

Talking Inclusion With - Season 1, Episode 1: Supporting LGBTQ+ Colleagues

Join Stephanie Hirst and guests Theresa Farrenson from Aon and Marianne Cowie Strategic Execution Manager from Zurich, and our very own Matheus Carvalho, Senior Inclusion & Diversity Consultant at Inclusive Employers, as we get an insight into their experiences of LGBTQ+ stereotypes in the workplace, LGBTQ+ networks and talk about the use of pronouns.

Host: Stephanie Hurst

Guests:

- Teresa Farrington, Customer Experience and Integration Leader, Aon (Secretary of the LGBT Insurance Network)
- Marianne Cowie, Strategic Execution Manager at Zurich and Chair of Zurich Pride UK
- Matheus Carvalho, Senior Inclusion and Diversity Consultant, Inclusive Employers

Introduction

Stephanie: A very warm welcome to the first ever Inclusive Employers Podcast, Talking Inclusion With. Hi, I'm Stephanie Hurst and I'm really happy and chuffed to have been invited to host this very first podcast. As we near the end of LGBT History Month, we're going to be talking about LGBTQ+ with our fabulous guests today: Teresa Farrington, who's Customer Experience and Integration Leader at Aon, who is also Secretary of the LGBT Insurance Network, and Marianne Cowie, Strategic Execution Manager at Zurich and Chair of Zurich Pride UK. Hello, Teresa and Marianne, welcome to our first podcast.

Teresa & Marianne: Hello.

Stephanie: And we also have our very own Matheus Carvalho, who's Senior Inclusion and Diversity Consultant. Hi, Matt.

Matheus: Hello.

Stephanie: I know with Inclusive Employers, lots of questions get asked about the use of pronouns and how to support LGBTQ+ employees. So today on our first podcast, we're gonna talk just that - how best to support LGBTQ+ colleagues in the workplace. We're also gonna be talking about stereotypes in the workplace and dress codes and all sorts of stuff like that, and coming out at work and the journey, because it can be a huge weight on people's minds. I've always thought that if you're your true self at work, you're a better person at work, you're more creative, you're better at your job, you're not having those thoughts weighing down on your mind all the time that you're not being your true self because that's using a real amount of your brain power within the workplace as well.

Personal experiences: Being out at work

Stephanie: I guess my first questions today to Teresa and Marianne - Teresa, have you ever been treated differently at work as a member of the LGBTQ+ community?

Teresa: I don't believe I have, although I would also caveat that by saying you don't know what's being said about you when you're not in the room. So as far as I'm aware, I've had no different treatment. What I would also say though, to counterpoint that somewhat

negative place to start, is I do think it's given me a lot more opportunities than I might otherwise have had. So I definitely think that there's no problem in the workplace with standing out and making yourself stand out and being noticed by senior people.

Stephanie: Marianne, I guess the same question to you as well. Have you ever found that you've been treated differently at work because of being a member of the LGBTQ+ community?

Marianne: Fortunately, quite a similar story, actually. I think it's certainly consciously, no issues, no run-ins with anybody, probably much more likely to have a comment about being a woman in a particularly male-dominated industry than actually being a member of the LGBTQ+ community. And, yeah, it has been probably something that's opened some doors and some conversations and connections beyond maybe what other people get to experience and take part in. So, no, all been quite positive, actually.

The coming out journey

Stephanie: Have you both been out at work from your very first foray into the world of work or was it something that you both did when you felt comfortable that "I can now be my true self"? Because I guess finding ourselves in life is a journey itself, isn't it, Marianne?

Marianne: Definitely. So I have been out ever since I started, which was just over five years ago and I came in on the graduate scheme at Zurich. So I was quite determined, I suppose - pressure came from myself to be out and to not let it become a big thing for myself. I thought, actually, if I just filter this into daily conversation from the get-go, I can avoid it having to be a big announcement, like I'd made it at school or at uni or to my family. So I was like, right, let's try and tackle this in a slightly different way. But we always say, it's very much a journey of, I suppose, whenever you meet somebody new, it is that same conversation again. But when you put yourself in a bit of a platform for being in the network or chairing the network, you also sometimes have that legwork done for you and you have to come out again and again, which is quite nice.

