



An Innovative Workplace Inclusion Programme

EQUALITY ALLIES AT WORK

An innovative workplace inclusion programme

ALLIES MATERIALS PACKAGE





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Dear Ally,

Congratulations for completing the first step in becoming an agent of change towards more inclusive workplaces!

Completing your basic training through the ally development workshop series is a huge step in this process. Thank you for trusting us to support you in the effort of becoming a workplace ally for women and LGB individuals. We are honoured and at the same time loaded with the responsibility to keep helping you as you embark on an allyship journey.

This materials package was developed for you, in order to guide you through your first steps of becoming an ally for women and LGB people. These groups, while different in composition, face some similar challenges at work. They are often excluded from formal meetings and informal gatherings, they are not easily heard or seen, and often constitute the subject of jokes. All these reinforce these individuals' experiences and feelings of devaluation, marginalization and exclusion, ultimately cultivating a workplace culture where human relationships and potential are damaged.

That's why allies are important. That's why what you have engaged with is important: because through the smallest of actions, you can make a difference in someone's life – at least at work. If you manage to implement larger-scale actions, you can definitely make a difference for a lot of people, as well as for the organisation. We know it may be challenging and difficult, but keep reminding yourself that it is worthwhile.

Allies such as yourself can help make organisations more inclusive and safe spaces for everyone. This guide will take you through some important information and help you start your ally journey.

Best of luck!

C. Ierodiakonou

Christiana Ierodiakonou
ALLies Project Coordinator

DEVELOPING EQUALITY ALLIES: THE ALLIES PROJECT AT A GLANCE

Developing Equality Allies is a small-scale social innovation programme that intends to:

- ∞ enhance awareness over the challenges that women and LGB (lesbian, gay, bisexual) people encounter at the workplace;
- ∞ develop necessary skills among employees who want to act as allies for these groups; and
- ∞ inform about actions that can support inclusion at the workplace.

Our Vision

To cultivate a new organisational ethos among organisations in Cyprus, which is respectful and supportive of diversity and eliminates 'Otherness'.

We conducted personal, in-depth interviews with women and LGB individuals with working experience in Cyprus in order to understand their experiences and perceptions, as well as the main challenges that they face at work. We collected data on their career transitions and decisions and focused on their perceptions of feeling included or excluded in everyday organisational life. The purpose was to understand the multiple factors that affect women and LGB people's inclusion at work.

Based on the research findings, we designed an innovative social solution to enhance awareness, skills and actions that support inclusion at the workplace. Specifically, we designed and pilot-tested targeted workshops, which:

- ∞ encouraged managerial staff to realise the factors and behaviours that may exclude women and LGB people from everyday organisational life,
- ∞ equipped them with knowledge and skills that they need to be able to act as active allies, and
- ∞ informed them about the individual and organisational actions they may develop in their workplaces.

The purpose is to estimate the effect of these workshops on individuals and organisations to gain insights into whether developing allies internally indeed leads to more inclusive workplaces for women and LGB individuals.

WHY DO ORGANISATIONS NEED ALLIES?

WHEN PEOPLE ARE EXCLUDED BECAUSE OF THEIR GENDER OR SEXUAL ORIENTATION, ALLIES BECOME A NECESSITY.

| | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES | Allies help create workplaces that are inclusive of people that could otherwise feel that they do not belong. |
| PROMOTING EQUALITY | The presence of allies sends a powerful message: the organisation supports non-majority groups and invests in inclusion and equality. |
| HAPPIER EMPLOYEES | LGB employees who feel they can be out at work suffer less stress, malaise and dissatisfaction with their careers. Women experience less discrimination and sexual harassment. |
| TALENT ATTRACTION | Inclusive workplace cultures help attract a diverse set of talent. |
| TALENT RETENTION | LGB workers and women are more likely to stay at a job if the environment is supportive and inclusive. |
| CREATIVITY & INNOVATION | Companies with inclusive and diverse cultures are more likely to maximize creativity, innovation and openness. They report greater team problem solving rates, better team performance and more effective decision making. |
| INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY | Employees who feel welcome, included and respected are more productive and engaged, producing higher quality work. They maximize their potential and are more committed to the company. |
| PROFIT GROWTH | Inclusive organisational cultures lead to higher revenue growth. |

WHO IS AN ALLY?

