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Fear none

# IMPLEMENTING PRIDE IN SPORT INITIATIVES WITH UNIVERSITY “BUY-IN”

MAY 2025

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**sport**



**Ben Cork** (he/him)  
Senior Relationship Manager, Pride in Sport





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# 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 Country across Australia 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 training today.

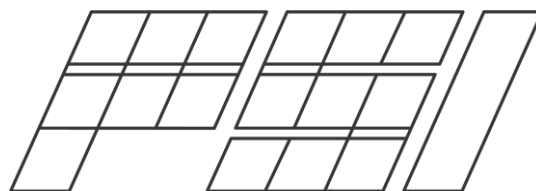
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## Who are we?

**Pride in Sport is a part of ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs.** ACON is a fiercely proud community organisation and is the largest LGBTQ+ health organisation in Australia.



PRIDE IN SPORT INDEX



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+wellbeing

acon PRIDE  
TRAINING





VIDEO SOURCE: Pride in Sport (2023) – Pride in Sport Collective



Ian Roberts (he/him)  
Patron, Pride in Sport







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# Go woke, go broke?

## New research busts the myth of go woke and go broke

A global study published by The Unstereotype Alliance proves that inclusive advertising drives profit



Nicola Kemp  
Editorial Director  
Creativebrief

Share   

## New Research Debunks The 'Go Woke, Go Broke' Myth

> September 26, 2024 > 9:00 AM

# [Business Growth](#), [Business Insights](#), [content marketing](#), [Market Trends](#), [Marketing](#), [Social Media](#)



UNIVERSITY OF  
OXFORD

gcn

Far-right "Go woke, go broke" claim disproven by brand advertising study

Emily Crawford  
1 February 2025 · 2-min read

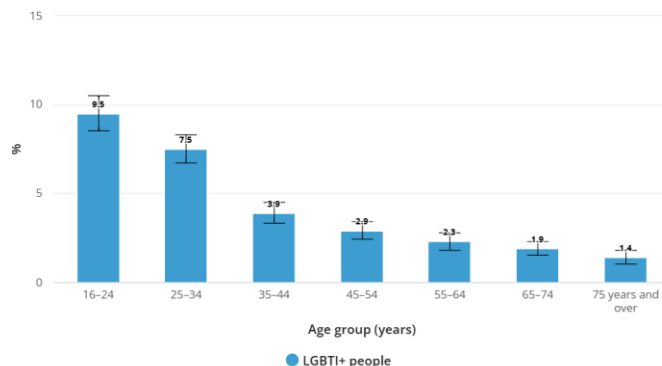




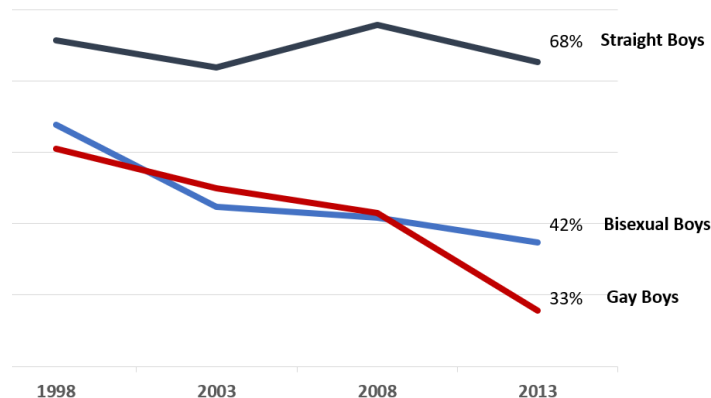
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# Why DEI?

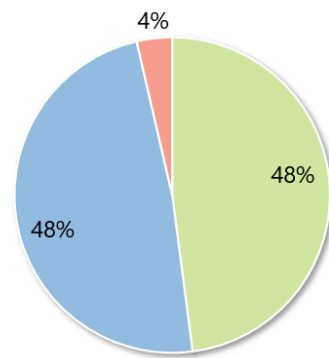


Team Sport Participation – High School Students  
(click image for source)



Gay men report the highest rates of witnessing homophobia at 76.62%, and 63.64% of gay men experiencing homophobia.

