



racism in the

LGBTQIA+

community

**“White people need to step up.
It’s white culture that made
racism. It’s your mess -
you need to clean it up.”**

– TODD

A PROJECT BY



FUNDED BY



Families,
Fairness
and Housing

Racism in the queer community is common but not much discussed.

A 2018 survey by UK’s Stonewall found half of black, Asian and minority ethnic LGBT+ people said they’d faced discrimination from the wider LGBT+ community. Black LGBT+ people reported that 61 per cent have experienced discrimination from other LGBT+ people.

A 2008 study “We’re Family Too”, produced by ACON and the Arab Council Australia, found that LGBT+ Australians from Arabic-speaking backgrounds experienced homophobia within the Arabic world and racism from the LGBT+ community. The report’s author, Ghassan Kassisieh, said that traditional community ideals of personal and collective ‘honour’ made it difficult for individuals to challenge homophobia, and participants said they also felt excluded in LGBT+ communities or were otherwise fetishised or expected to conform to certain roles because of their race.

This leaflet came out of a project at the Bendigo Pride Festival using discussion, lived experience and shared stories to bring this issue into the forefront of our local LGBTQIA+ communities. It contains some of the thoughts our participants made in our public forum event and in interviews for our animations.

We’re hoping these comments can be a starting point for the white LGBT+ community to consider how to be better allies, or at the very least, “not making someone’s struggle even worse”. It also contains a list of groups that may be useful.

Here were some of the points our participants made.



racism in the LGBT+ community

"Beauty standards [are racist]- white is right. It leads to me questioning if I'm good enough."

— SKYE

"[LGBT+] Places [make me] feel out of place."

— GEORGE

"Even though sometimes there is no obvious "we don't want you here" - you're excluded. For someone who's just trying to be friends and find a social circuit but also to find love... that's confronting."

— RONY

"Racism is a response to colonisation."

— TODD



dating

"Stereotyping exists in our community, it's not a generational thing. "No fats, no fems, no Asians" still exists. It was there ... right [in] front of you. "No GAMs" - that's Gay Asian Male."

— RONY

"It's nice to know the person instead of [labels]"

— GEORGE



on being

intersectional

"[Racism leads to] dividing yourself up - Wurundjeri and Queer? That never happens. Services and the community need to understand we are not just parts of ourselves."

— TODD

"You can't divide us into parts."

— SKYE

What does "Intersectional" mean?

A gay man has to deal with homophobia. A black man has to deal with racism. But a black gay man will have to deal with homophobia and racism (often at the same time). It is often the case that he will face racism inside the LGBT community and homophobia in the black community.

Similarly, a disabled lesbian Muslim will have to deal with ableism, homophobia, Islamophobia, racism and sexism. She might find physical barriers to accessing LGBT venues, but even when she can get into the building she might still face racism and Islamophobia from the white LGBT community.

Having an intersectional identity often generates a feeling that someone does not completely belong in one group or another, and can lead to isolation, depression and other mental health issues.

— THE EQUALITY NETWORK, SCOTLAND

🔗 www.equality-network.org



strategies for calling out racism

"White people need to step up. It's white culture that made racism. It's your mess - you need to clean it up."

– TODD

"It's about putting your perspective out in a non-confrontational way. Be that one person talking to that one person - changing a mind. Push where your circle of influence exists. If you can pass awareness to another, that's all it takes."

– SKYE

"Being sympathetic towards other people's struggles, you know, not ... making someone's struggle even worse."

– RONY

"Live your life in the way you want the world to be - you'll attract the people you need."

– TODD

"Stand up for others as you would like to be stood up for."

– SKYE

"See someone as the person first."

– ANNIE

You can find a podcast of our racism forum and animations on the subject at bendigopridefestival.com.au/digital-pride/

RESOURCES

A-Men is an online social group for gay Asian men living in Australia. Their online magazine explores art, sexuality and cultural identity. [f /amensydney](https://www.facebook.com/amensydney)

AGMC is the national peak body for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer individuals and community groups of multicultural and multifaith backgrounds.

agmc.org.au

Aleph Melbourne is a social, support and advocacy group for same-sex attracted, trans and gender diverse, and intersex people (and allies) who have a Jewish heritage, living in Melbourne, Australia. aleph.org.au

Australia & New Zealand Tongzhi Rainbow Alliance Inc. (ANTRA) is a community-based organisation empowering the young Mandarin- and Cantonese-speaking LGBTQIA+ communities. antra.org.au

Black Rainbow is a national volunteer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+SB social enterprise in the pursuit of positive health and wellbeing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Intersex, Queer, Asexual, Sistergirl and Brotherboys (LGBTQIA+SB).

