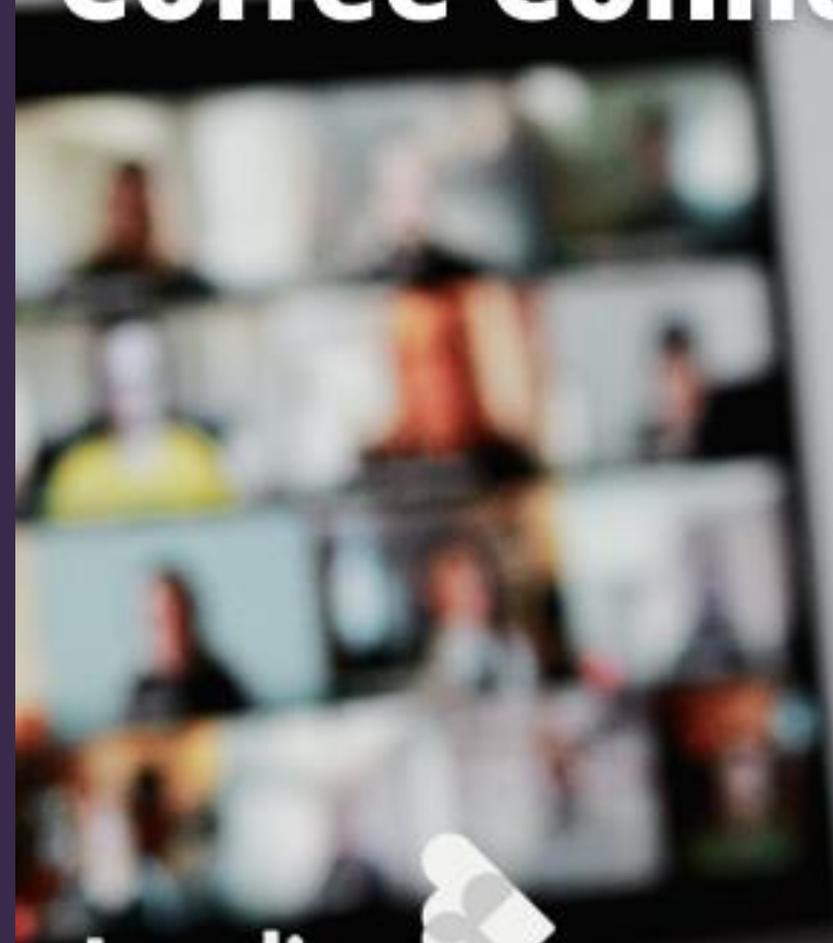




Diversity Coffee Connect: What does it mean to be an ally?

8th February 2023

Diversity Coffee Connect



What does it mean to be an ally?

On 8th February 2023, we invited Leading to Change community members to come together to explore the theme of **'What does it mean to be an ally'** in the context of equality, diversity and inclusion through informal conversation and reflect on what opportunities can emerge within our own teams and organisations.

Our conversation starters were:

1. Have you noticed times when you could have been an ally?
2. Have you taken this opportunity?
3. What impact do you think you could have by being an ally?
4. Do you feel confident to be an active ally within your workplace?
5. Do you feel you have the skills, language and behaviours to be an impactful ally?

Flow of the session:

1. Welcome
2. Overview of linked equalities blog/s
3. Prepare and move into groups
4. Group conversations
5. Plenary/ Final reflections

Who joined us?