Are you an Ally? (n=993)



- Active ally (I am active in my support)
- Passive ally (I support LGBTQ inclusion but not actively)

- 81 per cent reported high or very high levels of psychological distress
- 10.1 per cent had attempted suicide in the past year, and 25.6 per cent had attempted suicide at some point in their lives

LGBTQ+ workplaces which are inclusive are:

**2.5 times**  
more likely to 'always look to innovate'  
at work than non-inclusive organisations.

**2.3 times**  
more likely to always work together  
effectively, an increase of 35% on  
non-inclusive organisations.

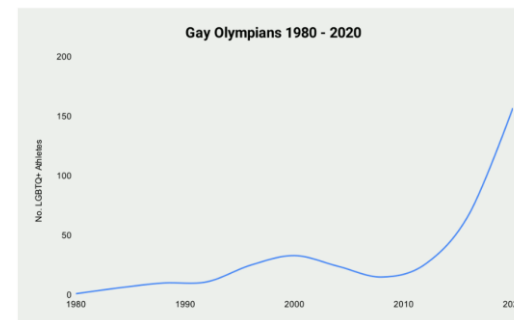
Source: Diversity Council Australia (2018). Out At Work: From Prejudice to Pride, Sydney, Diversity Council Australia



SPORTS

## The Olympics Will Be Completely Gay By 2080, According to Science

SALLY JULY 20, 2021





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## LGBTQ Inclusion is

- ✓ About behaviour
- ✓ Providing awareness
- ✓ Demonstrating organisational values of inclusion across all diverse groups
- ✓ Creating a safe and productive environment
- ✓ Creating an inclusive culture for all LGBTQ+ people regardless of whether or not they are 'out' in sport or the workplace

## LGBTQ Inclusion is not

- ✗ About beliefs
- ✗ Changing personal values
- ✗ Valuing one diverse group over another
- ✗ Tolerating workplace behaviours that are damaging to individuals
- ✗ Forcing people to come out

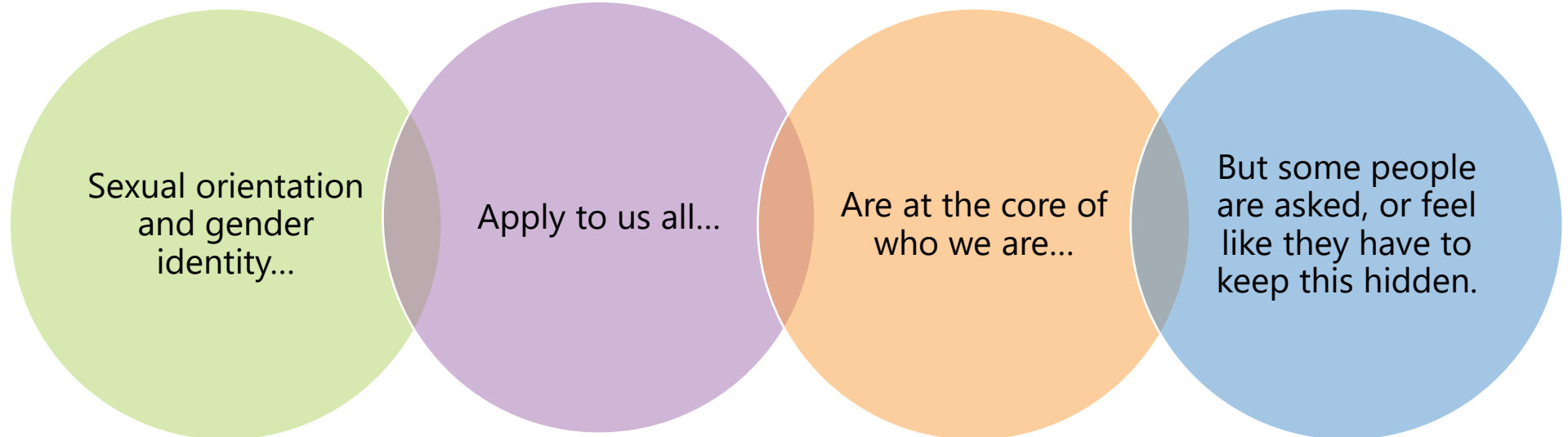




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# Why is LGBTQ+ inclusion important?





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# Denison, E: The Cycle of Exclusion in Sport



[www.outonthefields.com](http://www.outonthefields.com)

