

VISUAL STORY

Think Autism

Conference & Workshops

Saturday 30 May 2026

9:00am to 5:30pm

St Teresa of Kolkata Building
Australian Catholic University
115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung people of the Kulin Nation as the Traditional Custodians of the land where the Think Autism Conference is held.

I pay my respects to Elders past and present.

I extend that respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Autistic people who attend this event.

WELCOME

I am welcome here

This conference is by Autistic people, for Autistic people.

I am welcome whether I am Autistic, neurodivergent, LGBTQIA+, multicultural, Deaf, Disabled, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, a first-time attendee, or a support person.

At this conference I can:

- Stim
- Take breaks at any time
- Wear headphones or sunglasses
- Leave a session and come back later

I do not have to:

- Mask
- Explain why I need a break
- Speak in the open dialogue
- Stay for the whole day

HOW TO USE THIS

What is a visual story?

A visual story uses words and pictures to explain what will happen at an event.

It helps me know what to expect, feel prepared, and plan ahead.

I can read this story at my own pace.

I do not need to read it all at once. I can come back to it whenever I want.

I can read it on my phone on the way to the conference, or share it with a support person.

How to use it

- Read all of it
- Or skip to the section I need
- Use the contents on page 2
- Page numbers are at the bottom

THE EVENT

About the conference

The Think Autism Conference is a one-day event. It is hosted by Just Gold and Aurum Foundation.



The day is on Saturday 30 May 2026 and runs from 9:00am to 5:30pm.

Keynote talks

from Autistic leaders

Panels

with multiple speakers

Fireside chats

informal conversations

Workshops

in smaller breakout rooms

The day ends with an open dialogue session – anyone can speak, but no one has to.

THE BUILDING

About the venue

The conference is at the St Teresa of Kolkata Building.

This building is part of the Australian Catholic University (ACU).

The address is:

115 Victoria Parade

Fitzroy VIC 3065

The main sessions are in the O'Connell Lecture Theatre on Level 2. We call this the amphitheatre.

The workshops are also on Level 2, next to the Lecture Theatre

The conference will use the main entrance on Victoria Parade.



PHOTO: Building exterior
from Victoria Parade

FINDING THE VENUE

Map

The venue is in Fitzroy.

It is on the corner of Victoria Parade and Young Street.

Trams stop on Victoria Parade right outside.

The nearest train station is Parliament Station.

Parliament Station is about a 10 minute walk away.



PHOTO: Site map

ACU campus and nearby tram stops

WHEN I ARRIVE

Arriving at the building

When I walk up Victoria Parade I will see the St Teresa of Kolkata Building.

I can use the main entrance:

The entrance take me into to the first escalators.

If I feel overwhelmed when I arrive, I can step into the nearest sensory room before checking in.

