



TRAINING ON

BUSINESS ACTION to promote LGBTI RIGHTS



A COURSE ON ENSURING A GENDER LENS IN THE FUTURE OF BUSINESS

18 JANUARY 2024 | MUMBAI

Deadline for applications: 5 January

India took a significant step towards the decriminalisation of same-sex relationships in 2018¹. Even then, the legal recognition of other rights, such as marriage, adoption and inheritance, for the LGBTQI+ community remains limited. The lack of comprehensive anti-discrimination laws poses significant challenges for them. In addition, they have faced significant barriers to their inclusion in the workplace. This presents a challenge for companies committed to promoting greater equality, visibility, and respect for members of the LGBTI community.

Some of the challenges include:

- **Lack of Comprehensive Policies and Practices:** Many workplaces lack explicit anti-discrimination policies that protect LGBTQI+ individuals. This absence can lead to instances of discrimination, harassment, and exclusion.
- **Limited Awareness and Sensitization:** There's a lack of awareness and sensitivity among employees and employers about LGBTQI+ issues. This lack of understanding often leads to stereotypes, biases, and discrimination.
- **Fear of Coming Out:** Many LGBTQI+ individuals fear coming out at work due to concerns about discrimination, harassment, or negative repercussions in their career advancement opportunities.
- **Inclusive Benefits and Facilities:** While some companies are beginning to offer inclusive benefits, such as health insurance for same-sex partners, many workplaces still lack such inclusive facilities.
- **Leadership Support and Advocacy:** The lack of visible support from company leadership and management can hinder the creation of an inclusive environment. When leaders don't advocate for diversity and inclusion, it can send a message that it's not a priority.
- **Workplace Culture:** Some workplace cultures may not be inclusive or welcoming for LGBTQI+ individuals. This can create an uncomfortable environment, leading to decreased productivity and a lack of employee well-being.

¹ Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India

- **Legal Ambiguity:** Though there has been progress in legal aspects, the absence of comprehensive anti-discrimination laws covering sexual orientation and gender identity contributes to uncertainty about legal protections in workplaces.
- **Resistance Due to Cultural and Social Norms:** In some cases, cultural and societal norms can influence workplace dynamics, resulting in resistance to inclusive policies and practices.

Respect for and consideration of the rights of LGBTI individuals in the workplace is not just a matter of ethics or compliance. It is a strategic business decision that can benefit the overall performance and success of an organization. Creating an inclusive environment can help retain employees and attract top talent who value diversity and inclusivity. This diversity of perspectives and experiences can foster innovation and creativity, positively impacting the company's reputation. Moreover, businesses can play an important role in combating the marginalisation and discrimination faced by members of the LGBTI community.

Objectives:

UNDP's Business and Human Rights Team, in collaboration with Gender at Work Consulting, is offering a one-day workshop to enhance understanding of the intersections of LGBTI rights and the world of business among the business community.

The workshop will blend theory with practical guidance to enable companies to develop skills and strategies to better align their policies and practices with international standards. The [United Nations Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights](#) (UNGPs), [Gender Guidance on UNGPs](#) and the [Standards of Conduct for Business: Tackling Discrimination against Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, & Intersex People](#) will provide guidance and a framework of analysis for participants.

Who should attend:

- Business representatives
- Mid-level managers are welcome to join from all the functions and teams, however, we strongly encourage Human Resources, Diversity and Inclusion and Sustainability divisions/departments to join.

Participation cost:

Attendance to the training is free of charge. However, companies attending the training are responsible for their own travel costs, including flight tickets, on-ground transportation, and accommodation.

How to apply:

Please fill out the online application form: <https://forms.gle/fs5F64aR61fUTQcZ6>

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS: 5 January

Selected applicants will be notified by 10 January.

Tentative outline:

9:00-9:30	Registration
9.30-10.10.00	Welcome and Introduction
10:00- 11.00	<p>Legal and Normative Framework: This module will set the stage for participants to hone their understanding of LGBTI rights, especially related to business operations, using the guidance outlined in the UNGPs, UN LGBTI Business Standards, and existing legal framework in India.</p>
11.00-11.15	<i>Tea Break</i>
11.15- 12.30	<p>LGBTI inclusion in the Private Sector: Facilitated discussion to reflect on the following question:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the challenges that business is facing with regards to inclusion of LGBTQI+ individuals? • Why should a company care about LGBTI rights?
12.30- 13.30	Lunch
13.30-15.00	<p>Enhancing Knowledge and Embracing Diversity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using Inclusive Language and Terminology for LGBTQ+ Support: Common LGBTQ Terms and Pronouns Explained • Comprehensive Exploration of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation
15.00.-16.00	<p>Sensitivity and Respect: Do's and Don'ts When Interacting with the LGBTQ+ Community This session aims to sensitise, educate, and equip businesses with the tools and some guidelines for creating an environment where all employees, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, feel respected, valued, and included.</p>
16.00- 16.15	Tea Break
16.15-17.30	<p>Lessons on the Integration of Transgender People at Work: This module will highlight best practices and lessons from businesses taking direct action to integrate transgender people into the workplace, as well as guidance on gender-affirming practices.</p>
17.30-18.00	Wrap up and Feedback