

Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc.

**Universal Information Access: Pathways to an Equitable Future**

**Sunday, 7 May to Tuesday, 9 May 2023**

Rydges Sydney Central

28 Albion Street

Surry Hills NSW 2010

2023 Round Table Conference  
Book of Abstracts

**Please note:** The book of abstracts is current as of 2 May 2023.

# Sunday, 7 May 2023

## Session 1 – Plenary

### 1a. Harder, Better, Faster, Stronger!

10:00am – 10:30am

**Keynote Presenter:** **Richard Orme**, Chief Executive, DAISY Consortium.

#### Abstract

The title of this session isn’t only a great dance anthem (Daft Punk, 2001), it also neatly describes how accessible publishing reading will evolve in the coming years. Whilst authors and publishers have always been important partners in accessible reading, we are now experiencing a paradigm shift towards the world of inclusive publishing. Hastened by the transition to digital solutions, enabled by standards and tools developed by organisations such as the DAISY Consortium, we’re approaching the place where books and other publications are accessible to many people with print disabilities as the same time, at the same price, and in the same places. This change is both long-overdue and rapidly arriving.

In his role at DAISY, Richard works with disability organisations and publishers across Europe, North America, Africa, and the Middle East. In this session he will discuss how different actors in the publishing industry are upping their accessibility game. He’ll celebrate wonderful progress but also identify important gaps.

These supply side changes have important implications for libraries and the disability sector. How can organisations that historically plugged inequalities for people with disabilities play a positive role in this time of transition? For many people with print disabilities this change is better, but for some so much harder. And how should our organisations adapt to provide relevant services people can access books and other publications in the ways that work for them? We’ll need to be up for the challenge and ready to move.

#### Biography

When teaching in a college more than 30 years ago **Richard Orme** met a blind student who needed to access textbooks and software used on his course. Thus began a thrilling and varied career in what we now refer to as accessibility. After holding senior positions in national and international non-profits and software companies, Richard is now Chief Executive of the DAISY Consortium, the global organization whose mission is to develop standards and solutions for accessible publishing and reading. He is a founding member of the UK Publishers Accessibility Action Group, is Vice Chair of the international Accessible Books Consortium (an initiative of the UN agency WIPO) and is a trustee of the charity Warwickshire Vision Support. He volunteers in his community providing home visiting support for people with disabilities. Richard’s brother James has a profound learning disability, and his son Jim has dyslexia.

## Session 2 – Concurrent

### 2a. What have we learned?

11:00am – 11:30am

**Presenter:** Dr Manisha Amin, CEO, Centre for Inclusive Design.

#### Abstract

CFID have worked with over 66 companies and interview over 400 people in the past few years. So what have we learned about the barriers to access? This presentation provides an analysis of all the work conducted to find the themes and insights that are consistent and useful to all people and organisation.

#### Biography

**Manisha Amin** is the CEO of the Centre for Inclusive Design Emily’s an amazing group of designers and focus on bringing the insights of the edge - that is people who ignored because of race ability age and other forms of difference- To the mainstream. She has presented at numerous events on this issue and is passionate about the innovation that comes from the insights of those must left out.

### 2b. ARC Linkage Project: 3D Printing for Touch Readers – The Finishing Touches.

11:30am - 12:00pm

**Presenter:** Leona Holloway, Research Assistant, Inclusive Technologies, Faculty of Information Technology, Monash University.

#### Abstract

Through a generous Linkage Grant from the Australian Research Council, researchers from Monash University’s Inclusive Technology group have partnered with Round Table, the Department of Education and Training Victoria, NextSense, Guide Dogs Victoria and the Royal Society for the Blind to investigate the use of 3D printing for access to graphics by people who are blind or have low vision. Throughout the project, Monash worked with the partners and Round Table member organisations to bring 3D printing for touch readers from theory to practice, discovering when and how 3D printing can best be used to support inclusion and access to visual information, particularly in the spheres of education and orientation and mobility.

The four year project is now officially complete. In this presentation we will share the main outcomes of the project. This includes evidence of the efficacy of 3D printing for touch readers along with guidelines and other resources on 3D printing for touch readers. In particular, we will address some of the barriers to adoption of 3D printing and how to overcome them, highlighting best practice within the print accessibility community in Australia and New Zealand.

#### Biography

**Leona Holloway** is a member of the Inclusive Technologies group in the Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University. Her research focuses on how new and emerging technologies can be used to provide access to graphics and visual information for people who are blind or have low vision. Leona served as a research assistant on the ARC Linkage Project investigating 3D printing for touch readers and is conducting her PhD on the same topic. Her approach to 3D printing draws on her background in braille transcription and tactile graphics production, her work on accessibility guidelines, and her love of crafting/making. Leona leads the Australia and New Zealand Accessible Graphics Group (ANZAGG).

### 2c. Accessing financial services and products.

12:00pm – 12:30pm

**Presenter:** Fiona Woods, President, Blind Citizens Australia.

#### Abstract

Accessing and understanding financial information is essential if people with print disability are to live independently, safely and equitably. It is generally assumed that adults can receive and pay their bills and taxes, create and manage budgets, keep track of their superannuation and make other investments, and apply for mortgages, leases and loans when they need them.

The digitisation of services has made some of these things more achievable for people who are blind or vision impaired. However, inconsistency, noncompliance with accessibility standards and lack of training for both service providers and consumers have led to many people feeling unable to keep track of their finances, unwilling to complete their transactions on their own, and terrified of being scammed.

Beyond being personally disempowering, the general inaccessibility of financial information can limit our potential for board and management roles. Few users of braille or braille displays are highly skilled in mathematical braille. For people with additional disabilities, or for people who have acquired their vision impairment with age, technology is not the easy solution. Far from requiring elite blindness skills, being able to access banking and financial services and products should be guaranteed under the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cwlth) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disability 2008.

Blind Citizens Australia calls for targeted staff training, a range of accessible information alternatives, options for withdrawing cash and making purchases other than EFTPOS and alternative methods for paying bills and completing digital identity checks.

#### Biography

**Fiona Woods** has been the President of Blind Citizens Australia since December 2021 and a director since 2017. She became a director of Vision 2020 Australia last year. Fiona has been totally blind since early childhood. She studied Law and Arts at the University of Melbourne and worked as a lawyer before becoming the stay-at-home mother of six children. Fiona is an advocate for braille but knows that it cannot meet the needs of everyone. In Fiona’s many varied roles, she is expected to read and interpret many types of financial documents. She also regularly needs to make choices about products and services, by comparing financial details. Access to this kind of information and knowledge about how to use it for people who are blind or vision impaired is limited and unpredictable. Fiona hopes that things can change, starting with awareness.

## Session 3 – Concurrent

### 3a. The Long and winding Road to Audio Description on Australian Television: Lessons in Systemic Advocacy.

11:00am – 11.30am

**Presenter:** Lauren Henley, Senior Systemic Advocate at the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO).

#### Abstract

The right to access television programmes in accessible formats is clearly referenced under the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities – an international treaty that has been signed and ratified by the Australian Government. Despite this fact, Australians who are blind or vision impaired have now been advocating for access to audio description on television for more than 25 years. Lauren Henley has been involved in these advocacy efforts for many years, and recently took the issue to the United Nations. She lodged a complaint with the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities; the treaty body responsible for monitoring the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities at an international level. Lauren’s complaint alleged that the Australian Government had breached its human rights obligations to people with disability by failing to legislate minimum targets for audio description on television. The Committee handed down its final decision late last year and Lauren’s complaint was upheld. The Committee concluded that the Australian Government had, in fact, failed to comply with its obligations to people who are blind or vision impaired under the Convention. In this session, Lauren will outline her experience of taking a complaint to the United Nations and explain what this decision means for the future of audio description on Australian television. She will reflect on what she has learned from this process, and how these learnings could be applied to other systemic issues affecting people with print disabilities in Australia.

#### Biography

**Lauren Henley** is currently working in the role of Senior Systemic Advocate at the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO). Her passion for disability advocacy is fuelled by her own lived experience as a person who is blind. Since losing her sight in a car accident at age 20, Lauren has gone on to hold a wide range of policy and advocacy-related roles. She has previously worked as Advisor to the Disability Discrimination Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission and has twice represented the rights of Australians with disabilities at the United Nations. She has also held numerous roles with Blind Citizens Australia, where she was heavily involved in systemic advocacy efforts relating to audio description on television.

### 3b. Bringing Braille LEGO bricks downunder.

11:30am – 12:00pm

**Presenters:** Dr Melissa Fanshawe, Senior Lecturer, University of Southern Queensland and Tony Wu, National Product & DVA Manager for Commercial Services, Vision Australia.

