



The South African Workplace Equality Index 2019

FULL RESULTS REPORT

Out in the workplace

About The Forum

The South African LGBT+ Management Forum is a non profit company (registration 2016/311001/08) seeking to create safe and equitable workplaces that enable professionals to contribute to their fullest potential. We are a registered section 18a public benefit organisation working in South Africa.

Officially launched in 2017, The Forum aims to create a safe and equitable workplace for all regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity and expression by networking, educating, supporting, leading, and celebrating. Our flagship project is the South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI), which was launched in 2018.

We spend the majority of our waking day at work. Therefore every employee, regardless of their otherness, should be treated equally by their co-workers, and enjoy equal opportunities. Standards need to be set and greater accountability needs to be expected from leaders in our workplaces.

Acknowledgements

This project was made possible through support from The Other Foundation. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent those of The Other Foundation and we are thankful for their unwavering support in making SAWEI a reality. www.theotherfoundation.org

We would also like to extend our thanks to our advisory panel (who are profiled herein) for dedicating their time to ensure oversight over the index. Our independent moderators have also been critical to the success of this year's index.

Disclaimer

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Forewords

After last year's successful pilot, our team were determined to deliver a SAWEI with more participants, greater reach, and broader scope. We are all bound by the strong belief that the SAWEI will be a critical enabler in making the South African workplace a more inclusive and diverse place for all. After all, workplace inclusion means happier employees, higher performing companies and a more inclusive society.

Over a year of preparation has gone into launching SAWEI 2019, lead by a dedicated team managing the project in their free time. This year we went fully digital (one of only a few globally) with our own bespoke platform. This platform has taken a lot of manual work out of the process, improved user experience, and will enable us to rapidly scale up SAWEI each year it is run.

This year we also introduced new questions and incorporated feedback from last year's participants. We continue to appreciate those forward-thinking companies that put their hand up to participate; without their eager participation SAWEI would not have been possible.

This report captures the results, patterns and learnings from all participants in this year's SAWEI. We hope that companies reading this report will consider how they compare to best practice and what they can do to make their workplace more inclusive. The Forum will be able to support companies on their journey through publications, events or facilitations.

We continue to encourage all feedback on how to make the SAWEI better and more impactful. Feel free to contact us at SAWEI@lgbtforum.org with your thoughts.

SAWEI team

The SAWEI Project Co-ordinator and Team

For LGBTI people to be free, there are two things we can be sure of. One is that LGBTI people experience the frontlines of discrimination in their daily family and workplace lives. The other is that exclusion from economic participation has the most devastating effect on LGBTI people and their families. LGBTI people cannot be free without addressing economic issues. And business can make all the difference.

The South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI) offers an excellent tool for companies to measure how far they go to make a difference. This year, 27 brave companies (10 more than last year) from more sectors voluntarily stepped up to be counted amongst those who care.

The Other Foundation is proud to have supported SAWEI from its conceptualisation. The 2019 report assesses transgender equality and leadership visibility for the first time. Its growth can make a real difference in the lives of tens of thousands of LGBTI people and many more in their families.



Neville Gabriel
Chief Executive Officer
The Other Foundation



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I. Executive Summary

We know that more diverse and inclusive workplaces produce better performing, more resilient companies. SAWEI provides companies in South Africa with a means to measure their levels of LGBT+ inclusion against independently determined and research-based best practice. This was the second year that SAWEI was run, after a highly successful pilot in 2018, and it was pleasing to see 27 companies complete SAWEI in full (up from 16 last year). In total these companies employ 144,000 people and it was also really pleasing to see a wider spread of companies across sectors participating this year, particularly in those sectors that are major employers.

We are thrilled that six companies received the top gold tiering (vs. two last year), which is a great achievement and highlights how these companies are already working hard to create a more inclusive workplace. There was a wide distribution of results, which illustrates the different journeys that our participating companies are on. All companies that have been tiered can be considered to be leaders in their field for LGBT+ inclusion and all those that participated should be commended for their willingness to participate and seek objective feedback.

As with last year the structure of SAWEI mirrors the Forum's framework of LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace, which consists of six elements that address both the "structures" and the "behaviours" within a company. Both structures and behaviours are critical to workplace inclusion. This year, we expanded the number of points on offer and introduced questions on trans inclusion and leadership visibility.

Key observations this year include:

- Nearly all the companies that participated in both years have improved their scores and tiers
- The highest scoring sections (as a % of total points available) were processes and training.
- The lowest scoring section continues to be on visibility
- Nearly all companies have some form of anti-discrimination policy on the basis of sexual orientation, there continued to be poor clarity on the difference between gender and gender identity, with few companies explicit accounting for gender identity in their policies
- Explicit policies protecting LGBT+ people in hostile regions continue to be a key differentiator of our high performing companies
- The majority of participants had some form of LGBT+ network / resource group, with most having an "allies" programme; these networks are highly active and engaging with their companies
- Diversity training and awareness continues to be a popular initiative
- Once again, the greatest divergence in scores occurred with regards to inclusion of LGBT+ within Employment Equity (EE) forums, with nearly half explicitly including LGBT+ representation and half not
- Whilst most companies had sent communications about LGBT+ equality and inclusion within their organisation, only 16 of our 27 participants could identify senior leaders were LGBT+ and out

The evidence highlighted some great work that companies are doing on diversity and inclusion in South Africa. It has also shown the importance of addressing specific issues facing LGBT+ people in the workplace but also how this can be done through existing programmes that address gender and transformation.

II. Overview of the SAWEI 2019

History and Objectives of the SAWEI

The South African Workplace Equality Index (SAWEI), one of the flagship projects of the South African LGBT+ Management Forum, seeks to benchmark the levels of LGBT+ inclusion and equality in the workplace. SAWEI sits alongside similar benchmarks internationally, such as the USA, UK, Hong Kong, Australia, and Canada. We are the only such index in the Middle East – Africa region.

The SAWEI aims to:

1. Provide a practical, localised framework and set of targets, against which South African employers can measure themselves
2. Showcase and celebrate the most LGBT+ friendly employers in South Africa
3. Create a healthy, competitive environment between employers to create more inclusive, LGBT+ friendly workplaces

This is the second year that the Forum has run the SAWEI, after our highly successful pilot in 2018.

The Case for SAWEI and Measuring LGBT+ Inclusion

South Africa has one of the most progressive constitutions in the world protecting the rights of LGBT+ people, yet societal discrimination still exists. A change in attitudes and acceptance in the workplace not only positively affects business results, but also has the potential to create positive social change.

It is important for employees to bring their true and full self to work. The research on the benefits on diversity in the workplace is well established and we capture some of the key arguments in our publications, downloadable from our website: <http://lgbtforum.org/resources>. The Human Rights Campaign (HRC) found that LGBT individuals allowed to be open and supported at work will be 20 to 30 percent more productive¹. Research from the UK shows that staff who are out at work typically form more genuine relationships (with colleagues, with clients), enjoy going to work, are able to be themselves, and thus more confident². Primary research on the South African workplace is limited, a gap that we wish to fill in 2020. Nonetheless, existing evidence shows that creating inclusive working environments not only impacts the lives of LGBT+ people in the workplace, it also helps to foster a more diverse and inclusive environment for all employees.

