

HOSTING A GENDER-INCLUSIVE EVENT

What is a gender-inclusive event?

- We strive to make Camber Exchanges a space where attendees can connect, learn, and grow—regardless of race, ability, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and the combination of those identities. Moreover, we strive to hold events that not just include, but affirm the identities of everyone present. Hosting an inclusive event takes intentional work and action by the organizers.
- Particularly, we strive to make a space that is welcoming and affirming to people of all genders. This means that **organizers, hosts, and speakers take action to avoid assuming the gender of attendees, and are pro-active about making the space more welcoming for transgender people.**

Why is this important?

- **You can't know someone's gender, or the pronouns they use, just by looking at them.** Like using someone's name, using the correct pronouns for a person is a required common courtesy. Using the incorrect name or pronouns for someone can be especially hurtful for queer, transgender, or gender non-conforming people. Even if you think that your pronouns are “obvious,” sharing them helps normalize this process for queer and trans people. Adjusting the language you use, the facility or signage in your event space, and your check-in procedures are small actions that make a big difference in helping include queer and transgender people.
- Event hosts and people doing check-ins should review this information, and be prepared to explain to attendees who may be less familiar with trans inclusion.

A quick caveat:

- It's important to note that hosting an inclusive event requires different actions for people with different identities. That is, though this information can serve to make events more inclusive for people who are transgender and gender non-conforming, additional and distinct work is necessary to ensure an inclusive space for attendees who are Black, indigenous, people of color, disabled, or who hold otherwise marginalized identities.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR SELECTING AN EVENT SPACE

Select a space with gender neutral bathrooms.

- If possible, an event location should be selected with single-user bathrooms. If the facilities are not already designated as gender-neutral, **relabel gendered single-user bathrooms as gender-neutral** with a printed paper sign. Avoid using a sign that implies any gender binary. An example sign is below, and accessible online from [A Guide to Gender](#).
- If single-user bathrooms are not available at the event facility, print and **add signage to gendered multi-user bathrooms** that encourages people to use the gendered bathroom in which they feel most comfortable, and encourages people to trust that the everyone using the bathroom is using the space that feels safest to them, and refrain from policing their gender expression.
- An example sign is shared below and is available online [here](#).



THIS BATHROOM MIGHT BE GENDERED, BUT THE SAME ISN'T TRUE FOR EVERYONE WHO USES IT. 

Please use the bathroom in which you feel safest!

And please trust that everyone is using the bathroom that feels the best to them.

REFRAIN FROM EVALUATING THE GENDER EXPRESSION OF YOUR FELLOW BATHROOM USERS.
WE STRIVE TO CREATE INCLUSIVE BATHROOM SPACES FOR PEOPLE OF ALL
GENDER EXPRESSIONS AND IDENTITIES.



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CONSIDERATIONS FOR EVENT PLANNING

- **Strive to cultivate a group of speakers with a diverse range of gender identities and expressions.** However, be cautious to avoid tokenizing people—that is, select them for their expertise in the industry, rather requesting them to speak specifically to their experience as a transgender or gender-diverse person.
- When soliciting speaker information for promotional materials, **invite speakers to share their pronouns**, and include this information in promotional material.
- **Avoid selecting gendered products for raffle items.**
 - Don't preferentially give away pink water bottles, or women's climbing harnesses. Select gender-neutral items, and/or offer to.

GREETINGS AND CHECK-IN

At check-in, encourage attendees to write their pronouns on their nametag.

- This is important because normalizing sharing pronouns for everyone helps make it easier for transgender and gender non-conforming people to share their pronouns.
- **Provide an example nametag** for attendees to copy, with name, pronouns, and company name written. An example nametag is provided here. Feel free to use this example or write your own example on the nametags you provide for the event.
- **Event hosts are encouraged to share their pronouns on their nametags**, to model this behavior for attendees. This is particularly helpful when modeled by the hosts doing the check-in.
- **When checking in attendees, hosts should verbally note location of gender-neutral bathrooms.** E.g., “there are men’s and women’s bathrooms down the hall, and there’s a gender-neutral bathroom available next to them.” If gender-neutral bathrooms are not available, note this.
- However, **sharing pronouns should not be mandatory for hosts or attendees.** Some people may not be comfortable sharing their pronouns in this space—they may use different pronouns in different spaces, may not yet be publicly out as transgender, or may prefer to assess how safe a space is before they share their pronouns. **Do not require or force anyone to share their pronouns.**



RESPECTING PEOPLE'S PRONOUNS

- **Use the pronouns people have shared with you.** If they have not shared a pronoun, just use their name.
 - For example: “Ash likes mountain biking, but not as much as Ash likes rock climbing.”

- If you use the wrong pronoun, briefly correct yourself and move on. Do not offer a lengthy apology or explanation.
 - For example: “I just met Alex and she—I mean they—are doing really cool work at their organization.”

MODERATOR AND SPEAKER RESPONSIBILITIES

- Moderator and speakers are encouraged to share their pronouns in their verbal introductions.
 - E.g., “I’m Jane Doe, I use she/her pronouns, I’m the Marketing Director at this company, and I’ll be your moderator this evening.”
- Event facilitators and moderators avoid gendering attendees. When addressing the crowd, use gender-neutral terms of address.
 - E.g., say “Welcome, friends” or “Welcome, everyone” rather than “Ladies and gentlemen.” Similarly, when addressing or referring to someone in the audience, as in a Q and A portion, the moderator should address them as “the person in the blue shirt” rather than “the woman in the blue shirt.”
- The event moderator should be experienced in recognizing and interrupting microaggressions, both from panelists and audience questions. The way the moderator handles conflict in this space has a huge impact on the experience attendees have at the event.

BEYOND THE EVENT: MORE ALLYSHIP ACTION ITEMS

- **Share your pronouns** in your email signature and/or social media profiles.
- **When someone shares their pronouns with you, use them.** This applies to both professional and personal interactions.
- **Advocate for trans-inclusive practices** at your workplace. These practices include gender-neutral bathrooms, coverage of trans healthcare under company insurance, and inclusion of gender expression in your organization’s non-discrimination policy.
- **Identify local LGBTQ advocacy groups and donate** your time or money. Encourage your organization to donate, as well.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Definitions](#) from The Teaching Transgender Toolkit
[Gender Neutral Restrooms](#) from the AdaCamp Toolkit
[Gender Inclusive Event Planning](#) by Bron Lewis

Prepared by Lila Leatherman for Camber Outdoors, Aug. 2019. More questions? Visit their website, lilaleatherman.com, or contact lila.leatherman@gmail.com for help planning your next event.