

Disability Matters

Online Symposium

Sydney – 10 March 2026

Hosted by the Disability Innovation Institute UNSW



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*Disability
Matters*

Acknowledgement of Country

We would like to acknowledge that we are hosting this symposium from the lands of the Bedegal People (Kensington campus).

We also acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the various lands on which we all meet today and pay respects to Elders past and present and celebrate the diversity of Aboriginal peoples and their ongoing cultures and connections to the lands and waters of NSW.



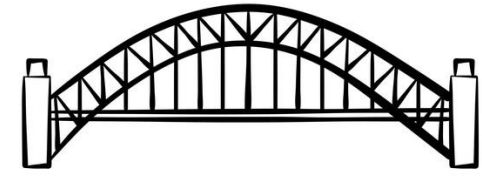
Format

- Introduction by DIIU Director, Professor Jackie Leach Scully
- Our speakers:
 1. Ricky Kremer
 2. Ebe Ganon
- Comfort break (5 minutes)
- Questions from the audience (10-15 minutes)
- Close and thank you (2 minutes)

Housekeeping



- Having cameras on is completely optional.
- If you wish to access English live captioning, you can turn this on by clicking the Show Captions option in the meeting toolbar below.
- The symposium will be recorded and made available on the Disability Matters website.
- All papers, materials and a copy of this PowerPoint will be made available on the website.
- Please direct questions to the Q&A box in the toolbar below, these will then be read out loud later on.
- If you feel you need to leave the session at any point for any reason you are free to do so.



About the DIIU

The UNSW Disability Innovation Institute is a world first initiative, focusing on disability research, education and knowledge exchange. Its team members take pride in undertaking work that's radically inclusive, and that crosses disciplinary boundaries. The Institute's approach is to see disability not as a problem to be solved, but an integral part of the human condition to be encountered and engaged with rather than feared.



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Ricky Kremer

Acknowledgement of Country



Leadership decision-making

- Hard being the first person with a disability at Centre in leadership.
- Feeling pressure and responsibility to make the best decision for everyone including people with disability.
- Meetings not as accessible as they could be.
- Colleagues not fully aware of my ways of working.

Practical tips to support people with a disability

- Taking time to prepare for meetings and to understand information before involving people with a disability in work.
- Knowing our support needs so we can do our best work.
- Making sure information is in simple language.
- Clearly asking what you need me to do in the subject and body of email – do you need me to read something or make a decision?

Recruitment

- Hard to keep information private and knowing what can and cannot be shared.
- Not being seen as a leader or equal.
- Constructive feedback not being valued or acknowledged.
- Feeling like decisions are being made without me being in the room.

Practical tips to support people with disability

- Being flexible by finding out what recruitment tasks are meaningful.
- This might look like being involved in the whole process or it may look like only being part of the final interviews.
- Ask people with a disability how they would like to contribute and feel valued.
- Openly take on feedback to make processes better.
- Remembering people with disability are the expert.

Advocacy for team and lived experience

- Hard to listen to people with disabilities stories of mistreatment and not be able to freely share with others due to privacy reasons.
- Worrying about lived experience safety and wellbeing.
- Hard knowing when to check-in with colleagues and lived experience.

Practical tips to support people with disability

- Managers giving teams and lived experience staff updates about what's happening so have more time to process.
- Having a strong manager, team and support where you feel safe to share worries.
- Regular check-ins to make sure the pressure isn't getting too much especially in high stress times.

Research

- Tricky place for people with disability to be in and understand.
- Lots of long and tricky words being talked about.
- Hard to keep meetings engaging and people with disability can feel left out.
- Some meetings don't have a set purpose or haven't been well planned out.

Practical tips to support people with disability

- Always be flexible. Find out what recruitment tasks are meaningful and include people with disability.
- This might look like being involved in the whole process or it may look like only being part of the final interviews.
- Ask people with a disability how they would like to contribute and feel valued.
- Openly take on feedback to make processes better.
- People with disability are the expert.

