

Queensland Disability 2026

**Access All Areas:
The Road Ahead**

Program

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
Merivale Street Entrance, South Brisbane
Plaza Terrace Room

Acknowledgement of Country

We respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land on which this event is taking place. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging.

Introduction

Welcome to the Queensland Disability Conference 2026, proudly hosted by Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN) and the Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety (DFSDSCS). We are delighted to have you join us for this event, now in its fourth year, as we continue to strive for inclusion and access for all Queenslanders.

The 2026 conference theme is **Access All Areas: The Road Ahead** and focuses on turning reform, inclusion and opportunity into meaningful action for Queenslanders with disability. The conference brings together senior leaders from government, business and community sectors, and people with disability and advocates, both in person and online.

Building on other events, this year's focus is on disability reforms, and the social and economic impact and opportunity of the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and other major events, and will also focus on accessible and inclusive transport.

Advancing disability reforms are central to building a more equitable Queensland and ensuring people with disability, their families and carers are active partners in shaping the systems and services that affect their lives.

The Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games will transform Queensland's communities, driving lasting social and economic opportunity for people with disability, redesigning our places, spaces, and systems to be truly inclusive.

Accessible and inclusive transport underpins this vision, enabling Queenslanders with disability to travel confidently and independently across the state – now and well beyond 2032. The conference elevates lived experience and cross-sector leadership, structured around three key panels:

- 1. Disability reforms** – unpacking the national and state reform agendas shaping the NDIS and Queensland's disability system, and how implementation can be co-designed and effective.
- 2. Brisbane 2032 Games – Social and Economic Impact** – exploring how the Games and other major events can deliver lasting economic opportunity, accessible tourism and genuine community benefit for Queenslanders with disability.
- 3. Accessible and Inclusive Transport** – examining opportunities for Queenslanders with disability to shape transport infrastructure, services and information to travel confidently and independently, now and beyond 2032.

Everyone has a part to play in bringing disability reforms to life. This work continues to be guided by the Queensland's disability reform work, *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022–27: Together, a better Queensland*, and *Australia's Disability Strategy 2021-2031*.

Throughout the day, QDN members will be leading as MCs, speakers, panelists, table hosts, and performers, highlighting the talents, skills, and leadership of people with disability. QDN and DFSDSCS encourage you to engage in meaningful conversations, build connections, and share your ideas and energy to work together to deliver 'Access All Areas'.

We extend our thanks to all speakers and facilitators for their contribution. We also acknowledge the presence and leadership of people with disability in shaping this conference and in driving systemic change across Queensland.

We hope you find the conference enriching and leave inspired to continue the vital work of fostering an inclusive Queensland.

Event Overview

People with lived experience of disability and other leaders across government, community, and business are invited to contribute to how we work together and the role we each play our part in advancing reform opportunities ahead, driving accessible and inclusive transport and embedding inclusive practices across all sectors to improve the lives of people with disability, and shape a more equitable Queensland.

There are four guest speakers and three panel sessions that highlight key areas for driving accessible practices in Queensland now and into the future, including the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Panel sessions will be facilitated by people with disability. Together, these sessions are designed to turn reform, innovation and lived experience into practical, meaningful action – reflecting this year’s conference theme, **Access All Areas: The Road Ahead**.

Conference History

This is the fourth annual Queensland Disability Conference. The conference is delivered by QDN in partnership with DFSDSCS to bring together people with disability, government, business, community organisations and researchers to shape disability policy, inclusion and reform across Queensland.

Each conference is designed to explore emerging opportunities, examine progress and identify the leadership needed to deliver meaningful change.

2023 – Australia’s Disability Strategy Forum

Queensland was the first state or territory in Australia to convene a jurisdictional forum for Australia’s Disability Strategy, bringing 261 people together with 13 Queensland Government departments, six statutory bodies and four local councils in the room. The Voice of Queenslanders with Disability Report was launched at the event. The report set a baseline for measuring progress and named four strategies for action which included safeguarding community voice, improving standard of living, enhancing dignity and equity, and strengthening belonging.

2024 – Imagining Possibilities: Shaping an inclusive Queensland

Building on the momentum of 2023, the inaugural Queensland Disability Conference was attended by 192 people in-person and 125 people online. There were four keynote speakers and four panels discussing disability reform, First Nations inclusion, the Brisbane 2032 opportunity and research to shape an inclusive Queensland. The strength of engagement, the calibre and diversity of speakers, the quality of table conversations, and the fully accessible format (Auslan, captioning, graphic recording) set the benchmark for future events.

