

6 things you should know when LGBTI community organising

[Blog](#), [Community Organising](#), [Human Rights Defenders](#), [ILGA-Europe Annual Conference](#)

Are you an LGBTI activist who will be empowering your community as an organiser in 2020? Here are some key ways to make sure you get it right!

Organising together is how people who experience exclusion, discrimination and violation of their human rights bring about changes in their lives. Community organisations grow and evolve from individuals organising activities together. As people continue to organise, connect and support with others, to link-in with the activities becomes a key feature of community organising.

Community organising also works the other way around — the more LGBTI people are aware, engaged, and mobilised, the more LGBTI individuals, groups and organisations are enabled in their work towards change.

If your resolution for 2020 is to empower your community as an organiser, some values and principles underpinning community organising within the LGBTI movement include:

- Respect for individual's perspectives and for difference of opinion
- Inclusion and empowerment of those who wish to join
- Outreach to those who may be challenged in participating
- Working for collective as well as for individual benefits
- Ownership and decision making by the people involved
- Accountability to others for actions taken
- Transparent representation
- Accessible and safe spaces — both physically and psychologically.

Here are six key practices to keep in mind:

1. Communicate with clarity

Use jargon free-communication about what you are doing, when, where, why. People must understand to get engaged and feel welcomed.

2. Make sure spaces are accessible

It's important to use accessible physical spaces that accommodate different abilities, financial resources, transportation and safety. Think about where you are organising and make sure that people can reach the place with public transportation, or that there are not architectural barriers and security of participants is protected.

3. Facilitate people to take part

Think about the time and the day that may facilitate people joining. For example, if you want to reach out to

youngsters in school in the morning they may be in school, and in the evening not everyone could be free to go out.

4. Ensure that cliques don't form

You may organise group activities based on people's shared identity, such as intersex or trans groups. However, you may also want to consider bringing different groups together to make sure that a broader sense of community and solidarity is cultivated.

5. Don't impose activities

Make sure that activities and future direction are based on what people want or need and are not imposed. This will help to create a sense of ownership of the space and of the work done to ensure accountability, and it will likely contribute to cultivate leadership and mobilisation. In practical terms this may mean creating a space to discuss issues and desires; plan together or open the space for planning; but also work on social change decisions, progress, plans, etc. to the widest group possible.

6. Support different interests

Different people have different needs and desires and should be encouraged to organise based on that. Diversity of activities will most likely lead to more people participating and feeling that their necessities are met.

At ILGA-Europe we believe that for social change towards acceptance of diversity and equality to happen, LGBTI people and communities must be at the core of the work. Want to know more? Have a look at our resource [Organising for change: resources to support LGBTI community organising work](#) by Patricia Prendiville (Equality Works) and Valeria Santostefano (ILGA-Europe).