

Equity & Inclusion guidance for LGBT+ organisations responding to research requests, event invites and those seeking to procure services.

Research requests

As an LGBT+ organisation you may receive many requests from students and organisations seeking input (either from your organisation or from your service-users or both). To help you decide whether you wish to participate there are a number of factors to consider.

Below is a template email and bullet point questions (presented for each request ‘type’) that you may wish to take back to the researcher. Please adapt as required and remember **you are under no obligation to take part – if you have any concerns about the nature of the research, or you simply don’t have capacity then it is entirely reasonable to decline.**

Many thanks for getting in touch with details of your [research / consultation name / info]. In order to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our [team / service users], I would be grateful if you could provide further information as outlined below:

Surveys

- Please can you provide us with a copy of the survey to review prior to sharing this with our [team / services users].
- If the survey is in a format that requires each section to be completed in order to move on to the next section – please make the survey available in a different format to enable ease of review. **It is entirely reasonable to decide not to take part / share the survey if it will take up too much of your time in having to complete the survey yourself in order to be able to review the questions.**
- If there are any pre-populated response options, please provide full details of the response options available.
- What safeguarding protocols do you have in place to protect participants? **This is essential if the focus is on under 18s and / or vulnerable adults.**
- How will the information be used and how will the findings be shared with participants?

Research

- Please advise what is the specific objective of the study and its intended impact?
- Who is / are the principal investigators?
- What is / are the sponsoring institutions or organisations?
- How are LGBT+ scholars/researchers included in this research work?
- Who is funding the study? Please describe any conflicts of interest.

- Is there IRB / Ethics board approval? Describe ethical practices specific to LGBT+ subjects.
- What is the target study population?
- What safeguarding protocols do you have in place to protect participants? **This is essential if the focus is on under 18s and / or vulnerable adults.**
- Describe geographic scope, languages, and intersectional inclusion.
- Is there a cost or travel requirement, or is there compensation for participants?
- Will the results of this research be published in open access journals or channels?
- Will your organisation be credited within the research publication?

Consultations

- Please can you advise what time and capacity commitment is required / expected if we choose to participate? **It is entirely reasonable to ask for payment, especially if the commitment is significant.**
- What is the purpose of the consultation - how will the information be used and how will the findings be shared with participants?
- Will the results be anonymised, and will they be shared with us for review and approval prior to being published? **This is particularly important to check if the consultation findings will be detailing your name and / or your organisation's name to ensure any quotes or information are accurate.**
- What safeguarding protocols do you have in place to protect participants? **This is essential if the focus is on under 18s and / or vulnerable adults.**
- What policy do you have in place around equity, diversity, and inclusion for your organisation? Please advise how you implement this policy in your day-to-day activities to ensure LGBT+ inclusion?
- Please can you provide a copy of any data monitoring forms (or research questions) that will be used?

In situations where the monitoring is inadequate (for example only M/F provided as gender categories) below is a template response which you can use and adapt as required.

Many thanks for sharing your monitoring form with us. Unfortunately, the categories provided exclude communities and we would therefore request that these are updated to include all LGBT+ communities in order for us to be able to participant. Please use the link below to access information on inclusive monitoring practices.

[LGBT Foundation – If we're not counted, we don't count](#)

See below (p5) for further information on challenging ineffective monitoring.

LGBT+ Inclusivity requests

In addition to requests to participate in research and consultations your organisation may also receive requests for guidance from organisations wishing to ensure their service / policies / project is LGBT+ inclusive.

Whilst it is positive that they are seeking to ensure best practice, it is important to consider if your organisation is best placed to support such a request: is it part of your remit and do you have capacity? Do you have a costing structure for such requests?

It is entirely reasonable to discuss payment (often corporates assume that as a charity or voluntary organisation services will be free!).

If you are able to consider the request, below are some bullet points you may wish to explore:

- Scope and scale of the request (for example “reading a TV script” may be just one scene or a huge developing year long storyline!)
- Will your organisation be credited and if so – will you be provided with the final draft to approve.

