Ethical Charter

July 2024
Acknowledgement of Country

Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras acknowledges that our events take place on sacred Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Gadigal, Bidjigal, Birrabirragal, Cammeraygal, Darug, Dharawal, and Wangal people who are the Traditional Custodians of the Sydney Basin.

We pay our respects to Elders both past and present.

We recognise the continuing connection to lands, skies, waterways and communities as the oldest continuous culture in the world.

And therefore the oldest continuous queer culture in the world.

Always was, always will be Aboriginal Land.
INTRODUCTION

For half a decade Sydney Gay and Lesbian Mardi Gras has called upon our Ethical Charter framework during the final stages of prospective partnership opportunities. This ensures we enter into relationships with organisations’ who share our values and commitment to our communities, and who actively advance our communities’ missions through their audiences, processes, staff and strategies. Simply put, the Ethical Charter framework is the foundation our relationship is built upon and reassures our communities of organisations alignment and active allyship.

Following Sydney WorldPride, our Ethical Charter has evolved further, with a more focussed set of principles to guide our partnerships. We have set ambitious standards for our relationships, as the important role Sydney Mardi Gras’ partnerships play requires a rigorous and ongoing conversation to support progress in corporate commitments to LGBTQIA+ communities.

The Ethical Charter Framework is an ongoing discussion with prospective partners. Organisations that the team believe are not an appropriate fit are not invited to respond to the Ethical Charter and are instead offered feedback on areas for potential development.

The Ethical Charter process is designed to ensure full alignment with our values and principles, that provides the Sydney Mardi Gras team and Board and our partners the confidence to progress with the partnership grounded in a robust and accountable ethical process.
OUR VISION
LGBTQIA+ people are respected and treated equally through a movement that enacts positive social change.

Our vision is our description of the world we want to live in. All our work, from the thousands of hours spent by volunteers through to the staff behind the scenes of the biggest and best LGBTQIA+ festival in the southern hemisphere, contributes to making this world a reality.

OUR PURPOSE
To champion LGBTQIA+ social issues through leveraging the power of arts, culture, partnerships and celebration.

In defining our purpose, we are describing how we play a role in contributing to the achievement of our vision. We are part of a worldwide Pride movement, but we are unique because of the combination of our focus (rights of LGBTQIA+ communities), approach (working through arts and culture), geography and reach (focused on NSW and Australia but reaching a global audience).

OUR ROLE
Our role is the unique way in which our organisation delivers its purpose. We use the power and drawcard of arts, culture and our global profile to champion the human rights of LGBTQIA+ communities.

Elevate LGBTQIA+ communities and their stories to a global stage
We are in the privileged position of hosting one of the world’s biggest and best Pride festival. We leverage this opportunity to provide LGBTQIA+ communities a platform to share and celebrate their stories, experiences, hopes and dreams with a global audience. This positively raises the profile of individuals and communities who are marginalised and oppressed because of who they love and how they identify.

Connecting and supporting diverse LGBTQIA+ communities
We are here for all communities under the LGBTQIA+ umbrella. We recognise that this is not one homogenous group with a shared experience. Rather, our communities are as diverse as they are in number. We find ways to bring these diverse communities together, despite their differences, whether that is to celebrate our identities, debate our diversities, or collectively advocate for change.

Embracing our cultural legacy to bring change for LGBTQIA+ communities
Our organisation was formed with the spirit of protest against injustice. We embrace this spirit and the courage of the ’78ers and those who followed, to continue to strive for equal rights and recognition of LGBTQIA+ people. Today, this goes far beyond the celebration of the Festival and using our history, knowledge and wisdom to champion LGBTQIA+ rights and protect our communities from threats to their safety and inclusion in society.
PRINCIPLES OF PARTNERSHIP

Guided by the vision and purpose of Sydney Gay & Lesbian Mardi Gras, we’ve evolved the following principles to underpin our partnerships, to ensure best-fit for our organisation and our communities. Prospective Partners will be scored 1-5 in each of the following categories:

**Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**
We want to partner with industry leaders in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion - who champion DEI as an integral part of their organisation.

**Collaboration**
We want to partner with long-standing supporters of our community, who want to stick by us for the years to come, and share a commitment to a strong and transparent partnership.

**Authenticity and Integrity**
We want to partner with organisations who share a deep and authentic commitment to our communities, who align with our values, and are genuinely invested in seeing our communities thrive.