2025 – Unlocking Potential: Reforms, Innovation and Inclusion

The conference expanded beyond Brisbane to include dedicated regional events in Cairns and Rockhampton. The Innovation Hub was a structured pitch process that turned table conversations into concrete sets of locally-driven ideas which included employment pathways, co-designed local disability plans, and Brisbane 2032 legacy infrastructure. This provided a set of tangible actions, rather than just a record of discussions.

Jimmy Patch Graphic Recording

Jimmy Patch, an internationally renowned, award winning, industry-leading illustrator and graphic recorder has attended the 2024 and 2025 Conferences. Jimmy creates unique and bespoke artworks of conversations and presentations, using hand-drawn illustrations. These artworks enable people to connect to the event using a visual snapshot. Examples of Jimmy's work from past Conferences are below.



Image Description: There are two (2) cartoon graphic recordings of the 2024 and 2025 conferences, containing a lot of information including the date and welcome. There are also short phrases and images that highlight various topics that were discussed in the session. Image also has the Queensland Government Logo and QDN Logo.

Conference Agenda

Date: Friday 11 September 2026
Time: Conference: 9:30am – 4:30pm
 Networking Event: 4:30pm – 5:30pm
Venue: Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre
 Merivale Street Entrance, South Brisbane, Plaza Terrace Room

Friday 11 September 2026	
Time	Activity
9:30am	Conference welcome: Lily Rosevear and Sara Shams
9:35am	Acknowledgement of Country: Uncle Willie Prince
9:40am	Conference overview: Lily Rosevear and Sara Shams
9:45am	Conference Opening Address: The Honourable Ann Leahy – Acting Minister for Families, Seniors and Disability Services, and Acting Minister for Child Safety and the Prevention of Domestic and Family Violence
9:55am	In conversation – Access All Areas: The Road Ahead Speaker 1: - The Honourable Sam O'Connor MP – Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth - Belinda Drew – Director General, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety In conversation with Michelle Moss – Chief Executive Officer, Queenslanders with Disability Network (QDN)
10:30am	Speaker 2: Debbie Platz APM – Queensland Human Rights Commissioner
11:00am	Morning tea
11:30am	Speaker 3: Dr Scott Avery – Professor of Indigenous Disability Health and Wellbeing in the School of Public Health, University of Technology Sydney
12:00pm	Panel 1: Disability Reforms - Desmond Lee – State Manager, Queensland, National Disability Insurance Agency - Hope Peisley – Deputy Director General, Strategy, Policy and Legislation, Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety - Anthea Long – First Assistant Secretary, NDIS Sustainability Taskforce - Brendon Buckley – Assistant Secretary, Transport Accessibility and Future Fuels Branch, International Aviation, Technology and Services Division, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communication and the Arts Facilitator: Dr Talitha Kingsmill – Chairperson, QDN
1:00pm	Lunch

Friday 11 September 2026

Time	Activity
1:45pm	Panel 2: Brisbane 2032 Games – Social and economic impact • Dominique Lamb – Director of Community Affairs to the President, Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Organising Committee • Councillor Vicki Howard – Civic Cabinet Chair for Community and the Arts and Councillor for Central Ward, Brisbane City Council • Katie Kelly OAM PLY – Accessibility and Inclusion Manager, Olympic and Paralympic Games Office, Department of Sport, Racing and Olympic and Paralympic Games • Alexandra Sloane – Vice President, Integrated Marketing and Communications, Australasia, Mastercard • Suzanne Edwards – Accessibility Standards Lead, Airbnb Facilitator: Dr Sharon Boyce – Deputy Chairperson, QDN
3:00pm	Comfort break
3:15pm	Panel 3: Accessible and Inclusive Transport • Prudence Betros – People Manager, Engineering & Maintenance, Integrated Operations & Workforce Planning, Virgin • Dr Kali Marnane – Associate Director, City Design Strategy and Policy, Urbis, with Daniel Quan – Associate Director, Transport Planning, Urbis – Games Readiness Report • Santiago Velasquez – Hailo Founder and CEO, EyeSyght and Hailo • Alex Bubke – Manager, Technical Accessibility, Accessible Transport Network, Department of Transport and Main Roads Facilitator: Nerine Broome – Board Director, QDN
4:15pm	Graphic Recording overview from Jimmy Patch, Patch Creative Co
4:20pm	Thanks and close: Michelle Moss – CEO, QDN
4:30pm	Networking event: Plaza Terrace Jazz duo: Dr Jeff Usher and Ella Doneman
5:30pm	Finish

Conference Presenters

Acknowledgement of Country



Image description: A man in a red and black striped polo shirt. He is wearing square shaped glasses and smiling slightly and warmly.

