



**ROTARY
LGBT+
INCLUSION**

ASSESSMENT

BEING LGBT+ INCLUSIVE



As I have started to share my ideas, opinions and stories about LGBT+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and gender diverse, and all the others) inclusion in Rotary, I have heard so many of our leaders say to me: “We’re a really decent club/district. We don’t have any bad people. So, we don’t have a problem. Right?”

I’ve also heard things like “why is Rotary doing something so political” and “there are no gay people in my community.”

These comments come from a space of ignorance and I always consider them a teaching moment. LGBT+ rights are human rights. But while diversity and inclusion have climbed the Rotary agenda over the past decade, many LGBT+ members continue to face discrimination, discomfort, and even danger in our clubs. When it comes to true inclusion, everyday interactions with peers and leaders matter as much as organisational policies or formal processes.

The purpose of this assessment tool is to support conversations in Rotary clubs, districts, and zones around inclusive practice for LGBT+ communities. It’s about our internal club processes, how we welcome new members, how we set up local and international projects, and everything else that makes up our clubs.

Using this assessment tool is simple, start at the top and work through actioning each item with your club, district, or zone. The items in the assessment are suggestions, some like inclusive bathrooms, make a big impact and are trickier to implement and others we can do just by quickly hitting edit on a form. Every little thing you do adds up and just may make the next person feel more welcome in your club or project.

This assessment tool was created in collaboration with four leaders from the RYLA Oceania program: Emma Bell, Katey Halliday, Sarah Van Der Kley and Saskia Hunt. RYLA Oceania is an innovative program for RYLA Alumni across Australia, New Zealand, and the South Pacific Islands. The goal of RYLA Oceania is to develop a network of the brightest global citizens and leaders who are engaged, educated, and pushed to achieve measurable results both individually and as a group within their communities. Our greatest thanks go to the project team for their hard work and commitment in creating this resource.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion is complex, and Rotary is making some great steps forward. We have started to address gender, generational and cultural diversity. There are still many other aspects for us to discuss including LGBT+, disability, indigenous people, and others, and then also how these identities can intersect (for example, how someone can be both LGBT+ and disabled). I’m excited about our progress and encourage people to reach out to the LGBT Fellowship, leaders, and district membership committees to continue the discussion.

Grant Godino (he/him) is the charter president of Gateway Rotaract, a member of the Rotary Club of Traralgon (Australia) and President of the LGBT Fellowship in 2021-23. Grant identifies as a gay cisgender male and lives with his partner Lee (he/him) (also a Rotarian) in Gippsland, just outside of Melbourne.



Club Experience

What can my club do to be more inclusive?	Why is this important?	Where can my club find resources to support this?
<p>Review all club forms (for example, membership forms) to ensure those that collect gender identifying information are inclusive of non-binary options.</p>	<p>When data collection practices are inclusive of all diverse sex characteristics, gender identities and sexual orientations, it shows that your club welcomes, accepts and respects members who identify within LGBT+ communities.</p>	<p>Standard for Sex, Gender, Variations of Sex Characteristics and Sexual Orientation Variables</p> <p>Inclusive language guide</p>
<p>Review all club documents and communications to remove any gendered language, such as references to ‘Chairman’ and ‘ladies and gentlemen.’</p>	<p>The use of non-gendered language reflects the reality that gender is not a binary concept exclusive to male and female gender. By making these changes you are also removing stereotypes associated with certain roles which suggest that one gender is more powerful than another. Examples of this include: “chairperson” and “friends and family.”</p>	<p>Article on gendered language</p>
<p>Ensure the club meets at a venue which provides gender neutral bathroom facilities.</p>	<p>Providing restrooms that aren’t segregated by gender allows people to use the restroom that fits with their gender identity without being challenged or harassed for being in the “wrong restroom.” Members are also more likely to come if they know they have a place they can go to the toilet. An easy suggestion on this one is to have an “All gender” sign on the accessible bathrooms. This is also important because some gender diverse people plan their days around access to a toilet; having gender neutral bathrooms means it’s easier for them to attend.</p>	<p>Speak to the venue where your Rotary meetings are held to ask whether they have or can accommodate gender neutral bathrooms</p> <p>UUA article on Gender neutral Bathrooms and how organisations can support/ what signage to use.</p> <p>Transgender Equality Q&A on why bathroom access is so important</p>
<p>Actively engage guest speakers at Club meetings on LGBT+ topics.</p>	<p>Guest speakers can help champion the message that diversity is part of your Rotary club and allows for an opportunity for your club to learn about the LGBT+ experience in a safe space.</p>	<p>Contact the Rotary LGBT Fellowship to arrange for a guest speaker</p> <p>Connect with local community LGBT organisations</p>

