

Autistica Research Festival 2022

autistica

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Welcome

Welcome to the 5th Autistica Research Festival, thank you all for joining us.

As the UK's leading autism research and campaigning charity we want to see a world where every autistic person lives a happy, healthy, long life. Our role in making this a reality is to identify problems, find solutions, and then advise and influence key partners who can implement the changes autistic people want to experience.

But we can't make these changes alone. We need to work together. By sharing information and experiences and connecting likeminded people at events like this we can ensure that we make real progress for autistic people.

You will have seen that we are able to offer free tickets to the festival. This wouldn't be possible if it wasn't for the generous support of Fujitsu – our corporate partner. If you were able to donate towards your ticket, we are so grateful. Thanks to Fujitsu, every pound we raise from festival goes directly towards the vital research and policy change that Autistica carries out on a daily basis.

I know you wouldn't be joining the Festival if you weren't passionate about autism and autism research, but it can be challenging when we bring different experiences, opinions and emotions to these sessions. It's important to remember that although we may hear things this week that we find difficult and different, we all have

a common aim: to improve the lives of autistic people across the UK. So let's all be respectful and kind to one another and allow for constructive discussion. We'd love everyone to get involved in the conversations online using #AutisticaFestival.

Thank you to all of the academics, professionals, and autistic contributors who have helped to make this event possible, and to my team at Autistica who have been working hard behind the scenes to make everything run smoothly, and to ensure every voice is heard.

I hope you enjoy the festival and end the week having learnt something and feeling part of a community that is making real change for autistic people.



Dr James Cusack
Autistica CEO

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7. Friday 15 July
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Timetable

	10:00		11:00	12:00		13:00	14:00		15:00
Monday 11th July	10:00 - 10:15 Intro James Cusack	10:15 - 11:00 Keynote: Sven Bölte Support from Day 1	11:00 - 12:00 Diagnosis and autistic women 2 Speakers			13:00 - 14:00 Diagnosis and acceptance 3 Speakers		14:30 - 15:30 Sensory experiences and processing 3 Speakers	
Tuesday 12th July			11:00 - 12:00 Autism and open research practices: Bringing pre-registration to autism research			13:00 - 14:00 Underserved groups 4 Speakers		14:30 - 15:30 Eating and diet 3 Speakers	
Wednesday 13th July	10:00 - 12:00 Healthcare 7 Speakers					13:00 - 13:45 Poster presentations		14:00 - 15:30 Social care 4 Speakers	
Thursday 14th July	10:00 - 12:00 Social relationships 7 Speakers					13:00 - 13:45 Poster presentations		14:00 - 15:30 Mental health 4 Speakers	
Friday 15th July	10:00 - 11:00 Keynote: Lara Suzuki Employment		11:00 - 12:00 Employment Part 1 3 Speakers			13:00 - 14:00 Employment Part 2 3 Speakers		14:30 - 15:30 Education 3 Speakers	15:30 - 15:45 Close James Cusack

- Keynote:** invited speakers discussing their research and lived experience
- Panel sessions:** groups of up to six speakers presenting their research, discussing their lived experience, or describing their community-based projects
- Poster sessions:** researchers and community members giving short, poster based presentations on their related projects
- Symposium sessions:** a group of researchers focusing on a single topic relevant to autistic people and autism research

Day One Monday 11 July

Session One

10.15-11.00

1

Keynote: Support from day one with Professor Sven Bölte

Sven Bölte is a Professor of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Science at the Karolinska Institutet (KI) in Stockholm, Sweden. He leads the KI Centre of Neurodevelopmental Disorders (KIND) and the Neuropsychiatry Division at the Department of Women's and Children's Health, Center for Psychiatry Research.

Sven has spent more than 25 years working in neurodevelopmental conditions, with key expertise in autism and ADHD and specialises in improving diagnostic instruments and assessments, cognition/neuropsychology, mental health and support pathways.

In this keynote, Sven will explain, how we can use the ICF as basis for support assessment for autistic individuals in different contexts, both clinical, educational and social services. Sven is convinced that the use of the ICF to evaluate individual's strengths and challenges and their environmental facilitators and barriers will initiate an urgently needed societal system shift towards a holistic understanding of neurodiverse individuals in their unique world that will guide better communication, support and solutions.



Session Two

11.00-12.00

2

Diagnosis and autistic women

Throughout the history of autism, women have been under-recognised, under-diagnosed and underserved. In the past decade, this inequality has begun to change as knowledge of autism in women has developed and grown. With this recognition, many women are now reflecting on their life experiences and understanding themselves through the scope and identity of autism. This stream will explore autistic women's experience of diagnosis and post-diagnosis and how this relates to wellbeing, self-understanding and the life-course.

