

NEWS/BUSINESS/FINANCE/LIFESTYLE EDITORS
[For Immediate Release]

2019 HONG KONG LGBT+ INCLUSION AWARD WINNERS & TOP EMPLOYERS FOR LGBT+ INCLUSION ANNOUNCED

Hong Kong, 14 May 2019 – Community Business, a leading not-for-profit organisation advancing responsible and inclusive business practices in Asia, today revealed its **2019 Hong Kong Top Employers for LGBT+ Inclusion** and the winners of its **2019 Hong Kong LGBT+ Inclusion Awards**. The results were announced at the fundraising Gala Dinner held at Hotel ICON, in commemoration of the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia (IDAHOT).

The 2019 Hong Kong LGBT+ Inclusion Index, first launched in 2015 and offered every two years, is Asia's first benchmark on corporate policies and practices for creating inclusive workplaces for LGBT+ employees. This year, 60 organisations participated in the Index, representing some 110,000 employees in Hong Kong, ranging from large multinationals to small NGOs, and from diverse industries such as financial services, hospitality, technology, legal, media, and properties and construction. Also established in 2015, the annual LGBT+ Inclusion Awards celebrate efforts to promote LGBT+ equality and inclusion in the workplace and community and provide an important platform for organisations and individuals to promote and amplify their meaningful achievements. The award nominations have been assessed based on the extent to which they are strategic, proactive, impactful, sustainable and paying it forward.

2019 Hong Kong Top Employers for LGBT+ Inclusion

This year, 17 organisations achieved a Gold Standard in the Index. The law firm **Linklaters** received the 2019 Hong Kong Top Employer for LGBT+ Inclusion Award, ranking number one in the Index and climbing from a Silver Standard in 2017. The top ten ranked organisations in 2019 are:

1	Linklaters
2	HSBC
3	Goldman Sachs
4	Morgan Stanley
5	Thomson Reuters
6	Herbert Smith Freehills
7	J.P. Morgan
8	Credit Suisse
9	Eversheds Sutherland
10	EY

“The last two years have seen remarkable progress towards LGBT+ Inclusion in Hong Kong. In contrast to previous years, 50% of the top ten ranked organisations for LGBT+ Inclusion in 2019 were from outside the financial services industry. This shows a dramatic shift in the way that other industries in Hong Kong are starting to recognise the business and moral case for LGBT+ inclusion, and for Diversity and Inclusion in general, and further illustrates that a clear strategy, concerted effort, and strong commitment can bring about significant change. In addition, today there are many resources that organisations can tap into for support and to learn what best practice looks like. The leading organisations have paved the way for those who are early in their LGBT+ inclusion journey,” said **Fern Ngai, CEO of Community Business**.

“We are extremely honoured to receive this award from Community Business. Although this is recognition of what we have achieved, I prefer to also think of it as encouragement to continue to move forward towards greater inclusiveness – to continue to work with our people, our clients and our communities, towards this goal. As the first non-financial organisation to be ranked no. 1 in the Index, we are thrilled to see LGBT+ Inclusion on the agenda of a diverse pool of industries.” said **Nathalie Hobbs, Regional Managing Partner – Asia at Linklaters.**

Top 3 SMEs¹ for LGBT+ Inclusion

In 2017, with the goal of engaging the local business community and smaller companies on LGBT+ inclusion, Community Business introduced a version of the Index for SMEs that is closely aligned to the structure of the main Index but seeking to make the questions and scoring more applicable to organisations with fewer employees. In 2019, nine SMEs participated in the Index and based on their performance, the 2019 Hong Kong Top 3 SMEs for LGBT+ Inclusion are:

1	Ambition & HaTCH
2	Blessed Ministry Community Church
3	Hugill & Ip

¹ Small or Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs), defined as:

- Manufacturing firms with fewer than 100 employees in Hong Kong, or
- Non-manufacturing firms (including the branches or subsidiaries of global/regional companies) with fewer than 50 employees in Hong Kong.

Gold, Silver and Bronze Standards

In addition to the Top Employer and SME rankings, Community Business assigned Gold, Silver and Bronze Standards to participating organisations, which acknowledge their level of performance in the Index. The following organisations, listed in alphabetical order, achieved Gold, Silver, or Bronze Standards. Please note that not all organisations were willing to be publicly acknowledged, and some which are early in their LGBT+ inclusion journey did not meet the Bronze standard, so this does not represent the entire list of participating organisations.



