PRIDE IN PRACTICE 2026

PRIDE IN PRACTICE

THE AUSTRALIAN LGBTQ+ INCLUSION CONFERENCE

MELBOURNE • 23 – 24 NOV

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PRIDE INCLUSION PROGRAMS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We recognise the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, their experiences, cultures, languages and practices, and the richness of their contributions to the places where we work, live and play.

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands we are meeting on today and their continuing connection to lands, waters, skies and communities.

We pay respect to Elders past and present, and extend this to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending our event.

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WELCOME TO PRIDE IN PRACTICE

Welcome to the 2026 Pride in Practice Conference!

Thank you for joining us. Your presence is a powerful act of leadership. By being here, you and the organisations you represent send a clear message: LGBTQ+ inclusion is not just important, it is essential, and the work continues.

For 16 years, this conference has been a cornerstone of our work; a place to connect, learn, and inspire one another. We are more than a conference. We are a community of leaders, allies, and advocates working towards a world where everyone can bring their whole self to work. We are proud to stand with you and thank you for your ongoing commitment to visibility, inclusion, and belonging.

As we do each year, we will once again host a luncheon for CEOs from some of Australia's largest and most influential organisations. Sponsored by PwC Australia, this important event provides a forum for leaders to discuss emerging challenges, share experiences, and collaborate on solutions that help shape a more inclusive future. It is a powerful demonstration of the ongoing commitment to Diversity, Equity & Inclusion across Australian workplaces.

We are here to support you with the tools, resources, insights, and confidence needed to create safer and more inclusive workplaces. Over the next two days, we will celebrate achievements, explore new ideas, and learn from one another.

We also extend our sincere thanks to our sponsors:

CEO Summit Sponsor – PwC Australia,
Silver Sponsor – Suncorp,
Room Sponsor – Dell Technologies, and
Coffee Cart Sponsors – The University of Sydney and Mars.

This event would not be possible without your support.

Finally, we would like to thank our Pride in Diversity members. You are at the heart of this work, helping to create workplaces where people feel welcomed, valued, and able to thrive.

From the entire ACON Pride Inclusion Programs team, we wish you an inspiring, thought-provoking, and rewarding two days.

Building futures. Protecting what matters

For more than 100 years, we've helped people and communities prepare for challenges, recover from setbacks and build confidence for the future.

At Suncorp, we know that feeling safe and supported matters. Whether it's at home, in our communities or at work, people thrive when they can be themselves and know they belong.

That's why we're committed to creating an inclusive culture where diversity is valued, different perspectives are welcomed and everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

We're proud sponsors of the Pride in Practice Conference and support the ongoing work to advance LGBTQ+ inclusion across Australian workplaces.

Because stronger communities start with people who feel respected, valued and connected.

Visit suncorp.com.au for more information or come and chat with one of our delegates.

SUNCORP

PROUD SPONSOR OF THE 2026
Pride in Practice Conference,
Melbourne

ABOUT OUR SILVER SPONSOR

SUNCORP

Suncorp is a leading trans-Tasman insurer with a heritage of more than 100 years and a purpose of building futures and protecting what matters.

Through some of Australia and New Zealand's most recognised insurance brands, we support millions of customers to navigate life's uncertainties and recover stronger when challenges arise.

At Suncorp, we believe inclusion helps create better outcomes for our people, customers and communities. We are committed to building a workplace where everyone feels respected, connected and able to bring their authentic selves to work.

As a proud sponsor of the Pride in Practice Conference, we value opportunities to learn, collaborate and share experiences that advance LGBTQ+ inclusion. We recognise that our people bring diverse and intersectional identities, perspectives and lived experiences that strengthen our culture and help us better serve the communities in which we operate.

Guided by our principles of caring for others, being courageous and doing the right thing, we continue to focus on creating equitable experiences through inclusive policies, practices and leadership. By fostering an environment where people can thrive, we help unlock the potential of our people and build a stronger future for all.

Contact: **www.suncorpgroup.com.au** or call **13 11 55**

Playing with Pride

PwC Australia is proud to have supported Playing With Pride, national research on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people who play women's sport across Australia.

Developed in collaboration with Pride Cup and Pride in Sport, this project explores how participation in women's sport influences confidence, identity and belonging for LGBTQ+ people, and what contributes to inclusive club and league environments.

More than 270 LGBTQ+ participants across 43 women's sports, at both community and elite levels, took part in the survey.

Scan the QR code to download the report

By listening and sharing these insights, we have a powerful opportunity to build a future where every LGBTQ+ person can step onto the field knowing they can truly belong.

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ABOUT OUR CEO SUMMIT SPONSOR

At PwC Australia, we combine trusted human expertise with emerging technologies to help clients and communities navigate complex challenges and transform at pace.

In the fast-moving era of AI, we're establishing ourselves as a leading partner of choice in the professional services industry, delivering lasting growth and quality outcomes at scale.

As part of a global network of 364,000 people, PwC Australia connects clients to specialist insights, capabilities, and technologies from around the world, helping them turn bold ambition into measurable impact, with responsible AI-led reinvention at the core.

