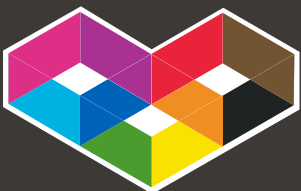


# Allies Toolbox Talk

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## Support Pack



**buildingequality**  
Building an inclusive construction industry

# Contents

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LGBTQ+ Flags	1
Glossary	7
Live being an Ally	13
Frequently Asked Questions	19
Workplace Diversity Benefits	25



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# LGBT+ Flags

## The Meaning of LGBT+ Flags

Flags first started to be used in the 1970s, at the growing number of Pride marches following the Stonewall Riots in New York in 1969. The community has been identified by others over the years, most notably in the concentration camps during World War Two, by inverted pink and black triangles respectively. The LGBT+ community uses flags as symbols of identification and pride in themselves and their community.



# Rainbow Flag



The rainbow flag is probably the most well-known and is often used to represent the entire LGBTQ+ community. The original flag was designed by Gilbert Baker in 1978 for San Francisco Gay Freedom Day. This flag was designed as a symbol of hope and comprised of eight stripes. In this version pink stood for sexuality, red for life, orange for healing, yellow for the sun, green for nature, turquoise for art, indigo for harmony, and violet for spirit. Increased demand for the flag in 1978, meant that the pink strip was dropped as the manufacturer couldn't source the coloured fabric. In 1979, the wish to decorate two side of the parade route, splitting the flag, meant an even number of strips were needed. The turquoise and indigo strips were replaced with royal blue. In 2017 the city of Philadelphia added black and brown strips to their Pride flag to represent people of colour, and this version of the flag is increasingly seen at other Pride events around the world.

# Lesbian Flag



The original lesbian pride flag had a red kiss mark in the top left corner. Some people still use that kiss mark to represent feminine lesbians. No one flag has been widely adopted to represent lesbians, but one flag increasingly used is the represent the following: darkest orange: gender non-conformity, middle orange: independence, lightest orange: community, white: unique relationships to womanhood, lightest Pink: Serenity and peace, middle pink: love and sex and darkest pink: femininity.

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## Bisexual Flag



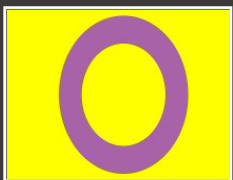
The bisexual flag was created in 1998 by activist Michael Page. He wanted to create a symbol for bisexual people to feel connected to since he felt the rainbow flag wasn't doing the job. The ratio of the colours of the flag is 2:1:2, where pink represents same-sex attraction, blue represents opposite-sex attraction and lavender represents attraction to both sexes.

## Transgender Flag



The transgender flag was created by transgender woman Monica Helms in 1999. The colours used at the top and bottom represent the traditional light blue used for boys. The next stripes are light pink traditionally used for girls. And the white stripe in the centre represents people who are transitioning, have no gender, are gender neutral or non-binary.

## Intersex Flag



Intersex is an umbrella term for those whose bodies do not align with the sex characteristics of male and female. Some people can have a combination of characteristics at birth. The intersex flag was created in 2013, using yellow and purple, as they are gender neutral colours. The purple circle is described as unbroken, about being whole and complete as well as the right for intersex people to make decisions about their bodies. Gold was used to reclaim slurs against the intersex community.

## Genderqueer Flag



The genderqueer flag is made up of lavender, white and green stripes. Lavender, a mixture of blue and pink traditional male and female colours, represents androgyny. Lavender also represents the queer identity and has historically been associated with the LGBTQ+ community. White represents those who identify as gender neutral and green represents third gender identities and those who don't identify on the traditional gender spectrum.

## Straight Allies Flag



The ally flag was created in the late 2000's and is also known as the 'straight ally flag'. This flag celebrates all straight and cis gender people who are proud allies of the LGBTQ+ community. The black and white stripes represent heterosexual genders, with the chevron representing the A in allies and shown using the traditional rainbow colours.

## Aromantic Flag



Aromantic (aro) means someone who generally doesn't experience romantic attraction. The flag has three versions, with this one most widely accepted. Dark green represents aromanticism, light green represents the aromantic spectrum, white represents platonic and aesthetic attraction, as well as queer/quasi platonic relationships, grey represents grey-aromantic and demiromantic people and black represents the sexuality spectrum.

