



CONSORTIUM
for stronger lgbt+ communities

Branding

Factsheet

This Factsheet is not intended to be a definitive guide.
It is designed for LGBT+ groups to gain a better understanding of the subject matter.

All the information provided was up to date at the time of creation.

This Factsheet was created by Consortium for the LGBT+ Futures Fund Skills
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As part of the LGBT+ Futures Fund Programme Consortium and its partners are delivering a range of learning and skills development opportunities.

As you work through the factsheet topics you will see a range of **icons** which are designed to alert you to additional information and support at the appropriate time.



Additional Resources Available: Click on the icon to find more information on the topic



Webinar Available. Click on the icon to take you to a recorded webinar on the topic



Additional Support Available: Email us if you need more support or information



Important Information: Don't be tempted to skip a section with this icon next to it.



External Link or Resource: Clicking on this icon or a link by it will take you to an external resource or

Introduction

Your 'brand' includes your groups' name, logo and also the 'look' and tone of your message used in publications, marketing materials, online and so on.

If you have a strong, consistent and clear brand but feel that there are still issues with certain groups of individuals and organisations not being aware of your work, then this may be a separate issue.



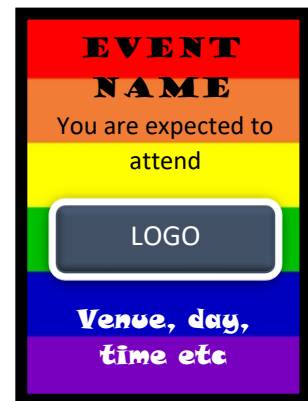
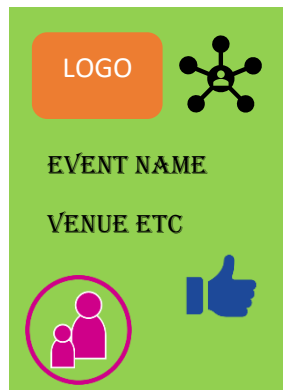
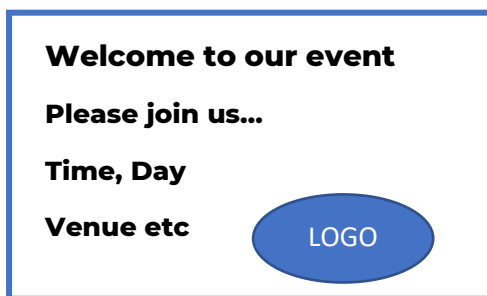
Rather than seeking to change a well-established and strong brand, you may need to review how you get your message out to the right place. **Please [request our toolkit developed by Stonewall: Making a Case and Influencing](#)**

Consistency

A consistent approach requires all staff and volunteers to use a format or structure, so that whilst information will of course vary from one flyer or publication to the next, there is still a clear indication that is it from the same organisation.

Having your logo on the document is not enough. If everyone is using different fonts, layouts, colours as well as a different tone and message then your 'brand' may be difficult for people to recognise or understand.

Would you immediately realise these three flyers are from the same group??



Take a look through your existing publications, flyers, website and any other medium you use and see if there is consistency (beyond including your logo) or if this needs to be improved.

If your resources look like the above examples, with no consistency then it is important to spend some time and develop a coherent template.

If possible, involve your group - staff, board, volunteers and members to work together in developing template guidelines to best present your existing brand. For



further information on ways to engage members **please access our short [webinar service-user involvement](#)**.

Decide on a 'tone of voice' – for example, is your group's remit to support and welcome service users, or are you providing formal and factual information to the public etc. This will help ensure all publications use the same 'tone of voice'.

