

# TOP EMPLOYERS REPORT

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# INTRODUCTION

The India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI) marks six years of driving measurable progress on LGBT+ inclusion across corporate India. A joint initiative by the Keshav Suri Foundation (KSF), Pride Circle, and Stonewall, IWEI remains India's first and only comprehensive benchmarking framework that enables organisations to assess, strengthen, and celebrate their inclusion practices through a lens uniquely designed for the Indian context.

As we observe the seventh anniversary of the Section 377 verdict, which marked the decriminalisation of homosexuality, we acknowledge the transformative power of that moment, as well as the complex road that has followed. The 2023 Supreme Court ruling on marriage equality was a sobering reminder that the path toward full equality remains unfinished. While same-sex relationships are no longer criminalised, the absence of broader legal protections continues to leave many LGBT+ individuals vulnerable, underlining the vital role of corporate policies that safeguard dignity, inclusion, and psychological safety at work.

India's progress exists within a global landscape that reflects both advancement and adversity. While several countries have expanded legal rights and visibility for LGBT+ people, a parallel rise in anti-trans legislation, restrictive policies, and social backlash has reignited debates on equality and inclusion. In this climate, corporate leadership stands as a critical stabilising force, one capable of shaping culture, countering regression, and ensuring that workplaces remain safe, inclusive spaces for all.

The **IWEI Top Employers** featured in this report exemplify that leadership. Their sustained commitment to LGBT+ inclusion demonstrates how organisations can move from policy to practice, embedding equity across systems, culture, and everyday experience. This year, we are also proud to celebrate the exceptional individuals and networks whose efforts have advanced this mission through the **Special Awards**, honouring the Ally Trailblazer of the Year, LGBT+ Trailblazer of the Year, Pride Employee Resource Group (ERG) of the Year, DEI Champion of the Year, Pride ERG Executive Sponsor of the Year, and Supplier Diversity Champion of the Year.

Through the **IWEI Employee Feedback Survey (EFS)**, we continue to provide organisations with a confidential, data-driven mechanism to understand the lived realities of LGBT+ employees. These insights are helping companies identify gaps, measure progress, and implement strategies grounded in authenticity and accountability.

The growing adoption of IWEI across industries reflects a collective recognition: that inclusion is not only a moral imperative but a strategic advantage. By facilitating peer benchmarking, sharing best practices, and offering a roadmap for sustained progress, IWEI empowers organisations to take tangible steps toward equality, transforming intent into measurable, lasting impact.

As we look ahead, our commitment remains clear: to continue supporting organisations in building workplaces that are inclusive, equitable, and courageous, where every individual, regardless of gender identity or sexual orientation, can thrive and bring their whole self to work.

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# FOREWORD FROM PARTNERS

As partners, we are proud to mark **six years of the India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI)**, a journey that has grown from a bold vision into a powerful movement driving workplace inclusion across India. What began as a benchmarking exercise has become a catalyst for change, inspiring hundreds of organizations to move beyond statements of intent and embed equality into the heart of their business practices.

This year's IWEI comes at a time when the global discourse around LGBT+ rights is as complex as it is crucial. Around the world, we've witnessed both progress and pushback, yet within this climate, Indian employers continue to demonstrate remarkable resilience and leadership. They are building workplaces that uphold dignity, belonging, and safety, even as social narratives evolve.

In 2025, with **120 participating companies**, we celebrate those that are not only keeping inclusion on the agenda but elevating it as a strategic priority. They are investing in psychological safety, equitable policies, and inclusive leadership, ensuring that LGBT+ employees can bring their authentic selves to work without fear or compromise.

Our admiration goes out to every organization that has participated in this year's index and to our **Top Employers** for 2025, whose ongoing commitment continues to redefine what inclusion looks like in practice. Congratulations also to our **Special Award** winners, the Ally Trailblazer, LGBT+ Trailblazer, Pride ERG, DEI Champion, Executive Sponsor, and Supplier Diversity Champion of the Year, for setting new benchmarks in driving change through action.

We extend our deepest gratitude to our partners for their continued belief in the power of collective action. The support of **JPMorganChase** as Vision Partner, **EY** and **NTT Data** as Headline Partner, and **Macquarie, Northern Trust, Randstad, Societe Generale Global Solution Centre**, and **ZS Associates** as Associate Partners has been instrumental in amplifying the reach and impact of IWEI. We also thank our partners, **HSBC, Diageo, Mastercard, TIAA, Nasdaq**, and **Marsh McLennan**, who helped bring this initiative to life. Additionally, we appreciate **Pride Cares** and **Rainbow Bazaar** for being pillars of support to LGBT+ inclusion.

As we celebrate the results of the sixth annual IWEI, we are reminded that inclusion is not a milestone, it's a continuum. The dedication, courage, and empathy shown by India Inc. in 2025 prove that even in uncertain times, progress is possible when organizations choose to lead with purpose.

**Ramkrishna Sinha**

Co- Founder



Celebrating the sixth year of the India Workplace Equality Index is a bitter-sweet moment. The year was marked by hesitation, anonymity, and pull backs as companies face a turbulent global scenario of changing compliance needs, social media pressure, and complex business cases. As companies rush to adopt AI, automate tasks and deploy agents, pushing efforts to nurture inclusion and humanization becomes a key differentiator. Congratulations to the 120 companies that registered for IWEI 2025! This reflects phenomenal leadership in the participating companies that continue to prioritize and invest in their staff, bringing comfort for queer people and allies in witnessing their employer's consistency and commitment in action. Many congratulations to the Top 10, Gold, Silver and Bronze Top Employers, and the individuals and ERG for their Special Award Recognition. Thank you for advancing LGBT+ inclusion and leading the way. You make a difference!