Stephanie: Yeah, that's the thing, isn't it, Teresa? I guess for some people it's the coming out again and again and again. And that can be very tiring, can't it?

Teresa: Yeah, I mean, I would say not only do you have to come out again and again and again, it's always those micro decisions about is this the right time to have this conversation or to drop the bomb, if you will. Is this a safe place? Should I tell my client? Because although my company might be good, my client might have a different opinion and you don't want to apply any stresses to that relationship, et cetera, et cetera. So you do have to constantly make those decisions. But then again, I think that it makes the LGBTQ+ community a lot better at risk management because we're doing it on a micro basis day-to-day.

I said recently, but now when I count the years, it's probably more than five on the journey of coming out as non-binary. So that's a whole different flavour of coming out. At least when I came out in my late teens as a lesbian, everybody knew what one of those was. And therefore, it does shortcut the conversation. They may not have met one before, but it was at least a term that was fairly familiar to people. Whereas non-binary is - you often get the "wait now" type thing, which you then have to embark on perhaps a more protracted conversation about describing what non-binary is, and then where you sit within that.

Education and self-advocacy

Stephanie: I always think that it's a choice to be uneducated, isn't it? Because it's not as if we're living in the 1980s anymore or anything like that, or early 90s. We've got this thing called the internet, which is brilliant because there's so much information. And if you're working with someone within the workplace who identifies as non-binary, it's really easy for you to go and look that up and educate yourself, isn't it?

Teresa: Yes. I would also say there's so much going on, though, in this life of the internet, that picking and choosing those nuggets that you choose to educate yourself with can be tough, I guess. But you're right, I think. And I suppose since the whole Black Lives Matter thing that kicked off, one of the key points that I think we've all kind of leveraged a bit is that whole thing - it's not my job to educate you. You should go and take some of that

responsibility yourself. And I've certainly kind of used that expression or that mindset when talking to others more recently.

Stephanie: Yeah, because there's a lot of trusted sources out there as well, and reputable sources where you can get information from. You're not just dropping on some random YouTube channel or something like that. There's great education out there for all areas of the LGBTQ+ spectrum. And I think that's really vital, and I guess, as you mentioned, which is coming out of the Black Lives Matter thing, which is really important.

Advice for supporting LGBTQ+ colleagues

Stephanie: Matt, what advice would you give to employers to support their LGBTQ+ colleagues, whether they choose to come out or not?

Matheus: So I'm going to start by linking back to something that Teresa said around safe spaces, and Marianne, you alluded to it as well. I'll link it back to my own journey in which when I started in the workplace, a couple of jobs ago, a lifetime ago now, I wasn't out when I started in the workplace. And I was also waiting for that moment in which, okay, when can I, when should I drop in the gender of my partner? - something that for, I guess, for most straight people, they don't have to think twice before they say it.

And something now that has helped - that experience has helped me in the conversations I have with members now, in the sense that how can you ensure that people understand that it's a safe space from day one? So from the moment that they joined the organisation, is there any LGBTQ+ representation that they can see whether when they joined the company on their website or when they're going for an interview? But also if you're putting those messages out there, obviously you do need to be making that - you do need to be doing your homework as an organisation to be ensuring that those safe spaces that you're talking about are really, really there.

So we talk a lot about psychological safety with our members. So that is about having that space where people feel like they can have a voice. They're not going to be discriminated against. They're not going to be dismissed because of their identity. And a lot of times, there's so many ways - and I think we're going to be discussing this later on - how we

create those spaces. But sometimes it comes down to having clear policies around what's acceptable and what's not acceptable in this workplace and making sure people understand those policies.