Despite the importance and benefits of ensuring LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace, companies in South Africa have never had a means to show how their company is performing and to identify potential gaps. Whilst Employment Equity (EE) legislation is in place for monitoring race and gender, no equivalent exists for LGBT+ employees. SAWEI provides companies in South Africa with a means to measure their progress against independently determined and research-based best practice. It will allow companies to identify their relative strengths and areas for improvement within a structured framework. The Forum also continues to use the SAWEI as a platform to create dialogue between employers and to share best practice.

¹ Human Rights Campaign (2014), "The Cost of the Closet and the Rewards of Inclusion". Available at: https://assets2.hrc.org/files/assets/resources/Cost_of_the_Closet_May2014.pdf

² Stonewall (2008), "Peak Performance: Gay people and productivity". Available at: http://www.stonewall.org.uk/sites/default/files/Peak_Performance__2008_.pdf

How SAWEI 2019 Worked

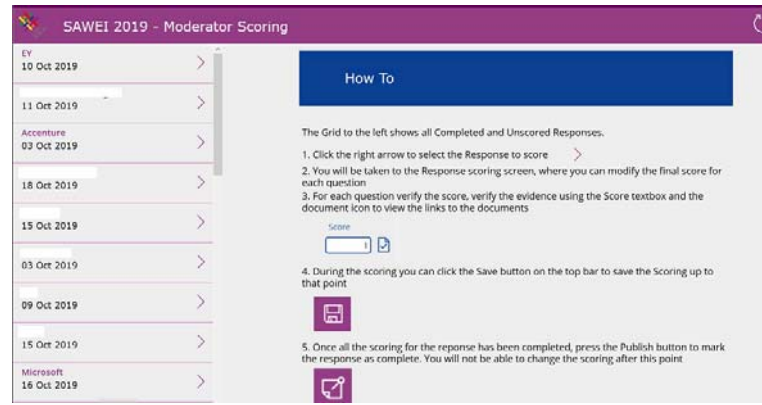
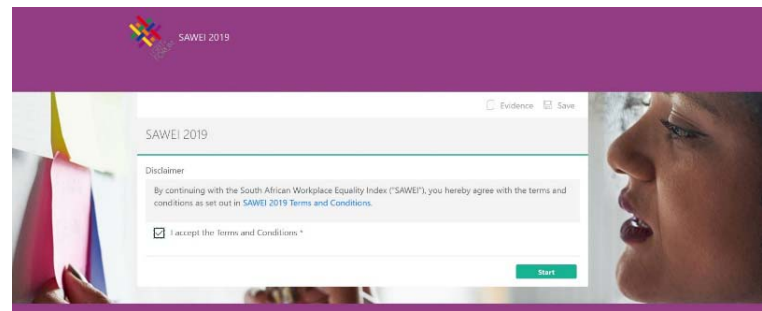
The SAWEI is driven by the entire Steering Committee and overseen by an advisory panel of four independent people emanating from business, academia, and social justice activism. The advisory panel approved the nature, wording, scoring, and weighting of the questions as well as launch process and method of moderating responses. They also had final say on the tiering of participants. The profiles of the panel can be found further on in this report.

A communications campaign was launched before and after the launch to announce SAWEI 2019 and to encourage companies to participate. All individuals on the mailing list of the Forum were requested to encourage their companies to participate. Interested companies were invited to participate and received a link to our unique online platform along with detailed guidance notes.

This year was a momentous year as we transitioned to a fully digital platform, kindly developed by Microsoft South Africa. Although last year's SAWEI was also conducted online, our full digitisation enabled participants to answer all questions online and more conveniently upload all required evidence directly onto the secure platform. Furthermore, the platform enabled our independent moderators to review all data through the same platform and to make direct adjustments rather than cumbersome spreadsheets and evidence documents. The new digital SAWEI platform will also enable us to rapidly and cost-effectively scale year-on-year.

Each participating company received log-in details that enabled multiple company representatives to access the platform and complete their submission. Participating companies completed 18 questions (up from 12 in 2018) through the online platform and provided evidence as defined in the guidance notes. Fortnightly "check-in calls" were organised for participating companies to transparently seek guidance and ask questions. All company responses were verified by two independent moderators to ensure that scores were fairly awarded to participants and that standards were applied consistently. Where more evidence was required to award the correct marks, companies were provided the opportunity to submit additional information in October.

Companies were contacted in early November with their results, prior to the official launch of this report.



▲ Screenshots from SAWEI 2019 Platform



Headlines Stats



Companies completing submissions in full



Sectors represented



Questions asked this year



Sections covered, as well as 1 bonus section



People employed by participating companies



Sign-up to completion rate



Average score achieved by all companies



The highest score achieved



Companies receiving gold status

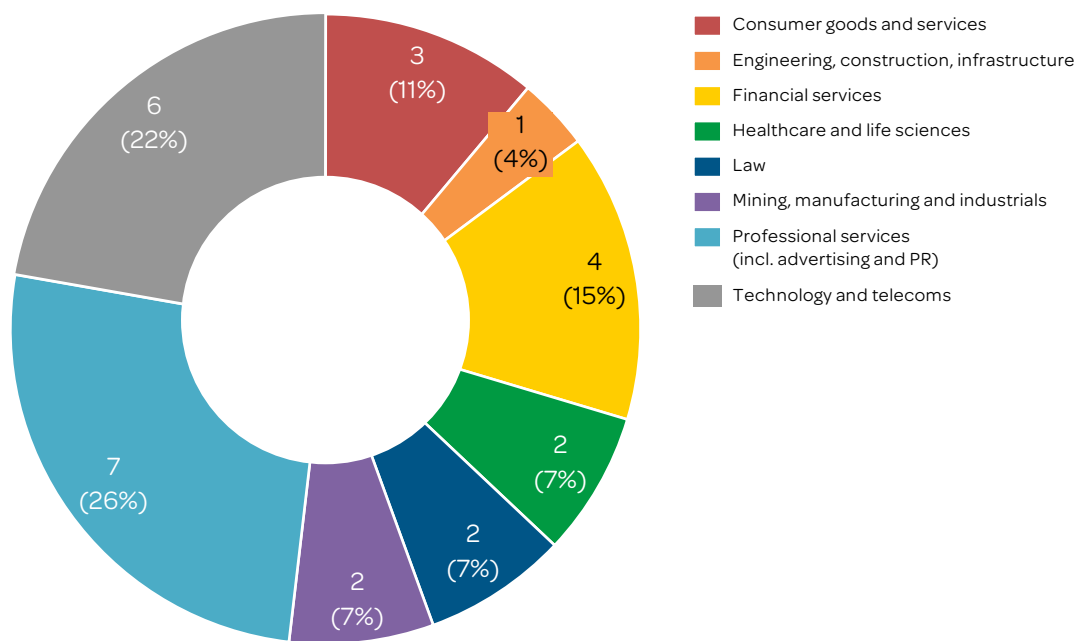


Companies achieving a tiering

Overview of Participation

This year saw a significant increase in the number of participating companies, with 27 completing submissions in full (vs. 16 last year). Notably, the completion rate – measured as a percentage of requests that led to a full submission – spiked to 93% (vs. 63% last year).

