

# Pride in your Workplace



**PROUD  
FUTURES**

Your Ultimate Guide to creating an LGBTQ+ Inclusive culture and organisation

5 practical and proven strategies that work

**GIVE**



**SPEAK UP**



**LISTEN**



**TAKE  
ACTION**



**LEARN**

# LISTEN to your LGBTQ+ employees and their experiences

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**Creating an inclusive environment starts with actively listening to the LGBTQ+ voices and lived experience within your organisation to create a culture of true belonging.**

LGBTQ+ employees can provide invaluable insights into policies, practices and cultural issues that enable inclusion or perpetuate exclusion. Their lived experiences illuminate areas that leadership may be blind to.

**A 2022 YouGov poll found 38% of Gen Z adults in the UK identified as something other than heterosexual; however, more than half of LGBT employees (53.8% Gallup poll) reported covering up their identity at work.**

This helps explain why organisations always underestimate their LGBTQ+ staff population. There will also be staff members who have LGBTQ+ children, close family members and friends. Therefore working for an organisation that is LGBTQ+ inclusive will be important to them as well.

## Example

We worked with Scottish Ballet on LGBTQ+ Inclusion as they are committed to building a truly inclusive culture of belonging. We started with a wellbeing day for their LGBTQ+ staff, and this lived experience then helped inform our partnership working which has ranged from Trans and non-binary inclusion training to developing LGBTQ+ storylines in their work and an LGBTQ+ Learning library.



## Practical Steps

### Quick wins

**Do a quick temperature check with your employees through an anonymous survey or a facilitated focus group to gain valuable insight on your organisation's LGBTQ+ Inclusion. It's important to do this with all staff as not everyone who is LGBTQ+ will be out at work and people with LGBTQ+ family and friends will also be impacted by workplace discrimination.**

### Long-term transformation

**Invest time and money into your LGBTQ+ groups (ERGs/LGBTQ+ network) and empower them to lead on LGBTQ+ inclusion. Listen to their feedback through annual engagement surveys to measure belonging, and remember to feed back the results along with actions to continue your commitment.**

**Allocate a budget and give staff time to dedicate to these groups so they have capacity to really power change within your organisation. Ensure your policies and procedures are up to date and include things like trans healthcare leave.**

# LEARN how you can inspire all of your staff to be LGBTQ+ Allies

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**While having "respect" and "inclusion" listed as core values is a step in the right direction, LGBTQ+ inclusive workplaces require all employees to actively practise allyship through consistent education.**

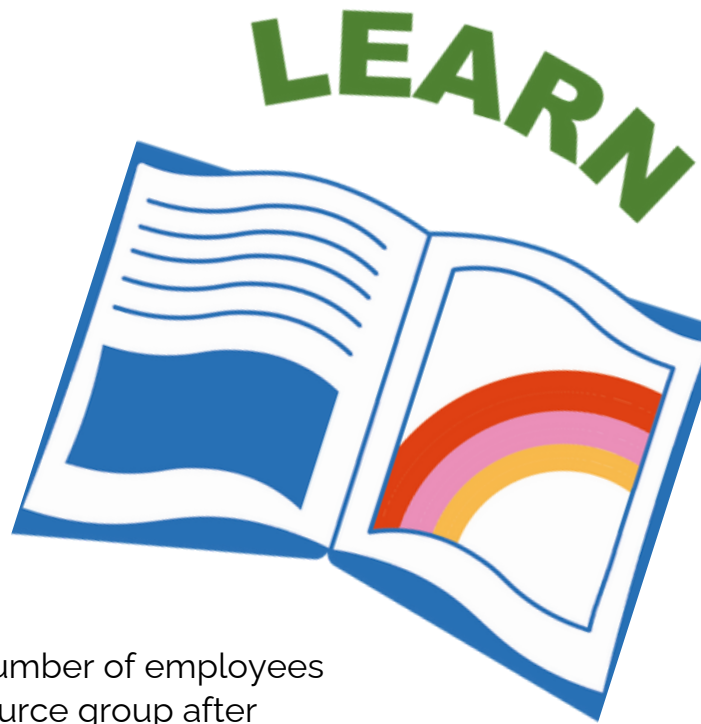
One-off general awareness or equalities training tends to leave employees unsure about:

- Using current inclusive terminology and avoiding outdated phrases
- Properly addressing and supporting trans or non-binary clients
- Challenging homophobic or transphobic comments or jokes in the workplace.

