

Responding to questions on Inclusion (LGBTIQA+)

We are committed to building an environment of belonging, where our people can bring their whole selves to work. A focus on diversity, equity, and inclusion to create belonging in everything we do will enable us to better support people with disability to live, learn, work and flourish according to their own interests and priorities.

Our diverse and inclusive workforce is our strength, its people's differences, both visible and invisible, that makes us who we are and when embraced enables us to work together and make possibilities a reality for everyone.

LGBTIQA+ Inclusion

- LGBTIQA+ inclusion is not about trying to change individual beliefs. It is about workplace behaviour and how we interact with each other in a professional working relationship.
- By supporting LGBTIQA+ workplace inclusion, we are not only saying this is a workplace where all employees can thrive, but also that harmful, discriminatory behaviour targeting those who do identify, will not be tolerated.
- People's personal views, values and beliefs are their own. It is the behaviours that inclusion initiatives target. It's also against the law to discriminate against individuals because of their difference.

Acknowledging Diverse Experiences

- Acknowledging and supporting diverse experiences helps to reduce feelings of isolation and stress, improving mental health and creating a stronger sense of belonging.
- When our people feel accepted and valued for their authentic selves, they experience greater emotional and psychological wellbeing, improved self-esteem, social connections and relationships.
- Fostering an inclusive environment in a workplace not only boosts employee morale but can lead to increased employee engagement, creativity and productivity.
- We create fair and transparent policies and practices that empowers and promotes the inclusion of all, irrespective of age, marital or family status, gender, gender identity, ethnicity, nationality, religious beliefs, qualifications, disability, sexuality, cultural backgrounds, socio-economic backgrounds, perspectives, experiences and lived experience.
- This is not about valuing one diverse experience over another, however there are diverse experiences that benefit from increased understanding and support to overcome barriers of inclusion.

Discrimination

- In Australia, there are many laws and regulatory standards that protect the human rights of LGBTIQ+ people when discrimination happens. These include the Human Rights Act, Equal Opportunity Act, Sex Discrimination Act, Disability Discrimination Act, NDIS practice standards and the UN Convention on the rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- We also have our own internal policies and procedures in place for employees and reinforces these laws and standards, and guides positive, inclusive behaviours in the workplace.

Bullying and Harassment

- Everyone deserves equal and fair treatment and the freedom to be their authentic self without facing discrimination. This right remains unchanged regardless of gender, sexuality, sex characteristics, appearance or disability.
- Experiences of bullying, harassment or discrimination based on LGBTIQ+ identities can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of LGBTIQ+ people, often leading to increased stress and anxiety that negatively affect mental health.

NDIS Participant Rights

- We are dedicated to ensuring that people with disability are included, empowered, and able to exercise choice and control over their lives. This commitment involves providing access to information and resources and creating opportunities for individuals to make informed decisions.
- The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities reinforces the rights for all people with disability to have respectful relationships, express gender identity, to be respected by support staff and organisations, inclusive health care and health information, and to be treated equally in all areas of life.
- As a disability support organisation, it is our responsibility to uphold the rights of people with disability in all areas of their life. It is important that we avoid making assumptions about the needs, opinions, or identities of people with disability and instead approach everyone with respect and understanding.

Sources and additional resources

- Pride in Diversity - <https://www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au/>
- Rainbow Inclusion - <https://rainbowinclusion.org.au/>
- Minus 18 - <https://www.minus18.org.au/>
- [Endeavour Foundation - Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [Endeavour Foundation – Code of Conduct](#)
- [Employee Assistance Program – Specialist Phone Helplines \(including LGBTIQ+\)](#)