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LGBT+ History Month 2026

Science & Innovation
#LGBTplusHM
#LGBTHM26

What is UK LGBT+ History Month?

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UK LGBT+ History Month is for everyone; whether you work in education, a museum, a library or an art gallery, a business, NHS service, or are a member of a network/social group or an individual.

When is it celebrated?

It is celebrated every February across the UK and was founded in 2004 by Schools OUT UK co-chairs, Paul Patrick & Professor Emeritus Sue Sanders. It was first celebrated in February 2005 and 2026 will be the 22nd UK LGBT+ History Month.

Why was it founded?

For so long LGBT+ people's history was hidden, following the repeal of Section 28 Schools OUT created UK LGBT+ History Month to:

- claim our past
- celebrate our present
- create our future
- Want to create a dedicated space to celebrate our rich and diverse history, herstory and their story.

LGBT+ History Month

Founded by:

SCHOOLS OUT

Why is it called LGBT+ History Month and not LGBTQ+ History Month?

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To ensure that LGBT+ History Month celebrates LGBTQIA+ communities in all our diversity. Adding ‘Q’ for ‘Queer’ was considered but we decided to use ‘plus’ instead to include **all** our communities, and because for some of our communities the term ‘Queer’ is associated with a time it was used in a negative context.

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2026 THEME - Science & Innovation

Science and innovation impacts our daily lives, from the technology we use to developments in healthcare, as well as helping us to address global challenges such as climate change and access to clean energy.

Diverse teams are essential for the development of solutions which benefit everyone, yet we might often struggle to name LGBT+ scientists and innovators. The 2026 theme for LGBT+ History Month aims to highlight the contributions of LGBT+ people historically and today, and to raise awareness of the people behind them.

Alongside celebrating LGBT+ people, it is important to highlight the harm that LGBT+ people have historically faced as a result of the ways in which science has been explored and misapplied in the past, such as through the medicalisation and pathologisation of LGBT+ identities, and how we still need to address this today.

2026 Badge Design

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The official 2026 UK LGBT+ History Month badge was designed by Dr Robin Hayward (they/them) (photo), a science communicator and designer who specialises in the subjects of trees, woodlands, and queerness in nature. They are a published scientist in the field of ecology and have experience designing badges for their own small business, where they create science and nature inspired enamel pride pins to sell online.

- The badge design creatively interprets the intersex-inclusive Progress Pride flag as an exciting demonstration of chemical reactivity. The Pride colours of the design expand to free movement outside of their rigid container and the bold outlines of the logo's lower half.
- Chemical reactions such as this occur when different materials are brought together and allowed to mix, just as our diverse identities can bring about sudden and creative change when acting in community.

Educational Video Shorts

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Click on the image to watch the YouTube video

LGBTQ+ Healthcare Trialblazers

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Barbara Burford (1944-2010) – Barbara was a medical researcher and pioneer in learning and social change. She fought tirelessly for equality in the public sector and was and established a number of NHS equality and diversity guidelines.

Dr Hannah Barham-Brown – Hannah is a GP trainee, media spokesperson, activist for LGBTQ+ rights and has presented two TEDx talks. She has been named on the 2018 and 2019 Shaw Trust Power List as one of the 100 most influential disabled people in the UK and has been named one of the Health Service Journal's 100 Most Influential People in Health 2020 and their Campaigner of the Year.

Dr Michael Brady – Michael was made the first National LGBT Health Advisor at NHS England in 2019. He has played a key role in tackling differences in LGBTQ+ healthcare, including high profile campaigns for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and the 'Can't pass it on' campaign.

Dr Cecil Belfield Clarke (1894-1970) – Dr Clarke was one of the first black doctors in the UK and established 'Clark's Rule' in paediatric medicine. This simple mathematical formula based on body mass allows doctors to safely calculate the dosage of medicine given to those aged between 2-17.

Christine Burns MBE – Christine is a British political activist known for her work with Press for Change, a key lobbying and legal support organisation for trans people in the UK. She fights for transgender rights, helped put together new employment legislation and the Gender Recognition Act, and wrote the first ever official guidance on trans health for the Department of Health and Social Care.

Lord Michael Cashman – Lord Cashman is a former actor, member of the House of Lords, and founded LGBTQ+ rights charity Stonewall.

Information from the NHS Confederation website

LGBTQ+ Healthcare Trailblazers

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Dr Michael Farquhar – Michael is a consultant in sleep medicine and was one of the originators of the NHS Rainbow Badge scheme, designed to promote inclusivity within the NHS. This has played a key role in raising awareness of the challenges faced by the LGBTQ+ community, and the importance of creating supportive environments where everyone can thrive.

