Alex Marsh UGC Transcript

- I'm Alex Marsh. I'm the Director of Strategy at UK Research and Innovation.

I guess I count myself pretty lucky. I've always had a really supportive family and I can live my life openly and happily as a gay person.
It's so important to me that everyone in my team knows that they can also be themselves at work.
In the UK there are still groups with less visibility or privilege who don't enjoy the same rights and freedoms, especially trans people.

Elsewhere in the world there are rights and victories that we thought were long-since won, which are being reopened and re-questioned, and of course there are several countries where LGBTQ people are denied their fundamental human rights and forced to live in the closet and in fear.
Why does this matter specifically for R&D? I think two reasons. The first one is that R&D is fundamentally about curiosity and creativity, and so we need the widest range of ideas and perspectives, and therefore people.
We also need diversity to make sure that we're asking the right questions in the first place, and that we are using R&D to solve problems for everyone.
This year I'm struck at how the Black Lives Matter protests remind us of the pain and injustice that black people have suffered for centuries, and still suffer today, and the protests remind me also of how connected LGBTQ rights are to black rights, and of the debt of gratitude that we owe, and that I owe, to the black trans women who were on the frontline of the Stonewall riots, and pushed forward the pride movement.

I am hopeful that we will listen and learn and take action together, and that we can build towards a future where everyone has opportunity and can live their life fully and can be themselves.