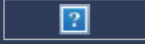


From: [Internal Communications](#)
To: [Phil Harrold](#)
Subject: Our participation in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme
Date: 10 November 2021 12:29:32

Using a Screenreader? [Click here for a web version](#)



10 November 2021



Dear BBC Pride members and colleagues,

You will be aware of the recent speculation about the BBC's continued participation in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme. I can confirm that, after careful consideration, we have decided not to renew our participation in the programme.

I am aware that this will not be a welcome development for some of you, so I wanted to explain why the Executive Committee and I have come to this decision.

I also want to give you my assurance that the BBC remains absolutely committed to being an industry-leading employer on LGBTQ+ inclusion. We are proud of our lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary colleagues and we will continue to support everyone to build fulfilling and enjoyable careers at the BBC.

As many of you will be aware, we have been participants in the Diversity Champions Programme, along with hundreds of other employers, for quite some time now. We have had – and continue to have – a positive and constructive discussion with Stonewall. We will continue to work with Stonewall in the future, on relevant projects. Our decision to leave the Champions Programme, and the associated Workplace Equality Index, is not a bar on the BBC working with Stonewall on corporate projects.

It is, however, unquestionable that recently our participation in the Diversity Champions Programme has led some organisations and individuals to consider that the BBC can not be impartial when reporting on public policy debates where Stonewall is taking an active, campaigning, role. It is for this reason that I believe that it is the right time to step back from the programme.

Since the day I started as Director-General, I have said that maintaining our impartiality is vitally important. Our journalists and programme makers must be able to report a full range of perspectives on stories and it is essential that our audiences believe us to be impartial on the public policy discussions we are covering. While I do not think that our journalism has been influenced by our involvement in the Diversity Champions Programme, not renewing our involvement is the correct move at this time to minimise the risk of perceived bias and avoid any perception that engagement with the programme is influencing our own decision-making.

We will continue to seek advice and guidance from external organisations to support colleagues. To that end I am pleased to announce that we will be partnering with 'INvolve UK' specifically to support our work on LGBTQ+ inclusion. INvolve is a global network and consultancy championing diversity and inclusion in business; they will offer LGBTQ+ staff at the BBC the opportunity to be part of a cross-industry mentoring scheme as well as providing significant leadership development opportunities and networking. This partnership will also help the BBC to stay connected to industry best practice on LGBTQ+ inclusion.

We are also committed to consistently reviewing internal policies and practices to ensure they are fully inclusive for LGBTQ+ staff.

Finally, I wanted to directly address an issue that a number of people have put to me. Some have asked me whether the BBC needs to be "impartial on trans people's lives". I want to be

clear, our impartiality is infused with democratic values and we are not impartial on human rights. In simple terms, what that means is that we don't condone or support discrimination in any form.

Our editorial guidelines are also clear: when reporting on policy debates, our journalism must be impartial and reflect a range of views. I want our reporting to cover a range of topics and different perspectives, to help our audiences understand and engage with the world around them.

Please be assured that the decision to leave the Diversity Champions Programme does not diminish our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion in the BBC. I am committed to providing a workplace in which lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary colleagues are respected, welcomed and able to fully participate.

I have asked the BBC Pride committee to set up a Q&A session with me this Friday, and I would encourage you to attend if you have any questions about this or other matters on LGBTQ+ inclusion at the BBC.

Best wishes,

Tim

Tim Davie
Director-General

From: [Phil Harrold](#)
To: [LGBTQ+ SL Network](#)
Subject: Stonewall update - in confidence
Date: 10 November 2021 12:22:53

Dear colleagues,

Very shortly today we'll announce that the BBC is not renewing our participation in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme.

As senior leaders in the organisation, I wanted you to know this in advance. I also suspect that you'll get asked questions about it, so I wanted to give you a heads up – and hope that you can support this move.

I've copied at the end of this email the statement that we'll issue.

In everything that we say to colleagues, we're making the point that this specific decision is about minimising any risk of perceived bias and avoiding any perception that our involvement with the Diversity Champions Programme is influencing our decision-making. I also hope that it's obvious that this decision does not diminish our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion at the BBC. Tim will send a note to the Pride network today setting out the decision in more detail and making it clear that we are committed to providing a workplace in which lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary colleagues are respected, welcomed and able to fully participate.

If you have any questions about this, please do give me a call direct. I'm also interested in any feedback from your or your networks.

Tim is doing a Q&A, hosted by BBC Pride, on Friday. You may want to join yourself, or encourage anyone approaching you with questions to join.

Best,

Phil

BBC STATEMENT – STONEWALL DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

The BBC is fully committed to being an industry-leading employer on LGBTQ+ inclusion. We are proud of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans colleagues and we support them to have fulfilling careers at the BBC.

