AWEI SURVEY

AWEI EMPLOYEE SURVEY PARTICIPATION TOOLKIT

Why this consideration?

The AWEI Employee Survey is an annual, repeated, cross-sectional survey aimed at documenting the impact of LGBTQ+ inclusion initiatives on organisations' employees. The survey is collected by Pride in Diversity, through an online questionnaire issued to employees via their employer organisations.
It has been run since 2012, and participation had grown year on year; over the last few years almost 45,000 people participated, employed in almost 200 different organisations across a wide range of sectors and industries.

The data is extremely rich, and covers a number of areas related to diversity, inclusion, exclusion, culture, etc.

The survey data enables your organisation to gain insights into the attitudes and experiences of all your employees, plus the difference between employees with a diverse sexuality and/or gender, and those without. It will also give your organisation information about many areas specific to your LGBTQ+ employees. You can use your data to compare yourself against your sector or industry, and the total Australian participants.

CASE STUDY – WHY WE USE THIS DATA TO INFORM OUR STRATEGY

NIQ

As a consumer intelligence company, providing measurement and data analytics for other organisations, NielsenIQ understands the importance of data-led business planning.

NIQ created and launched their PRIDE pillar at the beginning of 2023, and took the decision to participate in the AWEI employee survey straight away. They acknowledged that it was very unlikely that they would ever include such a range of questions focusing specifically on LGBTQ+inclusion within their internal surveys, and that the use of the AWEI survey was the best way to gain the data they needed.

At the PRIDE launch, co-leads Ben Heyhorn and Jose Rodriguez spoke about why the organisation was introducing a focus on LGBTQ+ inclusion, citing statistics from the 2022 AWEI data to illustrate some of the experiences of employees in workplaces across Australia. Managing Director and Executive Sponsor, Megan Treston, then spoke about NielsenIQ's participation in the 2023 survey as a way to find a baseline; understanding where their organisation was currently at in order to be able to track their culture from the beginning. Megan described the survey as "a tool to make everyone's experience at work better".

The Pride group has representation from every level of the organisation from MD down, as well as HR and internal communications teams. All these people were involved in communicating the survey, both through formal channels, and also through their team meetings, etc. The messaging was clear; the organisation wanted to understand how ALL people feel about LGBTQ+ inclusion. This was for everyone to complete, not just LGBTQ+ employees, aligning with the advice that NielsenIQ gives to clients – "analytics that don't belong to everyone serve no one".

Data driven discussions within your organisation can support your LGBTQ+ inclusion leadership team to develop your organisation's inclusion strategies for employees of diverse gender and/or sexuality. Used in combination with your 2024 index results, you will be able to decide which areas should be focused on to create the greatest benefit for your organisation and your employees. It will also enable you to gain tangible support from your Executive Leadership team to drive your inclusion initiatives organisation-wide.

In addition, this data can be used within internal communications campaigns to raise awareness and visibility of the inclusion work that is being carried out within your organisation, and the impact it is having on your employees.

However, for the data to have this value, you must obtain a decent number of responses from your employees. Just like any survey, the higher the rate of employee participation, the more beneficial it is for your organisational knowledge and future planning.

There are a number of areas that employer organisations can be working in to maximise their response rate and the value of their data.

CASE STUDY – WHAT WE DO WITH THE DATA

Deloitte.

Deloitte Australia has participated annually in the AWEI survey since 2019. We have found that having survey results focused solely on LGBTI+ Inclusion has helped to inform our strategic priorities and the annual impact areas of our StandOUT network.

In 2023, we found our survey results data particularly useful to be able to demonstrate that our Sydney WorldPride and Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras Partnership and the associated activities had a significant positive impact on LGBTI+ Inclusion at Deloitte. We did this by showing large improvements from our 2022 scores across relevant metrics and strong scores on new questions for 2023.