Uncle Willie Prince

Uncle Wilfred Prince, known as Uncle Willie, was born on Wakka Wakka country and has cultural and spiritual connection to the Kalkadoon clan group in Mount Isa. Uncle Willie experienced multiple hospital admissions in his early life and was removed from family and culture at age two and placed into hospital. He was later transferred to Xavier Home for Crippled Children and left there when he was 16. Uncle Willie worked for the State Library for 33 years and had a distinguished career in disability sport, representing Queensland 16 times. He carried the Paralympic torch in 2000 and in 2018 carried the Queen's baton for the Commonwealth Games. Uncle Willie is a voice and advocate for people with disability, particularly Aboriginal people with disability.

Masters of Ceremonies

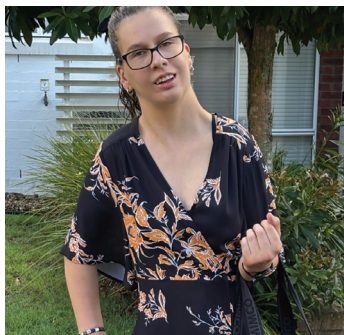


Image description: A woman wearing a black and orange dress, a bracelet, and holding a black bag. She has long, dark hair pulled back into a ponytail and dark framed glasses.

Lily Rosevear

Lily Rosevear is a youth consultant and passionate disability advocate who uses her lived experience to champion meaningful change. She has contributed to a range of initiatives focused on accessibility and inclusion, including presenting to organisational boards, collaborating with service teams to improve accessibility, and participating in the QDN Emerging Leaders Program. Lily is committed to ensuring young people with disability are not only heard but are actively involved in shaping the decisions that affect their lives. With a strong interest in leadership, innovation, and systems change, she is dedicated to creating more inclusive communities and opportunities for future generations.



Image description: A woman with long dark hair and wearing a blue dress with pink spots.

Sara Shams

Sara Shams is an award-winning strategic leader, disability advocate, and founder of Ethnability Consultancy. With a background spanning health, governance, and social impact, she partners with government, industry, and community to advance inclusive policy and practice. Sara serves in board and advisory leadership roles across the disability, housing, and multicultural sectors and is widely recognised for her leadership in disability inclusion and intersectionality. A sought-after speaker and facilitator, she is known for guiding thoughtful conversations that challenge perspectives, foster collaboration, and inspire meaningful action.

Speakers



Image description: A woman with shoulder-length blonde hair and glasses, wearing a blue jacket over a black shirt. She is also wearing a pearl necklace.

Ann Leahy

Ann Leahy is the Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers.

Ann was born in Stanthorpe, raised on the family farm, educated via Distance Education and boarding school, and holds a bachelor's degree in science. She has a keen interest in aviation and spends her spare time competing in sheep dog trials with her two beloved border collies, Molly, and Jess.

Ann has worked in the political sector for over 30 years. She is a passionate voice for the South-West fighting for doctors in local communities and better health facilities in the region.

Ann is a strong advocate for the agricultural, manufacturing, resources, and tourism sectors across South West Queensland. She is passionate about ensuring the government's priorities are focused on plans to grow these industries whilst keeping the communities safe and enabling them to grow with more housing opportunities.

Ann was elected in 2015 as the Member for Warrego and is the first female Member of Parliament to win the state seat of Warrego since Federation. She advocates for communities across her electorate from the western parts of the Darling Downs to the South Australian border.

Ann has served as Parliamentary Deputy Chair of the Parliamentary Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources Committee. In 2017, Ann was appointed as the LNP Shadow Minister for Local Government. In 2020, Ann was appointed to the portfolios of Local Government, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers. She was sworn in as Minister for Minister for Local Government and Water and Minister for Fire, Disaster Recovery and Volunteers in October 2024.