#### Abstract

In 2020 the LEGO Foundation launched LEGO braille bricks as a tool to help children learn about braille through play. The bricks have since been distributed in 21 countries. This session introduces the pedagogical concept behind the LEGO braille bricks, and explores how the bricks can be used to facilitate learning braille, alongside a braille program. Melissa and Tony share how their firsthand experience at LEGO land opened up new possibilities for the use of LEGO braille bricks to inspire inclusive learning of braille.

#### Biographies

**Melissa Fanshawe** is a senior lecturer in the School of Education at University of Southern Queensland. She has twenty-five years’ experience within Queensland schools as a teacher, advisory teacher, Deputy and Principal. Melissa is a qualified teacher for students with vision impairment, gaining her Masters at the then Royal Institute for the Deaf and Blind. She has worked throughout Queensland to support students with blindness and low vision, including as an Advisory Teacher for Adaptive Technology. Her PhD explored participation in learning and preparation for employment for students with blindness and low vision in mainstream secondary schools. She enjoys her volunteer roles as Vision Australia’s education ambassador for LEGO braille bricks, vice-president of the South Pacific Educators of Vision Impairment and an executive member of the Australian Braille Authority. Melissa is passionate about equitable access to education.

**Tony Wu** is an Accredited Orthoptist by profession graduating in 2007. Prior to studying Orthoptics, Tony also completed a Science degree at the University of Melbourne, majoring in Pharmacology and Biotechnology. Since graduating, Tony has worked at various ophthalmology clinics both in the private and public sector around Melbourne and Geelong. Tony has also worked at low vision and blindness agencies/companies, eye research and educational institutions. Tony’s passion and area of expertise in Orthoptics is low vision and adaptive technology for people with a vision impairment.

Tony currently works at Vision Australia as the National Product & DVA Manager for Commercial Services, and coordinated the launch and distribution of LEGO Braille Bricks in Australia in 2021 as the LEGO Project Manager.

### 3c. Certification in Unified English Braille.

12:00pm – 12:30pm

**Presenters:** Dr Frances Gentle, Lecturer; Josie Howse, Adjunct Research Fellow, NextSense and Craig Cashmore, Director – Development, PeppaCode P/L.

#### Abstract

NextSense is pleased to announce the launch of its online certification examinations in Unified English Braille. Candidates may select from certification of competency in UEB Literary and UEB Introductory Mathematics, with competency examinations in UEB Advanced Mathematics and UEB Extension Mathematics to be released later in 2023. Each exam follows the content taught in the corresponding UEB Online training program. In the tradition of the training programs, individuals have the option to complete the exams at any time during the year. The exams are fully accessible, low cost and self-paced, with automated marking on completion of the exam.

Candidates will require a PC or laptop and internet connection to register and complete the online examinations. Successful candidates will receive a certificate of competency and letter of results for the completed exam. Unsuccessful candidates will be offered the opportunity to resit the exam within a specified time-period.

The NextSense UEB design team has prioritised certification in UEB competency in response to many requests from UEB Online subscribers from around the world. We are delighted to extend our commitment to promoting the right to braille literacy for children and adults in all regions of the world. The online nature of the UEB examination and certification process provides a pathway to certification of braille competency for professionals and parents.

We invite you to visit the UEB Online website for detailed information about the examination process – [UBE Online website: https://uebonline.org/](https://uebonline.org/)

#### Biographies

**Frances Gentle** is a lecturer in sensory impairment with the NextSense Institute and Macquarie University (NSW). She leads the NextSense design team which developed the UEB Online website and literary and mathematics training programs in Unified English Braille. Frances is President of the International Council on Education of People with Visual Impairment and a recipient of Round Table’s Lifetime Achievement award in 2013.

**Josie Howse** (PSM) is an Adjunct Research Fellow with the NextSense Institute and former Manager of the Braille and Large Print Services, NSW Department of Education. Josie has extensive experience in braille code development both in Australia and at an international level. Josie was editor of the inaugural UEB Braille Primer: Australian Edition, published in 2006, and is co-editor the first and second editions of the UEB Australian Training Manual (2016; 2022). She recently authored the UEB Online training modules for Introductory, Advanced and Extension Mathematics and has supported the many UEB Online subscribers as they complete their exercises.

**Craig Cashmore** is the founder of PeppaCode, a web and app development business focused on 'out-of-the-ordinary' strategic web and software development for small business, start-ups and educational institutions. Craig's achievements include the successful launch of UEB Online and implementing educational apps for visually impaired children. Craig continues to work on new and innovative projects using modern web technologies.

## Session 4 – Concurrent

### 4a. The process of implementing a disability specific curriculum for students with blindness and low vision throughout Australia.

1:30pm – 2:00pm

**Presenters:** Meredith Prain, Able Australia; Cathy Basterfield, Access Easy English.

#### Abstract

People with print disability are diverse and include people who are blind and vision impaired, people who are deafblind and people with cognitive disability. It also includes people with poor educational outcomes, those with acquired disabilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people with English as a second language, some with only an oral language knowledge with no print literacy skills. There are multiple accessible formats which regular text can be converted to, but these translations are only one step towards genuine access and inclusion.

Health environments use a framework which is valuable for all environments any of us use. It includes the policy and practice of the organisation, the communication partner environment, along with the converted text in a more accessible format.

The information in this session draws on learnings from projects including:

* Deafblind Information Australia, website audit,
* Two Medical Research Futures Fund funded projects regarding communication of health information,
* Virtual Disability Conference,
* A disability service series of fact sheets.

Formats used in these projects have included:

* Plain language,
* Easy English,
* Audio format with visual cues,
* Auslan,
* Plain text for braille conversion.

Given people’s individual capacities and experiences, it is recommended that service providers and researchers provide additional support for individuals with print disability to access information in their preferred format. This support should be offered as standard practice to genuinely address barriers to accessing information.

Recommendations are made regarding good practices in converting documents into accessible formats, polices and resources which need to be in places and the steps to take once documents have been converted to optimise genuine access.

#### Biographies

**Meredith** **Prain** is an experienced speech pathologist and researcher. She has over 25 years' experience working with people with deafblindness and is passionate about making communities more accessible and inclusive for people with communication disability. Meredith is currently the National Head of Research and Centre of Excellence with Able Australia and manages the Deafblind Information Australia project.

**Cathy Basterfield** is an experienced Speech Pathologist, with more than 30 years working with people with Complex Communication Needs. For the last 18 years, she has lead the development of Easy English. Cathy was involved in the development of the first guidelines for writing Easy English in Australia. This is still the basis of quality Easy English. Cathy collaborates with international researchers and practitioners in Europe, USA, UK, with new work in Korea and Singapore underway.

### 4b When perfect is the enemy of good – Suggestions for a pragmatic approach to accessibility.

2:00pm – 2:30pm

**Presenters:** Lars Ballieu Christensen, Senior Accessibility Advisor and Tanja Stevns, Special Education Teacher, Vision, Sensus.

#### Abstract

”Il meglio è nemico del bene”, Italian proverb paraphrased by French philosopher Voltaire goes: The best is the enemy of the good. Where formal accessibility standards may be required when legislating and benchmarking, enforcing stringent compliance regimes can be more of a hindrance when creating accessible, inclusive teaching environments; simply because of the complexity involved and the advanced skills required by content creators. Although full accessibility compliance is required and have benefits in some situations, providing contents with a decent level of practical accessibility may often outweigh those benefits in terms timeliness, cost, and frustration. With decades of experience from formal accessibility audits, remediating thousands of documents, and creation of numerous inclusion technologies, Sensus suggests paths to a more pragmatic implementation of compliance and accessibility to remove barriers in education.

#### Biographies

**Lars Ballieu Christensen** works with technology and design for people with special needs. He advises government, organizations, academic institutions and companies on accessibility and inclusive design. Furthermore, he is the inventor of a range of innovative technologies that support inclusion and self-sufficiency amongst people with special needs, including the award-winning RoboBraille service. Lars holds master degrees in computer science and journalism, as well as a Ph.D. degree in computer science, all from the University of Roskilde, Denmark.

**Tanja Stevns** works with education and technology to support inclusion of people with disabilities. With more than 25 years experience working at the Danish National Center for Blind and Partially Sighted Children and Youth, Tanja is a special education teacher and speech therapist, specializing in visual impairment and general learning disorders.

### 4c A new Centre for Assistive Technology research.

2:00pm – 2:30pm

Presenter: Kim Marriott, Director, Centre for Assistive Technology, Monash University.

#### Abstract

Monash University is forming a new Centre for Assistive Technology, bringing together researchers from across Australia’s largest university interested in the design, evaluation and use of assistive technologies. The core aim of the Centre is to support people with disabilities to live self-directed lives by understanding the role of technology as an enabler or barrier to social and economic participation and driving technological innovation that meets the needs of people with disabilities, their families, educators and employers.

#### Biography

**Kim Marriott** is a Professor within the Department of Human-Centred Computing at Monash University. He leads the new Centre for Assistive Technology. His research focuses on accessible graphics for people who are blind or have low vision.

