, workforce development, maritime history, civic engagement, and sail training.
- Exceeded our promised deliverable by 800+ youth, with specific success in reaching those from Indigenous, rural, and low-income communities who have little interaction with the marine sector
- Supervised a youth council composed of 25 individuals from across Canada to develop activities and fulfill project deliverables. Provided mentorship and education to support these youth in developing skills in project management, communications, leadership, and grant writing.
- Supervised curriculum development, including the creation of 50+ hours of virtual educational content in Year 1.
- Oversaw the implementation of a \$79,000 bursary fund which supported 130 underserved youth in accessing sail training programs across Canada during Summer 2021
- Developed the Project's outreach strategy, which cultivated relationships with non-profit organizations, government agencies, corporates, and schools. This involved creating business decks, dissemination materials, and social media campaigns. This strategy enabled the organization to expand its reach beyond its home base of Toronto, and be recognized for its work nationwide
- Assisted the CEO in project reporting, budgets, organizational strategy, and fundraising

Fearless Collective (India)

2020-2021

Coordinator

- Supported Fearless Collective, a South Asian feminist arts and advocacy organization, in developing a series of virtual social justice workshops for students at Georgia Tech.
- Adapted Fearless Collective's own methodology and pedagogy, which was initially created for

individuals in South Asia, to fit the social justice context of the U.S.

- Researched and selected relevant U.S.-based social activists who acted as co-hosts for each workshop
- Planned logistics of each workshop, and acted as liaison between Fearless Collective and Georgia Tech

Women and Media Collective / UN Women (Sri Lanka)
Consultant

2018

- Developed a one-day training module on gender sensitive policy making for Sri Lankan women working in local government and community service organizations (CSOs), which involved case studies and role-play exercises. This training was successfully delivered in three locations in 2019.

Sunayra Lanka (Sri Lanka)

2016-2018

Co-Founder and Research & Operations Director

- Conceptualized a Creative Education model, which encouraged rural youth to utilize creativity and art to navigate the myriad of difficulties they faced
- Conducted research on programming sites in two different regions and global and local education trends, and developed the monitoring and evaluation criteria
- Supported several young people through their A-Levels and pursuit of higher education or employment outside their villages, many of whom were the first in their family to do so
- Developed internal communications, including short and long-term strategies, SWOT analyses, needs assessments, and branding strategies
- Organized fundraisers and developed external communications, including website, social media, blog posts, email campaigns, funder reports, and pitch decks
- Cultivated relationships with corporate and philanthropic stakeholders, academics, and the social services and youth sectors in Sri Lanka
- Drafted grant applications and proposals, and successfully secured numerous donations, including a renewable \$5,000 grant from the Feminist foundation FRIDA.

Centre for Poverty Analysis (Sri Lanka)

2014-2016

Research Assistant

- Contributed to qualitative research projects on post-war development, women-headed households, and political economy in Sri Lanka
- Wrote literature reviews, developed research questions and methodology, conducted fieldwork in several communities, liaised with high-level partners, coded qualitative data using Microsoft Excel and InVivo, and developed policy recommendations
- Co-authored two reports, one journal article, and several newspaper articles, and contributed to policy discussions with NGO and government actors
- Co-organized CEPA's 13th Annual Symposium: Post-War Development in Asia & Africa, a three-day conference involving more than 40 panelists from around the world

Publications

- Gunasekara, V., Philips, M., Romeshun, K. and Munas, M., 2016. "Life and Debt": Assessing the Impacts of Participatory Housing Reconstruction in Post-Conflict Sri Lanka. *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, 5(1), p.10. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.5334/sta.434> (Peer-Reviewed)

- Gunasekara, V., Philips M., Nagaraj, V., 2016. “Hospitality and Exclusion: A Study About Post-War Tourism in Sri Lanka.” *Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*, Report No. 15. <https://securelivelihoods.org/publication/hospitality-and-exclusion-a-study-about-post-war-tourism-in-passikudah/>
- Mayadunne, G., Philips, M., 2016. “Perceptions of Livelihood Service Delivery: A Study of Fisher Communities in Post-War North and East of Sri Lanka.” *Secure Livelihoods Research Consortium*, Working Paper No. 44. <https://securelivelihoods.org/publication/perceptions-of-livelihood-services-delivery-a-study-of-fisher-communities-in-post-war-north-and-east-of-sri-lanka/>

Fellowships

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- LankaCorps Fellow, The Asia Foundation, Sri Lanka 2014

Conference Presentations

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- “Hospitality and Exclusion: A Study About Post-War Tourism in Sri Lanka.” 2015
Critical Tourism Studies Conference, Opatjia, Croatia, June 26-30, Writer and Presenter

Volunteer Experience

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- Director of Development, Board of Directors, Broad Reach Foundation (Toronto, ON) 2021-2022
 - Caseworker Support Volunteer, COMPASS Refugee Centre (Kitchener, ON) 2019-2020
 - Intake Volunteer, House of Friendship (Kitchener, ON) 2019-2020