Our people are our greatest strength, and we are focused on creating a culture where everyone is empowered to thrive and feel like they belong. Inclusion and diversity are fundamentally embedded into how we work through meaningful initiatives, visible leadership, and employee engagement.

Our Shine People Network reflects our commitment to an inclusive and diverse workplace, elevating LGBTQ+ voices and championing an environment where people can bring their true, authentic selves to work.

By turning strategy into action, we allow our teams to succeed and contribute at their best, driving better results for the firm, its clients, and the communities we serve.

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

DAY 1	MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026		
8:00am – 9:00am	REGISTRATION (Concourse)		
9:00am – 9:05am	**Welcome to Country,** Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corporation (ACON Room)		
9:05am – 9:20am	**Opening Address – Day 1** Georgie Harman AO, Patron, Pride in Diversity (ACON Room)		
9:20am – 10:00am	**Session 1: Curious, Not Furious: Navigating Hard Conversations Across Deep Divides** Mars (ACON Room) A PC PN LE		
10:05am – 10:45am	**Session 2: Pride in Neurodivergence: From Insight to Action** Pride in Diversity (ACON Room) A PC PN LE		
10:45am – 11:15am	BREAK FOR MORNING TEA (Concourse)		
11:15am – 11:50am	**Session 3A (ACON Room)**	**Session 3B (Dell Technologies Room)**	**Session 3C (Westpac Room)**
	Moments that Matter: Psychological Safety in Challenging Times Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA) A PC PN LE	**Foundation to Gold: Turning AWEI Into a Roadmap** Swinburne University of Technology F PC PN	**Leading Out Loud: Lessons from LGBTQ+ Changemakers and Allies** NBN Co F LE
11:55am – 12:30pm	**Session 4A (ACON Room)**	**Session 4B (Dell Technologies Room)**	**Session 4C (Westpac Room)**
	Fear is the Mind-Killer: Understanding Resistance to Inclusive Learning ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs A PC LD LE	**Under the Rainbow Hood: The Reality of Building An ERG** NAB F PC PN	**Organisations and Inclusive Dress Practices – People Bringing Their Best** Defence LGBTQIA+ Information Service (DEFGLIS) I PC

Level: F Foundational I Intermediate A Advanced **Stream:** PC People & Culture PN Pride Network LD Learning & Development LE Leadership

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DAY 1 CONT'D	MONDAY 23 NOVEMBER 2026		
12:30pm – 1:30pm	**BREAK FOR LUNCH** (Concourse)		
12:45pm – 1:15pm	**Lunch & Learn 1: Safe in My City: Community-Led Conversations on Safety in Your LGA,** Maribyrnong City Council (ACON Room) F LD		
1:30pm – 2:10pm	**Session 5A** (ACON Room)	**Session 5B** (Dell Technologies Room)	**Session 5C** (Westpac Room)
	Silos to Strategy: Building An Intersectional Belonging Action Plan Melbourne Water I PC PN	**Breaking Barriers: The Donation Equality Journey** Australian Red Cross Lifeblood F PC	**Growing LGBTQ+ Inclusion Outside of Our Cities Through Regional Reach** Australia Post & Pride in Diversity F PN
2:15pm – 2:55pm	**Session 6: CEO of the Year Fireside Chat** Glenn Morgan, CEO, Deutsche Bank (2026 Winner) & David Locke, CEO, AFCA (2024 Winner) (ACON Room) F LE PN		
3:00pm – 3:40pm	**Session 7A** (ACON Room)	**Session 7B** (Dell Technologies Room)	**Session 7C** (Westpac Room)
	The Time for Leadership is Now: Secretary Jim Betts The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts F LE PN	**Stitching Together Community: Creative Avenues for Connection and Awareness** UNSW Sydney I PC PN	**Continuing Culture: Building LGBTQ+ Inclusion That Lasts** McCullough Robertson Lawyers F PN
3:40pm – 4:10pm	**BREAK FOR AFTERNOON TEA** (Concourse)		
4:10pm – 4:50pm	**Session 8: When Inclusion Isn't Equitable: A FLINTA+ Experience** FLINTA+firm (ACON Room) I PC PN		
4:50pm – 5:00pm	**Closing Remarks** (ACON Room)		
5:00pm – 7:00pm	**NETWORKING EVENT** (Level 2 Medallion Club Terrace)		

