

# Swinburne University of Technology

## Pride @ Swinburne – LGBTIQ Strategic Action Plan



# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Context and Swinburne's HR Strategic Planning Framework

Swinburne has established its 2020 vision – to become Australia's leading university in science, technology and innovation. To achieve this, we will:

- embrace a university-wide commitment to growth through excellence
- engage our students through quality, personalised education
- produce outstanding research that is relevant and internationally recognised
- be the partner of choice for the industries and communities we serve

To achieve Swinburne's 2020 vision, within the context of the **University's 2020 Plan**, the **Culture & Capability Strategy** is focused on establishing and nurturing an optimal organisational *culture* characterised by the values identified, and on building our *capability*. The Strategy sets out four key objectives for the years to 2020 which are:

1. An organisational culture that values innovation, integrity, accountability, inclusion and teamwork and that excels in high performance and continuous improvement
2. A socially inclusive and diverse culture that values staff and students and ensures their safety and wellbeing
3. Managed positive social, environmental and sustainable growth
4. Outstanding technology, infrastructure and facilities, and highly efficient business systems

The Culture & Capability Strategy will be operationalised with appropriate accountabilities through business unit plans in accordance with Swinburne's planning framework. One key component of the Culture & Capability Strategy is Swinburne University's People Strategy 2014 to 2020.

The Swinburne University's **People Strategy 2014 to 2020** is intended to assist in enabling the Learning and Teaching, Research and Development and Engagement Strategies in order to deliver on the Swinburne University 2020 Plan. The People Strategy is our formal commitment to a workplace culture that builds respect, fosters inclusiveness, promotes diversity and embraces the unique skills and qualities of all Swinburne employees.

The People Strategy focuses on the major themes of:

- Culture
- Capability
- Employee relations
- **Diversity**
- Well-being and safety

Attracting, engaging, developing and retaining high-performing and high-potential employees are essential sub-themes in the People Strategy.

## 1.2. Diversity Priorities and Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan (LGBTIQ)

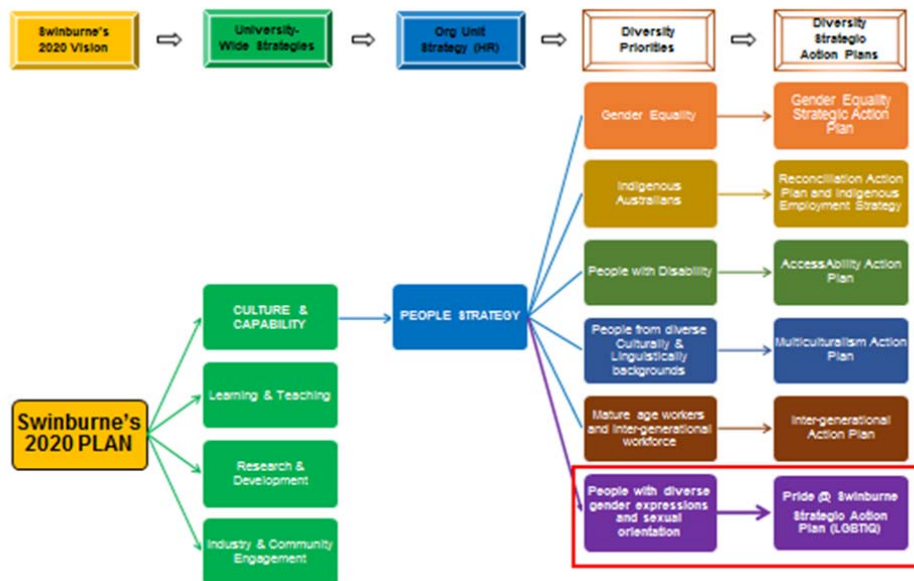
The University celebrates and respects the strength that difference creates. We acknowledge that diversity in the workforce encompasses gender, age, and race, place of birth, gender expression, cultural or religious background, physical ability, sexual orientation, language or experience. Swinburne acknowledges and embraces diversity and has prioritised the following diversity areas:

- People with diverse gender expressions and sexual orientation (LGBTIQ)
- Gender equality
- Indigenous Australians
- People with Disability
- People from diverse culturally and linguistically backgrounds
- Mature age workers and inter-generational workforce

Swinburne recognises the value in enabling the development of the skills and talents of all members of our community. We recognise that diversity increases the effectiveness of teams and the capacity for innovation. Diversity is valued and promoted across all university processes and activities, including recruitment, learning and development and talent management.