This year also saw a wider spread of sectors represented in the participating companies; particularly in sectors that are major employers such as mining and resources, retail, and financial services. However, the professional services sector continues to generate the greatest proportion of participating companies, followed by technology and telecoms.



The SAWEI aims to impact the lives of *all* South Africans working in our largest companies at varying levels. Three consumer goods and services companies employ **51,000 people**, four financial services firms participating in SAWEI collectively employ close to **42,000 people**, and two mining, resources and manufacturing companies employ **28,500 people**. SAWEI’s reach and potential impact has never been greater.

The economic hub of Johannesburg is still the most represented city in which our companies had offices (27 companies), followed by Cape Town (19), Durban (15) and Pretoria (10). We also had companies with locations in smaller cities such as Port Elizabeth, eMalahleni, Kimberley and Pietermaritzburg. Many of our consumer goods, financial services and mining, resources and manufacturing participants have a national reach whilst being headquartered in major cities.





III. Overall Results

Company Ratings

Participating companies were arranged in tiers of gold, silver and bronze as opposed to being ranked. The tiering was determined using a spread of the mean percentage scoring of this year’s participating companies. This year, gold rated companies scored 75% or over, the silver tier was defined as 60-74%, bronze tier was defined as 59-45%, and untiered participants scored less than 45%. Because there were more points on offer and a wider range of questions, the boundaries this year were 5% lower; however, the absolute points awarded were generally higher.

We are thrilled that six companies received the top gold tiering (vs. two last year), which is a great achievement and highlights how these companies are already working hard to create more inclusive workplaces. There was a wide distribution of results, which illustrates the different journeys that participating companies are on. All companies that have been tiered can be considered leaders in their field for LGBT+ inclusion and all those that participated should be commended for their willingness to participate and seek objective feedback.

As with last year, the clarity of evidence and the level of effort put into gathering and explaining the right evidence is often a key differentiator.

Tier	Company (in alphabetical order by tier)	Sector
	Accenture South Africa	Professional services
	Bain & Company	Professional services
	EY	Professional services
	Microsoft	Technology and telecoms
	P&G South African Trading (Pty) Ltd.	Consumer goods and services
	PWC	Professional services
	Baker McKenzie	Law
	Dalberg	Professional services
	Norton Rose Fulbright	Law
	SAP Africa	Technology and telecoms
	<i>Anonymous participant</i>	Financial services
	Vodacom	Technology and telecoms
	Deloitte	Professional services
	Hewlett Packard Enterprise	Technology and telecoms
	Johnson & Johnson	Healthcare and life sciences
	Nedbank	Financial services
	Uber Technologies	Technology and telecoms
	10 companies	



Defining the Tiers

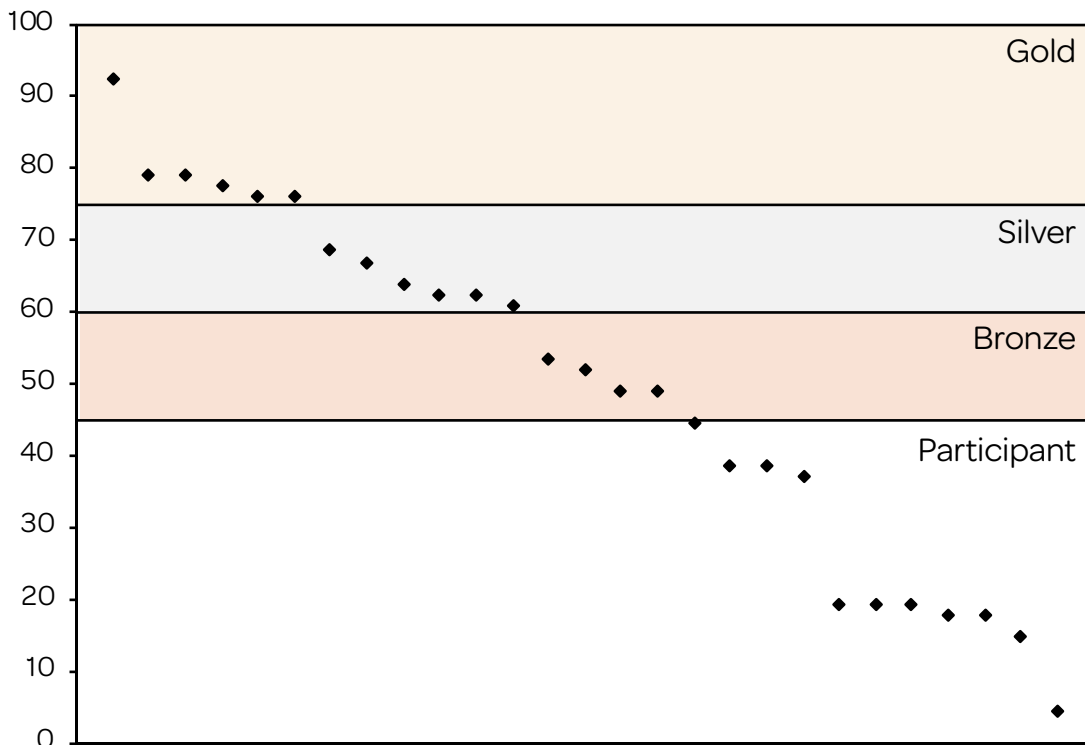
Gold companies are going above and beyond their peers to create LGBT+ inclusive workplaces for their employees. They are leaders in developing LGBT+ support structures, and have developed best-in-class inclusion and diversity mechanisms. Indicators show that these companies are actively creating workplaces that are highly supportive and inclusive for LGBT+ people.

Silver companies are taking LGBT+ inclusion very seriously and have achieved significant progress in ensuring that appropriate structures are in place to support their LGBT+ employees. They can be regarded as inclusive and affirming environments for LGBT+ people.

Bronze companies are taking LGBT+ inclusion seriously and have made progress in ensuring that adequate structures are in place to support their LGBT+ employees. They can generally be regarded as inclusive and affirming environments for most LGBT+ people.

Distribution of Results

The objective of the SAWEI is not to publically rank any company. The spread of results is however important for participants to understand where they fell relative to the tiers and the entirety of participants.



