

## Pride House · Paris 2024 and Compete Proud announce the their partnership

Paris – April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024

On the occasion of the [Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024](#), [Pride House](#) is happy to announce its new partnership with [Compete Proud](#), a unique LGBTIQ+ sport association within the Olympic Movement founded by Olympian and IOC Young Leader [Javier Raya OLY](#).

Through this partnership, Pride House aims to increase the visibility of LGBTIQ+ athletes competing during the Olympic and Paralympic Games, bringing into the space Compete Proud Team expertise, which is composed by [Matthew Mitcham OLY](#), Olympic Gold Medalist Diver; [Nikki Symmons](#), Former International Hockey Player; and [Javier Raya OLY](#), all of them DEI advocates and inclusion experts in sport.



Compete Proud will actively participate during the Olympic and Paralympic Games at the Pride House spaces in a diverse range of activities, starting with 'The Lab' where the team will share their experience as openly LGBTIQ+ athletes and Olympians with the local French community, working with groups and building up the excitement towards the Games. Then, during Olympic and Paralympic Games Paris 2024, the Team will participate on-site in what will be a first-ever Pride Hosue experience that will include 'social sofa' activities and live-streaming interviews. These activations will allow the fans to engage with the athletes beyond the playing field, as it will provide a unique platform for the athletes to share their journey.

"As co-chair of Pride House, I am immensely proud to announce our partnership with Compete Proud. This collaboration not only enables us to champion amateur sports but also empowers us to engage professional athletes, ensuring a legacy that embraces excellence at all levels of competition. Together, we will be stronger in advocating and promoting more inclusive sports." says Jeremy, co president of Fier-Play, Pride House · Paris 2024

“As the founder of Compete Proud, I’m truly excited for this collaboration to come to life and to have a real impact while in Paris. It’s unique that the team will take part in such an amazing opportunity, bringing closer to the Games the conversation around diversity and inclusion in sport.” says Javier, Olympian and IOC Young Leader - Compete Proud founder.

“I’m delighted to see this announcement public. We have been working together for many months now, developing ideas to create exciting, interactive activities and showcase our work during the Games with the French public and of course the Olympic and Paralympic athletes participating” says Nikki.

“I’m looking forward to connecting with other LGBTIQ+ athletes on and off the field. I hope to inspire and empower them with my story, and contribute to this initiative that provides a safe space for them” says Matt.

### **Compete Proud**

Compete Proud is a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) sports platform, founded by Olympian and IOC Young Leader Javier Raya, and supported by the IOC Young Leaders programme of the International Olympic Committee.

Compete Proud highlights the stories of proud athletes who throughout their journey have become D.E.I. role models. The platform offers educational tools, online webinars, in-person workshops and consultancy to other athletes, sporting bodies and corporate organizations, and aims to make sport more inclusive from grassroots to the Olympic stage.

Composed by a team of international athletes, Olympians and Paralympians specialised in Diversity, Equity & Inclusion in sport, Compete Proud offers expertise through online content, webinars, workshops and consultancy on topics such as racial and LGBTIQ+ Diversity & Inclusion, Gender Equality, Accessibility and any other topics related to minority groups in Sport. It is directed to athletes, sporting bodies, sport organizations, corporates and companies engaged in sport.

#### Ambassadors biographies:

##### **Javier’s:**

Javier Raya is an Olympic figure skater from Spain. He has competed at the highest international level for over 15 years, being finalist at Europeans and World Championships. With a media and communications education background, he works closely with sport institutions and athletes. Javier is passionate to develop diversity and inclusion within the sport.

##### **Nikki’s:**

Former international hockey player, with 13 years of elite international experience, teacher, author and LGBTQIA role model. Currently a communications professional utilizing her life-long experience to advocate for and advance inclusion, equity, and diversity. As a DEI leader, Nikki established the first Global LGBTQIA Employee Resource Group (ERG), Stripes Global at her current company. In 2020 co-

wrote a chapter in 'When the World Stops Watching,' a book which includes her experience as the first female athlete in Ireland to 'come out' publicly (in 2014). As a dynamic people activator driven by the success of the team, Nikki is a leader that values relationship building and connecting skills in both her personal and professional life, and also serves as a trusted advisor to senior leaders.

#### **Matt's:**

An 18-year career in the demanding sport of Diving is a notable feat in itself, but Matthew is one of the very few athletes to complete the golden trifecta by winning the Olympic Games (2008), World Cup (2010) and Commonwealth Games (2014).

Matthew's win in Beijing 2008 will forever stand out in history, not just for achieving the single highest dive score in Olympic history, but in coming out before his Olympic debut, he became the first ever openly gay Olympic Champion.

Since winning Gold in Beijing, Matthew has gone on to use his platform as an ambassador, speaker, and entertainer to advocate for issues surrounding mental health and wellbeing and the LGBTQIA+ community.

#### **Fier Play for Pride House · Paris 2024**

##### What is Pride House?

Operating under the name of Pride House International, Pride House is an open and inclusive venue present at major global sporting events. Its aim is to combat discrimination and elevate the profile of LGBTQIA+ people in sport. It plays host to a festive assortment of cultural, sports-related, and educational programs, all with the goal of making sport universal and accessible to all without any discrimination.

For more information on Pride House International, visit <http://www.pridehouseinternational.org/>

##### What are Pride House's objectives?

To create a unique event that both celebrates the Olympic Games and encourages interactions with our athletes and allies.

Educate and train the general public with educational tools, tips, recommendations, and a universal framework for embracing the sports moving through the lens of LGBTQIA+.

Raise awareness and visibility of LGBTQIA+ people in sport while making a rallying cry for the universal decriminalization of homosexuality.

##### About Fier Play

A non-profit organization, as defined under the 1901 French law, created in 2022 by the FIER foundation. The organization's aim is to promote fair play, inclusion, equity, and respect for people in sport, regardless of their sex, sexual orientation, gender expression, or identity.

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