

# PRESS RELEASE

## Sodexo launches Pride employee network

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**Sodexo, the world's largest services company, launched the UK and Ireland chapter of its global LGBT employee network this week at an event at its London headquarters.**

The Sodexo Pride network aims to lead on lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) inclusion among its 34,000 UK and Ireland employees. The network will also champion the role of allies, those who advocate LGBT inclusion and equality. The network has been launched to coincide with LGBT History Month.

Sodexo Group CEO Michel Landel opened the event on Wednesday (10 February) discussing his global vision for LGBT inclusion at Sodexo. Tony Leech, CEO, Justice Services Worldwide, then presented the business case for having an employee network. Neil Murray, regional chairman, and Chris Bray, CEO of Sodexo's Sports & Leisure segment and executive sponsor to the network, then spoke about their roles as LGBT allies and how others can become advocates for LGBT equality.

The Pride network co-chairs then discussed their personal experiences of being LGB in the workplace with Margot Slattery, country president of Sodexo Ireland, before a networking reception for the 100 Sodexo employees and external guests in attendance.

**Michel Landel, Sodexo Group CEO, said:** *"I am proud to be here today to support our colleagues working globally to champion LGBT inclusion. I firmly believe in the importance of bringing your whole self to work – it is critical for the engagement of our employees and allows our organisation to continue to foster an inclusive culture. The launch of this network in UK and Ireland marks an important milestone in our journey – it means that 65% of our global employee population now works in countries with a Pride chapter, and this percentage will continue to climb."*

Sexual orientation and gender identity is one of six areas of focus within Sodexo UK & Ireland's diversity and inclusion strategy. The Pride network forms part of the sexual orientation and gender identity workstream. It is Sodexo's fourth employee network and follows the successful launch of the Origins, Generations and WomenWork networks, which were established in 2015, 2014 and 2010 respectively.

The Pride network aims to raise awareness and confidence through education and training, develop and champion role models, and provide a forum to discuss issues affecting LGBT colleagues, providing guidance on how allies can support. It will also offer opportunities for personal and professional development.

**Chris Bray, CEO Sports & Leisure, Sodexo UK & Ireland, and Pride workstream executive sponsor, said:** *"I'm delighted to be taking on the position of executive sponsor for this workstream. The launch has been an amazing event which really highlighted why the network is needed for LGBT individuals and how important the support from allies is if we are to make a*

**I** *difference. I'm looking forward to the exciting programme we have in place to advance LGBT inclusion."*

**Ends**