



Encouraging respectful conversations in the workplace

A panel discussion hosted by
The Labour Relations Agency

Wednesday 26 July 2023

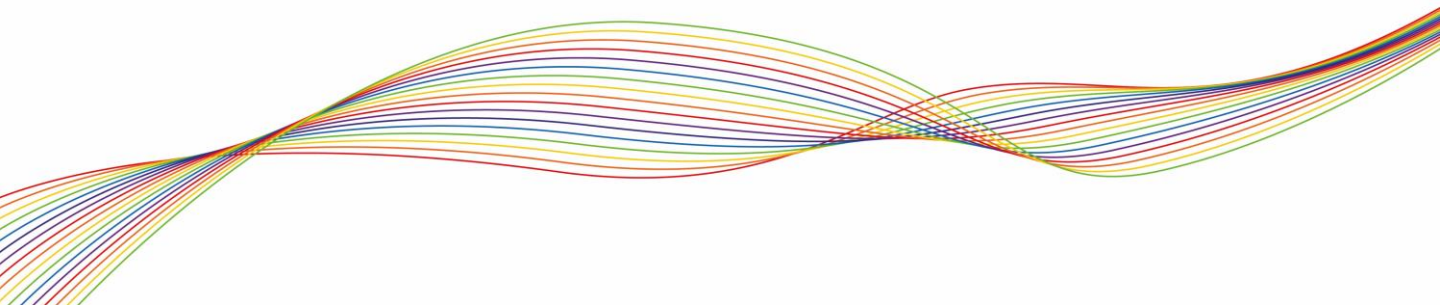
PROGRAMME

09.15	Registration and networking
10.00	Welcome by Patrick Quigley, LRA LGBTQ+ and Allies Staff Network
10.05	Panel discussion commences
11.00	Q&A session
11:20	Closing remarks by Don Leeson, LRA Chief Executive
11:30	Event ends/Networking

To facilitate the Q&A session today we will be using

slido

Please download from your app store and search for:





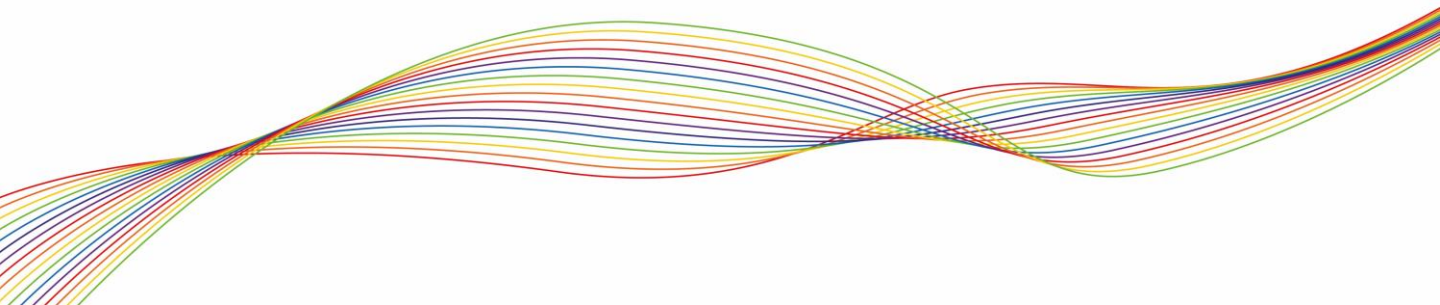
Message from LRA Chief Executive, Don Leeson and Patrick Quigley, LRA LGBTQ+ and Allies Staff Network

The Labour Relations Agency is delighted to be part of the Belfast Pride Festival again in 2023. This year, we will not just have a presence at the Pride Village and Parade, but will also be hosting this Panel Discussion, 'Encouraging Respectful Conversations in the Workplace.' This aims to promote the importance of having a diverse and inclusive working environment for all.

We believe it is important to embrace all aspects of diversity in the workplace. Pride gives us the opportunity to focus on the issues that many in the LGBT+ community face in work, to hear the voice of lived experiences, and to encourage employers to promote a harmonious and welcoming environment where all staff can be their true authentic selves. Our panel of experts will share their ideas and experiences and will highlight the value of inclusivity for organisations and their staff.

We look forward to welcoming you to what we hope will be a hugely insightful discussion.