**Keshav Suri**

Founder & CEO



Long before global policies caught up, India recognised more than two genders; a truth our culture has always lived by. Inclusion isn't new to us; it is part of who we are. As we release the 6th India Workplace Equality Index, it is inspiring to see organisations leading with intent and creating workplaces where members of the LGBTQIA+ community are seen, respected, and celebrated. This is India's moment to remind the world that inclusion isn't imported, it is inherited. Let's continue building workplaces that move beyond compliance to compassion, beyond diversity to true belonging. When India includes, India leads.

**Simon Blake OBE**

Chief Executive



The India Workplace Equality Index is now in its sixth year. Thank you to everyone who has participated in the Index and continues to make a genuine commitment to advancing LGBTQ+ rights in workplaces across India. Now, more than ever, we all need to stand together and demonstrate the importance of LGBTQ+ inclusion in workplaces and wider society. For those of you who have received a Top 10, Gold, Silver or Bronze award, please be incredibly proud of your brilliant achievements. In a turbulent global context progress is only possible because of excellent leadership from every employer who has participated in the Index. Thank you for leading the way in showing that inclusion and belonging are good for individuals, teams and business. Finally, thank you to our partners – the Keshav Suri Foundation and Pride Circle – for inviting Stonewall to support your work and to work with us to shape and adapt our programme for this region. It is an enormous privilege to be working with you on this important journey of change.

We look forward to seeing how these efforts continue to grow and to celebrating the next chapter of workplace inclusion together in the year ahead.

# Building a future that belongs to everyone

We believe that everyone deserves the opportunity to thrive.

**See our impact at [jpmorganchase.com/DOI](https://jpmorganchase.com/DOI)**

# HOW IWEI WORKS

The India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI) is the definitive benchmarking tool for LGBT+ workplace inclusion in India. The IWEI tackles the challenges of LGBT+ inclusion by offering in-depth assessments to measure your company's current state, providing a clear, tailored roadmap with planning structures, best practices, and actionable guidelines.

## EMPLOYER SURVEY

The Index studies **9 parameters** across different areas of employment policy and practice. Each participating company compiles a submission, accompanied by supporting evidence, which demonstrates their performance against a set of best-practice criteria. The IWEI team then thoroughly reviews each submission to give companies a holistic picture of where they stand on inclusion.

**Section 1: Policies and Benefits** determine if the company has policies ensuring equal treatment of LGBT+ employees, and benefits to support the needs of the community.

**Section 2: Employee Lifecycle** assesses how the company engages with all employees to raise awareness of LGBT+ issues and looks at the entire employee lifecycle with a lens of inclusion.

**Section 3: Employee Resource Group** evaluates the company's facilities for LGBT+ employees to network, consult, and offer feedback.

**Section 4: Allies And Role Models** examines the company's support for developing LGBT+ and ally role models.

**Section 5: Senior Leadership** inspects the initiatives and the leadership's efforts to promote LGBT+ equality.

**Section 6: Monitoring** assesses how the company enables its LGBT+ staff to self-ID.

**Section 7: Procurement** studies how the company engages with LGBT+ suppliers and sensitises their supply chain.

**Section 8: Community Engagement** evaluates the company's support for LGBT+ community groups and public promotion of LGBT+ equality outside the workplace.

**Section 9: Additional Work** seeks out examples in addition to any work that the Index previous sections haven't already covered.

## EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK SURVEY (EFS)

The IWEI offers a voluntary opportunity for companies to receive feedback about their employees' individual journeys with LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace. This survey is completely anonymous and allows companies to gain invaluable insight from LGBT+ and ally employees. IWEI 2024 also rewards an additional 2 marks to their final IWEI score for participation in EFS.

## TOP EMPLOYER AWARDS

Once submissions are received and evaluated, the companies are given a score and celebrated as Top 10, Gold, Silver, or Bronze IWEI Top Employers. Not all submissions qualify for the Top Employer Award. Overall scores are kept confidential between the company and the IWEI partnership, as is the general participation of any companies that wish to remain anonymous.

Following the release of the IWEI Top Employers results, companies have the option of receiving a detailed report and a feedback meeting for a small fee. During this meeting, they receive tailored feedback on their submission and action-planning tips for the year ahead. Participation in the IWEI is otherwise free of charge.

## SPECIAL AWARDS

The IWEI program offers prestigious awards beyond the main benchmarking process. Companies participating in the IWEI study can nominate exceptional individuals and their Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) for these special recognitions. This year, we celebrated winners across 6 categories: Ally Trailblazer of the Year, LGBT+ Trailblazer of the Year, Pride ERG of the Year, DEI Champion of the Year, Pride Executive Sponsor of the Year, and our newest category - Supplier Diversity Champion of the Year.

These awards celebrate individuals, initiatives, and ERGs that have gone above and beyond to create inclusive workplaces for LGBT+ colleagues in India and support their companies on their LGBT+ inclusion journey. It is free to participate, completely optional for companies to nominate, and does not affect the company's final IWEI score.





Shape the future  
with confidence

How can  
inclusiveness  
help us

Shape the future  
with confidence?

We embed inclusivity into every program and policy we create, fostering a workplace where everyone feels valued and empowered.



The better the question.  
The better the answer.  
The better the world works.

# KEY STATISTICS

**120** Companies Registered

**10**  
Top 10 winners

**26**  
Gold Award winners

**30**  
Silver Award winners

**21**  
Bronze Award winners

This year, IWEI participants collectively represented 25 sectors

The highest performing Sector is **Professional Services**, and the least performing Sector is **Healthcare**.