An ally is a person that belongs to the majority group and advocates for, or stands up in support of, members of marginalized groups.

- ∞ Men can be allies for women.
- ∞ Straight persons can be allies for LGB persons.

Why should you identify as an Ally?

- ∞ to help stop the oppression of women and LGB people.
- ∞ to make women and LGB people feel that they are valued.
- ∞ to challenge myths, stereotypes and preconceptions about women and LGB people.
- ∞ to encourage people to realize their biases and overcome any discomfort they may feel when interacting with women and LGB people.
- ∞ to offer a sense of safety to people who may feel threatened and excluded from the workplace or other spheres of society.
- ∞ to demonstrate that you care about women and LGB people, even if you are not a woman or a person identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual.
- ∞ to signify and act on your belief in gender and sexual equality.

Allies are important as they address situations that affected persons often feel they cannot.

COMMITTED ALLIES...

INCLUSIVE WORKPLACES

What are some qualities that Allies possess?

Allies want to learn: Allies want to hear about, become aware of and understand how Others experience the workplace. They want to learn about the challenges and obstacles they often face in everyday organisational life.



Allies take on the challenge: As they set to support women and/or LGB people, allies may feel uncomfortable, have questions or doubts and face several challenges. However, they are willing to take on the challenge.

Allies honestly support Others: Allies truly believe in and identify with their role. They use their voice and actions to support women and/or LGB people in many different ways – some are ‘smaller’ and personal while others may be bigger public acts. Allies express their support through the language they use, the conversations they choose to have and the signals they send to others. Allies realize that their actions, small or large, can have an impact.

| ALLIES DO | ALLIES DO NOT |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| ∞ Listen | ∞ Think they know everything |
| ∞ Respect confidentiality | ∞ Make promises they may not meet |
| ∞ Actively try to realize their biases | ∞ Pressure people to ‘come out’ |
| ∞ Want to learn | ∞ Make assumptions |
| ∞ Encourage others to learn | ∞ Out people |
| ∞ Empathize | ∞ Make sexist or homophobic jokes |
| ∞ Treat each person as an individual | ∞ Use exclusive language |

Start developing the competencies

- ∞ **Learn** about the struggles, obstacles and challenges that women and LGB people face at work – and in life.
- ∞ Learn to listen with **empathy** and fully focus on what women and LGB people are saying without drawing early conclusions or making pre-judgements.
- ∞ **Ask** questions. Be curious. Expand your knowledge and perspective.
- ∞ Acknowledge your own **privileges**.
- ∞ **Reflect** on and try to understand how your biases, though unconscious, may affect your judgments.
- ∞ **Question** your assumptions - try to think about the same situation through different angles.
- ∞ Try to **relate** to the feelings, needs and experiences of women and LGB people.
- ∞ Try to have positive and empathetic **interactions** with women and LGB people.
- ∞ Be **open** to new ideas, experiences and opinions. Try to consider ideas or opinions that are different from your own.
- ∞ **Advocate** for the rights of women and LGB people.
- ∞ **Challenge** sexist or homophobic remarks, jokes and comments.

ALLIES ARE NOT BORN.

THEY ARE TRAINED

and then

THEY ARE COMMITTED ENOUGH TO KEEP GOING!

STEPS TO BECOMING ALLIES

Becoming an ally is a continuous process of learning more, reflecting on yourself and your assumptions, becoming comfortable enough to act, and help others in their ally journeys. It is a journey that requires conscious reflections, thinking before acting and training yourself to respond to demanding and sometimes challenging situations.

To become an ally is a process. No one becomes an ally from one day to the next – regardless of any training they attend. It is a journey that takes time and involves different stages. Read about each one below.



1. Learn

Allyship involves a process of learning. As an ally, you need to:

- ∞ keep familiarizing yourself with the challenges that women and LGB people face in organisations because of their gender and/or sexual orientation.
- ∞ stay informed about relevant policies and legal developments.
- ∞ keep up with relevant terminology, thus making the language you use more inclusive.