Adding comprehensive LGBTQ+ inclusion training that goes beyond basics to your organisation's regular training schedule can help staff feel confident about understanding and supporting LGBTQ+ people.

## Example

Organisations regularly report an increase in the number of employees identifying as LGBTQ+ or joining their LGBTQ+ resource group after working with us. This is a sign that more people feel safer to self-identify and a positive indicator that a culture of belonging is being built.



## Practical Steps

### Quick wins

**Share these tips with your colleagues or put LGBTQ+ Inclusion on your next team meeting. You could also host a 1hr Learning Lunch for Pride month or platform some of your LGBTQ+ staff or clients.**

### Long-term transformation

**Invest in LGBTQ+ consultants or lived experience lead organisations who can work with your organisation and LGBTQ+ staff team to create and embed a culture of belonging through LGBTQ+ inclusive policies and practices from staff recruitment and retention to building inclusive workspaces.**

**To create a more LGBTQ+ inclusive culture in your organisation, continuous learning through thoughtful training is essential to turn written values into visible actions - creating true allies and inclusion and belonging champions, not just passive supporters.**

# **SPEAK UP** during the whole year and not for just Pride month in June

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While celebrating Pride month is great, true LGBTQ+ inclusion goes far beyond temporary displays of support. Many organisations enthusiastically share LGBTQ+ content and messaging in June yet lack substantive policies and inclusive practices in their year-round day-to-day operations. This can be referred to as rainbow washing.

Despite most organisations celebrating Pride month, research from YouGov in 2020 found that **only 38% of UK employers said they had actually updated their policies to cover gender identity** in the last two years.

In 2021, Virgin updated its gender identity policies. This included introducing gender neutral uniforms- meaning high heels or make up were not no longer compulsory- and everyone could choose their own uniforms. This resulted in a 100% increase in job applications, and showed that LGBTQ+ inclusion can benefit everyone.

## **Example**

We worked with a national youth organisation to update their LGBTQ+ Inclusion policies and procedures.

This included updating the language used in their application process to include trans and non-binary inclusive language, which resulted in an increase in applications from the LGBTQ+ community.

## **Practical Steps**

### **Quick wins**

Audit your internal processes for inclusivity gaps such as outdated language, from HR processes and data systems.

### **Long-term transformation**

Recognise and commemorate other dates out with Pride month, such as LGBT History month (February) or Trans Awareness month (November) or LGBTQ+ representation on Women's history month panels. Foster continuous learning through discussions, workshops and training.

Invest in Inclusive facilitation and leadership training so you can role model LGBTQ+ Inclusion in your organisation and train your staff on anti-discrimination policies so they can feel confident "calling in". Don't let rainbow-washing limit your potential by complementing public support with authentic, substantive actions internally.



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## TAKE ACTION to ensure LGBTQ+ people are welcomed in your organisation

**Merely stating an organisation is "LGBTQ+ inclusive" is not enough. Visible actions signalling an authentic culture of belonging are critical for:**

- Attracting LGBTQ+ talent
- Improving LGBTQ+ customer and client experiences
- Boosting employee engagement and retention.

### Example

We worked with a social enterprise who had received criticism for not being LGBTQ+ inclusive from their community members. Through LGBTQ+ Inclusion training we supported them to develop an LGBTQ+ Inclusion statement. They now display this statement and a Pride flag at all of their events and their facilitators have been trained in LGBTQ+ inclusive language. They also publicly responded to the criticism with the actions they were taking.