Speakers include

- Miriam Harmens
- Rosie Wilson and Megan Freeth

Session Three

13.00-14.00

3

Diagnosis and acceptance

An autism diagnosis can be a major life event that interrelates with a person's background, culture, and life history. It can be a complex experience and can lead a person to reflect on themselves, the meaning of the diagnosis, and how this can be accepted and understood. This stream will explore how people experience and respond to autism diagnoses, and how it impacts different people in different circumstances.

Speakers include

- Tracy Clements
- Jennifer Kirton
- Ashley Greene

Session Four

14.30-15.30

4

Sensory experiences and processing

Sensory perceptions, responses and experiences are an integral part of many autistic people's lives. As such, everyday environments and activities can have a significant or unanticipated impact and may require appropriate adaptations or support. Such experiences and issues will be the focus of this stream, looking also to approaches and programmes aimed at developing more accessible spaces and places.

Speakers include

- Keren MacLennan and Emily from @21andsensory
- Cheryl Gascoigne
- George Tackley



Day Two Tuesday 12 July

Session Two

11.00-12.00

1

Symposium: Autism and open research practices

with Daniel Poole and Felicity Sedgewick

Autism research has, for a long time, felt like a 'black box' to many people who are not closely involved in the processes - something which conclusions come out of, and which impacts autistic people's lives, but where it is very difficult to work out where those conclusions come from exactly. This is potentially bad not only for the autism community who are seeking to understand what research says about them, but often also for the quality of the science itself, because there is less oversight of the authenticity of the practices used to reach those findings.

Research in general is going through a phase of methodological revolution. Open research practices are increasingly being adopted in order to improve the reliability and transparency of studies. A key open research practice is pre-registration where a research plan is registered online before a study begins. When pre-registering a study the researcher will state what they expect to find and what they are planning to do in the study and with the data. Although pre-registration has rapidly risen in popularity over the past decade, it remains relatively uncommon in autism research.

In this interactive symposium, we hope to start a discussion about pre-registration in the context of autism research. We will introduce pre-registration, including a walk-through of an example from our own work. We will also discuss the benefits and some of the challenges relating to pre-registration of autism research. Pre-registration, and open science practices in general, are focused on research which tests hypotheses. However, qualitative research makes an important contribution to our understanding of autistic people's experiences. We will explore ways in which pre-registration might be developed to improve transparency in qualitative autism research.

Session Two

13.00-14.00

2

Underserved groups

The autistic population is diverse in make-up and background, but this is often not reflected within the autism research field. Many groups need greater involvement if their experiences, challenges and support needs are to be better understood. This stream aims to provide a platform for work with a focus on people who have historically been underserved by research and whose perspectives and experiences require more attention.

Speakers include

- Fang Liu
- Jane Waite
- Nalini Edwards, Sarah Donald and Sebastian Gaigg
- Natali Bozhilova

Session Three

14.30-15.30

3

Eating and diet

Knowledge of the interrelationship between autism, eating and diet is growing. High numbers of autistic people experience challenges related to eating, reflected in the disproportionate rates of eating disorders within the population. More must be done to better understand and support autistic people when eating and diet become a problem. These issues and experiences will be explored in this stream, with reference to anorexia, body image and sensory processing in autistic people.

Speakers include

- Emy Nimbley
- Sarah Miller
- Phaedra Longhurst



Ask your questions

Every session in the Festival will be live streamed on our website and you will be able to submit your questions to the speakers and pannellists directly underneath the video.

Questions can be about anything from asking a speaker to explain something they talked about to asking a panellist to go into more detail about a point they made.

We may not have time to get to all of your questions, but we'll do our best to make sure we get through as many as possible.

Day Three

Wednesday 13 July

Session One

10.00-12.00

1

Healthcare

Autistic people face many inequalities and barriers within healthcare. Access is inadequate because healthcare services have not been developed or designed to accommodate autistic people's needs or circumstances. More must be done to ensure healthcare professionals have the understanding and knowledge to engage with autistic people in sensitive and supportive ways. This stream will examine a broad range of issues related to the health and healthcare of autistic people.

Speakers include

- Barry Ingham
- Jade Davies
- Rachel Moseley
- Susan Simmons
- Kate Cooper
- Esther Whitney
- Sara King

Session Two

13.00-13.45

2

Poster presentations

These posters sessions showcase a wide range of autism research. They are comprised of both short video presentations and images of the posters.

