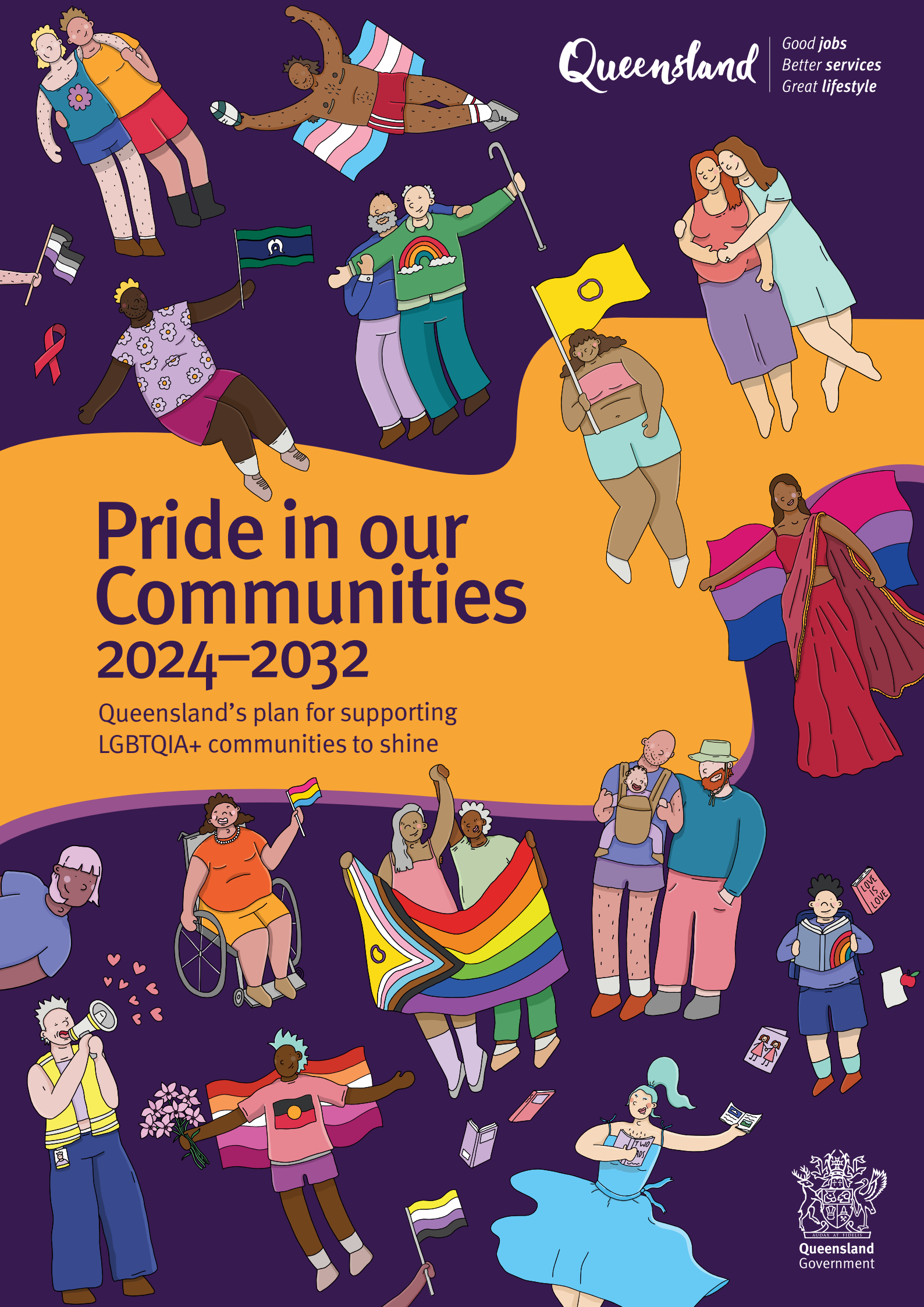


Queensland

Good jobs  
Better services  
Great lifestyle



# Pride in our Communities 2024-2032

Queensland's plan for supporting LGBTQIA+ communities to shine



Queensland Government



## Pride in our Communities 2024 – 2032

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### Interpreter



The Queensland Government is committed to providing accessible services to Queenslanders from all culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. If you have difficulty in understanding this document, you can contact us on 13 QGOV (13 74 68) and we will arrange an interpreter to communicate the report to you.

[www.qld.gov.au/languages](http://www.qld.gov.au/languages)

# Acknowledgement

We respectfully acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Traditional Owners and Elders of the lands and seas on which we meet, live, learn and work.

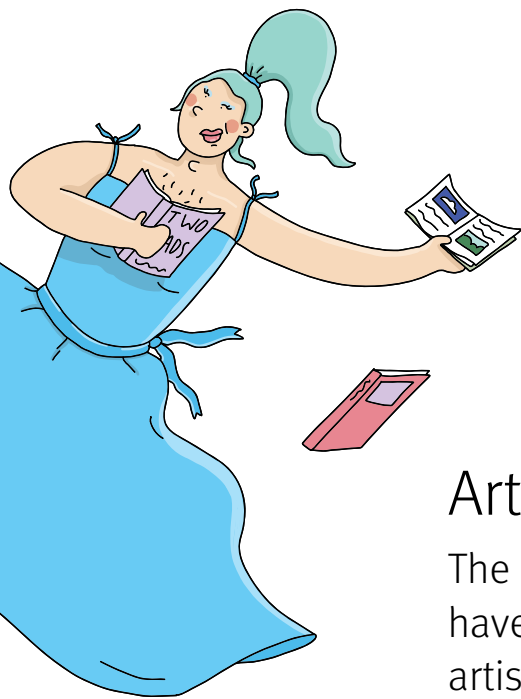
We acknowledge those of the past, the ancestors whose strength has nurtured this land and its people, and who have passed on their wisdom.

We thank the First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys of the past for their advocacy and strength. We acknowledge those of the present for their leadership and ongoing efforts to protect and promote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and cultures.

We acknowledge those of the future, the Elders yet to be, who will inherit the legacy of our efforts.

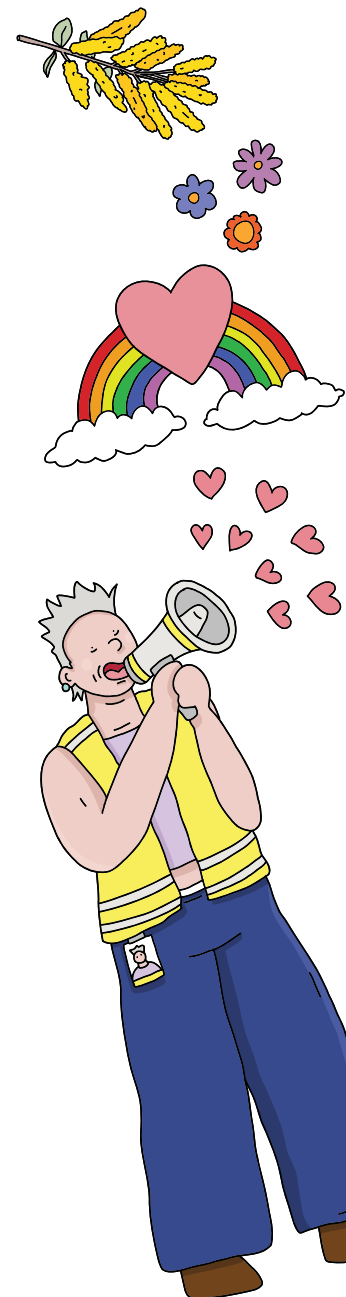
We recognise it is our collective efforts, and responsibility as individuals, communities and governments, to ensure equality, recognition and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples including First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys, across all aspects of society and everyday life.





## Artwork

The illustrations supporting Pride in our Communities have been specially commissioned from LGBTQIA+ artist Samuel Leighton-Dore and are drawn in the artist's signature artwork style and expression to authentically represent Queensland's diverse LGBTQIA+ communities.



## About the artist

Samuel Leighton-Dore (he/him) is a multidisciplinary artist, screenwriter and author based on the Gold Coast. Working predominantly across ceramics, illustration and animation, his art brings colour and levity to themes of mental health, identity and sexuality. His artworks have been acquired into both the Gold Coast City and Tweed Regional Gallery collections, and twice selected for the biennial North Queensland Ceramic Awards. In 2019 he was named Visual Artist of the Year at ACON's Honour Awards, recognising his creative contribution to the LGBTQIA+ arts community.

## Artist statement

Any opportunity to depict members of the LGBTQIA+ communities in my work is a privilege and a joy. It's a community that has nurtured me, believed in me, and brought significant meaning to my life in more ways than I can mention. With my illustration I hope to capture both a sense of taking up space without fear, and gently holding this shared space for those of us who need it most.

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# Thank you

The Queensland Government extends its gratitude and recognition to the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual plus (LGBTQIA+) communities in Queensland and allies who actively participated in the community engagement process and trusted us to share your stories. Your participation has played a pivotal role in informing development of this strategy.

We also acknowledge the older LGBTQIA+ activists within communities who have fought hard to advance the rights of LGBTQIA+ people.

Special appreciation is reserved for the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Roundtable, comprised of people from diverse LGBTQIA+ communities and sector representatives, whose invaluable expertise and guidance helped shape the strategy through co-design and consultation activities.



We express our deep sadness at the passing of Queensland LGBTQIA+ Roundtable member Mr Phillip Carswell OAM on 17 March 2024. We thank Phil for the enormous contribution he made to advancing Queensland's LGBTQIA+ communities over five decades, including offering his lived experience and expertise to the development of this strategy. We honour the legacy of inclusion and progress that he leaves behind for all Queenslanders.

*Permission has been sought from Phil Carswell's husband to publish this photo.*

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## Content warning

This publication may contain images or references to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who are deceased. The Queensland Government does not wish to cause distress to any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community members.

While this Strategy represents a positive move forward for Queensland's LGBTQIA+ communities, the contents of this document may trigger strong emotions in some readers or may raise questions for some people about your rights or the laws in Queensland. There are many services and support groups available to help navigate these feelings and questions. Support is available through:

Lifeline ([www.lifeline.org.au](http://www.lifeline.org.au)) on 13 11 14 (24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention)

13 YARN ([www.13yarn.org.au](http://www.13yarn.org.au)) on 13 92 72 (a free and confidential service, available 24/7, for mob to yarn to trained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander crisis supporters)

QLife ([www.qlife.org.au](http://www qlife.org.au)) on 1800 184 527 (Anonymous and free LGBTQIA+ peer support and referral 3pm to midnight every day)

LGBTI Legal Service ([www.lgbtilegalservice.org.au](http://www.lgbtilegalservice.org.au)) on 07 3124 7160 or text 0485 908 380 (free legal advice and resources for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland).