Also, tackling banter - how can a space be safe for an LGBTQ+ employee if there are jokes being made at the expense of their and other colleagues' identity or sexual orientation?

When I talk about LGBTQ+ History Month, it's interesting to see that a lot of our role models in the community, they have not been, or they've just been not given the space that they should have had. And even for, I guess, a lot of LGBTQ+ people out there, it's sometimes hard to think of role models if you're not tuned into the history because those stories have not been highlighted the way they should. So how can companies be doing the same in terms of giving space to their LGBTQ+ not only employees, but also the LGBTQ+ contribution to their businesses. So it could be from a consumer perspective, service perspective, and making sure those are highlighted. And that helps create a safe space in which we are thinking for different lenses that are not just what we'd call heteronormative lenses.

The impact of workplace comments

Stephanie: Yeah, just one single comment in a meeting can become a whole painful experience, can't it, for people, and force you then not to be yourself within the workplace. If you're even starting to take those first tentative steps to becoming yourself and becoming out, just one comment in a meeting can force you straight back into retreating and not being your true self, Marianne.

Marianne: Definitely. I mean, it can undermine all the good work that so many people are doing. You know, you see it on Twitter, there are thousands and thousands of people that are very positive and very welcoming, but it's always the loud sort of hatred that comes through above it all. And that's quite heartbreaking to see.

And just to pick up on Matt's point there about the safe space, because I think everyone's story is really different. I always like to tell mine because it is positive to give people that

encouragement that, the chances are it is going to be okay. But I think it'd be naive to think that that's the case for everybody. And in some ways, I'm very aware that I tick a lot of the very traditional sort of boxes in terms of what people expect to see in our financial services industry. You know, I'm middle class, I suppose, palatable for people in that sort of white kind of way. And actually, I don't really push the boundaries of that. So people can find it a bit easier to accept that, oh, yeah, oh, she's a lesbian. Okay, that's all right. But actually, if you start looking at it from different lenses of intersectionality, that becomes a much harder challenge, I think, for businesses and colleagues within them to maybe accept and to start having that conversation.

Creating safe spaces

Stephanie: So we've touched on safe spaces several times, I guess, Teresa, how do we go about in the workplace creating those safe spaces?

Teresa: Well, it's probably leading onto one of your other topics, but I think the LGBT networks are quite vital in that because they create platforms for a voice and visibility. And as Matheus said, putting the policies in place that underpins that, so you're basically drawing lines about what's acceptable behaviour and not, and the consequences of poor behaviour, to examining the dress policies. You know, there are a ton of different things that organisations can do, some of which are low hanging fruit and some of which take a bit more grounding in and evolution. So I suppose it's a bit of a well-used expression, but it's a journey.

Dress codes and workplace stereotypes

Stephanie: It's interesting you mentioned the stereotypes in how you dress in the workplace. What has been your experience of that?

Teresa: We work in a square mile, Marianne and I, and so it's very much the suited and booted type dress code. And for anybody to step outside of that seems sometimes to be a bit of a risk, much less anybody who wants to be in non-gender normative garments.

Although I do remember one of my male chums saying that he feels like he should be able to go into Lloyds in a frock because it was a particularly hot summer that year. And he really wanted to challenge some of those stereotypes, but he never actually found the opportunity or the courage to do that.

But it's that uniform of the city sometimes, which I think can be problematic because it does expect you to be in formal office wear, which can be - even having non-natural hair colour, you know, like if you wanted to come in with bright pink hair, I think you'd have problems. So it's just a bit more staid, I guess. But having said that, I do think it's improving. I've seen lots of improvements over the last few years.

Stephanie: That being, as we're working virtually these days, people are dressing a little more comfortably even on Zoom these days. Do you think that's going to change things within the workplace a little bit?

