

# **World AIDS Day 2022: Why We're Wearing Red and Fundraising for Waverley Care**

The University of Edinburgh Staff Pride Network have had a long-standing relationship with Waverley Care, Scotland's HIV and Hepatitis C charity. Cathy and Katie (members of the SPN committee) attended an event for supporters in October to learn more about the work of the charity to support those living with HIV in Scotland. We heard from a great speaker who had benefited from the support that Waverley Care offers, and had since gone on to work for the charity so that he could share what he has learned and gained from his experience with others in need.

Waverley Care inspired us to support their Wear Red for World AIDS Day initiative, to create awareness of how the work of Waverley Care has provided support for decades, and continues to support, people living with HIV and AIDS.

**World AIDS Day is marked every year on the 1st of December, and aims to bring people together to unite in the fight against HIV, raise awareness and challenge the stigma that surrounds living with the condition.**

We would like to invite all staff and students at the University of Edinburgh to join us in marking World AIDS Day this year! Please take part by wearing red on World AIDS Day (Thursday 1 December), and by donating at least £1 to our fundraiser for Waverley Care.

Donate now via our dedicated JustGiving page.

**If every member of staff at the University of Edinburgh were able to donate just £1 each, that could generate over £15,000 in donations for Waverley Care, a great charity doing incredible work in our city.**

We are also delighted to be collaborating with Edinburgh College of Art in hosting an event on the Thursday 1 December at 6pm in West Court (Edinburgh College of Art): **The Farewell Symphony, a talk by Sam Moore**, is a musing on the AIDS crisis, disappearance, and queer histories. We hope you can join us for the event in your red regalia.

Register to attend The Farewell Symphony via EventBrite.

The event is free to attend, but if you have the means, we suggest that each attendee make a donation of £2 to our fundraiser for Waverley Care.

Donate now via our JustGiving page.

Learn more about Waverley Care.

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**The importance of gender diversity in neuroscience**

# research

In this blog post, Professor Tara Spires-Jones (she/her) highlights how the lack of gender representation in neuroscience research is limiting medical progress:

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I've been thinking a lot lately about the importance of considering gender in neuroscience research. My day job is a dementia researcher. Our group is trying to understand the brain changes that cause Alzheimer's disease and related neurodegenerative conditions in order to effectively prevent or treat them. We always include sex as a variable in our analyses whether we're looking at donated human brain tissue or animal models, but for humans, we do not have any information about gender as this is not routinely collected by the tissue banks we access.

It turns out, it's not just our lab that has this problem. I recently wrote an editorial on the topic of gender in neuroscience research in my journal *Brain Communications* and, while reading about the topic, found some disturbing data about the lack of inclusion of trans and nonbinary people in medical research which is contributing to health disparities. An analysis of over 20,000 clinical trials concluded that many medical fields, including neurology, had a serious underrepresentation of women in clinical trials. Further, the authors state:

*Despite the high rates of sex reporting in the ClinicalTrials.gov registry, a meaningful analysis of the representation of gender was not possible because of the small number of clinical trials that included and reported on nonbinary genders or transgender health, highlighting a need for greater inclusion of gender diversity in medical*

*research. A standardized system that includes all sexes and genders, including transgender and nonbinary genders, in reporting is necessary to improve health for all. The relative absence of the gender nonbinary and transgender community from clinical trials limits medical progress for these communities.*

I discussed some of these data in a webinar with the UK Dementia Research Institute.

In addition to the need for research inclusive of all genders, in my field we have a lack of representation of gender diversity among researchers. We need all of the best minds to solve neuroscience challenges like dementia. One shining star in this respect was Prof Ben Barres, who sadly died a few years ago. Ben was a transgender neuroscientist who was an inspiration and advocate for diversity in neuroscience. I highly recommend his book, *Autobiography of a Transgender Scientist*.

I'm very proud of the Staff Pride Network for supporting our local LGBT+ scientists, whose successes are a reminder that everyone deserves to be included in neuroscience!

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- [Learn more about Tara's research](#)
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# Update on Availability of Pride Lanyards

Due to a huge demand over the past few weeks for the new Pride Progress lanyard, we are already very low on supply. Another order has been placed and we hope to have more stock available from mid-October. Our merchandise request form is closed for the time being.

If you have submitted a request for a lanyard via the Microsoft form, you can expect to receive an email in the coming days with an indication of when we expect to be able to fulfill your request. Apologies for the delay and thanks for bearing with us – we're delighted to see so much interest in supporting the Pride Progress message!