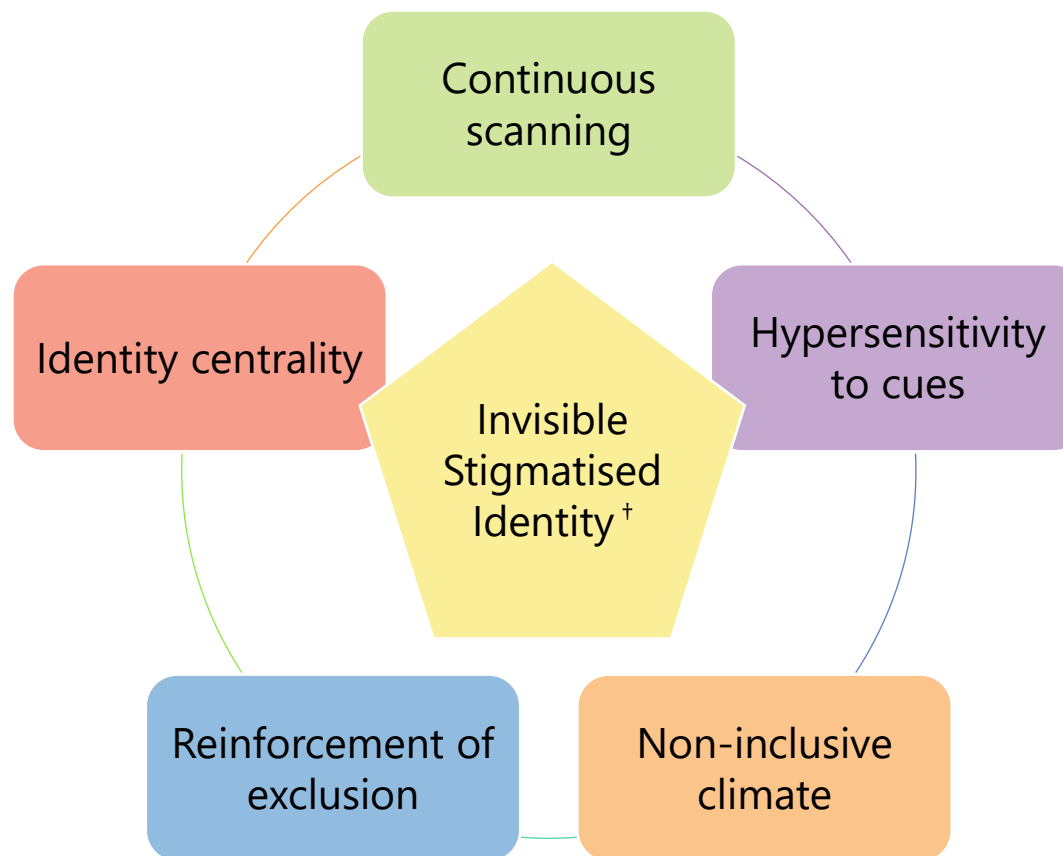
YOU  
CAN  
PLAY





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# Effects of non-inclusive culture



<sup>†</sup> Hartel, C. (2011). The Price of Stigma and the Role of Organisational Culture. Paper presented to Pride in Practice Conference, Sydney, Australia. December 2011.





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## Effects of non-inclusive culture

