

Dear AHRC,

I write to express my plea that you consider the Lesbian Action Group's application for an exemption to hold a single sex event for International Lesbian Day.

I understand the preliminary decision from your body is toward disallowing this exemption in order to allow the trans community to participate. While there are always occasions for the wider LGBTQI+ to meet together and celebrate events relevant to that wider community (Midsumma Carnival & Pride March come to mind), in this case there will be a huge psychosocial benefit for members of the single-sex lesbian Community to come together and celebrate its cultural achievements and history. Gay men and women have historically and do currently experience discrimination, cruelty and stigma, occasionally they need time and space to bolster their health and self-esteem.

The Pride Centre has previously allowed trans groups to hold trans-only events, as they should, for similar benefit. An ethic of equity should allow the same consideration to lesbian events, in this case defined as cis-women loving women.

There should be room in human rights for everyone, which means that this group should be given the same opportunity to define its celebration space as trans people are given.

May I respectfully ask that you reconsider your preliminary finding and allow the LAG this exemption.