



2020

# INDIA WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX TOP EMPLOYERS 2020 REPORT

Celebrating the winners of the India Workplace Equality Index

INDIA'S FIRST COMPREHENSIVE BENCHMARKING TOOL FOR EMPLOYERS  
TO MEASURE THEIR PROGRESS ON LESBIAN, GAY, BI AND TRANS  
(LGBT+) INCLUSION IN THE WORKPLACE





# 2020

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This year, **Keshav Suri Foundation (KSF)**, **Pride Circle** and **Stonewall** have partnered to create the India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI). This is India's first comprehensive benchmarking tool with which organisations can measure their progress on LGBT+ inclusion in the Indian context.

It was only in 2018 that the supreme court of India de-criminalised sexual acts between consenting same-sex individuals, and the LGBT+ community in India still faces immense social stigma. Very few people are 'out' at work, so feedback to employers on the needs of LGBT+ people is limited. The IWEI has been created to enable organisations to navigate these challenges and make progress towards LGBT+ equality.

The IWEI Top Employers, celebrated in this report, showcase the employers who are leading the way in India to advance lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT+) inclusion in the workplace.

The IWEI follows in the footsteps of Stonewall's UK WEI. This benchmarking tool has been used by employers over the last 15 years to assess their achievements and progress on LGBT+ workplace equality in the UK. Keshav Suri Foundation, Pride Circle and Stonewall have been working closely over the last year to adapt the UK WEI and bring it to life in the Indian context.

# A JOINT FOREWORD FROM THE PARTNERS

We're so proud to have formed this momentous partnership to build and deliver the first ever India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI). Pride Circle and Keshav Suri Foundation's achievements in driving change for LGBT people in India, along with Stonewall's 15 years of experience in devising indices and running workplace inclusion programmes, means this collaboration has the potential to be truly transformative.

It's now two years since the landmark repeal of Section 377, which decriminalised same-sex relationships in India. The next step is to open up access to work for LGBT people in the world's second most populous country, and to support employers themselves to become more LGBT inclusive. The time is ripe to make real change, and the potential to improve the lives of LGBT people is huge.

The power of business to progress social change is hard to overstate. No matter the industry, businesses have the ability to influence society and improve the experiences of LGBT people as employees, service users and customers. By taking part in the first IWEI, organisations have demonstrated a commitment to equality and a willingness to collectively raise the bar when it comes to inclusion. It's our hope that the Index will promote the type of collaboration and friendly competition that will push progress even further and allow employers to learn from each other's best practice.

We'd like to end by thanking every participant – we know you took a leap of faith by participating in the first ever IWEI. Your support of our partnership and of LGBT inclusion has been overwhelming, and there's no doubt that your dedication to equality will be noticed by LGBT people across India and beyond. So here's to many more years of the India Workplace Equality Index, and to all the progress it will surely make.



**KESHAV SURI**

**KESHAV SURI  
FOUNDATION**



**RAM SINHA**

**PRIDE CIRCLE**



**NANCY KELLEY**

**STONEWALL**

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# A QUOTE FROM FICCI, OUR INDUSTRY PARTNER

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“FICCI, as an ally, is a great supporter of LGBTQ+ inclusion. We have a Task Force on Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) for enabling D&I work policies across India Inc. FICCI has developed toolkits and assessment frameworks for gender parity and inclusion of people with disabilities within the workplace, and we are delighted to be an Industry Partner for the India Workplace Equality Index. I am hopeful that this comprehensive tool will be a catalyst for positivity and encourage corporates to become more diverse and inclusive. I congratulate our co-partners, Keshav Suri Foundation, Pride Circle and Stonewall for this significant effort towards advancing the participation of the LGBTQ+ community in the workplace”.



**DILIP CHENOY,**  
**SECRETARY-GENERAL**

**FICCI**

The Federation of Indian  
Chambers of Commerce &  
Industry



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# HOW THE INDIA WORKPLACE EQUALITY INDEX WORKS

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The India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI) is the definitive benchmarking tool for LGBT+ workplace inclusion in India. The IWEI empowers organisations to navigate the challenges of embedding LGBT+ inclusion and provides them with a clear roadmap to follow.

