

#actout MANIFESTO



We're here and there are a whole lot of us!

We are actors who identify as lesbian, gay, bi, trans*, queer, inter and non-binary, amongst many other things.

Until now, we haven't been able to be open about our private lives without fearing professional consequences. All too often, many of us have been cautioned – be it by managers, casting agents, colleagues, producers, editors, directors, etc. – to keep quiet about our sexual orientations and gender identities to avoid jeopardizing our careers.

We are putting an end to this – once and for all!

We have decided to come together with a public statement to achieve visibility.

Some of us are actors who bravely risked coming out on our own in the past; some of us are now deciding to. We're newcomers, household names, as well as those you may not have heard of yet. We grew up when homosexuality was still illegal, and we're also younger than Elliot Page. We grew up in villages and big cities; we're people of color, people with immigrant experiences and people with disabilities; we are not a homogeneous group.

Until now, we've been told that if we revealed certain facets of our identities, namely our sexual and gender identities, we would suddenly lose the ability to portray certain characters and relationships. As if the knowledge of who we are in our private lives would somehow invalidate our ability to convincingly embody roles for the audience.

Nothing could be further from the truth.

We are actors. We don't have to be the characters we portray. We act as if – that is the very quintessence of our job.

We play wives and fathers, lovers and politicians, heroes and creeps. And often enough, characters whose ideas we'd never agree with. That's why we can play murderers without having murdered anyone. We can save lives without having studied medicine. We can play people with sexual identities different from the ones we live out. And, by the way, this is something we've been doing for a very long time, the entire time, in fact, because it is the nature of our profession.

In addition, the experience of the last few years has shown that the viewing habits for film and TV series are expanding and changing. There are far more stories and perspectives being watched and celebrated than merely those of the white heterosexual middle class. Diversity has long been a lived social reality in Germany. Sadly, this fact is still hardly reflected in our cultural narratives.

Our society has long been ready. The viewers are ready.

Our industry should stand for togetherness and reflect society in all of its diversity.

We take responsibility for living and working together freely and openly. We stand in solidarity with everyone who faces stereotyping and marginalization through ableism, ageism, antisemitism, classism, racism and other forms of discrimination. We also feel connected to those colleagues who are not ready to take this step right now.

This is also an act of solidarity that goes far beyond the limits of our own industry and an appeal to everyone to support us.

We are looking forward to all the new stories we'll be able to tell and the characters we can portray.

The world is changing and we are all playing a part in it!