## Pansexual Flag



The pansexual flag as created in 2010 and has become a symbol of attraction to all genders. It is made of three colours – pink, yellow and blue. Pink represents attraction to women, blue represents attraction to men and yellow represents attraction to all other genders, including people who are non-binary, agender, bigender or genderfluid.

## Progress Flag



In 2018 the Progress flag was created incorporating elements from the gay flag created in Philadelphia and the transgender flag, to bring the focus on inclusion and progress within the community. The traditional rainbow colours are used, along with a chevron made up of black, brown, light blue, pink and white, to represent people of colour, transgender people and those living with HIV/AIDS.

## Genderfluid Flag



The flag represents the fluctuations and flexibility for gender fluid people. Pink at the top represents femininity or feeling female and the blue at the bottom represents masculinity or feeling male. White represents the lack of gender, purple the combination of feminine and masculine including degrees and androgyny, and black represents all other genders including third genders and pangender.

## Non-Binary Flag



The four horizontal stripes of the colours - yellow, white, purple, and black are symbolic for Non-Binary peoples' experience. This

flag was not created with the intention to replace the Genderqueer flag, but to be flown alongside it. Yellow represents those whose gender falls outside of and without reference to the binary. White represents people with many or all genders. Purple represents those whose gender identity falls somewhere between male/female or is a mix of them. Black represents people who are without a gender

## Agender Flag



Someone who is agender doesn't identify with any gender. The flag was created in 2014 by Salem X. The black and white

represents an absence of gender, with the gray representing semi-genderlessness and the green represents non-binary genders.

## Asexual Flag



The asexual flag was created in 2010. Asexuality is defined by a lack of sexual attraction or as a spectrum, which includes people

who feel sexual attraction infrequently or under specific circumstances. The black represents asexuality as a whole, gray represents gray asexuality and demisexuality (demisexuality is defined as no sexual attraction unless there is a strong emotional bond), white represents sexuality and purple represents community.



# LGBTQ+ Glossary

This Glossary has been collectively built and created by the Building Equality members since 2020.

It is important to note that language is always evolving and changing.

We all make mistakes, with language or otherwise, what is key is that we learn from our mistakes and apologise where needed.

Don't be scared to get it wrong or to ask questions.

Everyone is different, we just need to learn and respect one another.

Use your knowledge to educate and call-out others, when needed.



## Ally / Advocate

A (typically straight and/or cis) person who supports the LGBTQ+ community. Although the LGBTQ+ community can also be allies to wider identities in the community.

## Asexual

Somebody who experiences little to no sexual attraction.

## Bisexual (Bi)

Somebody who is emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of more than one gender.

## Cisgender (Cis)

Somebody whose gender identity aligns with the sex they were assigned at birth.

## Coming out

When a person first tells someone/others about their LGBTQ+ identity. This is not a one-off activity, it's something people have to do every time they meet new people. The choice of when or whether to do that is a very personal one. If someone 'comes out' to you, you should only share if given permission.

## Dead-naming

Calling someone by their birth name after they have changed their name. This term is often associated with trans people who have changed their name as part of their transition.

# Gay

Commonly refers to a man who is only emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other men. The term is also used to refer to people of any gender who only experience attraction to individuals of the same gender.

# Gender

Often expressed in terms of masculinity and femininity, gender is largely culturally determined and is normally assigned at birth based on visible sex characteristics.

# Gender dysphoria

Used to describe when a person experiences discomfort or distress because there is a mismatch between their sex assigned at birth and their gender identity. This is also the clinical diagnosis for someone who doesn't feel comfortable with the sex they were assigned at birth.

# Gender identity

A person's innate sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below), which may or may not correspond to the sex assigned at birth.

# Intersex

Refers to a person whose biological characteristics do not fit with societal definitions of what constitutes male or female. Intersex people identify in a variety of ways including male, female and non-binary.

## Lesbian

A woman who is only emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to other women.

## LGBTQ-phobia

An umbrella term which encompasses a range of negative attitudes and feelings toward people who are identified or perceived as being lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender (LGBTQ+).