Patrick Quigley *Don Leeson*



PANELLISTS

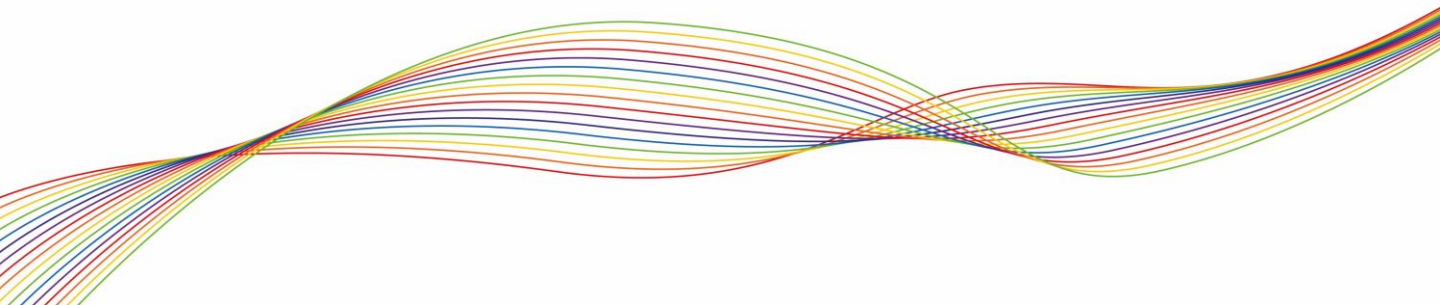
Chair - Jude Copeland

Jude is a legal technology lawyer and document review manager for Cleaver Fulton Rankin. He holds an LLB in Law & Government, LLM in Human Rights and Criminal Justice and has a number of further equality related postgraduate qualifications. Jude served on his regulatory body, the Law Society of Northern Ireland, as part of their inaugural Human Rights & Equality Working Group. As part of this, he worked on researching a diversity “snapshot” of the profession and how to promote diversity and inclusion. Outside work, Jude works to amplify marginalised voices in the conversation. He works with range of charity and grassroots organisations including Women’s Aid, Queerspace, Rainbow Refugees, and the LGBTQIA Heritage Project.



Geraldine Alexander

Geraldine is a senior trade union official with the Northern Ireland Public Service Alliance (NIPSA). She has over 30 years’ experience representing the interests of members employed in the civil and public services, including the voluntary and community sector. Geraldine is currently the strategic lead on policy in the key specialist areas of equality, human rights, social affairs and health and safety. She also has responsibility for a range of management and organisational issues. She holds a first class honours degree in Management and Business Studies. A former Board Member and Deputy Chairperson of the Health and Safety Executive for Northern Ireland. Geraldine is currently a LRA Board Member and Member (Employee) of the Industrial Court.