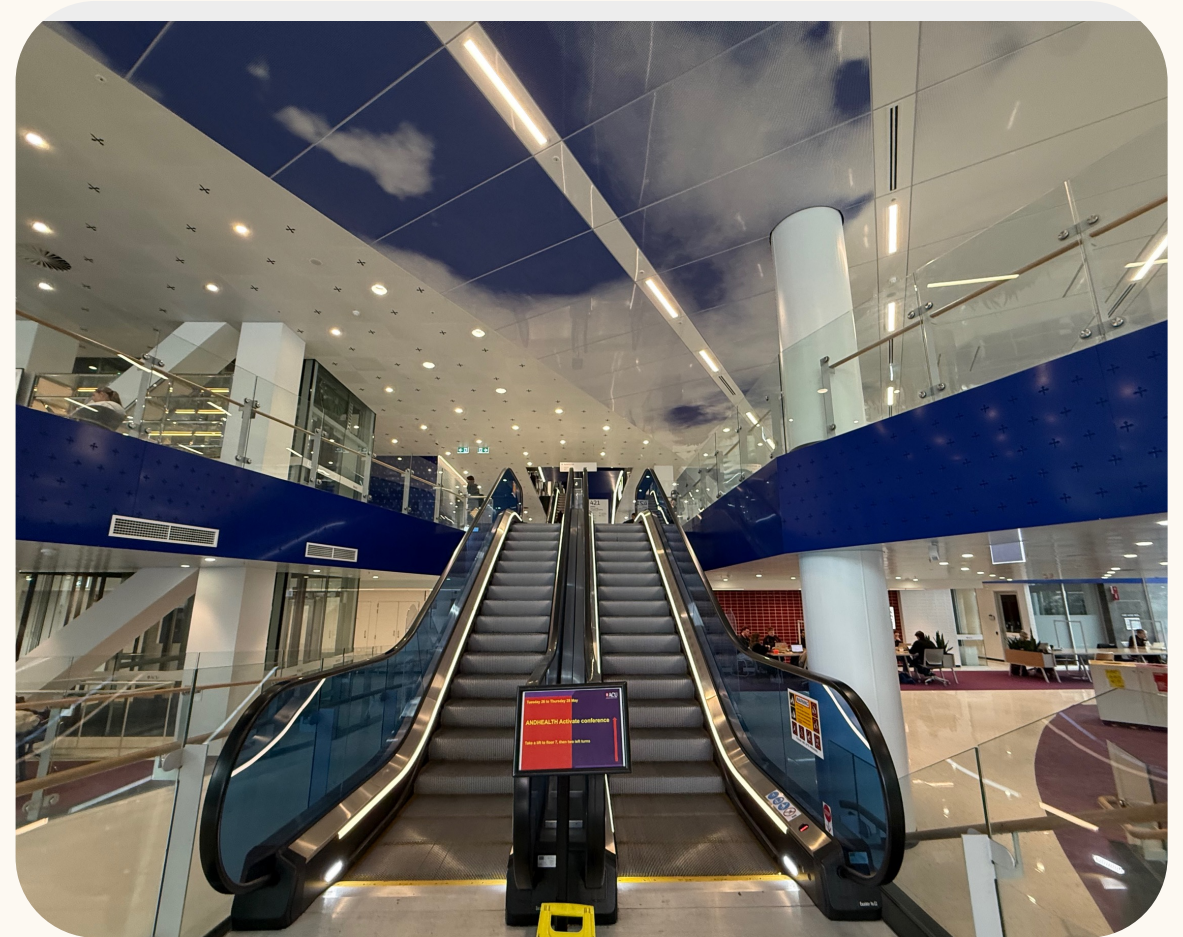


PHOTO: Building entrance

and the escalators leading up to reception

CHECK-IN

Reception

Reception is on the ground floor, right after the first escalators.

I take the escalators up to get there.

At reception I will:

- Check in with a staff member
- Be told where the sessions are
- Be told where the sensory rooms are



PHOTO: Reception area

and the escalators leading up to the theatre

MAIN SESSIONS

The O'Connell Lecture Theatre

The main program happens in the O'Connell Lecture Theatre on Level 2.

This is where the keynotes, panels, fireside chats, and the open dialogue take place.

Outside the theatre:

- The theatre has a sign with O'Connell on it
- A bench at the front
- A small reception area within the theatre

Inside the theatre:

- Rows of seating
- A stage at the front
- Microphones and speakers
- Camera-optional seating will be confirmed on the day



PHOTO: Amphitheatre reception area
and the door to the main area

QUIET SPACES · 1 OF 3

The listening area

At the upper part of the lecture theatre, there is a listening area.

This area is for sitting, standing, or moving – without being in the chairs.

In the listening area I can:

- Stand at the back
- Sit on the floor
- Lean against a wall
- Step from foot to foot if I need to move
- Still see and hear the session



BREAKOUT ROOMS

Workshop rooms

Workshops run at the same time as the main program.

Workshop rooms are on Level 2:

- Room 421.2.06
- Room 421.2.07

These are smaller rooms with chairs, tables, and a presenter at the front.

I can move between the main theatre and the workshop rooms throughout the day.

I can also leave a workshop and go back to the theatre if I prefer.



PHOTO: Workshop room
rooms 421.2.06 and 421.2.07



QUIET SPACES · 3 ON EACH FLOOR

Sensory rooms

There are **six sensory rooms – three on Level 2 and one on Level 3.**

Each one is next to the main entrance on its floor. Aspect volunteers will be there.



I can use the sensory room at any time during the day. No one will ask me why.

QUIET SPACES · 3 OF 3

The pause area

There is a pause area near the third-floor entry to the amphitheatre.

