

Where are all the women?

Research into the low visibility and engagement of same-sex attracted women in the workplace

June 2019



The full report is available online...

- 1 Overall findings
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Theme 1: Macro and Micro Culture

Psychological safety is largely determined by day-to-day social norms and expectations (micro culture).

Women are more likely to be out in workplaces that celebrate difference.



Influencing macro and micro culture

- 1 Continue to show clear leadership through consistent and explicit messaging and behaviour to enhance macro culture.
- 2 Empower your allies (both straight allies and other members of the LGBTI community) to influence the micro culture within the Workplace.
- 3 Educate people in the workplace on the importance of terminology and positive language.
- 4 Building opportunities to reverse mentor your workplace leaders to build greater connection to the LGBTI community.

Theme 2: Dual effect of gender and sexuality

Same-sex attracted women are more likely to doubt themselves and less likely to have a strong sense of belonging in the workplace. This compounds the effect of the glass ceiling because confidence and belonging are critical traits in overcoming the gender challenges all women face.

Supporting dual effect of sexuality and gender

- 1 Build connections across the workplace through gender-specific initiatives.
- 2 Develop leadership coaching for same-sex attracted women as an investment in role models of the future.
- 3 Create safe spaces for same-sex attracted women to come together and learn from each other.



Theme 3:
Impact of the perceived
stereotype
‘But...you don’t look gay’

How do we break the stereotype?

- 1 Help allies influence others to understand how their words can be unconsciously reinforcing the stereotype.
- 3 Challenge the stereotype from within the LGBTI community.

- 2 Empower same-sex attracted women to define how they want to be known.

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Gay women just as all women come in all shapes, sizes and styles.



Theme 4: Role Models

How do we influence women with role models?

1 Demonstrate a re-imagined definition of a role model through highlighting examples of behaviours and day-to-day actions.

2 Help connect same-sex attracted women through existing mentoring and networking channels.

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There are so few LGBT women in leadership it is hard for women to find role model to look up to. Out women need to be made more visible in senior management.

Theme 5: Networks and support



How can you create belonging through LGBTI networks?

- 1** Identify and build a group of 'early adopting' same-sex attracted women to help design and deliver initiatives that connects with an inclusive purpose and vision for the broader LGBTI network.
- 2** Set a goal for gender balance within your network leadership team, including people in supporting roles within your network.
- 3** Clearly articulate and share the purpose of your LGBTI network.
- 4** Reinforce the broader purpose of your LGBTI network at events.

What next?

Appendix 2

Bringing your actions to life in the workplace



Appendix 3

Your role



Workplace leaders

I want to understand what I can do to improve inclusion and role model good leadership

- Show clear leadership through consistent and explicit messaging and behavior
- Be authentic with your team so others can feel comfortable being themselves
- Be an inclusive role model and ensure your workplace has diverse role models
- Seek opportunities for reverse mentoring to open your own perspectives
- Find opportunities to share stories of diversity from within the LGBTI community



Workplace Diversity & Inclusion teams

I want to ensure that our inclusion approach is both practical and relevant

- Support and formalise connections between gender and LGBTI initiatives / networks
- Go beyond 'strategy' and consider how to influence micro culture
- Profile same-sex attracted women by providing opportunities to share their diverse stories
- Ensure that leadership programs include nuances relevant to same-sex attracted women
- Profile different types of role models and encourage leaders to re-imagine what type of role-model they want to be



Same-sex attracted women

I want to understand some of the challenges that might exist and how I can achieve the best experience for myself, and other same-sex attracted women

- Define how you want to be known in the workplace and share this (if comfortable) with colleagues and peers
- Have a voice and be part of the conversation – which could be through a role in your LGBTI network
- Consider how you can support other same-sex attracted through being your own type of role model
- Help design the vision and strategy of your LGBTI network



Allies outside the LGBTI community

I want to better understand the role that I can play and how I can influence the micro culture of the workplace

- Show support and influence the micro culture through lanyards, pins and supportive email signatures
- Question the status quo and drive change – one way to do this is to influence others through using inclusive language and calling out poor behaviour
- Attend LGBTI events and encourage others to do the same
- Provide help and time to support LGBTI initiatives



Allies within the LGBTI community

I want our network to be inclusive for the whole LGBTI community, including women

- Role model behavior through being open to different ways of working and ideas in your LGBTI network
- Actively engage in actions related to this research that are being implemented in your workplace
- Challenge stereotypes from within the community, reminding peers how they can influence micro culture

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