Speakers



Image description: A man smiling at the camera, he has short dark hair and is wearing a dark blue suit over a white shirt with a blue tie.

Sam O'Connor MP

Sam O'Connor grew up around his family's electrical retail business RT Edwards and completed degrees in Science and Arts at the University of Queensland. Before entering public life, Sam worked in the hospitality industry and as a media and communications advisor.

In 2017, Sam was elected as the first MP for the new Gold Coast electorate of Bonney. He proudly serves the residents of Labrador, Arundel, Parkwood, The Surrounds, and parts of Biggera Waters, Coombabah and Southport. Representing an electorate with one of the highest rates of renting and a significant proportion of social housing, Sam has seen firsthand the challenges of housing security and cost-of-living and its impact on his community.

Re-elected in 2024 for a third term in Parliament, Sam was honoured to be appointed Queensland's Minister for Housing and Public Works and Minister for Youth. In these roles, he is committed to giving more Queenslanders a place to call home by boosting frontline homelessness support, building more social and affordable housing and unlocking the potential of the community housing sector. Sam is also focused on driving innovation in the building and construction sector, improving productivity and efficiency to meet Queensland's growing housing and infrastructure needs.

To deliver generational change for our great state, Sam is working to position Queensland as the building capital of the nation, ensuring the state leads the way in tackling housing challenges and creates opportunities for the next generation to thrive.



Image description: A woman with shoulder-length blonde hair, wearing a brown jacket. She is smiling at the camera.

Belinda Drew

Belinda is an experienced executive leader with over 30 years' experience, specialising in policy, program design, investment, and service delivery.

After completing a Bachelor of Teaching from Griffith University and a Bachelor of Arts in Social Work from The University of Queensland. Belinda has worked in various fields including social enterprise, impact investments and social services and is dedicated to improving outcomes for Queensland communities.



Image description: A woman with blonde hair sitting at a desk. She is wearing a blue dress with white spots.

Debbie Platz

Debbie Platz commenced as the Queensland Human Rights Commissioner on 30 January 2026. She is the second Commissioner to be appointed to this role in Queensland.

Debbie has extensive public sector leadership experience, including as the New South Wales State Emergency Service (SES), Deputy Commissioner Operations, where she was responsible for safeguarding communities from natural disasters and demonstrated a deep commitment to representing vulnerable people.

Her career includes significant roles in the Australian Federal Police (AFP) as Assistant Commissioner and the Queensland Police Service as Assistant Commissioner.

She has been recognised for her ethical and diligent service, which includes being awarded an Australian Police Medal and Queensland Police Service medal, along with a meritorious service medal.

Debbie holds a Master of Studies (Applied Criminology) from the University of Cambridge, United Kingdom; Master of Business Administration from the University of the Sunshine Coast; Graduate Diploma in Education (Secondary/VET) from the University of the Sunshine Coast; and is Adjunct Professor with the University of Queensland.



Image description: A man with short greying hair, mustache and beard wearing a blue suit over a white shirt and an indigenous patterned tie.

Dr Scott Avery

Dr Scott Avery is a professor of Indigenous disability health and wellbeing at Girra Maa Indigenous Health, University of Technology Sydney. He is an Aboriginal man from the Worimi people and is profoundly deaf.

Dr Scott is a recognised educator, researcher and policy adviser on Indigenous cultural approaches for the inclusion of people with disability. His publication 'Culture is Inclusion' (2018) has influenced national policy across Closing the Gap, Australia's Disability Strategy, and the Disability Royal Commission. He has been appointed as an expert advisor to numerous Government agencies and is a director on the boards of Achieve Australia, Hearing Australia, the National Disability Research Partnership, and as a member of the Australian Government's First Nations Health Governance Group.

His work on intersectional policy and data methodologies is recognised internationally, having represented Girra Maa as a founding member of the WHO Disability Health Equity Network. He was appointed Ambassador for the International Day of People with Disability in 2024, gave the 2024 National Disability Leadership Oration titled 'deaf defying' which was broadcast nationally on the ABC's Big Ideas Program, and in 2025 was honoured to be named the recipient of the Aunty Barbara Nicholson Social Impact Award by the University of Wollongong.

Panellists



Image description: A man with grey hair and glasses, wearing a white shirt. He is smiling at the camera.

Desmond Lee

Born and raised in Cairns, Desmond Lee has worked in senior executive roles within the disability services sector in Queensland for over 16 years. His passion for working with people with disability was first sparked while at high school, where he regularly volunteered his time to work with children with disability at the (then) Cairns Central Special School.