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DAY 2	TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2026		
8:30am – 9:00am	**REGISTRATION** (Concourse)		
9:00am – 9:05am	**Welcome to Day 2** Pride in Diversity (ACON Room)		
9:05am – 9:20am	**Opening Address – Day 2** Dr Justin Koonin, President, ACON (ACON Room)		
9:20am – 10:00am	**Session 9: Intent and Impact: Building Enduring Trans & Gender Diverse Inclusion** Vicinity Centres (ACON Room) F PC PN		
10:05am – 10:45am	**Session 10: Stop Fixing LGBTQ+ People: Developing Leaders by Changing the System** ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs (ACON Room) A LD LE		
10:45am – 11:15am	**BREAK FOR MORNING TEA** (Concourse)		
11:15am – 11:50am	**Session 11A** (ACON Room)	**Session 11B** (Dell Technologies Room)	**Session 11C** (Westpac Room)
	Beyond the Rainbow Lanyard: From Tokenism to Authentic Allyship EY Australia F PC PN	**Strategy, Simplified: Building a Pride Strategy on a Page** Pride in Diversity F PC PN LD	**Silos to Strength: Uniting through Fairness, Inclusion & Respect** Ventia I PC PN
11:55am – 12:30pm	**Session 12A** (ACON Room)	**Session 12B** (Dell Technologies Room)	**Session 12C** (Westpac Room)
	The LGBTIQ+ Inclusion Playbook QBE F PN	**Strengthening Resilience in Challenging Times** Pride in Diversity A PC PN LD	**You Can't Have the D without the I** University of Sydney F PC PN
12:30pm – 1:30pm	**BREAK FOR LUNCH** (Concourse)		
12:45pm – 1:15pm	**Lunch & Learn 2: Results to Reality: Turning AWEI Insights into Strategy and Impact** ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs (ACON Room) F PC PN LE		

Level: F Foundational I Intermediate A Advanced **Stream:** PC People & Culture PN Pride Network LD Learning & Development LE Leadership

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DAY 2 CONT'D	TUESDAY 24 NOVEMBER 2026		
1:30pm – 2:10pm	**Session 13A (ACON Room)**	**Session 13B (Dell Technologies Room)**	**Session 13C (Westpac Room)**
	A Little Less Conversation, A Little More Action, Please GPT & Pride in Diversity I PC PN	**Partnerships with Impact: Corporate Responsibility & Partnership Without the Morning Tea** Endeavour Group F PC	**Inclusion By Design: Curriculum, Care and Culture** Torrens University I PC LD
2:15pm – 2:55pm	**Session 14A (ACON Room)**	**Session 14B (Dell Technologies Room)**	**Session 14C (Westpac Room)**
	Building an Employee Network for Parents of Trans & Gender Diverse Youth Victoria Police A PC PN LE	**How, Now…? Building Staff Capabilities for LGBTQ+ Inclusion** ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs A PC LD	**Passion Into Practice: Growing a Sustainable Pride Network** Gadens F PN
3:00pm – 3:40pm	**Session 15: The 2026 AWEI Employers of the Year Panel** Bendigo Bank & Russell Kennedy Lawyers (2026 Winners) (ACON Room) F PC PN		
3:40pm – 4:10pm	**BREAK FOR AFTERNOON TEA (Concourse)**		
4:10pm – 4:50pm	**Session 16: Digging Deeper: Unearthing the Value Of LGBTQ+ Inclusion for All** BHP (ACON Room) F PC PN		
4:50pm – 5:00pm	**Closing Remarks** (ACON Room)		

Level: F Foundational I Intermediate A Advanced **Stream:** PC People & Culture PN Pride Network LD Learning & Development LE Leadership

Program Disclaimer: ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs believes that the information contained in this publication is correct at the time of publishing. However, ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs reserves the right to vary any of the speakers, topics or times referred to in this program without further notice. Any conference or public forum referred to in this program may involve the presentation of information by speakers or other persons (Presentations). The views expressed in any Presentations are not necessarily the views of ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs and are intended to provide general information only that should not be relied on instead of other legal, medical, financial or professional advice.

Applying an intersectional lens: LGBTQ+ and neuro-inclusion in the workplace

Pride in Neurodivergence

Unveiling neurodivergent LGBTQ+ experiences in the workplace

2026 Publication
Now available to members

“ This publication doesn’t just present data; it provides a compelling and practical framework for individuals, workplaces, and policymakers to better understand and support neurodivergent LGBTQ+ professionals.”

DR JUDY TANG OAM
Director and Clinical Neuropsychologist, Invictus Health

pridein diversity

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SESSION LEVELS & STREAMS

All sessions have been categorised into levels and streams to help guide your journey through the conference.

LEVELS

The 'Levels' tag indicates the depth and complexity of a session, taking into account both the content covered and the level of interactive elements.

F FOUNDATIONAL

For sessions that are focused on insights and learnings i.e. from an AWEI journey, Pride Network challenges/successes and typically does not require audience participation.

I INTERMEDIATE

For sessions that build on foundational knowledge by combining practical insights, strategic considerations and clear takeaways or actions, with opportunities for audience participation and discussion.

A ADVANCED

For sessions that explore more complex or specialised topics, often incorporating workshop-style activities, active audience participation and content that extends beyond existing resources, such as the AWEI.

STREAMS

The 'streams' tag relates to sessions that may align to the role you hold in your organisation i.e. a session that talks to gender affirmation procedure and leading practice would be tagged with the stream 'People & Culture'.

PC PEOPLE & CULTURE

For those working across People & Culture, including Business Partners, DEI practitioners, Employee Experience and Employee Relations, these sessions connect directly to the work you do every day. From shaping systems, policies and practices that support psychologically safe and inclusive workplaces, to responding to emerging challenges, these sessions will provide practical insights, ideas and approaches you can take back to your organisation and put into action.

