

6 tips for LGBTI organisations partnering alongside a business in Pride season

[Blog](#), [Fundraising](#), [Pride](#)

How businesses engage with LGBTI inclusion has changed enormously in the last decade. Today, more businesses actively seek to work together with civil society organisations, while these may find new allies in the private sector. If you are part of an LGBTI group and are considering to collaborate with companies as Pride season kicks off, this blog and our [Frontline podcast mini-series](#) are for [you](#).

“We cannot deny the influence of the private sector in our societies,” says Evelyne Paradis, ILGA-Europe’s Executive Director, in our latest [Frontline podcast mini-series](#) exploring the challenges and opportunities that come with businesses supporting LGBTI equality. “They have access to power in a way we don’t. We need to build bridges.”

Many businesses are seeing the benefits of LGBTI inclusion both internally and externally, from market reputation to talent attraction and employee motivation. For many LGBTI activists at home with addressing policy-makers and providing services to communities, working with the private sector may be an unknown arena, even raising eyebrows.

However, a partnership can be “incredibly mutually beneficial” for both sides, says Nancy Kelley, Stonewall’s Chief Executive. “Companies can learn how to be better employers, better suppliers to consumers, as well as to be supportive to communities. And for civil society organisations it is an opportunity to access powerful supporters and to access funding they wouldn’t have otherwise.”

Furthermore, companies can reach broader audiences and have an effective impact on public opinion. This is especially relevant when LGBTI rights are at risk. One example is this [advertisement campaign](#) in which Mermaids collaborated with Starbucks in which a trans teenager hears their chosen name for the first time at the coffee retailer.

Here are key tips for LGBTI organisations partnering alongside a business that may be particularly useful in Pride season:

1. Before agreeing on a partnership, assess whether your values align and what the motivations of the company are. Find out if they have an **authentic approach towards LGBTI equality** by looking for key indicators:

- **Strong support from leadership** in implementing LGBTI inclusive policies and practices in the workplace.
- Supporting LGBTI equality is seen as a **long-term, sustained and well-funded effort**. A sign of this vision could be training programs on inclusion and diversity.

2. **Make a holistic appraisal of your potential partner.** Beyond LGBTI equality, look at their approach towards the environment and labour rights, including their supply chain, and any issue that matters to you.

3. **Engage with the LGBTI employees** of your business partner.

4. **Companies can support you** in a range of ways. In addition to funding, other resources companies can provide include pro bono support and advice or goods and services in-kind.

5. **Be clear** about your objectives, what you can and can't offer, and ensure that the partnership is balanced in term of outcomes.

6. Make sure both parties are clear about the objectives, obligations, deliverables and timeline of the partnership in a **written agreement**.

Do you want to know more? [Stonewall has useful advice for you.](#)