Each entrant compiles a submission, accompanied by supporting evidence, which demonstrates their organisation's performance against a set of best-practice criteria. The criteria are split across nine different areas of employment policy and practice:

## **SECTION 1: POLICIES AND BENEFITS**

This section determines whether the organisation has policies in place that ensure the equal treatment of LGBT+ employees.

## **SECTION 2: EMPLOYEE LIFECYCLE**

This section examines how the organisation engages with all employees to raise awareness on LGBT+ issues.

## **SECTION 3: EMPLOYEE RESOURCE GROUP**

This section examines how the organisation makes facilities available for LGBT+ employees to network, consult and feed back to the organisation.

## **SECTION 4: ALLIES AND ROLE MODELS**

This section examines how the organisation supports the development of LGBT+ role models and allies.

## **SECTION 5: SENIOR LEADERSHIP**

This section examines what activities the organisation's leadership undertakes to advance LGBT+ equality.

## **SECTION 6: MONITORING**

This section examines how the organisation monitors the sexual orientation and gender identity of employees.

## **SECTION 7: PROCUREMENT**

This section examines how the organisation engages with existing and potential suppliers.

## **SECTION 8: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

This section examines how the organisation supports LGBT+ community groups and promotes LGBT+ equality on public platforms.

## **SECTION 9: ADDITIONAL WORK**

This section examines additional in-country work that has not been captured elsewhere in the Index.

Once submissions are received and marked, all entrants are given a score and are celebrated as either Gold, Silver or Bronze IWEI Top Employers. Overall scores and individual criteria scoring are kept confidential between the organisation and the IWEI partnership – as is the general participation of any organisations that wish to remain anonymous.

Following the release of the IWEI Top Employers, organisations have the option of receiving a detailed report and a feedback meeting for a small fee. During this meeting, they receive tailored feedback on their submission and action-planning tips for the year ahead. Participation in the IWEI is otherwise free of charge.

# KEY STATS

65

65 organisations registered to participate in the 2020 inaugural India Workplace Equality Index (IWEI)

21

21 organisations achieved a Gold Award

18

18 organisations achieved a Silver Award

13

13 organisations achieved a Bronze Award

13

13 organisations did not meet the minimum threshold

53

The average overall score of all participants was 53%

16

Entrants to the IWEI represented 16 sectors collectively

# THE IWEI TOP EMPLOYERS: THE AWARDS

We are delighted to have received 65 registrations to participate in the IWEI in 2020. In recognition of their leading work in LGBT+ inclusion, the IWEI partnership congratulates the following Top 2020 Employers:

## GOLD AWARD WINNERS

Gold employers have successfully embedded LGBT+ inclusion in their policies, hiring practices and external communication, demonstrating a long-term and in-depth commitment towards LGBT+ inclusion.



# SILVER AWARD WINNERS

Silver employers have made significant achievements in promoting LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace, demonstrating progress and impact over time.



Deutsche Bank



Uber

vmware®



Gap Inc.



And 1 anonymous submissions



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## BRONZE AWARD WINNERS

Bronze employers have started their journey to better LGBT+ inclusion at work by developing inclusive policies and initiating activities that promote LGBT+ inclusion for employees

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**CRISIL**

An S&P Global Company

**Paysafe:**

**VIP INDUSTRIES LIMITED**



**WELLS  
FARGO**

**parexel.**

**And 7 anonymous submissions**

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# GOOD PRACTICE EXAMPLES

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## Policies and benefits

**Tata Steel** recognised that there was more work they could do to with their policies, particularly when it came to representing diverse families and ensuring that parental policies and benefits were accessible to all colleagues. In order to use more inclusive language, they renamed the 'Paternity Leave' policy as the 'Newborn Parent Leave' policy. Similarly, the 'Additional Privilege Leave' policy, which was once intended to provide female employees with leave if their child was sick, has been renamed 'Child Care Leave'. It has also been extended to same-sex parents, trans parents and single male parents.

## Employee lifecycle

For the last two years, **ThoughtWorks** has run a five-month paid internship programme for aspiring LGBTQI technologists. Interns get the opportunity to do classroom and virtual learning, as well as working on real projects shadowing experienced colleagues.