Poster presentations

- Valeria Garau
- Holly Sutherland
- Emma Reardon
- Arianna Paricos
- Lucy Waldren
- Rachael Davis
- Sarah Donald
- Alice Boddy
- Nancy Kouroupa
- Bérengère Digard
- Clare Lawrence
- Rachael Davis
- Nalini Edwards

Session Three

14.00-15.30

3

Social care

There is a pressing need to ensure autistic adults have access to social care that is effective and supportive. Social care must be designed, developed and adapted to meet the needs of autistic adults, though this requires an increase in the amount and the quality of research into autism and social care. This stream will explore key issues affecting autistic people within social care, including the adaptation of support provision for the homeless population and people with addiction issues.

Speakers include

- Mary Stewart
- Georgia Lockwood-Estrin
- Shantelle Svarc
- Sally Adams

Day Four

Thursday 14 July

Session One

10.00-12.00

1

Social relationships

How autistic people experience and engage with themselves and others is vital to understand if we are aiming to create a more inclusive society. This aim also requires knowledge of how non-autistic or neurotypical people understand and engage with autistic people since an inclusive society involves and requires shared knowledge and understanding. This stream will showcase autism research exploring social experiences and ways of thinking, relating and engaging with others.

Speakers include

- Laura Fox
- Emre Deniz
- Georgia Aitkenhead
- Caroline Hearst
- Stewart Rapley
- Martine van Driel
- Karri Gillespie-Smith

Session Two

13.00-13.45

2

Poster presentations

These posters sessions showcase a wide range of autism research. They are comprised of both short video presentations and images of the posters.

Poster presentations

- Holly Sutherland
- Emily Taylor
- Emy Nimbley
- Lynda Smith
- David Thorpe
- Joanna Krupa
- Elif Bastan
- Zsofia Maurer
- Marisa McKinlay
- Julie Bailey
- Yonat Rum

Visit the Poster page in this document for a full list of names and poster titles.

Session Three

14.00-15.30

3

Mental health

Autistic people experience far higher rates of poor mental health than the general population. Despite this, support, services and treatments are often inaccessible or inappropriate for autistic people, exacerbating the issues and their impact. These issues and potential ways to address them will be explored in presentations across this stream.

Speakers include

- Lauren Smith
- Amy van der Velden
- Rachel Moseley
- Samantha Friedman

Day Five Friday 15 July

Session One

10.00-11.00

1

Keynote: Beyond Empathy (Employment)

with Larissa Susuki

Professor Dr Larissa Suzuki is a computer scientist, engineer, inventor, entrepreneur and author. Her career includes over 17 years working in engineering. She is currently a Technical Director at the Google Cloud Office of the CTO and works with Nasa JPL engineers developing the Interplanetary Internet. Her continuing academic work is as Associate Professor and guest Lecturer at University College London, University of Quebec, Harvard University, and University of Oxford. Dr Suzuki has received numerous awards, grants and recognitions for her contributions to industry and international science.



Session Two

11.00-12.00

2

Employment (Part 1)

There are many barriers for autistic people seeking meaningful and sustained employment. Pathways into employment can be burdensome, with recruitment methods that do not enable autistic people to highlight their potential. Similarly, work environments and practices do not always allow for diverse ways of working. This stream will feature research with a focus on autistic people accessing, experiencing and navigating work and work environments.

Speakers include

- Maria Ashworth
- Marc Goblot
- Leah Derham-Boyce

Session Three

13.00-14.00

3

Employment (Part 2)

Speakers include

- Amber Pryke-Hobbes
- Susanna Fantoni
- Carrie Ballantyne, Connor McCann and Claire Wilson

Session Four

14.30-15.30

4

Education

Improving education provision for autistic children and young people is pivotal if they are to achieve their potential in later life. However, school environments and teaching practices are often not conducive to learning for autistic pupils, with a lack of understanding or effective training. This important topic will be the focus of this stream, exploring education and its practices in relation to autism and autistic people.

Speakers include

- Mary Hanley and Debbie Riby
- Alyssa Alcorn
- Jane Blackwell and Kerry Bell

Session Five

15.30-15.45

5

Festival Closing

with Dr James Cusack, Autistica CEO

Autistica's chief executive officer joins us to wrap up the Festival, reflecting on the topics that have been discussed during the week and the work Autistica is doing with our 2030 Goals to help make change a reality for and with autistic people.

Ask your questions

Every session in the Festival will be live streamed on our website and you will be able to submit your questions to the speakers and pannellists directly underneath the video.

