

TRANS- INCLUSIVE CULTURE

Guidance on
advancing trans
inclusion for
museums, galleries,
archives and heritage
organisations

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This guidance is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter.

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Contents

A Note on Language

4

Introduction

6

Context

9

The Public Sector Equality
Duty and the Roles,
Responsibilities and Potential
of Cultural Organisations

11

Ethical Framework for
Advancing Trans Inclusion

15

Scenarios

21

About RCMG

41

Supporting Organisations

42

A Note on Language

4

TRANS - This guidance uses the term trans as an umbrella term to include trans men and women, non-binary, gender fluid and gender non-conforming people.

TRANS INCLUSION - Refers to 'the rights of trans people to be recognised and respected in the workplace and in broader social life'.¹

TRANS-INCLUSIVE PRACTICE - A whole series of purposeful actions and activities that cultural organisations can undertake and which together will increase the potential for the organisation's workplace and public spaces to become more trans inclusive.

PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS - There are nine protected characteristics under UK equalities legislation. It is against the law to discriminate against someone because of: age; disability; gender reassignment; marriage and civil partnership; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

LGBTIQA+ - We use this inclusive term to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, asexual/aromantic/agender people.

¹ Sharon Cowan and Sean Morris, "Should 'Gender Critical' Views about Trans People Be Protected as Philosophical Beliefs in the Workplace? Lessons for the Future from *Forstater, Mackereth and Higgs*," *Industrial Law Journal*, 51, no. 1 (2022): 31.

seeing trans representation
in a museum is a fantastic
moment in history.

Every item is a trans person's
life - we are here & we always were



Introduction



This guidance has been developed by the University of Leicester's Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) with legal scholars and trans inclusion and equality experts in the context of growing uncertainty and anxiety surrounding trans-inclusive practice across heritage, arts and cultural organisations of all kinds.

The guidance, intended primarily for anyone working with or in museums, galleries, archives and heritage, sets out an ethical framework to support cultural organisations to advance trans inclusion. It explains key components of the UK law, as well as some of the limitations and complexities of the law. Developed in full, the actions and strategies shared in the guidance will enable staff, volunteers, freelancers, managers and trustees to work together to positively impact the experiences of trans individuals and communities.

Under the 2010 Equality Act, which includes a Public Sector Equality Duty,² public sector cultural organisations in the UK already have a legal responsibility to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity for those with protected characteristics and foster good relations between those who share protected characteristics and those who do not. In this sense, many museums, galleries, archives and heritage organisations have a duty to advance inclusion. Trans inclusion can, and must, sit squarely alongside their commitment and their work to be anti-racist, to challenge sexism and support women's rights, to combat ableism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination.

Recent case law has meant that 'gender critical' beliefs ('broadly speaking, the belief that sex is biologically determined, binary and immutable'³) - alongside other beliefs - are now protected under the Equality Act. This has generated some uncertainties and challenges for those striving to create and maintain organisational cultures and environments that are inclusive and safe for trans people.⁴ This context is proving confusing for leaders in cultural organisations and has led to conversations and confrontations that cultural professionals are not always equipped to take part in or resolve. This guidance sets out to offer support by drawing in insights from legal scholars to provide clarity and precision around the law, including important details that can help you understand and respond to issues, disagreements and upset, should they arise.

Recognising that the law cannot provide all the answers and that we also need other perspectives and forms of knowledge to drive this work, the guidance also includes an ethical framework - informed by leading-edge scholarship and practice around museum ethics and inclusion - which sets out a series of principles and actions that you can take forward.

Museums, galleries, archives and heritage organisations have been very aware for a long time that, alongside their obligations to comply with the Equality Act, they have ethical responsibilities and opportunities to generate inclusive public spaces and workplaces. Trans-inclusive practice is a key component of this work.

² Equality Act 2010, section 149.

³ Cowan and Morris, "Lessons for the Future," 2.

⁴ Cowan and Morris, "Lessons for the Future," 1-37.

Trans inclusion can, and must, sit squarely alongside their commitment and their work to be anti-racist, to challenge sexism and support women's rights, to combat ableism and all forms of prejudice and discrimination.



Museum of Transology, 2016
Fashion Space Gallery, London College of Fashion
Photo by Katy Davies

Context



In recent months, a number of cultural organisations have reached out to RCMG seeking guidance around trans inclusion, for example around how to build understanding and support amongst staff and stakeholders; how to ethically share trans stories from the collections with visitors; and how to defend, uphold and strengthen the organisation's trans-inclusive commitment in the face of complaints and protests. Recognising the pressing need for clear and informed guidance, over 3 weeks between 30 May and 19 June 2023, RCMG invited cultural organisations to participate in an online, confidential survey to let us know where they needed support and what specific issues they would like us to address. The survey generated over 130 responses that provided a detailed understanding of the questions and concerns that museums, archives, galleries and heritage organisations are facing and that have helped us to shape this guidance.

Many of the issues raised relate to widespread concerns around increasing hostility towards trans people. The most recent Home Office statistics showed that the number of hate crimes recorded by police in England and Wales in the year ending March 2022 rose by 26% and crimes against trans people saw the biggest rise, with 4,355 reports, up 56% from the previous year.⁵ A study published by the Scottish Government in 2021 found that, in the period between 2014/15 and 2019/20, 'the number of transgender identity aggravated hate crimes has doubled (from 48 to 96)'.⁶ The picture is not dissimilar in Northern Ireland where homophobic and transphobic hate crimes are reported to be at an all-time high.⁷

The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA Europe), in its *Review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and intersex people in the United Kingdom*, published in 2023, noted that anti-trans rhetoric continued to cause serious damage in the UK, with ongoing hostile reporting in a number of mainstream newspapers.⁸ The United Nations Independent Expert on sexual orientation and gender identity, following their official visit to the UK in 2023, stated that both government authorities and civil society representatives had reported that news media and social media channels 'are also spreading anti-trans discourse and stereotypical imagery of LGBT persons as dangerous, often employing homophobic and transphobic rhetoric'.⁹

⁵ "Hate crime, England and Wales, 2021 to 2022," Home Office, accessed 26 July, 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022/hate-crime-england-and-wales-2021-to-2022>.

⁶ "A study into the characteristics of police recorded hate crime in Scotland," Scottish Government, 2021, accessed 26 July 2023, www.gov.scot.

⁷ See, for example, Sara O'Kane, "Homophobic and transphobic hate crimes at all-time high in Northern Ireland," *ITV News*, 25 May, 2022, <https://www.itv.com/news/utv/2022-05-25/scary-time-for-lgbtq-says-campaigner-as-hate-crimes-hit-all-time-high>.

⁸ ILGA Europe, *Annual review of the human rights situation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people in Europe and Central Asia*, (Brussels: ILGA Europe, 2023), https://www.ilga-europe.org/sites/default/files/2023/full_annual_review.pdf.

⁹ United Nations, "United Nations Independent Expert on protection against violence and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Country visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (24 April – 5 May 2023), End of mission statement," (United Nations, 2023), <https://www.ohchr.org/sites/default/files/documents/issues/sexualorientation/statements/eom-statement-UK-IE-SOGI-2023-05-10.pdf>.

At the same time, there has been a series of first instance tribunal and appeal tribunal employment decisions on the issue of discrimination on the grounds of a protected characteristic, where gender critical views about transgender people have been held to be protected philosophical or religious beliefs. In this context, employers requiring staff to work within the parameters of their equality policies, whether to respect colleagues in the workplace or to help ensure non-discriminatory practices towards customers, have been more likely to encounter resistance if individuals do not personally endorse such views, since their alternative beliefs are protected under the Equality Act. However, in one of these cases - *Forstater v. CGD Europe and Others* UKEAT/0105/20/JOJ (2021) - the Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) judgement stated that even though the claimant's beliefs were protected, this did not mean 'that those with gender-critical beliefs can indiscriminately and gratuitously refer to trans persons in terms other than they would wish. Such conduct could, depending on the circumstances, amount to harassment of, or discrimination against, a trans person.'¹⁰

It is in this challenging and fast-changing context that this guidance seeks to provide a way forward.