IV. Results by Section

Overview of the SAWEI Framework

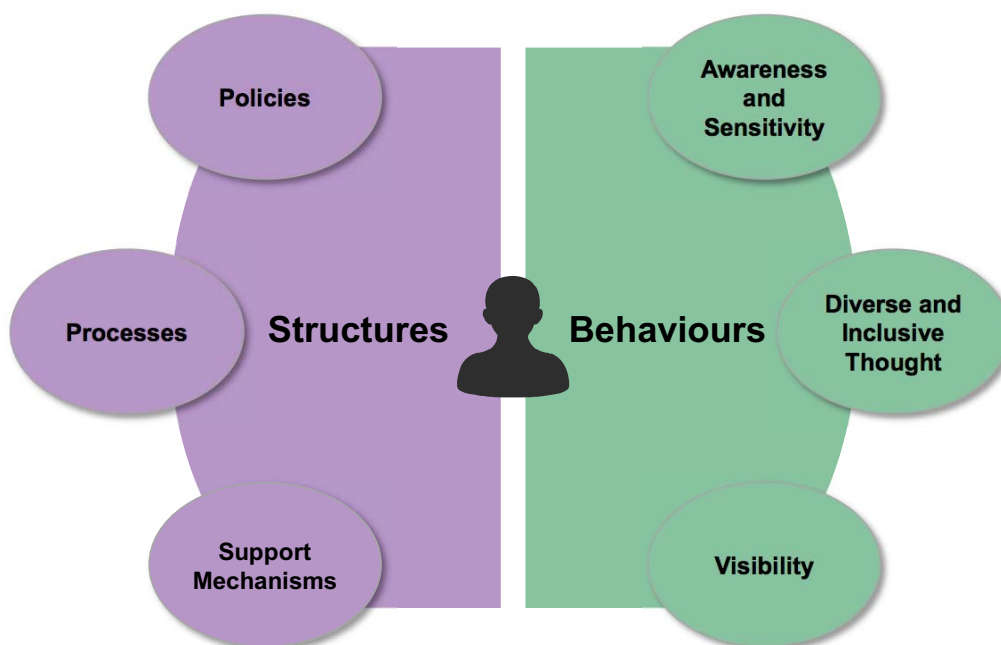
The structure of SAWEI mirrors the Forum’s framework of LGBT+ inclusion in the workplace. The framework consists of six elements and is based on the duality between the “structures” within a company and the “behaviours” of the people within the company. Our experience over the years has highlighted that true inclusion needs both of these aspects and SAWEI seeks to test indicators of all six elements of the framework.

On the one hand, structures are those company-wide elements that can be designed, built and measured, and nearly always require investment (both time and financial). It is often this aspect that companies focus on precisely because they can be designed top-down and the outcome and return of building structures is relatively tangible.

However, structures on their own cannot create inclusion. This is why behaviours are critical. By behaviours we mean the culture, values and everyday actions of the individuals that make up “a company”. This is where most companies that we speak to struggle to make meaningful progress. It is easy to write a policy, it is more challenging to create an environment where LGBT+ people can speak openly about their same-sex partners or where LGBT+ people have senior role models that inspire them. It is important to caveat that SAWEI is limited in its ability (and does not claim) to measure lived experiences, although this is an area we take seriously and are exploring further.

We write extensively about each of these six elements in the our publication “Creating LGBT+ Inclusive Workplaces: A Practical Framework for Employers”.

The Forum Approach to LGBT+ Inclusion in the Workplace

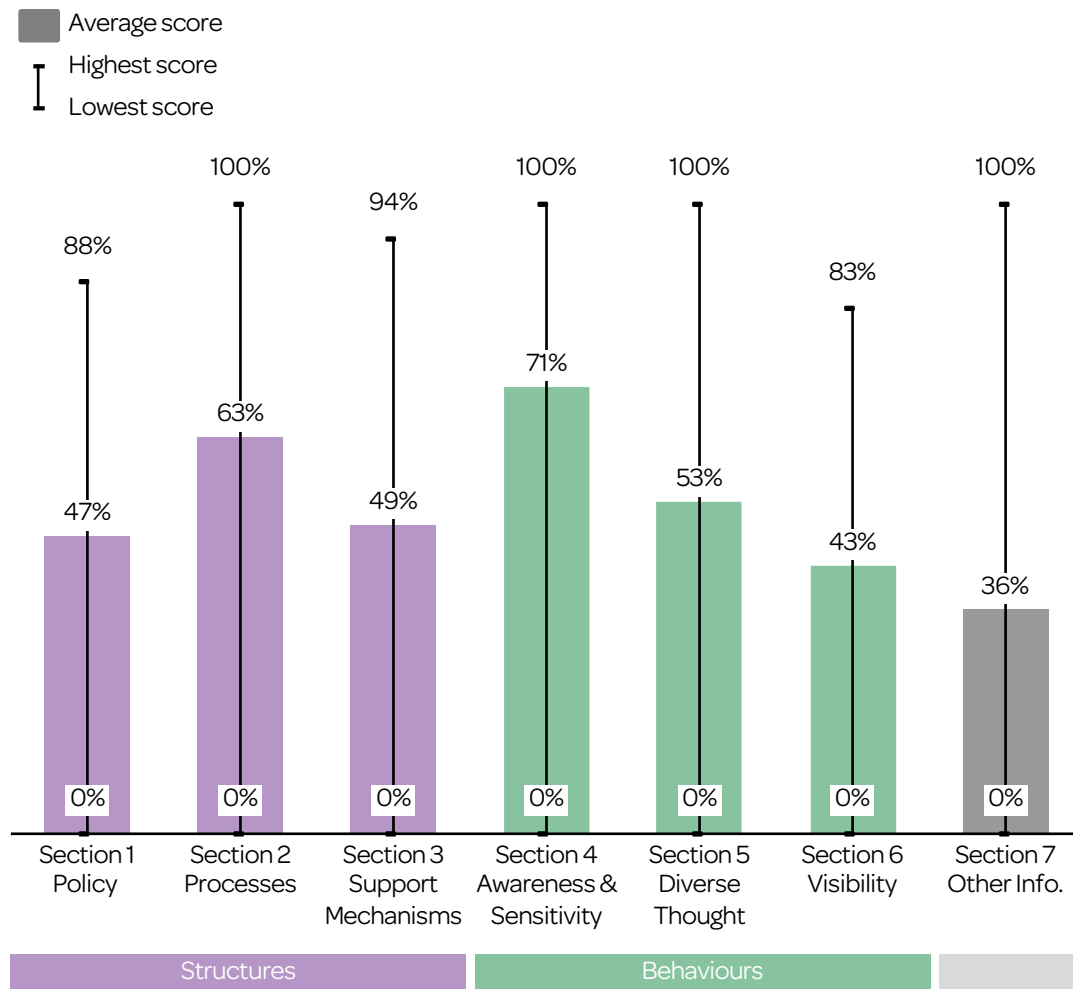


General Insights and Overview

The SAWEI consisted of 18 questions over six sections that mirror our framework. There was a total of 67 points across the six sections plus an additional five bonus points within the “other information” section. The average score across the participants was 33 (50%).

The highest scoring sections (as a percentage of total points available) were Processes and Awareness and Sensitivity. The lowest scoring section continues to be on visibility, where participants were asked about communications across their company and the visibility of LGBT+ leadership. LGBT+ people in the workplace are often invisible because they are not measured or immediately obvious, which means that their needs or challenges are often left unaddressed. Visible role models are particularly important in empowering LGBT+ people to bring their true selves to work and to perform their best.

In addition to highlighting gaps, this year’s evidence index highlighted some of the great work that companies are doing on diversity and inclusion in South Africa.