LD LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT

For those working across Learning & Development, including Organisational Development, Instructional Design and Change Management, these sessions connect LGBTQ+ inclusion with the way people learn, grow and adapt at work. Explore how to embed inclusion into learning strategies, extend the impact of training beyond the session itself, and create ongoing opportunities for reflection, development and meaningful behavioural change.

PN PRIDE NETWORK

For those involved in LGBTQ+ working groups and Pride Networks, including Network Co-Chairs, committee members and those looking to become more involved, these sessions are designed to help strengthen the impact of your network. Explore practical approaches to building sustainable strategies, engaging the LGBTQ+ community and allies within your organisation, and working effectively with leaders and the broader organisation to drive LGBTQ+ inclusion.

LE LEADERSHIP

For those working in leadership roles, including people managers and those leading programs, teams or areas of the business, these sessions focus on the practical role leaders play in creating inclusive workplace cultures. Explore how to support LGBTQ+ employees, respond effectively to workplace behaviours, and turn organisational commitments to LGBTQ+ inclusion into meaningful, everyday actions.

SESSION SYNOPSIS

DAY 1

Session 1 A PC PN LE

CURIOUS NOT FURIOUS: NAVIGATING HARD CONVERSATIONS ACROSS DEEP DIVIDES

Mars

What happens when we come face-to-face with someone who stands on the opposite side of our values? In the Pride+ community, navigating spaces where we feel misunderstood or unwelcome is a familiar challenge. But how often do our own defence mechanisms dictate the outcome before a conversation even begins? In this highly interactive, scenario-based workshop, we will step into a real-time exercise to dissect bias from both sides of the table – while recognising that curiosity does not mean tolerating harmful behaviour or taking responsibility for changing another person's beliefs.

Session 2 A PC PN LE

PRIDE IN NEURODIVERGENCE: FROM INSIGHT TO ACTION

Pride in Diversity

Following the recent launch of 'Pride in Neurodivergence: Unveiling Neurodivergent LGBTQ+ Experiences in the Workplace', Australia's first data-informed publication and workplace toolkit exploring the intersection of LGBTQ+ and neurodivergence at work, this interactive session invites participants to engage with the research in a practical and collaborative way. Through facilitated discussion, shared learning and reflection, attendees will explore key findings, identify practical applications, discuss opportunities for action, and consider what the insights mean for creating more inclusive workplaces for neurodivergent LGBTQ+ employees.

Session 3A A PC PN LE

MOMENTS THAT MATTER: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA)

Psychological safety is proven when it is tested. AFCA will share de-identified examples of how it has supported employees through personal crisis, responded to external hostility towards DEI, and helped its people through the sudden loss of a colleague. The session will show how visible leadership, an employee-led Ally Network, practical policy and wellbeing supports make it safer to speak up, ask for help and bring your whole self to work. Delegates will leave with practical actions for building psychological safety – and responding when difficult times or events put it under pressure.

Session 3B F PC PN

FOUNDATION TO GOLD: TURNING AWEI INTO A ROADMAP

Swinburne University of Technology

What happens when an organisation uses its first AWEI submission not just to understand where it is, but as a catalyst for where it wants to go? In its first year participating in AWEI, Swinburne University of Technology concurrently completed Foundation and Advanced submissions, achieving Gold Employer recognition. This session explores how the benchmarking process helped bring together existing LGBTQIA+ inclusion work, build organisational momentum and strengthen senior leadership engagement. Hear how Swinburne translated that momentum into a refreshed Rainbow Roadmap, executive commitment to a Platinum pathway, stronger communications partnerships, and a broader approach connecting employee and student Pride communities.

Session 3C F LE

LEADING OUT LOUD: LESSONS FROM LGBTQ+ CHANGEMAKERS AND ALLIES

NBN Co

Long before inclusion became part of the workplace conversation, LGBTQ+ leaders and allies chose to make themselves visible and use their influence to challenge

SESSION SYNOPSIS

expectations. Through historical and contemporary examples, storytelling, audience participation and reflection, this session explores leadership behaviours associated with cultural change and what today's leaders might choose to adopt in their own practice. Attendees will take part in an interactive "Who Am I?" leadership challenge, hear reflections from a senior LGBTQ+ executive, consider the people who shaped their own leadership journey, and leave with practical ideas to strengthen inclusion, allyship and belonging in their organisations.

Session 4A (A) (PC) (LD) (LE)

FEAR IS THE MIND-KILLER: UNDERSTANDING RESISTANCE TO INCLUSIVE LEARNING

ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs

This session explores what drives buy in to LGBTQ+ education by examining the dynamics of fear, in groups and out groups, and the mechanisms through which prejudice & discrimination form. Participants will gain a deeper understanding of how comfort levels, identity, and organisational culture shape engagement with inclusion training. The session then shifts to practical strategies for fostering constructive participation, offering approaches that are inclusive, respectful, and supportive of staff with diverse beliefs and readiness for self-reflection. The aim is to build confidence, reduce resistance, and create learning environments where meaningful, values aligned conversations can occur.