Highest Performing Section  
**Policies & Benefits**

**74%**  
Average score

**59.80%**  
Average score

Least Performing Section  
**Procurement**

**38%**  
Average score



# KEY FINDINGS FROM THE 2025 STUDY

## INDUSTRY TRENDS

- **95.4%** of companies enable allies to visibly signal their commitment to LGBT+ inclusion.
- **93.1%** of companies have an LGBT+ Employee Resource Group, compared to **81.7% in 2024**, a significant rise that reflects growing organisational commitment to structured inclusion.
- **92.0%** of companies are compliant with the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019.
- **74.7%** of companies provide LGBT+ employees the opportunity to self-identify.

Encouragingly, several foundational aspects of LGBT+ inclusion are becoming more established across workplaces. The growing **visibility of allies** and the continued **expansion of Employee Resource Groups** reflect a stronger culture of participation and shared responsibility. The rising **adoption of self-identification** mechanisms marks an important shift towards data-led inclusion, helping companies better understand and support their LGBT+ workforce.

## PICKING UP MOMENTUM

- **70.1%** of companies provide insurance coverage for gender transition (Sex Reassignment Surgery / Gender Affirmation Surgery).
- **60.9%** of companies recognise contributions to LGBT+ Employee Resource Groups during performance appraisals.
- **54%** of companies train procurement teams on diversity and inclusion outcomes that include LGBT+ considerations, showing strong progress from **41.4% in 2024**.

Progress in 2025 continues in areas tied directly to inclusion in everyday operations. The inclusion of **gender transition coverage in healthcare** plans remains a strong indicator of expanding support for employee wellbeing. The growing integration of **ERG recognition into performance systems** demonstrates a more structured link between inclusion and accountability. Notably, the significant **rise in procurement-related inclusion** training suggests that companies are beginning to extend diversity principles beyond HR to influence business ecosystems and vendor relationships.

## AREAS OF IMPROVEMENT

- **49.4%** of companies offer targeted recruitment training to reduce bias and discrimination towards LGBT+ candidates, **down from 54.8% in 2024**.
- **43.7%** of companies have a Supplier Diversity programme that encourages engagement with LGBT+-owned businesses, **up from 31.7% last year**.
- **40.2%** of companies support LGBT+ employees at all levels to become visible role models.

While inclusion is gaining traction, representation and external engagement remain comparatively weaker areas. **Supplier diversity shows notable improvement**, yet still involves less than half of all companies, highlighting the need for more inclusive procurement practices. **Recruitment bias training has seen a decline**, suggesting potential fatigue or shifting priorities. **Leadership visibility continues to be limited**, underscoring the importance of creating platforms and pipelines for LGBT+ employees to be seen and heard across all levels.

The 2025 findings reveal **steady progress in structural and policy-driven aspects** of LGBT+ inclusion, with clear gains in ERG participation, compliance, and supplier engagement. At the same time, the data highlights areas requiring renewed focus. Notably, there has been a **dip in targeted training for talent acquisition teams and a decline in recruitment-focused initiatives** aimed at reducing bias, an indication that early momentum in inclusive hiring may be losing traction. Sustained investment in representation, leadership visibility, and bias mitigation will be essential to counterbalance these gaps and ensure progress continues. Overall, the trends point to a consistent and growing awareness of LGBT+ inclusion as both a business and cultural priority. The next phase will require organisations to move beyond participation and visibility towards **measurable, long-term impact** grounded in consistency, accountability, and structural integration.



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where people grow.**

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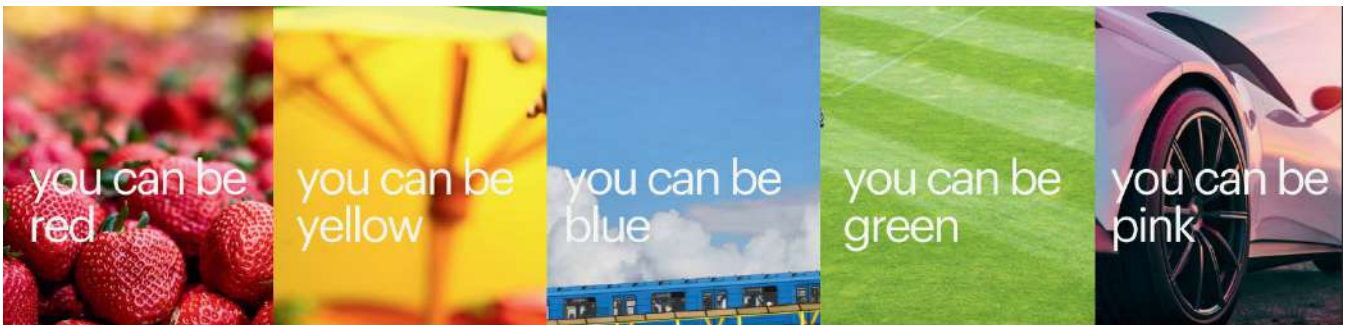
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# JPMorganChase

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JPMorganChase’s global Office of LGBTQ+ Affairs (LGBTQ) focuses on fostering inclusion and belonging for the LGBTQ+ community, and its allies, and supports our firmwide Diversity Opportunity and Inclusion strategy to be the employer of choice and bank for all customers, clients and communities. “LGBTQ” also strives to create a strong workplace culture by expanding access to opportunities, optimizing employee engagement and governing the “PRIDE” Business Resource Group and Executive Forum.