**TAKE ACTION**

A 2021 Mind study found that LGBTQ+ employees who were not open at work were 33% more likely to show signs of anxiety, depression and other mental health issues.

### Practical Steps

#### Quick wins

Introduce visible "signs of safety" for LGBTQ+ employees in your spaces, such as Pride flags or an LGBTQ+ Inclusion statement on visible display.

You could also invest in rainbow lanyards, pronouns badges or LGBTQ+ books or magazines for social areas or encourage your staff to share their pronouns on their email signatures.

#### Long-term transformation

Audit your organisation to ensure you are fully LGBTQ+ inclusive. From using LGBTQ+ inclusive language on your website to LGBTQ+ imagery on your marketing materials, ensure all facilities are inclusive such as gender-neutral toilets or inclusive signage. You could also develop LGBTQ+ Inclusive language and communications training which includes sharing your pronouns in team meetings to really foster an inclusive culture.

By taking a holistic approach with symbolic and tangible LGBTQ+ inclusive efforts, organisations foster a true sense of belonging that improves recruitment, engagement, innovation and better serves LGBTQ+ communities.



# **GIVE SUPPORT:** Actively support and invest in LGBTQ+ Communities

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Beyond inclusive workplace policies, organisations have opportunities to directly uplift and empower LGBTQ+ communities through their spending and partnerships, especially during the Pride month of June.

Companies with LGBTQ-inclusive cultures and who invest in LGBTQ+ partnerships are 3 times more likely to outperform peers (Gallup)

## **Example**

As an LGBTQ+ organisation we are committed to our supplier chain being 80% LGBTQ+ owned businesses as we want to invest our profits back into our LGBTQ+ community. We also recommend LGBTQ+ suppliers to all of our partners, from catering to buying merchandise for their pride events so you can double your social impact.

You can leverage your organisation's economic power as a force for positive change through:



## **Practical Steps**

### **Quick wins**

**Contract LGBTQ+ suppliers and vendors for your Pride month celebrations or invest in an LGBTQ+ organisation to deliver your Pride month training or events.**

### **Long-term transformation**

**Audit your bigger supplier chains to find out if they have LGBTQ+ businesses in their supply chains so you can build sustained, year-round partnerships beyond Pride month. Invite and invest in LGBTQ+ leaders to speak at events and on discussion panels on supplier diversity. Build relationships with LGBTQ+ charities and community groups and consider supporting them for your charitable giving or volunteer programmes.**

**By purposefully redistributing economic resources and influence, your organisation can have a profoundly positive impact in addressing the systemic inequalities facing the LGBTQ+ community.**

# Proud Futures can help you feel PROUD



**Pride Futures are an award winning social enterprise founded by LGBTQ+ couple and social entrepreneurs Ellis (they/them) and Lou (she/her) Beardsmore.**

We are LGBTQ+ Inclusion and Belonging specialists and have worked with over 100 organisations globally. We develop bespoke solutions for organisations to embed inclusion in their work, from gender diversity training to LGBTQ+ Group (ERG/Network) Wellbeing days to keynotes on Inclusive leadership.

We help organisations feel proud through innovative inclusion initiatives that create belonging and result in real change for LGBTQ+ people. We're on a mission to create a world where all LGBTQ+ people can thrive, so all our profits are invested into our free LGBTQ+ Wellbeing Programme in Scotland.



## You can join our community and connect with us here:

- ➔ Find out more about our LGBTQ+ Leadership, Training and Wellbeing Programmes at [www.proudfutures.org.uk](http://www.proudfutures.org.uk)
- ➔ Email us at [hello@proudfutures.org.uk](mailto:hello@proudfutures.org.uk) to book a call and let's explore how we can work together.
- ➔ Connect with us on LinkedIn, Instagram or Facebook [@proudfutures](https://www.facebook.com/proudfutures)

**Thank you for helping us build a better future for all LGBTQ+ people in the world.**