



# STEPS TO RAINBOW INCLUSIVENESS

Pride Pledge Guide to Progress  
2022

*How can organisations best support their rainbow members to thrive? The road to rainbow inclusion and diversity might seem complex and perhaps insurmountable. At Pride Pledge, we believe that small simple steps add up. Here are our top 8 tips for working towards rainbow inclusiveness in your workplace, organisation or community.*



## **WHY RAINBOW INCLUSION?**

A diverse workplace is a strong and happy one.

Your commitment to the celebration of all people in your organisation has many benefits. When employees feel accepted and able to bring their whole selves to work, their organisations see a huge improvement in engagement, wellbeing, and productivity, as well as employee attraction and retention.

Additionally, organisations who are active and proud in their support for rainbow communities see great improvement in brand reputation, customer engagement, as well as shareholder value.



## 1. LEADERSHIP FROM THE TOP

The tone of an organisation's culture is often set from the top - by the CEO, executive team, the board or similar. When those in leadership roles demonstrate their commitment to diversity & inclusion, it radiates an important message throughout the business of safety and workplace inclusion.

A member of the executive team visibly acting as an ongoing sponsor of this work is essential to keep the conversation going at the top table. In addition to raising rainbow issues in high level discussions, leaders can also drive rainbow inclusion by staying educated and up to date on rainbow issues and language, and generally being open and proud of their ally/rainbow status.



## 2. EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND INVOLVEMENT

Having rainbow employees actively involved in every step you take towards shaping inclusion in your workplace is vital.

Diversity and Inclusion Committees, or Pride and Affinity Networks, are a great way to ensure that employees are the eyes, ears and pulse of the organisation around what works and what doesn't. We highly recommend that these groups are empowered and are given a budget to invest throughout the year.

Similarly, don't be afraid to ask questions, listen and be willing and ready to learn from your rainbow constituents. This should help leadership and HR teams inform strategy, policy, practice, engagement initiatives and benchmarks, and address real needs of your workforce.



## 3. STRATEGY AND PURPOSE

Being clear about 'why' a commitment to rainbow diversity is important for your organisation is essential. Simply put, without a clear focus, nothing will be achieved.

We recommend writing your rainbow inclusion values into your organisational strategy, values, and annual businesses plans - in the same way that you would an eco, bullying or gender policy. Your approach to your rainbow values should be no different from that of any other business objectives.

Be proud, specific and transparent about your commitment to rainbow inclusion.



## 4. POLICY AND PRACTICES

Ensuring your policies and practices deliver on your stated commitments involves putting in some effort. Are your organisational policies reflective of the current business environment and your cultural ethos?

Policies need to be revised regularly to explicitly outline inclusivity of all employees, irrespective of their gender or sexual orientation. This requires retrofitting away from being heteronormative (reflecting a heterosexual world view) that may alienate those with a differing view point.

Some topline examples include ensuring that your;

- parental leave policy covers same sex couples (is non-gender specific),
- medical insurance benefits cover people of all gender and sexual orientations and marital status,
- and that your uniform policies include gender neutral and diverse options.

Finally, it's also recommended that organisations consider having a Gender Affirming Leave Policy and have gender neutral bathrooms readily available on your premises.



## 5. TRAINING AND AWARENESS

Ensuring that your entire workforce, and in particular those in leadership and management roles, understand your commitments and policies towards diversity and inclusion is key to delivering on your plan.

Key steps to ensuring good training and awareness include;

- including a section on your rainbow values in all your induction and orientation material,
- training for managers who are recruiting new employees and leading teams,
- and basic company-wide education on the essentials of the LGBTTQIA+ experience, including definitions, appropriate language and the foundations of gender and sexuality diversity.

Pride Pledge has a range of Rainbow Awareness Training products and courses available. Check out our website and get in touch if you'd like to get your workplace upskilled.



## 6. EXTERNAL ENGAGEMENT

Being public about your commitments towards being inclusive is beneficial in many ways.

- It fosters a sense of pride for your rainbow employees.
- It sets the tone for prospective employees, customers and stakeholders.
- It publicly promotes and re-enforces the type of organisation you are.

How your organisation can or should go about your public engagement will depend on your size and budget, but we encourage;

- celebrating multiple rainbow days of awareness per year,
- adding rainbow not for profits to your regular donation recipients,
- considering diversity in all your marketing, promotional and communications material,
- supporting your 'activity' with a formal accreditation such as The Rainbow Tick or a commitment to The Pride Pledge,
- or even entering in the New Zealand Rainbow Excellence Awards.



## 7. COLLABORATION

Talking to and sharing with other businesses on the same journey can be extremely beneficial. Many businesses are happy to share experiences, policy and training material, and general advice.

Remember, you are not on your own. Reach out to existing networks and get involved in the conversation to help make all New Zealand workplaces a more inclusive environment for rainbow employees.

As part of the Pride Pledge ACTIVE program, we run monthly Collaboration Meeting where organisations come together to share learning and tools on a given specific topic. Get in touch if this program seems like it could be useful to you.



## 8. MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

Understanding your rainbow workforce is a critical step to shaping your plans and priorities. Identify where you would like to be and set targets for improvement around LGBTTQI+ wellbeing.

Some easy steps to understand your rainbow employees include;

- adding a Diversity and Inclusion section into your Employee Engagement Survey or Diversity Survey,
- including relevant questions in your exit interviews,
- doing our Pride Pledge Rainbow Inclusion Stocktake - we have many options available and this is an idea way to 'take stock' of where your organisation is at in terms of rainbow inclusion.

Please note that sharing this information is an important step and is vital to holding organisations accountable for action. This should be no different from equal pay targets, gender targets for females in leadership roles, or Maori and Pasifika representation in your workforce.



## **STILL HAVE QUESTIONS?**

Check out our website for more educational resources and guides like this one to help you on your journey, and infor on all the Pride Pledge services including;

- Rainbow Awareness Training
- The Rainbow Inclusion Stocktake
- Policy Consultation
- Networking & Collaboration
- and more.

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