One of the key components of Swinburne’s People Strategy are our “Diversity Priorities”. Swinburne will deliver on these priorities through the relevant strategic action plans. The diagram below depicts the correlation between Swinburne’s university-wide strategies and the HR strategy, diversity priorities and the corresponding strategic action plans. This is referred to as Swinburne University’s Human Resources (HR) strategic planning framework.

*Swinburne University’s HR Strategic Planning Framework*



The **Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan** is incorporated into the University's business strategy and planning processes.

## 2. Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan and its key pillars

Staff and students who identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bi-sexual, Transgender, Intersex, and Queer and Questioning (LGBTIQ) are an integral part of Swinburne's diverse community.

We are a University that has a deep and abiding commitment to working with our LGBTIQ community, both staff and students, to ensure that we are supporting our people and saying no to the prejudice, hatred, discrimination and abuse of queer people. To this end, Swinburne is committed to developing and implementing a Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan, which would be reviewed on a yearly basis.

The Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan identifies initiatives for implementation intended to help create a more diverse and inclusive culture by promoting greater visibility and awareness of LGBTIQ issues that our staff and students experience.

The **Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan encompasses six key strategic pillars** which are represented in the diagram below. Under each strategic pillar a series of key initiatives and deliverables will be identified, developed and implemented.



## 2.1. Strategic Pillar 1: **Governance Framework**

Our Vice Chancellor chairs Swinburne's Executive Group who are responsible for the realisation of the University's 2020 Plan through various university-wide strategies (e.g. Culture & Capability Strategy), organisational unit strategies (e.g. People Strategy) and diversity priority based strategic action plans (e.g. Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan). The Vice Chancellor regularly reports to the University's Council on progress relative to diversity priorities and goals.

The Vice-President, International & Future Students (Swinburne EG member) is the Executive sponsor for the **Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan**.

A Pride @ Swinburne Steering Committee has been established. The committee members include:

- Vice President International & Future Students (Executive Sponsor)
- Associate Director, Workplace Relations & Diversity (Chair)
- VE representative
- Higher Ed representative
- Workplace Relations & Diversity Consultant
- Associate Director, Internal Communications
- Student Leadership Officer
- Other representatives

The steering committee is responsible for the achievement of the LGBTIQ diversity priorities through a clearly defined strategic action plan. At a high level the Pride @ Swinburne steering committee will be responsible for:

- the development and implementation of the strategy
- the identification of key priorities, programs and events for each year
- Ongoing monitoring and reporting progress to Swinburne's Executive Group
- Engagement with internal and external stakeholders and partners
- Management of relevant budget

A dedicated **Rainbow Student Advisory Group** will be formed including a spectrum of representation from the LGBTIQ student community. The Rainbow Student Advisory Group in conjunction with SSAA and SSU will be responsible for progressing the Pride @ Swinburne strategy for the student community and will also provide recommendations to the pride @ Swinburne Steering Committee.

Furthermore, "initiative or event" based working groups will be set up (including Swinburne staff and student representatives) to design, develop and implement initiatives and events that have been prioritised by the Pride @ Swinburne steering committee.

## 2.2. Strategic Pillar 2: **The Safe Zone**

The objective of this strategic pillar is to create a "safe zone" (a facilitated focus group) within Swinburne to give our students and staff regular opportunities to raise any concerns and share experiences and ideas about how we can create a workplace and learning environment that is more LGBTIQ friendly.

The steering committee proposes to run regular safe zone sessions every year (at least two per year) inviting Swin Allies, key stakeholders, students and staff representatives to participate in a “safe zone” facilitated focus group discussions.

The themes emerging from these discussions will further help define and refine the Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan.