Teresa: I would like to think so. Yeah, definitely. I am quite intrigued to see what will change. So much has changed because of lockdown that I think is positive. Not least things like this, for example, which open up what might formerly have been a session in a London office or a Manchester office or whatever, and only the people local to that office would have had the opportunity to join. Because we're doing things a lot more virtually, we're seeing a lot more participation from around the country, which I think opens up opportunities for people to see, meet, to hear from peers and their community in a way that they hadn't previously been able to. So I think there's lots of opportunities for how lockdown might positively improve workplace practices.

Marianne: And I think we saw quite a few initiatives coming in that help that before lockdown as well. We have "Dress for Your Day" at Zurich and I know a few other companies have adopted similar sort of practices because it treats people like grown-ups. Actually, if you're coming into the office to work on a project and you've got your head in a board paper all day, then actually you should be empowered to decide what outfit best fits you for that day. And actually, if you're then going out to see brokers that expect a certain level of professionalism, you can dial it up, you can dial it down, you can add a bit of your own sense of personality. And that, I think, is just a great step in direction of actually who decides what professional is. You know, are we still very archaic in that sort of what's successful and what's not. And actually people's hair color, accessories and a bit of

gender non-conforming dress probably isn't that actually that extreme in pushing that boundary, I think.

The importance of pronouns

Stephanie: Now let's talk about pronouns because right now in 2021, how important are the use of personal pronouns in the workplace? We're seeing, especially where I work, we're seeing lots of people who are having he/him, she/her, them/they, on the bottom of their email. And this just shows how far we've come in quite a lengthy journey, actually, in recent times. I guess, Matt, what do you find to be the key questions employees have around pronouns? And what is the key advice of Inclusive Employers on this?

Matheus: I think one of the questions that we get from organisations is why to begin with. Okay, why to start this conversation on pronouns and not just expecting that people understand it and understand the importance, but also give it that context. And the other element is how. So what organisations also ask us is how to do it.

So, well, first of all, why is it important? I think it shows that the organisation respects and that the organisation understands and is providing and is working towards providing a safe space to all colleagues in the workplace. And also it encourages people not to make assumptions about people's gender identity and about people's pronouns. So a lot of the conversations that we have here at Inclusive Employers as well is around think before you speak, think before you act. And I think this encourages people to take that step back and just not take it for granted that they are making an assumption and that assumption is correct about a person's gender identity and their pronouns.

And the other question we get is how to do it. So one of them that you mentioned, Stephanie, I think is around the email signatures. So having people's pronouns right next to their name in their email signature, because that acts as a constant reminder of the conversation and it also sends a message to people that this is an organisation in which we care about this and which we are taking steps to provide a safe space.

Other ways that you can do it also is at the beginning of meetings or training sessions. So say when people go around the room introducing themselves if they want to, and I think

whoever is leading that meeting can set the example and start. So I could start the meeting by saying, my name is Matheus, my pronouns are he and him.

We also use it on presentation templates. So say if you have your name, you can have your pronouns next to it. Also on Zoom or Teams calls, so add your pronouns right next to your name. And again, that helps start a conversation, but it also ensures that we are providing a safe space where people do not have to make assumptions about other people's pronouns and gender identity.

Personal experiences with pronouns

Stephanie: We touched on assumptions earlier as well, because assumptions can be something that really weigh heavy on people within the workplace. I mean, Teresa, and Marianne, do you use pronouns in your emails? Do you think it's important for everyone to do the same as well?

Marianne: Yes, yeah, I do, actually. And so do quite a few people at Zurich, which is great to see. And I think it's also useful, we talk about it a lot in the sense of normalizing it, particularly for the trans and non-binary community. But it can also just be incredibly helpful if you work in a company that's global, because sometimes you're not familiar with names in a certain language. So it gives you a bit of a heads up of how that person identifies. It's really useful for cis people who have names that are gender neutral, just to help give that extra bit of information. So it works in a really multifaceted way.