It is for stepping out briefly – without leaving the session entirely.

I can use the pause area to:

- Take a few breaths
- Look out the window
- Wait until I am ready to go back in
- Slow down between sessions



PHOTO: Pause area
third-floor entry to the amphitheatre

PRACTICAL

Toilets and water

Toilets and water fountains are near the escalators on each level.

There are accessible toilets on each level too.



PHOTO:
Corridor



PHOTO:
Toilets

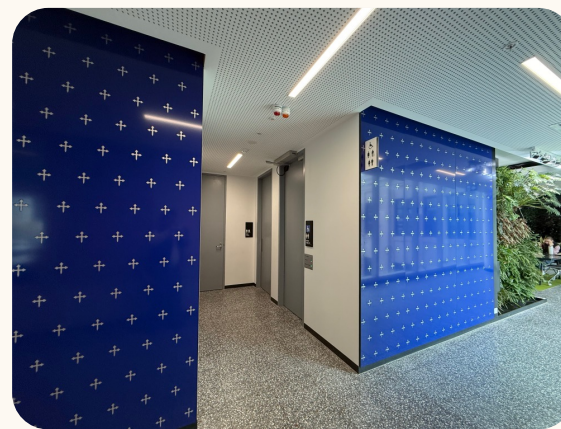


PHOTO:
Toilets



PHOTO:
Water fountain

SUPPORT

People who can help me

Aspect volunteers

In the sensory rooms.

They can help me settle if I need a break.

Wearing event T-shirts with the Autistic Pride Day logo.

Divergent Edge

practitioners

In the rooms throughout the day.

They wear special t-shirts with the Divergent Edge logo.



Event volunteers

They can answer questions and show me around.

Wearing event T-shirts with the Autistic Pride Day logo



There will also be a briefing on the day with information about who to ask and where to go.

ACCESSIBILITY

Accessibility features

This conference assumes neurodiversity needs. I do not need to ask for accommodations to be made.

Camera-optional seating

In every session. They will be confirmed on the day.

Low-scent policy

Across the event.

Step-free access

Throughout the building.

Accessible toilets

On each level.

Sunflower lanyard

Recognised – but everyone is treated with the assumption of neurodiversity needs.

Filming policy

Panels are filmed. Workshops are not filmed.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Sensory information

During the day I might experience:

- People talking, sometimes at the same time
- Microphones, speakers and applause
- Camera shutter sounds – photography all day
- Bright lighting in the theatre
- Crowds and movement at break times

If it feels like too much, I can:

- Use headphones, earplugs, or sunglasses
- Step into a sensory room (Level 2 or Level 3)
- Sit or stand in the listening area
- Step out into the pause area
- Leave the room at any time – no one will ask why

SCHEDULE · MORNING

The day – morning

9:00am	Arrival and Registration	
9:45am	Acknowledgement of Country + Opening	Kyriakos Gold
9:55am	Opening Address (video)	Dr Judy Tang OAM
10:00am	Keynote: A series of Missed Cues	Kyriakos Gold
10:15am	Agenda Setting: The Day in Five Points	5 speakers
10:30am	Fireside Chat: Autism Went Mainstream	Dr Naomi Malone (MC) + Dr Sharon Zivkovic, Kyriakos Gold
11:00am	<i>Break (10 minutes)</i>	
11:10am	Panel: Autistic Burnout as a Policy Failure	Anita Aherne (MC) + 6 panellists
	<i>→ Concurrent workshop in breakout room:</i>	<i>From Diagnosis to Success – Daniel and Daryl Giles</i>
12:15pm	<i>Lunch (45 minutes)</i>	
12:30pm	<i>→ Concurrent workshop:</i>	<i>Education: Home, School and the System – Dr Siobhan Lamb</i>