Section 1: Policy

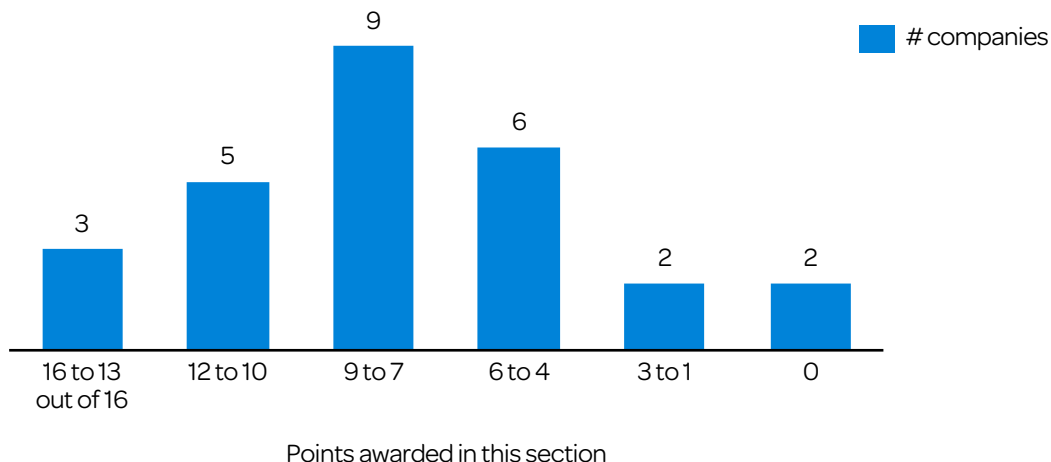
Given the importance of policy in protecting LGBT+ employees, this section contains the second greatest number of points. Most participating companies had policies in place prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation along with other elements such as race, language and gender (21/27). Leading companies have explicit anti-discrimination provision for gender identity (as opposed to just “gender”). This question was one of the most marked down questions in SAWEI as most companies continue to misunderstand the difference between discrimination on the basis of gender and, as was asked in the question, gender identity. Furthermore, upon recommendation from our advisory panel, we were quite strict on there being formal policies (as required by the guidance notes) rather than general principles or company statements.

This year, rather than asking about application of company policy to same sex couples, we asked whether companies used gender neutral terminology instead. Most companies used general neutral language across three main policies (compassionate leave, relocation, and parental leave). Like last year, an encouraging differentiator was those companies that make explicit provision for same-sex adoption and/or genderless “parental leave” (12/17).

Seven participants have policies that explicitly protect LGBT+ employees when travelling into hostile countries or regions. They are in the professional services and technology sector where international travel is a common part of the job. Even companies where travel is not part of the job are recommended to have some form of policy or position statement in place.

This year we introduced a specific question regarding workplace policies that are sensitive to transgender employees, namely regarding bathrooms, medical leave for gender affirming treatment and removal of gendered titles from company documentation. Whilst no company scored a full 5/5, this question proved to be a key indicator for overall performance with the gold rated companies gaining most points in this question.

A general observation in this section is that companies may actually have suitable policies in place but there is not a general awareness of them (either amongst HR or the general workforce). This became apparent when our moderators asked for additional information. Awareness of policy relating to LGBT+ employees is just as important as a policy being in place so that it can be applied consistently when required.

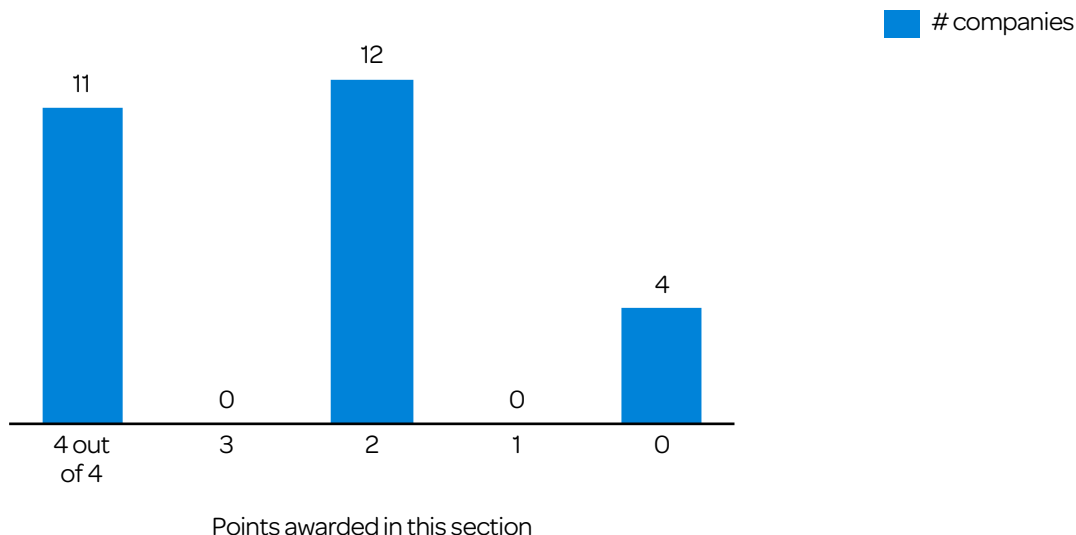


Recommendation: We recommend that all companies undertake a policy review with their LGBT+ staff to understand potential gaps using this report and our [best practice guide](#). We strongly encourage sexual orientation and gender identity to be explicitly addressed within anti-discrimination clauses within company policy. More often than not, general policies can be applied to LGBT+ employees but, without explicit reference, they can be applied inconsistently and therefore subjectively. There also appears to be a need for education amongst HR practitioners, in particular on the definitions of gender, gender expression, sexuality and biological sex. Companies also need to critically assess the suitability of their policies and workplaces for supporting trans or gender diverse employees.

Section 2: Processes

As with last year, only one question was asked in this section: the presence of a dedicated person dealing with diversity and LGBT+ issues. Although last year all companies had a member of staff working on diversity and inclusion, this year 23/27 participants had an equivalent role, which may be a consequence of the wider participant reach and sector coverage. These people were typically titled as “Head of Transformation” or “Head of Diversity and Inclusion”. Encouragingly 11 companies identified this member of staff as both sitting in South Africa and as having LGBT+ issues as part of their job description or mandate (up from 7/17 last year).

Recommendation: We recommend that every company, no matter how large, has a dedicated person for D&I activity. Furthermore the job descriptions of these people should be amended to include explicit reference to sexual orientation and/or LGBT+ people, and that working across all dimensions of identity is included as a key performance indicator (KPI) for that role. We strongly believe that diversity in the workplace should not be siloed and needs an integrated approach with one person accountable for change. Companies that have more globalised operating models where, for instance, D&I activity is driven by an offshore corporate centre still need to be able to demonstrate how those global initiatives and policies are applied in South Africa either through a network lead or a local HR practitioner.

