

TOOLS FOR TRANSGENDER INCLUSIVITY IN CONFERENCES

FINDINGS FROM THE NATIONAL SURVEY OF TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX GRADUATE STUDENTS

ABOUT THE NATIONAL TRANSGENDER AND INTERSEX GRADUATE STUDENT SURVEY

Data collection took place between 2018 and 2019. Any transgender and/or intersex person who attended a graduate program in the U.S. since 2008 was eligible to participate. All quotes and statistics are from the 456 transgender graduate students who completed the survey and have attended an academic conference.

54% OF TRANSGENDER GRADUATE STUDENTS DID NOT FEEL THAT THEIR TRANSGENDER IDENTITY WAS SUPPORTED IN THE CONFERENCE SPACE.

11% OF TRANSGENDER GRADUATE STUDENTS DELAYED ASPECTS OF THEIR TRANSITION IN ORDER TO AVOID MISTREATMENT IN ACADEMIC CONFERENCES.

BATHROOMS

82% of transgender and intersex graduate students stated a preference for all-gender restrooms at the conference. For many, a lack of access to all-gender restrooms means missing parts of panels in order to go to bathrooms at less busy times, limiting how much they eat or drink in order to use restrooms less frequently, or walking to nearby restaurants or their hotel in order to use a single-stall restroom.



33% of transgender and intersex graduate students avoid restrooms in conferences,



with **27%** going as far as to limit how much they eat or drink in order to use the restroom less.

"At conferences I plan my bathroom breaks days in advance if there's a published schedule, and try to go at the least busy times without missing any conference material."

- Trans man graduate student

"I have held my pee and walked blocks to a nearby restaurant on numerous occasions."

- Genderqueer graduate student

"I went to a conference where they made a concerted effort to tell people where the gender neutral bathrooms were and even provided a map. It was very helpful."

- Non-Binary graduate student

BADGES

84% of transgender graduate students prefer a space to include pronouns on badges. This may vary from typed and printed pronouns, to pronoun stickers that participants can add, to a write-in space. However, the addition of pronouns to badges only creates an environment of inclusion if cisgender people also include their pronouns and if everyone makes a conscious effort to check people's pronouns and use the correct ones.



34% of trans people had someone use the wrong pronoun for them *after* they had stated their correct pronoun.

"I have attempted to introduce pronouns on write-in name badges at the conferences, but the majority of cisgender attendees have ignored these instructions. The pronouns I've written on my name badges have also largely been ignored."

- Genderqueer graduate student

BEHAVIOR

Transgender graduate students reported experiencing differential treatment by other conference attendees due to their transgender identity. Experiences ranged from social exclusion, tokenization, and harassment to physical or sexual assault. Students emphasized the importance of being able to report harassment and violence to a safe source that will take their experiences seriously.



21% of trans people experienced someone making an invasive or unnecessary comment about their gender identity.

"At my last conference, I got cornered by someone during a poster session who asked me questions exclusively about my experience being trans. My research was never mentioned."

- Trans woman graduate student

"After disclosing my trans identity, I was subtly dis-invited to a dinner in which all other council members were invited."

- Trans man graduate student

Transgender graduate students are key contributors to their fields. However, in conferences they face continual obstacles to networking, attending panels, discussing research, and feeling safe. By ensuring that there are all-gender bathrooms, badges with pronouns, and accountability to standards of respect, conferences can diminish these inequities.