Session 4B (F) (PC) (PN)

UNDER THE RAINBOW HOOD: THE REALITY OF BUILDING AN ERG

NAB

Many ERGs begin with passion and momentum. Sustaining them is the challenge, particularly when networks become reliant on a small number of volunteers and face succession risks. In this candid conversation, Chelsey Stephen, Co-Chair of NAB Pride, and Kirsty Freeman, Senior Inclusion & Diversity Partner, explore NAB Pride's journey to redesign its operating model, governance and volunteer experience. Through both ERG and I&D perspectives, they will share what prompted change, the decisions that shaped the redesign, the tensions they navigated and the lessons learned along the way. Attendees will leave with practical ideas for building more sustainable, impactful employee networks.

Session 4C (I) (PC)

ORGANISATIONS AND INCLUSIVE DRESS PRACTICES – PEOPLE BRINGING THEIR BEST

Defence LGBTQIA+ Information Service (DEFGLIS)

The contemporary social landscape places significant demand on national institutions and organisations now more than ever, they must be representative of the society they service. One area organisations find challenging to negotiate is dress and grooming policies, and how they can foster expansive standards that maintain professional identity to include all walks of life, without further reinforcing cis heteronormative power structures. Through design thinking frameworks, stories of lived experience, discussion of institutional / professional identities, and insights on inclusion's link to capability, attendees will gain an understanding of policies that allow everyone to bring their best every day.

Session 5A (I) (PC) (PN)

SILOS TO STRATEGY: BUILDING AN INTERSECTIONAL BELONGING ACTION PLAN

Melbourne Water

Many organisations are moving beyond standalone diversity plans, but how do you strengthen LGBTQ+ inclusion without losing focus on the unique experiences of LGBTQ+ communities? This session shares how Melbourne Water transformed multiple diversity action plans into a single intersectional Belonging Action Plan. Through practical lessons, challenges, and examples, attendees will explore how embedding LGBTQ+ inclusion alongside First Peoples, gender equality, disability, culturally and racially marginalised communities, and social disadvantage can create stronger outcomes, clearer accountability, and a more authentic response to lived experience.

SESSION SYNOPSIS

Session 5B F PC

BREAKING BARRIERS: THE DONATION EQUALITY JOURNEY

Australian Red Cross Lifeblood

Our session will explore how decades of research, innovation and community advocacy helped reshape donor eligibility in Australia and pave the way for Donation Equality. We'll explore the history of donor eligibility criteria, the impact on LGBTQ+ communities and the scientific evidence that enabled reform. From eligibility changes to plasma donation in 2024 to whole blood donation in 2026, we'll highlight key milestones, notably the removal of wait times for plasma donors and the move to gender-neutral assessments, and discuss how community engagement has rebuilt trust, strengthened relationships, and created a more inclusive future where more people can save lives.

Session 5C F PN

GROWING LGBTQ+ INCLUSION OUTSIDE OF OUR CITIES THROUGH REGIONAL REACH

Australia Post & Pride in Diversity

We know that LGBTQ+ experiences can feel different outside our major cities. Rural and regional workplaces often have limited DEI resources, fewer trained practitioners, and local LGBTQ+ people may experience higher levels of isolation and discrimination. This session will explore Pride in Diversity's Regional Reach program sponsored by Australia Post. Drawing on years of learnings, these structured training events are designed to lift LGBTQ+ capability of local champions through practical tools, bold conversations and new local support networks. Regional Reach aims to close the maturity gap between metro and regional workplaces, ensuring LGBTQ+ inclusion is driven by capability – not postcode.

Session 6 F LE PN

CEO OF THE YEAR FIRESIDE CHAT

Glenn Morgan, CEO, Deutsche Bank (2026 Winner) and David Locke, CEO, AFCA (2024 Winner)

Leaders carry the weight of responsibility. They have a choice to commit to making LGBTQ+ people feel welcome, safe and engaged at their workplaces…or not. The Australian leader who chose to lean in to LGBTQ+ inclusion, and was recognised as 2026's CEO of the Year in the Australian LGBTQ+ Inclusion Awards is Deutsche Bank CEO, Glenn Morgan. Our 2024 winner, David Locke, CEO of Australian Financial Complaints Authority (AFCA), will interview our most recent winner in this captivating session. Two charismatic champions of LGBTQ+ inclusion will have a powerful conversation about the choices they made, and how others can follow in their brave footsteps.

Session 7A F LE PN

THE TIME FOR LEADERSHIP IS NOW – SECRETARY JIM BETTS

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

This session will explore what authentic leadership looks like during times of uncertainty, social tension, and change, particularly for LGBTQIA+ employees and their allies. In an informal "in conversation" format, Secretary Betts will share personal experiences, reflections, and practical insights on navigating crisis while maintaining inclusion, trust, and psychological safety within their agency. The discussion will focus on how leaders can respond to external events, policy changes, social debates, and workplace challenges that may disproportionately impact LGBTQIA+ communities, examining the balance between empathy and accountability, and the importance of visible allyship.