In the meantime, you can try contacting the User Services desk at your nearest campus library, as these teams may have a limited stock of lanyards available.

We will also have a small number of lanyards available at this week's upcoming evening social on Friday 7 October. Join us to hang out and you just might get your hands on a highly sought-after Pride Progress lanyard!

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# Celebrate Drag Queen Story Time with Edinburgh International Book Festival

A staff member was asking Jonathan yesterday about the controversy with 'Drag Queen Story Time' and telling him about their family's positive experience, taking his daughter to Celebrate Pride With Mama G! at the Edinburgh International Book Festival. Jonathan asked him if he would put it in an email for us to share with members and he has, below!

*I just wanted to let you know that I thoroughly enjoyed a recent trip to the Edinburgh Book Festival with my daughter Tilly and some of her wee friends. On Saturday 27th Aug we went to 'Celebrate Pride with Mama G!' which was a 2 hour event on the main stage at the book festival with music and stories all centred around LGBTQ+. Tilly really enjoyed the hour or so we were there. Mama G was great with the kids (Tilly was very enamoured with her outfit) and gave a nice, interactive, history of Stonewall that Tilly enjoyed singing along with, "Love is love is love is love"! . The two stories we were able to listen to were great and it was nice to hear stories (read by Juno Dawson and Jodie Lancet-Grant) that were more inclusive than Tilly is usually exposed to, mainly as that is what is generally available in mainstream kids' books.*

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# Gender Neutral Toilets

Gender neutral toilets are bathrooms which can be used by anyone, regardless of gender.

While anyone can use a gender neutral toilet, they are particularly important for trans and non-binary students and staff who may feel uncomfortable in or unable to use gendered bathrooms.

The map below shows the locations of gender neutral toilets across the University's campuses.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/estates/buildings-information/gender-neutral-toilets>

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## Join us at Edinburgh Pride 2022

### SPN at Pride Edinburgh

We invite members, allies and students to join us for the Pride Edinburgh March on Saturday 25 June!

The SPN marching troupe will be meeting at 11:30 on the day at Levels Café on Holyrood Road. Speeches start at 12:30 and the march moves off at 13:00.

If you can't make it to Levels beforehand but still want to join in, just look for our marching banner – it will be 3 metres wide and looks like the image above!

## **For a quiet space after marching:**

Members are invited to meet at the Informatics Forum from 14:00 – 17:00. Join us for refreshments and a marching troupe debrief! Please note that this private space is being facilitated for University of Edinburgh staff and students only. Entry will be via Robbie on the march, through the side entrance and building sign-in. Call/TXT/iMessage/WhatsApp (07905517428) or even teams message Robert (Robbie) Court to access later in the afternoon.

**Note: We will keep this post up to date throughout the day and I'll try and share our location during the march.**

## **Live updates:**

Live location: <https://maps.app.goo.gl/d8d45uCRVSKGdAi67>

14:00 we're meeting by the rino head / gift shop by informatics





12:40 were by the traffic lights



10:20 myself and the banner are now in levels cafe having breakfast so feel free if you want to be fashionably early.



8:44 Prepping for meeting at levels cafe. The refreshments are all ready at the informatics forum at the end of the Parade route. The banner has poles this year so wind permitting

should be above the crowd. [fingers crossed].

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# Recommendations for Inclusive Data Collection

During Pride Month in particular, we're glad to highlight opportunities for our members and allies to focus on LGBT+ inclusion in their work.

Don't forget that we can seize these opportunities all year round, not just in June!

Check out the following recommendations for designing an inclusive survey, kindly provided by Ariadne Cass-Maran, Senior Content Designer with Website and Communications.

Language changes and evolves all the time. Any list you offer people, especially a global community as we have at the University of Edinburgh, will inevitably age over time, or leave someone out. It helps to consider inclusive data-gathering as an evolving thing.

There's a lot of talk at the moment about blanket terms being used in inclusive language guides to try to cover everyone. However, we should be careful not to use a neutral term that might imply different things to different people. We should also be aware that there are circumstances when people prefer to see their identity represented.

