

From: [Scottish Lesbians](#)
To: [Legal Mailbox](#)
Subject: Lesbian Action Group - application for exemption to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984
Date: Monday, 28 August 2023 11:58:21 PM

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Re: Lesbian Action Group's application for a temporary exemption to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984

We note the Lesbian Action Group's application for a temporary exemption to the Sex Discrimination Act, which would allow them to hold a lesbian-only event. We write in support of this application.

We are a group of same sex attracted women in Scotland. Our group was founded in May 2022, in response to the increasing erasure of lesbian culture and the diminishing of the rights of lesbian women in Scotland. We believe that our situation in Scotland is not unique but is replicated in many otherwise progressive countries, including Australia. In fact, Australian women were among the first to contact us when we started our group, and they told us about the legal barriers facing lesbians in Australia who want to be able to meet in single-sex spaces. The similarity of the challenges facing Australian and Scottish lesbians are such that we have welcomed Australian lesbians into our online spaces to share community with us.

We have recently conducted research into the experiences of lesbians in coming out and connecting with other lesbians, and our findings will be made available shortly. Our research was open to international participation, and we have received responses from lesbians in Australia. The outcomes of our study are absolutely unequivocal: lesbians are experiencing huge barriers in being able to connect with other lesbians and participate in lesbian community, and are struggling with a lack of representation and the loss of acceptance of our status as same sex attracted women. It is our strong belief that as lesbians, we are facing a crisis in terms of the loss of our culture and spaces and the resulting negative impact on our wellbeing and mental health.

We did not anticipate that during our lifetime, we would see lesbians in progressive countries needing to explain that lesbian spaces and events are for women only, or needing to request a legal exemption in order to hold a single lesbian event. We see this as a shameful state of affairs which means that lesbians are being let down by the law. As this is however the current situation facing lesbians in Australia, we support the efforts of the Lesbian Action Group in requesting this legal exemption.

We trust that this email makes our position clear. Should you require anything further from us, please do not hesitate to reply.

Best wishes,

Lorraine Douglas and Jenny Willmott

on behalf of Scottish Lesbians.

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