



**AmCham**  
SINGAPORE

**LGBTQ+**

# **Corporate Culture Report**

**Supporting Diversity, Equity and Inclusion**



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# Executive Summary

There is increasing appreciation of the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) in the workplace, and having a values-driven company culture has become a key consideration for the recruitment and engagement of talent.<sup>1</sup> Diversity is a fundamental American value, and American corporate culture is seen to have “a genuine and deep respect for, and empowerment of, their employees”.<sup>1</sup> Cultural adaptability is also recognized to be critical,<sup>1</sup> particularly in Asia, where adaptation to the needs and nuances of the local community may result in companies taking varied DEI approaches in different countries.<sup>2</sup>

The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) LGBTQ+ Corporate Culture Survey was conducted to better understand how member companies are managing issues related to DEI, particularly for LGBTQ+ employees. It served as the first step to understand DEI and LGBTQ+ corporate culture among AmCham members. All AmCham members were invited to provide their input. By exploring differences and challenges identified through the Survey, the AmCham Equality Taskforce can then develop an action plan to help members address the needs of LGBTQ+ staff.

The Survey showed that many companies are committed to enhancing employee diversity and that there is effort to nurture and support all employees fairly while valuing their differences. Managers are supportive of LGBTQ+ employees, and there are policies and procedures that address discrimination and/or bias.

However, a limitation of this survey may be that some respondents are senior leaders in their organizations with oversight over human resources and therefore are more likely to be aware of their companies’ corporate DEI policies. As senior leaders, these respondents may not have full purview of the realities faced by their more junior LGBTQ+ colleagues both within the organization and across the wider Singapore landscape.

While career development is perceived to be equitable, there is room to further raise awareness, increase acceptance and improve understanding of LGBTQ+ co-workers through education programs, including events such as talks and webinars. Platforms such as resource groups can also provide support for LGBTQ+ employees, allowing continued discussions and information-sharing, including opportunities for their career/leadership development. In planning and implementing such initiatives, it remains crucial to adapt to cultural sensitivities and take local needs into consideration.

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<sup>1</sup> Odgers Berndtson and AmCham Singapore. (2022) *Winning in Asia Pacific: The American Way*. AmCham Singapore. <https://amcham.com.sg/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Winning-in-Asia-Pacific-The-American-Way.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Syed, Nurhuda. (2021) *Why the West has a lot to learn from Asia's diversity and inclusion*. Human Resources Director. <https://www.hcamag.com/asia/specialisation/diversity-inclusion/why-the-west-has-a-lot-to-learn-from-asias-diversity-and-inclusion/318685>

# Key Findings

## KEY FINDING 1

**Many AmCham member companies are showing commitment and working to improve employee diversity while recognizing the need to remain sensitive to the culture of the country in which they operate.**

A majority of respondents (85%) recognized that there is commitment to improving the diversity of their company's employees, noting that their companies promote a safe working environment where LGBTQ+ employees can bring their authentic selves to work without fear (83%).

Almost 9 in 10 respondents (87%) noted the use of open recruiting and hiring practices that do not discriminate against LGBTQ+ applicants. A similar number (89%) concurred that their company's leadership treats LGBTQ+ employees fairly.

Between co-workers, according to 92% of the respondents, there is respect shown to individuals and differences are valued. Similarly, there is appreciation shown for others with different backgrounds, beliefs and experiences (87%). However, less than 3 in 5 respondents (59.2%) think that their company has done a good job providing education programs that promote awareness of LGBTQ+ issues in the workplace.

**Figure 1. LGBTQ+ Corporate Culture**





It was noted that “initiatives are still more active in Europe and the U.S. versus in Singapore or Asia in general.” These initiatives and other changes in company culture may start in a company’s headquarters outside of Singapore before being expanded to their offices worldwide, so it is essential to make adaptations taking into account cultural nuances. For example, one respondent observed that “when operating in a fairly conservative country in Asia, the wider community and culture that we are based in also influences LGBTQ culture.” There is also concern that such initiatives be misconstrued as being political or with the intent to influence government policy. However, company efforts to strike a delicate balance may lead to less inclusivity, proactive support and education efforts as well as “don’t ask, don’t tell” attitudes.