”



you can be red    you can be yellow    you can be blue    you can be green    you can be pink

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# BEST PRACTICES

In a country where traditional norms often prevail, these unique and best practices are redefining LGBT+ inclusion in India. These examples demonstrate that creating an inclusive work culture is not only possible but is already yielding transformative results across diverse sectors.



accenture

Accenture ensures that its policies and benefits are equitable, free from gendered language, and inclusive of the specific needs of its LGBTIQ+ people. This includes parental leave designed around the role of the caregiver, holistic wellbeing support, medical insurance coverage for gender reassignment and reaffirming procedures, and equal benefits for all family structures. Accenture's policies also extend medical insurance coverage to the partners of LGBTIQ+ employees and offer the option to purchase coverage for partners' parents, reinforcing its commitment to equality and inclusion for all.



ACUITY  
KNOWLEDGE PARTNERS

This year, Acuity Knowledge Partners' PRISM network orchestrated an 'Allyship Walk', a fashion show-style event designed to express solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community. The event brought together employees who participated in the show and shared personal interpretations of allyship with the audience. It was a creative and high-impact initiative that blended visibility, solidarity, and gender expression into a vibrant celebration of inclusion.



DIAGEO  
*India*

Diageo India's DEI Platform brings together all inclusion workstreams under one vision: to embrace the fluidity of being human and create a more inclusive world. Through the Progressive Portrayal Framework, Diageo has developed a set of principles to guide gender-sensitive and authentic storytelling in communication. The Table for Everyone campaign under Black & White featured a creative initiative called 'Table for Everyone' using Cards for Sharing, which are designed to foster inclusivity through storytelling and open dialogue. These cards are used both internally and externally as part of Diageo's brand campaigns. Internally, Diageo launched the Inclusive Culture Hub, an employee-accessible resource page featuring its eight aspirational inclusive behaviors, employee testimonials, and toolkits on creating psychological safety. Together, these initiatives reflect Diageo's belief that authentic external portrayal begins with an inclusive internal culture.



encore  
CAPITAL GROUP  
Better Solutions. Better Life.

Encore in India launched Parental Pathways 2025 to support colleagues - including same-sex partners and LGBTQ+ members - navigating the beautiful and sometimes challenging journey of parenthood. This initiative provides inclusive benefits and resources designed to empower all partners to thrive, reflecting the company's commitment to care, equity, and inclusion at the heart of every relationship journey.



Launched in June 2023, the Transgender Assisted Accommodation Program offers a safe and secure housing option for transgender employees during and after transition. Currently, six transgender employees reside in company-provided guesthouses, ensuring dignity and stability in their living arrangements. This initiative is a cornerstone of the broader #HomeForAll campaign, led by the CHRO, which promotes inclusive and welcoming spaces for everyone.



In June 2025, HSBC India hosted a Rainbow Parenting event featuring speakers from Sweekar NGO (parents of LGBTQ+ children) to help normalize LGBTQ+ parenting within the workplace. The session opened dialogue among employees and parents, fostering empathy and understanding while encouraging inclusive conversations around family and identity.



KPMG's Unlocking Inclusion email campaign simplifies complex concepts like intersectionality, privilege, and identity into accessible, thought-provoking narratives rooted in lived experience. By sparking dialogue and building awareness, these communications have deepened understanding of LGBTQ+ individuals as multidimensional people, where orientation and identity are interwoven with other aspects of life, not set apart from them.



At Kyndryl, customer-facing teams are embedding inclusion into client interactions through enablement tools such as the RFP/RFI Guidelines and Winning with Kinship @ Kyndryl (delivered via Win Coach). These tools promote empathy, consistency, and strategic alignment in every engagement, strengthening both trust and inclusion. The LGBTQ+ community at Kyndryl plays a critical role in shaping this journey by offering insights, advocacy, and support that inform policy and decision-making. Through this work, Kyndryl ensures its values of belonging and wellbeing are reflected not just internally, but also in every client partnership.



The LaLiT Group champions inclusion through continuous engagement with the LGBTQIA+ community. Regular partnerships with organizations like the Keshav Suri Foundation, Pride Circle, TWEET Foundation, and Kineer Pvt. Ltd. have led to impactful events and conferences across India. Through #PureLove Nights club events dedicated to the queer community, and the display of Progress Pride Flags and PureLove Badges across properties, The LaLiT ensures year-round visibility and solidarity. Additionally, the PureLove ERG Membership invites LGBTQIA+ travelers and allies to be part of its ongoing inclusion movement.



Myntra's Allyship Sessions and LGBTQ+ Inclusion DYK Series, launched in August, aim to destigmatize misconceptions, address unconscious biases, and promote inclusive language and allyship. Myntra's gender-supportive policies include same-sex partner insurance coverage, medical support for gender reaffirmation surgeries and hormone therapy, unlimited wellness leaves (including transition leaves), wedding leaves for same-sex partners, and extended caregiver parental leaves. Together, these initiatives demonstrate Myntra's continued commitment to inclusive wellbeing.



Natixis Global Services India launched a Paid Apprenticeship Program aimed at creating employment pathways for transgender individuals. The initiative reserves 2.5% of its employee base for transgender apprentices, who are trained and supported for long-term corporate employment, reinforcing Natixis’ vision for sustainable and equitable inclusion.



Through a focused engagement strategy, Onity achieved a 94% increase in ERG membership, far exceeding its original goal of 20%. The approach included virtual sessions, physical posters with QR codes for instant registration, and personalized outreach. Additionally, Onity introduced focus hours during orientation sessions and one-on-one conversations for newly hired senior leaders, resulting in greater ERG participation and executive support. This approach demonstrated that personal connection and consistent visibility are key to driving inclusion.