## Session 5 – Concurrent

### 5a. (Accessibly) Mapping the Werribee Mansion and Gardens.

1:30pm – 2:00pm

**Presenters:** Dr Dagmar Reinhardt, Associate Professor, The University of Sydney and Leona Holloway, Research Assistant, Monash University

#### Abstract

Werribee Mansion is one of the largest and most opulent properties in Victoria, open to the public and situated in the formal gardens of Werribee Park with the Victoria State Rose Garden. In a partnership between Parks Victoria, Monash University and the University of Sydney, we have developed a multimedia map of the mansion and park for display in the main foyer, for inclusive use by all visitors including those who are blind or have low vision. The map uses a combination of print, braille, 3D models, 3D icons and audio touch buttons to provide an overview of the grounds and its many offerings. The map is accompanied by a larger model of the Mansion to enable touch access to its architectural features. These new materials provide a welcome supplement to guided touch tours, available weekly by request, when blind and low vision visitors can get a special hands-on access to the mansion’s many historic items.

#### Biographies

**Dr Dagmar Reinhardt** is a researcher and educator at the School of Architecture, Design and Planning, The University of Sydney. Reinhardt’s research focuses on the intersection of architecture, body, space and the senses, by integration of advanced data retrieval and fabrication methods, including photogrammetry and robotics. A practising architect, her built works, competitions and installations are research-based, widely published and have received numerous recognitions and awards for affordable and multi-generational residential works [Architecture and Design in theory and practice: www.reinhardtjung.de](http://www.reinhardtjung.de/).

**Leona Holloway** is a research assistant and PhD student with the Inclusive Technologies group in the Faculty of Information Technology at Monash University. She also leads the Australia and New Zealand Accessible Graphics Group, a subcommittee of the Round Table. Leona’s research focuses on how new and emerging technologies can be used to provide access to graphics and visual information for people who are blind or have low vision. In her work on the ARC Linkage Project investigating the use of 3D printing for accessibility, she created a series of tactile maps and guidelines for the design and implementation of 3D prints for touch readers.

### 5b. Museum for Touch Workshop: Understanding Museum Exhibits through Touch – Towards Object Based Learning and Universal Access for Blind and Low Vision Children and Adults.

2:00pm – 2:30pm

**Facilitator:** Dr Dagmar Reinhardt.

#### Short Project Description

Museums collect artworks, artefacts and specimen that are safeguarded behind barriers. These exhibits cannot be touched and are consequently inaccessible (not existing) to blind and low vision children and adults. In our research, we design and make of touch models that enable everyone to engage in the cultural narratives and knowledge that these objects represent.

In this workshop, we want to test with expert users > the BLV community how good our models are and how useful they can be for understanding museum artefacts and collections.

Participants are invited to test the 3D printed maps, diagrams and objects and will be asked to participate in a short survey.

## Session 6 – Concurrent

### 6a. Accessible libraries for people with print disabilities in Australia.

3:30pm – 4:00pm

**Presenter:** Dr Jo Kaeding, Course Coordinator, University of South Australia

#### Abstract

In Australia the rights of people with disability are legislated in the Disability Discrimination Act of 1992, as well as relevant State and Territory government legislation. Although Australian libraries are governed by these legislations, there is seldom direct reference to libraries or information services.

In this absence, the library professional body, Australian Library and Information Association (ALIA) developed guidelines to help libraries to ensure a minimum standard for services for people with a disability. In 1979 ALIA adopted a statement of policy on library services for people with disability, and in 1998 adopted guidelines on library standards for people with disability.

Since then, Australia has adopted the Marrakesh Treaty, library patron information needs, technologies, and the library sector itself have changed considerably. Research into disability and an awareness of the information needs of people with a disability has also developed.

In recognition of this ALIA adopted an updated Library and information services for people with a disability policy in 2018; and in 2019 updated Guidelines on library standards for people with a disability.

This presentation will explore these documents through the lens of supports and services provided by public libraries for people with print disability. The audience will gain an understanding of these documents, as well as the practicalities of how these can and are being implemented within public libraries in Australia.

#### Biography

**Jo Kaeding** has a PhD from the University of South Australia. Her research focus is accessible and inclusive public libraries for children with disability. Jo is a lecturer at the University of South Australia. She also has 15 years’ experience in public libraries. She is a recipient of the: South Australian Catherine Helen Spence Scholarship, Public Libraries of South Australia Rod East Memorial Award and the Australian Library and Information Association Twila Ann Janssen Herr Award. Jo has held committee positions with: Public Libraries of SA Executive, ALIA Children and Youth Services, and SA Libraries Children and Youth Services.

### 6b. Books without Barriers: A Practical Guide to Inclusive Publishing.

4:00pm – 4:30pm

**Presenters:** Julie Ganner AE, Dr Agata Mrva-Montoya, Maryanne Park AE and Kayt Duncan, Accessibility Initiative Working Party, Institute of Professional Editors.

#### Abstract

Publishers play a critical role in enabling access to copyright material to individuals with print disability. The findings from industry surveys and cases studies show similar barriers to production, distribution and discovery of accessible books. Publishers report skills and knowledge deficits as key challenges to accessible e-book production. Although information resources are available that cover aspects of accessibility, it is time-consuming for publishing professionals to find the necessary information relevant to the book publishing process. In response to this need, the Institute of Professional Editors (IPEd) Accessibility Initiative Working Party (AIWP) was formed in 2019 to develop guidelines for publishers that address the needs of readers with print disability.

#### Biographies

**Julie Ganner** AE is an accredited editor with over 30 years’ experience in book editing and editorial and production management. She works with educational publishers and independent writers of both fiction and non-fiction. Julie chairs the Institute of Professional Editors’ Accessibility Initiative Working Party. She has delivered presentations and workshops on inclusive publishing and editing for accessibility for writers, editors and publishers, and is co-author of Inclusive publishing in Australia: an introductory guide (AIPI 2019).

**Dr Agata Mrva-Montoya** is a lecturer and degree director of Master of Publishing in the Department of Media and Communications, University of Sydney. Previously she worked at Sydney University Press, where she led the implementation of accessible publishing practices. Her research focuses on innovation, technology and power in the publishing industry. She has published on the impact of digital technologies and new business models on scholarly communication and the book publishing industry in general. She seeks to align her current research projects with her interest and experience with accessibility, design thinking and digital technologies, in the belief that publishing can play an important role in creating a better society.

**Maryanne Park** AE is an accredited editor, with a decade of experience. She began her career as a mechanical engineer, but has spent the last decade working as a technical writer and editor. She often works in educational publishing, specialising in secondary science and maths resources, and has experience at creating digital resources for secondary education. Maryanne is passionate about helping educators to teach a wide range of students, with diverse needs and abilities.

**Kayt Duncan** is an author-illustrator and independent publisher of accessible children’s picture books which include *Spotty Dotty*, available in print, and Twin Vision (print/braille combined), and *Once Upon A Whoops*, available in a dyslexic-friendly large-print format. She is passionate about early-years literacy allowing all children to reach their full reading potential. Kayt advocates for, and educates the independent children’s publishing industry about, alternative format books, enabled through her role as the Children’s Book Council of Australia’s National Officer and Secretary of Book Links Qld. As a volunteer for Braille House, she produced a Braille Awareness educational comedy show for school- and preschool-aged children for Braille House, which won 2018 What’s On For Kids national award for Best Not-for-profit Children’s Show.

## Session 7 – Concurrent

### 7a. TapeBlock: Creative circuit making for all.

3:30pm – 4:30pm

**Presenter:** Kirsten Ellis, Senior Lecturer, Monash University

#### Abstract

The Electronic Maker (eMaker) Movement which includes consumer electronics and digitally enhanced fabrication activities attempts to broaden participation in technology design and making to the wider community. There are a number of benefits to undertaking these activities including building technical skills, improving creative thinking and providing opportunities for problem-solving. However, people with disabilities are often excluded from these spaces because the activities are not designed to cater for their abilities or are not perceived to be relevant or of interest. Through the custom creation of a toolkit, we have created an accessible circuit making activity that can be used by people with a range of abilities. TapeBlocks are a low-cost, chunky, creative circuit-making kit that people can make from individual components which are extremely accessible because of the physicality of their form and simplicity of their construction. TapeBlocks can be used in a variety of ways from making light, vibration and fan circuits. They are also useful for introducing concepts including conductivity and switches. Building TapeBlocks develops skills that can then be used to facilitate the creation of other objects including characters or vehicles with an electronic component. This workshop will give everyone the opportunity to make their own circuits and think about how activity design can facilitate inclusion.

#### Biography

**Dr Kirsten Ellis** leads the Inclusive Technology Research Group at Monash University, working with the community to use technology to solve real-world problems for people living with a disability. Her research focuses on optimising technology engagement opportunities for people living with disabilities. This field requires a unique range of skills to address interpersonal, creative and technical challenges, Dr Ellis’s work requires the ability to strive to address people’s needs with respect and sensitivity while being cognisant of the associated ethical issues. Dr Ellis was awarded the Department of Industry, Science and Resources Eureka Prize for STEM Inclusion in 2022.

