

Sodexo HRD recognised as LGBTQ+ role model in 2024 global Outstanding list

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[Sodexo](#) has announced that Laura Purdey, HR director for Schools & Universities in the UK and Ireland has been named in the 2024 Outstanding Executives Role Model List, which recognises those who are working hard to create more LGBTQ+ inclusive workplaces.

The global Outstanding Role Model Lists supported by YouTube showcase leaders who are breaking down barriers at work and smashing the ceiling for LGBTQ+ employees within global business. Separated into three categories the lists recognise executives, advocates and future leaders who are paving the way when it comes to increasing representation and driving inclusion for others within the workplace.

Role models featured in the Outstanding Role Model Lists do not work professionally in diversity, equity and inclusion but represent the wide range of individuals who have made it their personal mission to make a difference.

Laura joined Sodexo in 2007 and over the last 17 years has progressed her career in a number of HR roles at Sodexo. Laura has been HR director for Sodexo's schools and universities business since 2018. Throughout her time at Sodexo Laura has always been passionate about ensuring those around her feel comfortable to be their true self, she has been an active member of Sodexo's PRIDE employee network in the UK and Ireland and volunteered as co-chair of the global PRIDE network for a two year term.

Laura says: "I've always been out at work, which took courage especially at a younger age, so early in my career. I wanted to be out for myself and others, to be a role model and to give others in more difficult, less privileged situations more hope and confidence. I've worked hard, while being my authentic self to help people be more visible role models and allies and I have reached out further than my organisation.

"My work within our Schools & Universities business has given visibility, support and hope to young people who may be apprehensive to be themselves in the workplace. Giving them my insights on what it's really like in the workplace is valuable and boosting for them as they don't have workplace experience of their own. As the global co-lead for our Global Pride network, I have collaborated on a Global LGBTQ+ strategy that is inspiring change for thousands of employees and helping senior leaders to understand and act themselves, as visible advocates, this changes lives of our employees and our communities. There are many people in Sodexo dedicated to LGBTQ+ inclusion (too many to name) and I am honoured to have worked with them and been in a position to be able to do the work I have done."

Laura has played a key role in supporting Sodexo external benchmarks, including the retention of Sodexo's Advocate status in the [global Workplace Pride external benchmark](#), the highest rank for organisations scoring over 90%. The company's enhanced focus on LGBTQ+ rights has not only improved employee satisfaction but has also positioned [Sodexo](#) as an inclusive employer, attracting a diverse talent pool and setting a benchmark for inclusion in the industry.

Mark Goodyer, HR Director, Sodexo UK & Ireland said: "At Sodexo we are committed to building a diverse and inclusive culture where our employees feel valued and respected as individuals. We are immensely proud to see Laura included in this list and thank her for her continued commitment to helping make sure that our colleagues feel they can be their true self at work and thrive in their careers."

Also included in the global Outstanding Future Leaders Role Models list is AJ Francavilla, senior director, digital experience marketing, Sodexo North America, who continues to drive LGBTQ+ visibility and inclusion globally. Founder & CEO of INvolve, Suki Sandhu OBE, says: "LGBTQ+ and advocate role models remain vital for driving tangible, long term inclusion for LGBTQ+ individuals across the world. The individuals featured within the Outstanding Role Model Lists supported by YouTube are all trailblazers who are driving impactful initiatives and strategic change within their organisations and across wider society. I am so thrilled to be able to showcase and celebrate their achievements through this year's Outstanding Role Model Lists, and I look forward to seeing the continued positive impact these role models will make for global LGBTQ+ inclusion."

[Sodexo](#) believes in the importance of bringing your authentic self to the workplace, it's not just about boosting employee engagement, it's about creating an inclusive culture where everyone feels valued. Sodexo continues to challenge discrimination and promotes a working environment in which people can be open about their sexual orientation and their gender identity should they choose to.