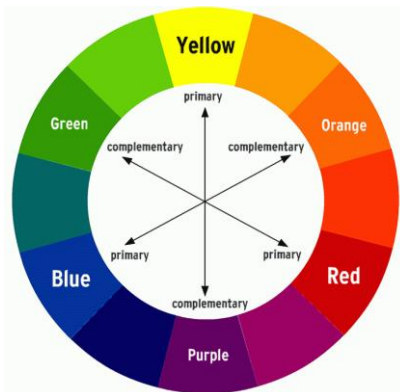
And if your organisation has multiple remits, you will still need to use a consistent approach within each area so that, for example, all of your service flyers have the same welcoming tone and all public information factsheets have the same formal tone and so on.

Agree on one or two main fonts that should be used for all communications with clear guidelines such as:

Arial Bold for all headings size 18

Arial size 12 for standard text

Decide on a colour scheme for key text that draws on or compliments any colours in your logo.



There are various 'complimentary colour charts' online that can assist you in finding options that will work. Do also consider how various colours appear in print and online.

For example, if your logo is purple the complimentary colour is yellow, but it is not an ideal colour for text. **See what we mean...** It can be helpful to try different combinations and see how they look.

When exploring fonts and colour combinations, it is vital to also consider accessibility. This [Government guidance](#) covers some key do's and don'ts when designing for accessibility and information on colour contrasts.

And why not take a look at our Equity and Inclusion resources via our members Dashboard for further information.

With regards to flyers and publications agree on a format so that regardless of the event, workshop, session etc, there will be a consistent approach.

You may want to develop two or three templates based on feedback from your group and then vote to find your winner!

Headings Arial Bold, dark blue (R0, G18, B148)
Size 18, centred

Info in Arial 12
(black) max half page

Relevant image below text

Contact info. Bottom left
In dark blue / OR blue
box orange text

Logo bottom right (include minimum dimensions)

Rebrand Decision

You may feel it's the right time to start completely afresh and develop a whole new brand logo and even company name.



Keep in mind if you are incorporated and you choose to change the company name this will require a legal change and impacts on your constitution, bank accounts, Companies House, and so on... It may therefore be preferable to maintain the 'legal name' but focus your logo and brand with the new wording.

For example: legal name LGBT Worcester Council Staff Network

Logo and brand 'working name': Worcester Rainbow



If your group has charity status you will need to inform the Charities Commission of your working name (even if there is no change to your legal name).

This must be agreed with your group / board to ensure there is buy-in from as many people as possible. And do consider why you are planning to rebrand. This may be linked to a particular time frame such as your organisation reaching its 10th year, it may be because the focus of the work you do has changed and so your name and logo need to reflect this.

It is helpful to conduct an initial survey with your group as you may discover the brand is better established and valued than you realised, and the issue may be more about how to connect with a wider audience.



As outlined above, if this proves to be the case please [request our toolkit developed by Stonewall: Making a Case and Influencing.](#)

Rebrand

If your group decides to proceed with a rebrand, below are some tips and factors to consider to help with the process:



If possible, recruit a professional brand company, ideally offering pro bono support. To increase your success in receiving free or discounted support – look at what you can offer them in return so that it becomes a partnership. **Take a look at our [webinar](#) on developing corporate partnerships.**

If a professional organisation is simply not viable, reach out to your network – there may be someone who is a professional graphic designer, artist etc. You could also consider free online design tools such as Canva.

Involve your members, service users, volunteers and any well-established professional contacts so that the new brand connects with your audience.

Review existing brands through a Google search online (try search phrases such as company logos, charity logos etc)

- What do you like and why?
- What do you not like and why?
- Are there any key themes you can draw from this research? For example
 - particularly liked logo's with bold solid text as they stand out
 - preferred soft / rounded fonts as they seem more welcoming...

With any proposed logo designs, test out how they look online and in print format. Sometimes logos may be clear when viewed in full screen mode, but a small version for business cards or ID badges for example may lose essential detail.

Rainbow Network

Rainbow
Network

It is also useful to consider different logo formats which can be used in different situations. For example, Consortium has logo variations, but they are still clearly the same brand:



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During the development stages, it is helpful to also test out logo designs both internally and with your service users, so they are part of the process ensuring the final logo speaks to your stakeholders.