blackrainbow.org.au

BlaQ was established as a collective response to the identified need for strengthened visibility of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ community. Through a network of sharing, support and connection, we aim to elevate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIA+ mob from across the country in a safe and inclusive space of belonging that prioritises and reframes us as central to the conversation. blaq.org.au

ConversAsians is a peer-led discussion group for Asian gay men. The group usually meets every two months to discuss topics relevant to Asian gay men, organised by volunteer facilitators. Topics are tailored to the Asian gay community and range from discrimination, sexual health, relationships, to mental wellbeing. [f /ConversAsians](https://www.facebook.com/ConversAsians)

A PROJECT BY



FUNDED BY



Families,
Fairness
and Housing

SocialisAsians is a social events group for gay Asian men and allies based in Sydney. The group holds a variety of volunteer-run events every couple of weeks, such as monthly boardgame nights (usual attendance between 50-100), dance classes, hikes and outdoor activities, pub nights and pot-lucks.

[f /SocialisAsians](#)

Dayenu exists to meet the needs of Jewish LGBTQIA+ people and their friends, families, partners and other supporters. It provides outreach through education, information, resources, social activities and other events. [🔗 dayenu.org.au](#)

Ethnic LGBT+ exists to provide a safe place for culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) LGBTQIA+ individuals to share their stories and to feel supported. We do this through stories of other CALD LGBTQIA+ individuals, access to collated academic articles and studies in the CALD LGBTQIA+ space in Australia and access to thought pieces centred on CALD LGBTQIA+ issues. [🔗 ethniclgbt.com](#)

Gay Asian Proud (GAP) is a social group for same sex-attracted Asian men based in Melbourne and wider Victoria.

[🔗 thorneharbour.org/lgbti-health/multicultural-health/gap-gay-asian-proud/](#)

Greek and Gay Support Network provides support services and hosts fun events for Hellenic LGBTQIA+ individuals and their friends. [f /greekkaigay](#)

Helem exists to meet the needs of LGBTQIA+ people from Arab communities in Melbourne. Check out their Facebook page for more info. [f /helem.melbourne](#)

(in)visible is a community driven peer-led program developed by and for young queer, trans and intersex people of colour (QTIPOC) from culturally and spiritually diverse backgrounds, aged 16-25 years through regular workshops and events, promoting building positive peer relationships.

[🔗 thedrum.ds.org.au/program/invisible/](#)

Koorie Pride Victoria is helping build visibility, strength and connection for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander LGBTQIAS&B+ people - our beautiful Rainbow Mob - across all of Victoria. [🔗 kooriepridevic.org.au](#)

Marhaba was founded by Imam Nur Warsame and is a Muslim LGBTQIA+ social support group with regular meetings, referrals to support services and a safe space where spirituality and sexuality can be reconciled.

[✉ enquiries@marhaba.org.au](#)

Queer Refugee And Asylum Seeker Peers is a growing community of LGBTQIA+ refugees and people seeking asylum, a peer led social support group that meets regularly for activities, excursions, workshops and trainings, referrals, connections, networking, and emotional and practical support, and a "queer family" for both QRASP members and their friends and allies. QRASP is based in Melbourne and has members across Victoria.

[🔗 manycolouredsky.org/australian](#)

Selamat Datang Indonesian Community (SDIC) is a community group for LGBTQIA+ Indonesians but is open to anyone who supports what the group does for its community and what it stands for. It was created to show support for the Indonesian LGBTQIA+ community through participation in the annual Sydney Mardi Gras Parade and events where group members can network, socialise, form new friendships and feel supported.

[✉ selamatdatangcommunity@gmail.com](#)

[f Selamat Datang - Supporting Our Indonesian Community](#)

Sydney Queer Muslims is a non-profit organisation dedicated to providing social support, education and resources to individuals and families in NSW. We aspire to support and advocate for people of diverse sexualities, genders and intersex status to reconcile their sexual identity with their faith.

[🔗 sydneyqueermuslims.org.au](#)

Trikone Australia is a non-profit, volunteer-led social-support organisation for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and queer (LGBTQIA+) people of South Asian descent living in Australia. Through small and large-scale events (such as picnics, movie nights, panel discussions, Bollywood dance parties, theatre productions and Mardi Gras floats), we offer a supportive, empowering and non-judgmental platform, where LGBTQIA+ South Asians can meet, connect and proudly promote awareness and acceptance of their sexuality in society.

[🔗 trikone.org.au](#)

Yellow Kitties hosts fun events such as badminton, rock-climbing, karaoke, anime and movie marathons for Asian LGBTQIA+ women. [🔗 yellowkitties.org](#)