



South Africa, Africa and the Future of Inclusive Travel

PARTNER PROPOSAL

Cape Town | January 2027 | [symposium.afrigay.com](https://symposium.afrigay.com)

## Executive Summary

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The **Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium** is a proposed one-day industry event designed to help South Africa's tourism sector better understand, serve and grow the LGBTQ+ travel market.

Hosted in Cape Town at **Mama Shelter Hotel**, the symposium will bring together tourism authorities, accommodation partners, DMCs, tour operators, travel brands, corporate partners, payment and financial services partners, travel technology platforms, media, LGBTQ+ tourism specialists, community voices and industry stakeholders for a focused day of insight, collaboration and practical learning.

This is not a Pride celebration or a general diversity discussion. It is a tourism growth platform that positions LGBTQ+ travel as a serious economic, strategic and destination development opportunity for South Africa, with a wider African outlook.

The first edition will be focused and achievable:

- **12 January 2027:** One-day symposium and evening networking reception (hosted at The Rockefeller Hotel)
- **13 January 2027:** Optional Glitter Trail Peninsula Experience

**From welcome to readiness: turning inclusion into tourism value.**

# The Opportunity

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LGBTQ+ tourism is a significant and growing global travel economy. Current industry estimates place LGBTQ+ traveller spend at more than **USD 333.4 billion in 2025**, with projections rising to approximately **USD 521.6 billion by 2031**.

South Africa is well positioned to lead in this space. The country offers natural beauty, safari, luxury hospitality, food and wine, culture, cities, coastlines, events and strong tourism infrastructure. It also holds a unique position on the African continent as a destination with constitutional protections and a globally recognisable LGBTQ+ travel appeal.

The opportunity is to position South Africa as the **gateway to LGBTQ+ travel in Africa** — a place where travellers can begin their journey with confidence before exploring wider regional experiences such as safari, the Indian Ocean islands, Victoria Falls, conservation tourism and curated African itineraries.

To realise this opportunity, the industry needs more structure: market understanding, supplier confidence, practical readiness, aligned messaging, product ideas, meaningful partnerships and trusted local expertise. Travellers need to feel safe, seen and joyfully welcomed.

**That is the gap the Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium is designed to address.**

## Why this Symposium Matters

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LGBTQ+ tourism is often spoken about under the broad umbrella of diversity, equity and inclusion, where it can become a small part of a much wider conversation rather than a focused tourism growth opportunity in its own right.

Many businesses describe themselves as LGBTQ+ friendly, but friendliness alone does not always translate into excellent guest experiences. LGBTQ+ travellers may be planning luxury honeymoons, family holidays, solo journeys, group tours, safari extensions, wellness escapes, nightlife experiences or multi-country African itineraries — and each journey may come with different expectations, sensitivities and practical considerations.

The opportunity lies in moving the industry from general goodwill to active readiness — from simply saying “LGBTQ+ travellers are welcome” to building the knowledge, products, partnerships and service confidence required to serve this market well.

The Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium will help tourism stakeholders understand that LGBTQ+ inclusion is not only a social value. It is also a commercial advantage, a service standard, a product development opportunity, an internal culture opportunity and a destination positioning tool.

The benefits extend beyond the traveller experience. When tourism businesses engage meaningfully with LGBTQ+ inclusion, they strengthen internal policies, build more inclusive workplaces, support LGBTQ+ employees, and help non-LGBTQ+ team members shift from uncertainty or assumption to confidence, respect and practical understanding.

## Why Cape Town as the Host City?

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Although the symposium has a national and African focus, Cape Town is the ideal host city for the first edition.

Cape Town offers destination appeal, LGBTQ+ visibility, hospitality excellence, international recognition, creative culture and natural beauty. It already resonates with many LGBTQ+ travellers and provides a visually powerful, accessible and desirable setting in which to launch the conversation.

Cape Town also allows the symposium to offer a strong experiential layer. Delegates can engage with the topic in the room, then experience the thinking in action through one optional day-two signature activity: **The Glitter Trail**.