### **2.3. Strategic Pillar 3: Swin ALLY Network**

In 2014, Swinburne will establish and launch an Ally program called the Swin ALLY network. Staff and students will be invited to sign up to be a Swin ALLY. A Swin ALLY is a visible champion who proactively raises awareness of LGBTIQ and sexual orientation equality across Swinburne and promotes a LGBTIQ friendly workplace and learning environment.

This network would include passionate Swin Allies (both staff and students) across the University who will collectively work towards:

- increasing visibility of LGBTIQ staff and students
- fostering greater inclusion across Swinburne’s staff and student community
- proactively raising awareness of the LGBTIQ issues

Swin Allies will receive ongoing communication pertaining to LGBTIQ events, training and development and volunteering opportunities.

Furthermore, it is proposed that a Swin ALLY training program be offered to all staff and students who have expressed an interest in becoming a Swin ALLY. This training program will offer an introduction to some challenges that our LGBTIQ staff and students experience and how we can individually and collectively work towards addressing them through various inclusive programs and practices.

### **2.4. Strategic Pillar 4: Awareness, Education and Development**

Swinburne will take a two pronged approach to increase awareness, to educate and develop staff and students around LGBTIQ issues:

#### **A. Unconscious bias training:**

We recognise that unconscious bias may be a key obstacle to achieving the full potential of all our diversity priorities, including the LGBTIQ diversity priority area. With this in mind, Swinburne proposes to roll out training across all levels of the organisation to help identify and overcome unconscious bias which may hinder the advancement of a diverse workforce at Swinburne.

#### **B. LGBTIQ – awareness, education and development program:**

- **Swin ALLY training program:**

It is proposed that a dedicated Swin ALLY training program for all staff and students who have signed up to be Swin ALLY is developed and implemented in 2015. This training program will offer an introduction to some challenges that our LGBTIQ staff and students experience and how we can individually and collectively work towards addressing them through various inclusive programs and practices.

- **Targeted training programs and workshops:**

In addition to the Swin ALLY training program, Swinburne will develop and implement a range of training programs and workshops that aim to create a safe and inclusive workplace or learning environment for all Swinburne staff and students who identify as LGBTIQ.

Furthermore, a range of information and education sessions will be implemented at regular intervals focusing on key relevant topics.

- **Development programs:**

Swinburne proposes to roll-out a range of development programs for staff and students. For instance in 2015, it is proposed that a LGBTIQ Mentoring Program for Swinburne students is implemented by SSAA.

## **2.5. Strategic Pillar 5: Engagement**

Strong engagement and collaboration within Swinburne and externally with key agencies, associations and organisations is critical to ensure success of our LGBTIQ diversity priority.

To increase our engagement (internally and externally) and to provide key information and resources to staff and students, Swinburne proposes to leverage a range of channels including:

- A dedicated webpage - Pride @ Swinburne
- Online blogs and e-newsletters
- Events for staff and students celebrating key dates on the LGBTIQ calendar
- Facilitated focus groups including “the Safe Zone”
- Pursue Pride in Diversity membership
- Partner at key LGBTIQ events – for example Midsumma festival, It Gets Better Project
- Engage with key organisations such as Pride in Diversity, Transgender Victoria, Diversity Council of Australia to name a few
- Networking events

## **2.6. Strategic Pillar 6: Implement Best Practice**

Swinburne will continue to review our current policies, procedures, support mechanisms, communications and methods of engaging with our LGBTIQ staff and students. Some actions that Swinburne proposes to undertake in this regard include:

- Review current policies pertaining to recruitment, EEO, Discrimination and Harassment policies for staff
- Ensure LGBTIQ friendly terminology is available on our HR, IT systems for staff and students
- Explore appropriate infrastructure and facilities that can be provided to our LGBTIQ employees for example, QueerSpace, Unisex restrooms etc.
- Ensure appropriate Medical and counselling services are available to staff and students where appropriate

- Employee Assistance Program

Swinburne will strive to establish appropriate channels to continually seek feedback from staff and students in relation to policy, facilities and services which may affect them.