But I think at the heart of it is just trying to normalise it. I certainly try and start a lot of my Pride events now by introducing myself and then saying what my pronouns are. And the more we can make that as normal as saying, "and this is my job," and all the usual things we put in our little brief 30 second intro, the better. I guess the challenge for me is now to try and take that out of just that Pride context of events where I feel very comfortable and I know that the audience is very receptive to that. And then maybe try doing it in some more non-Pride related events and meetings would be the next step for me, I think.

Generational changes

Stephanie: And Teresa, I'm guessing as generations evolve within the workplace, because there are people that are probably coming up to retirement and thinking, well, this is all a little bit strange. I've never experienced anything like this before. What's going on? I've been in the workplace for 40 years. What's all this? But it's all about educating, isn't it, and educating people, the older generation, which may have another 10 years left in the workplace or five years or whatever. But next generation is coming through now and Gen Z and the ones behind them as well, and the ones that are born today. This will be normalized, won't it, Teresa?

Teresa: Well, I would hope so. I mean, like Marianne, I definitely put the pronouns in the footer of my email signature block and a small explanatory note as to why. One thing that I would caution though, sometimes we just think we put all of the responsibility on the upcoming generation to change the world. And to be fair, if they're new into the workplace, what we tend to do is conform rather than want to change things because we're entering this scary new world where people are going to pay for our bed and board and whatnot. And therefore, surely we need to make them happy and not rock the boat. So I do think there's a tension of that expectation versus the reality of how much the next generation will come in and change stuff.

However, as you suggested, Gen Z and beyond are so much more comfortable with having gender non-conforming, non-conformity around them and all these sexuality variations from heterosexual to pansexual and everything in between, and asexual, of course. So I think those kind of conversations seem to be happening a lot more earlier in people's, kids' evolution, and they seem to be meeting a lot more of those people in the playground or the parents of their friends, et cetera. So I am really hopeful that this will become a lot more normal and things will change. If not, because we are sort of being challenged as those employers to create environments in which these people will thrive. So if they're not demanding it, we're thinking they're going to, and therefore we're trying to change things. So that's good.

And as to some of our older colleagues who are, your boomers and generation Xs like myself - I'm still having really engaging conversations with people who are curious about

these things. And yes, it is new and some of the questions they ask make you raise your eyebrows sometimes. But I think this is all just part of dealing with this multi-generational environment that is the workplace.

Personal journey: Non-binary identity

Stephanie: It's interesting you mentioned us like generation X and boomers and stuff and the education. I mean, for you on the non-binary spectrum, how has your journey been in kind of educating people in and outside of the workplace?

Teresa: Well, first I had to educate myself because non-binary was not a term that was around when I was a kid. I mean, as you said, you've been in the workplace for about five years. I did the maths - 30 for me, right? So it was a highly different world. And as I said earlier, lots of terms didn't really exist or were whispered about or spoken about in inflammatory press articles, mostly thinking about the trans community and people transitioning.

So when these terms popped up on my radar, I suddenly, firstly, I was interested in them. And then secondly, I was like, oh, hold on, these actually describe me. And that's quite a scary journey to try and reimagine yourself with these new terms and to take that leap to explore whether the words that you've been using to describe yourself aren't actually as well fitting as new terms are.

And so once I took that educational step of trying to explore and discover whether these terms fit, then sharing that with other people and that empathy of, I know it's confusing because I mess it up sometimes. So if I mess it up, I've got huge sympathy for other people who mess it up. Maybe a softer conversation that can be had with people that is like, yes, it is new. We're all on this journey. Yeah, especially on the gender variant, gender non-normative side of things. It is a whole new world that, lots of us, there's terms popping up hither and thither, I can't keep up with them all, so I can't expect everybody else to.

And I think the only thing that we can do is keep an open mind, be respectful, and just treat people at face value. If they say they are what they say they are, go with it.

LGBTQ+ networks

Stephanie: Now let's chat about networks. I know Teresa and Marianne have both been actively involved in setting up networks, both at Aon and at Zurich. I mean, can you tell us briefly about them? And Marianne, why you chose to set up the network at Zurich?