**Human Rights and Sustainability**
We want to partner with organisations with a shared vision of a fair and just world, who share a commitment to human rights and environmental sustainability.
Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- To what extent does the partner have a supported and empowered LGBTQIA+/Pride network within their organisation?
- What support does the partner provide to LGBTQIA+ people inclusion within their organisation? (e.g. diversity and inclusion initiatives, HR Policies explicitly supporting LGBTQI+ staff?)
- To what extent is the partner’s committed to diversity, equity, and inclusion accredited? (AWEI ranking, WGEA employer of choice, Pride in Diversity).
- Does the partner demonstrate a commitment to respecting and advocating for the rights of First Nations people in Australia and globally?
- How does their marketing represent the diversity of the LGBTQIA+ community?
- What training is in place for customer service interactions with LGBTQIA+ individuals?
- Do they provide training for employees on LGBTQIA+ sensitivity and cultural competency?

Authenticity and Integrity

- How has the partner established or contributed to programs that positively impact the development of LGBTQI+ people? (Mentoring, pro-bono services, donations, other sponsorships).
- Has the partner demonstrated a track record of public support for the rights of the LGBTQIA+ communities? (Support for marriage equality, transgender equality, gender equality etc.)
- Has the partner ever been involved in activities which directly threaten the rights of LGBTQIA+ communities?
- Has the partner previously been involved in controversy or scandal relating to LGBTQIA+ communities, and have these been appropriately resolved?
- Has the partner or members of its executive previously donated to causes or organisations seeking to harm LGBTQIA+ communities?
- To what extent has the partner demonstrated an understanding to the rich and diverse history of SGLMG, and understanding its origins in protest and political action that carry through to today?
- To what extent is the partner committed to an authentically supporting and uplifting LGBTQIA+ communities through and outside of the partnership?
- To what extent do the partner’s intentions and motivation for partnership go beyond marketing and publicity for themselves, but a genuine commitment to celebrating and empowering LGBTQIA+ communities?

Collaboration

- For how many years has the partner supported SGLMG, or other LGBTQIA+ organisations in Australia or around the world?
- To what extent has the partner demonstrated an open and transparent approach to the partnership, with SGLMG able to raise any issues arisen throughout the partnership?
- Is the partner wanting to commit to a multi-year partnership?
- Is there a community engagement element/grants programme that’s funded as part of the partnership proposal?

Human Rights and Sustainability

- How does the partner demonstrate respect for the inherent dignity of all people through their operations? (Commitment to human rights, modern slavery compliance)
- Is the partner connected to war, genocide or violence around the world?
- To what extent does the partner demonstrate progress, action, and further commitment to environmental sustainability and climate action?
- What is the partner’s policies and reporting around overall ESG (environment, social, and governance policies) that demonstrate an overarching commitment to ethical practices as an organisation?
ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Prospective partners will be scored 1-5 on each of the principles outlined, based on their responses and other information provided to each of the answers of the questions listed above.

Partners are encouraged to provide links and documents to support their answers. Where required, SGLMG will research and verify partners’ responses.

If a prospective partner scores a 0 for any of these questions, this will lead to an immediate failure of the Ethical Charter and the partnership will not progress. Prospective partners that score a 4-11 will be subject to robust discussion with senior members of the SGLMG team and CEO (and Board as required). Prospective partners that score a 12 or above will automatically pass the ethical charter.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

0 **DEI efforts are yet to be endorsed by senior leadership with budget attached, and HR policies are yet to be developed or are superficial.**

1 **Beginning their journey on diversity, equity, and inclusion.**

5 **The organisation exemplifies best practice in Corporate Australia. DEI efforts are accredited and the organisation has empowered Pride Networks, comprehensive HR policies, and inclusive marketing.**

### Collaboration

0 **The organisation hasn’t demonstrated a collaborative spirit thus far.**

1 **The organisation is new to supporting LGBTQIA+ initiatives or organisation and has demonstrated a commitment to a collaborative spirit.**

5 **The organisation has supported LGBTQIA+ communities and Mardi Gras for decades, is a deeply connected and understanding partner whose partnership forms part of their identity as a brand/organisation.**

### Authenticity and Integrity

0 **Unresolved and unaddressed involvement or activity that threaten the rights of or harm LGBTQIA+ communities.**

1 **The organisation is new to its support of LGBTQIA+ communities, with no prior track record of opposition.**

5 **The organisation is a vocal champion of LGBTQIA+ communities with an extensive track record of advocacy and financial support that demonstrates a genuine understanding of the intersections of LGBTQIA+ communities and is taking steps to address persisting inequities.**

### Human Rights and Sustainability

0 **Unresolved human rights or environmental violations (including active connections to war, genocide, or violence).**

1 **The organisation has limited policies and verified reporting across human rights and environmental issues.**

5 **The organisation is a recognised and accredited leader in sustainability and human rights and requires this throughout its supply chain.**
Thank you!