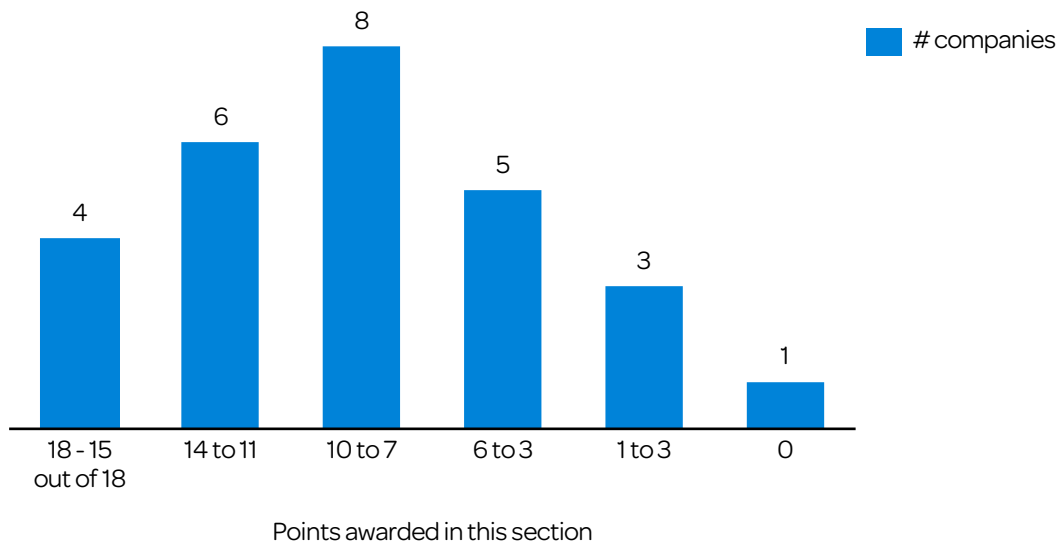


Section 3: Support Mechanisms

This section awarded the most points across SAWEI, with a potential 18 out of 68 points on offer. Whilst still important, it contributes less proportion of overall marks than last year as we have expanded other sections. The first part of this section focused on the mechanisms through which employees could report abuse or harassment on the basis of sexual orientation. Nearly all participants reported a variety of routes open to employees. The most common reporting route was the HR line manager (22/27) and an employee resource group/network (17/27). Often routes for reporting bullying and harassment were general in nature and open to all employees rather than tailored to those identifying as LGBT+. In future we will be more strict on the appropriateness of the routes for LGBT+ people, for example, the extent to which counsellors working for hotlines or line managers are sufficiently trained up and aware on matters relating to sexual orientation and gender transition.

The remainder of the section focused on active LGBT+ employee networks or similar within the organisation. The significant weighing of this section reflects the Forum's view that well-resourced employee networks are powerful vehicles for change. Companies that have a different philosophy and have chosen to enable diversity committees that are general in nature are also rewarded. A company did not have to have an LGBT + employee network to perform well in this section, although it would have been an advantage.

The majority of participants had some form of LGBT+ employee network within their company (22/27), of which nine identified having a distinct budget to support network activities. Nearly all participants with an active network had some form of "allies" programme or, even better, insisted that their employee groups were open to all people. The most common activities occurring in the past 12 months were "LGBT+ awareness raising event(s) for all staff" (21/27), "collaboration with other LGBT+ employee network(s) and/or promotion of their events" (15/27) (no doubt aided by the formation of the Round Table coordinating group), and "networking events for LGBT+ people and allies" (13/27).

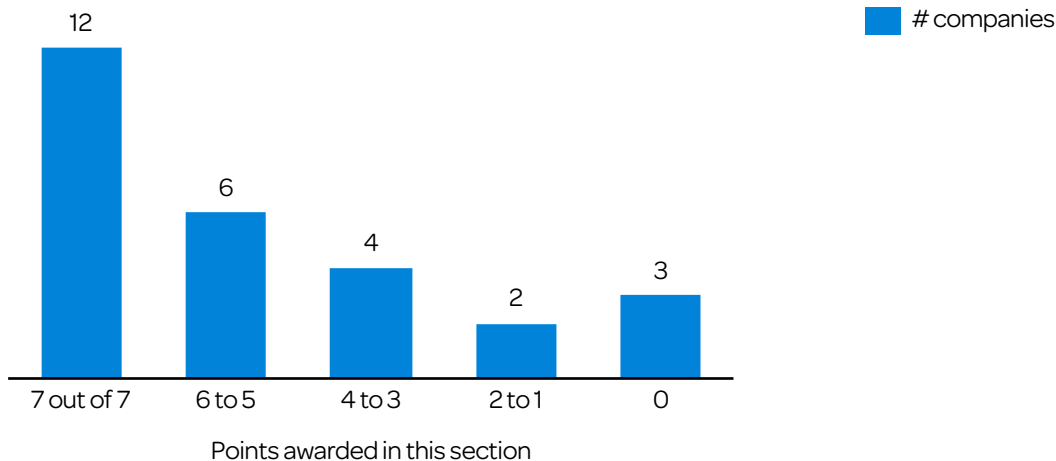


Recommendation: We recommend that companies seriously consider building a programme or network that allows LGBT+ employees to connect, create visibility and drive changes in the workplace. From inception, these networks must not be closed off and inaccessible. There are many benefits that we discuss in our “Business case for LGBT+ employee groups” publication, for instance, the ability to build networks across a company, to build leadership skills, and to raise awareness across the company. Importantly, this network should be empowered with the appropriate financial resources and visible leadership support to drive awareness. If companies wish to follow the route of “diversity committees” that fulfil and undertake similar activities as an LGBT+ specific group then this is also an alternative model that is shown to be effective in the right enabling company culture.

Section 4: Awareness and Sensitivity

A new question this year addressed the incorporation of LGBT+ inclusion during staff induction, where most companies identified that D&I and LGBT+ was a part of this process. The Forum believes that establishing a set of company values early in an employee lifecycle builds an inclusive culture and sets the boundaries of expected conduct. Nearly all companies that participated in SAWEI have on offer some form of diversity and inclusion “training” (22/27), with 18 of those explicitly addressing LGBT+ matters. For companies offering training, the majority remarked that the training was either compulsory or had been taken by the majority of employees.

Recommendation: We recommend that LGBT+ matters are explicitly included in all programmes or training relating to diversity and inclusion, particularly upon induction of new employees. Instances of exclusionary behaviour are not always triggered out of malice but often carelessness or ignorance. In this regard, training and awareness can help socialise LGBT+ issues to people that have never needed to consider these issues before. There are, however, limitations to simply being “trained” on issues of diversity and there can be variable impacts. Training, in conjunction with communications, an inclusive culture, and visibility of LGBT+ people are more likely to be impactful than just training for the sake of training, which can be seen negatively as a compliance exercise.