## Session 8 – Round Table AGM

4:45pm – 5:45pm

# Monday, 8 May 2023

## Session 9 – Plenary

### 9. The Vision for the Future - CEO Panel

9:30am – 10:30am

**Panellists:** Anna Presser, EverAbility Group; Chris Rehn, NextSense; John Mulka, Blind Low Vision NZ; Ron Hooton, Vision Australia.

#### Abstract

The panellists will discuss the current landscape and their vision for the future.

#### Biographies

**Anna Presser** joined the EverAbility Group in 2018 and was appointed CEO in 2021. She holds a Master of Business Administration, (MBA) from the University of Western Australia with a speciality in Social Impact. Anna is a recent graduate and scholarship winner of Leadership WA. Prior to her CEO appointment she was EverAbility’s Manager of Guide Dog services and breeding. She was responsible for the organisation’s diversified and expanding Guide dog service operations across WA and Tasmania. In this role, Anna successfully secured $5M funding from the State Government of Western Australia to develop a new, world-class Assistant Dog Breeding and Cadet Program. Before EverAbility Anna held senior Management and Business Development roles in various not-for-profit and commercial organisations. Anna is passionate about enabling and supporting people to achieve their best, whether this be EverAbility’s clients, people with disability, employees or volunteers.

**Chris Rehn** has led NextSense since 2010 and has spearheaded the organisation’s growth, its merger with seven other businesses and its continued development of Australia’s largest and most comprehensive cochlear implant program. He has more than 35 years’ experience in the health industry. He began his career as a registered nurse, subsequently working across public, private and not-for-profit hospital and health management, including as general manager of the former Sydney Cochlear Implant Centre. Chris is a Harvard Club Australia Non Profit Fellow and holds a Bachelor of Applied Science and a Bachelor of Business with combined majors in Marketing and Accounting. He has an unwavering commitment to, and passion for, the health, disability and not-for-profit sector.

**John Mulka** joined Blind Low Vision NZ in September 2019. Prior to this he spent his then 28-year professional working career in the not-for-profit and charitable sector with national organisations in his native country of Canada. John has held senior roles providing leadership to organisations in the areas of amateur sport, at risk youth, disease prevention and a sensory disability. Over his 11-year career with the CNIB (Canadian National Institute for the Blind) his responsibilities grew progressively, culminating with him being appointed as the Vice President, Western Canada in 2015 which he held until accepting the Chief Executive role with Blind Low Vision NZ.

**Ron Hooton** is the Chief Executive of Vision Australia and a Board Director for the Vision Australia Foundation. Ten years ago, he emigrated to Australia to take this role following seven years as Chief Executive of ProCare Health Limited, New Zealand’s largest Primary Health Network. Ron’s first career was in ICT, where he held Chief Information Officer positions in the New Zealand Defence Force and Countrywide Bank. Ron resides in the South Eastern suburbs of Melbourne.

## Session 10 – Concurrent

### 10a. Designing a Better Book: Outcomes of User Testing on Accessible Art Book.

11:00am – 11:30am

**Presenters:** John O'Neill, Founder and Deanna Lorianni, Founder, Color to Sound, LLC.

#### Abstract

Art should be accessible to everyone. However, when publishing art books, the industry is leaving audiences behind who have accessibility needs. We’ve been working to fill this gap by designing a new way to design and print art books. With photography and poetry as our art mediums, we’ve created a book for audiences with low vision or who read Braille so they can access the arts despite their varying abilities. In this presentation, we’ll share our experience of testing our prototype of the book, Now / Between, with people within the low-vision/Braille communities.

#### Biographies

**John O’Neill** is a Photographer/Designer and a disability advocate and designer who brings awareness to ableism anddisability rights. I am the co-founder of creative arts lab Color to Sound and a design educator and researcher at the University of Minnesota Duluth, teaching graphic design, user experience (UX) design, and accessibility.

His design work has been exhibited and awarded by:

* HOW International Design Awards
* Creative Quarterly
* Graphis
* Center for Plain Language
* Association of Marketing and Communication Professionals
* Graphic Design USA

John has presented nationally and internationally regarding graphic design, user experience, and accessibility. I’m also a published author who speaks about web accessibility.

**Deanna Lorianni** is a plain language expert, writer, editor, and trainer with nearly two decades of experience. She is co-creator of Now / Between, an accessible art book; and co-founder of Color to Sound, LLC, a creative arts lab. Deanna has presented globally on the topics of plain language and communication accessibility, including in Norway, New Zealand, and Australia. Creatively, she also writes poetry, short fiction, and screenplays.

### 10b. Keeping Braille on the Agenda: The Braille (?) Needs Assessment

11:30am – 12:00pm

**Presenter:** Tricia d’Apice, Lead Consultant Vision Impairment, NextSense Connected Services

#### Abstract

Specialist teachers hold a key role within the network of professionals who support students with vision impairment. Specialist teachers have intimate knowledge of the student’s lived experience, and the impact of vision impairment on their access to literacy. Specialist teachers are well positioned to recommend and implement strategies that facilitate meaningful, sustained and therefore successful access. One vital strategy is braille.

The decision to recommend braille must be informed by a comprehensive understanding of the challenges faced by the student when accessing print for sustained reading. A tool called the Braille (?) Needs Assessment has been developed to collect information and encourage wholistic thinking about the student’s diagnosis, visual functioning, current skills and preferences. Specialist teachers can use this information to reflect on the student’s educational and vocational goals, and how braille may enhance the student’s access to their learning. This information can also be used in conversations with families and other professionals. The outcome of the Braille (?) Needs Assessment can help to “keep braille on the agenda", with the student potentially becoming a Dual Media reader.

This presentation will introduce version 2 of the Braille (?) Needs Assessment and use two case studies to demonstrate its application. Future planned research will also be discussed including an invitation for Round Table members to provide feedback on the useability of the Braille (?) Needs Assessment and two trials planned for 2023 – to gather baseline information on current braille users and students with vision impairment in general.

#### Biography

**Tricia d'Apice** developed the Braille Needs Analysis to help school teams and families to understand the impact of the eye condition of their students with low vision, in an educational setting. And to keep Braille on the agenda if the student is finding print too difficult.

### 10c Securing the Future of Music Braille: Strategic Interventions from the DAISY Music Braille Project to Safeguard Music Braille Production and Use

12:00pm – 12:30pm

**Presenter:** Dr Sarah Morley Wilkins, Project Manager & User Experience Consultant of the DAISY Consortium’s Music Braille Project

**Co-authors:** Arne Kyrkjebø - Norwegian Library of Talking Books and Braille (NLB), and Haipeng Hu – DAISY Music Braille Technical Consultant, and BrailleOrch.

#### Abstract

In 2018 music braille was facing a crisis. The sector realised that significant intervention was required to protect it for the future. Through collaboration, funded by international DAISY member organizations, we identified the sector’s challenges, and delivered complementary interventions to safeguard music braille:

1. An active international network of experts collaborating to deliver these vital cross-sector improvements.
2. Two music braille software tools: One for agencies who may have limited music braille transcription expertise or wish to increase their production capacity (MakeBraille, available under licence from dzb lesen); and a totally free accessible notation tool for blind musicians and educators (the mainstream tool MuseScore with Sao Mai Braille).
3. Improved accessible music publishing: we secured accessibility improvements to the standard music file format, MusicXML, and to the interfaces and output of mainstream music notation tools. We advocate for ‘born accessible’ music publications, by sharing good practice engraving guidelines with mainstream music publishers.
4. Promotion of teaching and learning resources: our international resource list guides people to suitable resources at different stages of their music braille journey, whether blind or sighted.
5. Increasing the number of braille scores available: our Music Braille Production Network facilitates agencies to source and produce music braille for each other, following guidance so that scores are usable in other countries. Finding scores in online collections is now more effective through metadata improvements we devised.

Our interventions have already made a difference in the sector and we anticipate ongoing improvements as they become more widely implemented.

#### Biography

As an Applied Psychologist, **Sarah Wilkins** is particularly interested in the end-user experience and collaborating with specialists to deliver solutions to meet user needs. With over 30 years in the blindness sector she has participated in and led numerous international accessibility initiatives, including for computer software and accessible information more broadly. Sarah won prestigious awards for her series of ’Windows Explained’ books for blind and visually impaired users. She headed the National Centre for Tactile Diagrams, and then RNIB’s Centre for Accessible Information, and chaired the UK Association for Accessible Formats, before moving to Dolphin Computer Access, and the DAISY Consortium.

