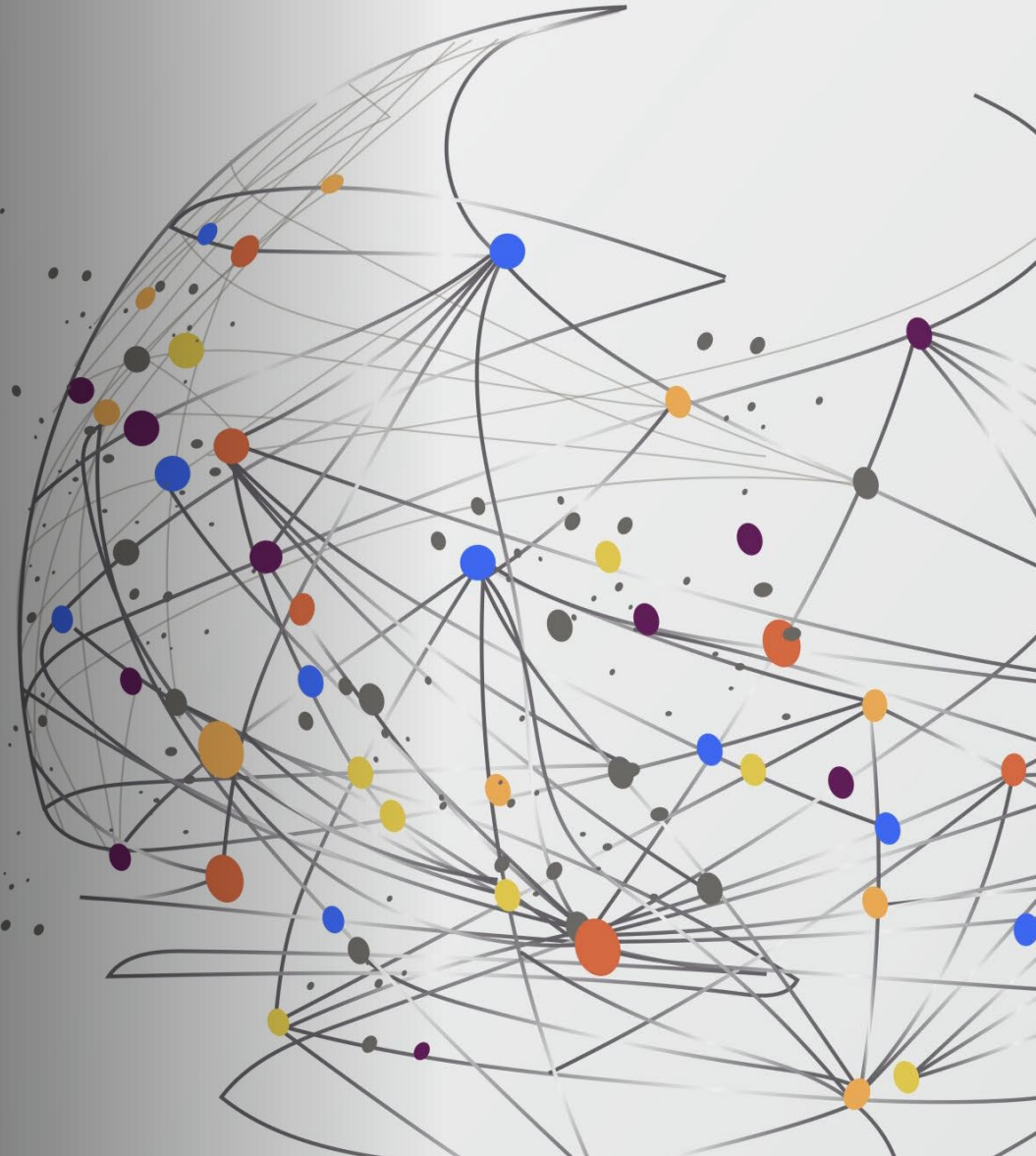




How to Create a Safer Environment for LGBTQ+ Riders on Transit

Kylie Madhav – Senior Director of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

SAGE





About SAGE

- Founded in 1978, SAGE is the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to improving the lives of LGBTQ+ older people.
- SAGE's mission is to lead in addressing issues related to LGBTQ+ aging. In partnership with its constituents and allies, SAGE works to achieve a high quality of life for LGBTQ+ older adults, supports and advocates for their rights, fosters a greater understanding of aging in all communities, and promotes positive images of LGBTQ+ life in later years.
- We fulfill our mission through advocacy, direct services, education, training and technical assistance programs, locally, nationally and internationally.

Overview

Challenges Faced by LGBTQ+ Riders

What Transit Providers Can Do

Smaller-Scale Solutions

Inclusive Language Guidelines: Gendered Terms

Inclusive Language Guidelines: Affirmative Terms

QueerCityPass

SAGE's Approach

Key Takeaways

Challenges Faced by LGBTQ+ Riders

Verbal Harassment

Sexual Harassment

Physical Intimidation

- The risk of incurring harassment and/or violence is especially high for members of the transgender and non-binary communities.