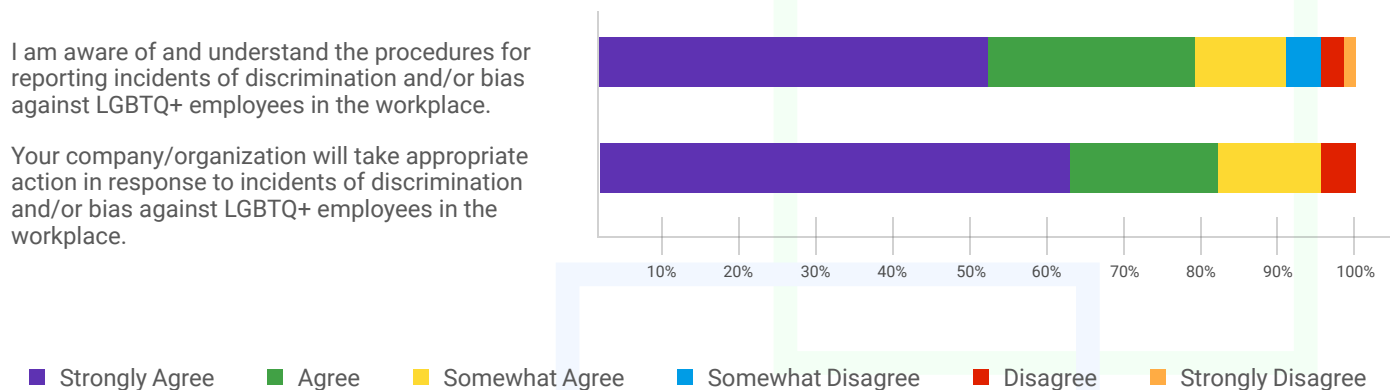
*“We have a great focus on diversity. However, we also need to be considerate of the local culture.”*

## KEY FINDING 2

**Policies and procedures are in place to address discrimination and/or bias against LGBTQ+ employees.**

Most respondents (79%) are aware of and understand their company’s procedures for reporting incidents of discrimination and/or bias against LGBTQ+ employees in the workplace. There was confidence (82%) that there would be appropriate action taken in response to such incidents

**Figure 2. Policies and Procedures to Protect Against Discrimination and/or Bias**



Several respondents commented on the importance of providing a safe working environment where harassment and bullying are not tolerated. Company policy regarding the reporting of incidents may be complemented by training, so that employees feel secure to report inappropriate behavior. While policies and procedures, as well as their implementation, may vary, specific policies were not discussed, so as to retain the Survey’s focus on the employees’ general perception of LGBTQ+ corporate culture.

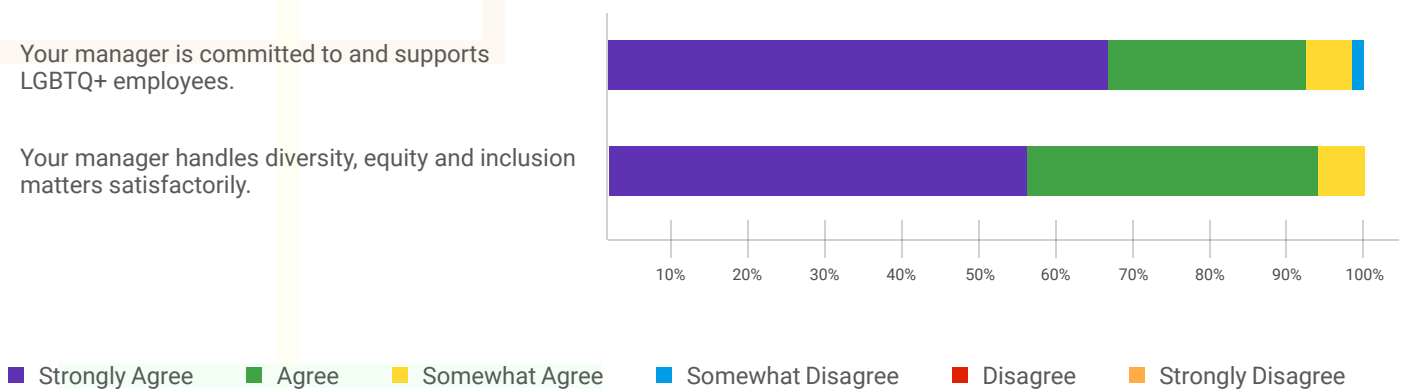
*“Swift and immediate action will be taken against harassment or bullying of any sort. Our employees must feel safe to work here and comfortable reporting on any deviant behavior.”*

### KEY FINDING 3

**Most managers are reported to be committed to and supportive of LGBTQ+ employees.**

More than 9 in 10 respondents indicated that their manager is committed to and supportive of LGBTQ+ employees (92%), and that they are satisfied with their manager's handling of matters pertaining to diversity, equity and inclusion (94%). Such support at the managerial level is critical to continue and further enhance DEI efforts.