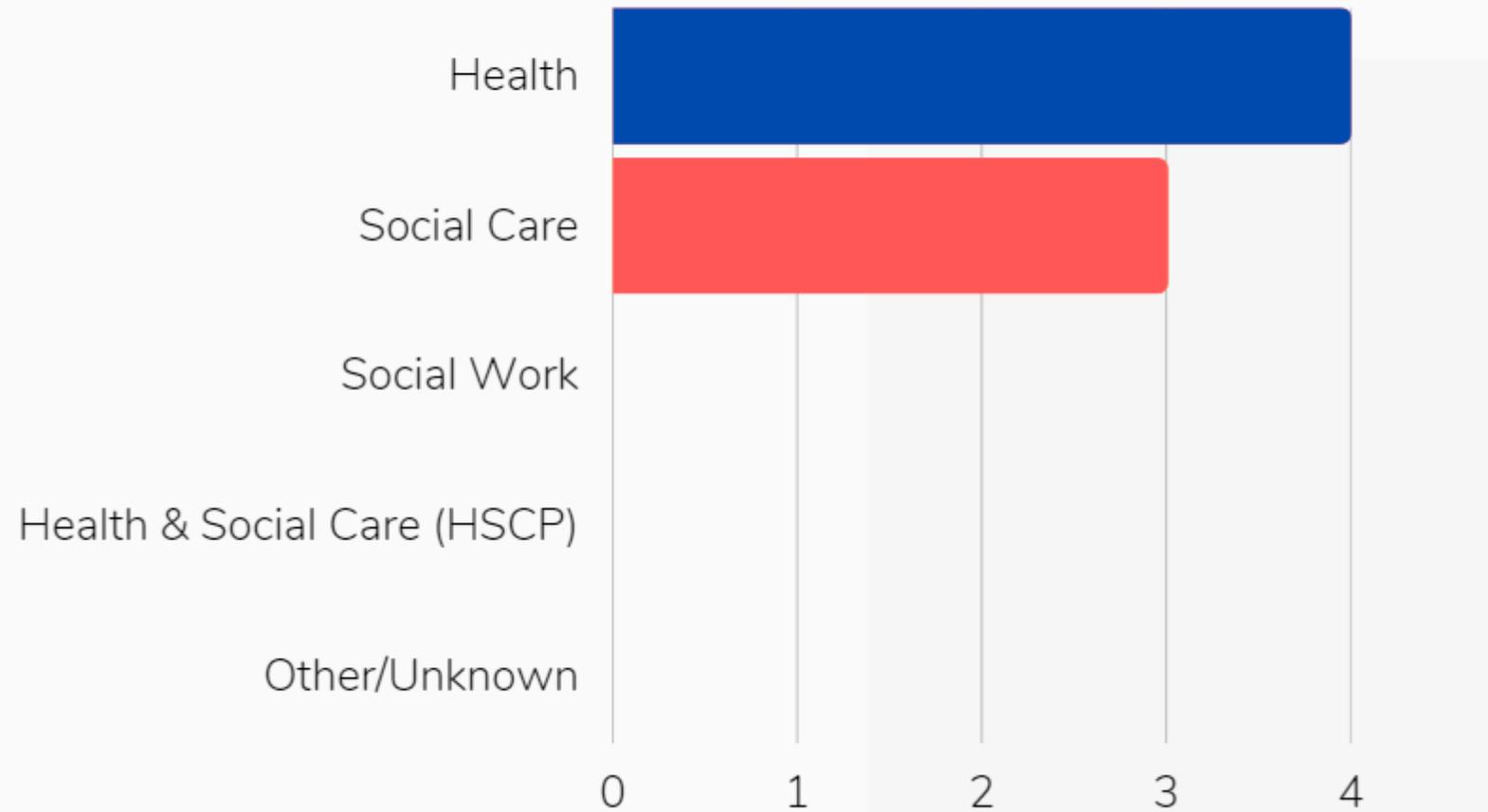
Leading to Change exists to support leadership **at all levels and at all stages, in all roles across health, social care, and social work in Scotland**. The purpose of the Diversity Coffee Connect series is to provide a safe environment to explore the context of **equality, diversity and inclusion** together through informal conversation and so these events were open to all.

We were joined by **7** colleagues from across health, social care, and social work in Scotland.

Participants joined us from a range of organisations across Scotland, including: Scottish Autism; Care Inspectorate ; Healthcare Improvement Scotland; Territorial NHS Health Boards and NHS Education for Scotland.

