

Rainbow Ready roadmap



User guide



To receive this document in another format,
email the Equality Unit <equality@dffh.vic.gov.au>.

Authorised and published by the Victorian Government, 1 Treasury Place, Melbourne.

© State of Victoria, Australia, Department of Families, Fairness and Housing, October 2023.

Except where otherwise indicated, the images in this document show models and illustrative settings only, and do not necessarily depict actual services, facilities or recipients of services.

In this document, 'Aboriginal' refers to both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Victorian Government acknowledges the contributions of Dr Catherine Barrett and Daniel Witthaus in development of this resource.

ISBN 978-1-76096-806-9 (online/PDF/Word)

Available at **Rainbow Ready roadmap** <<https://www.vic.gov.au/rainbow-ready-roadmap>>.

(2306512)

Contents

Introduction	4
Why do we need the Rainbow Ready roadmap?	4
How was the Rainbow Ready roadmap developed?	4
About the roadmap	5
What is the Rainbow Ready roadmap used for?	5
Who can use the Rainbow Ready roadmap?	5
What are the resources?	6
Core LGBTIQA+ principles	7
How to use the Rainbow Ready roadmap	8
Intersectionality and Inclusion	10
Ensuring community-wide LGBTIQA+ inclusion	10
Sharing your Rainbow Ready projects	11
Where to from being Rainbow Ready?	11



Introduction

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* is a set of resources for Victorian rural and regional communities to build lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, intersex, queer and asexual (LGBTIQA+) inclusion. The resources were developed with LGBTIQA+ communities, for all regional and rural communities to work together to address inequalities experienced by LGBTIQA+ people. The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* responds to calls from rural and regional Victorians for the need to build LGBTIQA+ inclusion by equipping communities with practical resources.

Why do we need the Rainbow Ready roadmap?

While progress has been made towards LGBTIQA+ equality, many LGBTIQA+ Victorians continue to face discrimination, inequalities and stigma, which can lead to poorer health and wellbeing outcomes. In regional and rural communities, LGBTIQA+ people can experience heightened discrimination and isolation, and in many cases have limited access to services and networks to help feel supported.

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* aims to support communities to address the unique challenges faced by LGBTIQA+ people living in rural and regional Victoria. The roadmap also offers examples to assist people in improving LGBTIQA+ inclusion in their own regions and towns.



LGBTIQA+ people living in rural and regional Victoria:

- experience higher rates of family violence
- are more likely to have a diagnosis of anxiety or depression
- experience higher rates of chronic disease
- are more likely to rate their health status as fair/poor.¹

How was the Rainbow Ready roadmap developed?

In 2016, the Victorian Government undertook the LGBTIQA+ Equality Roadshow across rural and regional Victoria. The roadshow visited 29 towns and hosted around 220 engagement activities with more than 2500 attendees. The roadshow's mission was to encourage communities to plan to build LGBTIQA+ inclusion.

An evaluation of the roadshow² showed that achieving longer term transformations would require that communities are given more support. Participants reflected that a resource would help communities learn from each other when developing LGBTIQA+ inclusive communities. From there, the Victorian Government engaged consultants to work with regional communities to design the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*. The roadmap was developed between 2019 and 2021, incorporating lessons from the Roadshow and feedback from communities in rural and regional Victoria.



Real-life case studies from the LGBTIQA+ Equality Roadshow are included on the Rainbow Ready roadmap website to provide examples of how to build your own local LGBTIQA+ inclusion.

1 Refer to: *The health and wellbeing of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer population in Victoria: Findings from the Victorian Population Health Survey 2017* <<https://vahi.vic.gov.au/report/population-health/health-and-wellbeing-lgb-tiq-population-victoria>>.

2 Besley, M, Chandler P 2018. *Program logic for LGBTIQA+ Equality Roadshow evaluation*, VicHealth, Melbourne.

About the roadmap

What is the Rainbow Ready roadmap used for?

The Rainbow Ready roadmap resources help regional and rural communities to identify, plan, monitor and evaluate progress towards local LGBTIQ+ inclusion. These resources are designed to be used in a range of local and community settings.

Who can use the Rainbow Ready roadmap?

The Rainbow Ready roadmap is designed for Victoria's rural and regional communities that want to become more LGBTIQ+ inclusive. This includes:

- community groups
- health and community services
- local government
- business and other services
- learning environments.

Additionally, existing LGBTIQ+ groups, and those that are already making strides towards LGBTIQ+ inclusion in their township, are encouraged to use the roadmap. They can use it to help identify ways to ensure the sustainability of their group and find new opportunities to collaborate across settings.

All regional and rural communities across Victoria can review the roadmap and undertake activities to become more LGBTIQ+ inclusive by working towards being Rainbow Ready. Whole communities, which will include LGBTIQ+ community members, their families, friends and allies, are encouraged to take part in or support Rainbow Ready activities. There's a role for everybody to play in achieving true LGBTIQ+ inclusion in Victoria's regional and rural communities.