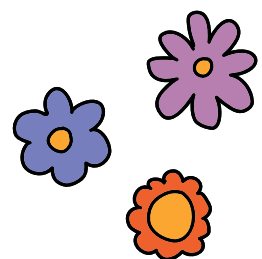
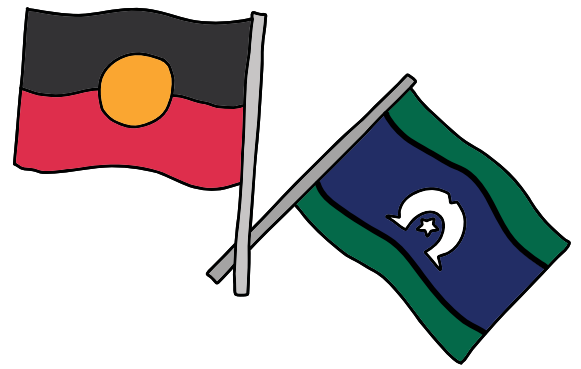
## Language note

A glossary of terms has been included within this document.

Queensland is home to unique and distinct First Nations cultures: Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples. There are hundreds of Aboriginal nations, languages and groups in Australia, each with their own cultures, lores and ways of living. Torres Strait Islander peoples also have unique cultures, languages and lores. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and that these cultures include Sistergirls and Brotherboys within communities. For the purposes of this document, we use the term First Nations to recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We also use the term LGBTQIA+ as a collective to recognise all LGBTQIA+ people, including First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys.

This document frequently refers to intersex people. We acknowledge that the intersex community includes children with innate variations of sex characteristics who may be too young to express their identity, as well as their parents and caregivers. We acknowledge that a variety of language is used to describe innate variations of sex characteristics in different contexts, including clinical terms, and that some people do not use the term intersex to describe their bodies.

Throughout this document, we have made active efforts to use inclusive language and to represent identities accurately at the time of, and for the purposes of, this document. We acknowledge that there are many distinct identities and experiences within LGBTQIA+ communities and that language may evolve over time as we learn more about the make-up of these communities.



## Message from the Premier

Queensland's commitment to advancing the rights of LGBTQIA+ people is strong, and built on a foundation of transformative legislative and policy changes over many years.



We recognise that Queensland's LGBTQIA+ communities have faced significant discrimination, loneliness and social isolation challenges in the past and sadly some challenges continue.

It is against the background of these struggles that we find the inspiration and determination to bring about positive and long-lasting change to create a Queensland that is welcoming, inclusive, and truly equitable for all.

The first of its kind in Queensland, Pride in our Communities is our shared commitment to building a Queensland where every person can be their authentic self without fear of discrimination. It is a Queensland where LGBTQIA+ communities can access the services they need, and the richness of diverse identities is acknowledged and celebrated.

It is about creating a Queensland where diversity is our strength, where love knows no boundaries, and where inclusion is second nature.

Equality and equity drive this strategy. Every person, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex characteristics, deserves the same opportunities, rights, and respect as anyone else.

Although there has been progress, we know there is still more to do and that real, meaningful change takes time. Pride in our Communities celebrates the work already underway across the Queensland Government and commits to further actions that will help strengthen the government's role in improving the lives of LGBTQIA+ people.

Pride in our Communities is a legacy of my late friend Phil Carswell. It was his passion and drive that helped shepherd reform here in Queensland, including the removal of so many discriminatory laws against LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders and led to reforms like marriage equality, banning conversion therapy and establishing Health and Wellbeing Queensland.

I am proud to lead a government that listens to our vibrant communities, including learning about LGBTQIA+ people's incredible resilience, unique stories, and the opportunities for change so that all LGBTQIA+ people can live and thrive in Queensland.

Together, we will ensure that Queensland is a place where every person, regardless of their sex, sex characteristics, gender or sexuality can thrive, participate, and live life authentically.

**Hon. Steven Miles MP**

Premier of Queensland



# Message from the Minister

There is a place for everyone in Queensland's vibrant and inclusive communities.



In 2022, we embarked on a journey with *Communities 2032*, the Queensland Government's all-inclusive plan that sets the stage for the kind of communities we all want to live in – communities that reflect our shared values and embrace the diversity that defines us.

Pride in our Communities is a continuation of that commitment and Queensland's first dedicated strategy for Queensland's LGBTQIA+ communities.

The journey to create Pride in our Communities has been a collective effort, shaped by the invaluable input of people from across Queensland's diverse LGBTQIA+ communities. I am grateful for the collective passion and commitment of the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Roundtable which has also helped shape the development of this strategy and will continue to provide insights to help shape government policies and services. I extend special thanks to Rebecca Reynolds for her role as co-chair of the Roundtable and recognise her ongoing contribution to this important work.

Our commitment to advancing the rights of LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland has been built on a foundation of transformative legislative and policy changes in recent years that have paved the way for this ground-breaking strategy.

In Queensland, we formally apologised to those convicted of consensual homosexual activity under unjust historical laws.

Recognising those injustices, we created a pathway for those affected to have these convictions removed from their records.

We removed the discriminatory 'gay panic' defence, which condoned violence against LGBTQIA+ people, meaning that an unwanted sexual advance could no longer be used to mitigate the crime of murder. We banned conversion therapies performed by health service providers.

Legislation was modernised to allow a person to alter their sex on legal documents to align with their gender identity without requiring medical and surgical transition, including non-binary gender identities, and provide better recognition of same-sex and gender diverse parents on a child's birth certificate through the option to register as 'mother' or 'father'.

This dedicated strategy for Queensland further directs the Miles Government's efforts towards embedding inclusion, and celebrating and strengthening outcomes for all LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders.

I extend my deepest gratitude to the people from all backgrounds who have contributed to the development of this strategy and trusted us to share their stories. I also extend my thanks to those LGBTQIA+ people working within the public sector workforce who shared your unique perspectives, energy, and time with us in this important work.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Leanne Enoch', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

**Hon. Leanne Enoch MP**

Minister for Treaty  
Minister for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships  
Minister for Communities  
Minister for the Arts





# Pride in our Communities

Pride in our Communities is the Queensland Government's plan for a Queensland where diverse Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual plus (LGBTQIA+) communities are connected, celebrated, safe and supported to live authentically and thrive.

Pride in our Communities helps guide Queensland Government services, policies and programs toward a more equitable and inclusive Queensland. Shaped by the voices of LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland and allies, it is also a testament to the hard-fought victories of those who paved the way before them.

This plan recognises that the diverse LGBTQIA+ communities across our state collectively make a contribution to Queensland being the inclusive, cohesive, resilient, supported, and liveable place that it is. This plan respects and honours Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ people and communities. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are distinct and important and for the purpose of this plan we use the term First Nations to acknowledge both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the term LGBTQIA+ as a collective for all LGBTQIA+ people, including First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys.

Everyone deserves to feel safe, connected, celebrated and supported so they can live their lives as their authentic selves, and this includes LGBTQIA+ people. While we have made positive strides, LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland continue to face experiences of discrimination, disadvantage, social isolation and loneliness in their everyday lives.

Pride in our Communities is a unified approach for the Queensland Government's role in improving the lives of LGBTQIA+ people.

The plan defines impact areas aimed at working towards solutions, with commitments to actions that drive our collective efforts in improving the lives of LGBTQIA+ people.

As a government, we have more work to do to engage, consult and co-design with LGBTQIA+ communities so that diverse identities, backgrounds and experiences are considered during government decision-making and so that LGBTQIA+ people can influence and contribute to our policies, programs and services. The launch of this strategy marks the beginning of a new journey; one which we take together with LGBTQIA+ communities. Throughout the life of the strategy, the Queensland Government will continue building and strengthening relationships with LGBTQIA+ people and organisations across Queensland to adjust our approach to evolving community needs.

Together, we will continue to build on the strengths of Queensland's LGBTQIA+ communities to create a more harmonious Queensland where LGBTQIA+ people can connect, live authentically and thrive.

# Listening to LGBTQIA+ voices

Recognising that people are the experts in their own lives, the Queensland Government listened to LGBTQIA+ people through a series of engagement activities to help us develop Pride in our Communities.

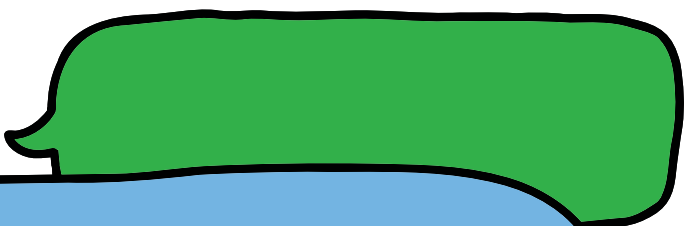
Consultation and engagement included the voices of lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, trans and gender diverse people, people with innate variations of sex characteristics and queer people. This included Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys, people living with disability, seniors, young people, culturally and linguistically diverse people, people living in regional and remote communities and people from rainbow families. We also held meetings with Pride networks and special interest cohort representatives and advocacy bodies, including, but not limited to, organisations advocating for the rights of intersex people, incarcerated women and LGBTQIA+ people, sex workers and LGBTQIA+ veterans.

Additionally, sector organisation Queensland Council for LGBTI Health facilitated engagement activities in Cairns, Townsville, Sunshine Coast, Toowoomba and Brisbane. Through this engagement, many more LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders were able to have their say.

The Queensland LGBTQIA+ Roundtable played a critical role in championing and shaping Pride in our Communities by sharing their lived experience and expertise and participating in co-design activities to inform the engagement activities and strategy development. We are grateful for their passion, contribution and collaboration.

For information about the community engagement undertaken as part of the development of this strategy, including the LGBTQIA+ Community Engagement Summary, visit: [www.qld.gov.au/pride](http://www.qld.gov.au/pride)





# We listened to LGBTQIA+ communities in different ways



## 17



LGBTQIA+ people on the Queensland LGBTQIA+ Roundtable



Early regional engagement with **16 LGBTQIA+** networks, organisations and social groups in:

- Bundaberg
- Fraser Coast
- Rockhampton
- Roma
- Mackay
- Gympie
- Biloela



## 482 submissions received

through an online LGBTQIA+ survey on the Queensland Government's *HaveYourSay* webpage

## 267 people engaged

through 17 face-to-face and virtual workshops throughout Queensland in:

- Rockhampton
- Gladstone
- Sunshine Coast
- Townsville
- Cairns
- Brisbane
- Gold Coast
- Mount Isa



We held online workshops open to the public and targeted engagement with special interest cohorts.

# LGBTQIA+ history in Queensland

As we move towards a more inclusive future for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland, it's crucial to also look back and acknowledge the rich history and legacy of those before us.

All people should have the right to be free of homophobic and transphobic violence, to work without fear of discrimination, have access to safe and appropriate services, and legal recognition of their identity. Queensland has experienced significant reforms and advancements in LGBTQIA+ rights in recent decades that are a testament to the tireless efforts of older LGBTQIA+ people and their allies.

Progress has been achieved alongside LGBTQIA+ community-led efforts. LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland have been uniting for decades to advocate for rights and build inclusivity within Queensland's broader communities. The below is only a small snapshot of these efforts.