Des has devoted 29 years to working in senior roles within the human services sector across Queensland, specialising in disability and community services, housing and Indigenous affairs across North Queensland, Cape York, Torres Strait and Gulf regions. Des has played a key role in implementing social reforms in First Nations communities in remote Cape York and Torres Strait communities.

Des has led the strategic and operational delivery of NDIS services for Queensland for some 10 years. Starting with the roll out of the first NDIS transition sites in Townsville, Palm Island and Charters Towers in 2016. Des would go on to establish and lead the Queensland (NDIS) Service Delivery Division as the NDIS was finally fully established in Queensland in 2019.

Des currently serves as the General Manager for the Queensland (NDIS) Service Delivery Team, servicing and supporting some 165,000 participants across metro, regional, rural and remote Queensland. A role which he has enjoyed for the past three and a half years.



Image description: A woman with short dark hair and is wearing tortoise shell glasses and smiling at the camera.

Hope Peisley

Hope Peisley (she/her) is Deputy Director-General, Strategy, Policy and Legislation at the Queensland Department of Families, Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety. She leads strategic policy development and legislative reforms across disability, child safety and families. Hope has worked across a number of Commonwealth government agencies, including the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Social Services and the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Hope has a passion for social policy and bringing about system change and reform.



Image description: A woman with brown hair pulled back, she is wearing a colourful scarf over a black jacket. She is also wearing drop earrings with a maroon disc.

Anthea Long

Anthea Long has over 20 years of experience in public policy, spanning senior government roles and community-level implementation. Anthea is currently on secondment to the Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, where she is leading the NDIS Sustainability Taskforce in the Disability and Carers Group.

Anthea was previously the Head of the Social Policy Division at the Treasury, where she led policy advice and analysis on key social programs. Her career also includes roles across the Department of Industry, Science and Resources, the Productivity Commission and international development work on SME and agricultural market development projects in Cambodia.

Anthea holds a Bachelor of Business, Honours in Economics, and a Master of International and Development Economics.



Image description: A man with blonde hair, wearing a purple shirt and a blue jacket. He is smiling at the camera.

Brendon Buckley

Brendon Buckley is the Assistant Secretary, Transport Accessibility and Future Fuels Branch within the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts, Australian Government. Brendon and his team are responsible for delivering on the Government's commitments in the Aviation White Paper to develop aviation-specific disability standards. In addition, the team are responsible for the Disability Standards for Accessible Public Transport, including the recent reforms that have been tabled in Parliament.



Image description:
A woman with long blonde hair (pulled back). She is wearing a turquoise jacket over a black shirt, and she has a dark pearl necklace and earring set. She is smiling at the camera.

Dominique Lamb

Dominique Lamb has a diverse background in corporate affairs, industrial relations, and not-for-profits. Dominique was previously the CEO of the National Retail Association and a director of NRA Legal. In her role as CEO, Dominique advocated on behalf of 60,000 shop fronts across the country about a diverse range of issues, including but not limited to crime, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG), youth employment, industrial relations, leasing and tenancy, franchising, and the digital economy.

Dominique served as the Queensland Small Business Commissioner from December 2022 until October 2025, where she focused on improving the operating environment for small businesses and reducing the time and cost of resolving disputes.

From October 2025, Dominique has taken on the role of Director of Community Affairs for the Brisbane Olympic Games, where she will continue her commitment to community engagement and advocacy.

Beyond her professional endeavours, Dominique is deeply committed to social causes, particularly those addressing domestic and family violence and Closing the Gap in our regional, remote, and rural communities.



Image description:
A woman with short dark brown hair. She is wearing a yellow blouse with a bow at the neck and smiling at the camera.

Vicki Howard

Councillor Vicki Howard is Brisbane's Civic Cabinet Chair for Community and the Arts and has represented Central Ward since 2012. She works closely with the city's arts, cultural and community sectors to deliver events and experiences that bring people together and is a strong advocate for Brisbane's creative identity as the city prepares for the 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games.