Members

What can my club do to be more inclusive?	Why is this important?	Where can my club find resources to support this?
<p>Provide face to face and/or online LGBT+ training and awareness opportunities for members.</p>	<p>LGBT+ awareness training can assist your club in creating a safer, more welcoming environment for members of LGBT+ communities. Training can provide members with the opportunity to consider factors faced by LGBT+ communities which many heterosexual or cisgendered people take for granted. With more awareness and understanding, we can better ensure we do not unintentionally offend or exclude people from diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identities.</p>	<p>Speak to the Rotary LGBT Fellowship about training opportunities and resources they can provide</p> <p>‘You Can’t Ask That’ Series 1 Episode ‘Transgender’ available on iView in Australia</p> <p>Trans 101 website with free videos and booklet resources</p> <p>Speak to local LGBT organisations about inviting someone to be a guest speaker.</p>
<p>Provide bystander awareness training opportunities for members.</p>	<p>Taking positive bystander action to address behaviour which is not inclusive or which reflects a bias (even an unconscious one) is important because we all have a role to play in educating ourselves and others about what is and is not inclusive behaviour or language and should not expect the burden of this responsibility to rest solely with those from LGBT+ communities. From changing the subject to calling it out or reporting it, there is always something active that can be done to ensure we are creating an inclusive Rotary club environment and are not complicit in the actions of others.</p>	<p>Mediators Beyond Borders ‘Training Active Bystanders’ online workshop</p>
<p>Promote and make resources available to all members about how to be a LGBT+ ally, including information about inclusive language.</p>	<p>Having a clear understanding of what inclusive language and respectful behaviour looks like is essential to achieve a safe club environment and a diverse and inclusive membership.</p>	<p>Understanding the Differences: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex People</p> <p>Inclusive Language Guide: Respecting People of Intersex, Trans and Gender Diverse Experience</p>
<p>Actively promote awareness of the LGBT Fellowship to members, including the support for individuals available.</p>	<p>Club promotes LGBT+ inclusiveness and awareness within their club and lets other clubs also know their club is inclusive. This creates a more welcoming environment and individuals are able to feel more open within the club. Knowing that there are clubs out there that you can reach out to for that support/openness.</p>	<p>LGBT+ Rotarians and Friends Fellowship</p>

