Why are pronouns important?

Pronouns affirm gender identities and create safe spaces by referring to people in the way that feels most accurate to them.

Why focus on pronouns?

You may have noticed that people are sharing their pronouns in introductions and on nametags. This is happening to make spaces more inclusive of transgender, gender nonconforming, and gender non-binary people. Including pronouns is a first step toward respecting people's gender identity, working against cisnormativity, and creating a more welcoming space for people of all genders.

How is this more inclusive?

People's pronouns relate to their gender identity. For example, someone who identifies as a woman may use the pronouns "she/her." We do not want to assume people's gender identity based on gender expression (typically shown through clothing, hairstyle, mannerisms, etc.) By providing an opportunity for people to share their pronouns, you're showing that you're not assuming what their gender identity is based on their appearance. If this is the first time you're thinking about your pronoun, you may want to reflect on the privilege of having a gender identity that is the same as the sex assigned to you at birth.

Where do I start?

Include pronouns on nametags.

What if I don't want to share my pronouns?

That's ok! Providing space and opportunity for people to share their pronouns does not mean that everyone feels comfortable or needs to share their pronouns. Some people may choose not to share their pronouns for a variety of reasons, e.g. they are questioning or transitioning their pronouns, they don't use or like any pronouns, they don't feel comfortable sharing them at that moment or in that space, or they fear bullying or harassment after sharing. In the case that someone has left pronouns off the nametag or chosen not to share their pronouns, please refrain from using pronouns for that person and refer to the person by name.