## Session 11 – Concurrent

### 11a. An equitable world at your fingertips.

11:00am – 11:30am

**Presenter:** Andrew Backhouse, Marketing, Braille House.

#### Abstract

This presentation will talk about how sighted children have an advantage of incidental learning through exposure to words before they can read, and how we can help children who are blind or have low vision to begin the reading journey earlier.

#### Biography

**Andrew Backhouse** is the Marketing and Community Engagement person at Braille House.

### 11b. AAC & Physical Print Disability - What's the link and where to next?

11:30am – 12:00pm

**Presenter:** Marie-Christine Lamy, Readily AACcessible.

#### Abstract

My 5 year old daughter, Isabelle, was diagnosed with Rett Syndrome in October 2019. Rett Syndrome is a rare genetic disorder affecting speech, coordination and purposeful use of hands. It means that, on top of having a communication disability, Isabelle also has a physical print disability. She is unable to hold or manipulate books.

After receiving a high tech Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) device in 2021, Tobii Dynavox eye gaze computer, it didn't take long to realise that most digital books, reading platforms and apps have not been made compatible with all AAC devices and do not provide added AAC features.

Six months ago, I started writing a blog about our journey and, as I learned more and more about physical print disability, became an advocate on the need to make AAC adapted books so Izzy, and other children with complex communication needs and physical print disability, have access to every tool, every resource and every opportunity to help them learn how to read and write efficiently. So far, AAC users have been mostly reliant on caregivers (e.g. parents) and professionals, (e.g. speech pathologists, teachers) to try and adapt paper books so they can access digital content to read at their own pace and as independently as possible.

#### Biography

**Marie-Christine Lamy** isa proud mum, freelance blogger and disability advocate who is actively involved in the community to build more inclusive and accessible services & facilities for people with disabilities, especially children. I started a social media blog, Readily AACcessible, to help raise awareness on the need to make digital books, reading platforms and apps universally accessible with all Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) access methods and added AAC features, so children with complex communication needs and physical print disability can do self-selected reading at their own pace and as independently as possible on their preferred devices.

### 11c. Neeje: empowering people with print disabilities to provide a fully informed consent.

12:00pm – 12:30pm

**Presenter:** Dr Ankur Gupta, Founder, Neeje.

#### Abstract

Informed consent refers to permission that an individual provides their clinician to carry out an intervention, be it surgery, prescription of a medicine or an investigation. The consent becomes fully informed only when the individual has been provided with all relevant information, such as their options and material and obvious risks. The language used should be understood by the individual. Most clinicians want to do the best for their patients but find it difficult to follow the informed consent process properly. Typically they discuss the options and risks but the documentation is seldom as comprehensive. The consent form is signed on the day of the procedure which gives little time to the patient to consider their decision. In fact the patient has no choice but to sign and the form is so large that reading and understanding the information is next to impossible even for native speakers let alone people with print disabilities. NEEJE is an attempt to correct this. NEEJE has developed proprietary software that will help clinicians in engaging people with print disabilities in an equal manner. It will empower people to provide their consent in a truly informed manner.

#### Biography

**Dr Ankur Gupta** is a psychiatrist with a passion for patient safety and empowerment. He trained as a psychiatrist in the UK where he also completed a MBA. His MBA thesis was on the merits of co-production in health. He has combined his passion and knowledge in creating Neeje to transform the process of consenting patients from informed consent to informed decision making. Neeje has several features which will empower people with print difficulties to access information regarding their medical procedures and make decisions in an informed manner.

## Session 12 – Concurrent

### 12a. Representing Visual Information in Sound: Latest Learnings about Sonification Use.

1:30pm – 2:00pm

**Presenter**: Phia Damsma, Creative Director, Sonokids Australia.

#### Abstract

Sonification represents data or information in sound, rather than as an image, chart, or graph. While less known than other alternative formats, sonification has huge potential to improve access to science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics (STEAM). Its application is wide, and international scientific projects are increasingly outputting data in sonified format. In December 2022 a week-long workshop in The Netherlands, ‘The Audible Universe’, will bring together people from around the world who are working with sonification, and are specifically interested in how to ensure accessibility, either as end-user, or as designer, scientist, developer, or musician. This multi-disciplinary group will discuss what works in sonification, and what doesn’t, and how other modes of access, including haptics or tactile, may benefit the outcomes.

In this presentation Phia will share the latest learnings on sonification use from this important and interesting event. She will also share results from a user survey as part of Sonokids’ own ‘Sonoplanet’ project. The ‘CosmoBally on Sonoplanet’ app for touch tablets, with a tactile 3D printed learning tool, offers a unique opportunity to research how (young) students interact with sonification, and how educators value the skills that can be developed through working with this app. Research findings from the Sonoplanet user survey can inform educational practice around sonification as well as future design of accessible sonification applications.

#### Biography

Phia Damsma is Creative Director of Sonokids Australia, developer of ‘Ballyland’ software and game apps that support learning of essential technology skills by students who are blind or have low vision. When she is not designing the next fun educational app, Phia likes to give presentations to students, educators and parents (including a Master Class series for NextSense Institute), act as accessibility consultant, and write course materials on accessible teaching of digital skills and emerging technologies. She is Co-President of South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment (SPEVI Inc.) and Lead of the Sonification World Chat Working Group ‘Learn’.

### 12b. The trouble with maths.

2.00pm – 2.30pm

**Presenter:** Peter Cracknell, Manager of Vision and Blindness Technologies, Quantum RLV.

#### Abstract

We all know blind students who have an aptitude for maths. And we also know that statistical maths is essential for evidence-based Tertiary courses. However, talented students will soon outgrow their AVT-VI’s - can we expect an AVT-VI to be fully across Calculus in Year 12? And when you consider that most learning actually happens at home – as students review what they have learned in class and do their assignments – how are they supported then?

Unfortunately, in UEB countries there is no digital automation of braille maths translation, so students are dependent on transcribers. In the USA students can take math content from anywhere and independently read maths braille using JAWS and a braille display. The reverse is also possible; students can write Nemeth maths braille and produce ink-print equations on their laptop screen that their maths teacher can read.

So, what’s the answer in Australia? Clearly, Nemeth is not going to happen! Could a Nemeth-UEB converter be invented? Yes, it probably could - after all, Duxbury is a very good literary translator. However, it might take a year's work, and a professional salary. The assistive tech manufacturers just don’t see the Return on Investment; so, who would commission the work, and who would pay? Given our State-based Education system, it’s going to have to be a consortium; and perhaps the other countries that use UEB. Surely in the Commonwealth of UEB, we can club together and get it done?.

#### Biography

**Peter Cracknell** is Quantum RLV's most experienced Assistive Technology consultant, across all areas including braille, print access, deafblindness, low vision and dyslexia. Starting his career as the Disability Access Officer for English National Opera in 1989, Peter instituted Sennheiser hearing systems throughout the 2000 seat auditorium, alternative format newsletters including audio and braille, and sign-interpreted opera performances. Migrating to Australia in 1996, Peter has been an innovator in print accessibility, collaborating with all the major vision agencies and authorities, and particularly focused on better outcomes in Education and Employment.

### 12c. Increased access to confident and independent graph creation by blind people.

2.30pm – 3.00pm

Presenter: A. Jonathan R. Godfrey, Senior Lecturer in Statistics, Massey University.

#### Abstract

There is increased use of statistical graphs within the formal years of education, when once this might have been thought to be just for the highest level of Maths courses at high school or across a range of university courses. In addition, blind people have had limited to the ability to create attractive flow charts with confidence.

In order to create content with confidence, a blind person must be able to digest that content to be assured the outcome is what was intended.

I contend therefore that the bar for true accessibility with independence is that a blind person can create, not just consume all manner of content. We take this for granted when it comes to word processed documents for example, but do we truly give blind people the skills to work with qualitative or quantitative data?

The ability to create content is part of what makes a blind person more employable. I speak as a person whose employment is successful and strengthened because I have these necessary skills and helped develop the necessary tools.

I will demonstrate a range of options that exist today to create statistical graphs with automatic text descriptions, simple mathematics, and flow charts. I will also need to discuss limitations, and hopefully pose a way forwards.

Resources for this presentation can be found at a page built using the tools outlined: <https://r-resources.massey.ac.nz/presentations/RoundTable2023/>

#### Biography

**Jonathan Godfrey** was the first totally blind person to gain employment as a lecturer in Statistics worldwide. He is also National President of Blind Citizens NZ, and a recognised leader in NZ's efforts to disaggregate official statistics by disability status.

## Session 13 – Concurrent

### 13a. A Dutch approach to inclusive education.

1:30pm – 2:00pm

#### Abstract

Approximately 85% of all visually impaired students in the Netherlands attend mainstream education. The teachers in mainstream education are supported by the two educational resource centers; Bartiméus and Visio. More than 10 years ago Bartiméus and Visio collaborated closely to set up an open and accessible platform called Eduvip. This platform provides a place for schools, teachers, students and parents to find all the relevant information, tools, e-learning, adapted learning materials, interventions and services to achieve inclusive education for visually impaired students aged 4 to 20 years.