Pride in our Communities is a critical step in propelling Queensland towards LGBTQIA+ equality and equity, ensuring a unified approach from all areas of the Queensland Government.





## A snapshot of LGBTQIA+ progress in Queensland

1962

The first Brisbane Queens Ball is held on Tamborine Mountain and is now held annually as the world's longest running continuous LGBTQIA+ event.

1984

The Queensland AIDS Council (QuAC) is established by a group predominately comprised of gay men in response to the HIV/AIDS epidemic in Queensland. (QuAC changed its name to Queensland Association for Healthy Communities in 2006, and to its current name, Queensland Council for LGBTI Health, in 2019).

1990

The *Criminal Code and Another Act Amendment Act 1990* is enacted to remove consensual adult male homosexual activity as a criminal offence.

The Brisbane Pride Festival commences as an annual event to celebrate LGBTQIA+ culture.

1991

Decriminalisation of sex between men comes into effect.

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* is introduced, prohibiting discrimination on the basis of lawful sexual activity in a range of circumstances.

1994

Brisbane Gender Clinic, focused on primary care, founded and operates one afternoon per week at Biala City Community Health Centre. The Clinic was relocated to QuAC in 2013.

1999

Queensland Parliament amends the definition of de facto relationships to include same-sex couples within the *Domestic Violence (Family Protection) Act 1989*, the *Property Law Act 1974* and the *Industrial Relations Act 1999*.

2000

Big Gay Day is established as a celebration of LGBTQIA+ communities and a way to raise funds for charities. It is now held annually as one of Brisbane's biggest street parties.

2002

The *Discrimination Law Amendment Act 2002* passes, resulting in 61 pieces of Queensland legislation being reformed to extend legal rights to same-sex couples.

The *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991* is amended to include gender identity and sexuality as attributes. This is a clear message that discrimination against LGBTQIA+ people would not be tolerated.

2010

Queensland becomes the first Australian State or Territory to fund a targeted LGBTI legal service.

Queensland Government establishes its first LGBTQIA+ advisory body, the Queensland LGBTI Roundtable.





2012

Civil partnerships are introduced to allow same-sex couples to register their relationship with the option of an official ceremony.

2016

On 15 September 2016 Queensland lowers the age for consensual anal sex from 18 to 16 years, in line with all other lawful sexual acts. The word sodomy was also removed from the *Criminal Code Act 1899* and replaced with 'anal intercourse'.

Queensland releases Australia's first Sexual Health Strategy 2016-2021 with vital information about the specific health needs of people within LGBTQIA+ communities.

The *Adoption and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016* is passed, allowing same-sex couples to apply to adopt a child.

Queensland Children's Hospital Gender Clinic established.

2017

On 11 May 2017 the Queensland Government issues an apology in parliament to people convicted under unjust historical laws against homosexual acts.

The Criminal Law (Historical Homosexual Convictions Expungement) Bill 2017 is passed in the Queensland Parliament on 10 October 2017 allowing for the expungement of historical homosexual convictions and certain historical public morality offences.

On 9 December 2017, the *Marriage Act 1961* (Cth) is updated to allow for marriage equality in Australia. This means that the right to marry in Australia is no longer determined by sex or gender, and same-sex marriages that took place overseas are now recognised in Australia.

Queensland introduces the *Criminal Law Amendment Act 2017* removing the 'gay panic' defence from the Criminal Code. The provocation section of the Criminal Code was amended so that an unwanted sexual advance could no longer be used to reduce the criminal responsibility for a killing from murder to manslaughter.

The first same-sex marriage since being legalised in Australia is held in December in Queensland.

2018

Queensland re-establishes the Queensland LGBTI+ Roundtable (renamed to Queensland LGBTIQ+ Roundtable when the Roundtable was reconvened in 2023). The Roundtable provides an engagement mechanism for LGBTQIA+ communities to help shape government policy, programs and services that are inclusive of, and responsive to, the needs to LGBTQIA+ communities, individuals and their families.

The Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Amendment Bill 2018 is introduced to repeal the requirement that a person must be unmarried for a change of sex to be registered on their birth certificate.

2020

Queensland became the first Australian jurisdiction to ban conversion therapy after the *Public Health Act 2005* was amended by the *Health Legislation Amendment Bill 2020* to make conversion therapy performed by health service providers an offence.

Queensland inaugurates the annual LGBTQ Domestic Violence Awareness Day in Brisbane on 28 May 2020.

2022

The Australian Government passes changes to the *Fair Work Act 2009* (Cth) protecting trans and intersex people from discrimination at work or when gaining work.

Queensland commits to funding an LGBTQIA+ community-led alliance to support engagement with Queensland LGBTQIA+ communities across the state.

2023

On 20 January 2023, the Queensland Police Service delivers an apology and statement of regret to LGBTQIA+ communities and LGBTQIA+ police members, past and present, for historical mistreatment.

On 3 October 2023, the Queensland Government removes co-payments for HIV antiretroviral therapy for people with HIV, regardless of their Medicare eligibility. The removal will benefit the estimated 5,919 people living with HIV in Queensland.

On 23 June 2023, the Queensland Parliament passes the *Births, Deaths and Marriages Registration Act 2023*. to allow Queenslanders to alter their sex on legal documents to align with their gender identity, including non-binary gender identities.

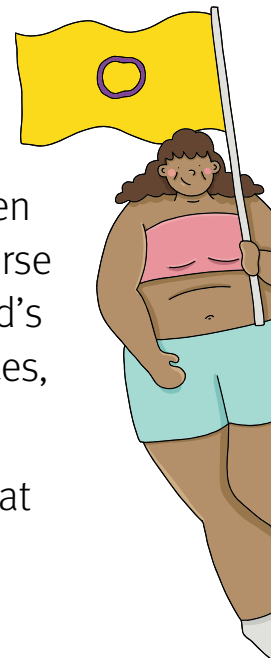
Parents and guardians can choose how they identify on their child's birth certificate.

2024

In April 2024, Queensland strengthens vilification and hate crime laws in Queensland through the *Criminal Code (Serious Vilification and Hate Crimes) and Other Legislation Amendment Act 2023*. The new law makes the public display, distribution or publication of prohibited hate symbols a criminal offence in Queensland to protect against the distress a person may experience from the display of symbols that are representative of an ideology of extreme prejudice against a particular religious, ethnic, gender, or other relevant group. Additionally, when crimes are motivated by hatred or serious contempt because of a victim's race, religion, sexuality, sex characteristics or gender identity, the penalty imposed by the court may be tougher than usual.

Queensland's first LGBTQIA+ strategy, *Pride in our Communities*, is released.





## What has informed this strategy

During unprecedented, significant state-wide engagement undertaken in 2023, LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland and allies contributed diverse perspectives and concerns, reflecting the diversity within Queensland's metro, regional and remote communities and the different experiences, strengths and resources of the distinct LGBTQIA+ communities.

Their voices underscored the need for a comprehensive strategy that fosters inclusivity, safety, support and a sense of belonging for all LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland. We heard clearly there are many opportunities to improve outcomes for LGBTQIA+ people.

### Barriers to accessing services

LGBTQIA+ people told us they encounter barriers when seeking services, including a lack of understanding from frontline workers, fear of potential discrimination and scarcity of specialist resources.

Some voices expressed frustration with services that have been established for the majority or with a predominantly heteronormative, endosex or cisgender lens.<sup>1</sup> Often, assumptions about a person's body, gender or that the 'default' sexuality is heterosexual do not take into consideration the unique needs and perspectives of people with innate variations of sex characteristics or diverse gender and sexuality and can cause harm.

Barriers such as these mean LGBTQIA+ people are less likely to seek services and support from government with sometimes serious consequences.

### Social isolation and loneliness, mental health and suicidality

LGBTQIA+ people expressed a need to address loneliness and social isolation. The personal experience of a feeling of 'otherness', feeling alone on the journey towards self-understanding, or a breakdown

of personal relationships related to their sexuality, gender identity or sex characteristics can all contribute towards feeling lonely or socially isolated. This may be in turn linked to mental health, substance abuse, domestic and family violence challenges and sadly, suicide in some cases.<sup>2</sup>

LGBTQIA+ people shared bravely about their challenges in their daily lives and that many have experienced identity-related trauma in the past. Throughout community engagement, LGBTQIA+ communities advocated for education and awareness and a trauma-informed service delivery to be embedded in the Queensland Government's approach.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) General Social Survey 2020 indicates that LGBTQIA+ people are less likely to be involved in social groups (37% compared with 47.6% for heterosexual respondents),<sup>3</sup> however, this impact is more pronounced for people living with HIV, who are likely to experience higher rates of social isolation and loneliness.<sup>4</sup> 58% of older gay and bisexual men living with HIV particularly experience loneliness.<sup>5</sup>

Contributing to further isolation, disengagement and loneliness, LGBTQIA+ people living with disability told us they find it difficult to access LGBTQIA+ social





or community venues and advocated for greater support for LGBTQIA+ community organisations and more inclusive venues and events. First Nations people and culturally and linguistically diverse people shared similar stories of often not feeling included within their broader LGBTQIA+ communities.

## Violence, discrimination and harassment

Discrimination and harassment based on sexuality, gender identity, sex or sex characteristics negatively impact the lives of LGBTQIA+ people, leading to poorer health and education outcomes and social isolation and loneliness.

We heard that LGBTQIA+ people can experience discrimination and disadvantage in their daily lives, based on their sexuality, gender identity or diversity of sex characteristics. This can either be obvious, such as violence resulting from transphobia and homophobia, or more subtle, such as stereotyping, assumptions and jokes.

Public safety concerns were at the fore for trans and gender diverse people who face high rates of discrimination, harassment, violence and psychological distress within the broader Queensland community.<sup>6</sup>

LGBTQIA+ people in regional and remote communities face additional barriers with higher rates of verbal harassment and psychological distress reported than their urban and suburban counterparts, along with significantly higher rates of suicidal ideation and attempts.<sup>7</sup> We also heard that LGBTQIA+ people in regional Queensland are lacking connection with other LGBTQIA+ people.

## Intersectionality

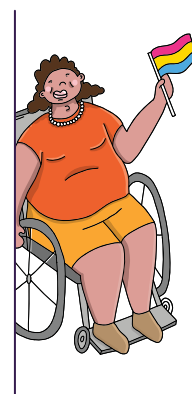
Other ways in which these impacts are compounded is through the lens of intersectionality – that is, where LGBTQIA+

community members may have intersecting identities and lived experiences, for example being a First Nations person, part of a culturally and linguistically diverse community, living with HIV, or living with disability. This may present compounding marginalisation and increasing barriers to participation, access to services and personal health, wellbeing and fulfilment experienced by many people with intersectional identities.

We heard several examples throughout community engagement, including LGBTQIA+ people living with disability experiencing having their sexuality dismissed or invalidated, and culturally and linguistically diverse people shared stories about translation services not accurately describing their LGBTQIA+ identities and circumstances.