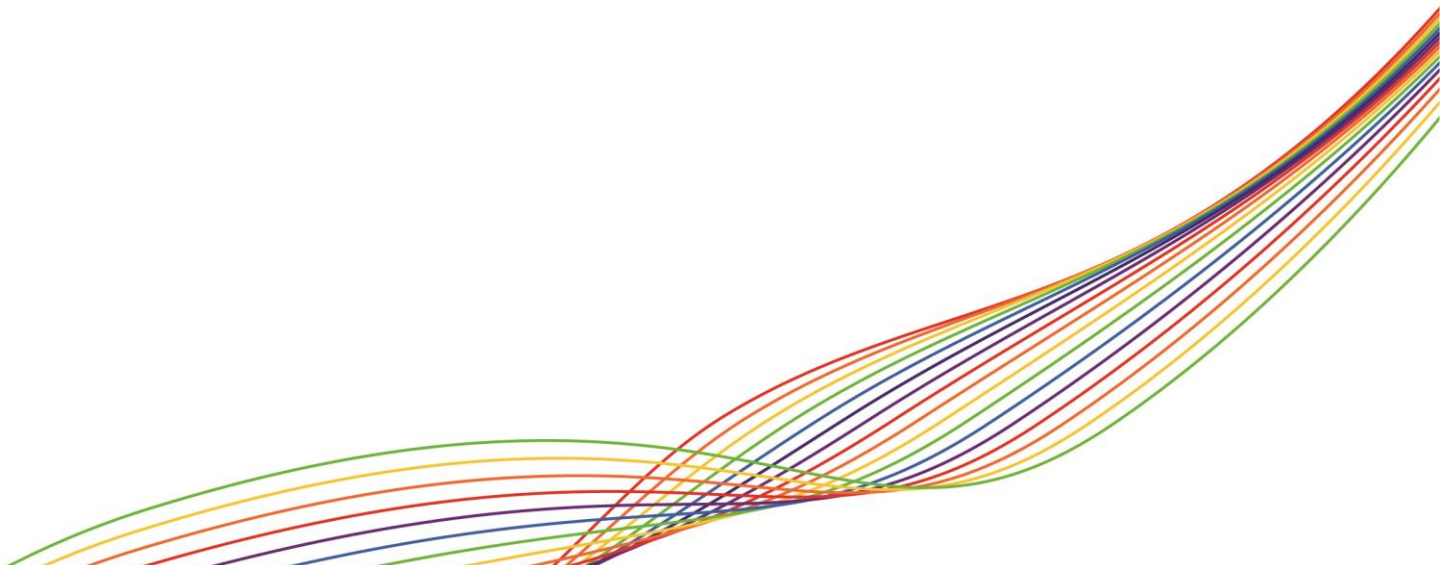
Kirsten Kearney

Kirsten is a former university lecturer who gave up her academic career to work in the arts and social justice sectors. She believes strongly in the power of story to communicate truth(s), to challenge stigma and to create meaningful thinking and conversation. She believes that change is possible and that the journey can be easier if you do it with other people. She is the CEO of [esc films](#), a film-making charity based in Belfast specialising in using storytelling, drama and film to transform lives. She is also the driving force behind the new LGBTQIA+ website www.inclusivefaith.lgbt which is a portal both of resources for LGBTQIA+ people of faith seeking a spiritual home.



Tara Kelly

Tara Kelly is an EDI specialist with 15 years' experience working within the social housing sector in England, and she has recently relocated back to Northern Ireland. She is Co-founder and previous Chair of Houseproud NW, and is currently EDI Outreach Manager at the Housing Executive.



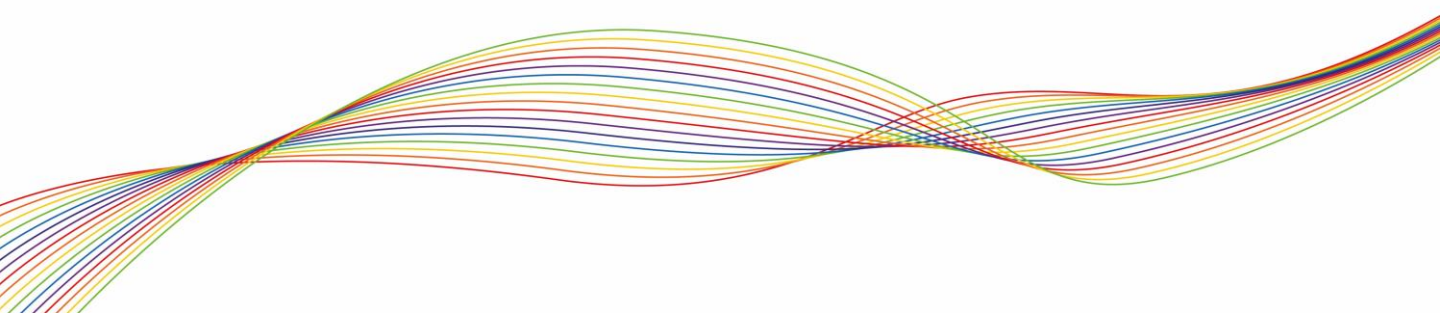
Morna Blaney,

Morna is an Employment Relations Manager at the Labour Relations Agency, Earlier this year Morna completed “An employer’s guide to encouraging respectful conversations at work” and she recently contributed to its companion podcast. The guide was produced to support employers who want to encourage respectful conversations at work, to eliminate taboos around certain topics or opinions, and to support an open and genuinely inclusive workplace culture in which all employees feel valued and have a genuine sense of belonging.



Paul Gillen

Paul is a partner in Lewis Silkin’s Employment, Immigration and Reward division based in Belfast. He is a Band 1 ranked lawyer and is qualified in England & Wales, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland and provides cross jurisdiction and comparative law advice to clients throughout the UK and Ireland of a full range of Employment Law and HR management. Paul’s passion is diversity, equity and inclusion and is the Chair of the Irish DE&I Committee in Lewis Silkin and a national DE&I Board. Paul is also a visiting professor at the Law Clinic in Ulster University as well as being DE&I Ambassador at the Institute of Directors.