*Image description:
A woman with long blonde hair sitting on a couch with a plant in the background. She is wearing a dark green dress and smiling at the camera.*

Katie Kelly

Katie Kelly OAM PLY is the Accessibility and Inclusion Manager in the Olympic and Paralympic Games Office, Department of Sport, Racing, Olympic and Paralympic Games. Her role is focussed on advancing accessibility and empowering people with disability through the Brisbane 2032 Olympic and Paralympic Games and beyond. Katie is a two-time Paralympian who was the first Australian to win a gold medal in the sport of Paratriathlon at the Rio Paralympics in 2016, and a two-time World Champion. She retired after seven years in high-performance sport after the Tokyo 2020 Paralympics.



*Image description:
A woman with long flowing blonde hair smiling at the camera. She has a cream jacket over a white shirt.*

Alexandra Sloane

Alexandra Sloane is Vice President of Marketing and Communications for Mastercard, leading brand, partnerships, and communications for Australia, New Zealand and Pacific Islands. Alexandra brings over 25 years' experience (in Sydney, New York and Singapore) across three chapters – advertising, global tech (Meta), and Telecommunications (Optus) with a track record of building superb teams, driving growth, and leading through complexity.

An AICD-qualified director with executive education in Sustainability from Harvard, Alex is passionate about shaping a modern, human-centred model of leadership.



Image description: A woman sitting in front of the London skyline, she is using a wheelchair and wearing a denim jacket over a black shirt and pants. She has long, light brown hair and is smiling at the camera.

Suzanne Edwards

Suzanne Edwards is the Accessibility Standards Lead at Airbnb, where she sets the company's overall vision and strategy for accessibility and works with teams across the company to execute it. She is a full-time wheelchair user after sustaining a spinal cord injury in 2011 and is deeply passionate about making travel more accessible. Suzanne joined Airbnb in 2017 as part of the acquisition of accessible travel startup Accomable. Since then, she has spearheaded innovations that help guests with mobility needs more easily find and book listings that meet their needs, as well as supply initiatives to increase accessible accommodation options at large-scale events such as the Paris 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the FIFA World Cup 2026.

Outside of work, Suzanne is an active member of the disability community and an advocate for employment opportunities for people with disability and for inclusive sports. She is a member of the English Adaptive Surf team and will be competing at the World Para Surf Championships in November.



Image description: A woman with long flowing light brown hair wearing a black jacket over a white shirt and gold earrings. She is smiling at the camera.

Prudence Betros

Prudence Betros is an HR leader, inclusion advocate and Co-Chair of Virgin Australia's Ability Network, bringing a powerful blend of strategic people expertise, operational insight and lived experience to the conversation on disability inclusion.

In her role at Virgin Australia, Prudence partners across the business to deliver people-centred HR solutions that support performance, culture and organisational growth. With a strong background in HR operations, people strategy and business partnering, she is passionate about shaping workplaces where accessibility, belonging and inclusion are embedded into how organisations think, lead, and operate.

As Co-Chair of Virgin Australia's Ability Network, Prudence helps champion disability inclusion, accessibility, and allyship across the organisation, creating space for greater awareness, representation, and meaningful action. Her advocacy is also deeply personal. As the parent of a son with disability, Prudence brings lived experience that has strengthened her commitment to building systems, workplaces and communities that are easier to navigate, more inclusive and more human.



Image description: A woman sitting smiling and facing the camera, she has short dark hair and is wearing a blue shirt and earrings.

Dr Kali Marnane

Dr Kali Marnane is an architect and researcher with experience across policy, strategy, and social outcomes. Her work focuses on improving inclusion, access and wellbeing through evidence informed practice and collaboration across sectors. Kali brings a strong interest in translating research into practical insights that support better planning, architectural design, and decision making. She was awarded the 2025 Emerging Architect Prize by the Australian Institute of Architects for her community-focused work.



Image description: A man smiling with short black hair wearing a black long-sleeved shirt.

Daniel Quan

Daniel Quan is an Associate Director at Urbis with over 14 years of experience across Australia and the UK in transport planning, parking and kerbside strategy, and sustainable mobility. His work focuses on creating transport networks and public spaces that are more accessible, inclusive and responsive to community needs.

He has worked with government and private sector clients on projects spanning accessible streets, movement and place planning, parking policy, active transport and travel behaviour change. Prior to returning to Australia, he delivered a range of transport and kerbside projects in London, including parking permit strategies and corridor studies designed to balance accessibility, safety and competing street demands.

Dan is passionate about improving how people move through cities and communities, with a particular interest in designing transport systems that support equitable access and participation for all users.



