

Diversity and inclusion stories:

Harry: Associate director, Ernst & Young (EY)



Listen and get inspired by Harry as he talks about his experience of diversity and inclusion in the workplace.

First off, tell me about you – what's your name and where do you work?

Hello. My name is Harry. I work at EY. EY works with entrepreneurs, companies, and entire countries around the world to solve their most pressing challenges.

I am an openly bi-person in my workplace. In addition to my day job, I serve as EY's global Bi+ Inclusion Champion.

That sounds really interesting. Can you talk a bit more about what your role involves?

My role is to represent our bi community, those who experience attraction to more than one gender. Many within this community identify as bisexual or bi for short and also pansexual or pan for short.

In this role, I also work with bi representatives from over 30 leading employers who share the same commitment to their bi community to help them advance bi inclusion in their workplaces.

What inspired you to get into this role?

As a young bi person, I grew up experiencing a lack of belonging and lacked visible bi role models and access to bi communities. At times, I felt alone and isolated, without support or representation.

Entering the workplace, it was great to see a commitment from my employer towards LGBTQ inclusion. However, I also noticed that the bi community was still underrepresented. There were no bi role models, limited understanding of bi issues and limited support for the bi+ community.

I saw a need and opportunity to help create a culture of belonging for bi people as part of EY's overall commitment to LGBTQ inclusion.

What's been your experience of championing LGBTQ inclusion in your workplace?

When I identified as bi, I received support from the company's LGBTQ network to organise an event for Bi Visibility Day – an internationally recognised celebration of bisexual identities which takes place annually in September. Being open as a bi person and working to champion bi inclusion at my company have been beneficial to my professional development.

It's great to hear how supported you feel by your employer. How do you think this has impacted you, professionally and personally?

Being able to openly identify as bi allows me to bring my whole self to the work I do, boosting my confidence and sense of belonging. Working on our bi inclusion strategy has helped me build new skills, a better network and raise my profile in EY and with the companies we work with. It's also so personally rewarding to help build and empower our bi+ community.

What do you think are the main things staff get out of having LGBTQ networks in place?

There are lots of benefits of LGBTQ employee networks in the workplace; they provide a safe space and platform for LGBTQ people to have a voice. They help raise awareness and understanding, and to educate people outside the LGBTQ community around how to be effective supporters, or "allies". Ultimately, they help people feel a sense of belonging within the workplace.

What benefits do you think LGBTQ networks offer employers and businesses?

Leading employers recognise the importance of building a Diverse & Inclusive workplace culture. It's not just about doing the right thing for employees, but also about doing the right thing for business. Workplaces where people of all genders, ethnicities, sexual orientations, faiths and abilities believe they belong are better positioned to succeed in the long term.

What's one thing you've learnt from your role that would want other people in the LGBTQ community to know?

One key thing I have learnt from my experience championing inclusion is that everything we need is within us; we each have enormous capacity to inspire and bring about positive change. Having the courage to be our authentic selves we are in the best possible position to help inspire others to do the same. Young LGBTQ people should understand they hold immense power within them to make a positive difference in the world by being a role model for others in the LGBTQ community.

Where could young LGBTQ people go to find more advice and support?

There are lots of networks that young LGBTQ people can look at to find support:

- [Bi Pride UK](#) is the UK's leading bi inclusion charity
- [Stonewall](#) is one of the world's the leading LGBTQ inclusion charities
- The [Bi Leaders Network](#). Or on [Instagram](#)

Check out more stories like this by visiting barclayslifeskills.com and searching "Diversity and inclusion stories".