## Non-binary

A non-binary person is somebody who does not identify within the gender binary of male or female. This is used both as an identity in its own right and as an umbrella term to encompass a variety of other identities.

## Orientation

Orientation is an umbrella term describing a person's attraction to other people. This attraction may be sexual and/or romantic. These terms refers to a person's sense of identity based on their attractions, or lack thereof. Orientations include, but are not limited to, lesbian, gay, bi, ace and straight.

## Outed

When a lesbian, gay, bi or trans person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent.

## Pansexual

A person whose emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by biological sex, gender or gender identity.

## Person of trans history

Someone who does not identify as trans or transgender but whose gender identity is not the same as that which they were assigned at birth. This is increasingly used by people to acknowledge their transition while retaining a gender identity (e.g. 'male' or 'female') separate from it.

## Pronoun

A word used to refer to a person's gender in conversation - for example, 'he' or 'she'. Some people may request that others refer to them using gender neutral pronouns, for example 'they' and 'ze'.

## Queer

Previously used as a derogatory term for LGBTQ+ individuals and for some it still carries negative connotations. However, it has been reclaimed by some in the LGBTQ+ community who don't identify with traditional categories around gender identity and sexual orientation. This is an important distinction, some in the LGBTQ+ community may describe themselves as queer but this can still be deemed a slur if used by someone outside the community.

## Questioning

The process of exploring your own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.

## Straight (Heterosexual)

A person who is only emotionally, romantically and/or sexually attracted to people of the 'opposite' gender.

## Transgender (Trans)

A term used to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth. Trans people may describe themselves using one or more of a wide variety of terms, including (but not limited to) agender, bi-gender, gender-fluid, genderqueer (GQ), gender-variant, non-binary, third gender, trans man, trans masculine, trans feminine, trans woman, transgender, transsexual, and two-spirit.

## Transition

The steps a person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things.

## Transsexual

This term was used in the past to refer to someone who had transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one they were assigned at birth. The term is still used by some to describe their identity, but many people prefer the term 'trans' or 'transgender'.

## Undetectable

HIV medication works by reducing the amount of the virus in the blood to undetectable levels. This means the levels of HIV are so low that the virus cannot be passed on. This is called having an undetectable viral load or being undetectable.

# LIVE being an Ally

Allies are some of the most effective and important voices of the LGBTQ+ movement.

Not only do allies help people in the coming-out process, they also help others understand the importance of equality, fairness, acceptance and mutual respect.

As you read on, you will find helpful resources that will give you more information on being an ally and a friend.





# LGBTQ+ Reading List

## Giovanni's Room

James Baldwin's ground-breaking novel about love and the fear of love is set among the bohemian bars and nightclubs of 1950s Paris. Giovanni's Room is a stunning story of homosexuality, the stigma surrounding LGBTQ+ romances and a love triangle.

## Rubyfruit Jungle

Following a woman who is unabashedly herself, Molly Bolt was adopted by a poor Southern couple. She leaves the South behind to travel the country, finding love and adventure along the way in this coming of age novel.

## Boy Erased

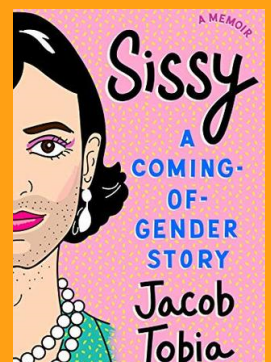
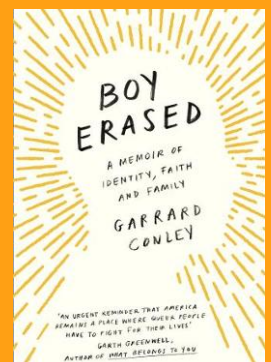
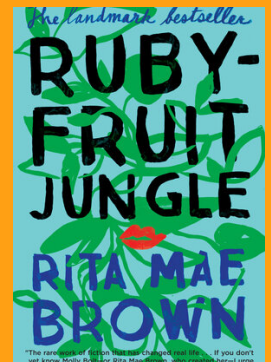
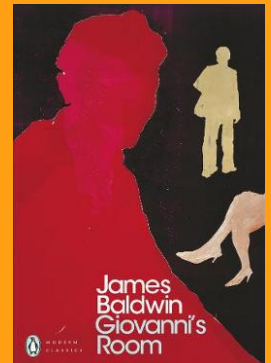
Raised by a Baptist pastor in a God-fearing community, Conley was uncomfortable with his sexuality even before he was outed to his parents. Given an ultimatum - be shunned or cured - Conley agreed to attend a program that promised to de-gay him.

## Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic

The graphic memoir tells the story of a closeted father and his lesbian daughter who comes out. Touching on every emotion, it'll make you laugh and cry.

## Sissy: A Coming-of-Gender Story

Growing up as a gender-nonconforming kid in North Carolina isn't easy, but Tobia shares his story with humour, wit and wisdom. By calling out gender stereotypes, it'll make you think about your own childhood.

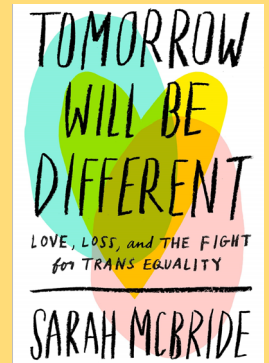




# LGBTQ+ Reading List

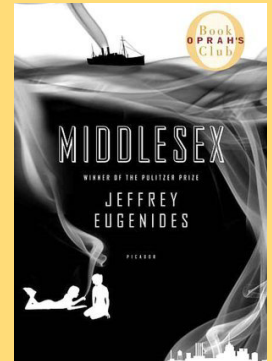
## Tomorrow Will Be Different

The book cuts between Sarah McBride's personal story and the journey of trans acceptance. McBride was the first transgender person to speak at a national political convention and she eventually became the first openly transgender state senator.



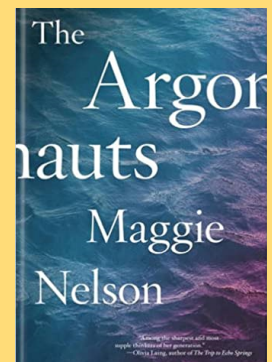
## Middlesex

2003 Pulitzer Prize for fiction winner, this novel focuses on the life of Calliope Stephanides. As a teenager in 1974, she discovers she's not actually a girl and becomes a boy that summer. An intersex coming of age tale is too rare, making this novel as unique as its prose.



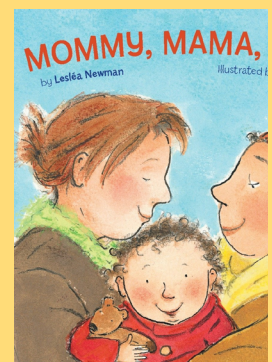
## The Argonauts

A brave, fascinating memoir about love, gender, gender theory, having children, death, writing, and the modern family Maggie Nelson, an established poet and prose writer, details her love for and relationship with Harry Dodge, a gender-fluid artist.



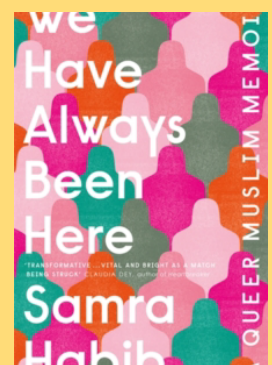
## Mommy, Mama and Me

A warm and adorably illustrated board book about a loving family which just happens to have two mums in it. From hide-and-seek to dress-up, then bath time and a kiss goodnight, there's no limit to what a loving family can do together



## We have always been here

Growing up as a gender-nonconforming kid in North Carolina isn't easy, but Tobia shares his story with humour, wit and wisdom. By calling out gender stereotypes, it'll make you think about your own childhood.



# LGBTQ+ Film List

## Moonlight

Winner of three Academy Awards including Best Picture, *Moonlight* chronicles the life of a young black man from childhood to adulthood, as he struggles to find his place in the world while growing up in a rough neighbourhood of Miami.

## Tangerine

The story follows a transgender sex worker who discovers her boyfriend and pimp has been cheating on her. The sex worker and her best friend, Alexandra, embark on a mission to get to the bottom of the scandalous rumour.

