

PLUS. NEWS

PLUS quarterly newsletter

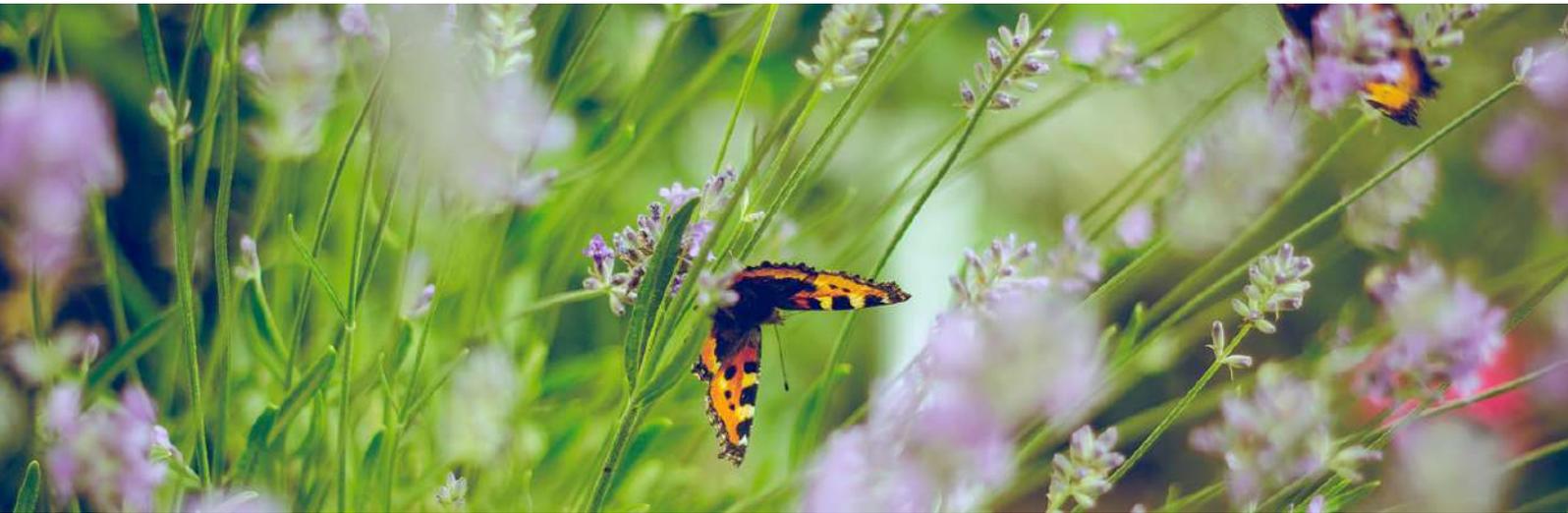


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**THE LGBTI+
BUSINESS
NETWORK**

SPRING — Season of growth

by Zimkhitha Guma

Sometimes, 2022 feels like 2020 too! Despite a sense that normality (whatever that is) is returning, many challenges remain. What if these are opportunities to discover our shared strengths, as LGBTI+ business people? What if the broader economic ecosystem *needs* for us to reach our full potential so that we can contribute to the country as only we can?

For this edition, we have sourced best practices on networking and collaboration (pages 2 and 3). On page 3, there are hints of what **Plus.** is doing behind the scenes to advocate for a policy and policy implementation environment that could unlock the potential of businesses run by LGBTI+ people. Then, along with community news, page 4 brings it together by summarising events, past and future, where stakeholders have and will continue to engage us and the policy changes we think will transform the business environment to a space where LGBTI+ business thrives.



When networking as an LGBTI+ person

Depth and quality trump breadth and quantity

Have you ever struggled to make friends? Excellent! Almost everyone has at some point, but if you let yourself fail forward you can only improve.

The secret to networking (or making friends) is being curious. If you want to understand the other person better so that you can serve their needs, you have done half the work in what's called *design thinking*. If you are LGBTI+, what you are really doing is finding that part of yourself that may have wished to be heard, understood and served as you truly are. You are then projecting that feeling at the other person, giving them what you know is the deepest longing of the human heart. But you have to be sincere; when you are dealing with people at this level, their 'sixth sense' is activated.

“Business after all is nothing more than a bunch of human relationship” — Lee Iacocca

Could your business share a secret superpower with other LGBTI+ businesses?

Businesses that don't take in LGBTI+ perspectives assume the world has two genders, two sexual orientations — or that they understand what it means to be LGBTI+. But they've never had to wish for a world that accommodated them the way you've likely wished for a more inclusive world. LGBTI+ perspectives may already hold a better feel for what the future will be like, where businesses that don't incorporate them are like scissor manufacturers who cater only to right-handed people, overlooking the needs of left-handed people.

And can gender rights and equality exist without LGBTI+ inclusion? After all, gender oppression is based on society's assumptions about how people should behave, whereas LGBTI+ people pioneer gender equality and freedom in ways that shape markets.