Section 5: Diverse and Inclusive Thought

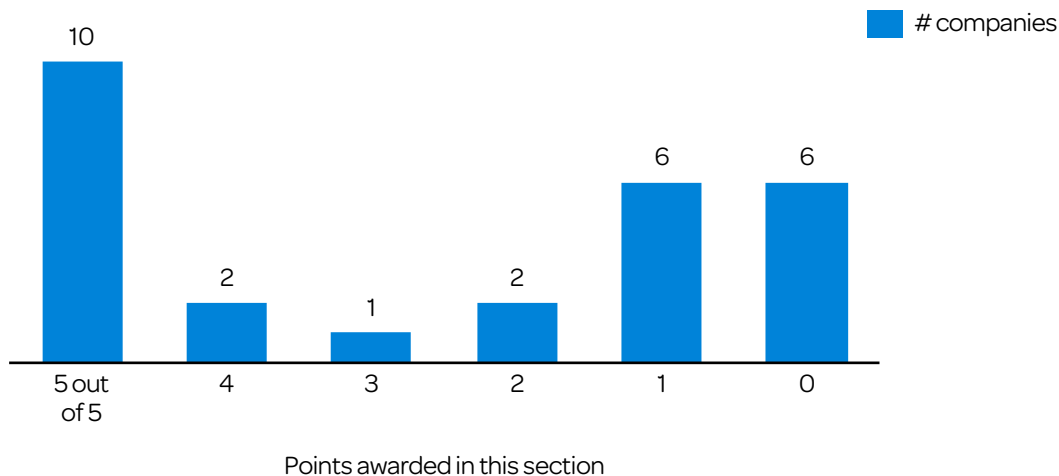
Once again, the greatest divergence in SAWEI scores occurred with regards to inclusion of LGBT+ within Employment Equity (EE) forums. With roughly half of respondents (13/27) stating that the mandate of EE representatives included LGBT+ and sexual orientation in contrast to an almost equal number (11/27) stating that it did not. We saw an almost identical split last year.

It appears that the difference occurs for two reasons. Firstly, companies in South Africa have relatively differing degrees of compliance against the EE Act in general and therefore their EE forums have different levels of activity and impact. Secondly, there is a differing interpretation of the legislation governing EE and diversity in the workplace. Some of the companies we spoke with explicitly highlighted that Chapter II of the EE Act prohibits discrimination in the workplace based on sexual orientation, and therefore concluded that their representatives were required by law to address LGBT+ matters (and so provided evidence of this), whereas others stuck to the requirements of reporting against targets of race, gender and disability as required by the EEA1 forms and therefore the composition of their EE forums were reflective of these obligations.

There is no need to necessarily create entirely new programmes. It is important to address specific issues facing LGBT+ people in the workplace but this can also be done through existing programmes that are underway to address gender and transformation. In fact, integrated diversity or transformation programmes are more likely to be successful than fragmented ones and are less likely to create an “othering” effect within an organisation.

Under half of our participants had held general D&I events where LGBT+ was a key component.

Recommendation: We recommend that EE forums, or any alternative body with the same mandate, have a designated LGBT+ representative and have LGBT+ matters as a recurring item on the agenda. More importantly, companies need to ensure compliance against the EE Act to commit themselves to the ongoing transformation of South Africa. The EE forum is legally mandated by South African law, and represents an opportunity to drive diversity in the workplace more generally by addressing barriers faced by employees of all backgrounds. We strongly encourage HR practitioners and LGBT+ employees to consult our workplace guide on the legal framework for inclusion in the workplace.



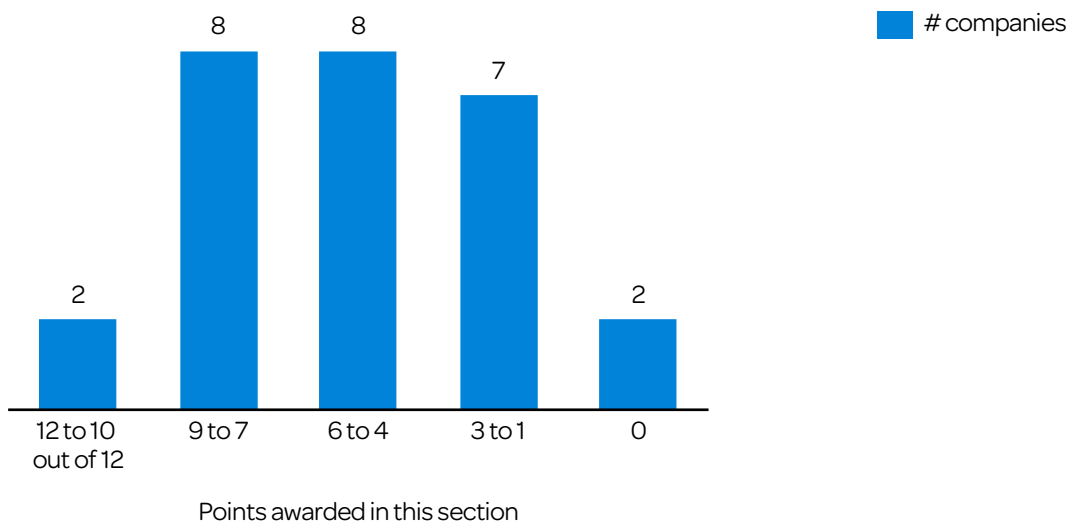
Section 6: Visibility

The majority of participants in SAWEI had circulated communications that promoted LGBT+ visibility in the past 12 months (23/27). The most common communication was “promotion of a sexual orientation / gender identity awareness raising day or event(s) such as IDAHOt, LGBT history month, Pride, Transgender Day of Remembrance”, with Pride being the most popular event marked. Notably 13 companies had launched email signatures relating to LGBT+ inclusion, particularly around Pride month.

South Africa has a distinct absence of out LGBT+ business leaders that can act as role models to emerging talent and that can advocate for change at the highest levels of an organisation. It is for this reason a new question was added this year relating to the visibility of LGBT+ senior leaders within participating companies. Encouragingly, 16 companies indicated that there was a senior leader within their organisation that was out and visible.

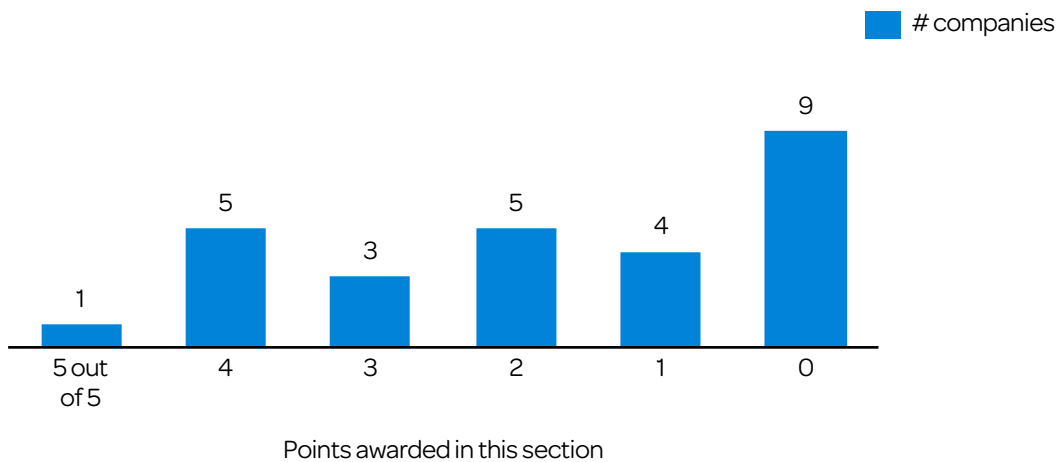
Recommendation: We would strongly advocate for LGBT+ business leaders to make themselves more visible to their organisation. This does not mean overt displays or “announcements” but rather to demonstrate to emerging talent and fellow leaders that being LGBT+ in that organisation is not an inhibitor to success. The importance of developing role models (of all identities) in our workplaces cannot be understated.