Lack of Access to Reliable Transit

Linguistic and Economic Barriers

What Transit Providers Can Do

- Incorporate inclusive language into your publications
- Step up safety measures
 - Be aware that increasing the number of uniformed officers on transit may not improve perceptions of safety for LGBTQ+ riders.
- “QueerCityPass” Model
- Visual signs of support for LGBTQ+ community
 - Publicly acknowledge and celebrate Pride month
 - Run Pride-themed trains or buses
- Increasing access to public transit
 - Discounted fares
 - Improved coverage
 - ADA-compliant transit options

Smaller- Scale Solutions

- Buddy Systems
 - Members of the LGBTQ+ community have leveraged their personal networks to establish « buddy systems » where community members will arrange to travel in groups of at least 2 to and/or from their destination.
- Private or Low-Capacity Transit Options
 - Non-profits and other organizations can help by setting aside funding to support small-scale transit options, such as Lyft or Uber, for LGBTQ+ and other communities for certain events or meetings.

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Language: Gendered Terms

- Avoid making assumptions about the gender of your riders. Addressing a crowd as “ladies and gentlemen” or “boys and girls.” Consider using more inclusive language such as:
 - Esteemed riders
 - Students
 - Colleagues, etc.
- Instead of using only “Mr. Ms. Mrs.” on forms, consider adding in “Mx.” or “M.” or forgo the use of these all together.
- For materials in other languages, research what norms exist within that language pertaining to gender neutrality. For example, in Spanish, some speakers opt to use terminal “-e” as a gender-neutral marker, but this convention is not universally used across Spanish-speaking communities.

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Language: Affirmative Terms

- One thing to keep in mind: language changes, and that's OK. The below list reflects the best practices of 2023, but these words may not always capture how members of the LGBTQ+ community identify. Embrace change and remain open to feedback.
- LGBTQ+ affirmative terms:
 - Trans or Transgender
 - Personal pronouns
 - Intersex
 - Lesbian or Gay
 - Identity
 - Queer (Use this term prudently as members of some communities and generations may find this word pejorative.)

LGBTQ+ Inclusive Language: Non-Affirmative Terms

- Terms that have fallen out of use and may be considered offensive:
 - Transsexual
 - Transvestite
 - Preferred gender pronouns
 - Hermaphrodite
 - Homosexual
 - Lifestyle when used in reference to LGBTQ+ identity

QueerCityPass

- New York, Istanbul and other cities around the world offer residents and tourists the opportunity to purchase “city tickets” and “city passes” that provide holders discounted access to transit and certain cultural institutions.
- Berlin, Cologne and Vienna have gone one step further and launched the QueerCityPass which provides holders with access to the public transit systems of those cities as well as discounted entry to important institutions for local queer communities.
- This is a unique and powerful way of signaling that the LGBTQ+ community matters to the transit purveyors of these cities.



SAGE's Approach



- SAGE has partnered with LYFT to provide complimentary rides to and from certain events for transgender and non-binary participants.
 - This has helped SAGE increase access to its centers and programs.
- SAGE continues to advocate for the NYC Council to award discretionary funding specifically for meeting the transportation needs of TGNB elders, ensuring their connecton to trans-affirming aging services.

Key Takeaways

- Opting for inclusive language is critical, but not the end of story.
 - Think of inclusive language as a road (or track) that helps you get to your ultimate goal of creating an LGBTQ+-affirmative transit system.
- Safety matters.
 - Ensure that your transit systems are as physically and emotionally safe for your riders as possible.
 - Increased police presence can be an important part of this solution but think about other levers at your disposal that can move the needle on safety.
- Make your commitment to the LGBTQ+ community public before, during and after Pride month.
 - Pride trains are fun to ride, but how can your agency form long-term connections with LGBTQ+-run businesses and institutions and what benefits would these partnerships offer your riders; LGBTQ+ or otherwise?

More Key Takeaways

- Focus on Accessibility.
 - LGBTQ+ people continue to face significant hurdles to gainful employment, promotion and safe housing.
 - This means that LGBTQ+ people in certain may be more likely to take public transit as they are less likely to be able to afford a car or other private transportation options.
 - This also means that LGBTQ+ people may be more likely to live in areas that are underserved by public transit as these areas may offer more affordable housing options.
 - Addressing transit deserts will likely increase the number of LGBTQ+ people who are able to access your system.

Resources

- [Queer City Pass: Europe's first tourist ticket for LGBTIQ visitors](#)
- [Inequity in Healthcare: Studies show the LGBTQ+ community are less safe on public transportation](#)
- [Queer mobilities: critical LGBTQ perspectives of public transport spaces](#)
- [Mind the queer public transportation gap](#)
- [How Buttigieg Could Make Transportation Safer, According to LGBTQ+ Advocacy Groups](#)



Thank You!
Merci !
¡Gracias!



Kylie Madhav
Senior Director of Diversity,
Equity and Inclusion
kmadhav@sageusa.org