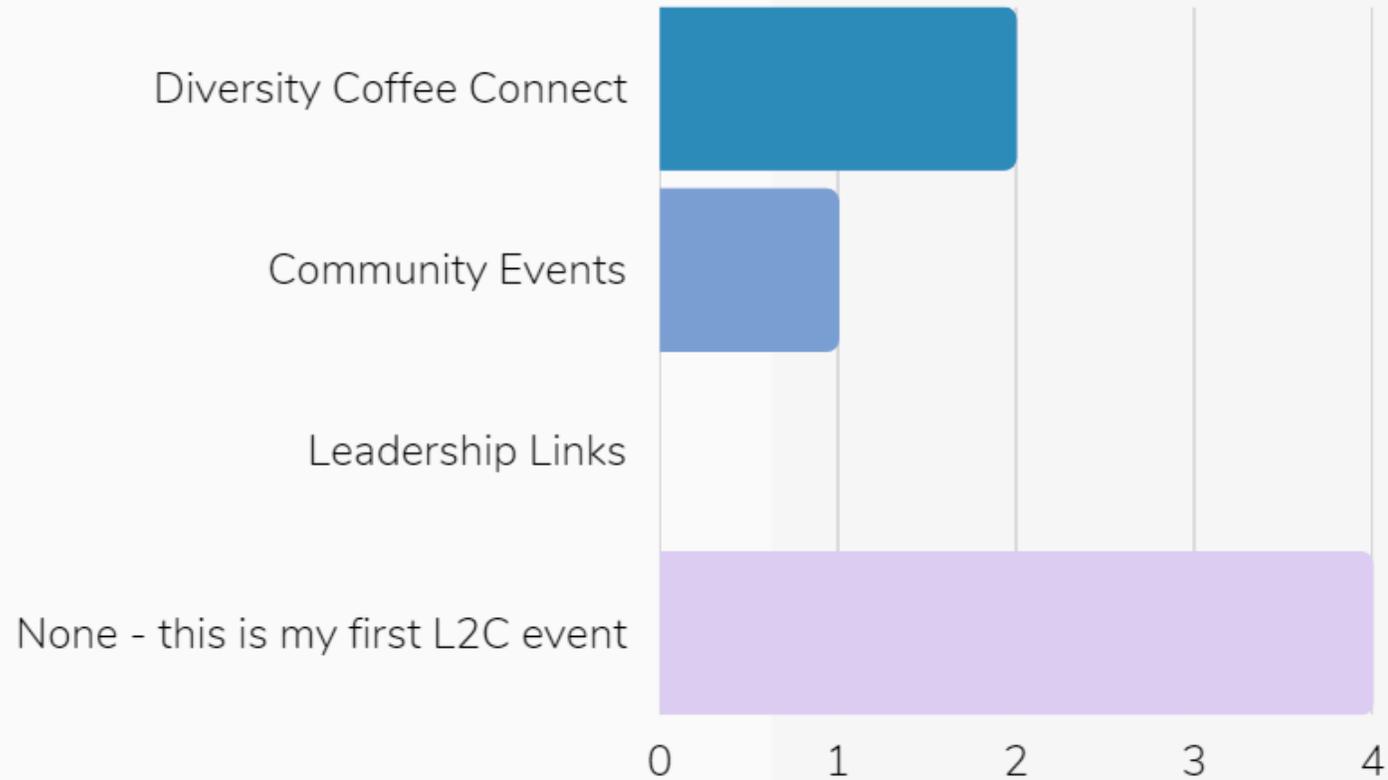
Who joined us?

