



**PROUD
TO BE AN
ALLY**

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For more information:

Visit [our page](#) on the Diversity & Inclusion site

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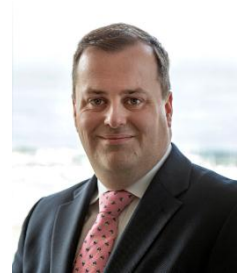
“ When AIB launched the ‘Pride Matters’ employee resource group, I was delighted to see the amount of support and enthusiasm we had from our colleagues across AIB. We know that people are fully supportive of everyone being themselves in the workplace – but sometimes they need help in enabling that.

For our LGBT+ colleagues – greater understanding and education is a particular opportunity, and the launch of the introductory guide to being an LGBT+ ally is a fantastic tool. Though not exhaustive, this covers what you can do to be an active ally in the workplace and a guide to LGBT+ terminology. Please do feel free to share this with your colleagues, and use as a resource.



Triona Ferriter, Chief People Officer





“ The ‘Pride Matters’ employee resource group, and in particular the LGBT+ Ally Pack, is another positive step forward in our journey to create a truly inclusive workplace.

We must continue to encourage diversity of thought in AIB and reflect the diversity of the communities we serve on a daily basis.



Robert Mulhall, Managing Director Retail and Commercial Banking Ireland



“ Being an ally means always being ready to show support, being fully informed and not being afraid to stand up for the rights of others.

This pack shows us all how to do that and I am really proud as the sponsor to be the first of hopefully many allies for Pride Matters in AIB.



Gillian Harford, Head of HR Strategy & Planning





What is Pride Matters?

Pride Matters is an Employee Resource Group ('ERG') with the aim of bringing awareness of and providing a voice to the LGBT+ community within AIB. We want to bring together employees with a shared interest in supporting the LGBT+ community, whether you identify as LGBT+, or as an ally.

Our ambition is to create a network for support, raise awareness and educate people on LGBT+ in the workplace with programmes and initiatives that will lead to greater respect and inclusion for all AIB LGBT+ employees.

Pride Matters is open to anyone working in or for AIB. Whether you identify as LGBT+ or as an ally, this is a resource group which welcomes anyone who supports the community or would like to gain a greater understanding of LGBT+.

What is an **ally**?

Put broadly, an ally refers to a straight and/or cisgender person (see definitions below) who supports the LGBT+ community.

Everyone can support the LGBT+ community in their own way. An ally can be anyone who is supportive and accepts the LGBT+ community, or someone who personally advocates for fair treatment, respect and equal rights for the LGBT+ community.



What makes a great ally?

1. Be **visible**

To use a coined phrase, be 'Loud and proud'. One of the most important things you can do as an ally is be visible.

Visible allies create a much more inclusive culture and show that the people of AIB value diversity. Being visible shows your colleagues, who may not be currently 'out', that they have your support.

This can be done in a number of ways, including talking about your LGBT+ friends and family members, or talking positively about LGBT+ news stories.

You also show support in smaller ways, something like wearing a pride badge on your lanyard or an AIB pride sticker. This is small but shows support in a massive way.

2. Avoid making assumptions about someone's orientation or **identity**

Modern relationships have gone beyond the traditional 'female + male' couples. It is as simple as remembering to ask, 'Do you have a partner?' instead of 'Do you have a boyfriend/ girlfriend/ husband/ wife?'

This can be hard to remember but can make a real difference to people. It is ok not to be perfect 100% of the time and it is always better to have the conversation than to not have it.

3. Have **courage** and challenge homophobic, bi-phobic and transphobic language and behaviour in the workplace

This kind of behaviour tends to be subtle. It can be someone saying “that’s gay”, but it could also be someone being treated differently. It is always challenging to speak up in these circumstances, it takes courage to say ‘that is unacceptable to me.’

Those who support LGBT+ colleagues make a huge difference to the working environment.

4. Empower **yourself** through learning

It is very important to educate and empower yourself. Not saying anything because you’re afraid you’ll offend someone? Confused about terms? Or not even sure what that rainbow stands for?

Hopefully by reading this pack you will have at least some of these questions answered, if not, that’s okay too. We have included a glossary of terms and whole host of excellent available resources at the end of this pack. The internet is a fantastic source of knowledge, and can be tapped into at any time. If you have a friend that identifies as LGBT+, ask them your queries and for help. Just be conscious that not everyone will be comfortable with this.

5. Understanding comes from **embracing** the new

The LGBT+ spectrum is constantly changing – the last few years have seen huge changes in understanding and expressing gender identity. It’s okay to not fully understand a person’s identity as long as you are able to be accepting of them.

The more active you are as an ally, the more people you will meet and the more you will learn about the LGBT+ spectrum:



Hints and tips

The following are some common queries and corresponding answers/information to situations that may arise

How do I respond if someone comes out to me?

If someone is coming out to you, you are someone they trust and respect (congrats!). This means you are in a prime situation to support.

Do:

- Listen fully to what the person has to say,
- Ask about how open they want to be, i.e. is this person telling everyone or just you?
 - Most importantly treat them the same. The person coming out is the same person you knew with the same interests/hobbies, you just now know more about them. It is important to reassure this person that this new information changes nothing between you. A fear for people coming out is that people in their life will reject them.

