



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

3 Operating Models for LGBTQ+ Inclusion

These help organisations navigate different environments while remaining values-based and safety-led.

1. Do No Harm Model

(Used in high-risk or hostile jurisdictions)

Definition:

The organisation minimises visibility to prevent putting employees at risk. Instead, it quietly maintains internal protections without public positioning.

Characteristics:

- Prioritises employee safety above all else.
- Low external visibility; no public Pride campaigns or statements.
- Strong internal policies but delivered quietly.
- Confidential support for LGBTQ+ staff.

Where used:

Countries with criminalisation of LGBTQ+ identities, state surveillance, or severe political/religious hostility.

ERG role:

- Provide confidential peer support.
- Advise on risk and cultural sensitivity.
- Ensure internal policies exist even if externally invisible.
- Quietly signpost resources.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

2. Embassy Model

(Used in mixed environments — moderate risk, partial acceptance, or evolving legal landscapes)

Definition:

The organisation behaves like an “embassy”: inside the workplace, employees experience full equality, safety, and inclusion, regardless of what is happening outside.

Characteristics:

- Strong internal protections and visible inclusion *inside* the organisation.
- Limited or cautious external activism.
- Pride/allyship activities may be kept internal only.
- Education and training prioritised for managers.
- Clear travel-risk guidance for LGBTQ+ staff.

Where used:

Countries with inconsistent protections, rising anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, or polarised political climates.

ERG role:

- Maintain vibrant, visible internal programming.
- Educate leadership on local risks.
- Build awareness campaigns tailored for cultural context.
- Advocate for internal policies that exceed local legal standards.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

3. Activist Model

(Used in supportive jurisdictions with strong civil rights protection)

Definition:

The organisation leans into public advocacy, visibility, and societal change, often partnering with NGOs and speaking publicly on LGBTQ+ issues.

Characteristics:

- External Pride campaigns, sponsorships, and partnerships.
- Public statements on policy, human rights, and equality.
- Active support for LGBTQ+ community programmes.
- Senior leaders visibly engaged as allies.
- Commitment to ongoing DEI advancement.

Where used:

Countries with strong protections, progressive public attitudes, and low risk to employees.

ERG role:

- Lead Pride efforts and partnerships.
- Host public-facing events or roundtables.
- Advise Comms/HR on advocacy opportunities.
- Co-create thought leadership on inclusion.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

ERG Actions: Top 10 LGBTQ+ Issues for 2026

How an LGBTQ+ ERG can operate safely and effectively under each global operating model.

Legend

- DNH = Do No Harm Model
- EMB = Embassy Model
- ACT = Activist Model

1. Attacks on Trans and Non-Binary Rights

DNH

- Quiet support circles for affected staff.
- Discreet guidance on navigating local systems.
- One-to-one signposting to mental health or external helplines.

EMB

- Internal education sessions on gender identity.
- Support for HR to uphold gender transition at work guidance internally.
- Visible internal pronoun inclusion, not promoted externally.

ACT

- Public learning events and panel discussions.
- Joint statements with leadership supporting trans inclusion.
- Partnerships with external organisations (e.g., Stonewall, local LGBTQ+ charities).

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

2. Marriage Equality and Family Recognition Under Pressure

DNH

- Quietly advise HR on equal benefits and parental recognition.
- Confidential support for staff facing external barriers.

EMB

- Host internal sessions on navigating family recognition.
- Work with global mobility to ensure safe travel for LGBTQ+ families.

ACT

- Publicly champion equal family rights through campaigns and storytelling.
- Engage in external advocacy aligned with organisational values.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

3. Conversion Therapy Bans Delayed or Weakened

DNH

- Silent inclusion: ensure internal policies prohibit harmful practices.
- Private, trauma-informed support for impacted employees.

EMB

- Educational workshops for managers on recognising harmful behaviours.
- Curate internal resources and survivor stories (anonymous if needed).

ACT

- Visibility campaigns during key dates (e.g., IDAHOBIT).
- Collaborate with NGOs to highlight best practice commitments.

4. HIV, AIDS, and Public Health Setbacks

DNH

- Private signposting to health services.
- Work with Occupational Health to discreetly share resources.

EMB

- Internal HIV awareness sessions dispelling stigma.
- Encourage HR to include PrEP, PEP, and HIV care within benefits.

ACT

- Public HIV awareness drives.
- Fundraising or partnerships with HIV charities.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

5. Criminalisation, Global Backlash, and Travel Safety

DNH

- Confidential one-to-one briefings for employees at risk.
- Quiet escalation channels for those travelling to hostile regions.

EMB

- Build LGBTQ+ travel safety guidance with HR.
- Internal awareness sessions for managers deploying staff.

ACT

- Publicly engage in campaigns supporting global LGBTQ+ safety.
- Visible allyship messaging around travel inclusion and protection.

6. Pride Bans, Flag Restrictions, and Visibility Pressure

DNH

- No external visibility.
- Quiet internal Pride microsite or virtual event.
- Anonymous storytelling opportunities.

EMB

- Hold internal Pride celebrations, safe spaces, fireside chats.
- Educate staff on global Pride risks and cultural sensitivity.

ACT

- Full participation in Pride parades and public campaigns.
- Flying flags, publishing statements, and sponsoring events.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

7. Digital Censorship and Algorithmic Erasure

DNH

- Quietly report blocked content to IT.
- Provide private guidance to employees on navigating filters.

EMB

- Partner with IT to audit internal systems for bias.
- Create internal escalation routes when LGBTQ+ content is mislabelled.

ACT

- Advocate publicly for ethical AI and anti-bias governance.
- Join multi-company working groups on inclusive tech design.

8. LGBTQ+ Refugees, Asylum, and Migration

DNH

- Confidential support for employees affected by asylum concerns.
- Quiet signposting to legal advice networks (where safe).

EMB

- Educate staff internally on global migration issues.
- Recommend mobility exceptions for LGBTQ+ employees or families.

ACT

- Public partnerships with LGBTQ+ refugee organisations.
- Awareness campaigns highlighting refugee experiences.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com



The FORTLAGE Collective

INCLUSIVE LEADERSHIP & GENDER DIVERSITY SERVICES

Education | Mentor Programmes | Keynotes | Thought leadership | Consultant

9. Intersex Rights and Bodily Autonomy

DNH

- Quietly ensure benefits do not cover non-consensual interventions.
- Provide safe inclusion language internally.

EMB

- Add intersex-inclusive language in policies and training.
- Internal awareness programming.

ACT

- External awareness days, storytelling, public commitments.
- Partner with intersex advocacy groups.

10. Corporate Retraction from LGBTQ+ Inclusion

DNH

- Maintain safe internal spaces even with reduced visibility.
- Ensure policies are not quietly removed.

EMB

- Gather and share internal data on belonging and safety.
- Coach leadership on risks of reducing inclusion investment.

ACT

- Public advocacy for sustained DEI investment.
- Participate in multi-company alliances and commitments.

24B Gillies Street
London, United Kingdom
NW5 4DN
Email: info@cynthiafortlage.com

www.cynthiafortlage.com