Session 7B I PC PN

STITCHING TOGETHER COMMUNITY: CREATIVE AVENUES FOR CONNECTION AND AWARENESS

UNSW Sydney

The UNSW Mardi Gras Community Quilt project demonstrated how creative, community-led practice can strengthen belonging, visibility, and inclusion. Through a

SESSION SYNOPSIS

series of workshops involving LGBTQIA+ students, staff, allies and community partners, participants created individual quilt patches which became an eight-metre quilt featured in the 2026 Mardi Gras Parade. This session will showcase how centring community voices, diverse LGBTQIA+ experiences, and creative expression, enables projects to move beyond symbolic representation, and create genuine connection, amplify intersectional LGBTQIA+ experiences, and foster community-building.

Session 7C (F) (PN)

CONTINUING CULTURE: BUILDING LGBTQ+ INCLUSION THAT LASTS

McCullough Robertson Lawyers

How do you turn the passion of an LGBTQ+ employee network into lasting, organisation-wide inclusion? Drawing on McCullough Robertson's experience, this session explores the journey from employee-led advocacy to shared organisational ownership. Through an honest and practical case study, speakers will explore the role of allies and leadership, maintaining momentum beyond key Pride moments, connecting LGBTQ+ inclusion with broader D&I priorities, and sharing local momentum across different organisational contexts. The session will reflect on what has worked, what has not, and what the organisation continues to learn about building LGBTQ+ inclusion that lasts.

Session 8 (I) (PC) (PN)

WHEN INCLUSION ISN'T EQUITABLE: A FLINTA+ EXPERIENCE

FLINTA+firm

Can something be inclusive in intention but inequitable in impact? FLINTA+firm was created in response to a challenge many organisations are reluctant to confront: an initiative may appear successful on paper, while the people it was designed to support do not experience the same sense of belonging, access, influence, or opportunity. Using FLINTA+firm as a case study, this interactive session explores: Who truly benefits from inclusion? Whose experiences are centred? What can organisations learn when participation does not translate into impact? And, when "successful" does not necessarily mean equitable.

DAY 2

Session 9 (I) (PN) (LE)

INTENT TO IMPACT: BUILDING ENDURING TRANS & GENDER DIVERSE INCLUSION

Vicinity Centres

This session explores how Vicinity Centres' Pride & Allies Employee Advocacy Group has driven meaningful change through sustained action across workplace culture, CX, centre operations and the built environment. From pronoun and inclusive language resources to frontline guidance on bathrooms and change facilities, inclusive amenities, national awareness campaigns and illuminated centre assets, Vicinity will demonstrate how multiple signals, systems and experiences work together to create a more inclusive environment. Attendees will gain practical insights into embedding inclusion beyond policy, and hear why humility, listening, external expertise and a commitment to continuous learning are critical when leading inclusion work without lived experience.

Session 10 (A) (LD) (LE)

STOP FIXING LGBTQ+ PEOPLE: DEVELOPING LEADERS BY CHANGING THE SYSTEM

ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs

What if some of the behaviours we try to "fix" in LGBTQ+ employees are not individual deficits, but rational responses to the environments in which they work? Drawing on research and insights from Pride Pathways: Future LGBTQ+ Leaders, this session explores how organisational culture can shape confidence, ambition and career progression. We examine perfectionism, people pleasing and fitting in as adaptations to systemic barriers, and consider how sponsorship, visibility, talent development and senior leadership engagement can change the conditions around LGBTQ+ talent. Because developing future LGBTQ+ leaders means more than changing individuals – it means changing the systems around them.

SESSION SYNOPSIS

Session 11A F PC PN

BEYOND THE RAINBOW LANYARD: FROM TOKENISM TO AUTHENTIC ALLYSHIP

EY Australia

Many organisations have invested in visible allyship, yet employees continue to report gaps in safety and belonging. Why? Drawing on insights from more than 500 employees across Australia and New Zealand through EY Australia's Allyship Matters Platinum Project, this session explores why traditional approaches to allyship are no longer enough. Discover the Signals → Engagement → Safety → Belonging framework and leave with evidence-based strategies to move beyond visible support and create workplaces where LGBTQ+ employees genuinely thrive.

Session 11B F PC PN LD

STRATEGY, SIMPLIFIED: BUILDING A PRIDE STRATEGY ON A PAGE

Pride in Diversity

Last year's 'Unleash Potential' session at the Pride in Practice conference showcased the powerful strategy work Pride in Diversity delivers with our members. This year, we're showcasing how strategy development can be simple. In this practical workshop, you'll explore an easy approach to creating a one-page Pride Network or working group strategy that captures your priorities, showcases your work and provides a clear roadmap for the next three years. You'll leave with a practical framework you can take back to your organisation and start using straight away.

Session 11C I PC PN

SILOS TO STRENGTH: UNITING THROUGH FAIRNESS, INCLUSION & RESPECT

Ventia

Employee networks can be powerful drivers of inclusion, but working in isolation can limit impact through inconsistent support, competing priorities and missed opportunities to learn from each other. This session explores how Fairness, Inclusion & Respect (FIR) can provide a shared framework that connects networks while preserving their distinct voices. Drawing on the experience of Ventia's Rainbow Employee Network, we examine what changes when LGBTQ+ inclusion moves beyond a standalone stream into a more dynamic, intersectional and enterprise-wide model. The session will share practical learnings, tensions, shifts and takeaways from moving from silos to shared strength.