This was important because the partnership was a significant investment and being able to demonstrate the impact of this on our people and culture, reinforced the decision to partner with SWP and SGLMG and we could then show a strong return on investment. Some examples of our results that we used for this purpose included:

- *93% believe that Deloitte is genuinely committed to LGBTI+ diversity & inclusion (new Q for 2023)*
- *98% of LGBTI+ respondents reported that inclusion initiatives at Deloitte have had a positive impact on how they felt about their own sexuality (up from 72% in 2022)*
- *84% report that active allies have positively impacted their sense of inclusion at Deloitte (up from 66% in 2022)*

From a broader perspective, Deloitte utilised all of the Pride in Diversity combined AWEI results to inform sections of our WorldPride Party with a Purpose Report. We shared our lessons learned from improving LGBTI+ Inclusion at Deloitte to avoid pink washing and used the AWEI survey results to support our findings. For example, the report states "Increasing numbers of Australian workers expect their workplace to take genuine action on LGBTI+ inclusion, especially in professional services. In our industry, 9 in 10 surveyed workers say that investment in LGBTI+ inclusion has positive impacts on organisational culture, and 7 in 10 say it's a reason they'd choose to join an organisation."

Therefore, participating in the AWEI survey not only benefits our organisation, by assisting with understanding strength areas and gaps and having data driven conversations, but it has wider impacts in helping us understand the true state of LGBTI+ Inclusion in the Australian corporate landscape.

What to think about

CASE STUDY: HOW WE GOT GREAT PARTICIPATION

Organon took part in the AWEI employee survey in 2023, and achieved a 100% participation rate! Here's how they did it.

As a relatively young organisation (less than two years old at the time of the survey), Organon is very focused and committed on building their people first culture. They aim to visibly live and demonstrate their values - including 'We All Belong' - to employees and external stakeholders.

Their strategy was to give employees a 2-week window to complete the survey, to create a sense of urgency. The survey was launched at an all-organisation 'town hall' meeting by Kate Berriman, the LGBTQ+ ERG lead. Kate described the survey and what the organisation wanted to do with the data (plan their inclusion work based on the priorities identified by their employees) and asked everyone to participate. The link to the survey was distributed via an all-organisation email shortly afterwards. 30% of employees completed the survey at this point.

After 1 week, Kate sent a reminder email to all employees, and Managing Director, Nirelle Tolstoshev, responded to the email (reply all), stating that she had completed the survey, restating the importance of the survey data, and encouraging all other employees to complete it.

Every time a survey update was received from Pride in Diversity, Kate forwarded this to all employees, reminding them that the feedback would be used to inform what inclusion initiatives the organisation should prioritise for the next year.

With 2 days to go, just over 70% of employees had completed the survey. At this point, all the Directors were asked to remind to their teams, and Kate and the other members of the LGBTQ+ inclusion committee continued to encourage participation from all their colleagues via informal channels.

At the end of the survey, Kate sent out a final all-organisation email to share the outstanding participation rate and say a massive "Thank you!" to all her colleagues.

What are some things to consider?

1. How long do you want to promote the survey internally? Slow and steady might work best for some organisations, while for others, a few weeks of dedicated focus could be the best approach
2. Do you have other surveys running? Try not to have your timings overlap to reduce survey fatigue
3. Are there any major events happening in your organisation that may impact people's ability to complete the survey, e.g., internal conferences, major product launches, public holidays and other 'shut-down' leave, etc.
4. What is your participation target? Perhaps for your other employee surveys you have a target for the % of your employees you want to engage; set a target for the AWEI or try and beat your participation rate from last year.
5. Who should promote the survey? More responses will be achieved if the survey is promoted by senior leaders plus an employee's direct manager.

6. How often should it be promoted? More success will be achieved if people are reminded to participate several times.
7. What communications platforms are available? What has the highest chance of being seen and having cut through. Do you need to use multiple platforms to reach different parts of the organisation? What informal channels can you use?
8. What is the messaging? What is most likely to make people want to participate? Do you need several different messages to motivate different people?