Image description: A man with short dark hair wearing glasses. He is also wearing a light blue jacket over a white shirt.

Santiago Velásquez

Santiago Velásquez immigrated to Australia from Colombia at the age of twelve and has since become the first blind electrical engineer in the Southern Hemisphere. He now lives in Montreal, is learning his third language and is currently expanding his company Hailo into the North American market.

Santiago is the co-founder and Chief Technology Officer of Hailo, a system that lets passengers hail a bus from their phone. He built it because he was tired of being left behind by buses he could not see to hail. Hailo now runs on 600 buses in Melbourne with the support of the Victorian Government — the first system of its kind in the world — and has been trialled by Transport for New South Wales. As a 2022 Churchill Fellow, he travelled to eleven countries researching global best practice in accessible public transport. For his engineering thesis he adapted a Boston Dynamics Spot robot into a guide dog, working from both the technical side and his own experience as a guide dog handler — not to replace guide dogs, but to reach the many people who cannot have one because of climate, allergies, cost, or simply where they live.

He has delivered two TEDx talks, keynote addresses in Australia, Europe and the United States, and has presented three times at the United Nations in New York, at the Conference of States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2019, 2020 and 2023). In 2019 he received the QUT Alumni Special Excellence Award, granted only seven times since 2005. In 2025 the Australian Government named him one of six national ambassadors for International Day of People with Disability.

Beyond his work, Santiago has completed the 96km and 48km Kokoda Challenges, walked the 55km Oxfam Trailwalker, dived with bull sharks in Fiji, and piloted a light aircraft. He believes barriers should never decide what someone becomes: access to knowledge and to transport is what gives people a real choice about the path they take.



Image description: A man with short dark hair and a moustache, he is wearing a black jumper over a white shirt.

Alex Bubke

Since joining the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) in 2012, Alex Bubke has worked in a wide range of customer-focused roles. Since 2019, Alex has worked in the Accessible Transport Network program, supporting TMR to become a leader in providing dignified, accessible, and inclusive transport products, services, information, and infrastructure. As Manager (Technical Accessibility), Alex provides strategic and technical advice to the department's varied infrastructure projects, championing universal design to deliver accessible and inclusive transport solutions for the community. Alex manages a range of projects and initiatives, co-designing with university partners, the disability sector and industry delivery partners, to identify and embed best practice through technical advice, guidance and resources. Alex has a Master of Architecture from QUT, a Diploma of Access Consulting, and is an Associate Member of the Access Consulting Association.



Image description: A woman with short blonde hair, wearing a blue shirt and smiling at the camera with her arms folded.

Michelle Moss

Michelle Moss is QDN's Chief Executive Officer and has spent more than 30 years working across the human services sector, including disability, health, and women's services such as sexual assault and domestic and family violence support. Her career spans direct support work, counselling, behaviour support, consumer and community engagement, and social policy. Michelle is a strong advocate for the voice of people with disability, championing their role in driving and influencing public policy and in the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services. She has particular expertise in the advocacy areas of transport, housing and health and their impact on Queenslanders with disability.

Facilitators



Image description: A woman with short dark hair wearing a black jacket over a blue shirt smiling at the camera.

Dr Talitha Kingsmill

Dr Talitha Kingsmill is a Non-Executive Director and Board Chairperson for QDN, and a disability and inclusion advocate, educator and solicitor. She has 30 years' experience across the private, public and NFP sectors in education, leadership, research, law, digital citizenship, regulatory compliance, policy development and disability advocacy and inclusion. Talitha's lived and professional experience provides rich insights to the confronting and very real challenges and obstacles for people with disability.

Talitha is the Queensland Disability Research Network (QDRN) Executive Lead and a Senior Research Fellow at Griffith University. She sits on a selection of national and state-based panels including the National Disability Data Asset Disability-Informed Ethical Oversight Panel and the Queensland Disability Reform Implementation Stakeholder Committee.

Talitha is a passionate advocate for equitable and accessible opportunities for all.



Image description: A woman with short blonde curly hair, wearing a black and white top and a gold necklace. She has a headrest and is smiling at the camera.

Dr Sharon Boyce

Dr Sharon Boyce is an educator, author, speaker and disability advocate, focused on disability awareness across Queensland and Australia. She is passionate and committed to social justice – empowering people with disability and supporting real living independence. In addition to her role as QDN Deputy Chairperson, Sharon is the Co-Chair of the Queensland Disability Advisory Council (Queensland Government) and Advisor to the Queensland Minister for Seniors, Disability Services and Child Safety.