Marianne: So I was quite fortunate that I didn't have to set mine up. I luckily inherited an already fully functioning network. But what we did do when I took over is take a bit of a step back and work out whether we wanted to rebrand. So in some ways, it sort of felt like a bit of a fresh start for the network. And we rebranded to Pride just because it was that little bit easier for everybody to understand exactly what it was about and to get everybody on board, I suppose.

I suppose why I got involved was mostly down to Lindsay and Mickey and other people on the network as was giving me that confidence and saying, actually, do you know what? You'd be a really good role model here. You'd be a great chair of this network and giving you that sort of sense of belief to go, do you know what, actually I am really passionate about this. I do want to make this company a better place to work. I've got lots of opinions and actually to have somewhere to channel them productively was a real opportunity.

So I suppose that was a thank you to them for encouraging me to take that step up and lead because it gave me that outlet, I suppose, to try and make some change. I think particularly when you've had a very positive experience and I suppose quite fortunate in that, I still got all my friends and family and I've not got a particularly difficult story of coming out. It felt like I had a bit of a responsibility to try and make that happen for as many others as possible, just to lay those foundations so that the new grads or the apprentices or work experience students or just people coming from another company join and know that they're welcome and that they're safe. And I think that is really powerful. I mean, yes, it's great if you can change policies and healthcare and practices along the way, but fundamentally, if you can change how that one person feels, to me, that was pretty much everything.

Stephanie: And I guess the same question to you, Teresa, as well, you know, setting up these networks and you're the secretary of the LGBT Insurance Network as well, aren't you?

Teresa: Yeah, although I have recently stepped down from that role to let others step up and take leadership roles. Marianne's explained it very well around how LGBT networks can work within organisations. I think the thing about sometimes working with organisations such as the LGBT Insurance Network Link is that it's cross-organisational. Part of that is the goal of trying to make the entire sector or industry be a lot more welcoming. And the power also that gives you is to try and set up a bit of friendly competition between all of the different organisations. So you can be saying, that company's doing it, why aren't we? And that can be quite powerful in this competitive environment that we're in.

But also it allows us at Link to showcase the good behaviours and the good examples that some organisations are doing. And that again raises their profile and amplifies the good things that, for example, Zurich are doing. And again, it creates a wider network for people to move around in so that they know that not only in their organisation is it safe, but you can chat across organisations just on a social, going for those monthly drinks and just that social thing about sharing common experience across different organisations can be very powerful.

Again, it gives you the ability to showcase, amplify, meet with people and network. And basically it's an amplification of what the LGBT networks in different organisations, the internal networks are doing.

What makes networks successful

Stephanie: Matt, have you got any examples of successful networks? And I guess mainly actually why they've been so successful.

Matheus: Yeah, I've got lots of examples of networks that have been successful and the actions that they have taken. But also, I think another piece here is the approach that the organisations have taken to the networks to ensure they are successful.

Two things that Teresa and Marianne said that really resonated with me. Marianne said about changing the way that people feel. I think one of the beauties of an employee network is that sometimes, you will make change to people's lives and you will not even know about it. You know, people will change their way of thinking or you will make an individual's experience all that much better. And sometimes you may not even hear about it, but just the fact that you are there as a network, that helps create that safe space, that helps send that positive message. And it makes a whole lot of difference to people at the individual level.

Now, on why networks are successful, I think that the organisations that I see doing really, really well are the ones that treat networks as business critical. And it's not just a nice thing to do. So when we say it's business critical, it's essential to the way the business operates. It's essential to creating a safe space. And also managers give employees the time necessary to take part in network activities.