## Paris is Burning

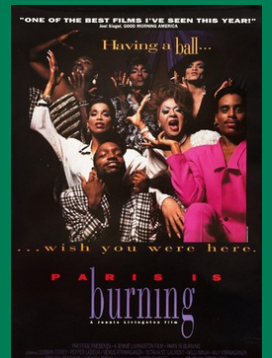
A chronicle of New York's drag scene in the 1980s, focusing on balls, voguing and the ambitions and dreams of those who gave the era its warmth and vitality.

## A Fantastic Woman

Marina struggles for the right to be herself. She battles the very same forces that she has spent a lifetime fighting just to become the woman she is now – a complex, strong, forthright and fantastic woman.

## Prayers for Bobby

True story of Mary Griffith, gay rights crusader, whose teenage son committed suicide due to her religious intolerance. Based on the book of the same title by Leroy Aarons.



# LGBTQ+ Film List

## Blue is the Warmest Colour

Adèle's life is changed when she meets Emma, a young woman with blue hair, who will allow her to discover desire and to assert herself as a woman and as an adult. In front of others, Adèle grows, seeks herself, loses herself, and ultimately finds herself through love and loss.

## 120 BPM

Members of the advocacy group ACT UP Paris demand action by the government and pharmaceutical companies to combat the AIDS epidemic in the early 1990s.

## Pride

It's 1984 and the National Union of Mineworkers is on strike. At London Pride, a group of LGBTQ+ activists decided to raise money to support the families of the striking miners. And so begins the extraordinary story of two seemingly alien communities who form a triumphant partnership.

## A Single Man

A romantic tale of love interrupted, the isolation that is an inherent part of the human condition, and the importance of the smaller moments in life. An English professor, one year after the death of his partner, dwells on the past and can't see his future.

## Dallas Buyers Club

An imperfect man fights for survival during an uncertain time, inspired by true events. Blindsided by his diagnosis of HIV, Woodruff's search for alternative treatments helped establish a way HIV+ people could access his supplies.



# LGBTQ+ Ted Talks

## Three ways to be a better ally in the workplace

We're taught to believe that hard work and dedication will lead to success, but that's not always the case. Gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity are among the many factors that affect our chances.

## How the world learned to say LGBT

Why it makes sense to use inclusive language, why minority rights should concern the heterosexual majority and how words that can seem complex, can help set you free as well.

## Effective Allyship: A Transgender Take on Intersectionality

In this passionate and deeply heartfelt talk, Ashlee seeks to help promote understanding about intersectionality, allyship and an urgency for compassion.

## Why we need gender-neutral bathrooms

In this poetically rhythmic talk, Ivan Coyote grapples with complex and intensely personal issues of gender identity and highlights the need for gender-neutral bathrooms in all public places.

## The importance of using inclusive language

Diversity trainer and activist Fahad Saeed addresses the myth that inclusive language and acronyms create more barriers than they tear down.

# LGBTQ+ Ted Talks

## How to talk (and listen) to transgender people

Gender should be the least remarkable thing about someone, but transgender people are still too often misunderstood. To help those who are scared to ask questions or nervous about saying the wrong thing, Jackson Bird shares a few ways to think about trans issues.

## The importance of queer allyship in the classroom

School can be an awkward time for nearly everyone, but for queer students, it can be particularly nightmarish. In a heartfelt and personal talk, Coby Everton shares their experiences of isolation in academic environments and explains why allies are essential in these spaces.

## Why kids need to learn about gender and sexuality

Lindsay Amer is the creator of “Queer Kid Stuff,” an educational video series that breaks down complex ideas around gender and sexuality through songs and metaphors. By giving kids and their families a vocabulary to express themselves, Amer is helping to create more empathetic adults.

## Why I must come out

When fashion model Geena Rocero first saw a photo of herself in a bikini, “I thought ... you have arrived!” As she reveals, that’s because she was born with the gender assignment “boy.” In this moving talk, Rocero tells the story of becoming who she always knew she was.