The city's role should be positioned clearly:

**Cape Town is the host. South Africa is the anchor. Africa is the horizon.**

Cape Town stakeholders benefit from the visibility, delegate spend, destination exposure and thought leadership value of hosting the symposium, while the event itself remains focused on South Africa's broader opportunity to lead LGBTQ+ tourism on the continent.

# Proposed Event Format

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The first edition of the Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium will be polished, practical and achievable.

The programme will feature a carefully curated mix of credible voices from tourism, hospitality, destination marketing, LGBTQ+ travel, travel trade, media, inclusive business and community leadership.

While speakers and panellists are still to be confirmed, the focus will be on people who can add real value: industry leaders, experienced operators, LGBTQ+ tourism specialists and market-facing partners with practical insight into how South Africa can better understand, serve and grow this travel segment.

This will be a day of useful insight, practical examples and meaningful conversation — helping the industry move from welcome to readiness.

## Morning: Insight & Inspiration

The morning will focus on information-sharing, strategic context and industry insight. Presentations and panel discussions will explore the LGBTQ+ travel opportunity, South Africa's positioning, traveller expectations, destination readiness, responsible marketing and the commercial value of inclusive tourism.

## Afternoon: Collaboration & Practical Learning

The afternoon will shift into a more interactive format. Delegates will take part in a practical and engaging Learning Lab, where they work together to explore traveller personas, design tourism experiences, respond to real-world guest scenarios and think through how LGBTQ+ readiness can be applied in their own businesses.

## Evening: Networking Reception

The evening reception will provide a warm and elegant environment for sponsors, speakers, partners and delegates to connect.

## Day 2: Optional LGBTQ+ Tourism Experience

The second day will offer one optional Cape Town-based signature experience: The Glitter Trail. This will showcase how LGBTQ+ tourism can be designed with personality, confidence, style, storytelling and commercial appeal.

# Dates & Venue

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## Dates, Venue & Format

The inaugural **Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium** will take place in Cape Town on **12 January 2027**, with the optional **Glitter Trail Peninsula Experience** on **13 January 2027**.

The January timing creates a strong start-of-year platform for the tourism industry to focus on LGBTQ+ market readiness, product development and inclusive growth ahead of the year's major sales, trade and travel cycles.

## Confirmed Venue Partners

### Mama Shelter Cape Town

Official Venue Partner for the symposium. Mama Shelter brings a fresh, vibrant and contemporary setting that reflects the energy of the event — creative, inclusive, practical and distinctly Cape Town.

### The Rockefeller Hotel by Newmark

Official host hotel for the evening cocktail party. The Rockefeller brings an urban Cape Town energy to the networking function, creating a stylish space for delegates, partners and speakers to connect after the formal programme.

# From Welcome to Readiness

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This theme captures the purpose of the first symposium and the practical shift South Africa's tourism industry needs to make.

Being welcoming is important, but the next stage of LGBTQ+ tourism development is readiness. Readiness means understanding the traveller, preparing teams, designing thoughtful products, communicating confidently, avoiding tokenistic marketing and creating experiences where LGBTQ+ travellers can feel safe, respected and genuinely welcome.

The symposium will use this theme to focus the conversation around a few clear objectives:

- Position LGBTQ+ tourism as a strategic growth opportunity for South Africa.
- Build greater understanding of LGBTQ+ traveller needs, expectations and market value.
- Help tourism businesses move from general friendliness to practical readiness.
- Encourage more intentional LGBTQ+ travel products, partnerships and experiences.
- Connect tourism authorities, private sector partners and LGBTQ+ tourism specialists around future growth.
- Use Cape Town as a powerful host city while keeping the broader focus on South Africa and Africa.
- Use The Glitter Trail as a tangible example of LGBTQ+ tourism product development in action.

This gives the first edition a clear role: to inspire the industry, create practical learning, and lay the foundation for a stronger LGBTQ+ tourism growth platform in South Africa.

## Target Audience

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The symposium is designed for tourism professionals and stakeholders who influence how South Africa is positioned, sold and experienced.