How to use the data

Once you have your data, you can use it in a number of ways.

If Pride in Diversity receives sufficient responses from your organisation's employees, you will be sent your data at summary as well as de-identified line-by-line data. You will also receive the summary data for all Australian respondents.

Firstly, you can compare your organisation's summary data to that of the total Australian data set, to see where you are better or worse, and identify any gaps to address within your LGBTQ+ inclusion strategy.

Secondly, if there are sufficient organisations participating in your sector and industry, you can request the summary data for these groups, and compare your organisations to others. Again, you can identify gaps to address within your LGBTQ+ inclusion strategy.

Thirdly, you can do a 'deep dive' into your line-by-line data, to see if there are any particular groups that have different experiences from the average, e.g., you may have lower levels of allyship in a particular business unit, or your LGBTQ+ women could have poorer levels of belongingness and outness than your LGBTQ+ men. Your trans employees may struggle to navigate your organisational policies and procedures. This analysis will allow you to design targeted initiatives to support these groups. Consider seeking assistance from a data analyst within your organisation; there are usually people with these skills in finance teams.

It should be noted that some populations will be small when multiple filters are applied, e.g., location, age, gender, gender experience, etc. Therefore, it is recommended that organisations consider their data sharing protocols, to maximise anonymity of respondents. To this end, participating organisations will be asked to nominate a senior HR contact to receive the results, and the survey data may not be distributed to anyone else by Pride Inclusion Programs employees. The nominated HR person should develop a plan of how to treat the data, in a similar way as would be done for any internal survey data.

As well as using your data for internal inclusion planning, it can also be used to raise awareness about the experiences of LGBTQ+ employees within your organisation, and the continuing place for the inclusion work that is being carried out within your organisation. You can also share success stories where you can see a measurable positive impact on your employees. Consider seeking assistance from your organisation's internal communications specialists.

CASE STUDY – WHAT WE DO WITH THE DATA

Australian Government

Services Australia

Services Australia is the largest federal government agency in Australia, employing more than 30,000 people. For an agency of this size, the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) survey data provides a way to better understand the attitudes, experiences and knowledge of their staff.

The agency started participating in the AWEI submission in 2015, followed by the survey in 2016. In the first year, only 1500 staff participated. The results showed low levels of visibility of LGBTI+ inclusion initiatives, active allyship and a limited understanding about why the work was being done. These insights were used to redesign, refine and refocus their inclusion work.

The agency has participated in the survey every year since and has seen the number of responses grow year-on-year to around 10%. The survey is promoted to staff for two weeks at the beginning of each year, to gauge how things have changed over the same period.

This approach has helped to track trends across some critical metrics such as staff support, visibility of inclusion work and awareness of training and educational resources. Seeing a strong annual increase in survey responses signals the work being driven by the agency's Inclusion & Diversity (I&D) Team is making a difference in workplaces across the organisation and more broadly the Australian Public Service.

Another important piece of work led by I&D, is the production of an annual highlights report. Sponsored by the Senior Executive LGBTI+ Ally, Nicky Bell, the report outlines key pieces of work being done collectively across the agency to increase visibility and support for LGBTI+ inclusion and areas of improvement and is sent to all senior executive leaders. In 2023 the results showed that:

- *88% of staff understand why we do this work*
- *88% of staff feel safe and included in their team.*

The number of LGBTI+ women who have a senior role model has more than doubled this year. This is a critical indicator of belongingness for this group.

The agency has also used the AWEI data to conduct 'deep dive' research into specific areas of interest such as LGBTI+ women and LGBTI+ people who are based regionally. The survey data has allowed them to develop targeted action plans for these groups and measure the outcomes. They've seen a significant improvement in the regional results, with staff now having similar awareness and allyship rates (both visibility of allies and being an ally themselves) as staff based in metro areas.