We recommend marking at least one day in the year with a communications campaign. These communications can be important signifiers, particularly to LGBT+ employees who are in the process of coming out, that the company respects them and that they are welcome. Visible leadership support, especially from leaders who may not be obvious choices as LGBT+ advocates, is particularly important as this has the potential to set the tone and culture for the whole organisation.



Section 7: Other Information

An additional five bonus points were on offer for participants to profile any initiatives that were not covered by other sections of the SAWEI as we realise that different companies seek different strategies. This was an opportunity for companies to truly differentiate themselves and, in some cases, was critical to them securing a higher tiering. Additional activities identified this year included a company CEO leading LGBT+ events, companies participating in Pride for the first time, funding local employees to visit international LGBT+ workplace conferences such as Out&Equal, conducting research on LGBT+ workplace issues, global commitments to using non-gendered language in all company documentation, community engagement with religious organisations and others. It is really encouraging to see companies taking initiatives and supporting activities for LGBT+ employees to be more engaged in their workplace and their communities. Companies were awarded one point for every additional internal initiative or two points for every externally focused *and/or* high-impact initiative.



V. The SAWEI Advisory Panel

SAWEI is overseen by an independent panel of advisors. Most of the indices that operate globally, and which SAWEI is modelled on, have some form of Advisory Panel or Board helping to guide content and execution. It is also critical that there is sufficient arms-length distance between SAWEI and the Forum directors to ensure independence. The panel is therefore critical to ensuring this independence by:

- Critically evaluating the entire process for the SAWEI
- Approving key decisions
- Providing assurance over the process
- Committing to acting independently themselves

The panel commits to meeting three times a year and is drawn from academics, social change activists and business people from across race, gender and sexual identities.

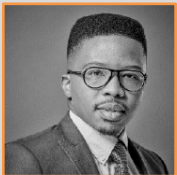
The South African Workplace Equality Index Independent Advisory Panel 2019



Keval Harie is the Director of the Gay and Lesbian Memory in Action (GALA) archives based at the University of the Witwatersrand. In his role as director, Keval is committed to growing GALA into a centre for research and advocacy for the equality, freedom and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and intersex people. Keval is a qualified attorney.



Tracy-Lynn Humby is Professor of Law at the University of the Witwatersrand specialising in the environmental and social impacts of mining and climate justice, and currently chairs the board of the Centre for Environmental Rights. Tracy is also a Mining, Sustainability and Diversity Consultant for Young Earth Attorneys, a specialist legal practice focused on creating an inclusive, environmentally sustainable and diverse economy.



Xhanti Payi is an economist and founding director of Nascence Advisory and Research. Payi has worked as analyst at Investec Wealth & Investment, economist at Stanlib Asset Managers and Country Risk Manager at Standard Bank Corporate and Investment Banking. As a columnist for the Business Day and Business Times, and has contributed articles to international publications like the Financial Times. Xhanti is also currently the chairperson for the Other Foundation.



Juan Nel is a registered clinical- and research psychologist and a Research Professor at the University of South Africa (Unisa). His expertise is in sexuality and gender. He is a founding member and served for 16 years on the Board of OUT LGBT Well-Being, a national health service provider for LGBTI people; a founding member of the Joint Working Group; and a founding member of the Sexuality and Gender Division of the Psychological Society of South Africa (PsySSA).

VI. The Work of the Forum

Who Runs the Forum?

[The Forum](#) is led by a Steering Committee of Directors, and supported with specialist skills. The committee represents a cross-section of professionals, demographics and sexualities.

All Steering Committee members have full time jobs and therefore commit time and effort to the Forum in their free time as dedicated volunteers. Steering Committee members participate as individuals and not on behalf of their respective employers, with the intent and passion to drive change, awareness and education across all companies in South Africa. We are always looking for talented dedicated individuals that would like to join our team.

The South African LGBT+ Management Forum

Directors



Luke Andrews



Farai Morobone



Teveshan Kuni

Specialist Support



Legal
Rudi Bylveld



Social Media
Khanyi Mpumlwana



Thabang Sebata



Thandi Masuku



Events
Kevin Featherstone

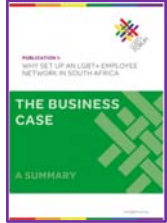
Our Publications

[The Forum](#) is committed to helping companies create inclusive workplaces for LGBT+ employees. As such, we have produced the following resources to support companies, as well as the reports relating to SAWEI. In 2020, we plan to add to this collection. For more information, please contact education@lgbtforum.org



Creating LGBT+ Inclusive Workplaces: A Practical Framework for Employers

This publication contains our guidance on best practice for LGBT+ workplace inclusion, with a distinct reference to South Africa. The publication introduces organisations to a practical framework which can be used to structure their approach to diversity and inclusion in workplace.



Why Set up an LGBT+ Employee Network in South Africa: The Business Case

Employee networks can have a positive impact on employees – making them happier and thus more productive. They can have a positive impact on business, and they have the potential to drive positive change in society. In this short guide we summarise the business case for why it pays to create and invest in an LGBT+ network in your company.



Strengthening LGBT+ Rights in the South African Workplace: A Legal Handbook

The South African legal landscape for LGBT+ people is distinctive within Africa and, in many cases, globally. In this guide, we review the legal framework within South Africa that all employees who define as LGBT+ and employers should be aware of.



Creating an LGBT+ Employee Network in South Africa: Ten Tips for Being Best in Class

An LGBT+ employee network can be an exceptionally powerful means of promoting a more diverse and inclusive workplace for all. This guide identifies ten common themes that will help build a best-in-class network.

Supporting the Forum

There are many ways in which you can support the activities of the South African LGBT+ Management Forum.

As an individual you could:

- **Join our mailing list:** We will keep you notified periodically of interesting events and updates
- **Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#):** Stay in touch with us more frequently
- **Join our working groups:** We rely on talented and dedicated professionals who give us their time. You can get involved with our events team, education, or SAWEI. You do not need to identify as LGBT+ to be part of the team, nor be South African. You just need to be driven by a common goal of creating a more inclusive working environment for all, particularly for people who identify as LGBT+

As a company you can also support us in the following ways:

- **Continue to participate in SAWEI:** We encourage you to participate in SAWEI 2021 and to attend our related events.
- **Partner with us:** We also welcome partnering with companies and LGBT+ organisations to hold joint events, workshops, and seminars, or to provide pro-bono services to support our work
- **Donate to us:** We are a public benefit organisation (PBO) that relies on the support of individuals and organisations to support our activities. Please contact our finance lead to find out more about the options available and how to obtain a section 18a certificate to make your donation tax deductible : finances@lgbtforum.org

Contacts

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The Forum Communications Lead

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The South African Workplace Equality Index is a flagship project of the South African LGBT+ Management Forum and is kindly supported by The Other Foundation

The South African LGBT Management Forum NPC

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