

Stonewall

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

This resource is produced by Stonewall, a UK-based charity that stands for the freedom, equity and potential of all lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning and ace (LGBTQ+) people.

At Stonewall, we imagine a world where LGBTQ+ people everywhere can live our lives to the full.

Founded in London in 1989, we now work in each nation of the UK and have established partnerships across the globe. Over the last three decades, we have created transformative change in the lives of LGBTQ+ people in the UK, helping win equal rights around marriage, having children and inclusive education.

Our campaigns drive positive change for our communities, and our sustained change and empowerment programmes ensure that LGBTQ+ people can thrive throughout our lives. We make sure that the world hears and learns from our communities, and our work is grounded in evidence and expertise.

To find out more about our work, visit us at www.stonewall.org.uk

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Stonewall is proud to provide information, support and guidance on LGBTQ+ inclusion; working towards a world where we're all free to be. This does not constitute legal advice, and is not intended to be a substitute for legal counsel on any subject matter.

Young Futures Aviva Transcript – Sarah's Story

Hello. I'm Sarah. My pronouns are she and her or they and them. And I am a platform lead working at Aviva.

So starting college after having gone to work for a few years, it meant I was a bit older than everybody else. Whilst college was really useful, I pretty much just found my profession through just pure accident, to be honest with you. I got a job at a company and didn't really go looking for a specific profession.

I then went back into college to do some evening classes to learn some programming languages. Although it was really good to be able to expand my CV with the college stuff, I would say that really most of the opportunities came through building and extending my professional network of contacts.

I definitely noticed that I was different to most of the people in the room. Like particularly early on in my career, not only being a woman but also being very young. In some ways it's been difficult to sort of cut through, but in other ways it has made me stand out a little bit against other people.

I am out at work as a bisexual and this seems to invite some probing questions from people. Folks tend to not understand fluidity very much. So if you're somebody that has a fluid gender, which I do, and a fluid sexuality as I do, most of the time, I'm pretty happy to support questions about this stuff, but some days it just feels like another microaggression.

I suppose most of the time it does come from a really curious place and a really well-intentioned place. I am a co-chair of Aviva's Gender Balance Community. I also lead a subgroup in our Pride community for bi and pan identifying colleagues. I always try and lead being really open, being really out about my identity, and I make it a big part of who I am.

There's some people out there that maybe roll their eyes and they're like, "why is she talking about these things?" I also know that there's somebody out there who is wondering if they are LGBT and are not really sure. Maybe they're worried about coming out. Having people who are being really authentic and being out about their identity can make it feel like a safer space.

My advice to a young LGBTQ person would be find somewhere where you can be yourself. I spent a lot of time when I was younger thinking that I've maybe made some wrong choices, but I'd say, you know, I really found my way in sort of quite an organic way. And I'm glad that I did.

Making some really good allies, some really good contacts in my professional network have allowed me to feel like the best version of me is the truest version of me.