She is an appointed member of the National Disability Insurance Scheme Independent Advisory Council, a member of the Physical Disability Australia Board, and advisor to the Toowoomba Regional Council's Access Committee. She is the Director of the Australian Institute of Inclusive Education and Research, CEO of the Disability Training Institute and Chief Executive Officer and Director of Aus Inclusion Pty Ltd. In 2020 she was awarded a Doctor of Letters for her research in education inclusion and dyslexia, and she is currently completing a Doctor of Philosophy.

Among the awards she has received are the Queensland Regional Achiever Award in 2012 for her work in awareness, raising and creating inclusive communities across Australia, a Human Rights Award in 2008 for her contribution to creating inclusion across the community, and a Disability Action Week Award in 2003 for her work writing an accessible children's story book.



Image description: A woman with short dark hair wearing pink glasses and black jacket smiling at the camera.

Nerine Broome

Nerine is an active QDN member who participates in peer support and focus groups, and prior to joining the board was a QDN consultant. She founded the Brisbane Functional Neurological Disorder (FND) peer support group, working with others to build a statewide community. Combining professional expertise in governance and change management, with lived experience of navigating complex systems, she is known for her generosity in sharing knowledge and has a talent for connecting people and resources to improve outcomes for Queenslanders with disability.

Nerine serves on the Sector Stakeholder Committee of the Queensland Disability Research Network and is the Autistic Co-Chair of Empower Autism. Her professional qualifications include a Master of Management (Human Resources), a Graduate Diploma of Management, and a Graduate Certificate in Information Systems as well as vocational qualifications in Assistive Technology. She is passionate about accessibility, inclusion, and social impact, particularly within education, employment, and healthcare systems.

Performers and Artists



Image description: A man sitting at a grand piano, he is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt and a dark fedora hat and dark glasses.

Dr Jeff Usher

Dr Jeff Usher, composer, pianist, singer/songwriter, arranger and music educator, is in many ways Australian music's best kept secret. He was once described by Australian jazz legend, Paul Grabovsky, as "one of Brisbane's living treasures". Blind since birth, Jeff stands in a long line of blind pianists. A jazz specialist, Jeff also excels in a wide variety of other genres. He has performed across Australia and the world during a career spanning over 40 years. Jeff has performed with notable American jazz musicians, released seven albums, has been a tutor at Queensland Conservatorium Griffith University since 1998, and received his PhD in music composition from the University of Queensland in 2019.



Image description: A woman with short dark hair. She is standing and singing into a microphone on a stand. She is wearing a black T-shirt with pink, yellow and green flowers.

Ella Doneman

Ella Doneman is a musician and educator who has had a love for singing from her youngest years. The love of music enabled her to connect with her family in Europe through traditional Czechoslovakian folk songs. She and her Czech family may not have spoken the same language but they all shared their love of music, song and story. In school, Ella sang in choirs and played the euphonium and later was part of a cappella singing group, the “Deep C Divas” for over 10 years. In 2015 Ella began her own education and teaching business working with people with disability, called Practical Life Skills. Right now Ella is at the beginning of a new project entitled “Blossoming Ella – Blossom Dearie, Ella Fitzgerald and Me!”.

With thanks

Monte Lupo

Speakers’ gifts were purchased from Monte Lupo Arts, made by talented ceramicists with disability. Monte Lupo offers beautiful handmade ceramic and textile artworks and homewares and provides employment opportunities for people with disability. Monte Lupo’s employee artists manage each step of the production process, preparing the clay, glazing and painting. Each detail is unique to the finished product and a testament to the hard work of their team members. Many of the artists have received national and international recognition for their work, and Monte Lupo is regularly featured in exhibitions across Australia, in addition to holding their own exhibitions. Monte Lupo is operated by disability support provider Multicap.



DWF

QDN thanks DWF for their generous support of the 2026 Queensland Disability Conference networking event.

DWF is a leading global provider of legal services, operating across eight key sectors in over 35 global locations with over 5,000 people. DWF has a reputation as a purpose-driven firm with a consistent “one team” culture that delivers positive outcomes for colleagues, clients and communities, across sectors including insurance, construction, energy, government, transport, health and more.