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¹⁰ *Forstater v. CGD Europe and Others*, UKEAT/0105/20/JOJ (2021), paragraph 4. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60c1cce1d3bf7f4bd9814e39/Maya_Forstater_v_CGD_Europe_and_others_UKEAT0105_20_JOJ.pdf. For discussion see Cowan and Morris, "Lessons for the Future," 1-37.



The Public Sector Equality Duty and the Roles, Responsibilities and Potential of Cultural Organisations

Cultural organisations are rare spaces in the public realm where we can manifest and model inclusion and equity, where diverse citizens come together to explore and connect, to engage and understand, to express themselves and celebrate differences.¹¹ Through the stories they choose to tell - and how they tell them - museums, galleries, archives and heritage organisations inform and enrich society's conversations about identity and belonging.¹² As a result, groups engaged in struggles for rights, dignity and respect have long recognised the role that cultural organisations can play in upholding and affirming their lives and in fostering the conditions for mutual respect and understanding between different groups. For trans people - whose lives are so often written about by others and who frequently find themselves the subject of stories that are distorted, sensationalised and mobilised to prompt division and hate - cultural organisations can, at their best, operate as spaces where trans lives and experiences can be presented on their own terms.¹³ All of these characteristics of cultural organisations reveal their potential but also their complexity as sites where varied groups of staff, volunteers, visitors and partners, come together.

Museums and galleries that are publicly funded or provide public services are legally required, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010), to have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and other prohibited conduct;
- Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic (which includes sex and gender reassignment) and people who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.¹⁴

¹¹ Suzanne MacLeod, *Museums and Design for Creative Lives* (London and New York: Routledge, 2021).

¹² Richard Sandell, *Museums, Prejudice and the Reframing of Difference* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007).

¹³ Richard Sandell, "Museums and the Human Rights Frame," in *Museums, Equality and Social Justice*, eds. Richard Sandell and Eithne Nightingale (London and New York: Routledge, 2009), 195-215; Richard Sandell, "Museums and the transgender tipping point," in *Museums, Moralities and Human Rights*, (London and New York, Routledge, 2017), 111-34; E-J Scott, "The Museum of Transology: protesting the erasure of transcestry," in *Prejudice and Pride: LGBTQ heritage and its contemporary implications*, eds. Richard Sandell et al. (RCMG and National Trust, 2018), 18-21.

¹⁴ See, "Public sector: quick start guide to the public sector Equality Duty," Government Equalities Office, 2011, accessed 26 July 2023, <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/public-sector-quick-start-guide-to-the-public-sector-equality-duty>.

... groups engaged in struggles for rights, dignity and respect have long recognised the role that cultural organisations can play in upholding and affirming their lives and in fostering the conditions for mutual respect and understanding between different groups.

The Public Sector Equality Duty describes fostering good relations as tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups. Private organisations and charities are also subject to this duty when they carry out a public service or are publicly funded.¹⁵ Among other things, the Public Sector Equality Duty dictates that management personnel should assess the equalities impact of any policy, process, or decision that is likely to affect people with protected characteristics, and that this should be integral to their decision making, evaluated with rigour and an open mind. As Cowan and Munro have noted, ‘policies and practices (or the lack thereof) that have a disproportionately adverse impact upon particular groups... may constitute unlawful discrimination’.¹⁶

Compliance with the general equality duty is a legal obligation and it will require forward planning so that consideration is given to the most effective ways in which all protected characteristic groups can generally be included in any services or activities offered. This allows cultural organisations to be proactive in publicly promoting trans-inclusive environments. Organisations such as museums that are not trans-inclusive could be discriminating against individual staff and customers, and creating a trans-inclusive organisation (for example, by adopting trans-inclusive policies and guidance that cover harassment and bullying against trans people) does not conflict with equality duties to prevent discrimination against (or foster inclusiveness for) any other protected characteristic group.

Despite cultural organisations being aware of their responsibilities and obligations under the Equality Act since 2010 and despite inclusion and equity being key values within the UK cultural sector and priority areas for policy makers, funders, and governing bodies alike, few cultural organisations have taken meaningful steps to advance trans inclusion. Many cultural organisations want to do better in this area but lack the knowledge, confidence and partnerships required to take this work forward. This is increasingly problematic in a climate where efforts to advance equity and inclusion are too often hampered by misinformed, highly charged and polarised viewpoints.

To support museums, galleries, archives and heritage organisations to meet their legal obligations and to realise their rich potential to advance equality for all, this guidance acknowledges that we need to fully understand the law and - recognising that the law can only provide part of the solution - harness a deep understanding of ethics; not only of the ethical obligations of cultural organisations but also their possibilities and potentials.

¹⁵ See, “Public Sector Equality Duty,” Equality and Human Rights Commission, accessed 27 July, 2023, <https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/public-sector-equality-duty>.

¹⁶ Sharon Cowan and Vanessa E. Munro, “Seeking Campus Justice: Challenging the ‘Criminal Justice Drift’ in UK University Responses to Student Sexual Violence and Misconduct,” *Journal of Law and Society*, 48, no.3 (2021): 308-33.



Immersing myself in
My Little Pony is
how I manage
Dysphoria

Museum of Transology, 2016
My Little Pony
Object Number: MOT000102
Photo by Katy Davies



An Ethical Framework for Advancing Trans Inclusion

15

What is an ethical framework and why is it useful in this context? Working ethically supports us to do ‘good work’ - to work in ways that maximise public benefit, build and maintain public trust, and have a positive impact in the world. Over the past decade, as cultural organisations have given greater attention to their role in advancing inclusion, many have begun to move away from thinking about and engaging with ethics only in relation to specific moments or crises (typically by consulting a code of ethics) towards recognition of the value of working creatively and dynamically with ethics in the everyday.¹⁷

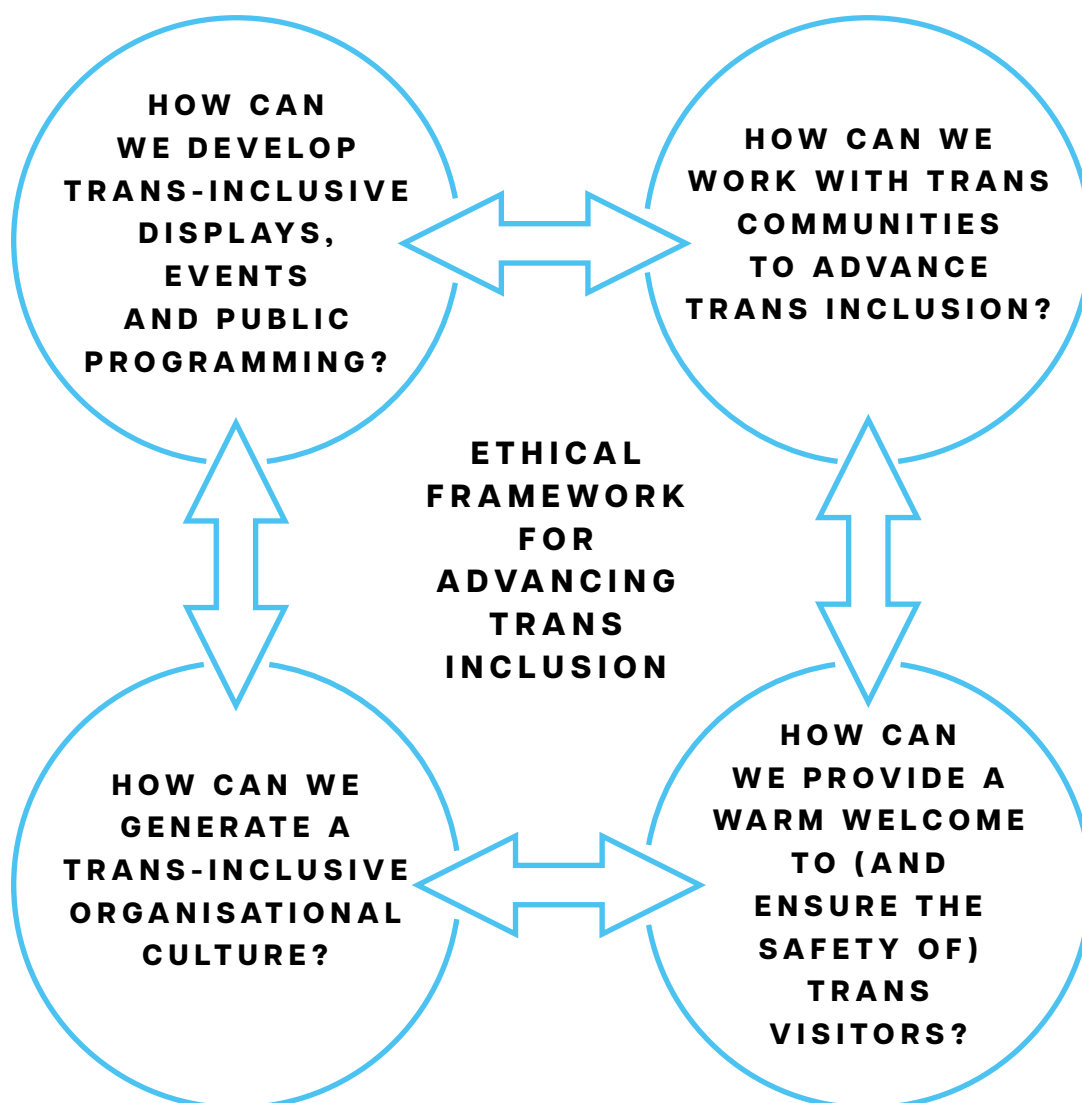
Ethical frameworks can support this way of working and play a key role in shaping broader efforts to advance inclusion in cultural organisations.¹⁸ They draw together varied forms of knowledge and expertise - for example, from scholarship, from the law and from lived experience - and distil a series of ethical principles that can be applied to and embedded within the day-to-day work of cultural organisations. Ethical frameworks:

- establish a set of shared values and priorities to guide decision-making and day-to-day practice;
- bring often unseen or unacknowledged issues to the fore and keep them in everyone’s mind;
- hold related or competing questions or issues in tension, providing a mechanism for thinking through complex issues and challenging us to find new, creative answers or ways of working;
- inform the way we work with people, with partner organisations and with different groups that might hold different perspectives and worldviews;
- help us to avoid the pitfalls specific to particular areas of work.

¹⁷ Janet Marstine, “The contingent nature of the new museum ethics,” in *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics*, ed. Janet Marstine (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 3-25.

¹⁸ RCMG, *Everywhere and Nowhere: guidance for ethically researching and interpreting disability histories*, (RCMG and National Trust, 2023), <https://le.ac.uk/-/media/uol/docs/research-centres/rcmg/publications/everywhere-and-nowhere-guidance-final.pdf>.

The Ethical Framework for Advancing Trans Inclusion is structured around 4 key questions and, in response to each, sets out a series of ethical principles or coordinates that can be used to guide everyday thinking, practice and decision-making as efforts to advance trans inclusion are progressed:



HOW CAN WE DEVELOP TRANS-INCLUSIVE DISPLAYS, EVENTS AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING?

By centering lived experience and empowering trans people to present stories from their own perspective and in their own words.

By working collaboratively to ensure a diversity of ideas and insights from trans people shape the work.

By acknowledging the harm that is caused to individuals - and the ways in which equality more broadly is undermined - when trans lives are omitted from public spaces and programmes.

By resisting and working to challenge reductive and stereotypical depictions by recognising a diversity of lived experience and the full and rounded lives of trans people.

By recognising that the experiences of some trans people are compounded by racism, sexism, economic inequality, ableism and varying forms of prejudice.

By prioritising positive and joyful stories that are affirming for trans visitors and enriching for all visitors.

By using gender-inclusive language in shaping all elements of public programming.

By fostering good relations between people who share a protected characteristic (in this case, the characteristic of 'gender reassignment' - i.e. trans people) and those who do not, by offering experiences and creating environments that actively generate a non-hostile culture of understanding, empathy, dignity and respect.

By recognising that displays, events, public programming and external communications (the stories we choose to tell and how they are told) have effects and committing to learning more about the ways in which approaches to presenting trans lives (ethical and unethical) play out for trans people.

By researching across collections and archives to highlight stories of gender diversity through history and different cultures around the world.

By preparing clear and unequivocal public statements of support for trans-inclusive programming to be used by all partners at all stages of work, including in the event of complaints/protest.

By developing content in full awareness of the negative experiences and hostile responses that many trans people face.

By resisting partial and limiting engagement with trans lives by embracing the challenge of thinking trans inclusively across all public spaces and programming.

By addressing gaps in collections and working with trans communities to actively collect materials related to trans lives.

**HOW CAN WE
GENERATE A
TRANS-INCLUSIVE
ORGANISATIONAL
CULTURE?**

By ensuring your allyship and support for the trans community is permanently visible.

By articulating the organisation's full and unequivocal commitment to trans inclusion internally and externally and alongside your other values.

By ensuring you partner with, receive funding from and work with organisations that foster trans-inclusive practice.

By establishing the ground rules for respectful working and caring relationships within your organisation.

By ensuring the organisation's equity and inclusion policies address trans inclusion alongside wider commitments to inclusion.

By ensuring that training on trans inclusion, delivered by a trans-led organisation, features as part of the organisation's equality, diversity and inclusion training for all staff, managers, volunteers, contractors and trustees.

By providing, where possible, single-user bathrooms, available to all (regardless of their availability, trans employees should be free to use the bathroom that they feel most comfortable using).

By using gender-inclusive language in all your communications.

By providing non-gendered uniforms for public facing staff and volunteers.

By learning about transphobia (the discrimination trans people face) and working in ways that prioritise safety and do not add to harm.

By making space and time to reflect on and evaluate progress to ensure momentum and ambition around trans inclusion.

By recognising the use of correct (an individual's stated) pronouns as central to a respectful, dignified and caring workplace.

**HOW CAN
WE PROVIDE A
WARM WELCOME
TO (AND ENSURE
THE SAFETY OF)
TRANS VISITORS?**

By not assuming someone's pronoun based on their visual appearance.

By recognising that everyone in the organisation can play an active part in the creation of inclusive public spaces and experiences that are free from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

By auditing and revising marketing materials, wayfinding materials and ticketing/ membership schemes in order to ensure that families of all kinds are recognised and equally valued and that language is inclusive.

By recognising that everyone in the organisation can play a part in making the organisation's trans-inclusive culture visible, tangible and felt by visitors, for example, in your behaviours, signage, availability of pronoun badges, staff lanyards, use of correct (an individual's stated) pronouns in activities for children and adults.

By prominently and confidently communicating - through, for example, public and organisational statements; signs and symbols; inclusive facilities; interpersonal communication - the organisational commitment to generating a safe, inclusive and respectful space.

By providing, where possible, single user bathrooms, available to all. Whether or not these are available, trans visitors should be free to use the bathroom that they feel most comfortable using.

By setting out clear expectations for appropriate and respectful behaviour and making clear that the organisation will not tolerate harassment of any kind or discrimination towards trans visitors, their families and friends. These expectations should be clearly set out on your website and shared with all staff and volunteers and third parties, for example, contractors and organisations that hire space and facilities.

HOW CAN WE WORK WITH TRANS COMMUNITIES TO ADVANCE TRANS INCLUSION?

By connecting with trans-led organisations (locally and/or nationally), listening to understand what matters to trans communities, and working to understand how to advance trans inclusion together.

By ensuring transparency, shared decision-making and clear communication form the basis of your partnerships with trans communities.

By sharing resources - for example, offering a space within your institution for local trans groups to make use of.

By working with an ethics of care and always prioritising the safety and wellbeing of your partners, your staff and all your stakeholders.

By nurturing and valuing your partnerships with trans communities and staunchly defending them in the event of any negative public or media criticism.