Risk to health and  
wellbeing

Loss of talented  
people from schools,  
clubs and workplaces

Risk to duty of care

Diminished team  
cohesion

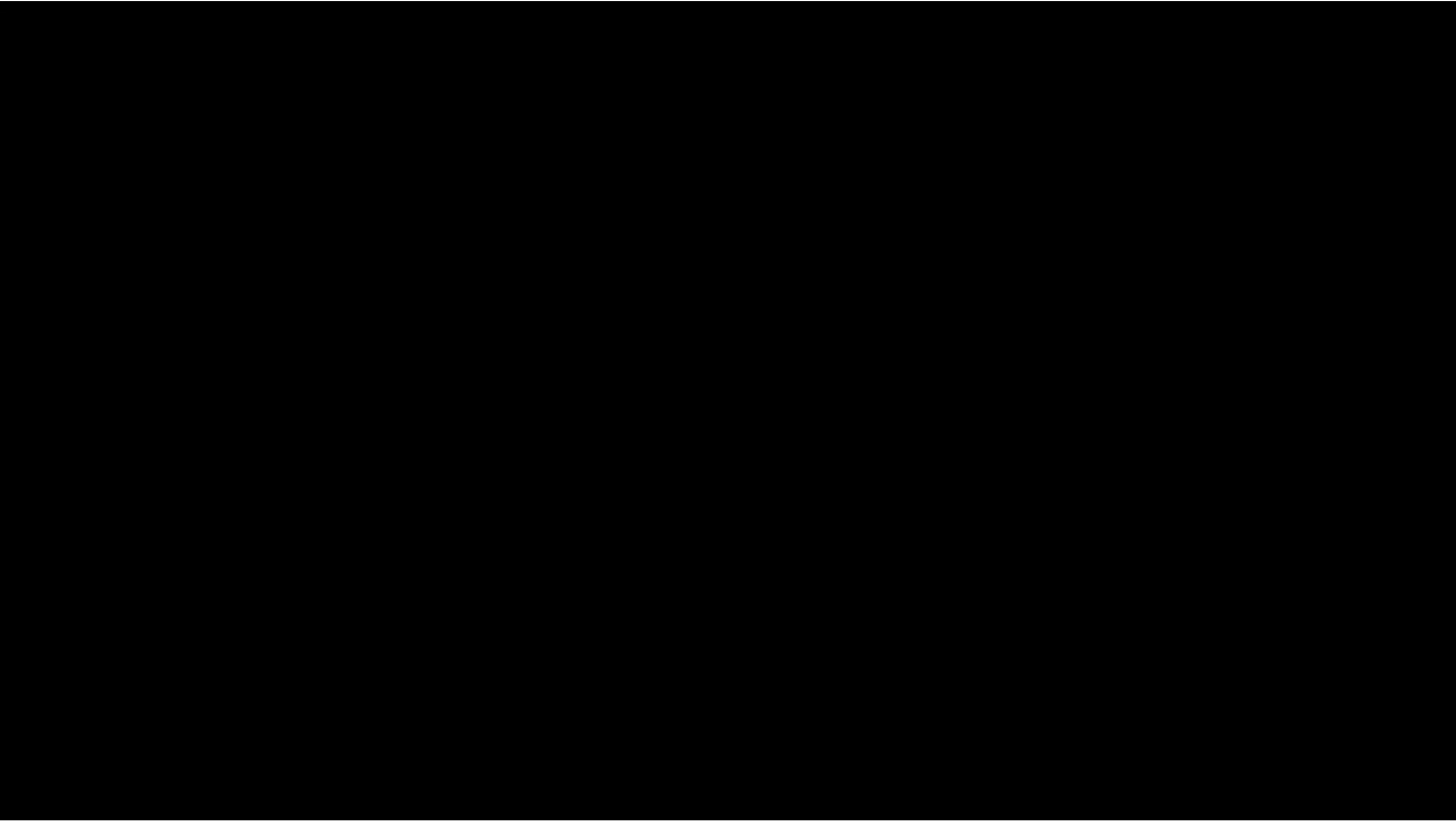
Risk to culture of  
respect and inclusion

Risk to productivity  
and engagement

Risk to organisational  
reputation

Negative impact on  
talent pipeline

Risk of decreased  
performance



VIDEO SOURCE: Member reflections, Pride in Sport (2024). Pride Month Campaign – SBS Demand



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# What can you do?

## **Participate in the Pride in Sport Survey:**

Understand the attitudes and behaviours of your sporting community.

## **Engage with the Pride in Sport Index:**

Develop an Inclusion Action Plan using our leading-practice roadmap tool.

**Measure the impact of your initiatives** using the Pride in Sport Survey each year.

## **Become a member of Pride in Sport:**

Build capacity and expertise with your own Relationship Manager, and access thousands of dollars worth of education, workshops and resources.

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# This work will benefit...

## **Those here already:**

Your existing LGBTQ+ participants, including those who choose to remain silent and invisible.

## **Those who will come back:**

LGBTQ+ athletes, fans, volunteers and staff who have previously left your sport, feeling that there is no place for them.

## **Those who are coming next:**

Emerging generations are more likely to identify as LGBTQ+, and have an expectation for safety, visibility and belonging.

Let's work together to make University sport a safe and welcoming space for our LGBTQ+ community.





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# Building 'buy-in'?

## **Define your 'Pride':**

What does Pride/Inclusion mean to you? Put the effort into clearly communicating your vision.

## **Understand your motivation:**

Integrity? Ambition? Excellence? Leadership? Growth?

## **Build connections:**

Sport does not (or should not) exist in isolation. LGBTQ+ engagement (and other inclusion initiatives) are a great way to connect new populations across the university.

## **Know your allies (and community):**

Relationships with the broader Ally network (if in place), Queer Society and LGBTQ+ community in leadership can facilitate support.





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# Building 'buy-in'?

## **Strength in numbers:**

Be a part of a vibrant community of professionals and subject matter experts across Australia, sharing learnings and celebrating success.