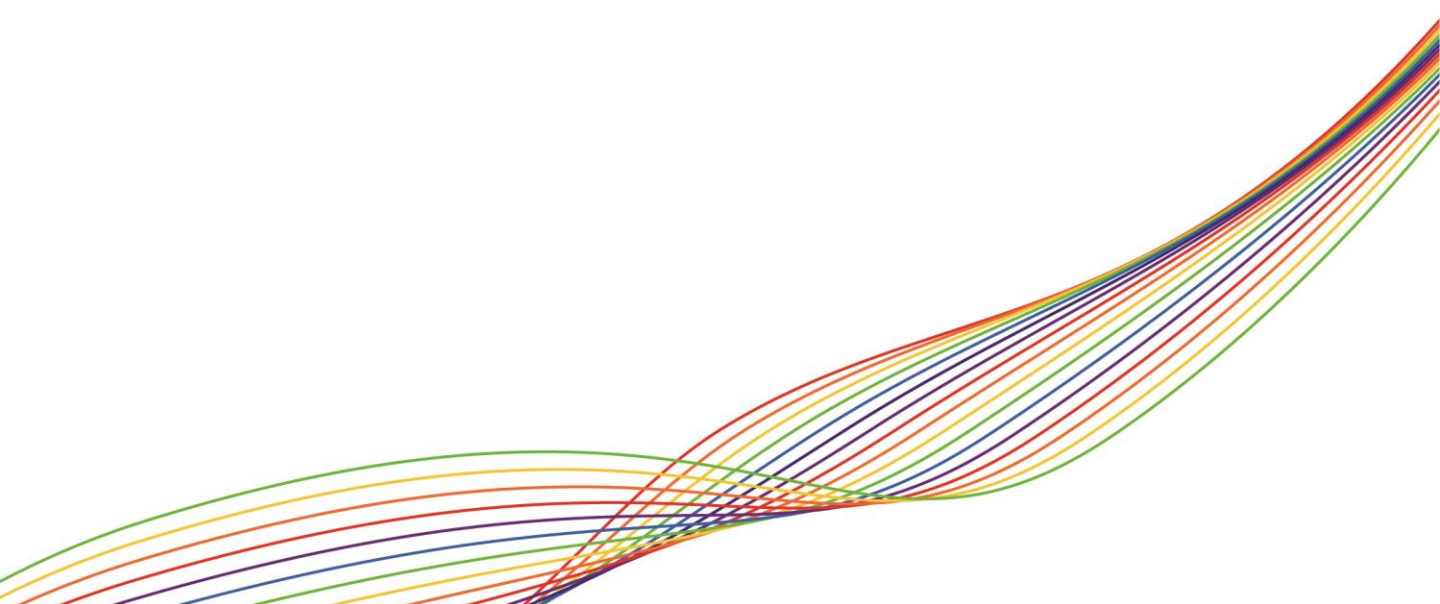
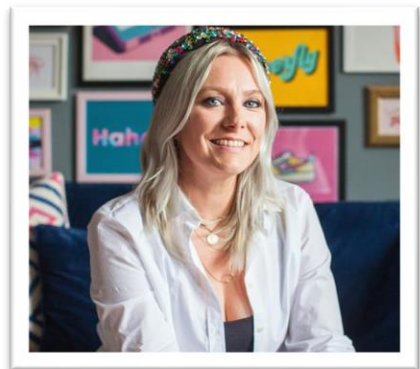
Karen McShane, Business Owner, Employer and President of CIHT

Business owner, employer and President of CIHT, Karen had over three decades of experience as a Chartered Engineer and has worked for both multi National organisations and local authorities before setting up an engineering consultancy in Belfast. She is the International President of the Chartered Institution of Highways and Transportation and has had roles in its Audit Committee and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Panel.



Orla McKeating, Business Development at Diversity Mark

Orla is Business Development Executive at Diversity Mark – an awarding authority on diversity and inclusion across the UK and Ireland accrediting more than 170 businesses and over 200,000 employees. Orla’s commitment to creating diverse and inclusive spaces is evident in her impactful work including founding Still I Rise Diversity Storytelling which offers learning through story sessions and workshops for children and young people and training for adults and educators on issues typically not addressed in story books including Race issues, Neuro Diversity, Gender Identity, LGBTQ+ issues, Disabilities, Diverse Families, Immigration and more. She is an international speaker specializing in race issues, stigma, equality and inclusion.



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