Target audiences include:

- Tourism authorities and destination marketing organisations
  - Accommodation partners, including hotels, lodges, guesthouses and hotel groups
  - DMCs, tour operators, travel advisors & tour guides
  - Airlines, transport providers and travel access partners
- Attractions, restaurants, wine estates and experience providers
  - Payment, banking and financial services partners, including card networks and payment platforms
  - Travel technology platforms and digital travel solutions
- Corporate travel brands and event organisers
  - Media, content creators and storytelling partners
  - GBTQ+ entrepreneurs, queer-owned tourism businesses and SMMEs
  - Community tourism voices and emerging tourism leaders

*For the first edition, the ideal audience size would be approximately **120 delegates**. This is large enough to feel significant, but intimate enough to allow meaningful conversation, networking and participation.*

## Strategic partner value

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The symposium offers partners a meaningful way to support inclusive tourism growth while gaining visibility with tourism decision-makers and aligned industry stakeholders.

Partner value includes:

- Association with a high-value global travel market
- Visibility in a national LGBTQ+ tourism growth conversation
- Access to tourism authorities, travel trade, hospitality partners and media
- Alignment with inclusive economic growth and SMME participation
- Opportunity to support supplier readiness and product development
- Cape Town host-city visibility with a wider South African and African outlook

**Partners help build capacity, confidence and commercial opportunity.**

# Partnership Opportunities

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The **Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium** has been designed as a focused, high-value first edition. With **Mama Shelter Cape Town** confirmed as Official Venue Partner, and **The Rockefeller Hotel by Newmark** confirmed as host of the evening cocktail reception, the event has a strong platform from which to launch. Afrigay is inviting a small group of aligned partners to support the symposium. A few partners are already on board and will be announced soon.

The opportunities below are ideas for how organisations can get involved. Partners may support a specific event element, contribute a cash partnership amount, provide relevant in-kind value, or suggest an activation that better suits their brand.

Available opportunities include, but are not limited to:

- **Lead Event & Naming Partner**
- **Lunch & Tea Break Partners**
- **Content, Photography & Storytelling Partner**
- **Delegate Access / SMME Participation Partner**
- **Delegate Swag Bag Partners**
- **General Event Support Partner**
- **The Glitter Trail Experience Partner**

Each opportunity can be tailored, with recognition linked to the level and nature of the contribution. Partner visibility may include website recognition, social media acknowledgement, event communication, selected branding, stage recognition, delegate tickets and inclusion in the post-event report.

The aim is to create partnerships that are commercially useful, strategically aligned and supportive of the symposium's purpose: helping South Africa's tourism industry move from welcome to readiness.

# Lead Event & Naming Partner Opportunity

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## Investment: let's have a call to discuss

The **Lead Event & Naming Partner** is the headline partner of the inaugural Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium. This is the strongest and most visible partnership opportunity, designed for an organisation that wants to be directly associated with the growth of LGBTQ+ tourism in South Africa and Africa.

This partner is not simply sponsoring an event. They are helping launch a new industry platform focused on tourism readiness, destination competitiveness, inclusive economic growth and market development. Their support helps make the full symposium possible — from programme development and production to delegate experience, hospitality, communications and post-event reporting.

### Partner receives:

- Naming association, for example: **Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium 2027, presented by [Partner]**
- Premium logo placement across the website, event presentation, invitations and digital assets
- Recognition as the headline partner from stage
- Opportunity for a short welcome address or thought-leadership message
- Strong visibility in event email and social media communications
- Recognition in partner announcements and post-event reporting
- Opportunity to include a relevant, branded give-away item in the Swag Bag
- Brand association with the long-term growth journey of the symposium
- **6 complimentary delegate tickets**
- First opportunity to discuss involvement in future editions

# Lunch Partner Opportunity

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## Investment: R65,000

The **Lunch Partner** sponsors one of the key hospitality moments of the day, including delegate lunch, soft drinks and gratuity. This is a practical and visible partnership linked directly to the delegate experience.

Lunch is more than a catering break. It is a major networking moment where delegates connect, discuss the morning sessions and build relationships across the tourism industry. For hospitality, food, beverage, destination or lifestyle-aligned brands, this creates a natural and positive association with care, welcome and quality.