By ensuring trans lives, experiences and partners are included in LGBT+ History Month initiatives.

By recognising and commemorating Trans Day of Visibility and Transgender Day of Remembrance.

By ensuring that senior leaders in the organisation turn up at events and make an effort to get to know trans partners, groups and communities.

By making your partnerships with trans organisations visible to visitors and wider stakeholders in order to nurture deeper relationships, celebrate your partners and show the importance of this work.

By working in partnership with trans-led organisations to explore how to fulfil the Public Sector Equality Duty (in particular, to foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic, in this case the characteristic of 'gender reassignment' - i.e. trans people, and those who do not).

Scenarios

21

In this section we draw on the responses to the survey that invited cultural organisations to share the concerns and questions they needed support with. Working with legal experts, equalities specialists and people with trans lived experience, we have crafted scenarios that speak to the day-to-day challenges that people working in heritage, museums, archives and galleries are navigating and seek to bring clarity, legal precision and ethically-informed practical advice to offer solutions and ways forward.

Although some of the scenarios speak to challenges that cannot always be anticipated, many of the issues that arise here can - and should - be addressed through forward planning, through the development of policies (for example, around Anti-Bullying and Harassment; Dignity and Respect at Work) and by proactively taking steps to nurture inclusive behaviours, cultures and environments.

Whilst the focus of this guidance is on trans inclusion, it is helpful to recognise that the issues presented here and the solutions put forward should form part of cultural organisations' wider and ongoing commitments to inclusion and equity for all.



Museum of Transology, 2017
Brighton Museum & Art Gallery
Photo by James Pike

A member of staff continually refuses to use the correct pronouns of a trans volunteer. We have asked them to use the volunteer's stated name and pronouns but they continue to refuse. We have worked really hard to reassure the volunteer – is this enough?

Reassuring the volunteer is important but it is just as important to address the behaviour of the staff member. It is not uncommon for people to make a mistake and unintentionally use the wrong pronoun. Many of us have been brought up with binary thinking that we have to unlearn. We also have to give people time to work through this.

Organisations can help in situations like this by inviting colleagues and volunteers to wear pronoun badges, using email signatures that include pronouns and including pronoun-inclusive options (that allow people to express their preference rather than ticking a pre-defined term) in sign-up paperwork and documentation. When managers and team leaders include their pronouns in the introductions at the start of a meeting, this can send a powerful message to everyone and help to foster a culture of trans inclusivity. Stating pronouns provides clarity for all.

Workplace Anti-Harassment and Bullying policies should include guidance on how to address intentional, persistent misgendering. If an individual persists in using pronouns that they have been asked not to use, or calling someone by their previous name, or it becomes clear that they are intentionally misgendering a colleague, then it is important that this is recognised as harassment and that this harassment may be unlawful.

As Mr Justice Choudhury said in the Forstater employment appeal tribunal in 2021, although Ms Forstater's gender critical beliefs were protected, 'that does not mean, however, that those with gender-critical beliefs can indiscriminately and gratuitously refer to trans persons in terms other than they would wish. Such conduct could, depending on the circumstances, amount to harassment of, or discrimination against, a trans person'.¹⁹

Some of the legal issues arising here are also explored in Scenario 8.

¹⁹ See, *Forstater v. CGD Europe and Others* UKEAT/0105/20/JOJ (2021), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/60c1cce1d3bf7f4bd9814e39/Maya_Forstater_v_CGD_Europe_and_others_UKEAT0105_20_JOJ.pdf.



This lipstick was from
my wonderful sister who
was the first family member
to accept and support my
transition. ♡

Our museum has received a number of very offensive comments on social media and a number of visitors have complained very loudly within the exhibition space in the museum where we have displayed some outcomes from a partnership with a local trans group. We are worried about our trans community partners, staff and volunteers - what can we do to protect them?

Sadly, there are too many instances where, in the face of public complaints, cultural organisations have responded by making statements that apologise for or seek to distance themselves from the trans-inclusive work they have done. In some cases, organisations have allowed hostile responses from a minority to directly affect their future programming decisions. All of these actions undermine the organisation's ethical position and values and compound the harm caused by the complaints, leaving community partners feeling exposed, let down and unsupported. Organisations can prepare for this situation by formulating ready-to-issue, clear statements that set out their commitments. They can also make clear their policy of removing all hateful material from physical spaces and online platforms - not only transphobic comments but also those that are racist, misogynist and/or ableist. Outspoken objections to trans content frequently intersect with homophobia, misogyny and racism.

Rather than seeking to appease those who are making offensive comments, museums, galleries, heritage organisations and archives should consider their legal and ethical responsibilities to the local trans group. Situations like this - however stressful and upsetting for all - can be an opportunity for cultural organisations to strengthen trust and deepen relationships with

community partners. The most important thing here is that you reach out to your partners to let them know you are committed to taking steps to support them and that you will work in partnership with and take decisions with them.

Together, you might decide to remove comments from social media and from comments boards in museums - just as you would with all other forms of discriminatory content. You might choose to jointly craft a public statement that reaffirms your commitment in the face of hostile and excluding comments. Through your discussions, you might identify practical ways to support the community members most directly affected, for example, by exploring with them how they can manage their online safety and the potential benefit of changing their privacy settings on social media.

We have had some very awkward exchanges in the museum with some members of staff continually claiming that trans rights take away women's and girls' rights. How can we hold this conversation, develop nuanced responses and make it clear that we support both trans rights and women's rights?

You can start by reminding colleagues that ensuring that the principles of equality and non-discrimination are applied in respect of each protected characteristic group is not a 'zero-sum' game, i.e. respecting the rights of one group does not minimise or reduce respect for the rights of another group.

'Gender reassignment' is one of nine protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010, defined as when a person 'is proposing to undergo, is undergoing or has undergone a process (or part of a process) for the purpose of reassigning the person's sex by changing physiological or other attributes of sex.'²⁰ It helps protect trans people from discrimination in employment, education and the provision of services, whether they describe themselves as 'trans', 'non-binary', 'gender fluid', 'gender non-conforming' or 'transitioning'.²¹ The other protected characteristics are age, disability, race, sex (which includes gender), sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, marital status or civil partnership, religion or belief. A trans person may, of course, also have one or more of those additional protected characteristics