PARTICIPANTS BY SECTOR

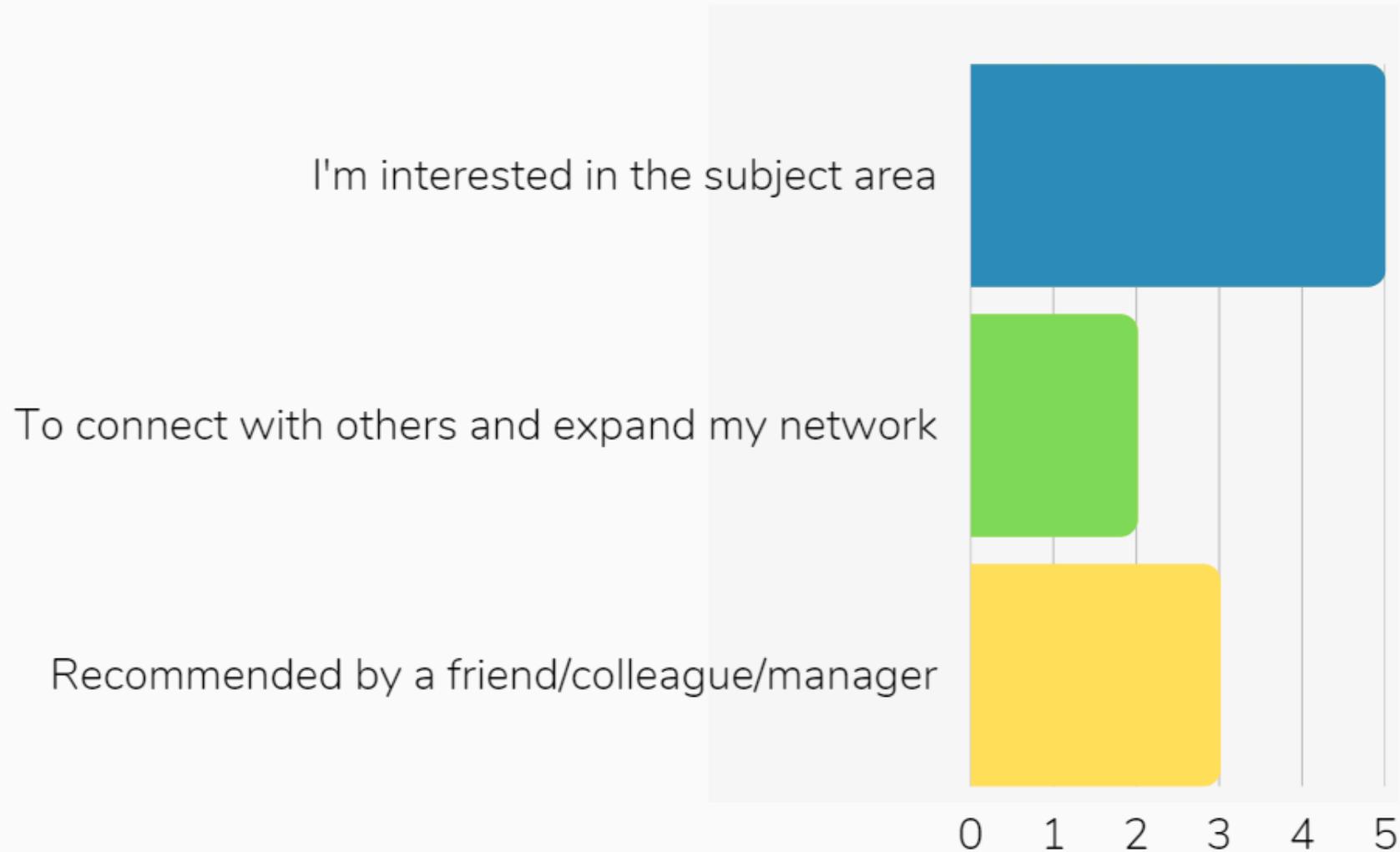


Was this your first Leading to Change event?

WHAT OTHER LEADING TO CHANGE EVENTS HAVE YOU ATTENDED?



