



## Request for Research Proposal:

# Word on the Sheets National Expansion: LGBTQ+ Women's Sexual and Reproductive Health Literature Review

### Contacts:

Scott McNaughton, Manager of Community Partnerships and Priority Populations  
[Smcnaughton@acon.org.au](mailto:Smcnaughton@acon.org.au)  
(02) 9206 2000

Lee Wang, Team Leader of LGBTQ+ Women's Health Programs  
[Lwang@acon.org.au](mailto:Lwang@acon.org.au)  
(02) 9206 2000

### Introduction

ACON is seeking proposals from researchers for a short-term project to conduct a comprehensive literature review investigating LGBTQ+ women's knowledge of sexual and reproductive health and their access of resources and healthcare.

This review will include recommendations for improving LGBTQ+ women's sexual and reproductive health literacy, as well as access to health care and improving health resources. This project is part of an exciting national initiative aimed at improving health outcomes for LGBTQ+ women across Australia.

### ACON

ACON is Australia's largest LGBTQ+ organisation specialising in community health, inclusion, and HIV responses for people of diverse sexualities and genders (LGBTQ+ – lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer). Established in 1985, ACON works to create opportunities for people in our communities to live their healthiest lives.

## **ACON's LGBTQ+ Women's Health Programs**

We know that LGBTQ+ women experience a number of health disparities when compared to the general population, including in mental health, sexual health, substance use and experiences of sexual, domestic and family violence. We also know that there is limited information on the health needs of LGBTQ+ women, due to a lack of research and data collection in service provision. This is why ACON has had programs for LGBTQ+ women aimed at improving their health outcomes since the 1990s.

Today, ACON's LGBTQ+ Women's Health Programs continue to empower LGBTQ+ women to take control of their health and increase their connection to community. We do this by engaging women around sexual health, general health and wellbeing, running community events and peer education workshops to facilitate connection and resilience, engaging in outreach initiatives at events relevant to our communities, and supplying free safe sex packs across NSW.

### **Project Background: Word on the Sheets**

Word on the Sheets spearheads the LGBTQ+ Women's Health Programs work in the digital landscape, providing an accessible, inclusive and relevant online hub for sexual and reproductive health information. This website was launched in 2023 and has recently received a grant from the Department of Health and Aged Care to undergo a national expansion and major redevelopment.

URL: [www.wordonthesheets.org.au](http://www.wordonthesheets.org.au)

### **About the Project**

The successful candidate will be responsible for conducting a literature review that explores the following key areas:

- LGBTQ+ women's knowledge (and knowledge gaps) of sexual and reproductive health, including (but not limited to) their understanding of STI and BBV transmission routes and risk, the importance of routine cancer screening, safe sexual practices, understanding of contraception methods and how to access pregnancy termination services, understanding of reproductive health including menstruation, pelvic pain (endometriosis, PMDD, PCOS, etc.), fertility, IVF, and family planning.
- How and where LGBTQ+ women are accessing sexual and reproductive health information
- What health disparities exist within LGBTQ+ women's sub-populations in terms of reproductive and broader health outcomes? The experiences of the following sub-populations in accessing sexual and reproductive health services:
  - Trans and gender diverse women
  - Non-binary people
  - People with disability
  - Those from rural and remote areas
  - Those from First Nations communities
  - Those from culturally and linguistically diverse communities

- The accessible, LGBTQ+ inclusive, and relevant sexual and reproductive health services across the States and Territories of Australia including Sexual health clinics, Women's health clinics, Cancer screening services, Contraception services, Pregnancy termination services and Aboriginal health services.

This literature review will contribute to the development of a national online health hub for LGBTQ+ women, which aims to improve access to inclusive, evidence-based health information.

### **Key Deliverables**

- A literature review report (10-20 pages) summarising current knowledge, service access barriers, and health disparities for LGBTQ+ women, as well as how additional intersections (including race, ethnicity, religion, ability, location, age) can impact LGBTQ+ women.
- Annotated bibliography of key sources.
- Identification of gaps in existing research and recommendations for future studies, health interventions and health promotion content.
- Practical recommendations to inform the project's health promotion and service improvement strategies.

### **Project Timeline**

- Contract Start: December 2024
- Final Report Submission: April 2025

### **Budget**

The total budget for this project is **\$10,000 AUD**, inclusive of GST and expenses. Payment will be made in stages, linked to [milestones](#), with a final payment on the successful completion of the research project.

### **Reporting**

The successful applicant will:

- Report to the Team Leader of LGBTQ+ Women's Health Programs.
- Be required to sign an ACON consultancy contract. A draft copy of the contract is available on request.
- Meet with ACON project staff at regular intervals during the project timeline.

## Eligibility Criteria

We are seeking applicants with:

- A strong background in public health, women's health, LGBTQ+ health, or a related field.
- Demonstrated experience in conducting systematic literature reviews or similar research projects.
- An understanding of the sexual and reproductive health needs of diverse populations, particularly LGBTQ+ women.
- Strong written communication skills with the ability to present complex information in an accessible format.

## Assessment Criteria

A successful applicant will be selected by a panel of internal ACON staff members, including:

- Manager, Community Partnerships and Priority Population Programs, Scott McNaughton (he/him)
- Team Leader, LGBTQ+ Women's Health Programs, Lee Wang (she/they)
- Another ACON staff member, TBC

The panel will consider the applicants ability to address the following criteria:

1. Ability to undertake a project of this scope within timeframe
2. Demonstrated understanding of the target populations of this project
3. Methodology and approach
4. Expertise and experience
5. Value for money

## How to Apply

To express your interest, please submit the following documents by **Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> December 2024**.

1. A research proposal (maximum 4 pages) outlining your approach and proposal for this research project.
2. You and/or your teams current CV, including details of similar research projects completed.
3. Contact information for two referees for whom you have conducted similar research for.
4. Your connection to LGBTQ+ communities or your experience working with LGBTQ+ communities.

Submit your application to: [women@acon.org.au](mailto:women@acon.org.au)

We look forward to receiving your application and working with a passionate researcher to contribute to this important project for LGBTQ+ women's health.