

Government meets businesses supporting LGBT people at work

LGBT at Work will bring together businesses and civil society organisations such as Google, Asos and Auto Trader, to discuss how to support people to be themselves at work.

- LGBT Business Champion hosts businesses in Manchester to discuss inclusivity
- Event signals development of a business-led network to share best practice
- Minister for Equalities and Prime Minister's Special Envoy on LGBT Rights also in Manchester to take part in discussions

This is the second in a series of events organised by Anderson, and it will also be attended by the Minister for Equalities, Mike Freer, and the Prime Minister's Special Envoy on LGBT Rights, Nick Herbert (Lord Herbert of South Downs).

Part of the role of the LGBT Business Champion is to gather evidence of good practice and what works when it comes to improving workplace inclusivity. The evidence gathered will then help shape future recommendations that Anderson will make to businesses. Today's event is part of this process, with representatives from a range of organisations on hand to discuss how they make sure their workplace is inclusive of LGBT people.

Research suggests that LGBT people face high levels of bullying, harassment and conflict in the workplace. Around a quarter (23%) of respondents to the National LGBT Survey 2017, who were in employment, reported that they had experienced a negative or mixed reaction from others in the workplace due to being LGBT.

HMG LGBT Business Champion, Iain Anderson, said:

"It's fantastic to be meeting with all these amazing organisations from across the country as we build our understanding of what works for LGBT employees and their employers.

"The workplace is where the majority of us spend most of our time. I will be looking at where business and Government can work together to support LGBT workers.

"I'm determined that businesses – large and small – which have created inclusive, accepting and empowering workplaces are celebrated and their best practice shared. That is what today's event is all about."

Minister for Equalities, Mike Freer, said:

"Everybody must be free to be themselves in all aspects of life. We are here to support businesses to foster an open and accepting culture so all staff

feel empowered, regardless of their background, sexual orientation or anything else. We are also aware that we have a lot to learn from business.

“Today’s event and all the work Iain is doing alongside the Government will help open discussions between organisations about what more can be done to ensure the workplace is inclusive for LGBT employees.

“As we build back better we must also build back fairer so the whole of our society is able to flourish.”

The Prime Minister’s Special Envoy on LGBT Rights, Nick Herbert, said:

“It is great to be in Manchester today, talking with business and other organisations about the steps they have taken to make work a fair and inclusive place for LGBT employees.

“The Government wants business to play a key role in the UK’s first Global LGBT Conference – Safe to Be Me, which will be taking place in June next year.

“I know that there is a huge appetite from British business to deliver tangible commitments that make real positive change for LGBT people at home and abroad. Today I hope to hear a range of ideas which can contribute towards a successful event next Summer.”

Anderson’s role as LGBT Business Champion will focus on progressing LGBT equality in employment and enterprise, continuing to build on the work the Equality Hub has started with SMEs in this field. The role will harness the influence of FTSE and sector business leaders to act as change agents to increase diversity in business leadership.

As well as a domestic focus, the Business Champion role also involves working with Nick Herbert, the Prime Minister’s Special Envoy on LGBT Rights and Chair of Safe to Be Me: A Global Equality Conference, to deliver an event that will showcase the UK as a leader on LGBT rights in June 2022. Businesses will play a leading role in the run up to the Conference, by making the economic case for LGBT equality at home and abroad.

The HMG LGBT Business Champion will be running more events like today’s in Manchester as he establishes an evidence base for the future work in his role.

Further Information:

The Safe to Be Me: A Global Equality Conference will be delivered with the UK’s co-chair of the Equal Rights Coalition, Argentina and Cyprus, co-host of the Council of Europe’s LGBTI Focal Points Network IDAHOT+ Forum.