THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE

The Disability Discrimination Act

Rights, Realities and the Road Ahead

Image credit: *Untitled,* Renee Sutton, 1958, gouache on paper, 42 x 33.5cm, Courtesy of The Cunningham Dax Collection

Welcome to the second event in the Critical Disability Studies Seminar Series

Program

3:00pm: Seminar begins
3:00–3:05pm: Acknowledgement of country and welcome
3:05–3:15pm: Introduction
3:15–3:25pm: Keynote
3:25–4:00pm: Panel discussion
4:00–4:15pm: Audience Q&A
4:15–5:30pm: Reception with refreshments

Wi-fi access

Join the Visitor Network:
Username: guest3
Password: 4k$Lq9
For information about the University's wi-fi policy and terms of use, visit
go.unimelb.edu.au/a79p

Live captioning

Professional live captioning for today's session can be viewed within Zoom by clicking 'CC' or 'Show Subtitles', or via this browser URL:
go.unimelb.edu.au/wnn2

Alternatively, scan the QR code:

Auslan

We are pleased to have Auslan interpreters from Auslan Services supporting this event.

How to ask a question during the seminar

Today we are taking audience questions in Slido. Scan the QR code below to access the app. If you have any difficulties, please grab one of our staff for help.

Example question: If you could ensure one reform is made to the Disability Discrimination Act, what would you like it to be?

Video message
Rosemary Kayess, Disability Discrimination Commissioner

Rosemary holds a Bachelor of Social Science, Bachelor of Laws and an Honorary Doctorate in Law. Before becoming Disability Discrimination Commissioner, Rosemary held senior academic roles with the Faculty of Law and Social Policy Research Centre at the University of New South Wales (UNSW). She is a Visiting Professor, Centre for Disability, Law and Policy at the University of Galway.

Rosemary was one of the drafters of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). She is currently serving as a member of the United Nations (UN) Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. She was awarded the Human Rights Medal in 2019 in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the promotion and protection of human rights.

Rosemary is a member of the NDIA Independent Advisory Council and the Australian Discrimination Law Experts Group. Her former memberships include the Strategic Engagement Reference Group for the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

To find out more about Rosemary, visit go.unimelb.edu.au/e8zp

Panellist
Professor Alastair McEwin AM, Senior Fellow, Grattan Institute

Professor Alastair McEwin AM is a strategic and solutions-focused leader, with extensive experience in disability and human rights, and a strong record of service to Australia through senior executive and Commonwealth statutory office holder roles.

Profoundly deaf, Alastair has held numerous management and governance roles in the private, government and non-government sectors. He has served as Australia's Disability Discrimination Commissioner at the Australian Human Rights Commission, and as a Royal Commissioner with the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability. Other past roles include CEO of People with Disability Australia and Executive Director, Community Legal Centres NSW.

He is a Professor of Practice in Disability at the University of NSW, Sydney. He is also a Senior Fellow with the Grattan Institute. His board and advisory roles include the board of The Achieve Foundation and a member of the Australia Post Stakeholder Council.

To find out more about Alastair, visit go.unimelb.edu.au/s8zp

"We need to modernise the DDA to ensure it's fit for purpose now and into the future"

– *Rosemary Kayess, Disability Discrimination Commissioner*

Panellist

Natalie Wade, Associate Commissioner, NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission

Prior to being appointed Associate Commissioner of the NDIS Quality and Safeguards Commission, Natalie was Founder and Principal Lawyer of Equality Lawyers, providing legal representation to people with disabilities and their families.
She delivered Australia's inaugural Disability Leadership Oration in 2023, with a brief to "set the national agenda".

Natalie's advocacy spans law reform and human rights campaigns, focusing on the rights of women and girls with disabilities, migrants with disabilities and leading advocacy for a Human Rights Act in South Australia. She led the first reform to the National Disability Insurance Scheme in response to the NDIS Review, through the NDIS Provider and Worker Registration Taskforce.

She authored *Disability Rights in Real Life*, a disability rights law handbook, and represented Australia at the United Nations Conference of State Parties to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (16th session).

In recognition of her contributions, Natalie was named Australian Young Lawyer of the Year in 2016, and more recently was awarded the 2024 Dennis Mutton Leadership Award.

To find out more about Natalie, visit go.unimelb.edu.au/j8zp

Chair

Associate Professor Anna Arstein-Kerslake, Melbourne Law School

Anna is the Director of the Disability Inclusive Law and Policy Hub at Melbourne Law School. She is an internationally recognised legal academic in the fields of human rights, disability rights, and gender justice. Anna has published widely in these areas, including *Restoring Voice to People* (Cambridge University Press 2017) and *Legal Capacity and Gender* (Springer 2020).

Anna has worked closely with United Nations bodies such as UN Women and the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). She was a drafter of the first UN General Comment on the Right to Equality Before the Law, adopted by the UN CRPD Committee in 2014. Anna has also consulted with governments and other bodies including the World Health Organisation (WHO), United Kingdom Ministry of Justice, Irish Ministry of Justice, Amnesty Ireland, Interights, and Mental Disability Advocacy Center. She is an Establishment Committee Member of the Melbourne Disability Institute (MDI).

To find out more about Anna, visit go.unimelb.edu.au/2k3p

Have your say on the Disability Discrimination Act

The Australian Government is currently seeking public submissions as part of the review of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA). You can make a submission as an individual or on behalf of an organisation. Share your ideas on how the DDA could be improved at go.unimelb.edu.au/i93p

About the Critical Disability Studies Seminar Series

The Critical Disability Studies Seminar Series is co-sponsored by the Melbourne Disability Institute and the Diversity and Inclusion team at UniMelb. It showcases thought leadership in critical disability studies.

The first seminar, The Social Model of Disability: 40 Years On, reflected on progress and challenges, featuring a video keynote address by Professor Tom Shakespeare, disability advocate and activist from the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

Speakers included Scott Avery, Professor of Indigenous disability health and wellbeing in the School of Public Health, University of Technology Sydney, and Lorna Hallahan, Associate Professor at Flinders University. She was National Research Director for the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability.

The session was chaired by Anne Kavanagh, Professor of Disability and Health at the Melbourne School of Population and Global Health, and Director of the Research Alliance in Youth Disability & Mental Health.

Scan the QR code above for more information on the Critical Disability Studies Seminar Series, and to view recordings of past events.

Alternatively, visit go.unimelb.edu.au/uj5

About today's catering from STREAT

CAPTIONS (CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): Streat's cafe on Cromwell Street in Collingwood; A young employee stands behind a counter display of lovely crispy bread loaves; Streat's Therapy Dog and Branch Manager, Magic, stands in front of a sign reading "Thanks for supporting Streat".

Refreshments were supplied by STREAT, a social enterprise with over a decade of experience supporting young people in Melbourne. They run a range of hospitality businesses that power youth programs, giving trainees valuable work experience. STREAT's purpose is to help young people thrive and belong with a healthy self, home and work. **For more information about STREAT visit streat.com.au**