

OUT & EQUAL 2020 SUMMIT

BUDDY PROGRAM

When Out & Equal pivoted to virtual programming due to the global health pandemic, we were conscious of creating opportunities for you to engage with each other and with us. We know that connection matters.

The 2020 Summit Buddies program was created for exactly that reason... to connect you to a few new friends with whom you can share a bit about yourself, dream about the workplaces we want to create, and process your Summit experience before, during, and after the event. Just as you may still be in touch with people you met long ago in the hallways, during a workshop or at an evening networking event of past Summits, we hope the 2020 Buddies program helps create lasting friendships, stronger community, and a sense of belonging.

WHAT TO EXPECT

- Summit registrants who indicated interest in the Summit Buddies Program will be randomly grouped into trios and provided a guide on how to engage in meaningful discussions with your buddy group, how to document your shared goals and experiences, and how to share your experience with us.
- Upon getting your group assignments, please connect with each other and agree to a communication platform for your trio (ex. GoogleMeet, Zoom, FaceTime, WebEx, etc.) By leaving communications up to the individual groups, we aim to give you the flexibility to drive your own connection and experience!
- Also, there will be Prizes! Out & Equal will send a Buddy Program survey/questionnaire to each person who participated in the program one month after the conclusion of Summit, to give each team a chance to meet and process the experience together. This short questionnaire will focus on your participation in the program, stories of value/learning/connections, and any general reflections – there are no wrong answers! Upon completion of the survey, all people who submit will be entered in a drawing... we are giving away ten \$150 dollar gift cards, and may feature stories about the impact your new connections have had on you/your career on the O&E website (if you give us permission).

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MEETING RECOMMENDATIONS

- We recommend Buddies try to meet 2-3 times to make the most of this experience and cement your connection with your group: before, during, and after Summit. Schedule your first meeting as soon as you can.
- Buddies should commit to showing up and thoughtfully connecting with one another.
- Not all groups may feel (at first or ever) like fast-friendships or likely professional connections and that's Ok. The guide questions are offered to allow you to share yourselves and your stories, and to hear others' – and that may in fact mean connecting with, and learning from, people in a wide variety of ways. Be open-minded to connection, and to the magic of what can happen when you stop to listen to someone who might have a much different experience or story than your own.
- By design, we are not designing or matching connections in any specific ways. We believe that random assignment will allow for the focus to be on human connection rather than any one preconceived idea about who would make the "best connection."
- Be brave: If it feels right to do so-, consider sharing about yourself personally. This will give others permission and confidence to do the same.
- Keep all conversations confidential. What happens in buddy groups should stay in buddy groups – just like Vegas! Avoid video recordings or taking photos of your Zoom screens. Memorializing your group in a screen shot may be Ok, but get your colleagues' permission first! And please maintain confidence of anyone and anything that is shared. When in doubt, ask!
- Make time and space for all buddies to speak, contribute, and collaborate. There will naturally be those who are more extroverted, introverted or who always seeks balance. Everyone's voice is important!
- If you have a less-than-ideal buddy group experience, be patient and flexible. Especially in these times where you and your colleagues might be balancing work with an unusual set of responsibilities and stresses.

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CONVERSATION GUIDE

To get things rolling, we are offering the following questions as a starting place for meaningful, connective, and fun conversations!

MEETING #1: HOLD THIS CONVERSATION BEFORE SUMMIT IF POSSIBLE

Each member should introduce themselves and consider sharing in an “icebreaker” types of conversation. Have fun with these!

- Your LGBTQ “coming out” or “staying in” story, or a source of your connection to/passion for the LGBTQ community.
- Discuss the meaning of work and a job/career for you personally. What is your “work” story? What values around work were communicated to you growing up? What is one favorite proud career moment? Do you have an important piece of advice you received or gave someone else that made a difference?
- What do you love about the LGBTQ community and our unique “culture” (whatever that means for you)?
- Favorite LGBTQ book, movie, or television show, and its impact on you personally.
- Favorite LGBTQ hero: Who have you admired, looked up to, been influenced by, or want to learn more about?
- What are you most excited about for Summit? What are your hopes and dreams?
- What are your expectations for Summit? Which workshops and/or speakers are you most looking forward to and why? Do you have goals you want to share? Do you want your buddies to do an accountability “check in” later on these?

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MEETING #2: HOLD THIS CONVERSATION DURING THE WEEK OF SUMMIT OR THE WEEK AFTER

Summit Experience Check-In

- How is your week going?
- Who are some of your favorite speaker so far: What thinking have they provoked in you? What spoke to you? Did anything they shared spark a memory or moment that resonated with you personally?
- What workshops have you attended? What did you learn? What have you been left curious with that you'd like to follow up on and/or learn more about?
- What are new or exciting discussions around (identity/allyship/inclusion/ leadership/ intersectionality/etc.) that have either validated or challenged your perspective?
- Many people attend workshops and think, subconsciously or consciously, I think I can do that! If you were to do a workshop, roundtable, or speech/talk next year, what do you think it could be? What would you like to share with the world?

MEETING #3: HOLD THIS CONVERSATION ABOUT TWO WEEKS AFTER SUMMIT

Summit Experience Follow-Up

- How have you been since Summit- what's new?
- Upon reflection of the Summit experience, what were some of your favorite moments?
- What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about others that feels important?
- Did you meet your personal and/or professionals you had going into Summit?
- Was there anything you and/or your colleagues from your workplace learned that you have already begun to implement or discuss? If not, what's the first thing you'd like to bring back to work to try and push forward?
- Groups can keep meeting if you'd like to! Now is the time to discuss if you'd like to keep it going, and/or how/when to keep in touch.
- Goodbyes and "gratitudes!"