Eduvip has since grown into an essential go-to resource containing more than 1500 pages and is unique within Europe. Nowadays, with the available tools it is easy to translate the content into different languages.

This presentation will show how the platform has adapted through the years to enable visually impaired students to be successful in an ever changing educational world; navigating inaccessible materials, non-inclusive working methods and developing the necessary technology skills to function in modern society.

Several unique interventions, specially developed applications, adapted learning materials and services will be highlighted to inspire the audience.

#### Biography

**Dick Lunenborg** began his career teaching in education. Observing the under-utilization of technology in the classroom, he developed an interest in technology and its different applications in enhancing education.

In 2002, Dick began working at the Bartiméus Institute, a national non-profit organization for the visually impaired. In his new role, he developed and manage ongoing projects on the implementation of innovative technologies in the education of visually impaired pupils as well as for children and adults with combined sight loss and multiple disabilities. Furthermore, he intermediates between the work-floor (professionals working within the education and care sectors) and technology (the software and hardware, and those who develop it) and provide consultancy on inclusion in education and wider integration through technology.

### 13b. ABA Workshop: First Nations Languages and Braille

2:00pm – 3:00pm

**Facilitator:** Tristan Clare, Executive Committee Member, Australia Braille Authority.

#### Abstract

What are the complexities of creating a standardised braille code when dealing with multiple languages that each contain variations in dialects? This workshop hopes to provide a starting point for transcribers, educators and own voices to come together and hash out some of the issues.

#### Biography

**Tristan Clare** is a passionate and dedicated consumer and producer of braille. She has held the position of transcriber and proofreader at NextSense for the past thirteen years and loves having a job where she gets to produce braille material for the next generation of students, while expanding her own knowledge of braille. Tristan is also a member of the Australian Braille Authority Executive.

## Session 14 – Plenary

### 14a. Barriers and Enablers for Preparation for Employment for Students with Blindness and Low Vision in Mainstream Secondary Schools.

3:30pm – 4:00pm

Presenter: Dr Melissa Fanshawe, Senior Lecturer, University of Southern Queensland.

#### Abstract

I wanted to understand why high unemployment rates remain for people with blindness and low vision, despite improved technology and changing attitudes of employers. My research revolved around 6 students with blindness and low vision, throughout Queensland, their parents, teachers, advisory teachers. As well as people with lived experience, policy makers and employers. I really wanted to know what were barriers and enablers to participation in learning and preparation for future employability.

The results showed that access to learning about and developing disability-specific skills were really important. When disability-specific skills were not present, or were not supported, it presented a barrier to future employability for students with blindness and low vision. It was an enabler when students had access to disability-specific skills over regular and sustained periods of time.

Further enablers included a) empowering students to develop personal agency, b) encouraging use of mainstream technology for access and inclusion, and c) promoting a collaborative approach to learning.

### 14b. Digital Accessibility – State of the Nation.

4:00pm – 4:30pm

Presenter: Stewart Hay, Managing Director, Intopia.

#### Abstract

The digital world is constantly changing. During this presentation we will take a look at where digital accessibility is at in 2023 and some of the future trends and changes that are happening.

#### Biography

**Stewart Hay** is the Managing Director and one of the co-founders of Intopia, a specialist inclusive design and accessibility consultancy working towards creating a more inclusive digital world. He is also one of the original founders for A11y Bytes and A11y Camp Australia. He has made a career helping organisations to successfully embrace technology for improved business and social outcomes. Stewart has a passion around the convergence of topics like strategy, innovation, technology, culture, diversity and inclusion.

# Tuesday, 9 May 2023

## Session 15 – Plenary

### 15a. Accessible ICT procurement Implementation Guide for Australian Universities.

9:30am – 10:00am:

Presenters: Darlene McLennan, Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training; David Swayn, National Disability Coordination Officer Program; Andrew Arch and Neil Jarvis, Intopia; and Steve Johnston, Council of Australasian University Information Technology Directors.

#### Abstract

Quality learning for all starts with accessible procurement. If the Information communications technology (ICT) that universities purchase is inaccessible to students or staff with a disability, many people will find it difficult to study or work there. Some of these experiences were unpacked in Vision Australia’s 2018 ‘On-line but off-track’ report, and this risk to students and staff has been amplified during the pandemic when universities shifted their primary mode of delivery to online.

The Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET), the National Disability Coordination Officer (NDCO) Program and partners Intopia and Council of Australasian University Directors of Information Technology (CAUDIT) have produced an implementation guide for universities with practical guidance about procuring ICT products and services with accessibility as an essential criterion. The work drew on existing good practice in several universities and was guided by an expert advisory panel of people with expertise and lived experience.

The accessible procurement implementation guide aims to assist Higher Education providers to embed accessibility requirements into their ICT procurement policies, procedures, and practice, with a view to building a more accessible future by design. It focuses on purchasing products and services that meet the requirements of AS EN 301 549, which incorporates WCAG.

The presentation will discuss the project’s process, the various components of the implementation guide, and how Universities (and others) can utilise the guide to improve the experience of students and employees with disability and will discuss the potential of future work in this space.

#### Biographies

**Darlene McLennan** is the Manager of the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET). ADCET provides national leadership, information and professional development for educators and support staff in the inclusion of people with disability in Australia's Higher Education and Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector. Darlene has nearly 35 years of experience working in the disability sector, of which 18 years are within the tertiary disability sector. She completed her Master of Business with the University of Tasmania in 2013 and has a post-graduate degree in Careers Education through RMIT.

**David Swayn’s** career over the last decade has focused on removing barriers for people with disability in education and employment in Australia. He is a keen advocate for working together to build a society where everybody can reach their full potential and a world where good design enables this. David is a recipient of the *“Champions of Change”* award from Equity Practitioners in Higher Education Australasia (EPHEA), a regular content contributor to the Australian Disability Clearinghouse on Education and Training (ADCET) and has worked on numerous national projects relating to improving education and employment outcomes for all.

**Andrew Arch** has been working in the field of digital accessibility for over 20 years. During this time, he helped setup and grow the digital access team at Vision Australia, worked at the W3C in Europe and spent 7 years as the senior accessibility expert in the Australian Government. In Canberra, he worked at AGIMO where he helped implement the Web Accessibility National Transition Strategy for the Australian government to adopt WCAG 2.0. At the Digital Transformation Agency he helped develop the Digital Service Standard. At Intopia since 2017 he provides training and strategic consultancy support to both the private and government sectors.

**Neil Jarvis** is an Digital Accessibility obsessive with over 20 years’ experience, working for not-for-profit, governmental and private sector organisations. In that time, he spent ten years on the Leadership Team of the Royal New Zealand Foundation of the blind, establishing its digital library and spearheading it’s international relations work. He played a leading role in the international campaign for the adoption and implementation of the Marrakesh Treaty, an international copyright exceptions instrument helping to end the book famine experienced by blind and low vision people around the world. He was also a leading member of the Transforming Braille Group, an international consortium which designed and helped bring to market the world’s first electronic braille device for less than US$500.

**Stephen Johnston** joined CAUDIT in 2011, having departed Edith Cowan University after 13 years of service in several senior IT roles including the Manager, IT Infrastructure and Manager, IT Project Governance. His Engineering background and understanding of various elements of IT Infrastructure (ranging from laboratory, desktop, server and network support to the provision of voice and video services) provides a technical basis for providing systems, services, applications and equipment able to solve real business issues.

Through the establishment of standards (in technology, services, equipment, staffing and procurement) he has been able to work with staff across ECU and the Higher Education sector to improve outcomes for staff, students and the community. Stephen holds a Bachelor of Engineering (Computing Systems). He is a Senior Member of the Australian Computer Society and is recognised by the Society as a Certified Professional. He is graduate of the 2009 CAUDIT/EDUCAUSE Leadership Institute.