Session 12A F PN

THE LGBTIQ+ INCLUSION PLAYBOOK

QBE

Pride networks have the power to be powerful catalysts for cultural transformation, but lasting change doesn't happen by chance. In this engaging and practical session, Nikki Lyon, QBE Pride Lead, reveals the strategies that help employee networks move beyond awareness raising to become influential drivers of organisational change. Learn how to secure leadership buy-in, build a compelling case for action, and embed inclusion into everyday business practices. You'll walk away with proven approaches, practical tools and fresh inspiration to create more inclusive cultures while delivering positive outcomes for both people and business.

Session 12B A PC PN LD

STRENGTHENING RESILIENCE IN CHALLENGING TIMES

Pride in Diversity

As organisations navigate growing uncertainty, increasing demands, and the risk of burnout, resilience has emerged as a critical capability for both individuals and organisations. However, resilience is not simply a personal responsibility. Inclusive workplaces recognise the role that culture, systems, leadership, and connection play in helping people

SESSION SYNOPSIS

thrive. In this highly interactive workshop, participants will explore their own resilience, examine broader challenges affecting wellbeing and performance, and identify practical strategies to build resilience individually and collectively. NB: This workshop will be 45 minutes and includes group participation and some movement.

Session 12C F PC PN

YOU CAN'T HAVE THE D WITHOUT THE I

University of Sydney

Organisations invest significant effort into attracting diverse talent, but diversity does not create inclusion. The University of Sydney leadership and culture specialists Ren Kotapati and Brooklyn Sulaeman, explore a simple truth: people thrive when they are safe to be themselves. Through storytelling, reflection and practical workplace examples this session examines how psychological safety, curiosity and authentic connection, unlocks the strengths, perspectives and potential of intersectional LGBTQIA+ talent, transforming diversity from representation into genuine belonging.

Session 13A F PC PN

A LITTLE LESS CONVERSATION, A LITTLE MORE ACTION, PLEASE

GPT & Pride in Diversity

This session offers a Start, Build, Grow blueprint for any company's LGBTQ+ journey. Start: one honest story, no infrastructure required. Build: structured, scenario-based conversation that turns awareness into practice response. Grow: live, unfiltered feedback benchmarked against sector data to prove real cultural shift, not just calendar moments. GPT's own path took two years with Pride in Diversity: 2025's "Trans-parency" gave staff a first genuine encounter with a trans experience, and 2026's Allyship Lab built on that foundation to move the organisation from listening to acting. Time to board the AllyShip!

Session 13B F PC

PARTNERSHIPS WITH IMPACT: CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITY & PARTNERSHIP WITHOUT THE MORNING TEA

Endeavour Group

Endeavour Group, with charity organisation Pride Foundation Australia, come together with Endeavour's corporate fundraising partners and Pride Foundation Australia's grant recipients to share their blueprint for corporate giving, through fundraising, partnership and sponsorship, that supports and empowers the LGBTQ+ community with real impact (in the current anti-DEI climate).

Session 13C I PC LD

INCLUSION BY DESIGN: CURRICULUM, CARE AND CULTURE

Torrens University

This roundtable style session will explore LGBTQIA+ and broader DEIB inclusion through the lens of curriculum design. In the twelve months since Kelly and Evan last spoke at this conference, that work has contributed to Torrens achieving AWEI Bronze accreditation. Be part of an interactive discussion which widens that out, exploring how inclusion gets built into everyday systems more broadly, from curriculum to events to staff and student support, rather than sitting alongside as policy or training. Kelly Cairns and Evan Karras open with a short framing on embedding inclusion, before opening the floor for attendees to share, question and compare notes together.

Session 14A A PC PN LE

BUILDING AN EMPLOYEE NETWORK FOR PARENTS OF TRANS & GENDER DIVERSE YOUTH

Victoria Police

When a child comes out as transgender or gender diverse, parents and caregivers often face a mix of immediate practical concerns and deeper personal reflection –

SESSION SYNOPSIS

while being unsure if workplaces and communities will be supportive. In response to this need, Victoria Police employees established the Parents and Caregivers of Transgender and Gender Diverse Children (PACTAG) network. This session explores the network's first 18 months, including its successes, challenges, and role in strengthening allyship, psychological safety and inclusion. Presenters will share personal experiences and practical lessons on building support networks and driving meaningful workplace change.

Session 14B (A) (PC) (LD)

HOW, NOW…? BUILDING STAFF CAPABILITIES FOR LGBTQ+ INCLUSION

ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs

This session reframes LGBTQ+ inclusion training by shifting from what and why to how. Together we will explore the practical capabilities staff need to enact inclusion confidently and consistently. Behaviour change requires more than knowledge: it requires practice, repetition, and alignment with organisational performance expectations. By centring universal soft skills and approaching education and training with a strategic mindset, organisations can build inclusion capability that strengthens culture and outcomes. Participants will explore how to map and design learning that prioritises performance over information, embeds repetition, and creates the conditions for sustained behavioural implementation across the workforce.