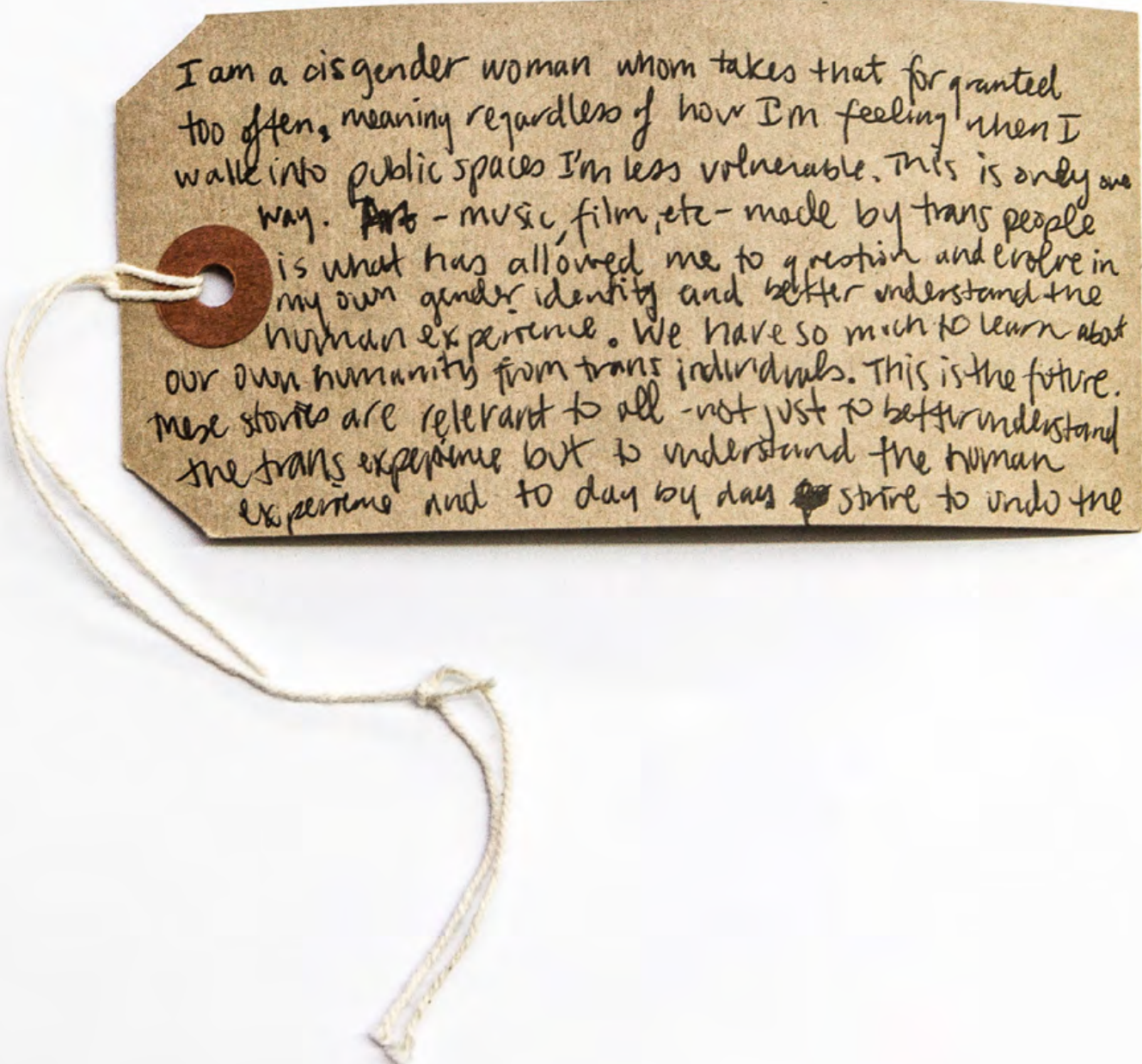
and be protected under other provisions of the Equality Act 2010. They do not require a Gender Recognition Certificate (GRC) to be protected from discrimination, harassment and victimisation.

You might explain to colleagues that personal identity is complex and does not generally arise from one single characteristic. Most individuals will belong to more than one protected characteristic group. Disadvantages can arise because of the impacts of combined, intersectional factors including discrimination, for example, because of an individual's status as a Jewish woman, as a Black lesbian, or as a trans man who is disabled. Treating everyone fairly and with respect within an inclusive and welcoming environment is the best way to ensure that discrimination related to any of the protected characteristics or any combination of them does not occur.

²⁰ Equality Act 2010, section 7(1).

²¹ In the Employment Tribunal case *Taylor v Jaguar Land Rover Limited* (Case No:1304471/2018), paragraph 178 of the judgment states 'We thought it was very clear that Parliament intended gender reassignment to be a spectrum moving away from birth sex, and that a person could be at any point on that spectrum. That would be so, whether they described themselves as "non-binary"... "gender fluid" ... or "transitioning"...' Individuals perceived by others to have this protected characteristic are also, in some respects, protected. https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f68b2ebe90e077f5ac3bb5a/Ms_R_Taylor_V_Jaguar_Land_Rover_Ltd_-_1304471_2018_-_judgment.pdf.

Creating a trans-inclusive organisation (for example, by drawing on the ethical and legal principles in this guidance to develop trans-inclusive policies and guidance that covers harassment and bullying against trans people) does not conflict with equality duties to prevent discrimination against or foster inclusiveness for any other protected characteristic group.



I am a cisgender woman whom takes that for granted too often, meaning regardless of how I'm feeling when I walk into public spaces I'm less vulnerable. This is only one way. ~~Art~~ - music, film, etc - made by trans people is what has allowed me to question and evolve in my own gender identity and better understand the human experience. We have so much to learn about our own humanity from trans individuals. This is the future. These stories are relevant to all - not just to better understand the trans experience but to understand the human experience and to day by day ~~to~~ strive to undo the

What guidance can you offer to museum staff who work with children and young people?

Cultural organisations can play an important role in making trans children, young people and their carers feel welcome, safe, valued and accepted. Visibility of trans people and their culture within museums, galleries, archives and heritage spaces can provide them with a sense of belonging and future. This is especially important, because, as numerous studies have shown, trans youth are significantly more likely than their peers to self-harm and think about taking their own life.²² Moreover, a recent report - *The Experiences of LGBTQ+ Children and Young People* - showed that disabled LGBTQ+ young people are at even greater risk of self-harm than non-disabled LGBTQ+ young people (80 per cent compared to 64 per cent).²³

Museums should be places not just where trans kids *can* go, but where they *want* to go. Simple signs of support speak volumes. Posters, stickers, flags and badges are widely recognised by trans youth as community endorsements that a museum is LGBTIQ+ friendly and, therefore, a place they can explore self-expression without fear of reprisal. All children (including trans children) should be provided with access to the toilets and changing rooms of their choice. Signposting quiet spaces upon arrival can be valuable for all young people.

When developing public programmes and displays, it is important to remember that trans content is not in itself age inappropriate for children. (Explicit adult content is. According to the British Board of Film Classification's guidelines, this includes considering bad language, dangerous behaviour, discrimination, drugs, horror, nudity, sex, violence and sexual violence).

Of course, care should be taken to present all content in age-appropriate ways. In broad terms the same principles of safeguarding apply to working with trans youth as with any other young people and, as with all individuals and groups, it is important that museums are aware of the additional risk factors that trans youth face. Trans children's gender identity will usually begin with a social transition, so it is important to avoid making assumptions about a young person's gender identity based on appearance or school uniform. Museum spaces and collections can stimulate positive explorations of gender and other aspects of identity. You should not ask a child to disclose their gender identity. However, if a child chooses to do so, it is important that your response is affirming and that you remember it is the child's decision as to whether they choose to share that information with others. If you are unsure of anyone's correct pronouns, using gender-neutral pronouns is an all-inclusive approach and introducing your own pronoun communicates your trans awareness.

²² See, for example, Robert Hart, "Trans And Nonbinary Youth Far More Likely To Be Admitted For Suicide Attempt Or Self-Harm, Study Finds," *Forbes*, November 16, 2022, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/roberthart/2022/11/16/trans-and-nonbinary-youth-far-more-likely-to-be-admitted-for-suicide-attempt-or-self-harm-study-finds/?sh=5e017cc860a6>; Josh Bradlow, Fay Bartram, April Guasp and Vasanti Jadvu, *The School Report: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bi and trans young people in Britain's schools in 2017* (Stonewall and Centre for Family Research, University of Cambridge, 2017), <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/school-report-2017>.

²³ Bradlow, et al., "The School Report," 17.

Kids in Museums have developed guidance on how museums can engage children, young people and families with LGBTQ+ heritage that all cultural organisations will find helpful.²⁴ You may also want to seek further support from trans youth service providers across the UK and Ireland offering workshops, training and guidance. You will find important information on safeguarding for all children and young people on the Kids in Museums website and specific safeguarding information for LGBTQ+ children and young people on the NSPCC website.²⁵



Museum of Transology, 2016
Fashion Space Gallery, London College of Fashion
Photo by Katy Davies

²⁴ “How can your museum engage children, young people and families with LGBTQ+ heritage?” Kids in Museums, accessed 26 July 2023, <https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/resources/how-can-your-museum-engage-children-young-people-and-families-with-lgbtq-heritage/#::~:~:text=At%20Kids%20in%20Museums%2C%20we,and%20discrimination%20for%20LGBTQ%2B%20people.>

²⁵ “Safeguarding Overview,” Kids in Museums, accessed 25 August 2023, <https://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/resources/safeguarding-overview/> and “Safeguarding LGBTQ+ children and young people,” NSPCC, accessed 25 August 2023, <https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/lgbtq-children-young-people.>

We have received a request from an organisation which advocates for the rights of people with gender critical beliefs to hire one of our spaces for an event. A member of staff has raised concerns, pointing out that the group has posted some social media content that they feel is trans exclusionary. We are worried about how hosting the group will affect trans colleagues, volunteers, partners and visitors to the museum. Can you advise?