“When people think of you in the disability corner – then they don’t necessarily consider you in the LGBTQIA+ corner.”  
 “People forget that I’m queer.”

– **Community engagement participants**  
 LGBTQIA+ people living with a disability workshop



21% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people do not feel accepted by their community, with 40% of First Nations LGBTQIA+ people experiencing some form of microaggression from within LGBTQIA+ communities. First Nations LGBTQIA+ young people are also least likely (35.5%) to report feeling accepted by members of their extended family.<sup>8</sup> During community engagement, First Nations LGBTQIA+ people shared stories about the devastating impacts on family relationships and barriers to participating in their culture and community due to their LGBTQIA+ identities.<sup>9</sup>



## Family relationships and domestic and family violence

We heard that many LGBTQIA+ people have faced painful confrontations with their families around their identity for many reasons including cultural conflicts, prejudice, or lack of understanding and awareness. These concerns were especially shared by LGBTQIA+ young people, people living in regional and remote communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with disability, and people who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

Like their heterosexual, endosex and cisgender counterparts, LGBTQIA+ people can also experience intimate partner violence with current estimates suggesting rates of LGBTQIA+ domestic and family violence are comparable to or higher than the general population.<sup>10</sup>



“LGBTQIA+ people should have equal, safe, and inclusive access to domestic and family violence support services and perpetrator behavioural change programs.”

– **Community engagement participant**

## Intersex people

Intersex people, or people with innate variations of sex characteristics, have diverse experiences and identities, which may overlap with other LGBTQIA+ identities. Intersex people do not share any single sexual orientation or gender identity, and intersex people may identify with the sex assigned to them at birth (otherwise known as ‘cisgender’), and may be heterosexual. Intersex also describes infants and children who do not have agency to express their identity. Further, a range of clinical language can be used to describe intersex people,

including diagnosis-focused language and umbrella terms such as Differences of Sex Development (DSDs). Not all intersex people use the term intersex to describe their bodies.

Intersex people spoke about the importance of recognising intersex as a distinct community without conflating or confusing their priorities with other LGBTQIA+ issues, as this has led to a lack of clear, appropriate policy responses and supports for intersex people.

Many intersex people have experienced invasive surgeries and other medical interventions in childhood without full and informed consent and with a lack of psychosocial and peer supports, which have had compounding impacts on their health over their lifetimes. Intersex people and their families often experience difficulty accessing knowledgeable and affordable health services across all life stages. Intersex people have called for a shift in both the wider cultural approach as well as specific clinical practice to improve awareness regarding their bodies and experiences and to enable full bodily autonomy for intersex individuals.

Although many of the specific legal and policy priorities of intersex people relate to health, other legislative and policy changes which may be intended to support LGBTQIA+ people must take into account the specific interests and needs of intersex people.

## Gender affirming care

Trans and gender diverse people and their allies strongly advocated for the need to increase the affordability of and access to gender-affirming care in Queensland. Many LGBTQIA+ people raised concerns about wait times for access to gender clinics, particularly for younger people. We heard stories during community engagement that highlighted that the inability to affirm gender causes a flow-on effect to the mental health of trans and gender diverse people.<sup>11</sup>



## LGBTQIA+ data

During community engagement, better data collection on Queensland's LGBTQIA+ population and needs was a consistent theme. Improved data can contribute to increased understanding of LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland and thereby leading to strong and targeted outcomes for LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders.

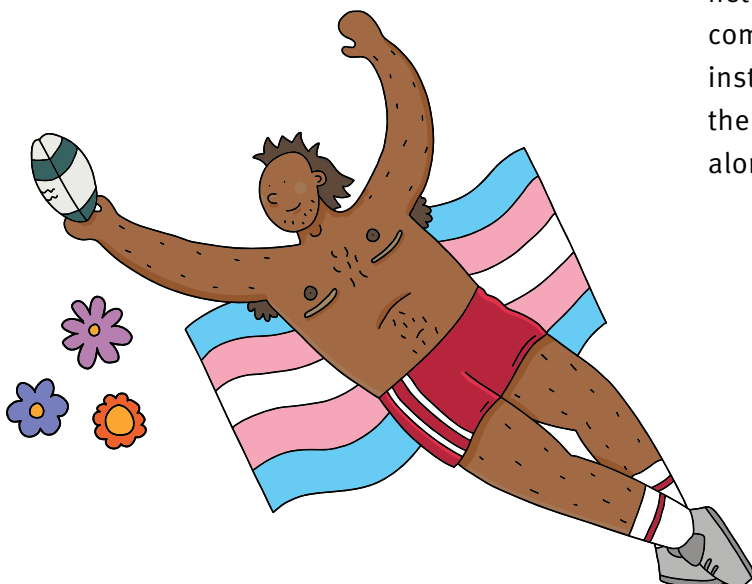
Available data relating to LGBTQIA+ people in Australia is minimal and disproportionately lacking compared to other distinct populations.

LGBTQIA+ people also told us that the safe and responsible collection of data should take into consideration privacy concerns for LGBTQIA+ people and ensure secure management of any data.



“[We need] more inclusiveness, more opportunities, and greater awareness of LGBTQIA+ issues through obtaining actual data on LGBTQIA+ populations and representation in workforces and communities.”

– **Community engagement participant**



## Recognising the strength of LGBTQIA+ people and trust instilled in the sector

During community engagement, we learned more about diverse LGBTQIA+ people uniting over many decades in Queensland. The need to preserve this history for future generations was raised as integral to acknowledging the experiences and history of LGBTQIA+ people and that this should be captured before older LGBTQIA+ people begin to pass away and can no longer share their stories.

“Young people have not experienced the environment that older [LGBTQIA+] Queenslanders have in the past – they may not have lived experience of what it was like, awareness that may assist to ensure that gains made are secured – the opportunity to hear stories directly [from] older people is limited – as fewer of them are around each year.”

– **Community engagement participant**



We also learned about the value of Pride networks and events and LGBTQIA+ community organisations, the trust instilled them by LGBTQIA+ people, and the opportunities for government to work alongside this legacy.

# Our guiding framework

Pride in our Communities will guide the Queensland Government towards its vision that Queensland's diverse LGBTQIA+ communities are connected, celebrated, safe and supported to live authentically and thrive.

This vision was shaped through community engagement with LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland. LGBTQIA+ people told us that they want to live authentically; to be able to express their true identities free from fear of discrimination or prejudice, to feel safe and a sense of belonging within their own communities and the broader Queensland community.

Pride in our Communities focuses on three key impact areas for achieving real and meaningful change for LGBTQIA+ communities. These impact areas are representative of themes that emerged from community engagement with LGBTQIA+ communities and the change they told us they need to live a safe, supported and equal life.

## Our vision

Queensland's diverse LGBTQIA+ communities are connected, celebrated, safe and supported to live authentically and thrive.

## Our impact areas

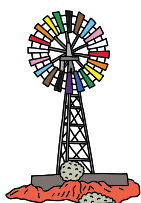
- **IMPACT AREA: Embedding an LGBTQIA+ inclusive culture** across Queensland, by increasing visibility, knowledge and understanding of LGBTQIA+ communities.
- **IMPACT AREA: Fostering stronger communities and connections** that support LGBTQIA+ people to belong and to thrive in communities across Queensland.
- **IMPACT AREA: Providing responsive, inclusive and accessible services** across Queensland that are welcoming and safe for LGBTQIA+ people to access.

Central to the strategy is a set of principles designed to guide us towards achieving our vision.

## Our guiding principles



**First Nations First:** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ communities, including Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities within Queensland are respected and promoted, fostering inclusivity and self-determination. The strategy, and the actions taken to implement it, always considers the relevance and impact to, and inclusion of, First Nations peoples and First Nations LGBTQIA+ communities.



**Community-led:** Communities are the experts in their own needs and we value the knowledge, skills, lived experiences and strengths of LGBTQIA+ people. This approach will create the change that is most effective for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland to thrive.



**Human rights, equity and access:** Everyone, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation or gender identity, is entitled to the full protection of their human rights. Pride in our Communities is firmly grounded in human rights principles, in line with the *Human Rights Act 2019* and will ensure equitable access to government services that are safe, welcoming and inclusive as described in the *Communities 2032* strategy.



**Place-based:** Many Queenslanders live outside our capital city, spread across long distances. Even within the same town and city, people can experience vast differences in their capacity to access information and services. This means that LGBTQIA+ communities have different needs across Queensland. Tailoring government services, policies and programs to meet the unique needs and opportunities of LGBTQIA+ communities in different places will enhance the safety, liveability, accessibility and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland.

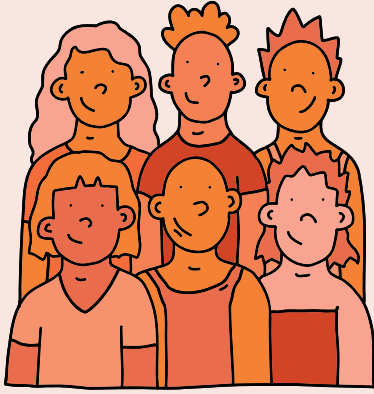


**Intersectionality:** LGBTQIA+ people are diverse, each with their own life story shaped by factors such as culture, migration status, gender identity, sex characteristics, sexual orientation, neurodiversity or living with disability. Intersectionality refers to the ways in which different aspects of a person's identity can expose them to overlapping forms of discrimination, marginalisation and disadvantage. LGBTQIA+ people dealing with additional forms of discrimination navigate life differently. This approach will help the Queensland Government to identify various privileges and forms of discrimination, ensuring more inclusive services, policies and programs that factor in the diverse experiences of LGBTQIA+ people.



**Systemic and sustainable:** Achieving real impact for LGBTQIA+ people requires a forward-thinking, long-term perspective. Our work will focus on implementing practices that drive fundamental and enduring change within government systems, institutions, and structures, aiming to remove systemic inequalities and inequities. Providing longevity for LGBTQIA+ supports and stability, and security within LGBTQIA+ communities is essential for them to thrive.

Pride in our Communities sets the vision, with outcomes being driven through a series of action plans which will evolve as the implementation of the strategy takes shape and more information is gathered within government on opportunities for change for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland.



## IMPACT AREA: **Inclusive culture**

The journey towards a Queensland where LGBTQIA+ people are able to live authentically and thrive begins with cultural transformation to create safety and understanding across all our regions. This change will bring benefits for all Queenslanders.

The Queensland Government is committed to championing a landmark culture shift in Queensland that embeds understanding and recognises the strength of LGBTQIA+ communities.

We will be a leader by role-modelling inclusion and celebrating the diversity of LGBTQIA+ people to play an influential role in encouraging positive culture change across Queensland.

Through this work, we will recognise the place that First Nations LGBTQIA+ people have always had, and will always have, in our Queensland LGBTQIA+ communities.

Pride in our Communities will be a driver for ensuring our services, policies and programs are inclusive of and responsive to the needs, opportunities and lived experiences of LGBTQIA+ people.