2. Reflect on your assumptions and biases

Unconscious biases refer to stereotypes or attitudes that we form outside of our own awareness. We **all** have unconscious biases – we may suspect, we may not think we have any biases, or we may know but do not necessarily admit it. Whatever the case, if you are human, you have biases!

As an ally, consciously try:

- ∞ to avoid making assumptions about other people's gender identity or sexual orientation.
If unsure, use neutral and inclusive language.

- ∞ not to reinforce stereotypes.
For instance,
 - do not assume that all individuals want to get married and have children,
 - do not assume that everyone has or wants a (opposite-sex) partner,
 - do not assume that if you are happy at work, so is everyone else,
 - do not assume that your experiences and perceptions are shared or common.

You can ask others of their own perceptions and experiences.

- ∞ to realize your own assumptions and the ways they may affect your decision making, ways of interacting with others and your attitudes towards certain groups or members of certain groups.
For example, could they affect who you hire, promote, assign important tasks to, or have coffee with?

- ∞ to always ask yourself: would have I acted the same way if there was another person involved?
Would have I thought the same about the X act if it was performed by another person?
Keep asking yourself questions to realize your biases and change your behavior if this needs to be changed.

Remember!

If you know one person identifying as lesbian, gay or bisexual, you only know **one LGB person.**

Treat people as individuals.

Don't expect a single person to represent an entire social group.

3. Take action

As an ally you can take different sorts of actions to support women and LGB+ people, and advocate for their rights. In following sections, you can find some small or large ways in which you can act as an ally.

∞ *Think before you speak*

Would you use the same words (adjectives, terms), if you were interacting with a man or a woman, a straight or an LGB person?

If yes, great!

If not, try to realize the reasons behind this. Then, consciously try to use more inclusive and neutral language.

For example:

| Instead of these: | Use these: |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Man/woman | Person, individual, employee, colleague, coworkers |
| Guys, ladies, gentlemen*, etc. | You, folks, pals, friends, everyone, people, peeps |
| Husband/wife, boyfriend/girlfriend | Spouse, partner, significant other |
| Opposite sex/both sexes | For biology say “all sexes” and for gender, say “all genders” |
| Gay or lesbian relationship | Same-sex relationship (not all people in same-sex relationships identify as gay or lesbians) |
| Homosexual | Gay / lesbian |

By using inclusive language, you can encourage other people to do the same. Through the language you use, you are softly training others – it takes some time, but it works! Ultimately, this will create a more inclusive environment for everyone.

Yes, it matters!

When you are in meetings with people of different sexes do not address them as “guys”. Instead, use proper names or agendered/ gender neutral alternatives (i.e. folks, pals, everyone, etc.).

Adjectives such as "aggressive," "emotional" or "sensitive" have different meanings when applied to men versus women. Words like "ladies," "girls," "sweetie" and "dear" may seem polite or harmless, but they can undermine authority and impact perceptions about women's competence.

∞ *Actively challenge your biases*

Would you give the same orders to a man or a woman, a straight or an LGB person?

Would you have the same expectations, and make the same requests?

If yes, great!

If not, try to realise the reasons behind this. Make conscious efforts to reflect on your biases and understand how these may affect how you interact with people. The next step is to consciously try to challenge them.

Unconscious bias training programmes expose people to their implicit biases and help to identify automatic patterns of thinking to ultimately eliminate discriminatory behaviours.

∞ *Act against workplace discrimination, marginalization & exclusion*

Discriminatory acts can vary in degree and type. Homophobia and sexism can become evident at the institutional level of decision making, but also in everyday organisation life through seemingly unimportant acts.

Keep in mind that some of these acts are difficult to pinpoint – they have been normalized and perceived as ‘how things are done’. Any of the following rings a bell?

“This is/you are so gay...”

“She won’t go out with me, so she must be a lesbian...”

“She is such a bitch...”

“Will she be able to handle this? It’s a difficult client...”

“We should not send George (gay man) to this client. Let’s send someone serious...”

Very often we hear jokes about women and LGB people. Or we listen to people undermining the value of women and LGB people. Or even we may observe some people who express their concerns about whether a woman or an LGB person will be able to handle a difficult situation.