Alongside this, ThoughtWorks runs sensitisation and LGBTI awareness campaigns for existing colleagues, so that LGBTI interns are understood and supported by their colleagues. The organisation is determined to have a staff team that reflects the diverse world we live in, and so far every LGBTI intern has continued their career at this organisation in a permanent role.

## LGBT Employee Resource Group

**Bain & Company** understands that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) employees have unique needs. That's why they created BGLAD, the LGBTQ network at Bain, almost two decades ago. It's aimed at providing LGBTQ employees with the opportunity to work as openly and 'out' as they feel comfortable.

BGLAD has also developed a comprehensive confidentiality process that allows employees to participate in the network in the most comfortable way for them. Employees can join BGLAD at four levels: Level 1 for people that are out to everyone, Level 2 for those who are only out to fellow LGBTQ colleagues in the local offices, Level 3 for those only out to the Global BGLAD Administrator and Level 4 for non-LGBT employees who wish to show their support as allies. This approach means that BGLAD members can choose who and where they get support from. Employees can contact the LGBTQ group at the local office for a chat and to connect informally and can also benefit from formal mentoring and coaching through BGLAD.

## Allies and Role Models

As part of their commitment towards inclusion, **Deutsche Bank** has been very active in celebrating key events in the LGBT calendar and making sure that allies are also involved in each of them. For IDAHOT, the Pride flag was hosted above the Jaipur and Mumbai offices and Pride banners were displayed at the Pune and Bangalore offices. Alongside this, awareness sessions on 'Being an Ally' were held for non-LGBT+ staff.

Across India, around 800 employees participated in these events, and the momentum continued as LGBT+ celebrations became virtual this year. To celebrate our success and show our support as allies, people shared pictures wearing purple on the Deutsche Bank Pride virtual wall with hashtag #IDAHOT2020, and personal stories were shared on LinkedIn.

## External Engagement

**Godrej** strives to lead LGBT+ inclusion efforts in corporate India by continuously engaging with employees and other corporates. In 2017, they hosted the United Nations for the launch of their Standards of Conduct for LGBT+ inclusion in corporate business. This provided an opportunity to engage with trailblazers across corporate India and have meaningful conversations on how to make the workplace more inclusive.

A year later, Godrej India Culture Lab launched a Manifesto for Trans Inclusion in the Indian Workplace. This was an innovative document that proved to be a 'one-stop shop' for everything employers would want to know about trans inclusion, and how to embed trans inclusion into the workplace.

## Community Engagement

Trans-friendly healthcare is not readily available in India. What is available is still very binary, with an intrinsic lack of understanding about the lived experience of being trans at its centre. **Lilac Insights** partnered with The Jimmie Foundation and the Association of Transgender Health in India to launch 'The Gender-Friendly Healthcare Facility Initiative', a first of its kind.

The program comprises six sessions designed to increase awareness amongst doctors in India about gender identity, and their role in bettering the experience of trans people accessing gender identity services. Over 100 doctors completed the program and are expected to have developed a clearer understanding of how to make their practice more trans-inclusive.

## Additional Work

**BCG** are committed to using their position as a global business to advocate for LGBT+ rights in India and across the world. As part of this, BCG gathers, analyses and publishes data on LGBT+ inclusion, attitudes and experiences in universities and the workplace via their own survey, 'Out&Work barometer', which made its debut in India and is now being rolled out in 19 countries. BCG share the results with clients and public stakeholders to help inform people about the lived experiences of LGBT+ people. Alongside this, BCG partnered with FICCI and Open for Business to launch a report of 'The New Global Champion - Why the fastest growing companies from emerging markets are embracing LGBT+ inclusion' in November 2019. The report is the first-ever analysis of the financial impacts of LGBT+ inclusion in companies headquartered in emerging markets, including India, and challenges traditional business thinking about diversity and inclusion

*Please note, organisations use different acronyms such as LGBTI, LGBTQ, LGBTQI etc. based on their own employee feedback. We have reflected the diversity of their language within this report and encourage all organisations to discuss the most appropriate language and acronyms for their organisation with their colleagues.*

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# DIDN'T TAKE PART IN 2020?

