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Profile: I am a public health social scientist. My advocacy and research are in the intersections of migration and health, with a specific focus on LGBTQ+ migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. I have a 5-year experience of advocacy and qualitative research in this space, with a range of outputs that include but not limited to decolonial knowledge production, and digital storytelling health promotion tools, such as podcast, animated videos, and online audio drama.

Work experience:

- Senior Research Fellow, Bradford Institute for Health Research, Bradford Teaching Hospitals NHS Foundation, & Honorary Senior Research Fellow, Bristol Medical School, Bristol University, UK – 2024 to present (*ending in 31st October 2025*)
 - o Qualitative research lead for community-based children and adolescent physical activity research
 - o Supervise an intern & organise a symposium on qualitative research in public health
 - o Stakeholder coordination (community organisations, charity, community development workers)
- Research assistant, Melbourne Sexual Health Clinic, Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences, Monash University – 2022 to 2023
 - o Co-design an online audio drama (podcast – 6 episodes with approx. 5 mins duration each) as a sexual health and HIV promotion tool for Asian-born gay men
- Research assistant, School of Public Health and Social Work, Queensland University of Technology – 2022 – 2023
 - o Lead a team of 4 peer researchers from diverse ethnic backgrounds
 - o Lead the participatory development of 5 animated videos (max. 5 mins duration each) as a sexual health and HIV promotion tool for women, men, and gay migrants
- Team leader and project officer, HIV education program, Queensland Positive People, 2016 – 2020
 - o Lead a geographically disperse team of 15 Peer Navigators (community health workers)
 - o Monitoring and evaluation (mixed method)
 - o Lead development of 12 educational modules
 - o Develop & deliver trainings on HIV-related topics for health and social care workforce
 - o Organisational policy development
 - o Stakeholder relationships (clinicians, state government, & community organisations)

Education:

- PhD (Public Health), University of Queensland, Australia, 2024
- Master of Health Management (with Distinction), Queensland University of Technology, Australia, 2017
- Doctor of Medicine, Universitas Pembangunan Nasional Veteran Jakarta, Indonesia, 2016

Key research publications:

Istiko, S.N., & Sudarto, B. (2025). Elite actors: understanding representation of culturally and linguistically diverse communities in the Australian health system through an intersectional lens. *Stolen Tools*, 3(1): 1-13. <https://doi.org/10.59745/vg2xja26>

Istiko, S.N., et al. (2024). Understanding key priority areas of mental health among queer asylum seekers and refugees in Australia through the lens of structural violence: a modified Delphi method study. *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 37(3): 750-767. <https://doi.org/10.1093/jrs/feae067>

Istiko, S.N., et al. (2023). Developing critical HIV health literacy: insights from interviews with priority migrant communities in Queensland, Australia. *Cultural, Health, & Sexuality*, 10:1-16. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13691058.2023.2265960>

Istiko, S. N., et al. (2022). (Not that) essential: a scoping review of migrant workers' access to health services and social protection during the COVID-19 pandemic in Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. *Intl Journal of Environmental Research & Public Health*, 19(5), 2981. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3390/ijerph19052981>

Advocacy, research, and public engagement highlights:

I have been involved in fundraising efforts to support community-based interventions supporting LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees. One of them was creating [a video promotion](#) on the impact of Pride Foundation's financial support for Third Queer Culture, a social and creative advocacy group for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees that I co-founded. Another one was obtaining financial support from Asia Pacific Network of Refugees to host [a documentary film screening](#) that also acts as a fundraising event.

From my PhD project on sexual health literacy among Asian-born gay men, I developed a decolonial interviewing approach called **race-conscious conversation**. A paper on this method is already accepted and soon to be published in *Qualitative Research* in 2025.

I led the development of audiovisual animated videos to promote sexual health and HIV literacy among diverse migrant communities in Queensland called [Have Fun Butt Play Safe](#). The project used peer research methodology.

I have created a teaching and training podcast about mental health among refugees called [Health Without Borders](#). This podcast has 3 episodes with a duration of 30 mins each.

Grant capture: Since 2020, I have generated a total of **USD 150,395** in public health research and community development funding from agencies in Australia (e.g., Queensland Health), Asia Pacific (e.g., Asia Pacific Network of Refugees) & the UK (e.g., Bristol Biomedical Research Centre). These grants are mostly targeted towards migrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and other ethnic minoritised groups.

Strategic and leadership roles:

Trustee, Race Equality Network, United Kingdom – 2024 to present

Members, Coalition for LGBTQIA+ Asylum and Migration Justice, Forcibly Displaced Network, Australia – 2024

Board member, Australian GLBTIQ Multicultural Council, Australia – 2023 to 2024

Member, Review Panel for Pride Foundation's Sidney Myer Fund (for LGBTQ+ asylum seekers and refugees), Australia – 2021 to 2022

Professional developments and achievements:

2025 – Mentor for a lived experience researcher, BASNET – UK BME Anti-slavery Network, Afruca

2024 – Mentee, University of New South Wales Kaldor Centre Displaced Scholars Peer Mentoring Program

2023 – Refugee Studies Centre' Pathways course (with Excellence in Community Engagement), University of Oxford

2023 - First Prize, Let's Get PrEPared Designathon! Interventions to increase awareness and uptake of PrEP among Asian-born Men who Have Sex with Men in Australia, Melbourne Sexual Health Centre

2021 - Best Presentation Prize, Monash Migration and Inclusion Centre Next Generation Network Symposium

Language: Indonesian (native); English (advanced)

Conference, training, and other public speaking highlights:

Conference – Chair, *Being queer (migrants), doing queer migration research*, International Migration Research Network (IMISCOE) Annual Conference 2024

Seminar – Speaker, *What are the key priority areas for refugee services to improve the mental health of queer asylum seekers and refugees in Australia?* Refugee-led Research Hub, University of Oxford, 2024.

Training – Trainer, *Sexual health literacy in HIV, migration and public health*, HIV Education Queensland, 2023