### 15b. Telstra 5G Touch and Track

10:00am – 10:30am

**Presenter:** Chris Harrop, Telstra Sports Technology Lead, Telstra.

#### Abstract

Telstra want everyone to share in the magic of sport. It’s why we are a long-standing sponsor of the AFL and it’s why creating connection and bringing people together is at the centre of everything we do.  We have been trialling how [5G technology](https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/656ZC0YKPvi2Bo0EYuwUFd7?domain=exchange.telstra.com.au/) and the power of our network can bring the magic of near real-time sporting action to Australia’s vision impaired audience.  We’ve been working with the team from [Field of Vision](https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/X6sJCgZ0N1ily05g4ToB1Im?domain=fov.ie/) and our [Telstra Labs](https://protect-au.mimecast.com/s/49LcCjZ1N7ijm516ZH5GkiH?domain=labs.telstra.com/) team to create a new experience for vision impaired AFL fans, using innovative technology that translates the movement of the ball on-field to a physical device. Using a magnet that moves inside the body of the device, as the Sherrin is kicked and handballed around the oval, a steel ring on the surface moves precisely to where the ball is on the playing field.  In this presentation, you will hear from Chris Harrop, Telstra Sports Technology Lead, about the genesis of this project, the co-design and engagement with vision impaired footy fans, and what Telstra’s plans are for the future in this space.  For more information, visit [Telstra unveils 5G Touch and Track prototype: https://exchange.telstra.com.au/telstra-unveils-5g-touch-and-track-prototype-a-new-way-for-vision-impaired-australians-to-experience-live-afl/](https://exchange.telstra.com.au/telstra-unveils-5g-touch-and-track-prototype-a-new-way-for-vision-impaired-australians-to-experience-live-afl/)

#### Biography

Chris Harrop is the Sports Technology Lead for Telstra.  He joined the company in 2016 and has worked closely with a number of sporting partners on digital products and strategy in that time. In this role, Chris has been able to work at the intersection of sport, technology and entertainment. This has enabled him to work on a wide range of fan experiences from live streaming to augmented/virtual reality features.  Prior to Telstra, Chris worked in TV production and digital services at the ABC.  When he is not working, Chris enjoys spending time with his family and watching even more sport.

## Session 16 – Concurrent

### 16a. WCAG 2.2 and other standards.

11:00am – 11:30am

**Presenter:** Sarah Pulis, Director, Intopia.

#### Abstract

In this presentation Sarah will talk about the new version of WCAG and about the new Australian standard that has recently been adopted.

WCAG 2.2 will be released by the time of the 2023 Round Table conference. WCAG 2.2 has nine new criteria, most of which will benefit people how are blind or have low vision and people withy dexterity or movement impairments. These include:

* Accessible authentication - provide an alternative to cognitive tests,
* Consistent help - help is always located in the same place,
* Dragging movements - alternatives exist that don't require an object to be dragged from one location to another,
* Focus appearance - objects that receive focus should not be obscured,
* Redundant entry - the same information does not need to be entered multiple times,
* Target size - minimum target sizes for mouse and touch use.

In addition to a new version of WCAG, Standards Australia has adopted ISO 30071-1 "Code of practice for creating accessible ICT products and services". AS ISO 30071-1 complements WCAG and other technical standards as a process-oriented Standard enabling organisations to embed accessibility considerations into their “business as usual” processes. This standard should help organisations embed accessibility into their policies and process both at organisational and system development levels.

#### Biography

**Sarah Pulis** is co-founder and director at Intopia. She has been working in accessibility and inclusive design for 13 years. She has a breadth of knowledge and experience helping organisations create more inclusive digital products and services. One minute she may be talking with senior leadership about strategic accessibility programs, the next she is getting technical with designers and developers. She is also affectionately known as the walking WCAG by her team.

Sarah is an extremely passionate accessibility advocate. She is founder of A11y Bytes and A11y Camp, Australia’s largest accessibility and inclusive design events which supports the sharing of knowledge and community connection.

### 16b. The power of AI for the future of information access.

11:30am – 12:00pm

**Presenter:** Jack Tyrrell, Client Relationship Manager and Dr Jennyfer Lawrence Taylor, Senior User Experience Designer and Researcher, Centre for Inclusive Design.

#### Abstract

As we move into a more technologically driven world, what does this mean for the print disability community?

The question on a lot of people’s minds with a print disability, is could Artificial Intelligence be the long-awaited answer for an equitable future.

Artificial intelligence is a constellation of many different technologies working together to enable machines to sense, comprehend, act, and learn with human-like levels of intelligence.

Advances in artificial intelligence have spurred the development of tools to help people with a print disability overcome challenges and improve independence. What previously required support from a person without print disability, can now be resolved independently with the support of these tools.

This presentation will provide an overview of the advancement of artificial intelligence and examples of technologies that support the needs of people with print disability. We will highlight the benefits for people with print disability as well as the benefits for broader audiences. We will also highlight the risks and challenges associated with artificial intelligence development. We hope that the audience gains new insights into the potential of technology for the future of information access.

#### Biographies

Jack Tyrrell is the Client Relationship Manager at the Centre for Inclusive Design. Jack lost his eyesight in 2011 at the age of twenty and has a lived understanding of challenges faced by people with print disability and the difference Artificial Intelligence, assistive technology, accessibility, and inclusion can make. He previously worked at Vision Australia and is a superuser with various types of technology. Jack regularly presents and provides demonstrations on assistive technology and where possible, looks to impart his knowledge to support a diverse range of organisations and people with a print disability reach their accessibility goals.

Dr Jennyfer Lawrence Taylor is a Senior User Experience Designer and Researcher at Centre for Inclusive Design with an interest in developing new ways to work inclusively with people in design practice. She brings a wealth of experience to her role at Centre for Inclusive Design, having previously worked in higher education. Jennyfer has completed a Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Information Technology with Honours, majoring in anthropology and information systems, and a PhD in Human-Computer Interaction.

### 16C - Smart Glasses: What do people who are blind or have low vision really want from smart devices?

12:00pm – 12:30pm

**Presenters:** Bhanuka Gamage (presenter), Toan Do, Nicholas Price, Kim Marriot, Inclusive Technologies Lab, Monash University.

#### Abstract

Over the last decade there has been considerable research into how artificial intelligence (AI) can be used to assist blind and low vision (BLV) people understand their surrounding environment. Applications include object detection, image captioning and text recognition. These have been embodied in smart devices like smartphones, smart-glasses and smart canes. However, there has been almost no research into whether these applications and devices align with the needs and preferences of BLV people.

We identified 477 research papers published in the last 2.5 years that have investigated AI techniques to help BLV people understand their environment. We analysed these papers to determine the application, device and AI technology and whether or not BLV people were involved. We then spoke with 24 BLV people (majority from Australia) to understand the most useful applications for an AI-based smart device based on their lived experience.

This presentation will dive into the interesting findings from this study and shine a light on some of the issues present in this space. Finally, we will propose future directions for developing AI-based smart devices.

#### **Biography**

**Bhanuka Gamage** is a PhD student at the Inclusive Technologies Lab at Monash University exploring the application of AI-enabled smart glasses for people who are blind or have low vision. He completed his BCS (Hons) at Monash University Malaysia and brings experience with his prior academic work that focused on Visual Question Answering and Clickbait Detection on YouTube as well as industry experience working on start-ups that used CV and NLP to extract information from structured and unstructured documents.

## Session 17 – Concurrent

### 17a. UV Printing and Laser Cutting Accessible Materials.

11:00am – 11:30am

**Presenters:** Peter Le, Team Leader Transcription and Trent Betts, Accessible Format Producer (STEM), Vision Australia.

#### Abstract

Building on the presentations given at the last two round table conferences covering UV printing and laser cutting, Peter Le and Trent Betts will show examples of accessible materials created using those techniques, and show examples of the files and processes that were used to create those products.

The workshop will cover topics such as: creating multiple tactile layers with UV printing, production differences between UV and PIAF printing, creating durable braille with laser cutting.

#### Biographies

**Peter Le** has been with Vision Australia for over 20 years and is the current Transcription Team Leader. Peter has a Bachelor of Science majoring in Organic Chemistry, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology. He has been involved with past Round Table Guideline workgroups in Accessible Assessment, Clear Print and E-text. Peter has a diverse experience in Graphic design and Braille production. He considers himself to be a mad scientist who works in a state of controlled chaos.

**Trent Betts** is an accessible format producer at Vision Australia. Trent comes to the field of accessible format production with close to 20 years' experience in software development. With this experience he is looking at ways to automate the process of transcription and develop tools to keep accessible content consistent and error free.

### 17b. Technology Assisted Voting in Australia.

11:30am – 12:00pm

**Presenter:** Jackson Reynolds-Ryan, Policy and Advocacy Manager, Blind Citizens Australia.

#### Abstract

The principle of equal participation in the political process is a fundamental tenet of democracy, and includes the right of citizens to cast a secret vote in government elections. Australia is recognised as the first country in the world to allow citizens to cast their vote anonymously, which was quickly adopted in democracies globally.

Yet our electoral processes, relying on pencil and paper voting, mean that people who are blind or vision impaired are dependent on other persons to assist - trusting that their ballot paper is completed accurately according to their wishes.

While telephone voting offered at State and Federal Elections goes some way into protecting the anonymity of the voter, it does little to provide voters who are blind or vision impaired an opportunity to verify their ballot has been entered correctly.

For the right to a secret ballot to be exercised on equal terms by all voters, governments across Australia must support new forms of Technology Assisted Voting. There is room for creativity in how this could be achieved: the iVote system (operating in NSW from 2011 - 2021) allowed voters to vote on a device of their choosing, while other approaches include mobile voting kiosks designed to support voters with disability.

Failing to provide accessible election processes is not only a failure to live up to the obligations under the UNCPRD, it also has the potential to result in the formation of a government that does not reflect the needs, interests, and values of the citizens it represents.