Questions can be about anything from asking a speaker to explain something they talked about to asking a panellist to go into more detail about a point they made.

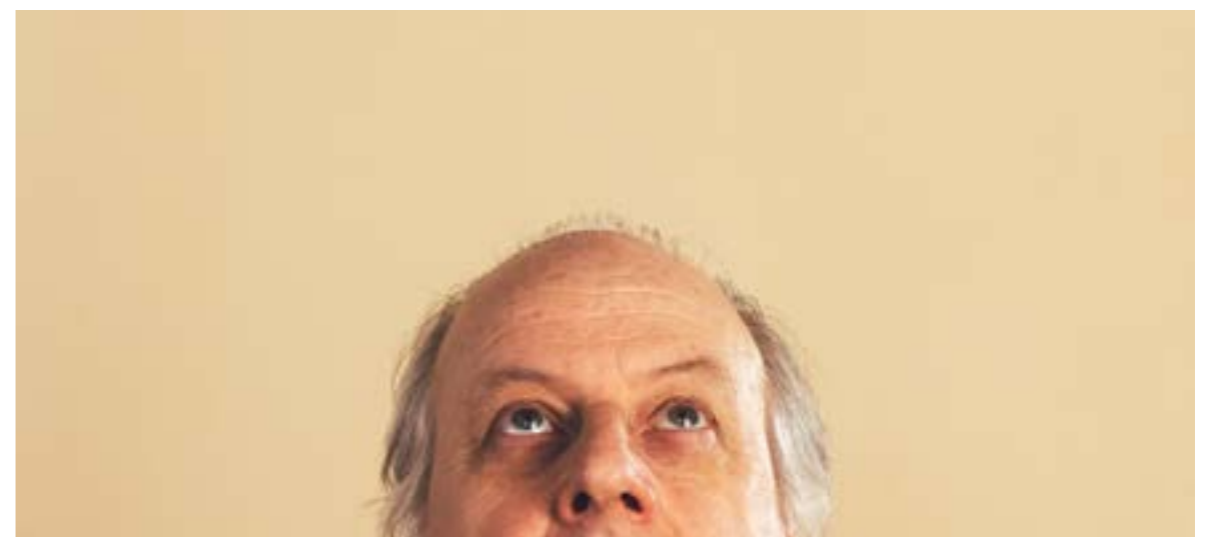
We may not have time to get to all of your questions, but we'll do our best to make sure we get through as many as possible.

POSTERS

While we can't hold an in-person poster session, we still want to share emerging work in autism research. Poster sessions are often a great way to see research in its early stages, which means that results presented in posters may change as projects progress or further research is conducted. All of the posters went through a peer review process and were evaluated by both researchers and autistic community members. [Click here](#) to see all posters in full.

Alice Boddy	'Wanting to belong but never quite making the mark': Exploring autistic women's experiences and responses to social rejection
Arianna Paricos	'I'm not mad, bad, and dangerous... simply wired differently' – a positive psychology exploration of quality of life of autistic women without intellectual disability
Bérengère Digard	The influence of bilingualism on cognitive and affective perspective-taking abilities in autistic and neurotypical adults
Clare Lawrence	So where are the Black autistic children?
David Thorpe	The working experiences of autistic adults
Elif Bastan	Autistic-like traits relate to different reasoning styles in social versus non-social domains
Emily Taylor	Rethinking Fast and Slow Processing in Autism
Emma Reardon	Autism research: are we looking for answers in the wrong places?
Emy Nimbley	Sensory processing and eating behaviours in autism: a systematic review
Holly Sutherland	Exploring the autistic social communicative 'style'
Holly Sutherland	Investigating the accuracy of people's judgements about social dyads' autistic diagnostic status from videos of social interaction
Joanna Krupa	An evidence-based approach to identifying, understanding and improving practical and social support and wellbeing for autistic adults with additional intellectual impairments over 45 and their family carers

Julie Bailey	Understanding educational experiences: Autistic students' engagement with in-person and remote learning
Lucy Waldren	Using Incorrect Cut-off Values in Autism Screening Tools: The Consequences for Research and Clinical Practice
Lynda Smith	'They obviously think we're misfits': Exploring the narrative experiences of parents of children with autism and learning difficulties and their perceptions of societal attitudes to autism.
Marisa McKinlay	A Systematic Review: 'Which psycho-social-environmental factors relate to positive mental well-being for autistic students in mainstream secondary school?'
Nalini Edwards	Accelerating a more inclusive science of autism through the Complex Needs Research and Development Hub (COMRAD)
Nancy Kouroupa	The preferences of parents of autistic children towards technology-based interventions
Rachael Davis	Autism and Bilingualism: A Thematic Analysis of Practitioner Perspectives and Experiences
Rachael Davis	Neurodiversity & bilingual families: Access to information and support
Sarah Donald	Examining language and communication in autistic people with complex needs - a systematic review of procedural and measurement issues and practice
Valeria Garau	Development and Validation of a Self-Report Measure of Monotropism in Autism
Yonat Rum	The role of self-disclosure in typical observers' empathy towards an autistic person
Zsofia Maurer	The lived-experience of friendship and well-being of autistic women - a mixed-methods exploration