There are many allies of LGBTQIA+ people across our communities— a family member, a friend, a neighbour, or a colleague. Delivering meaningful change for LGBTQIA+ people requires Queensland’s communities to be intentionally inclusive, and to build awareness and understanding of

LGBTQIA+ identities and needs. This will be achieved collaboratively between LGBTQIA+ people, Queensland communities, businesses, non-government organisations and the Queensland Government.

LGBTQIA+ people have shared stories about where they have needed to overcome, survive and protect against disadvantage, discrimination and harassment experienced in their daily lives. Through this strategy, the Queensland Government commits to playing an influential role in shifting wider community inclusion for LGBTQIA+ people, towards a more inclusive Queensland.

The Queensland Government will play an enabling role and contribute to this cultural change by developing and implementing practices that consistently consider LGBTQIA+ perspectives. This opportunity for change can address the systemic barriers that create inequity for LGBTQIA+ people, such as social isolation and loneliness, lower employment, poorer education or health outcomes.

Through Pride in our Communities, the Queensland Government will prioritise activities that promote a culture where LGBTQIA+ people are included and

celebrated across all areas of government and in the broader Queensland communities.

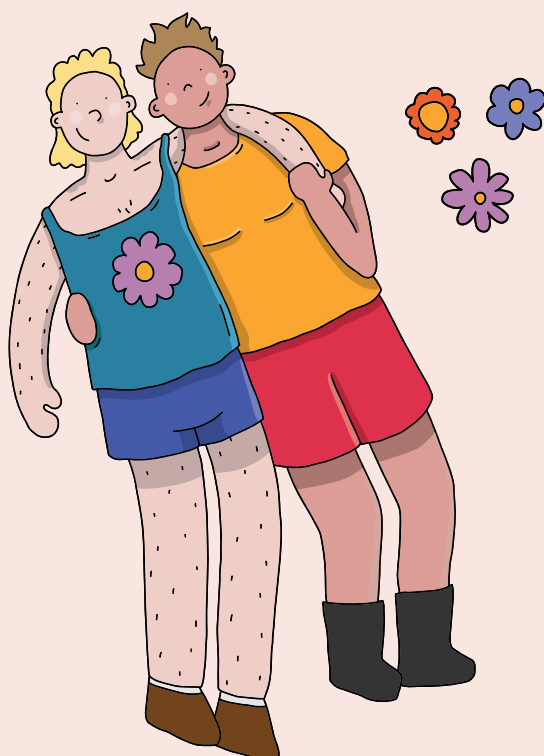
Refocusing government policies, programs and services to incorporate LGBTQIA+ perspectives will ensure services are inclusive of and embed the needs of LGBTQIA+ people in service delivery.



“[I want] support from the government for the right to be a person, or a human being. Supporting a person from any community to be who they are.”

– **Community engagement participant**

The release of this strategy marks the continuation of a journey and change takes time, so the Queensland Government will also work on championing resilience-building initiatives to help LGBTQIA+ communities go from strength to strength, with new capacity and resourcing as progress is made towards a better future where LGBTQIA+ people have equitable outcomes and can shine in their authentic lives.



## Amplifying LGBTQIA+ voices

The Queensland Government is committed to listening to and engaging with LGBTQIA+ communities.

By amplifying LGBTQIA+ voices, we will ensure that Queensland Government policies, services and programs are culturally competent to support LGBTQIA+ communities and reflective of the lived experiences and needs of Queensland’s LGBTQIA+ communities.

This strategy will centre First Nations LGBTQIA+ knowledge holders, so that we can continue to recognise and find space for their lives and stories in all that we do.

Through this work, we will work towards broader cultural change in Queensland.

The voices and stories of Queensland’s LGBTQIA+ communities are critical in creating and identifying opportunities for change and embedding LGBTQIA+ perspectives in Queensland.

“Understanding the community isn’t a monolith, and including more diverse voices (including members of the Brotherboys and Sistergirls community) would allow more range of lived experiences to feed into decision making.”

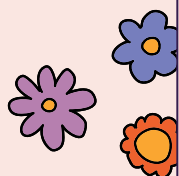
– **Community engagement participant**



Establishing and enhancing engagement platforms will ensure LGBTQIA+ people can continue to contribute insights that influence the design of government policies, programs and services and enable us to adjust our approach as we move forward.



We will work to ensure LGBTQIA+ voices are listened to and can shape the decisions that affect and relate to LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland through effective engagement mechanisms.



“Engage and consult with LGBTQIA+ communities and networks to ensure their voices are heard and their needs are met in the development and delivery of services, programs and strategies.”

– **Community engagement participant**

## An inclusive and respectful workforce

Enhancing our understanding and celebrating LGBTQIA+ people will contribute towards making Queensland communities stronger.

The Queensland Government will be a leader in providing and enhancing an inclusive workplace where LGBTQIA+ people are employed in representative numbers and feel safe, valued and supported to bring their whole selves to work.

By being a leader in inclusive workforce we will inspire and encourage workplaces throughout Queensland to better practice.

We will ensure that First Nations LGBTQIA+ people are welcomed and that the cultural responsibility that they uniquely hold within family and community are recognised, understood and supported. We will seek to reduce the impact of the cultural load imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ employees due to their identity, knowledge and lived experience. Embracing diversity and inclusion within our workforce, including LGBTQIA+ people,

fosters a richer culture and deepens our understanding of LGBTQIA+ communities’ perspectives contributing to a more inclusive and diverse Queensland where everyone feels valued, respected and belongs.

We will continue building education, awareness and understanding of LGBTQIA+ people within the public sector workforce. This will support our work towards addressing the unfair systemic biases embedded within government policy, services and systems that have an effect on LGBTQIA+ peoples’ lives.

We are also working to build our leaders’ capability to promote, support and progress a culture of respect and inclusion.

The Queensland Government also encourages its workforce to participate in and recognise days of significance for LGBTQIA+ communities to ensure visibility and awareness of LGBTQIA+ people.





## Visibility

The Queensland Government is committed to recognising and celebrating the diversity of the LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland.

Pride in our Communities will drive opportunities to embed LGBTQIA+ diversity and representation within Queensland's culture, media and storytelling.

We are committed to recognising and celebrating the beauty and the diversity of First Nations LGBTQIA+ people so that their roles and the unique ways in which they hold culture are acknowledged and supported.

We know that representation is a powerful tool, enabling LGBTQIA+ people to see themselves within the community, live authentically and participate in their communities. Representation helps break down stereotypes, challenge societal biases, and promotes understanding and a sense of belonging and acceptance within Queensland.



“The media has the power to change the attitudes and beliefs of society through creating greater awareness and understanding of LGBTQIA+ people and the challenges and opportunities that exist to improve inclusivity”

– **Community engagement participant**

We are committed to recognising and celebrating LGBTQIA+ people in government media and communication channels so LGBTQIA+ identities and successes are visible and included across the Queensland community.

The Queensland Government is working to promote positive community attitudes and promote social inclusion for LGBTQIA+ communities.

“[I want] reduction of stigma and discrimination. Education helps challenge stereotypes, dispel misconceptions, and promote acceptance and understanding of diverse orientations and gender identities. By educating people about LGBTQIA+ experiences, history and contributions, it fosters a more inclusive and tolerant society. This can lead to reduced stigma, discrimination and violence against LGBTQIA+ individuals, creating safer environments for them to live, work and study.”

– **Community engagement participant**

Sharing and celebrating LGBTQIA+ people's identities and stories will contribute to elevating the visibility of LGBTQIA+ people. This will contribute to an inclusive and unified Queensland, reinforcing that everyone, regardless of their sex characteristics, sexual orientation or gender identity, plays an integral role in the fabric of Queensland's communities. Ensuring LGBTQIA+ people are represented in Queensland stories will foster a Queensland that embraces diversity and inclusion.



## Starting with the facts

The Queensland Government will explore opportunities to change the way it collects and shares information and data relevant to LGBTQIA+ people. This will help inform opportunities for change for LGBTQIA+ communities.

We also recognise the importance of finding a place for practice-based evidence when working with and for our First Nations LGBTQIA+ people and the communities they live in.

Queensland and national data sets have historically ignored, overlooked or marginalised LGBTQIA+ communities and identities. This has caused harm to LGBTQIA+ communities by not enabling adequate services to be provided and caused difficulties with advocating for services and support due to a lack of information about population and areas of need.

Until complete data sets exist, addressing the significant gap in knowledge about and services for LGBTQIA+ communities starts with data gathering.

Increasing consistency and usability of data gathered across all areas of government will contribute to embedding LGBTQIA+ perspectives across government services, policies and programs and meeting LGBTQIA+ communities' needs. Data about LGBTQIA+ communities' needs will support strong advocacy and help direct government efforts in supporting LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland.

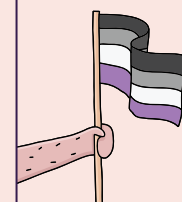
Data collection is a complex activity, and there are further complexities when dealing with LGBTQIA+ communities' data. Government must take into consideration the unique circumstances, consent and privacy considerations of LGBTQIA+ people.

Data sovereignty in Queensland's collection of LGBTQIA+ data must acknowledge and refer to the ownership and control over such data by the communities it represents, ensuring their rights, privacy and autonomy are respected throughout the data collection process. Collection activities must also acknowledge and respect the time and knowledge given by LGBTQIA+ communities in collecting data. Recognising that communities are the experts in their own needs, this includes seeking out opportunities for LGBTQIA+-led data collection.

We will also seek out opportunities to access existing Queensland-based LGBTQIA+ data, ensuring we can leverage existing quality methodology, collection and analysis of data.

“There is so much not known about the community and data capture would help address gaps.”

– **Community engagement participant**



Collecting and securely managing LGBTQIA+ data will contribute to improved understanding of LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland and lead to strong and targeted outcomes for LGBTQIA+ people. It will also uplift the visibility of LGBTQIA+ communities in Queensland.

This also includes measuring our progress on the changes we make and the impacts on LGBTQIA+ people's lives.



## Arts and culture

The Queensland Government will support initiatives that promote LGBTQIA+ representation and inclusion in the arts.

By championing and preserving LGBTQIA+ representation in the arts we aim to contribute to a more inclusive Queensland where everyone can share their stories through authentic expression.

We also recognise that First Nations LGBTQIA+ art is central to First Nations culture, storytelling, performance and dreaming and contributes to the preservation and protection of knowledge.

Arts and culture play a pivotal role in fostering social cohesion and celebrating the diversity of communities. Cultural events, performances, and exhibitions provide platforms for LGBTQIA+ artists to showcase their talents and share their stories, promoting understanding of the LGBTQIA+ lived experience in Queensland.

Focussing on arts and culture initiatives creates a space for dialogue, reflection and community-building, fostering a sense of belonging for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland.



## Equitable Queensland

The Queensland Government will continue to stand firm in our commitment to a Queensland where LGBTQIA+ people can thrive without fear of discrimination or prejudice.