Don't:

- Double guess their coming out - Coming out is an incredibly personal thing and the person has most likely thought about their decision to come out for a long time.
- Be afraid to ask questions. If you are encouraged, ask questions, be a sponge and take it all in. Curiosity is normal and will get you further than judgement.



I don't want to upset **anyone** - what should I avoid saying?

Sometimes we say words without realising the impact they may have on others. Take time to educate yourself about language and histories of oppression. Here is a list of commonly used words and phrases which could be offensive to the LGBT+ community:

That's so Gay

This stigmatizes gay and queer people. It uses their identities to describe something as undesirable and bad. This saying replaces negative adjectives with words related to LGBT+ identities.

Bisexuality doesn't really exist. People are just gay or straight

This denies the fluidity of sexuality and dismisses people's experiences and definitions of self. People deserve the right to define their own identities any way they wish and have those definitions honoured.

I think everyone is really bisexual

While this is often meant to acknowledge the fluidity of sexuality, it dismisses the reality of people who identify as bisexual and erases their experiences. It also invalidates the self-identifications of non-bisexual people.

Tranny

Whether or not someone identifies as trans*, calling anyone "tranny" is extremely offensive. While some people within the trans* community may choose to reclaim this word for themselves, it is not a word that is okay to use to label another person or use as a joke.

What is your REAL name? I mean the one you were given at birth


This is just like asking anyone else 'what is your real name?' The name you know now for the person now is the name he/she has chosen to match their true gender identity. Questions like this infringe on the person's personal life.

That person doesn't really look like a woman/man

What does it mean to look like a man or woman? There are no set criteria. It also should not be assumed that all Trans Men strive to fit within dominant ideas of masculinity or all Trans Women strive to fit within dominant ideas of femininity, or that all Trans* people want to look like men or women. Gender presentation is fluid and distinct from gender identity, and all forms of gender expression deserve acceptance.

Misusing or assuming a person's pronouns are He-Him and She-Her

Assuming someone's pronouns can be demeaning and invalidates an individual's identity and the pronouns that they use. It is vital that we respect the names and pronouns that people use. It is impossible to know without asking. If you are not sure, ask: "What pronouns do you use?"



What do I do as if I see someone being treated badly, or if someone comes to me and tells me that they are **being treated badly**?

AIB has a Code of Conduct which all staff are asked to abide by. The code states “We treat each other courteously and with respect, dignity and fairness at all times – as we would like to be treated, and we hold each other to high standards of personal behaviour.”

Furthermore, under AIB’s Bullying and Harassment Policy, “Everyone working in AIB has the right to be treated with dignity and respect.”

If you witness or are told about behaviours which are not in line with these values it is important that you act as soon as possible by either talking to the wrong doer or a member of management who might be able to help. If the behaviour continues then you should escalate your complaint asap.

Glossary of Terms

These terms relate to a person's sexual orientation - their emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction to another person.

Ally A (typically) straight and/or cisgender person (see definitions below) who supports the LGBT+ community.

Asexual Refers to a person who does not experience sexual attraction.

Bisexual or Bi Refers to a person who has an emotional and/or sexual orientation towards more than one gender.

Coming out When a person tells someone/others about their identity as lesbian, gay, bi or trans. This is something LGBT+ people do again and again as they 'come out' to different people throughout their life.

Gay Refers to a man or woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards the same sex. Also a generic term for lesbian and gay sexuality.

The Gender Recognition Act The Gender Recognition Act in the Republic of Ireland allows all individuals over the age of 18 to self-declare their own gender identity. Young people aged 16-17 can also be legally recognised.

Heterosexual / Straight Refers to a person who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards people of the opposite gender.

Homosexual Refers to a person who has an emotional romantic and/or sexual orientation towards someone of the same gender.

Lesbian	Refers to a woman who has an emotional, romantic and/or sexual orientation towards the same sex - some women's preference may be to identify and use the term Gay (see above).
LGBT+	The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi and trans. '+' encompasses the diversity of experiences within queer communities (See LGBTQQIAAP).
LGBTQQIAAP	The acronym for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, ally, asexual, pansexual.
Outed	When an LGBT+ person's sexual orientation or gender identity is disclosed to someone else without their consent, as opposed to the individual coming out.
Pansexual	Refers to a person whose emotional, romantic and/or sexual attraction towards others is not limited by biological sex, gender or gender identity.
Queer	In the past, this was a derogatory term for LGBT+ individuals. The term has now been reclaimed by LGBT+ young people in particular who don't identify with traditional categories around gender identity and sexual orientation but may still be viewed to be derogatory by some. Not to be confused with 'gender queer' (see below)
Questioning	The process of exploring one's own sexual orientation and/or gender identity.



The following terms refer to a person's gender identity, that is, their internal sense of their own gender, whether male, female or something else (see non-binary below). Individuals may identify differently to what's on this list, and a person's gender identity and pronouns may change over time.

Cisgender or Cis Someone whose gender identity is the same as the sex they were assigned at birth.