Why did you sign up for this session? (from session registration)





Diversity Blog Series

Writing to Connect

leadingtochange.scot



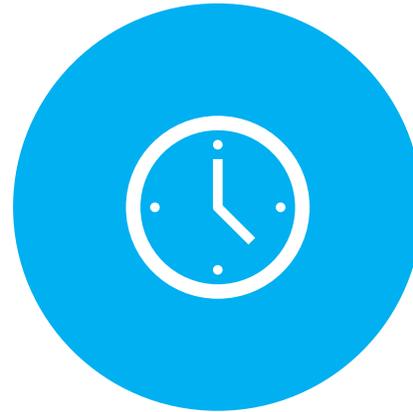
You only aspire to what you see... Dr Greg Ekatah

- Role-modelling is important (and you never know who is watching).
- Looking different didn't define what could be done – there's more that unites us than divides
- Importance of purpose as an inspiration, even if no one looks like you. What is it you really see?
- Need to create an open supportive environment that has space for ethnic minority staff to share concerns
- **Challenge:** If there is nobody that looks like you, what other ways can you see people that can inspire you?

Breakout rooms: facts and figures



3 BREAKOUT ROOMS



TIME IN BREAK OUT
ROOM: **25 MINUTES**



EVENT DURATION: **60
MINUTES**

Key conversation themes

The themes from our conversations included...

“Look for commonalities (rather than differences)”

“Involving people with lived or living experience”

“Be brave/embrace the discomfort - start a conversation - ask 'How can I help?'”

“being part of one minority, doesn't mean you should support others exactly the same as you would, but it can help be a starting point of a shared experience”

“being a good ally isn't always about grand gestures of calling out people for being rude/offensive etc. it can be quiet support to individuals”

“Normalising allyship”

“Walk alongside as an ally; you're not the representative for the other person or there to fix the issue”

“People don't like to have things done *to* them, they like to have things done *with* them”

“Inclusion and involvement in allyship”

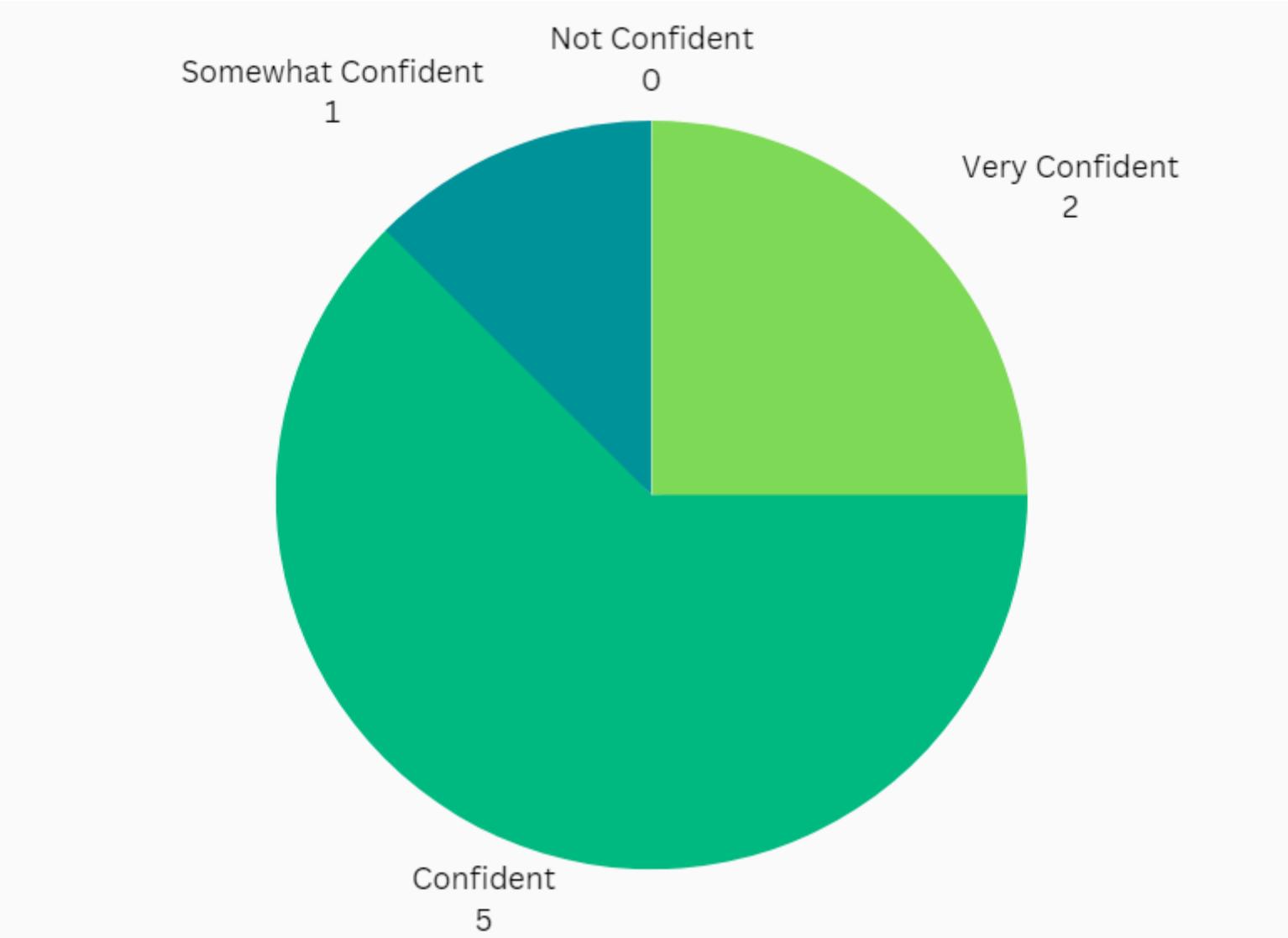
“allyship isn't one size fits all”