We recognise the fundamental importance of protecting human rights and preventing unfair discrimination.

Equality and justice must extend to all Queenslanders, regardless of sexuality, gender or sex characteristics.

Upholding human rights standards, and promoting this to the broader Queensland community, fosters an inclusive and equitable Queensland where LGBTQIA+ people can live authentically without fear of discrimination, prejudice or violence.



## IMPACT AREA:

# Stronger communities and connections

Ensuring social inclusion for LGBTQIA+ people and instilling a sense of belonging is about helping everyone to participate in their community and ensuring Queensland communities are at their best.

We will promote social inclusion for LGBTQIA+ people, so people are able to live safely and authentically.

By fostering stronger communities, social connections and a sense of belonging, we can create a better Queensland where all LGBTQIA+ people thrive.

For many LGBTQIA+ people, a feeling of ‘otherness’, the journey towards self-discovery, or a breakdown of personal relationships related to their sexuality or gender identity, can contribute towards feeling lonely or socially isolated.

First Nations LGBTQIA+ people told us that it can be difficult to navigate between being both First Nations and LGBTQIA+ and sometimes feel excluded from both communities.

LGBTQIA+ people living with disability feel excluded from LGBTQIA+ spaces or not acknowledged in the broader community as being LGBTQIA+.

People living in regional and remote areas have nowhere to go to find connection with their LGBTQIA+ peers.

We will seek opportunities to support small and large-scale events in Queensland that help foster a sense of social connection and belonging for LGBTQIA+ people.

We acknowledge that there has also been a strong history of LGBTQIA+ people and organisations coming together to advance the rights of LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland and create positive, inclusive environments for LGBTQIA+ people.

Through Pride in our Communities, we will lean into, and build on, the strength of LGBTQIA+ communities.

## Safe in Queensland communities

The Queensland Government is working to promote the safety of LGBTQIA+ people in our communities. Community protection, providing safe housing and shelter, and enforcing human rights and our anti-discrimination laws is at the forefront of these efforts.

LGBTQIA+ people have the right to feel safe at home, in their neighbourhood, in hospitals, at their school, at work, in custody and in their community, free from violence, harassment and isolation.



“I want safety for LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders to feel safe in all public spaces – schools, health care facilities, workplaces. To recognise and support them to be who they are without fear of discrimination or recrimination.”

– **Community engagement participant**

Through community engagement, we heard that LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland experience discrimination and harassment in their communities and that this is more pronounced for trans and gender diverse people, LGBTQIA+ people in regional and remote communities and people experiencing homelessness. This is the time to change that. Discrimination and harassment have no place in our vision for LGBTQIA+ people to thrive in their lives. We acknowledge that to be successful in creating stronger communities and social connections that our communities need support to manage racism, homophobia and transphobia.

Anti-discrimination and human rights are also enshrined in our laws.

## Building stronger connections

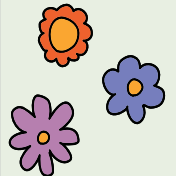
Pride in our Communities will help drive community-building initiatives that create and enhance safer spaces where social connections can flourish, providing vital support networks for LGBTQIA+ people through culture and community leadership.

Everyone deserves to belong and have a place in Queensland. We know that many LGBTQIA+ Queenslanders do not feel like they belong.

Many LGBTQIA+ people are feeling lonely and socially isolated, especially First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, LGBTQIA+ people who are seniors, living in regional and remote areas, incarcerated, living with disability, hospitalised, experiencing homelessness, or culturally and linguistically diverse.

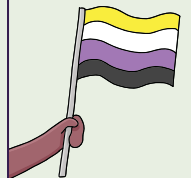
“I don’t have anywhere local to go, to hangout with people like me.”

– **Community engagement participant**



“Being visible. People in the community cannot find a link into the local community. No hub/central access point.”

– **Community engagement participant**



“I found no groups or education or community while growing up in a regional town.”

– **Community engagement participant**



We know that social isolation and loneliness has a profound impact on the physical health and wellbeing of people. Spaces and services that are reserved for LGBTQIA+ people serve as environments where people can express their identities authentically without fear of judgement, discrimination or harassment.



LGBTQIA+ communities highlighted opportunities to improve the accessibility of LGBTQIA+ spaces, services and events to ensure people of all cultures, ages, disabilities and locations can feel a part of LGBTQIA+ communities.



“It’s pretty simple, I’d like to feel connected to other LGBTIQ people.”

–Community engagement participant

## Strengthening the LGBTQIA+ sector

Pride in our Communities will leverage the expertise and insights of trusted, established organisations, networks, events and social groups to provide much needed representation and support for LGBTQIA+ communities. We will seek to achieve this through collaboration and resourcing efforts.

We know that many places in Queensland do not have established Pride networks. We will seek to build the capacity of emerging local groups and organisations that advocate for and support local LGBTQIA+ communities, including First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys.

We will seek to partner with accredited organisations, networks and services that provide culturally appropriate services for First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys that honour spiritual connection and are trusted by communities.

We recognise that LGBTQIA+ communities are experts in their own local needs and challenges, and that community-led responses deliver the best possible outcomes. LGBTQIA+ organisations, networks

and social groups have a history of working together and shepherding strong community outcomes for LGBTQIA+ people.

Pride events and LGBTQIA+ specific events and places provide safe and supportive spaces for LGBTQIA+ people to connect, share experiences, build strong community bonds and be visible and celebrated. Established Pride organisations represent a trusted, enduring focal point for community networking, celebrations and events, access to services and support for LGBTQIA+ communities. Pride organisations and events play a vital role in Queensland, contributing greatly to the vibrant social fabric of a diverse and inclusive Queensland.

Collaboration and resourcing these organisations, networks, event organisers and social groups for community-led activities will contribute towards building stronger communities and connections. Doing this in-place recognises that different communities have different needs across Queensland.

Together, we can continue the proud history of strength and unity amongst LGBTQIA+ people.





## Supporting healthy relationships

We are committed to promoting and reinforcing the importance of healthy relationships, how to improve relationships, the behaviours that create a lack of safety and how these can be addressed.

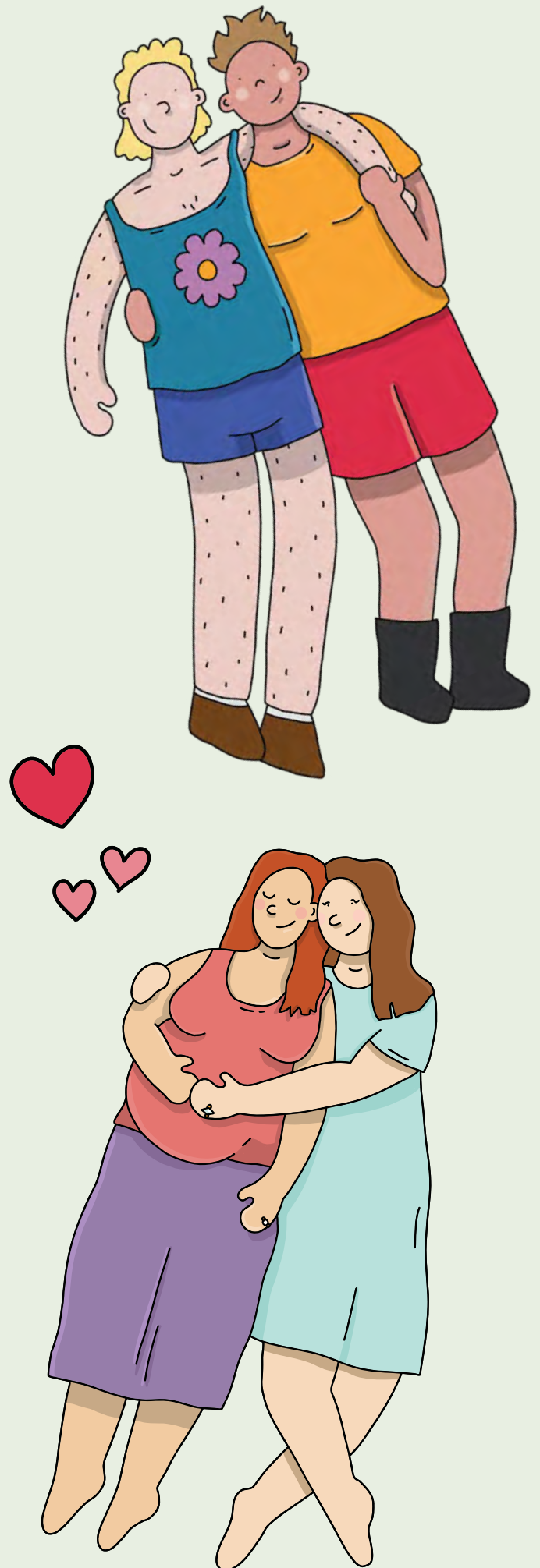
This includes campaigns and resources on LGBTQIA+ healthy relationships and consent, education programs in schools on respectful relationships, and promoting Queensland's anti-discrimination laws and policies that protect LGBTQIA+ people and promote a safe and inclusive Queensland.

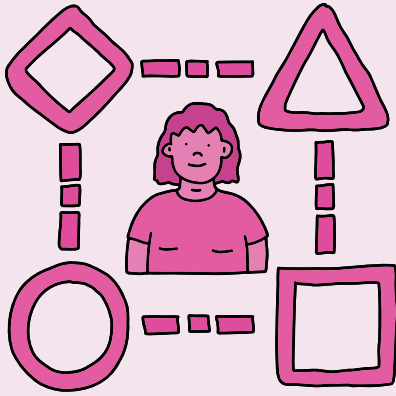
Everyone should enjoy healthy connections with their families and their partners and their broader communities.

Ensuring respectful relationships among people within Queensland communities, and reducing occurrences of domestic and family violence within families and LGBTQIA+ relationships, is crucial for fostering safety, support and respect for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland.

Everyone – individuals, families, partners and broader communities – plays a pivotal role in shaping the support system for LGBTQIA+ people. Like all relationships, LGBTQIA+ relationships thrive on the foundation of understanding and mutual respect.

The Queensland Government will focus on developing LGBTQIA+ specific programs, campaigns and resources that contribute to building safe and healthy relationships and environments for LGBTQIA+ people.





## IMPACT AREA:

# Responsive, inclusive and accessible services

When LGBTQIA+ people access government services they should feel welcome, understood, and have their needs met.

The Queensland Government is committed to making services welcoming for and responsive to the needs of LGBTQIA+ people.