When allies witness such instances, they intervene as they know that such seemingly harmless jokes and comments can reinforce stereotypes, reproduce hierarchies and relations of power and subordination, and they can exclude people.

Certain jokes, while funny for some people, can hurt others, making them feel less than persons, excluded and rejected. As an ally you should not let such jokes slide.

Speak up! Challenge exclusionary comments, homophobic or sexist jokes, generalizations and assumptions about people based on stereotypes and misconceptions. Ask the person making the joke to explain it again and again. Say, “I don’t get it” or “I don’t understand how this is funny”.

If you **resist** you may force them to think why their joke isn’t funny. If they’re open to it, and if you feel ready you can **have a conversation** about why you think the joke is offensive and derogatory. You can explain how that makes you feel, and how it might make a woman or an LGB person feel.

Remember!

Allies respond immediately to homophobic, sexist, discriminative and dismissive comments or jokes.

You can respond in different ways, however. For example, you could challenge someone directly or you can speak to the persons involved later in private.

Initiating discussions is a key role of workplace allies.

If issues around equality and inclusion are not discussed, they remain invisible.

Your interventions as allies show that you support members of marginalized groups. Very importantly though, they can educate people, thus contributing to the development of accepting people and inclusive workplaces.

- ∞ Hear a sexist joke? Don't laugh. Speak up!
- ∞ Hear a gay joke? Don't laugh. Use a blank face and respond!
- ∞ Seeing somebody's ideas being overlooked? Don't look the other way. Say something!
- ∞ Seeing somebody's efforts not credited? Draw attention to their contributions!
- ∞ Realizing that some people are unreasonable missing from a meeting? Suggest they should be included or invited them yourself.
- ∞ Realizing that some groups are underrepresented in events, meetings etc.? Advocate for them to be invited.
- ∞ Witnessing a microaggression or discrimination? Address it right away or bring it up later. Make sure that your colleague realizes that they are hurting people.
- ∞ Hear people talking about someone's sexual orientation? Tell them that this is irrelevant information, unless the person wants to disclose it.
- ∞ Hear stereotypes or myths around sexual orientation or LGB+ people? Address them and offer correctives that are based on facts. Make sure that others know that while they have a right to their opinion, discrimination, homophobic or sexist comments cannot be tolerated.
- ∞ Somebody comes out to you? Don't act surprised. Support them! Disclosure is a very sensitive and difficult matter for many people.
- ∞ Hear people misgendering someone by (un)intentionally using the wrong pronoun? Find a way to correct them without making this too obvious. Continue the conversation and slip in a sentence that uses the correct pronoun.
- ∞ Witnessing someone being bullied or harassed? Get into the conversation and then check in with the victim privately. Ask them if they want you to say something.
- ∞ If you are in a position that allows you to, hold "office hours" and encourage team members to talk to you about issues that trouble them or concerning behaviors in the company.

When you find yourself in situations where you feel you should act, try to not be aggressive. Instead, kindly point out the problem and have a conversation with the other person(s) involved. Appropriate humor can help you to not look confrontational. Some facts can also help you create learning moments, without sounding aggressive.

You may use phrases such as “a lot of people don’t actually know that...” or “I actually read the other day that ...”. Shift your attention to the behavior instead of the person. You can also provide a corrective and explain why this is better. This will help you reinforce positive behavior instead of focusing only on the negative behavior.

Also, you may find yourself in cases where you want to advocate on behalf of someone else. While having the best intentions, this may make the person feel uncomfortable. To avoid awkward situations, talk to the person affected before acting on their behalf.

Remember!

Your interventions can educate people and demonstrate that you support equality and inclusion for all.

When you can, it’s best to ask what pronouns people prefer and use these when addressing them. If you make a mistake, apologize, correct yourself and move on.

Further, speaking up sends a **powerful message**. It tells others that you advocate for LGB and female colleagues because you want them to feel included; that you care about women and LGB people, even if you are not a woman or a person identifying as gay, lesbian or bisexual.

∞ Come Out as an Active Ally

By coming out, or actively making yourself visible, as an ally you let people know that you are all up for equality. By doing this, you encourage other people to follow you in this journey.

How can you make yourself a visible ally?