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barclays • BlackRock • BNY Mellon • Credit Suisse • Eversheds Sutherland • EY • Fidelity International • Goldman Sachs • Herbert Smith Freehills • HSBC | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ABN AMRO Bank N.V. Hong Kong • Allen & Overy • Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd • AXA Hong Kong • British Consulate-General Hong Kong • Citibank • Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer • Hogan Lovells • Manulife | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Consulate-General • Baker McKenzie • BNP Paribas • CBRE Limited • Consulate General of Canada, Hong Kong • Deutsche Bank AG, Hong Kong Branch • Equal Opportunities Commission • KPMG • LUSH Asia Limited • State Street |
|--|---|--|

- J.P. Morgan
- Linklaters
- Morgan Stanley
- Nomura International (Hong Kong) Limited
- Société Générale
- Standard Chartered Hong Kong Ltd
- Thomson Reuters

- Moody's Corporation
- The Commonwealth Bank of Australia, Hong Kong

- The Economist Group
- Willis Towers Watson

SME Index:

- Ambition | HaTCH Powered by Ambition
- Blessed Ministry Community Church
- Brown-Forman
- Daly & Associates
- Hugill & Ip
- Tru-Style

Top Companies by Industry

This year, Community Business also recognised the top 3 ranked organisations on the 2019 LGBT+ Inclusion Index from the Financial Services and Legal industries, the two sectors for which there were the highest number of participating organisations.

	Financial Services	Legal
1	HSBC	Linklaters
2	Goldman Sachs	Herbert Smith Freehills
3	Morgan Stanley	Eversheds Sutherland

Launch of 2019 LGBT+ Inclusion Index Report – *Raising the Bar*

“Our 2019 LGBT+ Inclusion Index Report - *Raising the Bar* will be launched in June and will present the collective findings from all the participating organisations, providing critical benchmarking data and highlighting best practices. Now that we have multiple industries recognising the importance of LGBT+ inclusion and many organisations making clear strides to improve their inclusion policies and practices year on year, we hope that this report will mark the beginning of an increased commitment to LGBT+ inclusion in Hong Kong and signal a shift in progress toward local and companies from non-traditional industries. We look forward to monitoring progress and supporting more organisations in their LGBT+ inclusion efforts over the next two years and seeing a larger and even more diverse pool of Index participants for 2021.” said Ngai.

LGBT+ Inclusion Award Winners

To recognise the significant contribution made by companies, individuals and community organisations towards LGBT+ inclusion in Hong Kong, Community Business also announced the winners of its 2019 Hong Kong LGBT+ Inclusion Awards, including:

Award	Winner
LGBT+ Network Award sponsored by HSBC	Credit Suisse, Hong Kong LGBT Open Network
LGBT+ Executive Sponsor Award sponsored by Nomura	Peter Picton-Phillipps, EY
LGBT+ Inclusion Champion Award sponsored by Eversheds Sutherland	Rob Head, Thomson Reuters
LGBT+ Ally Award sponsored by Morgan Stanley	Sudesh Thevasenabathy, AXA Hong Kong
LGBT+ Community Impact Award sponsored by Goldman Sachs	Blessed Ministry Community Church, Living Your True Self 活出真我
Community Business Advancing LGBT+ Rights Award	Michael Vidler, Vidler & Co. Solicitors

The Community Business Advancing LGBT+ Rights Award is a special one-off award to recognise the groundbreaking work of human rights lawyer Michael Vidler of Vidler & Co. Solicitors who has made a significant impact on the advancement of LGBT+ rights in Hong Kong. Mr Vidler has defended several landmark LGBT+ discrimination cases, including the QT case involving the issuance of dependant visas for same sex couples.

Full biographies for each finalist can be found [here](#). For more information on each award, please refer to [Community Business' website](#).

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About Community Business

Community Business is a not-for-profit organisation (Hong Kong Charity Number 91/6560) whose mission is to lead, inspire and support businesses to have a positive impact on people and communities. A recognised leader in advancing responsible and inclusive business practices in Asia, Community Business facilitates networks, conducts research and events, leads programmes and campaigns and provides training and consulting. Our focus on responsible business is aligned to four mission-led themes:

- Building responsible leadership
- Tackling workplace inequality
- Ensuring employee wellbeing
- Promoting social inclusion

Within the tackling workplace inequality theme, Community Business' **Creating Inclusive Workplace for LGBT+ Employees Campaign**, launched in 2008, has been a long-term and sustained effort designed to encourage and support companies to put LGBT+ inclusion firmly on their corporate agenda. The campaign aims to:

- Raise awareness of LGBT+ inclusion as a business issue
- Increase understanding of LGBT+ issues from an Asian perspective
- Encourage and support companies to create inclusive workplaces for their LGBT+ employees in Asia
- Advocate for positive change in wider society

Founded in 2003 and based in Hong Kong with a presence in India and the United Kingdom, Community Business works with companies of all sizes and from diverse industries across Asia, harnessing the power of business to drive social change. For more information, please visit www.communitybusiness.org.

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