

2023 LGBTQI+ LATAM Forum: A Day of Transformation

On May 3rd Out & Equal hosted **LATAM Forum: A Day of Transformation, in São Paulo, Brazil**, with a regional focus bringing in diverse perspectives from across Latin America. Bringing together over **350 community members** including workplace executives; diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging (DEIB) and Human Resource (HR) practitioners; Employee Resource Group (ERG) leaders; and other workplace inclusion changemakers, the forum was an invigorating return to in-person global events for our partners.

Executive Breakfast: Leveraging Your Influence



The 2023 LATAM Forum began with our Executive Breakfast event, in which 40 senior executives gathered to network and share their personal stories, experiences, and business best practices. Keynote Speakers included **Deena Fidas**, Managing Director & Chief Program and Partnerships Officer (Out & Equal); **Javier Constante**, President, Latin America (Dow) and Member of the Out & Equal Board of Directors; **Adriana Quintas**, Human Resources Lead (General Motors) and member of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee (AMCHAM Brasil); and, **CV Viverito**, Director, Global Impact Programs (Out & Equal).

These thought leaders shared their perspectives on some of the greatest personal and organizational challenges and successes in the journey towards greater LGBTQI+ workplace inclusion across the continent. With a call to action for executives to work together across industries and geographies to leverage their collective influence to ensure measurable and sustainable progress, the breakfast fostered new connections and energy.

"I was proud to prioritize our trailblazing partnerships in Brazil when I became CEO in 2018, the year we launched our first corporate sign-on declaring support for LGBTQI+ equality during an election year. After four intense years of adversity and hard work, in the next election cycle in 2022, we launched a similar effort and reached an [historic high of over 100 major companies and organizations](#) standing strong urging Brazil's presidential candidates to recognize and commit to public policies and concrete actions that support LGBTQI+ inclusion in the Brazilian workplace. Our 2023 LATAM Forum event is a continuation of this longstanding commitment to the LGBTQI+ people and talent of Latin America, and to the businesses across Latin America who thrive when they include that talent in real and meaningful cultures of belonging."



Erin Uritus, CEO, Out & Equal

Opening Plenary: “Leading the Change: Executives and Cultures of Belonging”



The opening plenary kicked off with remarks from Deena Fidas, Managing Director & Chief Program and Partnerships Officer (Out & Equal): “Today – around the world – business often lead on LGBTQ+ inclusion where lawmakers lag. The transgender woman in São Paulo rightfully demands the same respect for her pronouns and her name change as her colleague at the same company in Manilla or in New York.”

Following the Opening Remarks, **Erik Day**, Senior Vice President, Global Small Business (Dell Technologies) and Chair of the Out & Equal Board of Directors, moderated the opening plenary with panelists **Abril Rodriguez**, Partner International Tax Services (EY), **Priscila Hayasaka**, Director of Finance Internal Controls Latin America (Bank of America), and **Javier Constante**. The panel discussed the role of executive leadership in creating cultures of belonging in the workplace, the importance of mentorship and reverse-mentorship, and the need for visible role models in the workplace that are beacons for change.



Breakout Sessions

Throughout the rest of the day, the conference offered three diverse session formats, across a wide range of topics, to cater to different learning needs: four interactive workshops, four panel discussions, and four community conversation sessions. Topics ranged from the evolution of ESG and DEIB, the future of work, trans and nonbinary inclusion, race, gender and sexuality in the workplace, ERG phases of development, and mapping your spheres of influence.

[Click here](#) to review the full day's agenda.



LATAM Forum Learning Outcomes

Participants were able to walk away with greater understanding, confidence, and skills to:

- Build and evolve their organization's new and existing ESG and DEIB policies that align with core business values and create strategic independencies for overall impact.
- Define strategies to build bridges for greater intergenerational understanding and dialogue in the workplace.
- Discover practical steps toward responsible self-care as DEIB practitioners.
- Discuss how to utilize mentorship and sponsorship as tools for the advancement of LGBTQ+ women in the workplace.
- Engage in stakeholder mapping to identify personal spheres of influence and learn strategies to inspire passion and drive progress toward shared goals.
- Gain practical guidance on building and scaling policies and programs that foster greater transgender and nonbinary workplace inclusion.
- Gain a deeper understanding of how intersecting identities of race, gender, and sexuality affect people's experiences in and out of the workplace, and how to cultivate greater allyship.
- Identify where ERG goals can align with and deliver toward business needs and priorities.
- Understand the role that glocalization (globally and locally informed strategies) plays in today's market and how leveraging "glocal" strategies maximizes impact, partnership, and engagement.