Providing this 'deep dive' research to the senior executives significantly increased their engagement in LGBTQ+ inclusion and the support they were able to provide.

Services Australia also use the AWEI data to prioritise attention on internal policies and processes. For example, when the Workplace Respect Team saw that many LGBTI+ people weren't reporting their negative experiences, they understood more could be done to encourage reporting.

The agency also uses the free text comments in the survey to provide insights into staff attitudes, including those who are supportive and those with different views. Inclusion messages are then communicated in a way that help people understand why the work is important to the agency.

For Janelle Graham, Assistant Director, Inclusion and Diversity, one of the most important improvements has been seeing the ally numbers increasing year on year and having the "satisfaction in seeing what we're doing is having an impact".

What are the next steps?

The AWEI Survey is open every year from beginning of November end of February.

To participate there are four easy steps

1. Complete the Expression Of Interest form
2. Get approval from your organisation to participate in the survey
3. Develop your internal communications plan
4. Send out your unique link to your employees

When you complete the EOI form to request your survey link, the Pride Inclusion Programs team will send you some preparatory documents for your organisation's review, including:

1. A PDF of the AWEI survey questions
2. A summary of the survey questions and the areas covered
3. ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs Research Data Security policy
4. ACON's Privacy Policy
5. ACON's Pride Inclusion Programs Data Cleansing Protocol
6. ACON's Research Ethics Review Committee approval letter
7. AWEI Survey Participation Toolkit

This will give you the information you need to develop a business case in order to get approval to participate, and liaise with your senior leadership team, internal communications team, and other key stakeholders, to develop your communications plan.

The unique URL for your organisation's employees to participate will be sent for distribution to your employees one week before the survey goes live!

During the live period you will be provided with updates on your participation rates; this will help you to decide how to further support your employees to participate. Throughout November and December these updates will be monthly, but from mid-January until the survey closes you will receive weekly updates. However, you can request an update at any time from your relationship manager, or if you are not a member of Pride in Diversity just email awei@acon.org.au

Should you have any questions, please speak to your Relationship Manager or contact awei@acon.org.au

CASE STUDY: HOW WE USE THE AWEI SURVEY

QIC has participated in the AWEI Employee Survey every year since 2020, and has grown their employee response rate to close to 30% of their Australian workforce. Here is how they did it.

Importantly, they started with a communications plan, utilising their formal channels. The Executive Sponsors sent out an all-organisation email to launch the survey, explaining why participation is important. QIC then promoted the survey for a period of 2 weeks, with a launch article sharing information on the company's intranet, and a reminder published prior to the survey close.

As well as the formal communications, all LGBTQ+ network committee members, ally group members, and Executive Sponsors were empowered with information to communicate via their informal channels and encouraged to do so. Information was shared in the MS Teams group, which provided members with appropriate talking points to then communicate to their colleagues, further encouraging participation. QIC attributes the successful growth in participation to this multi-pronged communication approach, including the use of the strong established LGBTQ+ network within the business.

QIC views meaningful data as a critical factor in improving diversity, equity and inclusion within the company. Prior to 2023, the survey data was analysed by team members within the LGBTQ+ committee, and key findings became an input into their strategy planning process. The value of this data was recognised by the business and in 2023 the committee secured support from the HR Reporting and Insights Team, who were able to do more in-depth analysis. A Power BI dashboard was built, comparing the data across the previous three years to analyse trends. This enabled QIC to better understand the impact that their inclusion initiatives have had on their employees over time.

In addition to informing the LGBTQ+ committee's strategic planning process, QIC has also been able to generate data-led news stories designed to raise awareness and visibility of the importance of the inclusion work being carried out within their organisation.