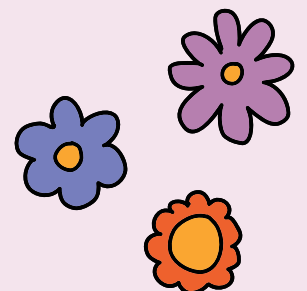
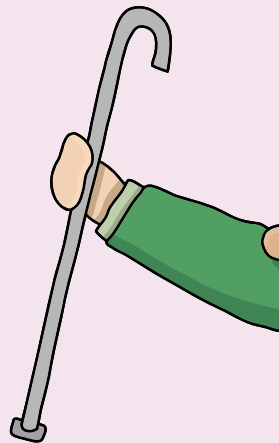
Pride in our Communities provides a plan to increase access for LGBTQIA+ people to receive the services they need and to ensure LGBTQIA+ people know where to access services through locally available, culturally safe and trusted sources.

Queensland Government service delivery upholds the *Human Rights Act 2019* and *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*. We are committed to delivering services that support the health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ people, enabling them to participate in society and thrive.

Services including healthcare, mental health support, justice and legal protections, schooling and broader education, child and community protection, family violence and sexual assault services, and housing assistance should be accessible to everyone. We will seek opportunities for government services to work collaboratively with LGBTQIA+ specific services.

Embedding the rights of LGBTQIA+ people in service delivery includes equipping our frontline services with understanding the specific and intersecting needs of LGBTQIA+ people and training them to respond appropriately. It is also vital that LGBTQIA+ people and their lived experience is embedded within services.

Recognising and addressing disparities faced by LGBTQIA+ people when accessing government services is about addressing the obligation of government services to provide equal access, and creating a Queensland where everyone feels valued, supported and can live authentically.





## Appropriate and capable services

Pride in our Communities supports our ongoing commitment to operate from a position of safety and ensure a trauma-informed approach so that our services are inclusive of LGBTQIA+ perspectives.

LGBTQIA+ people want to come into an inclusive service environment that considers the potential impact of past and present traumas and the impact this has on their interactions with a service and their overall wellbeing. LGBTQIA+ people want to access services that see their whole selves and identities, for example both Aboriginal and queer, and where they are not labelled and marginalised further.

Linking in with our commitment to a culture shift, the Queensland Government is working to continue building the capability of its frontline workforce so that LGBTQIA+ people can interact with services that foster trust, safety and sensitivity and place them at the centre of service delivery.

“Changes to language has helped a lot, using more inclusive language does a lot to give a sense of safety.”

– **Community engagement participant**



We are committed to ongoing training of our frontline workers and LGBTQIA+ specific services and programs to address the needs of LGBTQIA+ people. We will also seek opportunities to strengthen collaboration across all government services, department and agencies.

This will translate to a strengthened, more sensitive and tailored service delivery that promotes equitable access and support for people with innate variations of sex characteristics, and of diverse sexual orientation, gender identity and backgrounds.



## Regional and remote access

The Queensland Government is committed to ensuring accessible health services, housing and accommodation, educational programs, and resources tailored to the specific needs of LGBTQIA+ people in regional and remote areas to ensure the wellbeing of everyone in Queensland.

We recognise that First Nations LGBTQIA+ people need to maintain their connection to culture through Country and should be able to access relevant services and support.

Many LGBTQIA+ people living in regional and remote Queensland face unique challenges that have an impact on wellbeing and quality of life. A significant challenge is lack of access to inclusive healthcare services, including mental health support and gender-affirming care. Many remote areas also have limited or no LGBTQIA+ community spaces or support networks, exacerbating feelings of isolation and loneliness. In some regional and remote areas, LGBTQIA+ people face a hostile social climate, including discrimination and stigma both within their local communities and when accessing services. This can contribute to higher rates of mental health issues and impacts on physical health outcomes, as well as serious community safety concerns for LGBTQIA+ people in regions. LGBTQIA+ people living in different regional and remote areas of Queensland have different needs. These challenges underscore the importance of targeted support and advocacy efforts to improve the lives of LGBTQIA+ people living in regional and remote Queensland.

LGBTQIA+ people should have access to the services they need no matter where they live in Queensland.

We will continue to find ways to improve equitable and safe access for LGBTQIA+ people in regional and remote Queensland. This is crucial for fostering inclusivity and diversity and overall community wellbeing.



## Stronger health outcomes

Pride in our Communities provides an opportunity to improve the patient journey and enable the delivery of equitable, accessible and sustainable healthcare for LGBTQIA+ people in Queensland.

As Queensland continues to grow and advance, every Queenslanders should have equitable access to healthcare, no matter where they live. We are dedicated to providing a world-class health system for all Queenslanders that is equitable, accessible, safe and sustainable.

To make this happen we will acknowledge the unique health needs of LGBTQIA+ communities.

For First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, we acknowledge the unique health challenges experienced and the specific health supports needed to support positive social and emotional wellbeing, and that feeling belonging and being viewed as equal is important for positive holistic health outcomes.

For people born with innate variations of sex characteristics, access to appropriate healthcare at all life stages is a core priority, noting that the needs of intersex people may vary widely depending on their specific variation or diagnoses, life experiences, age, outcomes from previous medical interventions, and other factors such as their level of agency and self-knowledge. Intersex people often experience cumulative impacts on their physical and mental health over their lifetimes due to stigma, pathologisation of their bodies and consequent medical interventions. Intersex organisations have called for significantly improved clinical understanding and practice so that health services align to a client-centred, trauma-informed and human rights-based model of affirmative care. Additional psychosocial services to assist with the complex trauma

they experience is also needed, along with other social supports and education for families, and greater training and knowledge for healthcare providers.

Comprehensive and timely access to gender-affirming care and appropriate psychosocial support is vital for the holistic wellbeing of trans and gender diverse people. This care has an impact on the physical and mental health of trans and gender diverse people and also plays a fundamental role in fostering a sense of alignment between their identities and lived experience, enabling them to thrive authentically.





Inclusive healthcare policies and practices are essential for rainbow families, acknowledging and supporting their reproductive rights while embracing the diversity of all family structures. It is imperative that antenatal, birth, postnatal, paediatric and all other health care are delivered without discrimination, tailored to the specific needs and dynamics of LGBTQIA+ families, fostering a respectful and inclusive healthcare experience for people in rainbow families.

Rainbow families require inclusive healthcare policies and practices that recognise and support their reproductive rights and are inclusive of all families. Antenatal, birth, postnatal and paediatric care should be provided in a non-discriminatory manner, with healthcare services and staff addressing the unique needs and dynamics of LGBTQIA+ families, ensuring respectful and inclusive care throughout the process.

Focussing on mental health and suicide prevention initiatives tailored to LGBTQIA+ communities and providing accessible resources and safe

spaces for counselling will contribute to a future where everyone feels seen, heard and supported in their mental health journey.

We will strive to create healthcare environments, either in hospital or care options closer to home, that are respectful and affirming for people with innate variations of sex characteristics, diverse sexuality and gender.

“Health is one of the main contributors to wellbeing for all people. At the moment, there is a lack of understanding in health and medical settings in relation to appropriate care for trans and gender diverse people and families. This is inequitable and a cause of great harm.”

– **Community engagement participant**





## Equitable education for all Queenslanders

Promoting an inclusive Queensland for the future starts with supporting and educating Queensland's young people.

We are committed to building a high-quality education system for all Queenslanders and realising the potential of every student. Young people in Queensland are our future so we want to give them a great start.

We are committed to being a leader in inclusive and best practice education, promoting healthy LGBTQIA+ relationships and supporting LGBTQIA+ students to engage successfully in their learning to realise their potential.

The Queensland Government is continuing to take action to support LGBTQIA+ students, their families and staff through creating safe and inclusive learning environments.

Partnership between schools, families and the broader community is essential for promoting the engagement and wellbeing of every student. Making sure all types of families are represented and welcome recognises the diversity of our communities and schools.

We will continue to support our school communities to be safe, welcoming and inclusive learning and work environments for LGBTQIA+ students, staff and community members.

As part of this, we support our schools, students and staff to welcome First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, and to recognise their unique family and cultural responsibilities.



We understand that rainbow families are part of the education ecosystem and are committed to ensuring all types of families are represented and celebrated within our schools.

We encourage schools to take practical steps that ensure all young people are engaged in age-appropriate respectful relationships and consent, education inclusive of the diversity of LGBTQIA+ experiences and relationships, through the delivery of the Australian Curriculum.

We enable inclusion for LGBTQIA+ children and young people in all facets, including curriculum, uniforms, sports and other activities.

## The way forward – our commitment to ongoing change

Pride in our Communities is Queensland's first LGBTQIA+ strategy and marks the beginning of a key step in Queensland's journey to achieving our vision for LGBTQIA+ communities.

The Queensland Government will work with LGBTQIA+ communities and the LGBTQIA+ sector to listen to emerging community needs, share learnings and adjust our approach as we move forward.

Our path forward will be charted through a set of action plans with the first being a foundational plan to set us on the journey towards our vision, focussing on 2024 until 2026.

Central to our approach is the principle of shared decision-making and collaborative partnership between the Queensland Government and LGBTQIA+ communities, including:

- shared accountability
- shared responsibility
- shared learnings.

While we know there is much that government can influence, achieving meaningful change for LGBTQIA+ people will be a collective, intentional effort between the Queensland Government LGBTQIA+ people and the broader Queensland community.





# Glossary of terms

Key terms used in this document are listed below.

We acknowledge that there are many distinct identities within the spectrum of sexuality and gender and different experiences for people with innate variations of sex characteristics and that people may adopt different definitions.

Every effort has been made to use inclusive language and to represent identities accurately. However, we acknowledge that language related to and used within LGBTQIA+ communities is constantly evolving. The language we use may be adapted over time as we learn more about the make-up of LGBTQIA+ communities.

The terms and definitions provided herewith are specific to this document only and not intended for interpretation or definition outside the context of this document.

**Asexual:** Asexuality is the lack of sexual attraction to others, or low or absent interest in or desire for sexual activity.

**Bisexual:** Bisexuality is an attraction to more than one gender. Those who identify as bisexual may feel a sexual or romantic attraction to people of different gender/s which may include their own.

**Brotherboy:** Brotherboy is a culturally and socially accepted term used within some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to describe transgender or gender diverse people who may be assigned female at birth yet live their lives through male spirit and take on the traditional male roles within their community.

**Cisgender:** Cisgender is used to describe an individual whose gender identity aligns with their assigned biological sex.

**Co-design:** This describes a collaborative approach to working directly with stakeholders to develop products, initiatives, and strategies. It emphasises shared decision-making and iterative feedback loops to create solutions that meet the needs of stakeholders.

**Community-led:** A concept where initiatives are initiated or managed by LGBTQIA+ communities for the benefit of LGBTQIA+ individuals.

**Cultural load:** This refers to the often invisible emotional, cultural, social and workplace responsibilities imposed on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees due to their cultural identity, knowledge and lived experience.



**Endosex:** This refers to people whose innate sex characteristics meet medical and social norms for typically ‘male’ or ‘female’ bodies.

**First Nations:** We recognise that there are hundreds of Aboriginal nations, languages and groups in Australia, each with their own cultures, lores and ways of living. Torres Strait Islander peoples also have unique cultures, languages and lores. The use of the term First Nations within this document refers to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

**First Nations LGBTQIA+:** We recognise that both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are distinct and include Sistergirls and Brotherboys within communities. For the purposes of this document we use the term First Nations LGBTQIA+ people to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ people, including Sistergirls and Brotherboys.