- ∞ Use an identifier badge on your office door, desk, personal luggage.
Let people know that you are a safe person that they can talk to in they need to.
- ∞ Add your ‘I am an ally’ logo in your email signature – this will spread the word around in no time.
- ∞ Be active and visible in your support of inclusion. Initiate discussions with colleagues, in boards and meetings. Talk regularly about inclusion, suggest actions that can make your organisation a more inclusive place.
- ∞ Respond to questions in a way that will educate and inform. Direct people to relevant material, websites, and other resources. Give them access to knowledge and facts that can alter their views or biases. You can find some relevant resources at the end of this guide.
- ∞ Your ally conversations shouldn’t be random. Mention that you’re an ally and clearly explain that you are an ally because you want everyone to feel included. Tell them that you are having these conversations because exclusionary behavior hurts the people or groups that are being excluded, but also everyone in the organisation as it affects the overall climate at work.

4. Train others

Once you have learned about the obstacles that women and LGB people must overcome, spread your knowledge to others. Encourage them to start their own ally journeys and support them to come out as allies.

- ∞ Allies can help other employees stop the oppression of LGB people and women in work organizations, and beyond.
- ∞ Allies can stop myths and misconceptions affecting women and LGB people.
- ∞ Allies can make women and LGB people feel accepted and included.
- ∞ Allies can be safety and support points for women and LGB people.
- ∞ Allies can make organizations safe places for women and LGB people.

Remember!

Allies can make a great difference to a workplace. Invite as many others as you can to this journey.

COMMON CONCERNS & CHALLENGES ALLIES FACE

Being an ally is not an easy task to start with, but it gets easier along the process. You will make mistakes. Don't let this discourage you; acknowledge when you are wrong, learn from this, and try not to repeat the same mistakes again.

- ∞ Allies often must challenge people with strongly-held views. Don't shy away from such encounters. Don't consider them lost cases. Insist. Try to expand their views by giving them facts and resources, examples they can relate to and understand.
- ∞ Allies might find themselves getting angry with people. Try to not be emotional and use your knowledge to counter stereotypes and non-factual statements.
- ∞ Allies' suggestions might be dismissed by management. Don't be disappointed. Collect information and evidence to make a case. Get support from other colleagues and keep advocating until you are heard.

Becoming an ally is a journey...
...It's time you get on board!

<https://ucy.ac.cy/allies/en/>

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APPENDIX I:

GLOSSARY

To become an Ally you need to understand key terms, acronyms, commonly used phrases, to get to know what is offensive and what is not. This comprehensive glossary was created through a combination of the glossaries developed by leading organisations such as ILGA Europe, EIGE and Catalyst.

- ∞ **Belonging**: is a sense of fitting in or feeling like you are an important member of a group.
- ∞ **Bias**: An inclination, prejudice or preference that influences our judgement of other people. Can be conscious or unconscious. Biases are constructed through socialization and often lead to internalizing systemic discriminations present in our societies.
- ∞ **Biological sex**: Sex determined by the physical characteristics of the body at birth, such as genetic markers and internal/external genitalia. Biological sex may differ from gender identity.
- ∞ **Biphobia**: the fear, unreasonable anger, intolerance or/and hatred toward bisexuality and bisexual people.
- ∞ **Bisexual**: An individual who is emotionally, romantically, and/or physically attracted to men and women. This is sometimes stated as “bi.”
- ∞ **Compounded stereotypes**: Generalised view or preconception about groups that results from the ascription of attributes, characteristics or roles based on one or more grounds.
- ∞ **Coming-out**: People often establish an LGB identity to themselves first and then may decide to reveal it to others. There are many different degrees of being out. It is up to each person, individually, to decide if and when to come out or disclose.
- ∞ **Different-sex relationship**: a relationship containing people of two different sexes. This term is preferred instead of opposite-sex, as ‘opposite’ is based on the incorrect assumption that there are only two possible sexes and that they are immutable.
- ∞ **Discrimination**: unequal or unfair treatment which can be based on a range of grounds, such as age, ethnic background, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity. Discrimination is based on prejudiced thinking and can be exercised by individuals or institutions. There are different types of discrimination:
 - **Direct discrimination**: where a person is treated less favorably than others on grounds such as sex and gender, age, nationality, race, ethnicity, religion or belief, health, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, than another person is, has been or would be treated in a comparable situation.
 - **Indirect discrimination**: where an apparently neutral provision or practice would put people of particular sexual orientation or gender identity at a disadvantage compared to others.