### 3. Pride @ Swinburne Strategic Action Plan 2014-2015

Swinburne's proposed key actions and deliverables for roll out in 2014-2015 have been summarised in the table below.

Strategic Pillar	Actions	Accountability	Timeline	Key Performance Indicator
<b>Strategic Pillar 1: Governance Framework</b>	1. Establish Pride @ Swinburne Steering Committee	HR	2014	Relevant governance framework established and running
	2. Establish Rainbow Student Advisory Group (RSAG) and to consult with LGBTIQ students on SSAA services and activities including accessibility, inclusiveness, and healthy lifestyle activities.	SSAA – Student Leadership Office	2014	
	3. Select key student representatives from RSAG to provide input into the Steering Committee	SSAA – Student Leadership Office	2014 - Ongoing	
	4. Set up “initiative/ event” working groups as required including representatives from staff and students	HR and SSAA	2014 - Ongoing	
<b>Strategic Pillar 2: The “Safe Zone” A forum to raise and address LGBTIQ issues</b>	5. Conduct “safe zone” facilitated discussions inviting staff and students	HR and SSAA	2015 - Ongoing	Two facilitated “Safe zone” forums conducted per year
<b>Strategic Pillar 3: Swin ALLY Network</b>	6. Establish a Swin ALLY program and network	HR and SSAA	2014 - Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful roll out of Swin ALLY network</li> <li>• Feedback from Swin Allies</li> <li>• Feedback from staff and students through various mechanisms</li> </ul>
	7. Develop an ongoing communication strategy with the Swin ALLY network	Internal communications, HR and SSAA	2014- Ongoing	
	8. Develop and roll out a Swin ALLY training program	HR and SSAA	2015 - Ongoing	
	9. Evaluate Swin ALLY network and training programs	HR and SSAA	Ongoing	

Strategic Pillar	Actions	Accountability	Timeline	Key Performance Indicator
<b>Strategic Pillar 4: Awareness, Education and Development</b>	10. Unconscious bias training program developed and implemented for all Swinburne diversity priorities	HR	Pilot in 2014 2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Successful implementation of relevant training, awareness and education program</li> <li>• Feedback from staff and students</li> <li>• Training program feedback</li> </ul>
	11. Targeted training programs and workshops developed and implemented to create a safe and inclusive workplace and learning environment for staff and students who identify as LGBTIQ. For example, "Coming Out Workshop"	HR and SSAA	2015- Ongoing	
	12. Develop and roll out LGBTIQ Mentoring Program for <b>Students</b>	SSAA	2015- Ongoing	
	13. Organise education and information forums for staff and students pertaining to various key topics. For example, "Working with LGBTIQ students"	HR and SSAA		
	14. Develop and roll out a Pride Reverse Mentoring Program for select Senior Leaders at Swinburne	HR	2015	
	15. Promote and create visibility of work undertaken by expert Swinburne academic and research staff who have deeper understanding of LGBTIQ issues in the workplace, learning environment and the community more broadly	HR	2015	
<b>Strategic Pillar 5: Engagement</b>	16. Organise Pride @ Swinburne Day on Thursday, 9 October 2014	SSAA	9 October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Your Voice survey results</li> <li>• Feedback from staff and students for the event</li> </ul>
	17. Organise other key events for staff and students celebrating key dates on the LGBTIQ calendar	HR and SSAA	Ongoing	
	18. Utilise online blogs, newsletters and other key social media channels to promote and encourage appropriate conversations pertaining to key topics	SSAA	Ongoing	
	19. Sign up for Pride in Diversity membership	HR	2014	
<b>Strategic Pillar 6: Implement Best Practice</b>	20. Update gender neutral terminology on HR Systems	HR	2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice policies, procedures and facilities in place</li> </ul>
	21. Review and update relevant policies and procedures to ensure they are LGBTIQ friendly	HR	2015	
	22. Provide for a Unisex restroom	Facilities	2014	

Strategic Pillar	Actions	Accountability	Timeline	Key Performance Indicator
	23. Set up appropriate feedback mechanisms from staff and students in relation to policy, facilities and services that would affect them	HR and SSAA	2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feedback from staff and students</li> </ul>