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The India Workplace Equality Index will be back for 2021. Make sure you don't miss out next year! What's in it for you? Here are 10 reasons to complete the India Workplace Equality Index:

## 1. We do the work, so you don't have to.

It can be time-consuming and difficult to come up with a structure for tackling LGBT+ inequality in the workplace.

The Index provides a ready-made, easy to use framework. It gives you a simple structure for planning your yearly work and is based entirely on best practice, so you can make the most of your time and resources.

## 2. India's first ever

India's first comprehensive index for LGBT+ equality is built on the vast expertise of the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index, which launched in 2005.

## 3. Helping you to prioritise

It can be difficult to know exactly how your workplace is addressing LGBT+ inclusion. The Index is a great way of getting an overview.

It's divided into multiple sections, from employee policy to workplace culture. Completing it will give you a sense of where you're already doing well and where there may be gaps in your work to focus on.

## 4. Submit from your desk

The Index's fully digital submission process makes submitting easy and quick.

## 5. Show people you care

Taking part in the Index clearly demonstrates a commitment to your LGBT+ employees. What you learn from the questions and the feedback you receive can improve your practices.

It can also empower teams to make changes appropriate to their regions. This can have a whole range of positive effects – from favourable media coverage and stronger client relationships to more engaged and productive employees.

## 6. It's free!

It's completely free to submit to the Index.

## 7. Buy-in

We know it can be hard to get budget and support for diversity and inclusion work. The Index is an excellent bargaining tool when asking for resources.

Completing it yearly will show tangible progress, which you can use to persuade senior managers and board-level colleagues to invest in targeted action.

## 8. Making equality everyone's business

The structure of the Index encourages people from your workplace to get involved in LGBT+ work. We assess activities from across your organisation, helping you to make sure LGBT+ inclusion is everyone's business.

## 9. Celebrate your achievements

Participating organisations are celebrated with top employer awards. This impressive accolade gives you external recognition for your work and helps you to stand out from the crowd as a forward-thinking organisation. Being able to demonstrate your achievement shows that you are an employer of choice and can help you to recruit and retain diverse talent.

## 10. Tailored feedback and support

Even greater value can be derived from the Index by signing up for a customised benchmarking report and tailored feedback on your Index submission from our IWEI team of experts. Our experts will also help you create a detailed plan for the year ahead.

# IWEI PARTNERS AND CONTACT DETAILS



## Keshav Suri Foundation

Keshav Suri Foundation, launched in 2018, is a non-governmental organization with its motto to Embrace, Empower and Mainstream the LGBTQIA+ community in India. In the last two years, KSF has made strides both online and on-ground with various initiatives and programs, keeping a focus on the marginal intersections of the community. At present, we are working towards queer livelihood building, access to education by means of scholarships and fellowships, making mental health services available for the community, and creating workspaces LGBTQIA+ inclusive.

Its Founder; Keshav Suri was a key petitioner in the historic reading down of Section 377 and has been actively involved with community development initiatives for over a decade now.

KSF also runs the It Gets Better India project that uses storytelling as a means to connect LGBTQIA+ youth around the world.



## Pride Circle

Pride Circle is India's premier Diversity & Inclusion organization with a mission to enable and empower LGBTQ+ people and support organizations in fostering a culture of belonging for all.

We partner with over 250 companies to provide executive leadership development, comprehensive D&I training and consultation, and professional networking opportunities that build inclusive and welcoming work environments. With our experience & growing roster of national & international partner companies, governments & non-profit organizations, Pride Circle is leading the LGBT+ inclusion revolution in India.



## Stonewall

Stonewall is a lesbian, gay, bi and trans (LGBT) rights charity in the United Kingdom, established over 30 years ago. Stonewall is now the largest LGBT rights organisation not only in the UK but in Europe.

## Contact us:

For more information about the Index or to sign up for the 2021 IWEI, please email: [contact@workplaceequalityindex.in](mailto:contact@workplaceequalityindex.in)

Or call us on: **+91 9739 2421 10**

Check out our website on: <https://workplaceequalityindex.in/>

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