

LWA LGBTQIA+ Safer Spaces Policy

As a group of LGBTQIA+ landworkers, we come together to celebrate and uplift each other and our connection with the land. We want to raise our visibility within land work, and create an emboldening space to discuss and challenge issues faced by our community. Growing this community together is active work, this document should live, change and grow with us- it describes what we expect of ourselves and what we commit to each other. Members are required to regularly revisit the below checklist and do the work of recognising and challenging the various forms of oppression and exploitation that harm some of us while also benefiting some of us. We want to create a space in which people feel comfortable embracing/bringing their whole selves.

Principles we build our space around/Checklist:

1. Safety: There are limitations to who is included in this space. Anyone who self identifies as an LGBTQIA+ or questioning person and a landworker or LWA supporter, or an LGBTQIA+ ally and a landworker (or LWA supporter) is welcome. While we encourage conversations that 'call people in' - that is, engage with, and hope to educate where people have views that harm members of our LGBTQIA+ community, this is not what our shared space as a group is for. Repetitive action that aligns with racism, disableism, poverty, transphobia, transmisogyny, homophobia, sexism, misogyny, islamophobia and antisemitism, as well as others are considered grounds for exclusion.
2. Respect everyone's identity and background, including pronouns and names. Do not assume anyone's gender identity, sexual preference, survivor status, economic status, immigration or documentation status, background, health, etc. Respect includes recognising that lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual people are not dangerous, and that the rights of each of these identities are not a threat to others' rights.
3. Taking up space/ active listening - If you are normally outspoken, step back, if you are normally quiet, step forward. We welcome unfinished thoughts and emotions. Speak only from your own experience. We recognise that active listening and processing looks different for different people, and will strive not to judge everyone's participation by neurotypical standards.
4. If someone says you've upset them, listen. Do not act defensively. Take this as a chance to learn. Respect where they are coming from.
5. Accountability - be willing to enter an accountability process if others feel you need to. This may include mediation, and if felt necessary, exclusion. If you feel upset by the behaviour of another member(s) of the group, share this with someone in the group that you feel comfortable with. If someone brings an issue forward to you or you witness something you do not feel is right do not wait on the sidelines. We have a responsibility towards each other to speak up.
6. Accessible language - try to use accessible language, avoid in-jokes, activist jargon, and explain who you are talking about no matter how obvious they are to you.

In creating this document we have leaned heavily on the safer spaces policies of Soul Fire Farm and Sisters Uncut and the organising principles outlined in Emergent Strategy by Adrienne Maree Brown. We would like to acknowledge the work that went into these resources and thank the people who put them together, from whom we've learnt a lot. We would highly recommend checking them out.

<http://www.sistersuncut.org/saferspaces/>

<http://www.soulfirefarm.org/about/safer-space/>

<https://www.activedistributionshop.org/shop/books/4538-emergent-strategy.html>