



## 2023 Conference on Neurodivergence, Identity and Self-determination: Enhancing understanding and connections

4-5 November, 2023  
University of Wollongong, Wollongong NSW

### CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

#### EVENT OVERVIEW

My Life My Decisions, Inc. with support from the University of Wollongong is proud to announce they are hosting a conference on *Neurodivergence, Identity and Self-determination*. This conference will focus on bringing together individuals with different perspectives to explore environments, opportunities, actions and connections that foster a positive sense of lifelong identity, self-determination and belonging for neurodivergent and autistic individuals. Through the conference, we aim to provide a space and opportunity for respectful dialogue to develop shared understandings and collaborations to address current issues, barriers and priorities in the autistic and neurodivergent community and to form a shared vision that connects rather than divides different groups. The lived experience of autistic and neurodivergent individuals and their families will form a centrepiece for presentations and discussions across the two days. A central theme throughout all sessions will be the merging of research and practice to meaningfully impact identity, self-determination, and inclusion of autistic and neurodivergent individuals. Over the two days, participants will have the opportunity to engage with presentations, panel discussions, workshops and networking events including a conference dinner.

The conference will focus on **four Streams**:

- Promoting positive identity
- Facilitating self-determination
- Neurodivergent perspectives and understandings
- Co-production of knowledge and practice

#### KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

We are finalising our program but have already lined up a group of internationally recognised keynote speakers including Grace Tame, Dr. Melanie Heyworth, Judy and Tim Sharp, and Yenn Purkis. We will provide more information via our website as additional speakers are confirmed.

## AUDIENCE

- Autistic and neurodivergent adolescents and adults
- Parents and family members
- Practitioners and professionals – Allied health professionals, educators, university staff
- Researchers

## A LITTLE ABOUT US

My Life My Decisions is a community-based group of neurodivergent individuals, parents, and researchers who are dedicated to creating neuro-affirming environments, resources, research and practice that support autistic and neurodivergent individuals to develop and exercise self-determination as they move from early childhood to adulthood. You can find out more about MLMD at <https://mylifemydecisions.org>

## CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

We are pleased to open a call for abstracts and expressions of interest for presentations, panel discussions and workshops. We welcome submissions for people with lived experience as well as professional and research perspectives. **The deadline for submission of abstracts is 5 September, 2023.**

Abstracts can be in any format but must be limited to 300 words. In your submission, you must clearly indicate your preferred presentation type (e.g. oral presentation, panel, workshop) and communicate how your abstract aligns with at least one of the streams. In addition, you need to indicate relevance for at least one of the target groups. To submit your abstract, please use the attached online link. Alternatively, you can submit the attached form to [admin@mylifemydecisions.org](mailto:admin@mylifemydecisions.org). Please indicate in the subject description that you are submitting a conference abstract. Please ensure that abstracts and presentations reflect terminology guidelines suggested by the [Australian Autism CRC](#) and [Reframing Autism](#) and which avoid [ableist language](#).

Abstracts will be reviewed and applicants **notified by 1 October** of the outcome. Presentations will not be confirmed until the presenter is registered for the conference. Below you will find a schedule of conference fees.

## CONFERENCE FEES (for both days)

- Autistic/Neurodivergent individuals - \$200 (1 day only \$120)
- Families/Parents of Autistic/Neurodivergent Individuals - \$300 (1 day only \$160)
- Pension/Concession - \$200 (1 day only \$120)
- University students - \$200 (1 day only \$120)
- Professionals/Researchers - \$500
- UOW staff - \$300
- Conference dinner - \$80



To submit your abstract use the following link  
[https://uow.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_8iaBaXn9g8qjf26](https://uow.au1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_8iaBaXn9g8qjf26)

Or you can complete and email the attached form to [admin@mylifemydecisions.org](mailto:admin@mylifemydecisions.org)

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**ABSTRACT SUBMISSION**

**Abstract Title:**

**Primary Presenter Name:**

**Affiliation:**

**Email:**

**Names of co-presenters** (leave blank if only one presenter):

**Choice of presentation**

Oral presentation (20 mins presentation, 10 mins Q&A)

Workshop (1 hour)

Panel discussion (1 hour)

Networking activity (1 hour)

**Identified stream (select the one that most applies)**

Promoting positive identity

Facilitating self-determination

Neurodivergent perspectives and understandings

Co-production of knowledge and practice

**Intended audience (select all that apply)**

Autistic/neurodivergent adolescents/adults

Parents and family members

Practitioners and professionals

Researchers

**Abstract** (1500 characters maximum):

**Please explain how your presentation will address the identified stream.**

**Please explain how your presentation is relevant for the intended audience(s).**

**Please list any requirements or items you will need?** Please note that a standard computer, visual and microphone setup will be available in each room.

**Please verify that if the abstract is accepted, the primary presenter will be able to attend the conference in person to present.** Yes  No

Thank you. Notifications of outcomes will be made by 1 October, 2023.

Email your abstract to [admin@mylifemydecisions.org](mailto:admin@mylifemydecisions.org)