#### Biography

**Jackson Reynolds-Ryan** first joined Blind Citizens Australia in 2021 as the National Policy Officer, before moving into the role of Policy and Advocacy Manager in 2022. Prior his time at BCA, Jack worked for several years in the charity sector in both Australia and the United Kingdom. With a background in workplace and community organising within the Australian trade union movement, and a Masters in Public Policy from University of Melbourne, Jack brings experience in policy development and modern campaigning methods.

### 17c. Big Visions: Creating Diverse Content at Vision Australia Library.

12:00pm – 12:30pm

**Presenters:** Sarah Bloedorn, Library Strategic Lead and Vildana Pralljak, Library Manager, Vision Australia.

#### Abstract

Vision Australia Library has partnered with a local publisher to create a beautiful series of children's books, Big Visions, to celebrate inclusion, diversity and following your dreams. Through inspirational stories that appeal to children and adults alike, these books champion the amazing stories of some incredible Australians, helping to change expectations of what children and young people who are blind and low vision can and can’t do to build strong foundations for life, true meaningful participation and life-long employment.

By being not just a sharer, but a creator of books, podcasts and other resources, VA Library has been working to create space for positive conversations and contributions within the library and the community.

The Vision Australia Library team will share the steps, projects and future plans for creating content that supports diversity and inclusion.

#### Biographies

**Sarah Bloedorn** is a librarian with over 15 years’ experience working in public and tertiary libraries, with a particular interest in supporting young people to build literacy. She has worked at Vision Australia for the last seven years and is currently the strategy lead for the VA Library.

**Vildana Pralljak** is a highly accomplished management specialist recognised for leadership, technical proficiency, strategic ingenuity and insight in service design and innovation. Vildana has extensive experience in leading teams and achieving high quality projects guaranteeing customer satisfaction, business transformation, process optimisation, change objectives and capability development goals. Vildana has years of experience within the Non for Profit, Corporate and disability sectors, and is currently Manager of Vision Australia’s Library Service.

Vildana particularly enjoys gymnastics and all forms of exercise, and is a proud mum of two cheeky children.

## Session 18 – Concurrent

### 18a. Assistive Technology Update

1:30pm – 2:00pm

**Presenter:** Damian McMarrow, National Access Technology Manager, Vision Australia.

#### Abstract

Technology, particularly the technology we use in our everyday life, has evolved rapidly over the last 20 years, and continues to change at an extremely fast pace. The assistive technology space has seen similar levels of advancement and innovation, particularly in the last few years. There have been major advancements in braille and wearable technology in particular, and significant improvements in the use of artificial intelligence to assist with accurate object and text detection.

The uptake in smart speakers and smart home devices has also increased dramatically, and has delivered a number of benefits to those who are blind or have low vision. Similarly, the inclusion of built-in accessibility features into smart phones, tablets, and computers has meant that people with print disability have greater access to information and their environment than ever before.

This presentation discusses and demonstrates some of the new and emerging technologies that have, or are likely to have, a significant impact on access to information and the environment for people who are blind or have low vision, now and in the future.

#### Biography

Since graduating with a Bachelor of Information Technology from Griffith University **Damo McMorrow** has spent over 24 years in the IT industry in a variety of roles, from running his own adaptive technology business, to managing technical and service delivery teams across the Education sector. During this time, he has relied upon adaptive technology and equipment to help overcome a wide range of barriers and issues. Damo then brought his experience and passion for technology to Vision Australia, previously as an Access Technology Specialist, where he assisted clients in the use of technology for work, education, travel and leisure, and currently as national Access Technology Manager, leading Vision Australia’s Access Technology Service. In his spare time, he is a broadcaster on the internet radio station Mushroom FM, a keen cook, amateur radio operator, and 4-wheel-drive and camping enthusiast.

### 18b. How to make a PDF accessible in Adobe InDesign.

2:00pm – 3:00pm

**Presenter:** Vithya Vijayakumare, Senior Digital Accessibility Specialist, VisAbility Ltd.

#### Abstract

This hands-on, practical course will show you how to make a PDF accessible in Adobe InDesign and will outline the background of PDF accessibility standards (PDF/UA) and their continued importance.

#### Biography

**Vithya Vijayakumare** is the Senior Digital Accessibility Specialist at VisAbility. With over 10 years of experience, Vithya’s role is to ensure that websites, social media, videos, documents, audio materials and social media content are accessible to all. She has delivered projects in various accessible formats and also presented and provided workshops on various topics relating to digital accessibility, Inclusive publishing, content accessibility and future innovation solutions (3D Surround Sound/360 audio). Currently, she is a member of the Perth Web Accessibility Camp (PWAC) and Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities.

## Session 19 – Concurrent

### 19a. ANZAGG Meeting and Showcase.

1:30pm – 3:00pm

**Facilitator:** Leona Holloway

#### Abstract

The Australia and New Zealand Accessible Graphics Group is a subcommittee of the Round Table devoted to sharing information and ideas about accessible graphic. This includes tactile graphics, image descriptions, 3D printing, image recognition software, audio labels, sonification, refreshable graphics displays and more. Anyone with an interest in accessible graphics is welcome to join the meeting and showcase.

The meeting will report on innovations from ANZAGG members over the past year and elections will be held for committee positions for 2023-2025.

Attendees are invited to bring along examples of accessible graphics that you have created or used for an informal showcase, when we will take a hands-on look at graphics produced using a range of media, from low tech (handmade) to high tech and everything in between.

## Session 20 – Plenary

### 20a. Implementing the Marrakesh Treaty: Responding to the Challenges on the Ground

3:30pm – 4:30pm

**Feature Presenters:** Victoria Owen, Information Policy Scholar-Practitioner, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto and Jessica Coates, Senior Rights Advisor, National Library of Australia.

#### Abstract

The Marrakesh Treaty (2013) entered into force in September 2016. It is an historic treaty; it is the first treaty with a human rights focus at its core and it is the first users’ rights treaty in the history of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO). The goal of the Marrakesh VIP Treaty was to end the book famine experienced by millions of people worldwide with print disabilities. We know the numbers:

It has been estimated that less than 10% of the world’s published books are available in accessible formats for people who are print disabled.

The Treaty’s main purpose was to create mandatory limitations and exceptions to copyright for the benefit of people with print disabilities.

Marrakesh provided the momentum for countries to update laws to facilitate access to works in accessible formats. While a great achievement, making the Treaty operational on the ground was not straightforward. National legislation added variations and the practical issues encountered by those working to provide access make the actual realization of the promise of Marrakesh quite challenging.

In this conference session, Jessica Coates (Australia) and Victoria Owen (Canada), two leading advocates in Marrakesh legislative reform and in providing information tools to practitioners on the ground will share information on national and international collaborations, the development of information tools, and establishing standards for practice. The successes and challenges in the practical implementation of the provisions of Marrakesh will be presented and how the speakers envision future approaches to resolve the barriers to implementation.

#### Biographies

**Victoria Owen** holds joint appointments as Special Advisor to the Dean on Information Accessibility, UTSC, and as Information Policy Scholar-Practitioner, Faculty of Information, University of Toronto. Her particular focus encompasses copyright, access, accessibility, and the public interest. Victoria holds a Master’s in Library Science and a Master’s in Law; she teaches at the Faculty of Information and serves as chair of the Canadian Federation of Library Association’s Copyright Committee, the ARL-CARL Joint Task Force on the Marrakesh Treaty Implementation, and the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions’ Committee on Standards, and board member of the WIPO Accessible Book Consortium.

**Jessica Coates** is Senior Rights Advisor for the National Library of Australia, and Policy Advisor on broadcasting and the cultural sector for the Australian government. She holds a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Laws, and a Master of Laws. She is a copyright policy expert working with cultural institutions in Australia as a researcher, a lecturer at the Queensland University of Technology and a copyright, broadcasting and cultural sector policy adviser for the Australian government and private sectors. Ms. Coates is a principle or contributing author to multiple publications, including Making Content Accessible, a guide to Australia's disability access laws.

### 20b The European Accessibility Act: Its Development and Implications.

4:30pm – 5:00pm

**Feature Presenter:** Roger Firman, Chair, UK Association for Accessible Formats (UKAAF).

#### Abstract

The European Accessibility Act has been quite a few years in development and will prove to be a major piece of legislation. In the presentation, Roger is going to trace its history and development, discuss relevance to various sectors including disabled people, and explain the landscape for publishers. He will conclude by looking at what 2025 means and where next after 2025.

#### Biography

**Roger Firman** is chair of UKAAF, the UK Association for Accessible Formats. Until he retired in June 2022, he had run his own company called Golden Chord, dedicated to providing a high-quality personalised transcription service for customers who require music, music-related and other materials in braille. Roger is a life-long user of Braille and is passionate about its application in all areas of life.