Using Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy alongside the Rainbow Ready roadmap

The Rainbow Ready roadmap supports the Victorian Government's *Pride in our future: Victoria's LGBTIQ+ strategy 2022-32*. The strategy aims to drive equality and inclusion for Victoria's diverse LGBTIQ+ communities. The Rainbow Ready roadmap will bring to life one of the strategy's priority areas by supporting the creation of safe, strong and sustainable communities in rural and regional Victoria.

The strategy can be used as a tool of negotiation and advocacy by community groups, businesses, services and organisations that want to partner with their local government, state government, or any other government service to drive change as part of a Rainbow Ready project. All government departments, services and bodies have a role to play in delivering on state-wide equality and inclusion under the LGBTIQ+ strategy. Activities undertaken under Rainbow Ready can support those bodies in delivering on the strategy's vision and objectives.

Find out more by reading the LGBTIQ+ strategy <<https://www.vic.gov.au/pride-our-future-victorias-lgbtqi-strategy-2022-32>>.



What are the resources?

A range of resources have been developed to support your use of the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*.

Guides

a 

User guide

How to use the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*.

b 

Setting guides

Guides for achieving LGBTIQ+ inclusion in five settings:

1. community groups
2. local government
3. health and community services
4. business and other services
5. learning environments.

Tools

a 

Assessment and evaluation tool

A tool to measure where your setting is at with LGBTIQ+ inclusion, and areas for improvement. This tool can also be used at the end of a Rainbow Ready activity to help you measure your progress and identify achievements or areas for improvement.

b 

Action plan

A template for planning your Rainbow Ready activities, including identifying actions, stakeholders, and desired outcomes.

c 

Rainbow Ready status checklist

A checklist to help you know if you're Rainbow Ready, both along the journey and when you have done your *Rainbow Ready roadmap* activities based on the indicators under your setting guide.



Core LGBTIQ+ principles

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* is based on four core LGBTIQ+ principles, each of which have been developed by LGBTIQ+ Victorians in regional and rural areas. These principles are critical elements to ensure that LGBTIQ+ inclusion is meaningful and sustained throughout every phase of implementing the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*. The core principles should be considered frequently when using the roadmap.



1 Visibility

LGBTIQ+ people and their culture are visible and celebrated

The visibility of LGBTIQ+ people and initiatives can indicate a shift towards LGBTIQ+ safety and equality. This is an important sign of hope for many LGBTIQ+ people.



2 Inclusion

LGBTIQ+ people are included in the journey

Participation of LGBTIQ+ people in activities is critical to achieving and maintaining LGBTIQ+ inclusion. It is also critical for empowering of LGBTIQ+ people.



3 Understanding

LGBTIQ+ inclusion is underpinned by education and understanding

Education to provide all communities with knowledge of LGBTIQ+ experiences, histories and challenges is key to widespread inclusion and meaningful allyship.



4 Safety

LGBTIQ+ peoples' safety is a priority

Strategies are in place to identify and reduce risks to the safety of LGBTIQ+ people. Responses to LGBTIQ+phobic incidents support LGBTIQ+ people and include actions to prevent reoccurrence.



The core principles are tailored to each of the five settings in the **setting guides**, with a unique set of indicators for:

- community groups
- local government
- health and community services
- business and other services
- learning environments.

How to use the Rainbow Ready roadmap

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* is organised into six phases. At every phase, it's critical that the voices of local LGBTIQ+ community members are heard and represented. Consider how your plans, activities and evaluations can be led by or involve local LGBTIQ+ people or groups.

Phase 1 Getting started

How

1. Learn about the Rainbow Ready roadmap and its core principles (found in the **user guide**).
2. Choose your **setting guide**:
 - a. community groups
 - b. local government
 - c. health and community services
 - d. businesses and other services
 - e. learning environments.

Resources

- User guide (this document)
- Setting guides

Phase 2 Assess

How

1. Use the **measurement and evaluation tool** to assess the current state of your setting against the LGBTIQ+ indicators.
2. Indicators that aren't met, or are partially met, can be identified as areas for improvement.
3. Discuss your current state with stakeholders, including local LGBTIQ+ community leaders.

Resources

- Setting guides
- Measurement and evaluation tool

Phase 3 Plan

How

1. Use the **action plan** template to plan your activities, required resources and outcomes.
2. Discuss your proposed activities with stakeholders, including local LGBTIQ+ community members as activity leaders, consultants, or supporters.
3. Consider how you can collaborate and partner with other settings to ensure community-wide inclusion in your activities.

Resources

- Action plan

Phase 4 Activity

How

1. Deliver activities under your **action plan**.
2. Continue to engage LGBTIQ+ community members and stakeholders, including as project leaders.

Resources

- Action plan



Phase 5 Evaluate

How

1. Use the **measurement and evaluation tool** to test your progress against the indicators relevant to your **setting guide**.
2. Discuss findings, including with LGBTIQ+ community members.
3. Repeat the evaluation to check progress until as many **setting guide** indicators that can be achieved are achieved.