Word Cloud: What are the enablers and opportunities in becoming an ally?



All responses in plain text: Ask: 'How can I help?', Be supportive, Walk alongside, Culture change; open, inclusive, supportive, Insight into lived experience Private support, Listen/ Listening, Comparable experience, Increase my knowledge, Involvement

How confident are you to be an ally to someone now?



What action are you going to take away from the session today?

Responses included...

"recognizing that allyship has multiple facets, it doesn't always look like a grand gesture in front of people pointing out an inequality, it can be a helpful conversation or support"

"Ask 'how can I help' instead of making assumptions about what people want/need"

"that being in a minority in one way, doesn't mean you know how to be an effective ally to other minorities"

"just be present for people to let them know you are available"

"I'll seek to build allyship into work I'm doing around equalities and mainstreaming in my organisation."

"pay closer attention, raise my awareness"

Feedback

We asked participants for their reflections on the session. 3 participants (42%) responded to our feedback survey.

Their reflections included:

3

out of 3 respondents agreed that the event felt like a psychologically safe space

3

out of 3 feel very confident, confident or somewhat confident to start an equality, diversity and inclusion conversation with their colleague, manager and team

3

out of 3 would attend a Diversity Coffee Connect session in the future

What participants said about this event

- *"I enjoy exploring a range of topics in conversation with others and expanding my awareness, insight and knowledge"*
- *"The right length of session, good balance between speakers/plenary/breakout sessions, opportunities for further reading and research"*
- *"It's a safe space to explore the topic and to engage in a meaningful and insightful discussion and hear from real people about their experiences."*
- *"The sessions can fit nicely into the working day"*
- *"Absolutely a great resource"*

Next events in the series



Diversity Blog Series



8th March – How much
do we really
understand talent?



18th April -
Empowerment and my
leadership Journey

How to Find Out More



Website: <https://leadingtochange.scot/>



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Like us: <https://www.facebook.com/L2CScot/>



Email the team: hello@leadingtochange.scot



Keep in touch: [Leading to Change weekly email](#)

Thank You!

If you have any questions about anything in this pack or any of the events in the series, feel free to contact us at: hello@leadingtochange.scot