Session 14C (F) (PN)

PASSION INTO PRACTICE: GROWING A SUSTAINABLE PRIDE NETWORK

Gadens

How can a volunteer-led Pride network turn limited resources into national impact? Drawing on Pride@Gadens' journey from modest beginnings across two offices to a growing national presence, this session explores how passionate employees can turn ambition into sustainable action while balancing demanding day-to-day roles. Through a candid case study and practical framework, attendees will learn how to distribute responsibility, build internal partnerships, secure leadership support and design initiatives that can scale across locations. Attendees will leave with realistic strategies to strengthen Pride networks at any stage of development.

Session 15 (F) (PC) (PN)

THE 2026 AWEI EMPLOYERS OF THE YEAR PANEL

Bendigo Bank & Russell Kennedy Lawyers (2026 Winners)

The Employer of the Year recognises the organisations achieving the highest score within the AWEI Submission. To secure this top honour, a winner must score within the Gold or, in some cases, Platinum Tier, demonstrating excellence in LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion. Ultimately, this accolade celebrates an organisation's understanding that true inclusion is a continuous, evolving journey - one where sustaining equity and supporting employees never truly ends. Join Bendigo Bank, Russell Kennedy Lawyers and Pride Inclusion Programs' Index Project Manager, Will Reilly, as they explore how participation in Australia's national benchmark can drive organisational culture, embed lasting change and create measurable impact.

Session 16 (F) (PC) (PN)

DIGGING DEEPER: UNEARTHING THE VALUE OF LGBTQ+ INCLUSION FOR ALL

BHP

BHP is the only mining organisation to achieve AWEI Gold Status for two consecutive years. The real story lies beneath the recognition. In this session, BHP employees will share how LGBTQ+ inclusion has been embedded across one of the world's largest resources organisations by connecting inclusion to safety, leadership accountability, workforce experience and business performance. Through practical examples, data-driven decision making and lessons learned in a challenging DEI environment, speakers will explore how inclusion can move beyond advocacy and become part of everyday business practice, creating value for LGBTQ+ workforce and the broader workforce alike.

LUNCH AND LEARN SESSIONS

DAY 1

Lunch and Learn 1 (F) (LD)
12:45pm-1:15pm
ACON Room

SAFE IN MY CITY: COMMUNITY-LED CONVERSATIONS ON SAFETY IN YOUR LGA

Maribyrnong City Council

Safe in My City shares learnings from a focused consultation with LGBTIQA+ community members and partner organisations in Melbourne's west. The project explored safety across personal, relational, community, organisational and cultural settings, reasserting that visibility, belonging, public space, access to affirming services and participation can be as important to felt safety as direct institutional responses to violence. The discussion will explore what the consultation revealed, and how practitioners can responsibly interpret both what communities say and what they do not say.

DAY 2

Lunch and Learn 2 (F) (PC) (PN) (LE)
12:45pm-1:15pm
ACON Room

RESULTS TO REALITY: TURNING AWEI INSIGHTS INTO STRATEGY AND IMPACT

ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs

Let's explore how to skyrocket inclusion by harnessing the power of the existing data. Over two decades, organisations have participated in the Australian Workplace Equality Index Submission process, presenting evidence for evaluation of their organisation's inclusive practices & being benchmarked against other organisations, all vying for the recognition of their efforts at the annual Awards. Alongside has been the AWEI Employee Survey, allowing organisations to anonymously gather insights from their employees about how these initiatives and practices are playing out on the ground. While there are no awards offered, let's utilise results to turn weakness into strength!

PRIDE IN PRACTICE

THE AUSTRALIAN LGBTQ+ INCLUSION CONFERENCE
MELBOURNE • 23 – 24 NOV

acon PRIDE INCLUSION PROGRAMS

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Tomorrow starts today

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For greater inclusion we need partners. None of us can do this work alone!

ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs offer a range of benefits to assist employers, sporting organisations and service providers with all aspects of LGBTQ+ inclusion.

Pride in Diversity is the national not-for-profit employer support program for LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion specialising in HR, organisational change and workplace diversity. Pride in Diversity publishes the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI), Australia's national benchmarking instrument for LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion.

Pride in Sport is a national not-for-profit program specifically designed for sporting organisations and the inclusion of LGBTQ+ employees, athletes, coaches, volunteers and spectators. The Pride in Sport Index (PSI) benchmarks and assesses the inclusion of LGBTQ+ people across all sporting and recreation contexts.

Pride in Health + Wellbeing is our initiative providing support and specialised training to Health and Human Service providers in the development of LGBTQ+ inclusive service delivery.

Pride Training develops all of our specialist LGBTQ+ inclusion training content, across both facilitated and eLearning platforms. Training packs offer customisation options as well as fully bespoke program development.

For more information contact us at:
info@prideinclusionprograms.com.au
or visit **www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au**

acon : PRIDE TRAINING

prideinhealth +wellbeing

pridein sport

pridein diversity

PRIDE
INCLUSION
PROGRAMS

ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs is a social initiative of ACON.
The four programs – Pride in Diversity, Pride in Sport, Pride in Health +Wellbeing, and Pride Training – help to make the places where LGBTQ+ community members live, work and play more inclusive of LGBTQ+ people. This is achieved by working with a range of organisations to help ensure that LGBTQ+ people feel welcome and supported.
To find out more visit: **www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au**