## **Be patient:**

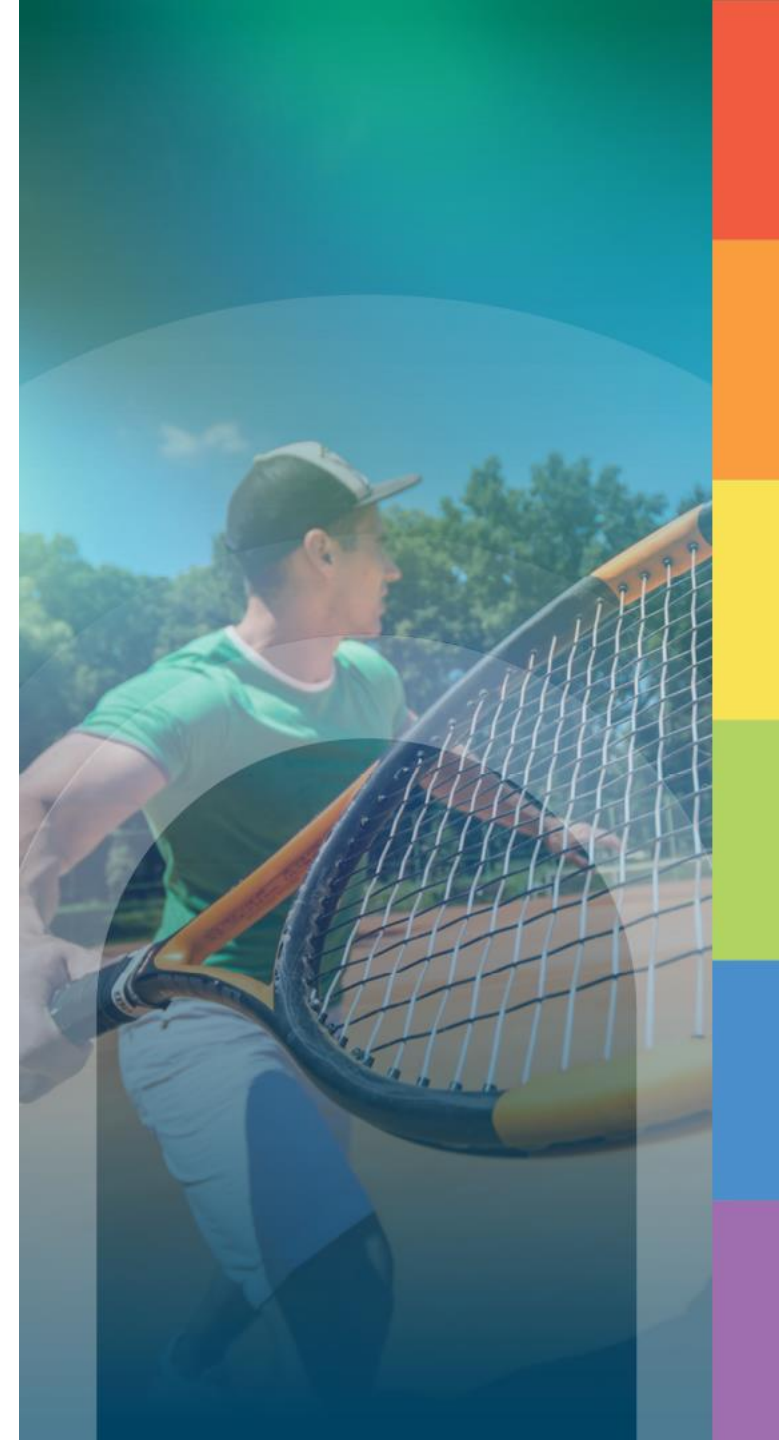
True culture change takes time. Understand that progress will come with consistency and patience.

## **Start small, but plan to grow:**

Start with a focus on what you can control. Build momentum with small wins and stories of success. Create capacity by engaging a diverse team.

## **Communication is key:**

Words have power. Keep stakeholders at all levels up to date with your aims and achievements.







VIDEO SOURCE: Athlete endorsements, Pride in Sport (2024). Pride Month Campaign – SBS Demand



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# QUESTIONS

**BEN CORK**

SENIOR RELATIONSHIP MANAGER  
PRIDE IN SPORT

He/him

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[www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au](http://www.prideinclusionprograms.com.au)



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# Content advisory

Please note there are some confronting topics and data discussed in this session.  
Some content covers mental health, anxiety, suicide and suicide ideation.

If the content of this training session raises any concerns, support is available.

- Your organisation's EAP Provider
- Suicide call back service: 1300 659 467 (24-hours)
- Lifeline (crisis support and suicide prevention): 13 11 14 or [www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au) (24/7)
- QLife (LGBTI peer support and referral service): 1800 184 527 or [www.qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au) (3pm to midnight)
- Beyond Blue: 1300 22 4636 (24-hours)
- Rainbow Door: 1800 729 367 (10am-5pm 7 days)