**Gay:** This term is used to describe persons, who are romantically or sexually attracted to persons of the same sex.

**Gender:** Gender is an individual’s self-concept of who they are and can manifest in various forms, including behaviour and physical appearance. Many people identify as either male or female, while others see their gender as a blend of these categories or as neither.

**Gender affirmation / gender affirming:** This refers to the process of recognition and support in inhabiting one’s gender identity, expression or role.

**Gender binary:** The gender binary refers to a system of gender classification in which all people are categorised as being either male or female. The gender binary may be prescribed by a social system, cultural traditions or religious belief.

**Gender diverse:** This is a term used to describe gender identities that do not conform to the binary framework of male or female. Gender diversity challenges the norms and stereotypes that others may expect or impose on them.

Gender diverse people may use different labels to express their gender identity, expression, or perception, depending on their personal preferences and experiences, for example some people may prefer labels such as ‘non-binary’. Language in this context is continually evolving.



**Heteronormative/ity:** Heteronormativity is the assumption that the ‘default’ sexual orientation is heterosexual. It assumes that ‘normal’ relationships exist only between a cisgender man and a cisgender woman. This has a negative impact on people of diverse sexuality and gender and creates stigma for homosexuality, bisexuality, and other forms of sexual expression, and gender expression outside the gender binary. This can contribute to the distress that people of diverse sexuality and gender experience when expressing or questioning their sexual orientation or gender identity.

**Homelessness:** This refers to people living without safe and secure accommodation, including people living on the streets, squatting, living in parks, ‘couch surfing’ or in rented rooms that don’t offer long-term security of tenure. This is also referred to as ‘rooflessness’ or living without a roof, noting that the concept of ‘home’ for many people, including many First Nations people, represents much more than accommodation.

**Homosexual/ Homosexuality:** This describes people who are sexually attracted to people of their own sex. This includes people who identify as being lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or queer and may include other identities within LGBTQIA+ communities.

**Homophobia:** This describes the prejudicial attitudes, feelings and actions toward homosexuality or people who identify as being lesbian, gay, bisexual, pansexual or queer. It can be expressed as discrimination and violence against homosexual people and is often based on irrational fear.

**Innate variations of sex characteristics (see also – Intersex):** Variations of sex characteristics refers to people with innate genetic, hormonal or physical sex characteristics that do not conform to medical norms for female or male bodies. It refers to a wide spectrum of variations to genitals, hormones, chromosomes and/or reproductive organs. Other umbrella terms used to describe being born with variations of sex characteristics are Intersex, or Differences/ Disorders of Sex Development (DSD).

**Intersectional/ity:** This is a concept that recognises how different aspects of a person’s identity, such as gender, culture, sexuality, religion, and ability, can create multiple layers of discrimination or disadvantage and compound inequality.

**Intersex (see also – innate variations of sex characteristics):** Intersex is descriptive term for a diverse population of people who have intersex traits or characteristics that do not fit social or medical norms for male or female bodies. People with variations of sex characteristics are not a homogenous group and have a diversity of bodies and identities.

**Lesbian:** A lesbian is a woman who is physically and romantically attracted to other women.

**LGBTQIA+:** This acronym stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, plus. The ‘plus (+)’ indicates that the letters of the acronym do not capture the entire spectrum of sexual orientations, gender identities and sex characteristics, and is not intended to be limiting or exclude certain groups. For the purposes of this document, the + also acknowledges First Nations LGBTQIA+ people, Sistergirls and Brotherboys.



**LGBTIQ+:** This acronym stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer, plus. The ‘plus (+)’ indicates that the letters of the acronym do not capture the entire spectrum of sexual orientations, gender identities and sex characteristics, and is not intended to be limiting or exclude certain groups. This acronym is used within this document to reference the title of specific initiatives or groups that use the LGBTIQ+ acronym.

**Non-binary:** A non-binary person is someone who does not identify as exclusively male or female. Someone who is non-binary might feel like a mix of genders, or no gender at all.

**Pansexual:** A pansexual person is sexually, emotionally or romantically attracted to people regardless of their gender. For the purposes of this document, pansexuality is considered to be reflected in the ‘+’ or plus component of the LGBTQIA+ acronym. For the purposes of this document, pansexuality is considered to be reflected in the ‘+’ or plus component of the LGBTQIA+ acronym.

**Pride:** The word ‘pride’ in the context of LGBTQIA+ communities refers to a multifaceted, integral cultural concept encompassing self-acceptance, celebration, identity, and advocacy for the rights, visibility and dignity of LGBTQIA+ people. It symbolises resilience, solidarity and the ongoing struggle for equality and social justice.

**Pride events:** A Pride event is an event celebrating LGBTQIA+ social and self-acceptance, achievements, legal rights, and pride.

**Privilege:** Privilege refers to a special advantage possessed by an individual or group because of the absence of discriminatory barriers or disadvantage.

**Racism:** This describes the prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism against a person or people on the basis of their membership to a cultural, linguistic or ethnic group, typically one that is a minority or marginalised.



**Rainbow families:** Families where the parent or parents identify as LGBTQIA+.

**Sex:** In this document, sex is used in reference to a person's sex characteristics, such as their chromosomes, hormones and reproductive organs. While typically based upon the sex characteristics observed and recorded at birth or infancy, a person's reported sex can change over the course of their lifetime and may differ from their sex recorded at birth. In a few instances in this document, sex refers to sexual activity between people (see: Timeline of LGBTQIA+ progress in Queensland and Equitable Education for all Queenslanders).

**Sexuality or sexual orientation:** This relates to a person's romantic or sexual attraction to others. Sexuality is not determined by a person's gender identity or sex characteristics.

**Sistergirl:** Sistergirl is a culturally and socially accepted term used within some Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to describe transgender or gender diverse people who may be assigned male at birth, yet live their lives through female spirit and take on the traditional female roles within their community.

**Trans / Transgender:** This term relates to a person whose gender identity does not correspond with the sex registered or assigned at birth.

**Transphobia:** This describes the prejudicial attitudes, feelings and actions toward trans / transgender and gender diverse people. It can be expressed as discrimination and violence against trans people and is often based on irrational fear.

**Queer:** This term was originally derived from the traditional definition of 'strange' and came to be used as a slur to describe, attack or humiliate LGBTQIA+ people. In recent decades, the word has been reclaimed by some LGBTQIA+ people (that is, used without negative connotation) and is used to describe a wide range of LGBTQIA+ identities. Some LGBTQIA+ people continue to find the word offensive due to the historical use of the word. 'Queer' does appear in this document when referencing the words used by some LGBTQIA+ people during community engagement. It also appears in the LGBTQIA+ acronym to reflect some people's connection with queer identity.





# Endnotes

- 1 See glossary: 'Cisgender' refers to people when a person's gender and personal identity aligns to the sex they were assigned at birth. 'Endosex' refers to non-intersex people.
- 2 Amos, N., Lim, G., Buckingham, P., Lin, A., Liddel-Hunt, S., Mooney-Somers, J., & Bourne, A. (2023). *Rainbow Realities: In-depth analyses of large-scale LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing data in Australia (Version 2)*. La Trobe. <https://doi.org/10.26181/24654852.v2>
- 3 Australian Bureau of Statistics. (2020). *Social Survey: Summary results Australia General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2020*. Retrieved from <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/people-and-communities/general-social-survey-summary-results-australia/latest-release> Note, the ABS Social Survey uses the terms 'gay, lesbian or bisexual' however it is understood that many LGBTQIA+ people would have identified themselves this way, even if it were not their preferred descriptor, in order to be included in the survey. This issue highlights a gap in data for LGBTQIA+ people that continues to impact service delivery and outcomes for these communities.
- 4 Queensland Positive People. (2021). *Queensland Parliamentary Inquiry Into Social Isolation and Loneliness – Queensland Positive People Submission no 106*. Retrieved from <https://documents.parliament.qld.gov.au/com/CSSC-0A12/IQ-DD31/submissions/00000106.pdf>
- 5 De Jesus, M., Ware, D., Brown, A. L., Egan, J. E., Habermen, S. A., Palella, F. J., Jr, Detels, R., Friedman, M. R., & Plankey, M. W. (2021). *Social-environmental resiliencies protect against loneliness among HIV-Positive and HIV- negative older men who have sex with men: Results from the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS)*. *Social science & medicine* (1982), 272, 113711. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2021.113711>
- 6 Amos, N., Lim, G., Buckingham, P., Lin, A., Liddel-Hunt, S., Mooney-Somers, J., & Bourne, A. (2023). *Rainbow Realities: In-depth analyses of large-scale LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing data in Australia (Version 2)*. La Trobe. <https://doi.org/10.26181/24654852.v2>
- 7 Hill AO, Lyons A, Jones J, McGowan I, Carman M, Parsons M, Power J, Bourne A. (2021). *Writing Themselves In 4: The health and wellbeing of LGBTQIA+ young people in Australia*. National report, monograph series number 124. Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health
- 8 Hill, B., Uink, B., Dodd, J., Bonson, D., Eades, A. & Bennett, S. (2021). *Breaking the silence: Insights into the lived experiences of WA Aboriginal/LGBTIQ+ people: Community summary report 2021*. Kurungkurl Katitjin, Edith Cowan University. Perth, Western Australia. <https://www.ecu.edu.au/centres/kurungkurl-katitjin/research/current-projects-and-past-projects/breaking-the-silence> It should be noted that accurate statistics for First Nations LGBTQIA+ people are difficult to obtain. Although this is a report based on Western Australia statistics, based on recent community engagement undertaken in Queensland it is likely that the experience is similar in Queensland. Microaggressions refers to discrimination that takes the form of daily and brief occurrences which nonetheless may result in anxiety and other mental health and health consequences to those who are subjected to them over time (Balsam, et. al., 2011).
- 9 Liddel-Hunt, S., Uink, B., Douglas, K., Hill, J.H.L., Hayward, L., Stretton, N., Perry, Y., Hill, B., & Lin, A. (2023) *Walkern Katatdjin (Rainbow Knowledge) Phase 2 National Survey Community Report*, Perth, Western Australia. <https://www.rainbowknowledge.org/phase-2-results>
- 10 Amos, N., Lim, G., Buckingham, P., Lin, A., Liddel-Hunt, S., Mooney-Somers, J., & Bourne, A. (2023). *Rainbow Realities: In-depth analyses of large-scale LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing data in Australia (Version 2)*. La Trobe. <https://doi.org/10.26181/24654852.v2>
- 11 Amos, N., Lim, G., Buckingham, P., Lin, A., Liddel-Hunt, S., Mooney-Somers, J., & Bourne, A. (2023). *Rainbow Realities: In-depth analyses of large-scale LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing data in Australia (Version 2)*. La Trobe. <https://doi.org/10.26181/24654852.v2>