Organisations are required to comply with the Equality Act and ensure that services and facilities, including private hire, are open to everyone, including to groups whose beliefs may be in conflict with your organisation's values. It is important that you do not discriminate against any group with protected characteristics and this includes people with gender critical beliefs. Only in very exceptional circumstances might it be appropriate to refuse a booking, and we recommend seeking legal advice on the particular circumstances before doing so.

Any cultural organisation that hires out its spaces is likely to receive bookings from organisations with different values and should be ready to manage the relationship with hirers in a professional and non-confrontational manner. This does demand a level of organisational readiness. You will find it helpful to review your Terms and Conditions for anyone booking a space to make clear, for example, that organisations hiring spaces are in no way endorsed by the Museum; organisations can be advised that they cannot add the museum's logo to their event information, remembering to adopt a consistent approach to all organisations to ensure treatment is not less favourable because of their particular protected characteristics or belief(s). You might also consider staff training so that everyone is clear about the law and is equipped to work in a non-conflictual, courteous and professional manner with the hiring organisations. You are also right to take seriously the issues raised by staff who are concerned for the safety and wellbeing

of trans colleagues and visitors. Working with your staff and partners, you can ensure that everyone understands the legal obligations of the museum as well as the steps you are taking to ensure that everyone feels safe. You can explore together the measures you will put in place to ensure that trans staff, volunteers and visitors are aware of the organisation's commitment to trans inclusion and that they feel as safe as possible.

You might, for example, take steps to ensure that trans staff and visitors are not exposed to trans-exclusionary content that might be present in the group's leaflets or PowerPoint presentations. Ensure that your website and room hire booking communications are up to date and that they clearly set out the organisation's expectations for appropriate and

respectful behaviour (which make clear that the organisation will not tolerate harassment of any kind or discrimination towards trans visitors, their families and friends). Finally, you might review and reaffirm your public commitment to advancing trans inclusion on your website, in your programming and through your organisational culture and visitor welcome.



Museum of Transology, 2017
Brighton Museum & Art Gallery
Photo by James Pike

The curatorial, learning and community engagement teams in our organisation have been working with local community groups to co-curate an exhibition. Just before the exhibition opened to the public, the museum's Director gave instructions to remove items selected from the museum's collections that represent and celebrate trans culture. This has caused considerable upset amongst staff and members and damaged our relationship with the community co-curators, our LGBTIQ+ community and their allies. What advice can you give?

The proactive erasure of trans lives and culture from a museum display is deeply concerning. It removes the opportunity for everyone to learn about trans people, it sends a harmful message to members of the trans community that they are not worthy of being seen and are not deserving of inclusion, and it removes the potential for the museum to counter widespread misinformation about trans lives in the media.²⁶

There is no law prohibiting the inclusion of trans content in museum displays and heritage or archive teaching resources. On the contrary, public or publicly-funded organisations that are not trans inclusive run the risk of not fulfilling their obligations under the Public Sector Equality Duty. 'Gender reassignment' is a protected characteristic and cultural organisations should not discriminate on that basis. Public and/or publicly funded cultural organisations should be trans inclusive to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and advance equality of opportunity. Those organisations must foster good relations between individuals and groups who have that protected characteristic and those who do not. Any policy or practice that has a disproportionately adverse impact upon protected individuals or groups may constitute unlawful indirect discrimination; removing trans content clearly has a disproportionate adverse impact on trans people.

In terms of practical steps, in the first instance you would be advised to discuss this with your museum's LGBTIQ+ staff network and explore ways to open up a non-conflictual dialogue with the leadership team with the goal of reinstating the material.

²⁶ E-J Scott, "Where Can Trans People Call Home in History?," *Museums Journal*, 118, no. 10 (2018): 16; Richard Sandell, "Museums and the Transgender Tipping Point," 111-34.

Of course, for this approach to be constructive, it needs to be undertaken with understanding of how the Equality Act applies. The actions of the Director raise questions about their understanding of the museums' responsibilities under the Public Sector Equality Duty, which states that managers should be aware of and assess the equalities impact of any decision. Moreover, the Government Equalities Office guidance highlights a number of principles, drawn from case law, that explain what is essential in order for the Equality Duty to be fulfilled. These include:

'Knowledge - those who exercise the public body's functions need to be aware of the requirements of the Equality Duty. Compliance with the Equality Duty involves a conscious approach and state of mind.'

'Real consideration - consideration of the three aims of the Equality Duty must form an integral part of the decision-making process. The Equality Duty is not a matter of box-ticking; it must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.'²⁷

All discussions about a suitable way forward need to be undertaken in the context of this legal duty.



Museum of Transology launch of Trans Pride UK Collective, 2023
Triangle LGBTQ+ Cultural Centre
Photo by Bex Wade

²⁷ Government Equalities Office, *Equality Act 2010: Public sector equality duty. What do I need to know? A quick start guide for public sector organisations* (Government Equalities Office, June 2011), https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/85019/equality-duty.pdf.

I am finding it very difficult to secure support for measures to advance trans inclusion in our organisation. Even proposals for small scale changes - like a new label to accompany a painting by a trans artist in our collection or making bathrooms gender inclusive for an event during LGBT History Month - are subject to unprecedented and disproportionate levels of managerial scrutiny. What advice can you offer?

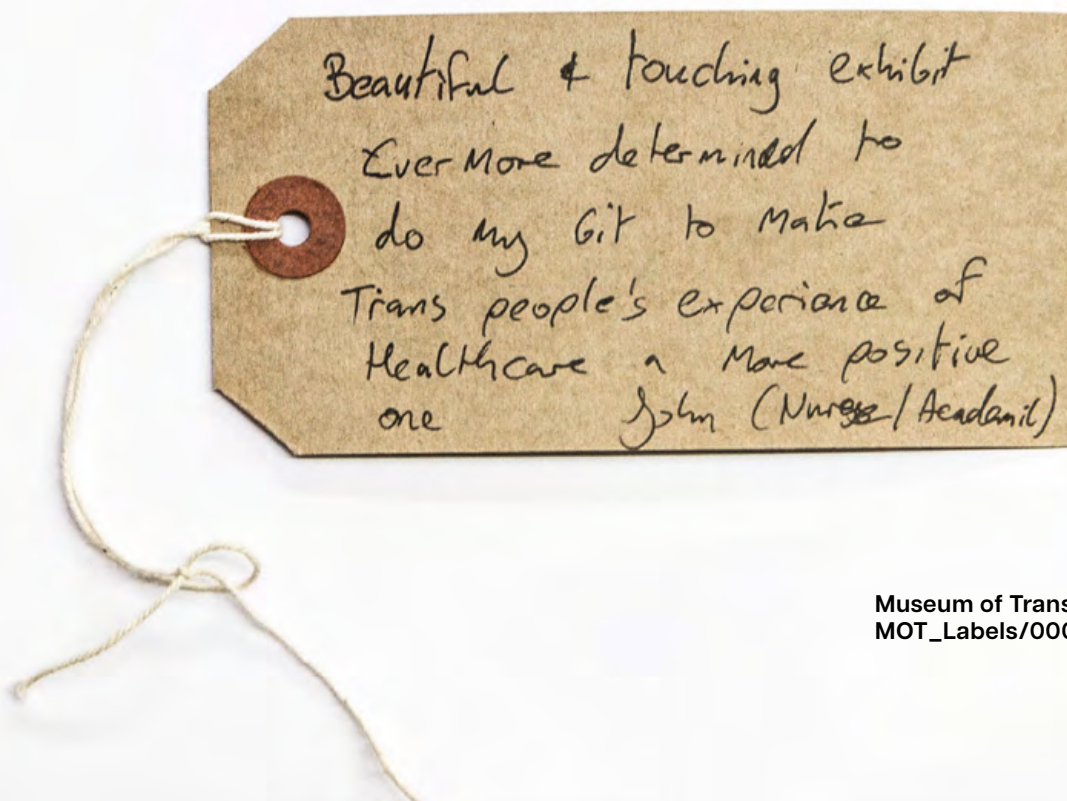
Rising anti-trans rhetoric in the public and political realm is undoubtedly contributing to a risk-averse culture of anxiety and inaction amongst the leadership of cultural organisations. Individuals and groups that hold trans-exclusionary views have become increasingly bold in their opposition to organisations that address trans inclusion as part of their broader efforts to advance equity for all. This is contributing to a climate of fear within cultural organisations, generating higher levels of scrutiny around trans-inclusive initiatives (sometimes helpful and sometimes unjustified) and leading some galleries, heritage, museums and archives to apply self-censorship as a route to avoiding unwelcome attention and critique.