Parexel takes pride in fostering education and awareness as the foundation of inclusion. Its Pronouns Matter campaign and Gender Transitioning Employees: Guidelines for Best Practices serve as key resources for sensitizing employees and supporting transitioning colleagues. Through these initiatives, Parexel continues to nurture a culture where respect for identity and understanding of LGBTQ+ terminology become integral to everyday interactions. Beyond the workplace, Parexel actively supports LGBTQ+ communities through partnerships with NGOs and other foundations.



Sutherland launched the LEAD (LGBT Enablement and Development) mentoring program in 2022 as part of its commitment to fostering LGBT inclusion. Now in its fourth cohort, the program has guided five mentees and mentors through skill-building, leadership development, and mutual learning. The initiative has not only supported the professional growth of LGBT employees but also deepened leaders’ understanding of diverse lived experiences — building empathy and inclusion across the organization.



At Tekwissen, LGBT+ inclusion is not an annual event but a lived culture through a 3-Pillar Inclusion Framework that integrates inclusion into every aspect of the employee experience: (a) Policy: Gender-neutral benefits, inclusive healthcare for same-sex partners, gender-affirmation care, and a zero-tolerance anti-discrimination charter signed by all employees and vendors; (b) Participation: The Pride in Action program offers year-round visibility through ERGs, awareness sessions, allyship training, and leadership sponsorship, embedding inclusion into onboarding and performance reviews; and (c) People Leadership: All managers complete Leading with Inclusion training focused on microaggressions, psychological safety, and active allyship, measured through perception surveys. The impact speaks for itself, a 47% increase in self-identification, a 92% positive safety rating, 100% workforce reach across five geographies, and a 35% rise in LGBTQ+ representation in leadership pipelines. Tekwissen ensures inclusion is not just celebrated but consistently lived.



Thomson Reuters’ CSR project empowered over 125 transgender individuals across Hyderabad and Ahmedabad through skilling, education, and healthcare initiatives. Recognized as the Best Transgender Project at the CSR Summit 2025, the initiative demonstrates Thomson Reuters’ commitment to advancing inclusion both internally, through diverse workplaces, and externally, by uplifting the broader community.

# THE IWEI TOP EMPLOYERS AWARDS

In recognition of their leading work in LGBT+ inclusion, the IWEI congratulates the following Top Employers





Top 10 employers have integrated LGBT+ inclusion comprehensively and serve as industry thought leaders, setting the standard with transformative initiatives to lead the change.



Deutsche Bank Group



Shape the future  
with confidence



JPMorganChase



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Group



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LaLIT





# Every Voice Matters

At MSCI, we encourage our employees to reach their full potential, which is why we work to ensure our people have the resources they need and that their voices are heard.

Discover more about inclusion and belonging at [msci.com](https://www.msci.com)



## EQUITY AT WORK, EQUALITY FOR LIFE

Because banking with integrity means standing with every identity





Gold employers have successfully embedded LGBT+ inclusion in their core policies, hiring practices, and external communication, demonstrating a long-term and in-depth commitment towards LGBT+ inclusion.



## ZS is a place where *passion* changes lives



We are a management consulting and technology firm that partners with companies to improve life and how we live it. We transform ideas into impact by bringing together data, science, technology and human ingenuity to deliver better outcomes for all.

At ZS, inclusion and belonging go well beyond what meets the eye. We are committed to nurturing a high-performing culture where every individual feels valued, respected and empowered to flourish.



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A workplace that inspires you to be your true self:





Silver employers have made significant achievements in promoting LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace, demonstrating progress and impact over time.



*\*3 anonymous companies*



Bronze employers have started their journey to better LGBT+ inclusion at work by developing inclusive policies and initiating activities that promote LGBT+ inclusion for employees.



# Powering Pride



Every day **we are committed to promoting equity at work**. Nasdaq's people bring a wide range of backgrounds and experiences that elevate everything we do.

We leverage our unique position at the intersection of capital creation, markets and technology **to promote diversity and equity among the businesses** and communities we serve.

We strive to create **a culture that encourages individual growth and achievement** and enables people to be their full selves at work.

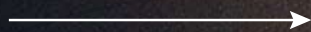


**BE PART OF  
A GLOBAL TEAM  
UNLIKE ANY OTHER**

## SPECIAL AWARDS

We also recognize the exceptional contribution made by individuals from within our Top Employers. Our Special Award Winners have gone above and beyond to create inclusive workplaces for LGBT+ employees in India and supported their companies on their LGBT+ inclusion journey.

### OUR WINNERS ARE



# ALLY TRAILBLAZER OF THE YEAR



**Bharat Sekar** (he/him)

Sr. Proposal Manager & Team Lead  
Jacobs Solutions India Pvt. Ltd.

Barath Sekar (he/him) is one of the visionary allies at Jacobs, championing a culture of belonging where everyone can thrive — a culture Jacobs calls TogetherBeyond™. As the Former Chair of Prism in India, one of the company's most impactful Employee Networks, Barath advanced Jacobs' unparalleled focus on inclusion, helping build safe, supportive, and empowering spaces for LGBTQ+ employees, along with a diverse team of visionaries, thinkers and doers in India.

Leading Prism's evolution in India into a strong advocacy network that drives awareness, policy change, and cultural transformation, Barath's initiatives have consistently fostered empathy, education, and action across teams and regions, creating meaningful visibility and safe spaces for LGBTQ+ community and Allies.

Among his notable achievements, Barath curated the "LGBTQ+ History in India" seminar, attended by over 300 employees, a first-of-its-kind effort that educated colleagues on queer heritage and created space for authentic dialogue. Through his 'QUEERious Café' initiative, he established safe, recurring

forums for employees to openly discuss identity, allyship, and inclusion, dismantle stereotypes and nurture understanding across levels.