Gender Queer A person who does not subscribe to conventional gender distinctions but identifies with neither, both, or a combination of male and female genders.

Gender variant Someone who does not conform to the gender roles and behaviours assigned to them at birth.

Non-binary An umbrella term for a person who does not identify as only male or only female, or who may identify as both.

Trans An umbrella term to describe people whose gender is not the same as, or does not sit comfortably with, the sex they were assigned at birth - Trans* (with the asterisk) is a new term that is gaining prominence and encompasses the diversity of experiences within trans communities.

Transgender when used as a noun, e.g., 'a transgender' - is generally considered to be offensive to trans people.

Transgender man A term used to describe someone who is assigned female at birth but identifies and lives as a man. This may be shortened to trans man, or FTM, an abbreviation for female-to-male.

Transgender woman A term used to describe someone who is assigned male at birth but identifies and lives as a woman. This may be shortened to trans woman, or MTF, an abbreviation for male-to-female.

Transitioning The steps a trans person may take to live in the gender with which they identify. Each person's transition will involve different things. For some this involves a medical transition, such as hormone therapy and surgeries, but not all trans people want or are able to have this.

Transitioning also might involve things such as telling friends and family, dressing differently and changing official documents (social transition).

Transsexual This was used in the past as a more medical term (similarly to homosexual) to refer to someone who transitioned to live in the 'opposite' gender to the one assigned at birth.

This term is still used by some although many people prefer the term trans or transgender.



Resources

Republic of Ireland

<http://www.belongto.org>

BeLonG To Youth Services is a national organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people, parents and schools.

<http://www.LGBT.ie>

The National LGBT helpline website aims to provide a gateway to information and support for LGBT+ people in Ireland and also has information for the friends and family of LGBT+ people as well as professionals working with LGBT+ people. The helpline is open Monday - Friday 7pm - 9pm. Tel. 1890 929 539

<http://www.lovingouroutkids.org>

Loving Our Out Kids (Formerly Parents Support) is a support organisation run by parents for other parents who have lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender children of any age.

<http://www.teni.ie>

Transgender Equality Network Ireland is an organisation supporting the transgender community in Ireland. TENI have produced a range of resources for professionals.

<http://www.corkgayproject.com>

The Cork Gay Community Development Project provides a range of services including: helpline, parents group, cafe, youth group.

<http://www.outcomers.org>

Outcomers is a social and befriending support group for the gay, lesbian and bi-sexual community and is located in the centre of Dundalk town supporting the North East Region.

<http://outhouse.ie>

Outhouse is the resource and community centre for the LGBT+ communities in Dublin. Open 7 days a week, services include: a café, meeting rooms, information and referral services, library, theatre space and support to community groups and organisations

Republic of Ireland cont.

<http://outwestireland.ie>

OUTWEST is a social and support group for gay, lesbian and bisexual people in the West of Ireland. They hold meetings every month, and discos and other events regularly. They operate in Mayo, Galway, Roscommon, Sligo, Leitrim & Donegal.

<http://goshh.ie>

Provides a safe, confidential, welcoming environment in Limerick City working throughout the Counties of Limerick, Clare, and North Tipperary. They focus on the promotion of equality and wellbeing of all with a positive and respectful approach to sexual orientation and gender diversity.

Northern Ireland

<https://www.rainbow-project.org>

The Rainbow Project is a health organisation that works to improve the physical, mental & emotional health and well-being of lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender people in Northern Ireland.

<https://genderjam.org.uk/>

GenderJam NI supports and advocates for young trans, non-binary, questioning and intersex people across Northern Ireland. They bring young people together into a supporting community and help them with problems in education and healthcare.

<https://sailni.com>

SAIL is the support organisation for the families of transgender and gender variant people in Northern Ireland. They organise meetings in various locations across Northern Ireland, talk and discuss experiences, in a private, confidential and supporting environment.

<http://www.familytiesproject.org.uk>

Family Ties is a peer and social support group for parents, guardians and family members of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. The group meets regularly each month and aims to provide support to parents, guardians and family members around issues related to sexual orientation and gender identity.

Great Britain

<http://www.stonewall.org.uk>

Stonewall is a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights charity in the United Kingdom.

<http://LGBT.foundation/get-support>

LGBT Foundation provide a wide range of support services to lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans* people.

Services and activities include: a range of support groups; face-to-face counselling; a helpline, email and pop-in service; a befriending scheme; a sexual health programme, anti-homophobia projects in schools; a substance-misuse project; organisational training; a range of guides and resources; a national website; advice surgeries; LGBT+ infrastructure support; various research projects and policy campaigning.

USA

<https://www.pflag.org/>

Provides support for families, allies and people who are LGBT+, education about the unique issues and challenges facing people who are LGBT+ and advocates for full equality for people who are LGBT+.

<https://www.glad.org>

GLAD works nationally to create a just society free of discrimination based on sexual orientation, HIV status, and gender identity and expression.

<http://outandequal.org>

Out & Equal Workplace Advocates champions safe and equitable workplaces for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. The organization advocates building and strengthening successful companies that value all employees, customers and communities.