- ∞ **Experienced discrimination:** also called subjective discrimination, is the experience of being discriminated against. Experienced discrimination does not necessarily entail discrimination in the legal sense.
- ∞ **Diversity:** Acknowledging the different characteristics in which individuals and groups differ from one another (for example, age, socio-economic status, gender, religion, sexual orientation, race, etc.) and striving to have the different identities in our society represented in the spaces we are part of.
- ∞ **Dominance/Dominant identity group:** A social identity that holds more privilege, visibility and control over resources than other social identities in a given society. The cultural values and practices of that social identity are often perceived as the “norm”.
- ∞ **Double standards:** Defining the content of formal and informal behavioural cultures, which means that the criteria or standards used to evaluate and regulate women often differ from those for men, benefiting the latter.
- ∞ **Gay:** a man who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to men, without necessarily having any sexual experience. The term ‘lesbian’ is preferred for women in contemporary contexts.
- ∞ **Gender:** A set of social, psychological, or emotional traits, often influenced by societal expectations that classify an individual as either feminine or masculine.
- ∞ **Gender bias:** Prejudiced actions or thoughts relying on the gender-based perception that women are not equal to men in rights and dignity.
- ∞ **Gender discrimination:** Any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on the basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.
- ∞ **Gender equality:** Equal rights, responsibilities and opportunities of women and men and girls and boys.
- ∞ **Gender expression:** refers to people's manifestation of their gender identity. Typically, people seek to make their gender expression or presentation match their gender identity/identities, irrespective of the sex that they were assigned at birth.
- ∞ **Gender gap:** Gap in any area between women and men in terms of their levels of participation, access, rights, remuneration or benefits.
- ∞ **Gender identity:** One's deeply held personal, internal sense of being male, female, some of both, or neither. One's gender identity does not always correspond to biological sex.
- ∞ **Gender variant:** can refer to someone whose gender identity differs from normative gender identity and the gender roles/norms assigned at birth.
- ∞ **Harassment:** Unwanted conduct related to the sex of a person occurring with the purpose or effect of violating the dignity of that person, and of creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment

- ∞ **Hate crime:** offences that are motivated by hate or by bias against a particular group of people. This could be based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, age or disability. Also called bias crime.
- ∞ **Hate speech:** refers to public expressions which spread, incite, promote or justify hatred, discrimination or hostility towards minorities.
- ∞ **Heteronormativity:** refers cultural and social practices where men and women are led to believe that heterosexuality is the only conceivable sexuality. It implies that heterosexuality is the only way of being “normal”.
- ∞ **Heterosexism:** Assumption that every person should be heterosexual, thus marginalizing those who do not identify themselves as heterosexual.
- ∞ **Heterosexual:** Person who is attracted to someone of a sex other than one’s own.
- ∞ **Homophobia:** fear, unreasonable anger, intolerance or/and hatred directed towards homosexuality and towards lesbian and gay people based on prejudice.
- ∞ **Homosexual:** A person is categorized as homosexual when the partner’s gender is the same as the individual’s. It is recommended to use the terms lesbian and gay men instead of homosexual people.
- ∞ **Inclusion:** Actively and intentionally removing barriers for the participation of groups and individuals with lesser opportunities, and valuing the diversity of backgrounds, beliefs, identities, capabilities, and ways of life.
- ∞ **Intersectionality:** An intersectional perspective suggests that classifications like gender, race or sexual orientation cannot be examined in isolation from each other because each person has many interconnected social identities. These intersectional identities mean that some people can experience several overlapping forms of disadvantage that may even aggravate the other.
- ∞ **Lesbian:** a woman who is sexually and/or emotionally attracted to women, without necessarily having any sexual experience.
- ∞ **LGB:** Acronym for lesbian, gay and bisexual people.
- ∞ **Mansplaining:** A man talking in a condescending and patronizing way to someone (usually a woman) about something that person is already familiar with, having the mistaken assumption that he knows more about it than the person he’s talking to.
- ∞ **Marginalization:** The process of excluding certain groups or individuals from a society or community and putting them in a powerless position.
- ∞ **Microaggression:** Verbal, nonverbal or environmental messages or actions that invalidate or insult people of certain marginalized groups. Microaggressions are indirect, subtle and sometimes unintentional forms of discrimination and “otherization”.
- ∞ **Oppression:** The systemic, unfair and pervasive – often unconscious – ways that dominant groups unjustly maintain privilege and power by marginalizing other groups.
- ∞ **Power:** The ability of an individual or group to achieve their own goals and influence events, resources, and the behavior of others.
- ∞ **Prejudices:** Attitudes and feelings – whether positive or negative and whether conscious or non-conscious – that people have about members of other groups, which may be based on