This is troubling but, to an extent, understandable. Even though most trans-inclusive programming is warmly received by audiences, the press and local communities, in recent months events intended to affirm and advance trans inclusion have sometimes attracted protests that potentially place staff and visitors at risk and organisations are rightly concerned to take steps to protect them. At the same time, it is important to balance this with the legal and ethical obligations cultural organisations have to advance trans inclusion, even in the face of protests and tactics intended to deter trans-inclusive efforts voiced by a minority of opponents.

The Public Sector Equality Duty is again helpful here, reminding us that cultural organisations have had a legal responsibility to consider, in the work that they do, the need to eliminate discrimination and harassment and to advance equality of opportunity for people with protected characteristics and, of course, to foster good relations between different groups. If we consider the paucity of initiatives to advance trans inclusion across the cultural sector, it is clear that many organisations are failing to fulfil their positive legal duties. Moreover, if we consider the unique role that cultural organisations can play in the public realm, to model and manifest inclusion and to shape experiences that build respect and mutual understanding between different groups, it is clear that many are also failing to realise their ethical potential to advance trans inclusion.

The following are some helpful tips to build confidence around trans inclusion in your organisation:

- Share this guidance with colleagues and seek opportunities to explore together how it can support the organisation to take its trans-inclusive work forward. As this guidance makes clear, this work should not rely on an individual member of staff but, instead, should be rooted in an organisation's broader commitment to inclusion, arise from its vision and values and form part of the institutional response to equalities legislation and, where applicable, its public sector duty;
- Ask that your organisation's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policies include statements committing to trans equality. These can be posted on your website for staff to use for signposting in the case of an anti-trans content complaint;
- Ask for LGBTIQ+ community-led training (informed by lived experience) for all staff to facilitate the ongoing upskilling and increasing of confidence and capacity within the organisation;
- Organisations can prepare for any complaints or objections that may arise by preparing clear, ready-to-issue statements explaining their commitment to trans inclusion and ensuring that all departments are fully briefed on their use;
- Prior to the launch of trans-inclusive programming and events, ensure all staff across the organisation are fully briefed so that they understand the quality and social value of the content.



A member of staff at the museum has been expressing gender critical beliefs in the staff room and a colleague has raised concerns that this has started to become harmful for trans colleagues. Can the staff member be asked not to share their gender critical views?

Recent case law has made it clear that gender critical beliefs about trans people are protected beliefs under the Equality Act, and discrimination against someone for holding these beliefs is unlawful. As such, holding the view that sex is binary, that trans men are not men or that trans women are not women is not in and of itself discriminatory.

However, manifestations of this belief might be unlawful. Section 26 of the Equality Act clearly states that harassment on the grounds of a protected characteristic, such as gender reassignment, is unlawful discrimination.

Harassment in the workplace is defined as: where an individual (“A”) engages in unwanted conduct relating to another individual’s (“B”) protected characteristic (e.g. gender reassignment) and that conduct has the purpose

or effect of violating B’s dignity and creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for B.

Examples might include:

- Refusing to recruit, work with, promote or provide training to a person because of their gender identity, their perceived gender identity or because of the gender identity of a person with whom they associate;
- Asking someone if they have a GRC (Gender Recognition Certificate), and other unwanted questioning about a person's gender identity, gender history or transition;
- Disclosing confidential information about a person's gender history or gender reassignment without their consent (which, in certain circumstances, might also constitute a criminal offence);
- Verbal or written jokes or abuse based on gender identity.

So, employers are expected to examine the behaviour, rather than simply the beliefs, of the person and its impact in assessing whether there has been harassment.

Intentionally and persistently misgendering another person may well (depending on the facts of any particular case) be deemed to be unlawful harassment.²⁸ Recently a tribunal in

²⁸ Research in Canada has found that, in public service employment, gender diverse people are between 2.2-2.5 times more likely to experience discrimination and workplace harassment than cisgender (i.e. non-trans) male co-workers (see, Sean Waite, “Should I Stay or Should I Go? Employment Discrimination and Workplace Harassment against Transgender and Other Minority Employees in Canada’s Federal Public Service,” *Journal of Homosexuality*, 68, no. 11, (2020): 1833-59).

British Columbia, Canada held that the deliberate, constant misgendering of the claimant (who was non-binary) was a violation of their human rights and the employer was ordered to pay \$30,000 in damages to the claimant and ‘implement a pronoun policy and mandatory training for all staff and managers about diversity, equality and inclusion’.²⁹

A similar approach was taken in the UK case of *Taylor v. Jaguar Land Rover Limited* where it was held that Rose Taylor, a non-binary employee, had been discriminated against when their employer failed to support them in their complaints about adverse comments from colleagues. Taylor was awarded £180,000 in damages.³⁰

No two situations are identical, and consideration needs to be given on a case-by-case basis to establish what conduct is unlawful.

To ensure that the organisation is a good place to work, there are practical steps that can be taken to protect all staff regardless of their gender identity or trans status, including:

- All staff should be made aware of employee support systems, including any counselling provision and complaints procedures with specialist services engaged as appropriate;
- Ensuring that Anti-Harassment and Bullying and Dignity at Work policies are up to date and actively implemented;
- Ensuring that all staff and particularly senior and line managers are expected to identify, respond to, and address behaviour that runs counter to Anti-Harassment and Bullying and Dignity at Work policies;
- Training for all staff which should include guidance for bystanders on what action they should take to support colleagues. All staff should be trained in how to respond to and de-escalate abusive or aggressive behaviour;
- Clear, public-facing messaging stating that the abuse of staff on any grounds will not be tolerated and that, where such behaviour occurs, it may be reported to the police.

²⁹ *Nelson v. Goodberry Restaurant Group Ltd. dba Buono Osteria and Others*, BCHRT 137 (2021).

³⁰ *Taylor v. Jaguar Land Rover Limited*, ET/1304471/2018 (2020).

Can we use the term ‘trans’ to refer to people in the past?

The label ‘trans’ can be a useful umbrella term to signpost today’s audiences to instances of gender nonconformity, gender fluidity, gender variance and gender crossing. It is not a replacement for the many tremendous opportunities to explore historic and cultural

specificity, but rather, a pathway to this research that enables audiences the opportunity to use their contemporary understanding of gender to learn more about it in the past.

Now more than ever, it is important cultural organisations play a role in tackling misinformation about trans people, by using their collections to explore the prevalence of gender non-conforming lives in the past. The historical contextualisation of variations in gender expression serves to directly tackle the stigmatisation trans and non-binary people are facing by demonstrating that variation in gender expression is not a purely modern phenomenon, but rather, a continuing and evolving timeline of human expression. Even today, our understanding of sex and gender not only varies across cultures, it varies within them.

Working with trans communities and drawing on their lived experience to consider material in collections can be a valuable route to increasing gender inclusivity in museum, archive, gallery and heritage narratives. At the same time, there is a rich and growing body of material arising from academic researchers working in trans studies that is bringing to light stories linked to gender nonconformity, gender fluidity, gender variance and gender crossing in museum, gallery and archive collections and at heritage sites all over the UK. Collaborative research with universities offering queer and trans studies, as well as with LGBTIQ+ community driven research groups and projects are all effective strategies for improving the knowledge of trans experiences that existed in the past.



