

OutLine Aotearoa Principles for Supporting Research

OutLine frequently receives requests to support research projects involving Rainbow* communities in various ways. These principles guide us in deciding how and when to support such research projects. We hope they will also encourage the development of research projects which build principles of Rainbow competence in from the very beginning.

OutLine recognises the value in research which can tell us about experiences of people in Rainbow communities, especially where this research can then be used to support funding, service development or policies which will benefit Rainbow people. We also value building capacity within Rainbow communities by supporting Rainbow-led research (while noting that a Rainbow identity alone is not sufficient to guarantee ethical research). We therefore prioritise research which is community-led and/or will directly benefit the communities being studied. Additionally, as a national organisation in Aotearoa/New Zealand, we prioritise research projects with a significant focus on people in Aotearoa.

We are also conscious of a long history of research being undertaken on Rainbow communities which has been harmful to the research participants or to Rainbow communities more broadly. It is important to us that research which we support in any capacity has demonstrable competence on Rainbow issues, as well as cultural competence across other relevant identities, and has strong understanding of ethical and methodological concerns that are specific to Rainbow communities (see Adams et al 2017; Henrickson et al 2020; Vincent 2017).

This will often be a higher bar than that required by institutional ethics approval processes. It includes not only considerations about the specific questions and language that you're using and whether you're providing support to participants, but also understanding how heteronormative or cisnormative assumptions might be shaping your research, and how processes around consent, confidentiality and support provision may operate differently for these communities.

Key questions for researchers:

- What specific support are you requesting from us?
- What are your existing connections to Rainbow communities?
- Have you done previous research in this area?



- How is your research building off existing work?
- Have you consulted with Rainbow organisations or groups as part of the project design? What changes, if any, were made as the result of this consultation?
- Does the project have ethics approval? How have Rainbow-specific ethical and methodological concerns been addressed?
- Does the research involve other marginalised or vulnerable groups? How have any ethical or methodological issues specific to these populations been addressed?
- How is the research consistent with *Te Tiriti o Waitangī*?
- Where will people be directed for additional support, if needed? Are these organisations Rainbow-competent? Have appropriate Rainbow organisations been included?
- How will the research benefit the research participants? How will it benefit the wider populations being studied?

* We are using *rainbow* as an umbrella term to describe people whose sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression or sex characteristics differ from majority, binary norms. This includes people who identify with terms like takatāpui, lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex, transgender, queer, non-binary, or fa'afafine, as well as people who don't use specific words for their identity, people whose identity changes over time, and people who are in the process of understanding their own identity and may not have 'come out' to themselves or others.

References

- Adams, Noah, Ruth Pearce, Jaimie Veale, Asa Radix, Danielle Castro, Amrita Sarkar, and Kai Cheng Tom. 2017. Guidance and ethical considerations for undertaking transgender health research and Institutional Review Boards adjudicating this research. *Transgender Health* 2(1):165-175.
- Henrickson, Mark, Sulaimon Giwa, Trish Hafford-Letchfield, Christine Cocker, Nick J. Mulé, Jason Schaub, and Alexandre Baril. 2020. Research ethics with gender and sexually diverse persons. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17(18):6615-6627.
- Vincent, Benjamin William. 2017. Studying trans: recommendations for ethical recruitment and collaboration with transgender participants in academic research. *Psychology and Sexuality* 9(2):102-116.