Appendices

1. Example business case for participation

<table>
<tr><td colspan="4">PARTICIPATION IN AUSTRALIA WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX (AWEI) EMPLOYEE SURVEY</td></tr>
<tr><td>Project Sponsor</td><td></td><td>Project Manager</td><td></td></tr>
<tr><td>Contribution to organisation</td><td colspan="3">Two of our core values are [Inclusivity] and [Mutual respect], however we have very little visibility of the experiences of some specific groups of employees, who may be part of populations who have traditionally experienced exclusion and negative behaviours.

In 2023, Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) Employee Survey data revealed that a staggering 58% of Australian employees who identify as having a diverse sexual orientation do not feel comfortable being open to everyone at work, and 16% feel they must conceal their identities entirely. The data is equally concerning for employees who identify with a diverse gender identity, with 64% not feeling comfortable being open to everyone at work, and 22% concealing their identity altogether.

More concerningly, 11% of employees with a diverse sexuality have been the target of unwanted jokes, innuendo, or negative commentary because of their sexuality, in their workplace in the last 12 month; 21% of employees with a diverse gender have experienced these workplace incivility behaviours targeting their gender, in their workplace in the last 12 months. Close to 70% of these incidents are unreported. LGBTQ+ employees experience poorer health and wellbeing outcomes than their non-LGBTQ+ counterparts across the board, and their productivity and engagement is reduced if they are not comfortable being out or open in their workplace.

The AWEI Employee Survey covers a large number of areas related to diversity, inclusion, exclusion, culture, etc., which we do not cover in our internal engagement or D&I surveys. It also collects more data around different populations within the LGBTQ+ umbrella that we are able to collect. Due to the lack of current internal data, we have very little visibility of the experiences of our LGBTQ+ employees or the impact of our inclusion initiatives on non-LGBTQ+ employees, to enable us to ensure our organisation is inclusive and our initiatives are visible and impactful.

It is recommended that we participate in the AWEI Employee Survey in order to be able to measure this.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Options considered</td><td colspan="3">Within our internal HR Management Systems, including detailed data collection around LGBTQ+ populations including sex recorded at birth, gender (including non-binary options), and sexual orientation, plus other diversity groups, to enable us to compare engagement, productivity, rates of promotion, etc. for different populations. Plus adding some specific questions around navigability of internal processes for people who have traditionally found these to be a barrier. Feedback has been received from the HR team that this would be problematic since the same data is collected globally, and legal requirements in different markets prohibit this. Surveys would need to be developed on an individual region basis.

It was also advised that generally we get low disclosure of diversity information, since many employees are worried that it may be used negatively.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Benefits</td><td colspan="3">• The AWEI survey is run by an external organisation, and therefore has an extra level of anonymity attached.
• Pride in Diversity is the national subject matter expert in LGBTQ+ workplace inclusion, and understand what themes are important.
• Participation in the national survey would allow us to benchmark our organisation against other organisations, both nationally and within our industry.</td></tr>
<tr><td>Timescale</td><td colspan="3">• The AWEI survey period is from beginning of November – end February.
• It is proposed we use a 3 week window in November, prior to National conference and end-of-year shut down.
• The survey will be launched and promoted in an intense campaign during this 3 week window.
• Results will be received and analysed in May, and reported to the SLT in June SLT meeting</td></tr>
</table>

Costs	• Participation in the survey is free. • We require approximately 0.5 days support from the HR team, to develop and facilitate a data security plan. • We require approximately 0.5 days from the Internal Communications team, to develop and facilitate a communication plan. • We require approximately 2 days from the Data Analytics team, to help analyse and report on the data.
Risks	• There is a risk that participation may attract negative feedback from some employees. The comms campaign will align it with our organisation values and be supported from the senior leadership team. However, there is a greater of not understanding the attitudes of those who are against our values. • There is a risk of having confidential employee data be surveyed by a 3rd party. Pride in Diversity Research Data Security Policy, Privacy Policy, and Data Cleansing Protocol have been provided. • There is a risk of the data being visible internally. The results data will be supplied only to the Head of HR by Pride in Diversity. An internal data security plan will be developed to ensure non-identifiability is maintained when analysis is conducted and reporting occurs.