Service and Social

What can my club do to be more inclusive?	Why is this important?	Where can my club find resources to support this?
<p>Actively celebrate, promote and participate in LGBT+ events and days of significance, such as IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism, and Transphobia) and Pride March.</p>	<p>When a Rotary Club actively celebrates, promotes and participates in LGBT+ events and days of significance this demonstrates that a club is actively engaged with LGBT+ communities as an ally. This builds trust and a deeper understanding of diverse persons and what it means to be inclusive of different people and groups within their community. It is also a great opportunity to build membership and the shared experience develops relationships within the club and the wider community.</p>	<p>Information about significant LGBT+ days and events</p>
<p>Actively support LGBT+ charities and organisations through community service and/or fundraising initiatives.</p>	<p>Just like any area of focus in a Rotary Club, when members actively engage in the community by visibly participates in charities and organisations through service and fundraising initiatives, it results in a clear demonstration of commitment and support. It is also important to note that Rotary does already get involved in things like the Rotary AIDS Action Group and initiatives supporting LGBT+ mental health.</p>	<p>Do a Google search for “LGBT charity” to find local groups your club can support.</p> <p>Rotary Action Group for Family Health and AIDS Prevention</p> <p>Mental Health Needs of Non-Binary Youth - Australian Rotary Health</p>
<p>Ensure a senior leader within the club role models and demonstrates support for LGBT+ inclusion by attending/participating in LGBT+ events and initiatives (such as attending a Pride March).</p>	<p>Having an LGBT+ club champion is a great way to have a club member responsible for sharing opportunities and experiences available to everyone that demonstrate support for LGBT+ inclusion. Among many things, the LGBT+ club champion can organise representation at events and initiatives such as the Pride March, and organise guest speakers to further education members and inspire action and service within the club. This could be embedded into an existing role like membership or President.</p>	<p>Rotary LGBT Fellowship</p>

Image

What can my club do to be more inclusive?	Why is this important?	Where can my club find resources to support this?
<p>Display Rotary branding when attending/participating in LGBT+ events (eg. banners, t-shirts, etc. displaying the Rotary logo).</p>	<p>Having pictures of LGBT+ people or specific imagery of a LGBT+ inclusive symbol such as a rainbow heart on a website promotes a diverse club. By showing this at Rotary events it creates awareness to other clubs of what can be achieved and how diverse a club can be.</p>	<p>Rotary LGBT+ Fellowship - Friendship committee</p>
<p>Update the Club's website to expressly indicate the Club's support for the LGBT+ community.</p>	<p>By expressing on the club's website their support towards the LGBT+ community it shows a sign of interest and involvement. There could also be an inclusion of Rotary's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion statement on the website.</p>	<p>Tips to attract a diverse membership video</p>
<p>Promote the Club's involvement with LGBT+ community initiatives via the club's website and social media platforms.</p>	<p>By updating their website this promotes LGBT+ inclusiveness over all platforms. This shows the work and commitment the club is towards creating a LGBT+ community within their club. Thus promoting to other clubs the initiatives their club has put in that other clubs can also be involved in. This creates a sense of community.</p>	<p>Rotary Showcase</p> <p>Rotary LGBT+ Fellowship - Service committee</p>



Business and Operations

What can my club do to be more inclusive?	Why is this important?	Where can my club find resources to support this?
Develop a Club grievance policy, or review the existing policy, and ensure it expressly applies to incidents of bullying, harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity.	Having a code of conduct for the club sets behavioural expectations up front for new members and, if reviewed, provides an opportunity to have an open discussion with existing members about what behaviour is and is not ok within Rotary. Having these expectations formally documented provides club leaders with a point of reference should they need to address any problematic behaviour exhibited by a member.	The Rotary Code of Conduct is a great start and can be tailored to individual clubs Rotary LGBT+ Fellowship - Education committee
Review Club strategic documents to ensure LGBT+ inclusion is embedded in club goals.	Including LGBT+ inclusion within the Club's strategic document with clearly defined LGBT+ objectives/outcomes along with clearly defined actions plans or targets for the assessed year will ensure it remains a focus for the club. This will also ensure the sustainability of LGBT+ initiatives by accepting them as part of the Club's focus, independent of individual drivers	My Rotary Strategic Planning Guide
Ensure the club utilises LGBT+ inclusive businesses wherever possible in sourcing suppliers/ providers for club events and fundraisers.	Rotary has a great reputation for making positive connections with businesses and organisations in the community work we do. To maintain the integrity (one of Rotary's five core values) of being considered LGBT+ inclusive, clubs must also ensure that the businesses and organisations we support are LGBT+ inclusive as well so that inclusion efforts are not seen as tokenistic.	Rotary's Core Values



Created by the RYLA Oceania LGBT Fellowship Community Project Group