# LGBTQ+ Podcasts

## Homo Sapiens

The institution that is BBC Radio 4's Woman's Hour was the inspiration for Will Young and Chris Sweeney to start their own podcast. The pair focuses on the same format and magazine-style approach as Jane Garvey and Jenni Murray, but deal specifically with LGBTQ+ issues.

## Prejudice & Pride

This six-part series from the National Trust hosted by the legendary Clare Balding, the series explores hidden stories and important figures in UK history, celebrates queer performance, and discusses the "herstory" of lesbian sexuality through the decades.

## Being Transgender

Amnesty Factual released the three-part series Being Transgender in early 2018. Each episode deals with trans rights, what it means to be trans and non-binary in the UK today, media representations of homosexuality, and transition.

## Attitude Heroes

Attitude produced a brilliant series to mark the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality in England and Wales. The series, which features an incredible line-up of guests, including Tom Daley, Ian McKellen, and Gok Wan.

## The Gay Agenda

Broadcaster, illustrator, and writer Rylan Cavell takes a fresh look at LGBTQ+ issues, which includes drag king Lydia Bernsmeier-Rullov and comedian Kate McCabe. The Gay Agenda generally covers a really broad variety of topics.



# LGBTQ+ Podcasts

## NB: My non-binary life

You might have heard the term non-binary. This is how it feels. Join Caitlin Benedict & Amrou Al-Kadhi as they ask the big questions about gender & identity.

## Afroqueer

AfroQueer tells the stories of Queer Africans from across the continent and diaspora. The podcast celebrates queer love, and explores laws, migration, media, race, class, censorship, family and sex. Along the way, they also share some bitter truths of what it means to be Queer and African

## If these ovaries could talk

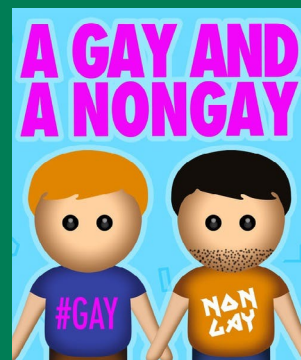
Lesbian mums Robin Hopkins and Jamie Kelton get up close and personal with guests, as they discuss making babies and raising families in non-traditional ways.

## A Gay and a NonGay

Winner of best comedy at the 2018's British Podcast Awards, hosts James Barr and Dan Hudson talk openly about their respective experiences, from consent to burnout.

## The Log Books

The Log Books offers a unique look at queer history in Britain by exploring the Switchboard's archives, a helpline which provides information, support and referrals for anyone considering their sexuality.



# LGBTQ+ Charities

## The Proud Trust

The Proud Trust is a life saving and life enhancing organisation that helps LGBTQ+ young people empower themselves, to make a positive change for themselves.

## LGBT Foundation

The LGBT Foundation is a national charity delivering advice, support and information services to LGBTQ+ communities.

## Albert Kennedy Trust (AKT)

AKT supports LGBTQ+ young people aged 16-25 in the UK who are facing or experiencing homelessness or living in a hostile environment.

## Mermaids

Mermaids supports transgender, nonbinary and gender-diverse children and young people, as well as their families and professionals involved in their care.

## George House Trust

George House Trust provides services to people living with, and affected by, HIV, offering one to one advice.

## Mind Out

Mind Out work to improve the mental health and wellbeing of LGBTQ+ community and to make mental health a community concern.



# Trans Specific Resources

## Tips for Allies of Transgender People

The following are tips that can be used as you move toward becoming a better ally to transgender people. When you become an ally of transgender people, your actions will help change the culture, making society a better, safer place for transgender people and for all people (trans or not) who do not conform to conventional gender expectations.

## Trans Ally: Do's and Don'ts

This resource is intended to answer some common questions and to provide some basic ways to make your world more trans-friendly. There is a lot more information out there (some accurate, some not-so-much), and many creative ideas that have yet to be invented!

## Trans Voices series on YouTube

Listen to Trans Voices - a playlist where transgender children talk about being raised by their families, trans people address popular culture, how gender impacts everyday life and open up about their #MeToo experiences.

## Trans Ally Resources

There are countless resources to support your trans ally learning (and coming out!) experience. Looking to be a stronger ally? Check out some of the listed organisations and connect with their work. Check out these resources that were developed to boost your trans inclusion IQ and action plan. Commit to learning more.

