



Wilton Park

Provisional programme

Opportunities and challenges: the intersection of faith and human rights of LGBTI+ persons

Wednesday 7 – Friday 9 September 2016 |
WP1488

Attendance is by invitation only

The challenging discussion regarding the relationship between religion, sexual orientation, gender identity and sex characteristics is at the forefront of the international human rights debate, generating discourse at a number of high level meetings, including the UN Human Rights Council, Global LGBTI Human Rights Conference and CHOGM.

The Wilton Park roundtable will build on work undertaken in other fora, with a focus on ways in which to promote greater tolerance for sexual minorities in the context of faith and the inter-face between LGBTI activists, religious leaders and LGBTI people of faith, recognising that they are not mutually exclusive.

This international meeting will bring together up to 60 people including faith communities, LGBTI and human rights advocates, selected governments, international institutions and regional organisations. Discussions will consider how stakeholders can work together to promote LGBTI rights and freedom of religion and develop alliances for progressive action.

The off the record meeting, which follows on from the 2014 Wilton Park event [‘Promoting the human rights of LGBT persons: next steps for international institutions and civil society’](#), will promote frank exchange in a safe and neutral environment in order to share lessons learnt and exchange best practice, promote tolerance and increase capacity to provide protection from harm.

It aims to:

- Identify challenges facing LGBTI persons of faith, faith leaders and faith communities, and seek ways forward to raise awareness and promote equal human and civil rights
- Consider different perspectives on LGBTI equality and identify how best to work with national legislators, community and faith leaders to promote tolerance;
- Share lessons learned and best practice amongst civil society and faith

In association with:



groups to increase capacity to provide protection from harm;

- Strengthen international focus and collaboration on the promotion of human and civil rights of LGBTI persons;
- Further develop networks in support of advocacy groups and faith communities with a view to future joint working.

In association with Arcus Foundation

(Speakers invited and themes proposed * denotes confirmed)

Wednesday 7 September

1500-1530

Participants arrive

1600

Welcome and introduction

***Julia Purcell**

Programme Director, Wilton Park, Steyning

1615-1715

1. Challenges and opportunities

What are the main challenges and current opportunities to promote and engender LGBTI rights in the context of faith? What are the opportunities afforded by high-level fora (eg UNGA, Global LGBTI Human Rights Conference, CHOGM) and how to maximise them? What is realistic and achievable and in what time-frame?

1715-1745

Tea/coffee

1745-1845

2. How to balance tensions between faith, national legislation and international frameworks?

What can be learned from best practice examples: freedom of religion, LGBTI rights in national legislation? How to apply models in different contexts and countries? What are the successful challenges to discriminatory practice? What is the impact of faith-based exemptions to legislation? In what ways can faith and LGBTI advocacy perspectives be better integrated with policy- and law-making?

1845

Briefing for World Café hosts in the Library

1915

Reception followed by dinner

Thursday 8 September

0800-0845

Breakfast

0915-1045

3. Layers and levers: maximising opportunities to build common ground

What scope is there to multiply capacity and expand alliances across networks and sectors? What can be learnt from past advocacy experience and rights movements? How to shift from reactive to pro-active advocacy/positions? What are the risks? And what are the success stories? Bridging divides: what avenues can be used to develop and promote inclusivity and engagement? How to further promote multi-sector and interfaith alliances and build coalitions to bring about change?

1045-1130

Photograph followed by tea/coffee

1130-1245

4. The power of narratives: re-framing the debate

How to use existing 'faith narratives' to advocate for greater inclusivity? What are the compelling arguments? What examples of effective use of language and story-telling to challenge stereotypes and 'myth-bust'? What about 'non-faith' narratives? How best to promote inclusive and tolerant dialogue through discussions of eg health, values, rights based freedoms, perceptions of dignity, traditional stories? What's worked and what hasn't?

1300-1430

Lunch

1500-1615

5. Champions of change

World Café session held in the Great Hall

i. Faith leaders and communities

How to harness the 'power of the pulpit'? How faith leaders and communities can play a pro-active role in campaigning for LGBTI rights and how can other stakeholders engage positively and effectively?

ii. Public leaders and figures

How to influence opinion, challenge hate speech and promote diversity and inclusion? How to engage media to ensure responsible reporting?

iii. Families and educators

What role can families and other educators play in awareness-raising and creating a safe space? How to ensure LGBTI persons are included as role-models?

iv. Diaspora communities

How can diaspora LGBTI persons of faith support and promote discussion amongst faith groups and communities in country of origin?

v. Policymakers

How can government officials and policymakers champion change at national, regional and international levels? How can states provide better protection to LGBTI persons?

vi. Funders and donors

Roles and responsibilities? How to influence change?

1615-1645

Tea/coffee

1645-1715

6. Reflections from World Café

Plenary session

1715-1845

7. Educating and informing the next generation: how to promote inclusive thinking

How can schools and public information campaigns promote inclusion and increase understanding of the challenges for LGBTI persons? How to maximise and expand to reach wider networks/communities? How to integrate into theological training and faith practices? What is the role and responsibility of popular culture (eg media, sport, film, music) to promote acceptance and diversity? What other ways can stigma and stereotypes be challenged?

1845

Briefing for discussion group chairs in the Library

1930

Dinner

Friday 9 September

0800-0845	Breakfast and checkout
0915-1045	8. Looking to the future: maximising networks, sharing best practice, multiplying productive alliances <i>Parallel facilitated working groups</i> What needs to change to move forward? Who needs to do what? <ol style="list-style-type: none">i. Building alliances/coalitions across activist and rights networksii. Best practice/framing challenges for activist groupsiii. Maximising and measuring impact of campaigns/activismiv. Interface between policymakers and civil societyv. Ensuring safe space for campaigners
1045-1115	Tea/coffee
1115-1145	9. Report back from working groups Plenary session – feedback from working groups.
1145-1200	10. eQuestionnaire Completion of online eQuestionnaire
1200-1300	11. Conclusions and going forward Chaired roundtable discussion
1300	Lunch
1400	Participants depart

This is a preview programme and as such may be subject to change.

This is an invitation only conference.

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