Somewhere over the Rainbow...

LGBT+ groups often use the Pride rainbow colours in their brand as an easy way to stand out as LGBT. However, keep in mind that with every LGBT+ group having the same idea, will it actually help you stand out, or just blend in with other similar groups?

Future proof your brand

Many LGBT+ groups in recent years have updated their name from LGBT to LGBTQ, LGBT+ and so on. And indeed, some longer-standing groups previously updated from L&G to LGB and then to LGBT!

But what will this look like in 5, 10 or 15 years' time? Likewise, a brand name that is specific to a service may not be relevant in future years if your group expands.

For example: Reading LGBT+ Youth Club may be relevant now as an organisation name, but if you expand and start delivering 1:1 support, family support and so on, the name becomes obsolete.

"Years ago, I worked for a company called London West Training Services...they weren't in West London and they didn't provide training! It was annoying having to explain that with every new contact made. It was such a relief when they finally rebranded!" Consortium member.

It's also important to do some research and be aware of other relevant organisations in terms of their brand and message to ensure you remain unique and distinct.

Be prepared for the possibility of conflict! It's unlikely that you will get complete consensus across your group and stakeholders and so a certain amount of compromise may be required. It can be useful to explore pros and cons to help in the decision process and you may wish to utilise tools such as a SWOT analysis.

Voting can be a good way to manage conflicts so that final decisions are based on the 'majority' opinion.

Whatever approach you choose, be clear from the outset in communicating how final decisions will be made. Whether you plan to hold an anonymous vote across your membership, trustee board decision, chairperson has the final say etc, it's important to make this clear from the outset, so that people know their views are part of a 'process' and may not necessarily make the final cut.

Brand Launch

Once you have decided on your new logo and brand format, you will need to consider how this is launched.

Review your branded materials:

- Produce a list of all soft copy documents and hard copy materials that will need to be updated.
- This can be a good opportunity to review materials and update content as well as brand.
- Prioritise the list to ensure essential materials (such as the logo on your website) are updated as soon as the new brand is launched.

It may not be financially viable to recycle old flyers and office stationery such as compliment slips and business cards. Review your current stock and consider a timeframe within which to use up old stock before replacing with the newly branded materials.

Whilst cost is clearly a factor here, this needs to be balanced with the original aims of the rebrand. If you are still using old flyers 2 years down the line, it's unlikely to help get your new brand known.

Internal launch communications:

Make sure you have a clear plan in place for your board, staff and volunteers so that everyone starts using the new brand once the initial launch has happened. This may require setting aside a specific time slot to ensure your team update their email signature, font defaults and so on.

Ensure everyone is clear on exactly what graphics, colours, fonts etc they should be using. A professional brand company will provide guidelines, so if you have undertaken the project yourselves, you will need to ensure you provide basic guidelines.

External launch communications:

Depending on budget the actual 'launch' of your new brand can be anything from a social media post to a fancy launch event. In terms of timings, consider whether you have any other upcoming events such as an AGM, where the brand launch can be announced.

If you simply present the new logo, it may alienate members and supporters, so it can be helpful to include some information about the journey your group has undertaken in the rebrand process when you launch. This will help ensure people understand why it has come about and are therefore more likely to 'buy-in' to the new brand.

Once your visual brand is launched, keep in mind that the consistent use of tone and message is a longer-term piece of work that will continue after the 'big reveal'. It can be helpful to build in review periods in the first year after the launch to ensure a consistent approach is embedded.

Recap

- Involve your group and service users.
- Review your existing brand and message (does it need to change?)
- Develop a clear and consistent template for publications, used by all.
- Recruit a brand specialist if viable.
- Research other brands and relevant organisations as part of the process.
- Ensure design options work across different mediums.
- Have a clear plan for the final decision process to help minimise and manage conflict.
- Plan your launch and ensure its coordinated.
- Continue the process after the launch to ensure the message becomes fully embedded.