Barath also led Jacobs' Pride March initiatives in India, championing visible allyship to demonstrate the company's unwavering commitment to inclusion. He also helped advance inclusive benefits, including health insurance for same-sex partners and coverage for gender-affirming procedures. Barath's work has earned him accolades at Jacobs and beyond, including being shortlisted as a IWEI's DEI Champion finalist last year.

Barath's leadership exemplifies the power of authentic allyship: bold, compassionate, and action-oriented. His legacy continues to inspire colleagues across Jacobs and beyond to lead with empathy and integrity. Congratulations, Barath!

SPECIAL AWARDS

# LGBT+ TRAILBLAZER OF THE YEAR



Tanisha Gupta (she/her)

Co-lead Pride ERG

Novartis Healthcare Pvt. Ltd.

Tanisha Gupta is a dynamic young leader redefining what inclusion looks like in today's workplaces. As a Manager in HSE & Environmental Sustainability Engagement and Co-Lead of AGLOW, the Pride Employee Resource Group at Novartis, she has played a pivotal role in strengthening psychological safety, fostering dialogue, and building meaningful support systems for LGBTQIA+ employees across the organisation.

Her defining moment came in June 2024, when she addressed more than 500 associates at the marquee Pride event, sharing her story with honesty and courage. The impact was immediate and profound; two colleagues came out that same day, demonstrating Tanisha's ability to turn awareness into belonging. Recognising the need for deeper connection, she introduced dedicated listening circles for LGBTQIA+ associates and rainbow parents, which expanded rapidly from a single attendee in 2024 to sixteen today.

Under her co-leadership, AGLOW has continued to evolve into a thriving community that champions inclusion across Novartis. The group has advanced inclusive policies, gender-neutral

infrastructure, and sensitisation sessions for hiring managers, while also driving visible cultural change through initiatives such as a three-storey Pride flag hoisting, a Pride bench on campus, and artistic collaborations with LGBTQIA+ creators, including a mural made with employees. AGLOW's efforts have also encouraged associates to share their coming-out stories at large gatherings, weaving inclusion more deeply into the organisation's culture.

As a Certified Pride Ambassador for Asia, Tanisha has contributed to Novartis' global Stonewall recognition and shared insights on platforms such as myGwork on IDAHOBILIT 2025. Beyond her corporate work, she founded Project Kutumb, an initiative that helped build understanding between queer individuals and their families. In 2025, she represented India at the One Young World Summit in Munich and was shortlisted for the first round as a delegate speaker for the global plenary on Anti-Hate.

Tanisha's leadership continues to inspire a more inclusive and compassionate future for workplaces and communities alike. Congratulations, Tanisha!

SPECIAL AWARDS

# PRIDE EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP (ERG) OF THE YEAR



Deutsche Bank Group

Deutsche Bank Group  
dbPride India

dbPride India stands as a model of what sustained allyship, authentic leadership, and community-driven inclusion can achieve. Comprising 75+ LGBTQ+ employees and supported by dbAlly, a network of over 500 allies, dbPride continues to create spaces where every individual feels seen, heard, and valued across Deutsche Bank India.

Through biweekly connects, dbPride fosters a strong sense of belonging, celebrating personal milestones, addressing workplace concerns, and offering peer support in a safe and affirming environment. LGBTQ+ employees also have access to queer-affirmative mental health counselling, ensuring holistic support for emotional and psychological wellbeing.

dbPride's creative year-round programming reflects its commitment to awareness, advocacy, and action. From the Pride Bazaar and Leadership Floor Walks to interactive film screenings, musical skits, and Purple Ice Cream Day, their initiatives merge learning with celebration. Workshops on "Parenting for Gender Inclusion" and "Inclusive Sex Education at Home" have further engaged families in

building inclusive ecosystems beyond the workplace.

The Safe Zone Project and Inclusive Sphere training have transformed awareness into allyship, engaging 1,000+ employees through empathy-led learning. These initiatives have empowered employees to come out proudly.

In 2024–25, dbPride deepened its impact through high-impact engagements such as the 'Future Proofing Pride' forum, Allyship Masterclass, and the DEI Champions Award, featuring changemakers and global leaders.

dbPride's journey is one of transformation, combining bold visibility with compassionate leadership to redefine what inclusion truly means. Their work continues to make Deutsche Bank a place where every LGBTQ+ employee can thrive authentically and unapologetically. Congratulations, dbPride!

SPECIAL AWARDS

# DEI CHAMPION OF THE YEAR



Ali Khan (he/him)

Global Head, Governance Risk &  
Compliance and Global Pride IDG Head  
ZS Associates India Pvt. Ltd.

Ali is a transformative leader and one of the driving forces behind ZS Associates' global journey toward greater diversity, equity, and inclusion. Through his leadership in Pride@ZS and his influential role on the Inclusion & Belonging Council, Ali has built a culture where inclusion is not an initiative but an everyday practice.

Under his guidance, Pride@ZS has evolved from a small group of committed individuals into a thriving global network of over 1200+ members, amplifying LGBT+ visibility and advocacy across regions. His leadership has resulted in landmark policy changes, including the introduction of inclusive insurance benefits, self-identification options within company systems, and trans-inclusive hiring initiatives, ensuring that every employee feels seen, supported, and valued.

Ali's impact extends beyond the workplace. Through partnerships with organizations such as the MIST LGBTQ Foundation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), he has spearheaded community initiatives on HIV awareness, education, and empowerment,

bridging the gap between corporate inclusion and social change.

Recognizing that true inclusion embraces all identities, Ali has also championed intersectionality by advocating for new ERGs such as Muslims@ZS and the East Asia Community Network, creating spaces for cultural dialogue and belonging. As a member of ZS's IB Council, he continues to shape organization-wide strategy, ensuring diversity is integrated into recruitment, leadership development, and employee experience.