Lunch Plenary Keynote



Out & Equal hosted a lunch plenary with keynote remarks from **Diane Rodriguez**, CEO (Ecuadorian LGBT Chamber of Commerce). Diane shared her personal story, as a proud and visible trans woman, to invite us to reflect on our purpose as DEIB leaders and the role we assume to promote positive change in our workplaces, particularly for our transgender and nonbinary colleagues.

Diane and **Gabriel de la Cruz Soler**, Global Impact Programs Manager (Out & Equal), designed a mass participation exercise where attendees engaged in self-reflection and small group discussions around the thought-provoking question, “Can you tell us about a time when you managed to transform an act or feeling of resilience into empowerment?”

Excellence Awards

To conclude the transformative event, Out & Equal recognized individuals, companies, and ERGs who are leading the way with bold and innovative approaches toward developing and enhancing workplace inclusion for LGBTQI+ people in Latin American workplaces. The finalists were recognized during the ceremony and the winners were announced and presented with their awards.



Individual Winner

Melina López (she/her)
 Product Marketing and Inclusion Manager
 Google



Company Winner

PepsiCo
 Jessy Lira (she/her) Facilities Analyst, PepsiCo Brasil
 Jesús Sandoval (he/him) Customer Care Coordinator, PepsiCo Mexico
 Jose (Pepe) Cota (he/him) Commercial Analytics Head, Pepsico LATAM
 Mario Hernandez (he/him) DE&I and Culture Coordinator, Pepsico México
 Carlos Domingues (he/him) Sr Manager Culture & DE&I, PepsiCo Brasil



Employee Resource Groups Winners (2)

Red Orgullo Citibanamex & Rede Orgulho Citi Brasil
 Antonio Afonso (he/him) Diversity and Inclusion Head, Citi Brazil
 Camilla Cruz (she/her) SVP - LRR Head, Brazil Pride Network Co-Chair, Citi Brazil
 Fatima Cheffer (she/her) Business Sr Manager IT, Brazil Pride Network Co-Chair, Citi Brazil
 Joseph Hernandez (he/him) Data Program Manager & Pride Network Co-Chair, Citibanamex

Demographic Snapshot

- Participants: Approximately 350
- Companies: More than 70
- Twelve (12) countries represented: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, México, Panamá, Perú, UK, USA
- 10% of attendees identified as transgender or non-binary
- 47% of participants identified as women
- 36% of participants identified as Black or Indigenous

Media Coverage

[Deena Fidas' interview with Exame:](#)

“LGBTQI+ inclusion actions, such as the use of social names, are gaining momentum in companies”

“Today is a day of transformation. And after the transformation there may be some anxiety and confusion, as well as, of course, new ideas. Regardless of the pandemic and public policies that have incentivized setbacks, we are here today with representatives from different Latin American countries, speaking three languages in our sessions and bringing forth best practices. What happens in Mexico City cannot always be replicated in São Paulo, but it can serve as an example to think about alternative ways of approaching the issues.”

Deena Fidas, Managing Director & Chief Programs and Partnerships Officer, Out & Equal

Participant Voices

“Together, we are creating workplaces where LGBTQI+ employees and allies belong, thrive, and contribute to greater impact on the world.” - Edilson Machado, LAA Marketing Director (Dow)

“I am very proud to be part of the Business Inclusion Council of this institution that contributes so much to the evolution of the corporate environment around the world and that, with events like this, directly impacts the construction of knowledge, networking and exchange of experiences of Diversity, Equity professionals, Inclusion and Belonging.”
- Ananda Puchta, Activist & Social Mission (Ben & Jerry's)

“The event was an opportunity to meet many people that I admire. I also learned from many inspiring people in the DEI field. Every person in the Forum is contributing day by day to more diversity, equity and inclusion in the business environment.” - Mikkel Mergener, Founder and CEO (Merg)