**Figure 3. Commitment and Support from Managers**



*"Management is committed to and supports all employees."*

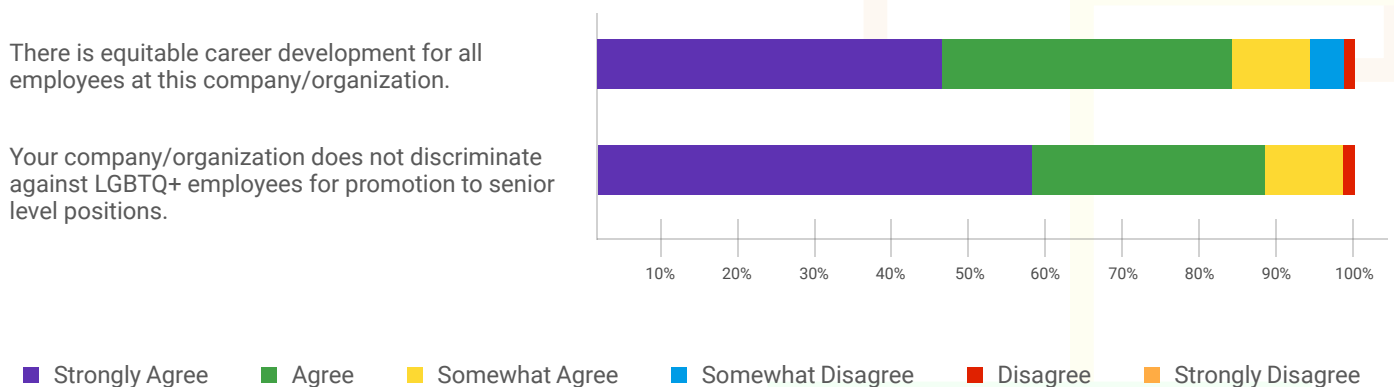


## KEY FINDING 4

Career development is generally perceived to be equitable and there are LGBTQ+ resource groups. However, companies may focus more on female and ethnic minority talent instead, and LGBTQ+ employees may be reluctant to self-identify.

A majority of respondents (84%) commented that there is equitable career development for all employees at their company. Only one person (1%) indicated that there is discrimination against LGBTQ+ employees for promotion to senior roles.

Figure 4. Career Development



Programs to support LGBTQ+ employees and their career development include business resource groups or employee resource groups, which can help to ensure that all employees, regardless of gender, have a voice. However, one respondent shared that “we have leadership development/acceleration programs for gender minority (women), ethnically diverse talent (i.e., ethnic minorities) but have not yet invested in the LGBTQ+ minority group. [Employee Resource Group] is looking into this – there are challenges ... also due to self-identification (or our concerns that there may be talent reluctant to self ID).”

*“Equal Opportunity for all employees based on talent and commitment to the tasks at hand”*

## KEY FINDING 5

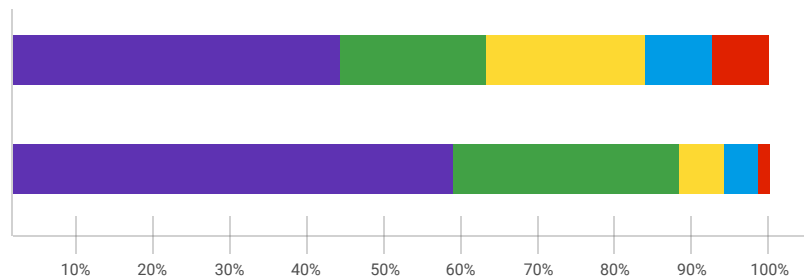
Although it may be easy to get to know co-workers with different backgrounds, fewer than two out of every three people feel that they have become more understanding of their LGBTQ+ co-workers.