If you do not feel able to take on the request, it may be helpful to sign post to other LGBT+ organisations via the Consortium Directory:

<https://www.consortium.lgbt/member-directory/>

Engaging in events

If your organisation is invited to an event, it is important to ensure it is LGBT+ inclusive. Below are some bullet point questions and considerations to help evaluate the event inclusivity and determine if you wish to participate and / or promote to your service users. This includes events advertised as LGBT+ as they may still exclude certain communities (for example, a lack of awareness around trans and non-binary needs).

Factors to consider if asked to promote an event (for example to your service users)

- Who else is involved in the event?
- Who has a visible role and who has been involved in shaping the event?
- How has diversity, equity and inclusion been part of the event organisers process of developing the event?
- What accessibility provisions are in place for the event? E.g., level access to the room/stage, captioning, sign language interpretation, audio description, quiet spaces, accessible toilets, gender neutral toilets, prayer space.

Factors to consider if deciding to join an event as an attendee

- All of the above bullet points plus:
- What lived experience are you expecting me to bring to the event, what aspects of this are shared by others involved and what might I be the only representative of in the room?

Factors to consider if asked to participate at an event: for example, as a guest speaker or performer

- All of the above bullet points plus:
- Are travel expenses covered for in-person events?
- How much are speakers / performers being paid?
- How have you considered the diversity of panel members?
- Who else is will be on the panel? **Are you comfortable attending alongside the other speakers? For example, the panel may be intended to present opposing views which may put you in a very uncomfortable position.**

Weigh up the impact on your group / outcome of taking part or not, to help you decide. If you determine that it is a positive opportunity, but you don't have capacity or availability on the date – it is helpful to sign post the organisations to other LGBT+ organisations via the Consortium Directory:

<https://www.consortium.lgbt/member-directory/>

Procuring Services

As an LGBT+ organisation it is important to ensure any services you wish to commission / procure (such as a HR firm, accountancy firm, solicitors and so on) are fully LGBT+ inclusive.

To help with the procurement process there are a number of factors to consider and research you can undertake to help inform your decision:

- Check prospective organisations' websites and social media for evidence (or lack of) LGBT+ inclusion.
- Ask prospective organisations who else they have worked with and request references from any relevant customers.
- Ask for their policies and how they implement policies in day-to-day activities.
- Ask to see their staff monitoring form.
- Ask for information on their ethical HR practices (for example, are they a living wage employer?)
- Seek recommendations from your own networks.

Internal factors to consider:

- What positive action does your organisation take to ensure underrepresented groups are targeted within your procurement process?
- Consider using a weighted procurement process with Equity and Inclusion given equal weighting to other areas.

Challenging ineffective monitoring

- Challenge the 'excuse' that IT systems are preventing a change to monitoring – there is always a solution even if “other” is added and used as a starting point.
- It may help to reference the Office for National Statistics (ONS) as they updated entrenched systems to enable LGBT+ inclusion for the first time in the 2021 Census.
- Where possible, monitoring systems should be encouraging self-describe as best practice on monitoring forms – although this makes quantitative analysis difficult.

There may be situations where a provider has received funding to deliver a programme (for example an employment or apprenticeship scheme) where the funder stipulates the monitoring requirements.

In such instances there a number of actions that can be followed up:

- 1) Check that the information the provider has given is actually correct – they may have misinterpreted information from the funder / governing body.
- 2) Encourage the provider to create a cover letter / information sheet to explain to potential service-users that monitoring requirements are specified by an external funder / governing body and additionally provide a means to capture correct information at a local level.
- 3) Challenge the organisation who are specifying the monitoring:
 - a. you may wish to advise the provider to follow this up.
 - b. or offer to work with them to jointly challenge.
 - c. If it is a large governing body (such as a government department) it may be more appropriate to bring the challenge to the attention of the Consortium Leaders Network and Equity and Inclusion working group for a larger scale collective approach. [Contact us](#)