# Frequently Asked Questions

We all have questions about being an Ally, language, pronouns and many other topics.

The following are some questions that Building Equality has often been asked about LGBTQ+ issues.

If you have a question and cannot find the answer on this page or in this resources pack, feel free to email us or visit our [website](#).



## Why did you become an Ally?

Allies have many different personal reasons for supporting the LGBTQ+ community. Some people may be driven by a strong belief in inclusion and essential human rights, while others may want to show support for family, friends and loved ones who are LGBTQ+. Sometimes, allies simply feel that striving for equality is the right thing to do. Generally, allies don't agree with the injustices they see the LGBTQ+ community face and want to make positive change. Not all allies are straight and cis, different members of the LGBTQ+ community can also be allies to each other.

## What happens if I use the wrong language?

Language, particularly the English language, is always evolving. Some terms that were acceptable in the past aren't now, some terms may fall out of favour in the future. We all make mistakes and if you realised you've used the wrong language or term, acknowledge it, apologise if necessary, and commit to using more appropriate language in the future. If you are unsure refer to our Glossary at section 1.

## How can I be an effective ally?

Different allies bring different skills to support the LGBTQ+ community that can reflect their age, professional connections or passion for a topic or situation. Challenge inappropriate language and behaviours when you encounter them, bring enthusiasm and ask the LGBTQ+ community you're supporting / working alongside how best to help. Research - read this support pack in its entirety - watch the films, read the books to truly understand and be an effective ally.

## What are the first steps in being a great ally?

Reaching out and connecting with LGBTQ+ employees, networks or groups is always a good first step on an allies journey. Educate yourself on the challenges facing the community and don't be afraid to ask questions.

## What is not helpful / common mistakes made by allies?

Don't assume that you know what the LGBTQ+ community faces on a daily basis, and never dismiss someone's lived experience. Support the community in the way they want to be supported, rather than how you think they should be. Critical friends are important, but there's a difference between challenging discussions and decisions to ultimately reach a successful way forward and being demeaning and condescending.

## Who can be an ally?

Anyone who wants to be. An ally can merely be someone who is supportive and accepts the LGBTQ+ person, or an ally can be someone who personally advocates for equal rights and fair treatment. An ally can be both within the LGBTQ+ community and outside - heterosexual.

## Can you recommend any resources that I can read to educate myself?

See LIVE being an Ally section of this resource pack.

## What is a gender pronoun?

A gender pronoun is the pronoun that a person uses for themselves. Some common examples include: she / her / hers, he / him / his and they / them / theirs. See [mypronouns.org](https://mypronouns.org) for more information.

## How do I know what pronouns to use?

Ask! We recommend that all workplaces start every meeting by introducing themselves and their pronouns, if they are comfortable doing so. Some workplaces also offer the option to include pronouns in email signatures or on name badges. If you are unsure of someone's pronouns just ask "can you remind me which pronouns you use for yourself?" - they won't be offended. But don't just make assumptions based on a person's appearance.

## Why is using the wrong pronouns a problem?

Being misgendered is a real problem for many, including non-binary, trans and intersex people. For most of us, our singular and visible gender identity is never questioned and we are not misgendered. But not everybody has that privilege; and those that are referred to with the wrong pronouns can feel disrespected, invalidated, and alienated.

## What do I do if I make a mistake?

Correct yourself and apologise. If you realise your mistake after the fact, apologise in private and move on. In either case, don't dwell on the mistake - we all make them. Just learn from it.

## Do you have any tips on how I can correct others?

Talk to the person in private and explain to them the mistake they made and what language or action they should have considered instead. They may not have been aware what they did or said was wrong. Depending on the situation and the mistake, a more formal conversation may be needed, but always start with a private discussion.

## What are the right acronyms to use? LGBT, LGBT+, LGBTQ+ LGBTQIA?

There are many different acronyms used by, and to describe, the LGBTQ+ community. Building Equality usually use LGBTQ+ as they feel it best reflects the community they represent, using '+' to cover the many different ways the community identifies itself and its allies. We include Q for Queer as an umbrella term referring to anyone who is not straight and not cisgender. However, some LGBTQ+ people still find the term offensive, - so err on the side of caution when using this term to describe someone.