SCHEDULE · AFTERNOON

The day – afternoon

1:00pm	Panel: Identity and Intersectionality	Georgie Prattis (MC) + 5 panellists
1:30pm	→ <i>Concurrent workshop:</i>	<i>The Full Picture – Dani Bultitude & Emma Read</i>
1:50pm	<i>Break (10 minutes)</i>	
2:00pm	Panel: Autistic Entrepreneurs and the Economy	Kyriakos Gold (MC) + 3 panellists
2:30pm	Showcase: Autistic Entrepreneurs in Focus	6 entrepreneurs presenting
	→ <i>Concurrent workshop:</i>	<i>Work That Works – Jacob Alan Kness & Leslie Clements</i>
3:00pm	<i>Break (10 minutes)</i>	
3:10pm	Panel: Neuroaffirming Practice	Dr Naomi Malone (MC) + 3 panellists
3:30pm	→ <i>Concurrent workshop:</i>	<i>Designing Your Own Operating System – Rebecca McCash</i>
4:00pm	<i>Break (15 minutes)</i>	
4:15pm	Open Dialogue	Kyriakos Gold (MC) + the full room
5:30pm	<i>Conference close</i>	

PREPARATION

What to bring

✓ **Water bottle**

Water fountains are inside the building too.

✓ **Headphones or earplugs**

For sensory load.

✓ **Sunglasses or a hat**

For bright lights.

✓ **Phone and charger**

Power points may be limited.

✓ **Sensory tools or stim items**

Whatever helps me stay regulated.

✓ **Snacks and lunch**

Catering is not provided.

✓ **Notebook or device**

If I want to take notes.

✓ **Ticket**

Printed or on my phone.

EATING DURING THE DAY

Food and drink

Catering is not provided.

I bring my own food and drink, or buy something from nearby Fitzroy.

Inside the building

- Water fountains near the escalators
- I can bring my own food and eat it on the day

In Fitzroy nearby

- Cafes and coffee on surrounding streets like Gertrude Street
- Bakeries and supermarkets nearby
- Plenty of takeaway and casual options

GETTING THERE

Planning my journey

Tram

Trams stop on Victoria Parade outside the venue.

Routes 11, 12, 86, 96 and 109 run on Saturdays.

Train

Closest station is Parliament Station.

Then walk or catch a tram up Victoria Parade.

Bus

Several buses stop near Victoria Parade.

PTV Journey Planner shows routes.

Car

Paid parking under the building.

Street parking may have time limits.

Taxi or rideshare

Uber, DiDi or taxi.

Address: 115 Victoria Parade, Fitzroy.

I check times before I leave on the PTV app or ptv.vic.gov.au.

TICKETS

Booking and NDIS

Tickets are booked through Humanitix.

I may be able to use my NDIS funding to attend.

NDIS tickets and support

For an NDIS ticket, support letter, or invoice, I email:

hello@autisticprideday.org

I check with my Support Coordinator or Plan Manager first.

Refund policy

Refunds are available up to 7 days before the event.

QUICK ANSWERS

Frequently asked questions

Where are the toilets?

Near the escalators on each level. Accessible toilets too.

Where can I get help?

Event volunteers (Autistic Pride Day t-shirts), Aspect volunteers (sensory rooms), Divergent Edge practitioners (special t-shirts).

Where can I go if I need a break?

A sensory room (Level 2 or Level 3), the pause area, or the listening area at the back of the theatre.

How will I know if anything changes?

I will receive an email the day before the conference

Who do I contact for more info?

hello@autisticprideday.org

Where can I give feedback?

I will receive a survey at the end of the conference.

WORDS AND MEANINGS

Glossary

NDIS

National Disability Insurance Scheme. A government scheme that can help fund disability support.

LAC

Local Area Coordinator. A person who helps me work with the NDIS.

Plenary

A session everyone at the conference attends together.

Fireside chat

An informal conversation on stage between a few people.

Open dialogue

A session where anyone in the room can contribute. No one has to.

Stim

Short for self-stimulating behaviour. Movements or sounds that help me focus or feel settled.

FROM US TO YOU

A message from the organisers

Thank you for coming to the Think Autism Conference.

This day is for you.

We hope this visual story helps you feel ready.

If anything is missing or unclear, please tell us:

hello@autisticprideday.org

– Just Gold and Aurum Foundation

DISCLAIMER

Disclaimer

A note from the Autistic Pride Day team:

This Visual Story was developed in consultation with Autistic people, Autistic Pride Day and Aspect Autism Friendly. It is intended as a general guide to support predictability and reduce anxiety for individuals engaging in this environment or activity. While every effort has been made to ensure the information is accurate and accessible, individual needs and preferences may vary.



Autism Friendly