Have you exchanged tips on leveraging this advantage with other LGBTI+ businesses at one of our networking events?

You will then discover that the most powerful way to talk to someone is using the voice they know the best: their own. The most powerful way to speak is to listen.

Use design thinking

When you meet a potential collaborator or client, your contribution begins before you've said a word. Don't waste time on convincing them that your product or service is the best; they can't see your product or service. They can only interact with *you*, so show them that you understand where they are. This is called design thinking, which focuses on the person you are designing or working for as much as it does on the design or work itself. Its steps are

- 1. Empathise
- 2. Ideate
- 3. Prototype
- 4. Test.

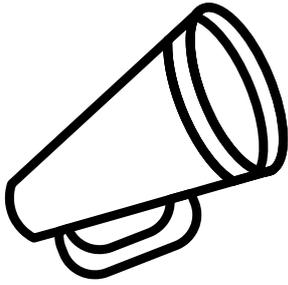
This sounds like something you could never do in one networking conversation, but you could. Conversations allow you to go on storytelling journeys and perform thought experiments. They allow you to capture the essence of what the other person wants to see changed (the pain-point) and show that you are grappling with them to bridge the gap between where they are and where they wish they were. None of this does away with other networking good practices like always having an elevator pitch ready, or using body language (where possible) to communicate confidence and charisma.

What's the policy environment got to do with it?

When businesses face the same set of challenges, it tends to be because they are labouring under the same set of rules. The fact that these are like the colour of the water fish swim in means people are more focused on swimming (that is, sustaining their businesses) than they are in studying the water. But knowing something about the policy environment is a powerful way to anticipate the kinds of solutions your clients will need. At Plus., we are curious about the policy environment you work under; more specifically, we would like to serve you by understanding your policy environment as an LGBTI+ businessperson. What do you think needs to change? Would you work with others and ourselves to help make this change happen? If we announce an event where we discuss the creation of legislation that gives LGBTI+ businesses an advantage that offsets their structural and societal disadvantages, can we count on your attendance?



PLUS COMMUNITY NEWS



Announcements!

Your membership! Keep an eye open for emails on how to validate yours and renew it in February 2023.

PAST EVENTS

We held an LGBTI+ Summit at EY in Sandton

- Trevor Naidoo from Procuresense shared on how to understand Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) codes in relationship to procurement
- Sylvester Chauke, the author of *Stand Against Bland*, gave a keynote address about the importance of establishing a brand that will never be forgotten
- EY gave business clinics on preparing for investment and managing business finances

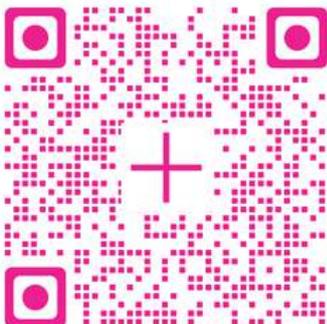
We also participated in the *Case for LGBTI+ Inclusion* stakeholder engagement by The Roundtable at Nedbank.

- Our keynote speaker was Bonang Mohale, author of *Lift as You Rise and Behold the Turtle*. He gave an impassioned plea on the importance of forming just relationships with LGBTI+ suppliers and employers.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- 13 – 14 September: **Plus** is sponsoring 5 tickets to the Smart Procurement World SMME Conference. Use [this link](#) or the QR code on the poster to book (Full URL <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8YH6WVQ>)
- 15 September, 10:00 to 12:30 – SARS Compliance Workshop. Use [this link](#) or the QR code at the bottom of this page to book (Full URL <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T36TKSE>)
- 21 September, 10:00 to 12:00 – Financial Wellness Workshop. Use [this link](#) or the QR code at the bottom of this page to book (Full URL <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T5M692R>)

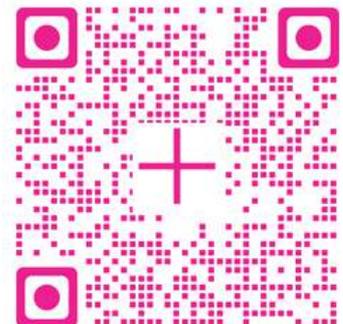
Smart Procurement
World SMME Conference



SARS Compliance
Workshop



Financial Wellness
Workshop



Financial
Wellness
with Mboma
Financial
Services

21 September 2022
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Our Guest Speaker
Nonjabulo Sikhakhane

REGISTER NOW!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T5M692R>

More Information:
manager@lgbtiplus.com



LIVE WEBINAR

**SARS COMPLIANCE
WORKSHOP**

Join us and hear about the latest regulations and laws that govern small businesses. You will also be kept abreast and assisted on other matters pertaining to SARS compliance.



Thursday,
15 Sept, 2022
10:00 am - 12:30 pm

Register here:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/T36TKSF>

For more information contact:
manager@lgbtiplus.com



PLUS. The LGBTI+ Business Network

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**PLUS. PROPERTY
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
INDABA**

27 October 2022
10:00 - 14:00
Venue: TBC (in
Johannesburg)



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