Museum of Transology, 2016
Fashion Space Gallery, London College of Fashion
Photo by Katy Davies

I work in a small archive and we have one toilet for men and one for women. It would be useful to have guidance on signage that can be used outside and in these toilets to ensure that we are trans inclusive.

This is an important issue. As Galop - the UK's LGBT+ anti-abuse charity - state, '[w]ilst the majority of people don't have to think twice about which bathroom they should use, for transgender, non-binary and gender-non conforming people, the experience of using toilets in public or a business premises can be a stressful, nerve-wracking or even dangerous one'.³¹

It is challenging to provide a range of services in a small organisation. Many organisations are moving towards ensuring that they provide all gender toilets alongside male and female toilets. The Health and Safety Executive requires that all gender or unisex toilets are fully enclosed (not cubicles) and have their own hand-washing and drying facilities. It could be that your small, single toilets fit this model and that you can make both of them all gender by simply removing the male/female signage and adding a 'Toilets' or 'All Gender Toilets' sign. As Margaret Middleton says, 'The best gender inclusive restroom signage puts focus on the facility not the user'.³²

If you have toilets with cubicles and shared wash areas, recent guidance stipulates that these need to be single sex. Importantly, make it clear in your signage and communications that all visitors are free to use the facilities that they feel most comfortable using; to insist that a trans person uses a particular bathroom may be unlawful discrimination. In order to help staff, volunteers and visitors to use the toilets they feel most comfortable using, you can put up signs such as the Good Night Out 'Pee In Peace' signs which encourage visitors to use the facilities they feel most comfortable using and 'asks them not to police others based on their gender expression'.³³ Remember to place menstrual products in all the toilets - including the male toilets - to ensure that everyone who needs them has access to sanitary products. This will send an important trans-inclusive message to everyone who works in and visits your organisation.

³¹ Good Night Out Campaign, *We All Need the Toilet: an All Gender Access Toolkit* (Good Night Out Campaign, 2021), <https://www.goodnightoutcampaign.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/toilets.pdf>.

³² "Gender Inclusive Signage," Margaret Middleton, accessed 27 July 2023, <https://www.margaretmiddleton.com/post/gender-inclusive-signage>.

³³ Good Night Out Campaign, *We All Need the Toilet: an All Gender Access Toolkit*.

We are keen to do some contemporary collecting around trans lives. What advice can you offer on ethical approaches to acquisition and cataloguing?

The recent burst in the visibility and confidence of trans culture makes connecting with communities and collecting trans lives easier than ever before. There is a prolific art scene and a vibrant Trans Pride festival calendar right across the UK and Ireland. Moreover, despite trans people not being highly visible in museums, galleries, archives and heritage spaces, this has not deterred the trans community from building its own collections and archiving skills. A prolific culture of collecting has been led by organisations including the Museum of Transology,³⁴ that empowers and facilitates trans people to select and catalogue

their own objects as the curators of their own gender stories. Equally, doctoral students across the UK are embarking upon ambitious research projects exploring trans lives and culture.

Gender exploration and expression is also centre-front of contemporary arts practices reflecting artists' aims to drive change, inspire hope and raise awareness in response to the pressing social circumstances trans people find themselves in.

Rather than collecting *from* trans communities, curators should aspire to collect *with* them. Trust needs to be earned, and there is work to be done with this community. Newly-formed good intentions to expand a museum's inclusive practice is not a magic solution for centuries of erasure from (or ridicule in, if included) historical representation. Consequently, it is important that members of the trans community are included in every step of the collecting process, including object descriptions and search terms in order to use the community's terminology and to ensure future searchability by members seeking to explore the collection.

As with all work with minority communities, inclusivity needs to start from within the organisation. Ensure that you work with trans lived and professional experience throughout the process; this may be within your collections management and programming teams or you may need to reach out to a qualified freelance consultant to support you to do this work well.

³⁴ <https://www.museumoftransology.com/>



Museum of Transology, 2017
Munroe Bergdorf, photographed by Sarah Moore
Object Number: MOT00035/1
Brighton Museum & Art Gallery
Photo by James Pike



About RCMG

41

For more than 20 years, the University of Leicester's Research Centre for Museums and Galleries (RCMG) has been at the forefront of a process of cultural transformation, working with museums, galleries, archives and heritage sites and drawing on diverse forms of expertise to expand and enrich the social value and ethical potential of culture and heritage. Our research is recognised as world-leading both in terms of its contribution to the field of museum studies and its profound and lasting impact on wide-ranging cultural organisations and their diverse beneficiaries.

We support inclusive transformation in cultural organisations through action research and scholarship, enabling culture and heritage to play an active, ethical and impactful role in society. Through our collaborative practice we build new equitable relationships between cultural organisations, diverse audiences and communities; we generate socially plentiful cultural spaces; we use collections, sites and stories to engage with and impact pressing contemporary issues; our research shapes initiatives that advance equity and inclusion, combat ableism, racism, transphobia and homophobia, and build support for rights, respect and dignity for all.

A unique feature of the Centre is this collaborative ethos – we *think, research* and *take action* with cultural organisations to generate new insights for them, for the international cultural sector and for diverse fields of scholarship.

For suggestions of further reading and links to useful resources please see the RCMG website - www.le.ac.uk/rcmg

Supporting Organisations

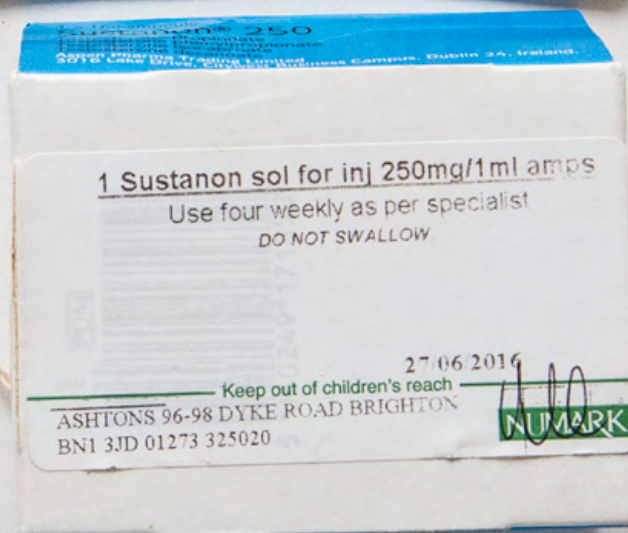
42

This guidance is supported by the following culture sector organisations. Collectively they represent and advocate for thousands of museums, galleries, archives and heritage organisations and culture professionals; they recognise and award world-leading excellence; and they set standards, develop advice and guidance used by staff, volunteers, freelancers, leaders and trustees across the UK and internationally to create inclusive experiences for many millions of visitors.

Supporting organisations include: Acceso Cultura; Association of Independent Museums (AIM); Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA); Archives and Records Association (ARA); Arts Marketing Association (AMA); Engage; Fundación TyPA; Group for Education in Museums (GEM); The Heritage Alliance; Heritage Volunteering Group (HVG); ICOM ICME (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography); ICOM ICOFOM (International Committee for Museology); ICOM UK (International Council of Museums UK); ICOM ICFA (International Committee for Museums and Collections of Fine Arts); Kids in Museums; Museums + Heritage Advisor; Museums Association (MA); Office de coopération et d'information muséales (OCIM) supported by the Ministry of Higher Education and Research and the University of Burgundy; South and East Museums Federation (SEMFed); Scottish Museums Federation (SMFed) and Yorkshire and Humberside Federation.



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HAPPENED TO ME APART
FROM MY WIFE & SON!
ITS MADE ME THE HUSBAND & FATHER
I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE



Museum of Transology, 2016
Sustanon 250;
Object number: MOT000186
Photo by Katy Davies



Museum of Transology, 2016
Fashion Space Gallery, London College of Fashion
Photo by Katy Davies