Ali's leadership has delivered measurable results, from increased minority representation to stronger engagement and retention, cementing ZS Associates' reputation as a DEI leader in India.

A passionate advocate, strategic thinker, and empathetic leader, Ali embodies the spirit of inclusion that transforms workplaces and communities alike. His work continues to inspire a new generation of leaders to build spaces where everyone can truly belong. Congratulations, Ali!

SPECIAL AWARDS

# PRIDE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR OF THE YEAR

Powered By  
 Marsh McLennan



Dorte Landwehr (she/her)

Director of Operations, South India

McKinsey Global Capabilities  
& Services

Dorte Landwehr is a seasoned leader with a three-decade career at McKinsey & Company, marked by her commitment to fostering inclusive and collaborative workplaces. An OCI cardholder and long-time resident of Chennai, Dorte brings a global perspective shaped by her experiences in Germany, the U.S., and India.

As Director of Operations for McKinsey Global Capabilities & Services (MGCS) in South India, Dorte leads more than 2,000 colleagues across Chennai and Bengaluru. She has been instrumental in embedding diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into the region's operations, ensuring these principles are reflected in daily work practices.

Dorte is an active sponsor of EQUAL, McKinsey's LGBTQ+ employee resource group, and has led initiatives such as non-discriminatory hiring practices, inclusive health benefits, gender-neutral facilities, and allyship training. She played a key role in launching the Day of Pink celebration in Chennai in 2014, which has since become an annual tradition across the firm. Programs like "Voices of Equal" and "Allies from the Heart"

further reflect her commitment to fostering a culture of inclusion.

Beyond McKinsey, Dorte has collaborated with organizations such as PeriFerry, EnAble India, Sa-Ni-Sa, and the Help the Blind Foundation to support marginalized communities. These partnerships have included skill-building programs for the transgender community, inclusive hiring initiatives, and conversations with social change leaders.

Dorte's efforts also extend to women's empowerment and disability inclusion through initiatives like Women's Wisdom Circles, Lean-In sessions, and Access Chapter learning programs. Under her leadership, over 30% of colleagues in McKinsey's India centers actively participate in DEI initiatives, strengthening allyship and representation across the region.

Dorte's leadership reflects a thoughtful and sustained approach to inclusion, setting a strong example for creating workplaces where everyone can thrive. Congratulations, Dorte!

SPECIAL AWARDS

# PRIDE EXECUTIVE SPONSOR OF THE YEAR

Powered By  
 Marsh McLennan



Nilesh Iyer (he/him)

CEO

Natixis Global Services India

Nilesh Iyer, CEO of Natixis Services in India, exemplifies how inclusive leadership can redefine industries and inspire systemic change. With nearly two decades of experience in financial services, Nilesh has led one of India's youngest Global Capability Centers (GCCs) toward becoming a benchmark for inclusion in a traditionally heteronormative sector.

Under his stewardship, Natixis has woven diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) into its foundation through the transformative charter "Inclusion 360," which reimagines every stage of the employee journey, from recruitment and engagement to leadership and well-being.

A firm believer that "inclusive brands win customer trust, investor confidence, and long-term growth," Nilesh has championed initiatives that move beyond tokenism to create lasting impact. His LGBTQIA+ Apprenticeship Program, launched in 2023, provides structured pathways for LGBTQIA+ youth entering the workforce, offering competitive stipends, mentorship, and full employee benefits. This initiative ensures a seamless, equitable transition from university to corporate life.

At Natixis, inclusion is tangible. Employees and their partners enjoy comprehensive health

coverage, including gender-affirming surgeries and hormone therapy, along with dedicated mental health support delivered through queer-affirmative professionals.

Nilesh's partnership with PeriFerry has extended inclusion beyond corporate walls, empowering LGBTQIA+ individuals through digital skill-building, mentorship, and a unique "Day in the Corporate Environment" experience at Natixis.

By embedding DEI into business strategy, Nilesh has ensured continuous learning through awareness sessions, allyship drives, and partnerships with organizations like Pride Circle, creating a culture of empathy and collaboration across teams. He's invested time out to be a loud and proud advocate for LGBTQIA+ inclusion and mental wellbeing and spoken at forums such as the People, Wellbeing & Thriving Summit and the Trans Inclusion Summit.

Through his visionary leadership, Nilesh Iyer has turned intent into action, building a workplace where difference is not just accepted but celebrated. His work continues to position Natixis as a pioneer of progressive inclusion within India's financial services ecosystem. Congratulations, Nilesh!

SPECIAL AWARDS

# SUPPLIER DIVERSITY CHAMPION OF THE YEAR

Powered By



## NatWest Digital Services India Private Limited

At NatWest India, supplier diversity is not just a policy, it's a purposeful commitment to equity, representation, and shared prosperity. Under visionary leadership, the organization has built one of the most inclusive and responsible sourcing ecosystems in corporate India, ensuring that inclusion extends beyond the workplace and into the marketplace.

Between 2023 and 2025, NatWest partnered with Pride Circle to host the Rainbow Bazaar across its Gurugram and Chennai campuses, spotlighting over 20 LGBT+ owned businesses and drawing more than 1,000 colleagues. The initiative generated over 200 business leads, amplifying queer entrepreneurship and building lasting visibility for underrepresented suppliers. Turning intent into impact, NatWest has successfully onboarded two LGBT+ owned vendors, strengthening its supplier network and demonstrating how inclusion can drive measurable change.