preconceived ideas and influenced by elements such as gender, race, class, personal characteristics or other factors.

- ∞ **Privilege:** The unearned advantages, benefits and rights given to people who belong to certain social groups. (For example: male privilege, white privilege, etc.)
- ∞ **Rainbow flag:** A symbol celebrating the uniqueness and diversity within the LGBTI community. The flag has six stripes, each a different color, ranging from purple to red.
- ∞ **Sex:** Refers to biological, genetic, or physical characteristics that define males and females. These can include genitalia, hormone levels, genes, or secondary sex characteristics. Sex is often compared or interchanged with gender, which is thought of as more social and less biological, though there is some considerable overlap.
- ∞ **Sexual orientation:** Emotional, romantic, or sexual feelings toward other people. People who are straight experience these feelings primarily for people of the opposite sex. People who are gay or lesbian experience these feelings primarily for people of the same sex. People who are bisexual experience these feelings for people of both sexes. And people who are asexual experience no sexual attraction at all. Other terms describing sexual orientation include (but are not limited to) pansexual and polysexual.

APPENDIX II: SELF-ASSESSMENT

Below you can find a short self-assessment sheet that can help you reflect on your readiness to be a workplace ally for women and sexual minority members. For each of the following statements, reflect on what answer best represents you. Make sure to answer how you tend to behave in real life, rather than how you think you should behave and what you consider to be the correct answer. Answers range on a scale from 1 to 4, where:

Does not apply to me (1)

Applies to me (3)

Applies to me somewhat (2)

Applies to me very much (4)

| |
|---|
| I engage in self-examination of my own biases regarding sexual minority members. |
| I engage in self-examination of my own biases regarding women. |
| I am informed about the various issues faced by sexual minority individuals in the workplace. |
| I am informed about the various issues faced by women in the workplace. |
| I know about organisations that advocate for sexual minority issues. |
| I know about organisations that advocate for women's issues. |
| I actively challenge my biases and stereotypes about sexual minority members. |
| I actively challenge my biases and stereotypes about women. |
| I understand the difference between sex, gender and sexuality. |
| I know about legislation relating to the treatment of sexual minority individuals in the workplace. |
| I know about legislation relating to the treatment of women in the workplace. |
| I acknowledge that my unconscious biases may affect my decisions at work. |
| I know that there is such a thing as being an ally for women and/or sexual minority members. |
| I understand what a workplace ally does. |
| I can support a sexual minority person, if they need my help for workplace issues. |
| I can support a woman, if she needs my help for workplace issues. |
| I have the confidence to be an active workplace ally for sexual minorities. |



I have the confidence to be an active workplace ally for women.

I can/ could easily interact with LGB colleagues.

I can/ could easily interact with female colleagues.

When hearing sexist or homophobic remarks or jokes at work, I typically guide the conversation elsewhere.

I find it difficult to use inclusive language when interacting with others at work.

I am sometimes worried that I may unintentionally offend an LGBT person by using inappropriate language.

I am sometimes worried that I may unintentionally offend a woman by using inappropriate language.

I understand how language can exclude or include people.

I talk about equality and inclusion issues at work.

I have engaged in efforts to promote more widespread acceptance of sexual minority members in the workplace.

I have engaged in efforts to promote more widespread acceptance of women in the workplace.

When hearing sexist or homophobic remarks or jokes at work, I typically call them out.

