

Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32

Annual update 2022-23
summary



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The strategy

We launched *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022–32* in February 2022. It is Victoria's first whole-of-government LGBTIQ+ strategy. It is our plan to advance equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse LGBTIQ+ communities in all government work over the next decade.

The lived experience of our LGBTIQ+ communities is central to why and how the Victorian Government implements the strategy. Our work is guided by:

- the Ministerial LGBTIQ+ Taskforce
- Justice Working Group
- Health and Wellbeing Working Group
- all LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

In partnership with LGBTIQ+ communities, we are progressing our four priority areas:

- equal rights and freedoms
- equitable, inclusive and accessible services
- visibility to inform decision-making
- safe, strong and sustainable communities.

In the first year of the strategy, we have taken significant steps towards an equal society. Yet, we recognise that there is still more to do.

As we move into the second year of the LGBTIQ+ strategy, we will continue to take a whole-of-government and whole-of-communities approach to equality reform. We will continue to work with LGBTIQ+ communities to ensure lived experience is at the heart of our work.

Commissioner for LGBTIQ+ Communities highlights



A rural and regional tour promoting the strategy to 12 communities and over 260 Victorians.



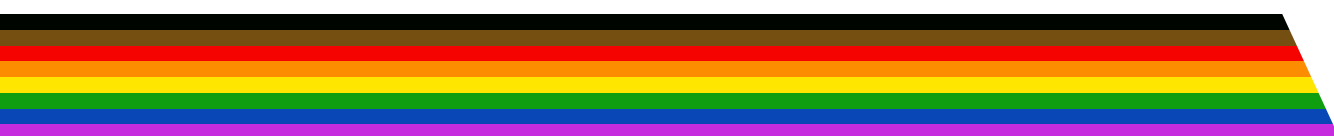
Rainbow Ready Roadmap resources launched after wide consultation with 13 LGBTIQ+ communities.



Worked with LGBTIQ+ organisations on the #IStandWithTransPeople campaign.



Worked with the Coroners Court, the Department of Health and Switchboard Victoria on a new report with suicide data for LGBTIQ+ communities in Victoria from 2012 to 2021.



Current actions under the priority areas



Priority area 1. Equal rights and freedoms

Our first year of actions continues the foundations for an equal and just society in partnership with LGBTIQ+ communities.

We narrowed religious exceptions through the *Equal Opportunity (Religious Exceptions) Amendment Act 2021*. The *Change or Suppression (Conversion) Practices Prohibition Act 2021* was also introduced. Lived experience stories and community advocacy informed these legislation reforms.

To improve equal rights and freedoms, we:

- established a specialist LGBTIQ+ legal service at the Victorian Pride Centre
- released *Victoria Police workforce diversity and inclusion framework 2023–2030*
- released the *LGBTIQ+ inclusion action plan 2023–24*
- provided access to LGBTIQ+ awareness and sensitivity training for Victoria Police staff, developed with Thorne Harbour Health
- established a Trans and Gender Diverse Group as part of the Victoria Police LGBTIQ+ Portfolio Reference Group.



Priority area 2. Equitable, inclusive and accessible services

We are working to ensure all Victorian Government services are approachable, welcoming, safe and inclusive for LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

This includes reforming Victoria's mental health system. That work included:

- partnering with Switchboard Victoria to deliver 3 suicide prevention programs
- funding more than 20 organisations that work with LGBTIQ+ communities, people with disability and multicultural communities through the Diverse Communities Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants Program to provide better pathways to the mental health system
- engaging Intersex Human Rights Australia to develop resources to increase awareness of intersex variations.

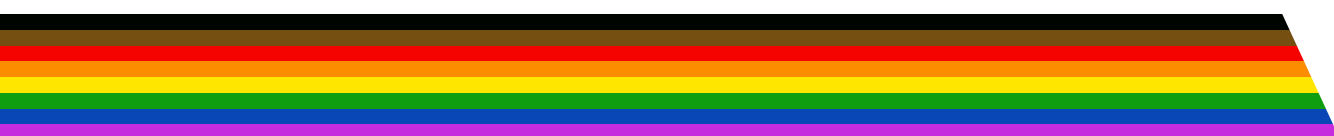
Working with LGBTIQ+ Victorians, we are tailoring supports and building inclusive services.

This includes:

- the Pride in Place program for safe and inclusive recovery pathways for LGBTIQ+ people experiencing homelessness
- a Jobs Victoria Advocate located at Victorian Pride Centre to improve employment outcomes for LGBTIQ+ Victorians
- over 150 sessions for school staff on supporting LGBTIQ+ students through Safe Schools.

We championed LGBTIQ+ leadership across Victoria through our 2022 LGBTIQ+ Leadership Program. This supported 28 emerging leaders to develop their leadership skills and grow inclusive communities across Victoria.

We partnered with 22 LGBTIQ+ organisations to strengthen their capacity to provide services for our diverse communities. This was through our 2022 LGBTIQ+ Organisational Development Grants program.





Priority area 3. Visibility to inform decision-making

We funded 2 research projects on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on family violence services for LGBTIQ+ people. We partnered with La Trobe University to build the evidence on social and cultural practices of alcohol and tobacco use among lesbian, bi+ and queer women.

We also delivered dedicated LGBTIQ+ sessions through the the Government's Ageing Well consultations. These reached 1,200 people to better understand the experiences of older LGBTIQ+ Victorians.

Our LGBTIQ+ communities are central to co-designing policy and program response through working with the LGBTIQ+ Ministerial Taskforce, and the Health and Wellbeing and Justice working groups. We have also engaged 10 organisations representing LGBTIQ+, multicultural and disability communities to support recommendations from the Royal Commission into Victoria's Mental Health System.



Priority area 4. Safe, strong and sustainable communities

Through *Pride in our future* and in partnership with LGBTIQ+ communities, we are working to build a society where all people can be themselves and support each other. Actions include:

- supporting Fitted for Work to work with trans and gender diverse clients on job-readiness
- funding for the design and delivery of LGBTIQ+ safe spaces, QHub, for young people across Western Victoria.

We are celebrating pride and connecting communities. Over 49,000 people attended the Melbourne Pride street party in February 2023. We also partnered with 37 organisations to deliver events to support and connect Victoria's LGBTIQ+ communities. This funding was through the Pride Events and Festivals Fund program.

We are working to ensure our sport and recreation settings are inclusive by:

- investing in new and refurbished change room facilities so they are more gender inclusive, as part of the Local Sports Infrastructure Fund
- supporting 3 projects to increase LGBTIQ+ inclusion and participation in sport and active recreation, through the Together More Active Grants Program.



Case study

Building the capacity of community organisations to deliver community-led supports

In 2022 and 2023, the THREE for All Foundation received funding to build the capacity of its Queer Refugee and Asylum Seeker Peers group. The funding was through the LGBTIQ+ Organisational Development Grants.

This peer-led group connects LGBTIQ+ refugees and people seeking asylum with vital community services.

The grant funding supported the group to:

- deliver leadership and volunteer training events
- develop governance policies
- create a network to link the group with other similar LGBTIQ+ organisations.

The THREE for All Foundation reported increased confidence and engagement with those in leadership roles in the Queer Refugee and Asylum Seek Peers group.

‘Our activities contributed directly to the building of a resilient and connected LGBTIQ+ refugee community and skilled self-support group through provision of regular activity, safe spaces, leadership and training.’

— Ian Seal, Executive Director, THREE for All Foundation



By growing capacity and leadership, the organisation now supports over 300 people.