### Partner receives:

- **Lunch Partner** recognition
- Branding or signage in the lunch area, where venue rules allow
- Recognition from stage before lunch
- Logo visibility in the digital programme or event materials
- Website, email and social media acknowledgement
- Association with a premium hospitality moment at Mount Nelson
- Opportunity to include a relevant, branded give-away item in the Swag Bag
- Recognition in the post-event impact report
- **2 complimentary delegate tickets**

# Tea Break Partner Opportunity

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## Investment Options:

**Morning Tea Break Partner: R25,000 – or - Afternoon Tea Break Partner: R25,000 – or - Full-Day Tea Break Partner: R45,000**

The **Tea Break Partner** supports one or both of the symposium's key refreshment and networking moments. These breaks give delegates time to connect, reflect on the content, meet speakers and partners, and continue conversations outside the formal programme.

Sponsors may choose to support either the morning or afternoon tea break individually, or take both breaks as the **Full-Day Tea Break Partner** at a discounted combined rate.

This is a practical, visible and approachable sponsorship opportunity for a partner that wants brand presence during high-traffic delegate moments without taking ownership of a larger event element.

## Partner receives:

- **Morning Tea Break Partner, Afternoon Tea Break Partner or Full-Day Tea Break Partner** recognition
- Branding or signage at the relevant tea break area, where venue rules allow
- Recognition in the digital programme or event materials
- Website, email and social media acknowledgement
- Association with delegate hospitality, networking and informal industry connection
- Opportunity to include a relevant, branded give-away item in the Swag Bag
- **1 complimentary delegate ticket** for an individual tea break partner
- **2 complimentary delegate tickets** for the full-day tea break partner

# Content, Photography & Storytelling Partner Opportunity

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## Investment: R30,000

The **Content, Photography & Storytelling Partner** supports the capture and sharing of the symposium's story. This includes photography, selected content capture, post-event storytelling and visual documentation of the day.

This partnership is ideal for a brand that understands the value of visibility beyond the event room. The content created will help extend the impact of the symposium, showcase partner involvement, document key moments and support future growth of the platform.

For the right partner, this is a strategic visibility opportunity because their support helps shape how the event is remembered, shared and reported.

### Partner receives:

- **Content, Photography & Storytelling Partner** recognition
- Logo recognition in selected event content, where appropriate
- Website, email and social media acknowledgement
- Recognition linked to post-event storytelling
- Mention in the post-event impact report
- Opportunity to include a relevant, branded give-away item in the Swag Bag
- Access to selected event images, where appropriate
- **1 complimentary delegate ticket**

# Delegate Access / SMME Participation Partner Opportunity

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## Support model: R990 per hosted delegate

Partners may sponsor as many delegate places as they wish, with a minimum of one hosted delegate place. Partners attending the symposium must also purchase at least one ticket for their own representative. This opportunity helps make the symposium accessible to selected tourism SMMEs, LGBTQ+-owned tourism businesses, emerging tourism leaders, tourist guides and community tourism voices who may not otherwise be able to attend.

It is a practical way to support access, transformation and wider industry participation.

### Examples:

5 hosted delegates: R4,950

10 hosted delegates: R9,900

20 hosted delegates: R19,800

30 hosted delegates: R29,700

### Partner receives:

- Delegate Access / SMME Participation Partner recognition
- Acknowledgement of the number of delegate places supported
- Website, email and social media recognition, where appropriate
- Recognition in the post-event report
- Option to include a relevant branded item in the delegate swag bag

# Delegate Materials Partner Opportunity

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## Investment: R12,500

The **Delegate Materials Partner** supports the practical materials that help delegates engage with the day. This may include delegate bags, printed materials, worksheets, notebooks, pens or other useful on-site items.

This partnership is about being part of the delegate journey. The materials are handled, used and taken away, giving the partner a direct presence in the event experience.

### Partner receives:

- **Delegate Materials Partner** recognition
- Logo placement on relevant materials, where production allows
- Website, email and social media acknowledgement
- Recognition in the digital programme or partner list
- Opportunity to include a relevant, branded give-away item in the Swag Bag
- Association with the delegate experience and practical learning
- **1 complimentary delegate ticket**

# Swag Bag Insert Partner Opportunity

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## Investment: R2,500 + supplied item for each delegate

The **Swag Bag Insert Partner** is a paid opportunity for brands to place a useful gift, offer, voucher or branded item into each delegate bag.