When hearing sexist or homophobic remarks or jokes at work, I typically show my opposition with non-verbal behaviours (e.g. rolling eyes, shifting in chair, etc.).

I make myself known as an ally for sexual minorities at my workplace.

I make myself known as an ally for women at my workplace.

I feel confident to build the business case for diversity and inclusion in my department/ organisation.

I am often worried about saying the wrong thing when discussing diversity and inclusion issues at the workplace.

I think sexual minority individuals face barriers in the workplace that are not faced by heterosexual people.

I think women face barriers in the workplace that are not faced by men.

In the past two months, I supported or advocated for an LGB colleague.

In the past two months, I supported or advocated for a female colleague.

When hearing sexist or homophobic remarks or jokes at work, I typically ignore them.



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| I am comfortable being openly identified as an ally to sexual minority individuals at work. |
| I am comfortable being openly identified as an ally to women at work. |
| I am worried that, in being an ally to sexual minority individuals, people may assume I am a sexual minority person. |
| Sometimes, I feel anxious about how LGB colleagues might react to me as an ally to sexual minorities. |
| Sometimes, I feel anxious about how female colleagues might react to me as an ally to women. |
| Sometimes, I feel skeptical if being a workplace ally actually makes a difference. |

Now, take a look at your answers. This self-assessment gives you a starting point to start reflecting, questioning and changing.

Ask yourself: how could I further develop? Where is there room for improvement?

You can also discuss these statements and your reflections on them with colleagues or friends - they might bring in a different perspective about your competences and strengths.

APPENDIX III: ORGANISATIONS AND ASSOCIATIONS PROMOTING GENDER AND SEXUAL ORIENTATION EQUALITY

International

Catalyst: Catalyst is a global non-profit organisation working with leading companies around the world to help build workplaces that work for women. Arguing that workplaces that work for women will work for everyone, the actions and work of Catalyst touch upon the working lives of other marginalised groups as well.

Founded in 1962, Catalyst drives change with pioneering research, practical tools, and proven solutions to accelerate and advance women into leadership—because progress for women is progress for everyone.

EIGE: The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) collects, analyses, processes and disseminates data and information on gender equality issues, whilst at the same time making them comparable, reliable and relevant for different users. EIGE provides statistics – including its own composite indices – guidelines and other open access resources for those interested to work towards gender-equal workplaces and societies.

Fundamental Rights Agency (FRA): The FRA is an EU body tasked with collecting and analyzing data on fundamental rights with reference to, in principle, all rights listed in the Charter of Fundamental Rights. The FRA's primary methods of operation are surveys, reports, provision of expert assistance to EU bodies, member states, and EU candidate countries and potential candidate countries, and raising awareness about fundamental rights. The FRA is based in Vienna, Austria, and was formed in 2007.

ILGA World: ILGA World – the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association - is a worldwide federation of more than 1,700 organisations from over 160 countries and territories campaigning for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex human rights.

ILGA Europe: ILGA-Europe are an independent, international non-governmental umbrella organisation bringing together over 600 organisations from 54 countries in Europe and Central Asia. ILGA-Europe advocates for human rights and equality at European level, works on strategic litigation to advance the rights of LGBTI people, and works on strengthening the LGBTI movement in Europe and Central Asia.

Stonewall: Stonewall is a part of a vibrant global movement for change made up of LGBTQ+ people, their allies, families and friends.



Local

[BPW Cyprus](#): BPW Cyprus (Business Professional Women) was founded in 1988 that aims to contribute to the Cypriot Society by providing women opportunities for professional and leadership development, promoting equal opportunities, encouraging lifelong learning in professional and educational settings and ensuring women's rights.

[ACCEPT-LGBTI CYPRUS](#) ACCEPT-LGBTI Cyprus promotes and supports respect for human rights. It fights for acceptance, self-acceptance, equality, equity, and simultaneously harmonizing on an equal basis the Cypriot society with issues concerning the LGBTQI community.

[MIGS](#): The Mediterranean Institute for Gender Studies (MIGS) promotes and contributes to social, political and economic projects related to gender equality and women's rights, with a focus on the Euro-Mediterranean region.