Resources

- Assessment and evaluation tool
- Setting guides

Phase 6 Checklist

How

1. Access the Rainbow Ready checklist and review your progress against it.
2. You can use the **Rainbow Ready checklist** tool to measure your own progress at any time during, or at the end of your work.
3. Share your *Rainbow Ready roadmap* work so that others can learn from your stories of success and lessons learned.

Resources

- Rainbow Ready checklist



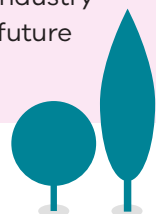
Choosing your setting guide

Choosing your **setting guide** is an important step in using the Rainbow Ready roadmap. You are encouraged to use the setting guide that best fits your group or setting. For example:

- an aged care provider would select the **setting guide for health and community services**
- a university would select the **setting guide for learning environments**
- a local rainbow families group would select the **setting guide for community groups**

Some users may find that their group or setting sits across more than one of the settings guides. For example, a youth group at a university could select either the setting guide for learning environments or the setting guide for community groups. In this instance, selecting the one guide that best fits your setting is perfectly fine.

If you have another idea for a future setting guide, particularly one that your industry or sector may benefit from, please let us know. We may be producing more in future iterations of this project.



Intersectionality and Inclusion

What is intersectionality?

Intersectionality is an approach to understanding the diverse experiences of people and their identities. It involves recognising that this can create different layers and types of discrimination for an individual or group. It is important to understand that LGBTIQ+ experiences are not all the same.

As well as being diverse in their sexuality, gender identity or sex characteristics, LGBTIQ+ people are diverse in other ways. This might include their Aboriginality, ethnicity, colour, nationality, refugee or asylum seeker background, migration or visa status, language, faith, ability, age, mental health, housing status or geographic location. For example, LGBTIQ+ Victorians from ethnic faith communities experience life as LGBTIQ+, as well as being a person of colour and person of faith.

Intersectionality and the Rainbow Ready roadmap

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* must be reviewed and used with an intersectional lens. This means recognising the diversity of LGBTIQ+ communities, their experiences and identities.

At every stage of using the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*, consider how your actions and activities will be implemented to engage, support and respond to the needs of a wide range of LGBTIQ+ people and communities. Additionally, ensure the people involved in planning, consulting on, delivering and evaluating your activities are themselves diverse in their LGBTIQ+ identities and experiences.



In applying an intersectional lens to your project, ask the question, *Who is not at the table? Are we including LGBTIQ+ people with different identities, and lived experiences in planning and project delivery? How are we enabling the voices of those who we don't usually hear from?*

Ensuring community-wide LGBTIQ+ inclusion

In using the *Rainbow Ready roadmap*, it's important for your setting to consider opportunities to collaborate with individuals and groups from other settings in your wider community. Widespread LGBTIQ+ inclusion cannot be achieved in isolation, and townships must ensure all environments are safe and welcoming for LGBTIQ+ people. Consider how you can forge a meaningful partnership with another setting in the planning phase of your activities.

For example, a local LGBTIQ+ sporting group could work with local government to ensure the group is promoted by the council, and that all council sporting facilities are welcoming of LGBTIQ+ people.

In addition to working with your broader township, consider how you might collaborate with metropolitan groups, organisations and service providers. Many metropolitan LGBTIQ+ groups and organisations deliver activities and services across rural and regional Victoria. Forging partnerships with these groups can be an effective way to gain wider support for your township, leverage their existing knowledge and frameworks for LGBTIQ+ inclusion, and encourage state-wide expansion of services available to metropolitan areas.



Sharing your Rainbow Ready projects

When you feel you have done your Rainbow Ready roadmap projects based on the indicators under your setting guide you may want to find a way to publicly share your results – for example, via your group or organisation’s website.

Publicly sharing your group, service or organisation’s Rainbow Ready projects is a good way to assist others in your region or town to continue or build on the work already undertaken. Importantly, it’s an opportunity to celebrate your achievements.

We’d also ask not only that you let us know, in the Equality Unit, but also that you share your success stories and learnings of what worked and what didn’t in your project, so that others across rural and regional Victoria, and elsewhere, can learn from your experiences. It’s one of the main purposes of this project, as LGBTIQ+ people across the state told us they would like to see how inclusion work was done. We want you to share your stories so that others can apply the lessons in their own town, community or organisation.



The Victorian Pride Centre’s resource directory

<https://pridecentre.org.au/resource-directory/> can be a good place to start in identifying state-wide LGBTIQ+ resources, groups and services.

Where to from being Rainbow Ready?

The *Rainbow Ready roadmap* has been designed specifically for rural and regional Victorian settings and can offer a pathway to undertaking Rainbow Tick accreditation. Undertaking activities suggested within the Rainbow Ready roadmap can help you gather evidence that you may use later if you choose to go down the path of the Rainbow Tick.

Those larger health and human services who achieve Rainbow Ready status are encouraged to consider Rainbow Tick accreditation, where appropriate. Rainbow Tick is a national accreditation program for health and human services organisations, and other large services, to show they are safe, inclusive and affirming of LGBTIQ+ people.

Go online to find out more about the Rainbow Tick: <https://rainbowhealthaustralia.org.au/rainbow-tick>.