## What if I encounter a negative reaction to “coming out” as an LGBTQ+ ally?

This is a possibility but most people are respected and supported for their words and actions as an ally - even when people around them don't quite understand why they would support LGBTQ+ equality. This is why it's very important to think about why you're an ally, and to be able to explain it to others, if you ever encounter a negative or indifferent reaction.

## If I become an LGBTQ+ ally will people think I'm LGBTQ+

Maybe – and we know that this can be an uncomfortable reality at first. In response, you can clarify that you are straight and/or cisgender, leave the question unanswered, or lead with why it is important to you to identify and take action, as an ally. This experience can offer a valuable perspective into the challenges LGBTQ+ people deal with all the time. Working through any anxiety you may have, and being able to have a good laugh about it, will give you the confidence and the tools to have a deeper discussion with others about the issue.

## What are the issues LGBTQ+ people still face?

There are many societal issues that the LGBTQ+ community face such as anti-LGBTQ+ bully, harassment, discrimination and hate crimes, as well as access to healthcare or limited and restrictive rights for transgender people. These issues are magnified in construction, engineering and the built environment with 59% of LGBTQ+ individuals overhearing 'gay' being used as an insult in the workplace and 54% not feeling comfortable being open about their sexuality and/or gender identity in the workplace.

# Workplace Diversity Benefits

Ten benefits of diversity in the workplace covering people, performance and business.

Workplace diversity is not just a politically correct fad - it is a serious competitive advantage. Companies with more diverse workplace outperform their competitors and achieve greater profits!





## People Benefits

### Variety of different perspectives

Since diversity in the workplace means that employees will have different characteristics and backgrounds, they are also more likely to have a variety of different skills and experiences. Consequently, employees in a company with higher workplace diversity will have access to a variety of different perspectives, which is highly beneficial when it comes to planning and executing a business strategy.

### Higher employee engagement

Workplace diversity leads to higher employee engagement. Deloitte conducted research that captured the views and experiences of 1,550 employees in three large businesses. This research showed that engagement is an outcome of diversity and inclusion.

The link between workplace diversity and employee engagement is pretty straightforward - when employees feel included, they are more engaged.

# Performance

## Increased creativity

People with different backgrounds tend to have different experiences and different perspectives. When you put together people who see the same thing in different ways, you are more likely to get a melting pot of fresh, new ideas.

## Faster problem-solving

Harvard Business Review found diverse teams are able to solve problems faster than cognitively similar people. Employees from diverse backgrounds have different experiences and views, which is why they are able to will bring diverse solutions to the table. Thus, the best solution can be chosen sooner, which leads to faster problem-solving.

## Better decision making

A white paper from Cloverpop has found a direct link between workplace diversity and decision-making. Researchers found that when diverse teams made a business decision, they outperformed individual decision-makers up to 87% of the time. When employees with different backgrounds and perspectives come together, they come up with more solutions, which leads to the more informed and improved decision-making processes and results.

## Higher innovation

In a diverse workplace, employees are exposed to multiple perspectives and worldviews. When these various perspectives combine, they often come together in novel ways, opening doors to innovation.

## Business Benefits

### Increased profits

Companies with a diverse workforce make better decisions faster, which gives them a serious advantage over their competitors. As a result, companies they achieve better business results and reap more profit.

### Reduced employee turnover

Diversity and inclusion in the workplace cause all employees to feel accepted and valued. When employees feel accepted and valued, they are also happier in their workplace and stay longer with a company. As a result, turnover rates are lower.

### Better company reputation

Companies that are dedicated to building and promoting diversity in the workplace are seen as good, more human and socially responsible. Workplace diversity also makes your company look more interesting. Finally, if you present a diverse workforce, you will make it easier for many different people to relate to your company and your brand, opening doors to new markets, customers and business partners.

### Improved hiring results

Diversity in the workplace boosts an organisations brand and presents a company as a more desirable place to work. Diversity is an especially beneficial asset for attracting top talent from diverse talent pools. According to a survey conducted by Glassdoor, 67% of job seekers said a diverse workforce is important when considering job offers.