This is not a dumping ground for flyers. Items should be relevant, useful, good quality and aligned with the tone of the symposium. The opportunity gives partners a direct way to reach every delegate with a tangible item or offer.

The partner supplies enough items for all delegates, speakers and hosted guests.

### Partner receives:

- Inclusion of approved item in each delegate bag
- Website or social media acknowledgement
- Recognition in the partner list, where appropriate
- Direct physical reach to delegates
- Opportunity to connect the item to a specific offer, service or experience

# General Event Support Partner Opportunity

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## Investment: From R5,000

The **General Event Support Partner** provides flexible support towards the overall delivery of the symposium. This may contribute to production, logistics, communications, design, event coordination, reporting or other practical delivery needs.

This option is ideal for partners who want to support the purpose of the symposium but do not need to own a specific event element.

It still provides meaningful recognition while allowing the event team to allocate support where it is most needed.

### Partner receives:

- **General Event Support Partner** recognition
- Website, email and social media acknowledgement
- Recognition in the digital programme or partner list
- Mention in the post-event impact report
- Opportunity to include a relevant, branded give-away item in the Swag Bag
- Association with the launch of a new LGBTQ+ tourism growth platform
- **1 complimentary delegate ticket**, depending on contribution level

# The Glitter Trail Peninsula Experience

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## Glitter Trail Experience Partner

The **Glitter Trail** is Afrigay Travel's signature LGBTQ+ group travel experience — joyful, stylish, proudly South African and packed with personality, connection and sparkle.

For the symposium, it will be presented as a one-day **Cape Peninsula experience** on 13 January 2027, giving delegates a taste of how LGBTQ+ tourism can be packaged with energy, confidence and commercial appeal.

Think bottomless bubbles, fabulous onboard entertainment, shared celebration and a Cape Town experience that feels completely different from a standard day trip.

Afrigay is inviting partners to help support the Glitter Trail experience and keep the delegate cost accessible. Support may include cash sponsorship, bubbles, transport, lunch, hosted experiences, entertainment, snack packs or branded delegate moments.

### Partner receives:

- Glitter Trail Experience Partner recognition
- Visibility linked to the Day 2 experience
- Website, email and social media recognition, where appropriate
- Recognition in the post-event report
- Opportunity to create a fun hosted or branded moment

**Chat to us about potential partnerships to help make this happen.**



# Expected outcomes & Long-term potential

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## Expected Outcomes

The first edition is designed to deliver practical value for the industry, partners and delegates. It will create greater awareness of the LGBTQ+ travel opportunity, build confidence among tourism businesses, encourage new partnerships, and strengthen the case for South Africa as Africa's leading LGBTQ+ travel gateway.

## Long-Term Potential

While the first edition is intentionally focused and achievable, the long-term opportunity is significant. Over time, the symposium can grow into an annual platform for LGBTQ+ tourism insight, supplier development, trade collaboration, SMME support, destination positioning and African LGBTQ+ travel leadership.

## Wrapping it up

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South Africa has a rare opportunity to become the leading LGBTQ+ travel gateway to Africa — not by relying only on its natural beauty, progressive reputation or existing appeal, but by building a tourism industry that is genuinely ready.

Readiness means understanding the traveller. It means designing better products, preparing teams, reducing awkwardness, building trust, marketing with authenticity and creating experiences where LGBTQ+ travellers can arrive fully, safely and joyfully.

The Afrigay LGBTQ+ Tourism Growth Symposium is designed to start that work.

Hosted in Cape Town, grounded in South Africa, and looking towards the future of inclusive travel in Africa, the symposium offers a timely, practical and powerful platform for tourism growth.

It is an opportunity to bring the right people into the room, begin a more serious industry conversation, and turn goodwill into strategy, product, partnership and measurable impact.



— afrigay —

# LGBTQ+ TOURISM GROWTH SYMPOSIUM

— 2027 —

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