Dr Kevin Fenton CBE – Professor Kevin Fenton CBE is Regional Director for London in the Office for Health Improvement and Disparities, within the Department of Social Care. He is a senior public health expert, who has worked in a variety of roles across government and academia - with a remit of tackling health inequalities, urban health and infectious disease prevention. He was named the second most influential black Briton in 2021's Powerlist.

Dr Mags Portman – Mags was called a "pioneer within the sexual health sector". She advocated for access and usage of pre-exposure prophylaxis medication (PrEP) to reduce incidence of HIV/AIDS in the United Kingdom. Portman has been attributed with preventing thousands of new HIV diagnoses through her work ensuring PrEP accessibility.

•**Dr Ronx Ikharia** – Ronx is a self-made emergency medicine doctor and trailblazing activist, who describes themself as a queer, black, androgynous, intersectional feminist. They have appeared regularly on TV, presenting 'Operation Ouch' (CBBC), ' The truth about boosting your immune system' on BBC One and the acclaimed 'Is Covid racist?' on Channel 4.

Tracy MyHill OBE – Tracy made an outstanding contribution to LGBT equality during her time in chief executive, deputy chief executive and HR director roles. She encouraged and inspired people to discuss LGBT issues within Swansea and Cardiff and Vale Health Boards and across the UK Ambulance Sector ensuring board level commitment and LGBT staff networks were actively involved in the decision-making processes.

Information from the NHS Confederation website

LGBTQ+ Inclusion Plan Launch Event

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LGBTQ+ Staff Network

🎉 **Monthly Highlight: LGBTQ+ Inclusion Plan Launch Event**

🗓️ **Wednesday 25 February 2026**
⏰ **5:30pm**
📍 **University of Manchester Students' Union, Oxford Road**

Learn about the new Inclusion Plan, hear from Chief People Officer Meera Nair, and discover how the renewed Rainbow Badge programme strengthens safety, trust and visibility for LGBTQ+ patients and colleagues.

Enjoy: Live DJ • Free food • Welcome refreshments

👉 Call to action: Attend the launch event and show your commitment to making MFT a safer, more inclusive organisation

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To mark LGBT+ History Month, NHS England's LGBTQIA+ Staff Network is hosting a lunchtime webinar with Pride in STEM Network on **Monday, 9th February at 12.30 to 1.30pm**. The event is supported by our Health and Care LGBTQ+ Leaders Network.

This session will explore the experiences of LGBTQIA+ colleagues working in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, with a particular focus on healthcare and the NHS. It will offer practical actions that we can all take to build more inclusive workplaces.

What the session will cover

- Who Pride in STEM are and their mission
- Key achievements and impact of the Pride in STEM network
- The challenges faced by LGBTQIA+ employees in the NHS and wider STEM roles
- Actionable strategies to improve inclusion and belonging
- What it means to be an effective ally, and how to support LGBTQIA+ colleagues.

Register your place

If you have any queries about the event, you can contact NHS England at england.lgbtqia@nhs.net.

LGBTQ+ History Month 2026 | Schwartz Round February 26th

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Would you like to share your story at the next Oxford Road Campus Schwartz Round?

The February Schwartz Round at Oxford Road Campus will be focusing on LGBT+ History Month, with a theme of "Standing on proud ground: learning through LGBT+ history". The round will be in person at RMCH on **26th February, 12:15-13:30**. Lunch is provided.

The Schwartz team are looking for panel members to share their stories and we would love to hear your voice!

Schwartz Rounds are confidential spaces where healthcare staff come together to reflect on the theme of that round, and share their perspective. Each round starts with a group of panel members sharing their stories, and facilitators then open the conversation up to the audience in the room.

Panel members are asked to share a short, 5 minute story at the round which reflects your personal story; working in a health and social care setting, or being a patient as someone who identifies as LGBTQ+.

Full support is given by the facilitators who will work with you to shape your story, and provide support on the day.

For more information, please contact the facilitators for this round - Andrew Lloyd (andrew.lloyd@mft.nhs.uk) or Jackie Nicholson (Jacqeline.Nicholson@mft.nhs.uk) or visit our intranet page here.

If you would prefer to be an audience member, please join us for the round on the **26th Feb, 12:15-13:30, 5th Floor RMCH - Seminar Rooms A & B**.

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We encourage you all to reach out to the EDI Team (Equality@mft.nhs.uk) to discuss how you plan to celebrate LGBT+ History Month. Also, feel free to share any pictures from the events you carry out during the week or beyond.

Let's not treat this event as something that ends in just one month. Instead, let it be the beginning of an ongoing commitment to embracing LGBTQ+ equality. Together, we can continue this important journey and make meaningful, lasting change.