2. Example communications plan

Date	Type	Audience	Purpose	Sender	Notes	Status
4-Dec	Teams Call	Directors	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum FEEDBACK REQUESTED: Lorem ipsum	Executive sponsor	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lorem, porttitor id dolor eget, rutrum pretium odio. In hac habitasse platea dictumst.	Completed
26-Jan	Townhall briefing	Directors, People Leaders, All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Network Lead	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Approved
26-Jan	Email #1	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum FEEDBACK REQUESTED: Lorem ipsum	MD	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lorem, porttitor id dolor eget, rutrum pretium odio. In hac habitasse platea dictumst.	Approved
26-Jan	Yammer Post #1	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Executive sponsor	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lorem, porttitor id dolor eget, rutrum pretium odio.	Approved
26-Jan	Teams Post #1	Pride ERG	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Network Lead	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Approved
1-Feb	Email #2	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum	Network Lead	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lorem,	Drafted

			ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum		porttitor id dolor eget, rutrum pretium odio.	
1-Feb	Email #2 response	All Employees	ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	MD	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lore	Drafted
1-Feb	Yammer Post #2	All Employees	ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Executive sponsor	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lore	Drafted
1-Feb	Yammer Post #2 Response	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum	Pride ERG		
6-Feb	Email #3	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Network Lead	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lorem, porttitor id dolor eget, rutrum pretium odio. In hac habitasse platea dictumst.	Drafted
6-Feb	Email #3 response	Directors	ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Individual teams	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lore	Drafted
6-Feb	Yammer Post #3	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Executive sponsor	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Drafted
6-Feb	Yammer Post #3 Response	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum	Pride ERG		
9-Feb	Email #4	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Network Lead	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lorem, porttitor id dolor eget, rutrum pretium odio. In hac habitasse platea dictumst.	Drafted
9-Feb	Yammer Post #3	All Employees	INFORM: Lorem ipsum ACTION REQUIRED: Lorem ipsum	Executive sponsor	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit.	Drafted
16-Feb	Email #5	All Employees	INFORM: Responses and thanks	MD	Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Vestibulum augue lore	Drafted

3. Example email communication – you can edit and use within your organisation

INVITATION TO HAVE YOUR SAY IN REGARD TO OUR LGBTQ+ INCLUSION WORK

Dear **<name>**,

This year we are participating in the Australian Workplace Equality Index (AWEI) Employee Survey. This is a national survey run by Pride in Diversity, and covers a number of areas related to diversity, inclusion, exclusion, culture, etc., with a particular focus on inclusion of LGBTQ+ employees. This is only one area of our diversity & inclusion work, and while the survey focuses specifically on LGBTQ+ inclusion, it does not by any means lessen our focus in other areas of diversity practice.

The AWEI survey data enables our organisation to gain insights into the knowledge levels and experiences of all our employees. It will also provide us with essential information about many areas specific to LGBTQ+ employees, allowing us to develop inclusion plans and initiatives which prioritise the needs of our LGBTQ+ employees and their allies.

It provides a means by which you can have your say!

Regardless of how you personally identify, we encourage all our employees to participate in this survey. While the survey data will identify the name of our organisation, please note that individual employees cannot be identified by either Pride in Diversity or by ourselves (i.e., participation is completely anonymous). Your feedback will enable us to, not only gauge the visibility and impact of our LGBTQ+ inclusion initiatives, but it will also enable us to understand the views of those who do not identity as LGBTQ+, as well as the experiences of those who are of diverse sexuality and/or gender.

Should you have any questions, please contact: **[insert contact name here]**

The survey will close **[insert date here]** (CHANGE IF YOU WANT TO CREATE A SPECIFIC WINDOW FOR YOUR EMPLOYEES)

To participate in the survey, please click here: [insert URL here]