While almost 9 in 10 (88%) respondents indicated that it has been easy to get to know people at their workplace who have backgrounds different from their own, only 62.7% think that their experiences have enabled them to become more understanding of their LGBTQ+ co-workers.

Figure 5. Personal Experiences with LGBTQ+ Co-Workers

My experiences at this company/organization have led me to become more understanding of differences among my LGBTQ+ co-workers.

Getting to know people with backgrounds different from my own has been easy at this company/organization.



Strongly Agree Agree Somewhat Agree Somewhat Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Therefore, there is opportunity for colleagues to improve their understanding of LGBTQ+ employees, despite challenges that may arise from a perceived lack of diversity or openness. Suggestions included organising events, such as webinars, talks and even “an International Women’s Day type Pride day”, to help raise awareness and increase acceptance and respect for this community. In addition, platforms could be created for stories to be shared openly, and opportunities could be provided to attend leadership summits such as “OutNEXT”.

*“Lack of diversity in my organization, majority are same race and identity. Impossible to pinpoint identity as well due to heteronormativity.”*



# Conclusion

The results of this Survey indicate that there is a heartening commitment to employee diversity and general support for LGBTQ+ employees, which form a good foundation for further DEI efforts.

Possible areas for action include:

## **1. Education to promote awareness and acceptance of the LGBTQ+ community**

Events such as talks and webinars help raise awareness of LGBTQ+ related matters, including workplace issues. These events also provide opportunity for discussions to facilitate understanding and encourage empathy among colleagues.

## **2. Platforms to foster a culture of inclusion**

Resource groups are helpful to sustain conversations and provide support to LGBTQ+ employees. They could offer channels to share stories and forge connections, so that LGBTQ+ employees may feel a greater sense of belonging. These groups also serve to share resources and information on career and leadership development opportunities, such as relevant seminars and conferences.

## **3. Engagement of employees and leaders to customize initiatives to meet their needs**

To effectively achieve long-term impact, initiatives should be aligned with a larger strategy, including the continued use of relevant data to evaluate progress and evolve plans as necessary.<sup>3</sup> The use of employee insights also helps to ensure that the plans proposed are appropriately adapted to the needs and nuances of the local community.

<sup>3</sup> AmCham Singapore. (2018) *Gender Diversity and Inclusion Survey*. AmCham Singapore. <https://amcham.com.sg/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AmCham-Women-Gender-Diversity-Inclusion-Survey-2018-Insights-Report.pdf>

# Survey Demographics

This Survey was administered from February 24 to March 11, 2022 and completed by 79 senior executives from AmCham member companies.

## Location of Company's Global Headquarters

United States	51%
Singapore	32%
United Kingdom	8%
Others	7%

## Primary Industry

Professional Services	18%
Finance	15%
Human Resource	14%
Information & Communication	11%
General Manufacturing	6%
Pharmaceuticals & Health Science	6%
Digital Sector	5%
Social & Community Services	5%
Hospitality & Tourism	4%
Legal	4%
Aviation/Aerospace	3%
Energy & Utilities	3%
Real Estate & Building Services	3%
Others	3%

## Position of Respondents in Their Company/Organization

Senior Executive (Director, CxO, etc.)	54%
People Manager	24%
Individual Contributor	22%

## Age Range of Respondents

Under 21	1%
21 to 34	15%
35 to 44	37%
45 to 54	25%
55 or older	22%

## Gender Identity

Male	47%
Female	48%
Non-binary/third gender	1%
Declined to answer	4%



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# About AmCham Singapore



Established in 1973, the American Chamber of Commerce in Singapore (AmCham Singapore) is the largest and the most active international business association in Singapore and Southeast Asia, with over 4,700 members representing nearly 600 companies. Our Chamber comprises 14 industry-specific committees: seven sectoral and seven functional.

AmCham is a forward-thinking, business-progressive association. Our mission is to create value for our members by providing advocacy, business insights, and connections. Our membership includes American companies and Singaporean and third-country companies with significant U.S. business interests. AmCham is an independent, non-partisan business organization. We are a member of the 28-chamber-strong AmChams of Asia Pacific.

Our goal is to provide the information and facilitate the access and connections that give members insight into the local, regional, and global operating environment, enhance their four professional capabilities, and enable them to make well-informed business decisions. For more information about AmCham Singapore, visit [www.amcham.com.sg](http://www.amcham.com.sg).

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