I also think networks that succeed really, really well, they are given tools to succeed. So it's also organisations going, okay, so here's our strategy. Here's what we're aiming to achieve with diversity and inclusion. How can you take part in that? Here are the tools to help you succeed as a network. So it's about channeling that passion into strategy as well. So you have your socials, which are such an important part of a network, but then you're also adding, you're maybe thinking of policies, you're maybe thinking of the way we do things at the organisation and creating a dialogue between the network and key stakeholders in the organisation. I think that really helps elevate a network and give them the platform to succeed as well.

And I also think from networks that are really successful, they keep an ear to the ground in terms of what is important to the LGBTQ+ community. So say for example, last year, are we supporting the trans community amidst this really tough year where transphobic discourse was coming right, left and center? Are we supporting the LGBTQ+ community through COVID and how that has impacted different people in the community? So again, it's keeping that dialogue alive rather than starting to be stifled in terms of what we want to achieve and what we want to do and keeping near to the ground to what's current and what's relevant and also keeping a close relationship with the organisation to ensure that we are achieving the inclusion objectives of the organisation.

Advice for small businesses

Stephanie: It got me thinking about the fact that we're speaking to people here, especially Zurich, Marianne, is it something like 54,000 employees within the business, something like that?

Marianne: On a global scale, yeah.

Stephanie: But what about those small businesses? What advice do you have if you're a small business owner and a member of staff comes out or a new starter is on the LGBTQ+ spectrum? Where do you start? It's a new experience for the management structure there and they're in fear of getting things wrong. What advice would you have for them?

Marianne: I think that's where organisations like Link come into their own, really, because you've got that wider support framework there. You know, you've got a real vast spectrum of people and experiences along all manner of where they are in that setting up of LGBT network versus not having any LGBT employees. So, I would encourage that there are a lot of those sorts of networks around, not just in the financial services industry, but beyond. So, do a bit of research into that and see if there are already that support system that you can draw on. Otherwise, it can be really tough, and I say that that's okay, and it's expected to have to try and find your feet and find that rhythm and learn from your mistakes and that they might happen and you might put your foot in it occasionally. But you only make progress if you carry on trying and sort of giving up at the first hurdle is a bit of a barrier. So, yeah.

Teresa: Can I throw something in as well, though, that I think sometimes the large global organisations, although they can employ diversity and inclusion professionals, so they've got perhaps the budget to throw at even hiring somebody full time to do a role. They frequently are completely bound by needing to report back up through their organisational chain. And that small organisations have the opportunity to be a lot more agile, because usually they just have to go to the local CEO, which might just be sitting two desks across from you.

So whilst small organisations wouldn't necessarily be able to support their own LGBT networks, I think they can make a lot more swift impact on culture to their colleagues than

large organisations can. So I think it can be, it has some difficulties, but it certainly has some large advantages.

Closing

Stephanie: Thank you so much to our guests, Teresa Farrington, Customer Experience and Integration Leader, Aon.

Teresa: Thanks, Steph.

Stephanie: And Marianne Cowie, who's Strategic Execution Manager at Zurich and Chair of Zurich Pride UK.

Marianne: Thanks, Steph.

Stephanie: And of course, to our very own Matheus Carvalho, who's Senior Inclusion and Diversity Consultant. Thanks, Matt.

Matheus: Thank you.

Stephanie: And of course, for more information about supporting LGBTQ+ colleagues, you can visit our website, which is [inclusiveemployers.co.uk](https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk). That's [inclusiveemployers.co.uk](https://www.inclusiveemployers.co.uk). And also, if you're a member of Inclusive Employers, there's a link to our LGBTQ+ resources in our podcast description.

And on the next podcast, join Inclusive Employers' very own Stephen Copsey, who is talking about inclusion in sport. He'll be joined by the incredible Anita Asante, former England international footballer; James Ledger, Commonwealth athlete; as well as Michelle Daltrey, one of our inclusive sports specialists here at Inclusive Employers. You've been listening to Talking Inclusion with Stephanie Hurst. If you've enjoyed listening to this podcast, then please subscribe and leave a review from wherever you get your podcasts.