

Our network is helping to make LGBT history at Acas

16 May 2019



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Lucie joined Acas in 2008. She worked on the helpline before moving on to individual conciliation. She's worked with the helpline training team for the last four years, helping with training updates on legal knowledge and complex questions for the helpline.

"Words mean more than what is set down on paper. It takes the human voice to infuse them with deeper meaning." Maya Angelou

Words written or spoken can create conflict and dispute but they can also resolve that conflict and work through a dispute to bring it to an end. Human voice is a powerful tool and that can be felt everywhere.

Giving the workforce a voice is an important part of a productive workforce.

Relaunched Acas LGBT+ staff network

But what does employee voice look like in practice? Acas has relaunched its LGBT+ staff network to coincide with 2019's LGBT history month. It was decided to broaden the network so it is now called LGBT+ & allies. It welcomes everyone to make a change and to contribute.

This is an important step in giving LGBT+ staff a chance to use their voice and to contribute their views, their understanding and their knowledge across the whole of Acas.

The network will work with Acas management teams to act as a critical friend, helping to shape and influence staff policies as well as providing feedback on external work that links to the network.

Alongside this the network will give ongoing practical guidance on how Acas can continue its work to be an inclusive workplace for all. Acas recognises the need to keep reviewing and updating in the journey for equality, diversity and inclusion.

The network provides an important space for LGBT+ staff to talk in confidence, to share and to offer support if and when needed for issues that might not be work related but are linked to LGBT+ issues.

Why the '+'? To be honest, we know that it isn't just lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans within the community. The community is representative of so much more diversity. We wanted the network to recognise the many sexual orientations but also the spectrum of gender of all staff, including intersex and those who are non-binary or gender-fluid.

Related Acas research and guidance

Knowledge is key to being able to make a difference. Acas has published:

- research on [supporting trans employees in the workplace](#)
- guidance on [gender reassignment discrimination](#)
- guidance on [sexual orientation discrimination](#)

Contributions from across our organisation

Acas staff are geographically dispersed with offices across the UK. We are making use of our organisation's Yammer site to post about and discuss LGBT history, giving staff from all areas of the UK a chance to contribute.

Taking a stand against LGBT+ discrimination, bullying and harassment is important for creating inclusive work environment. Even though IDAHOBIT (International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia, Intersexism and Transphobia) is just one day in the year, every day is a good day to discuss LGBT+ issues and address inequality.

Acas will be working to create inclusion networks for race, equality and disability as well as continuing its work with our carers staff network.