

Which pronoun suits you?

Name tags make sure that we use the correct name when we talk to someone. A pronoun sticker indicates how someone wants to be addressed at a glance. Using the correct pronouns acknowledges someone's gender identity and is an expression of respect.

Leiden University strives to be an inclusive community and respects the diversity of gender identities amongst staff and students. That is why we provide pronoun stickers during events.

What is gender identity?

Your gender identity is the way in which you experience yourself: man, woman, non-binary, or anything beyond these categories. Your gender identity is not necessarily tied to your biological sex. **Transgender** people don't identify with the gender they were assigned at birth and **non-binary** or **genderfluid** people don't feel comfortable with the distinction between man and woman.

A **pronoun** refers to a person without using their name. Most of the time you use pronouns like he/his and she/hers, but they/them pronouns are also a possibility for referring to a person. It might take a while to get used to these pronouns, but they have been around in other languages for quite some time.

What is a pronoun?

“You can't always tell someone's gender based on their appearance.”



Why is it important to use inclusive pronouns?

Everyone appreciates being addressed with the correct pronouns. For transgender and non-binary people this is often rather important, because their gender identity is not necessarily apparent to others.

Also, when your gender identity is directly visible to others, it is **even more important** to make a habit of using inclusive pronouns. In doing so, you normalise talking about pronouns and you protect transgender and non-binary people in using pronouns consciously.

Don't worry when you use an incorrect pronoun by mistake, it happens to everyone. When you notice, apologise and then use the correct pronoun. It is important that you do not dwell on the excuse for too long, as it can make people uncomfortable or give them the feeling that they need to reassure you.

What if I use an incorrect pronoun?

TIP! There are more ways to make your language more inclusive. Indicate your pronouns in your email signature, or state them when you introduce yourself. Practice makes perfect!

Example of an e-mail signature

Yours sincerely,

[name]

[title]

Pronouns: he/him



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“Leiden University respects the gender identity of students and staff.”

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