Along with many other UK employers, the BBC has participated in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme to support our objective to create a fully inclusive workplace. However, over time our participation in the Programme has led some to question whether the BBC can be impartial when

From: [Phil Harrold](#)
To: [zzSEG](#)
Subject: Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme
Date: 10 November 2021 12:23:46

Dear Senior Executive Group,

Later today we'll announce that the BBC is not renewing our participation in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme, or the associated Workplace Equality Index. I wanted you to know this in advance, as you may have questions about it from colleagues.

I've copied below the statement that we'll issue publicly – and there is a longer, more explanatory, note from Tim to BBC Pride members that we will issue at the same time.

I hope that the statement below is clear about the rationale for the decision. To be clear, this move does not diminish our commitment to LGBTQ+ inclusion at the BBC. We remain committed to providing a workplace in which lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and non-binary colleagues are respected, welcomed and able to fully participate.

If you have any questions about this, please do give me a call.

Best,

Phil

BBC STATEMENT – STONEWALL DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

The BBC is fully committed to being an industry-leading employer on LGBTQ+ inclusion. We are proud of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans colleagues and we support them to have fulfilling careers at the BBC.

Along with many other UK employers, the BBC has participated in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme to support our objective to create a fully inclusive workplace. However, over time our participation in the Programme has led some to question whether the BBC can be impartial when reporting on public policy debates where Stonewall is taking an active role.

After careful consideration, we believe it is time to step back from the Diversity Champions Programme and will also no longer participate in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index.

Being a part of the Diversity Champions Programme has never required the BBC to support the campaigns of Stonewall, nor its policy positions. As a broadcaster, we have our own values and editorial standards – these are clearly set out and published in our Editorial Guidelines. We are also governed by the Royal Charter and the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. Our journalists continue, as ever, to report a full range of perspectives on stories.

Although the BBC will not be renewing its participation in the Diversity Champions Programme, in the future we will continue to work with a range of external organisations, including Stonewall, on relevant projects to support our LGBTQ+ staff.

Phil Harrold

Company Secretary and
Chief of Staff to the Director-General and Chairman

British Broadcasting Corporation

Broadcasting House, London, W1A 1AA



From: [Phil Harrold](#)
To: [Charlotte Moore & Assistant](#); [Elan Closs Stephens - BBC Board](#); [Fran Unsworth and Assistant](#); [Ian Hargreaves](#); [Leigh Tavaziva & Assistant](#); [Nick Serota](#); [Richard Sharp - Chairman](#); [Robbie Gibb](#); [Shirley Garrod](#); [Steve Morrison - NED](#); [Tanni Grey-Thompson](#); [Tim Davie](#); [Richard Sharp](#)
Cc: [Phil Harrold](#)
Subject: Stonewall Diversity Champions Programme - statement
Date: 09 November 2021 21:52:46

Dear Board members,

Tomorrow we will announce that we will not renew our participation in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme.

I have copied below the statement that will be issued tomorrow lunchtime, and we will separately be sending a longer more explanatory note to BBC Pride members.

Do let me know if you have any questions.

Obviously the statement remains confidential until we publish tomorrow.

Best wishes,

Phil

BBC STATEMENT – STONEWALL DIVERSITY CHAMPIONS PROGRAMME

The BBC is fully committed to being an industry-leading employer on LGBTQ+ inclusion. We are proud of our lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans colleagues and we support them to have fulfilling careers at the BBC.

Along with many other UK employers, the BBC has participated in Stonewall's Diversity Champions Programme to support our objective to create a fully inclusive workplace. However, over time our participation in the Programme has led some to question whether the BBC can be impartial when reporting on public policy debates where Stonewall is taking an active role.

After careful consideration, we believe it is time to step back from the Diversity Champions Programme and will also no longer participate in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index.

Being a part of the Diversity Champions Programme has never required the BBC to support the campaigns of Stonewall, nor its policy positions. As a broadcaster, we have our own values and editorial standards – these are clearly set out and published in our Editorial Guidelines. We are also governed by the Royal Charter and the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. Our journalists continue, as ever, to report a full range of perspectives on stories.

Although the BBC will not be renewing its participation in the Diversity Champions Programme, in

the future we will continue to work with a range of external organisations, including Stonewall, on relevant projects to support our LGBTQ+ staff.

reporting on public policy debates where Stonewall is taking an active role.

After careful consideration, we believe it is time to step back from the Diversity Champions Programme and will also no longer participate in Stonewall's Workplace Equality Index.

Being a part of the Diversity Champions Programme has never required the BBC to support the campaigns of Stonewall, nor its policy positions. As a broadcaster, we have our own values and editorial standards – these are clearly set out and published in our Editorial Guidelines. We are also governed by the Royal Charter and the Ofcom Broadcasting Code. Our journalists continue, as ever, to report a full range of perspectives on stories.

Although the BBC will not be renewing its participation in the Diversity Champions Programme, in the future we will continue to work with a range of external organisations, including Stonewall, on relevant projects to support our LGBTQ+ staff.

Phil Harrold

Company Secretary and
Chief of Staff to the Director-General and Chairman

British Broadcasting Corporation

Broadcasting House, London, W1A 1AA