NatWest also embeds inclusion through its Supplier Diversity Charter and targeted capability-building efforts. More than 5,000 employees have completed the LGBT+

Awareness e-learning program, while the YES Check tool ensures DE&I principles are considered in every supplier evaluation. The updated Supplier Code of Conduct (June 2025) explicitly includes protections for sexual orientation and gender identity, setting a new industry standard for ethical sourcing.

Beyond compliance, NatWest champions community collaboration, sharing LGBT+ inclusion best practices with partner organizations, inviting suppliers to participate in ERG-led events, and working with EcoVadis to embed LGBT+ inclusion into ESG assessments.

Through policy innovation, supplier engagement, and sustained allyship, NatWest India has redefined what it means to build an inclusive supply chain. Its vision reflects a simple truth, economic empowerment begins with equitable access and authentic representation.

Congratulations, NatWest India, for championing inclusion beyond business and setting new benchmarks in supplier diversity!

SPECIAL AWARDS

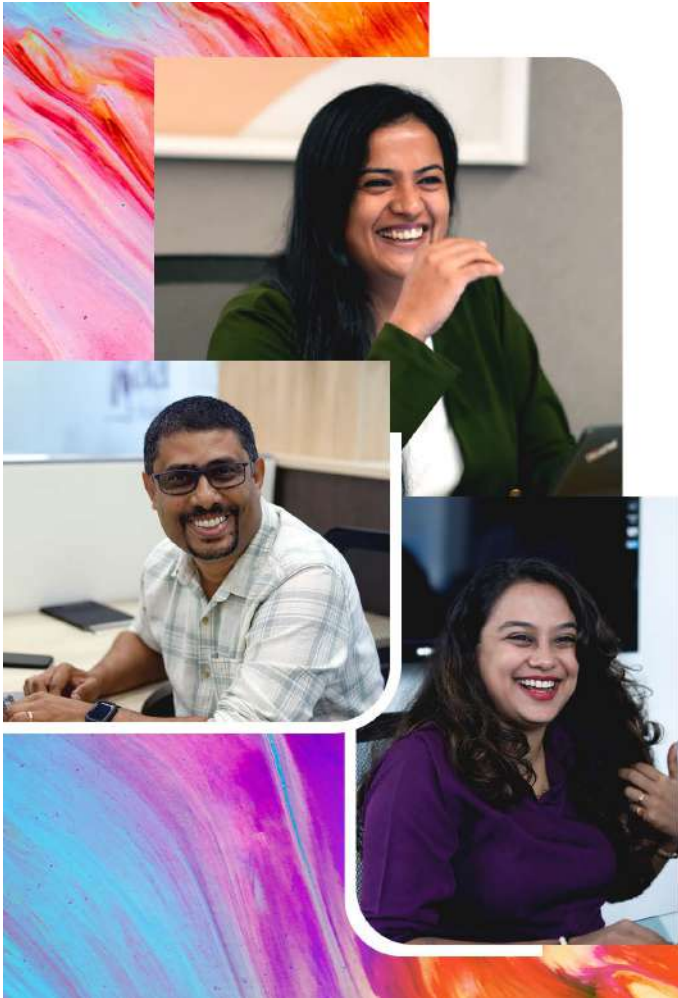
DIAGEO

India

Keep Walking  
with *Pride!*

At Diageo India,  
we celebrate *you* for  
*who you are!*

*Celebrating life,*  
every day, everywhere



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# IWEI 2026 CALENDAR



DEC - MAR  
2025 2026

Customised Feedback Report & Consultation

ARP 2026

Announcement of 7th Edition & Launch Webinars

MAY 2026

Submission Opens for Survey

JUL 2026

Submission Closes for Employer Survey & Awards Nomination

AUG 2026

Submission Closes for Employee Feedback Survey

NOV 2026

7th Edition of Annual Summit and Awards (in-person)

To become a sponsor for IWEI 2026, please write to [nikita@thepridecircle.com](mailto:nikita@thepridecircle.com)

*\*Calendar updates for Webinars & Roundtables will be published in March 2026.*

# IWEI PARTNERS



The Keshav Suri Foundation has made strides with its various initiatives and programs, focusing on the marginal intersections of society, including the LGBTQAI+ communities, people with disabilities, and acid attack survivors. The foundation is working towards queer livelihood building, access to education through scholarships and fellowships, making mental health services available for the communities, and creating workspaces diverse & inclusive. The foundation is on a mission to Embrace, Empower, and Mainstream various communities across the country.



Pride Circle is a Diversity & Inclusion company with a mission to enable & empower the LGBTQ+ community, Allies, Educational Institutions, organisations, & Society in fostering a culture of belonging for all. Founded in India, now operating in the UK. We partner with over 500 companies worldwide offering a comprehensive, best-in-class consulting & advocacy programs that enables them to foster safe, inclusive and welcoming work environments. We are also invested in building Generational Inclusion, Mental Wellbeing, and Psychological Safety for all through an intersectional lens, enabling everyone to thrive at work.



Founded in London in 1989, Stonewall now works in each nation of the UK and has established partnerships across the globe. We help create transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people through our campaigns, research and change and empowerment programmes. We continue to fight for a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live their lives to the fullest.

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# CONTACT US

For more information about the Index or to sign up for the IWEI 2026,

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Call us on: [+91 9840177228](tel:+919840177228)

Learn more: [workplaceequalityindex.in](http://workplaceequalityindex.in)

“

Inclusion isn't a trend.  
It's the foundation of dignity, trust,  
and innovation in the modern world.

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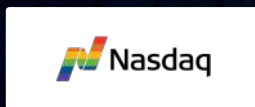
Badge & Lanyard  
Partner



Seating  
Partner



Attendee Gift  
Partners



Hospitality  
Partner



rainbow  
bazaar