

Long Story, short (14)

What does the “A” in LGBTQIA+ stand for?

“Long Story-Short” is a weekly email describing one LGBTQIA+ inclusion principle around 250 words (or less!) while demystifying some of the complexities around LGBTQIA+ inclusion in humanitarian and development environments.

‘A’ = Asexual, (or Ace)

The LGBTQIA+ alphabet serves as a useful catch-all for the diverse SOGIESC community, but often we don’t take the time to think about what each of the letters *mean* and the diversity of people who identify with them.

Those who identify as Asexual, who sometimes prefer to be called *Ace*, or *Aces*, are people who *generally* do not feel or experience sexual attraction in a traditional or normative way. Aces still have / can have/ do have intimate, committed, and long-term and romantic relationships, but may not experience *physical* attraction or find pleasure in the physical side of relationships.

Aces can be straight, gay, lesbian, queer, trans and **anywhere** else on the diverse SOGIESC spectrum; it is important not to assume that someone who identifies as asexual is necessarily any one of these identities. There are also a diversity of identities within the Ace community, such as *demisexual*, which refers to a person who may experience physical attraction only with someone with whom they have a very close bond.

Research by [The Trevor Project](#) (we LOVE The Trevor Project!) also emphasises that not everyone who identifies as asexual wants to be part of/considered a part of the LGBTQIA+ community.

And yes, you do have colleagues, partners, and programme participants who are asexual. As always, whether or not they choose to identify themselves is their decision, and part of the ordinary course of respecting people’s basic privacy and basic rights.

Resources and additional information:

[The Trevor Project](#)

[Human Rights Campaign](#)

[WebMD](#)

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