So if you're designing a form or survey, here are some

recommendations:

- Be clear on what quantitative and qualitative data you want to gather.
- When providing a list, include the identities you want to know about, and include 'prefer not to say' as an option.
- In addition to your list for participants to select an identity, provide a free text box to give the option for people to provide their identity if they don't see it in the list provided. The reason for this is that there are always unknowns and unknown unknowns. By providing a list, you give people the opportunity to see themselves represented, but you also risk leaving an identity out. Provide the opportunity for people to tell you about themselves.
- If you want to ask people about their gender, including cis and trans genders, to understand self-identification and the intricacies of societal definitions, a free text box will allow participants to provide more nuanced information about an identity they selected.

Ariadne's work has informed an inclusive language guide for the University community. Explore the [Inclusive Language Guide](#)

Check out [Advance HE's guidance on collection of diversity monitoring data](#). [Advance HE guidance on data gathering](#)

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# A sincere thank you from Proud Scotland Awards 2022

Dear University of Edinburgh Staff Pride Network,

I am contacting you to say thank you for everything you have done over the past year to celebrate, support and promote the LGBTQ+ community.

As was stated during the awards ceremony, 2022 was probably the toughest year to select finalists and winners with over 1000 nominations being received and over 36000 votes being cast, all from the public. Although it was commiserations on the night his hopefully shows the amazing impact which you and your organisation is having within the community and how your actions have caused an individual to nominate you this year.

We strongly hope that you continue your amazing work and impact so that we will see you again at the Proud Scotland Awards 2023.

During the evening, you will be aware that we raised money to help support the delivery of Pride Edinburgh, <https://prideedinburgh.co.uk/>, and Glasgow's Pride Mardi Gla, <https://glapride.com/>, and hope that we will see you showing your Pride, at either or both of the marches and events.

Again, from myself as the Chair of the Judging panel, congratulations on being a finalist in 2022 and thank you for being amazing!

Stuart McPhail

Chair | Proud Scotland Awards

<https://proudscotlandawards.com/>

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# Celebrate Pride Edinburgh 2022 with us in style!

**Happy Pride Month 2022!**

To celebrate, the Staff Pride Network is offering a limited number of t-shirts for free to network members.

We've got seven variations of the SPN logo available, representing a number of pride flags.

**Check out the t-shirt designs (image file on SharePoint)**

## **UPDATE 6 JUNE**

**Please note that the following logo variations are no longer available in June 2022 due to high demand:**

**Rainbow; Philadelphia; Bisexual**

If you select one of the above variations, we will record this as an expression of interest for when we can next order a batch of t-shirts.

We hope to see you wearing your colours loud and proud on Saturday 25 June at the Pride Edinburgh march! We welcome you to join the Staff Pride Network marching troupe ☐

**Complete this short form to request a t-shirt**

Logo flag variation options available in June 2022:

Lesbian / Non-Binary / Trans / Intersex

We recognise that the sexualities and identities of all our network members are not represented by these flags – apologies that we can't print more variations on this occasion!

With huge thanks to our colleague Gill Kidd who created this version of the t-shirt design! Logo designs are by Kael Onion

Oakley.

- We have a limited number of t-shirts and size options, and will therefore respond to requests on a first-come-first served basis. Please expect to receive an email confirming the availability of your preferred t-shirt.
- If we run out of your preferred design and size, we can retain your details for when we can next order more t-shirts. We can't guarantee that the next batch of t-shirts can be made available for free (sorry).
- We kindly ask that anyone who gets a t-shirt considers making a one-off donation of £5 – £15 (or whatever you can manage) to Pride Edinburgh. You can do so at the Pride Edinburgh march on Saturday 25 June – card machines will be available.
- If you are unable to attend the Pride Edinburgh march but would still like to make a donation, let us know via email.

Any questions about the t-shirts or the request form? Get in touch: [staffpridenetwork@ed.ac.uk](mailto:staffpridenetwork@ed.ac.uk)

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## **Iona Community: Student Week this September with Mx Ashwin Africanus Thyssen**

10 – 16 September: Students' Week (*title tbc*) A week for students to experience life in the community, to share



laughter and stories, to explore the island and to reflect on current concerns.

This week is jointly led by Iona Community staff with staff and students from Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities and the Student Christian Movement. We are delighted that we'll be joined by Mx Ashwin Africanus Thyssen from Stellenbosch University for this week.

<https://iona.org.uk/visit-and-stay/iona-abbey-centre/iona-abbey-programme-bookings/?fbclid=IwAR2DhbgZdvhzn5GnSr1G8EA3XQfYKLbhqAXd5v12EIw07sCGzQWozghMZDU>