Fujitsu

We are thrilled to once again support the Autistica Research Festival. Our support allows Autistica to offer free tickets to those who are unable to seek professional funding. It means the event is accessible and inclusive to all. As an accredited Disability Confident Employer, this is important to us. We have worked in partnership with Autistica since 2019. What started out as a two-year partnership, has developed into a four-year relationship, given our staff's commitment to helping the charity through the Covid-19 pandemic. As a company, we've donated over £220K to support Autistica's vital research. But we're proud to be able to go further, we've also supported the charity with skills and technology.

Our partnership has already spread understanding and awareness throughout the company and made a significant impact on Autistica. In September 2021, we were honored to win 'Corporate Charity Partnership of the Year' at the Third Sector Awards. We continue to work with Autistica to kickstart live-changing research, campaigning, and innovation that will benefit thousands of families across the UK.

Across Fujitsu we recognise that, when implemented correctly and genuinely, responsible and ethical behaviours create shared value. Responsible Business has been a substantial part of the Fujitsu Way (our corporate philosophy) since its inception, making it an integral part of our company DNA.

In this digital age, IT is essential to our everyday lives. As a global technology organization, Fujitsu strives to make a positive impact to the society in which we operate through the solutions we develop and through our commitment to the UN Sustainable Business Goals. Our practices have been recognised and applauded externally in many benchmarks and indices, but there's always more we can do.

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Acknowledgements

We want to thank the various groups of people that have been instrumental in making this Festival a success.

The Autistica Insight Group and the Conference Review Panel shared their thoughts and opinions on not just the direction of the Festival but also the research that was submitted to be presented ensuring it aligned with the community's priorities. Thank you for continuously guiding and supporting the work of the Festival.

Thank you to the large number of researchers and academics that took the time to peer review all the research that has been submitted and consequently presented at this Festival. Your expertise and knowledge of the landscape of autism research has enable such a diverse range of research projects to be shared.

And lastly, thank you to the Autistica team for their time, focus and dedication to making this Research Festival possible.

Below are the names of our Insight Group and Conference Review Panel members who are made up of people directly related to autism through research, personal experience and family.

Abi Chippindale
Aelswith Mary Parker
Alex Vowinckel
Ali Smith
Andrew McGarva
Angela Heeley
Annalise Ayre
Anne-Marie Gregory
Carly Jones MBE FRSA
Catherine Crompton
Chloe Redfern
Colin Townsend
Dave Belton
Denise Odell
Dheeraj Rai
Edmund Coleman-Fountain
Emma Gowen
Emma Nielsen
Emmy Gregory
Eric Heath
Fern Adams
Jacqui Rodgers
Jenny Shorthouse
Jill Bradshaw
Joanna Andreano
Jorik Mol
Kana Umagami
Katrine Basso
Kirsty McNicoll

Klara Eke
Laura Lennuyeux-Comnene
Liliya T Bakiyeva Wheatcraft
Lizzy Van Tromp
Lucy Livingston
Lynne Hayward
Michelle Keifer
Moyna Talcer
Naomi Schneider
Nick Ollerenshaw
Nigel Blakey
Rachel Fricker
Rachel Moseley
Richard Lelliott
Robert Brickwood
Robin Jackson
Sara King
Sarah Bellwood
Sarah Douglas
Sarah Markham
Sarah Miller
Stephen Wanless
Susanna Fantoni
Suzanne Claire Iwai
Suzanne Iwai
Suzi Sapiets
Thomas Kingston
Vicki-Jane Appleton

The logo for 'autistica' is displayed in white, lowercase, bold, sans-serif font. It is positioned inside a black semi-circle that is cut off at the top edge of the frame.

We can't make breakthroughs without you.

If you can support our work with a one-off donation
or a regular monthly gift we would be so grateful.

Together we can create breakthroughs
that enable every autistic person to live
a happier, healthier, longer life.

Thank you.

[Donate now](#)