Mentoring

- Showing what good leadership looks like.
- Making sure people with disability feel supported at work but also still do the work that's needed.
- Hard for lived experience staff to understand the complexities of leadership roles.
- Monthly Peer Network group.

Practical tips to support people with disability

- Trial and error when learning how different people work.
- Important to feel supported by manager and team by having regular check-ins.
- Grateful for brainstorm, meetings and discussions with manager to understand big picture of my work better.
- Having my own mentors to learn from.

Question time



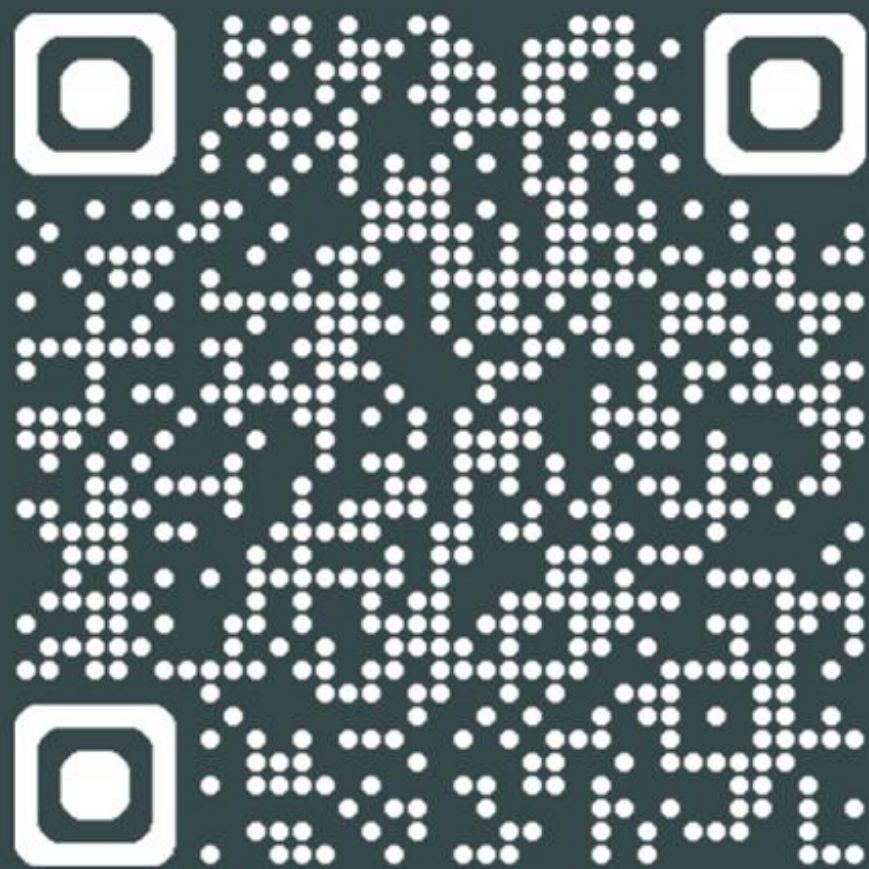


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National Centre
of Excellence in
**Intellectual
Disability Health**

Feel free to send me an email anytime.

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Ebe Ganon

UNSW Canberra



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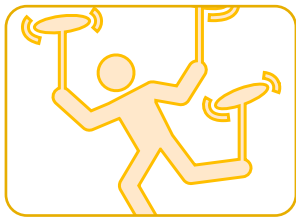
Emotional labour through multiple lenses

As a... Neurodivergent person?

Younger person?

PhD student?

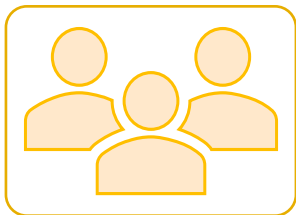
Reflecting on lived reality



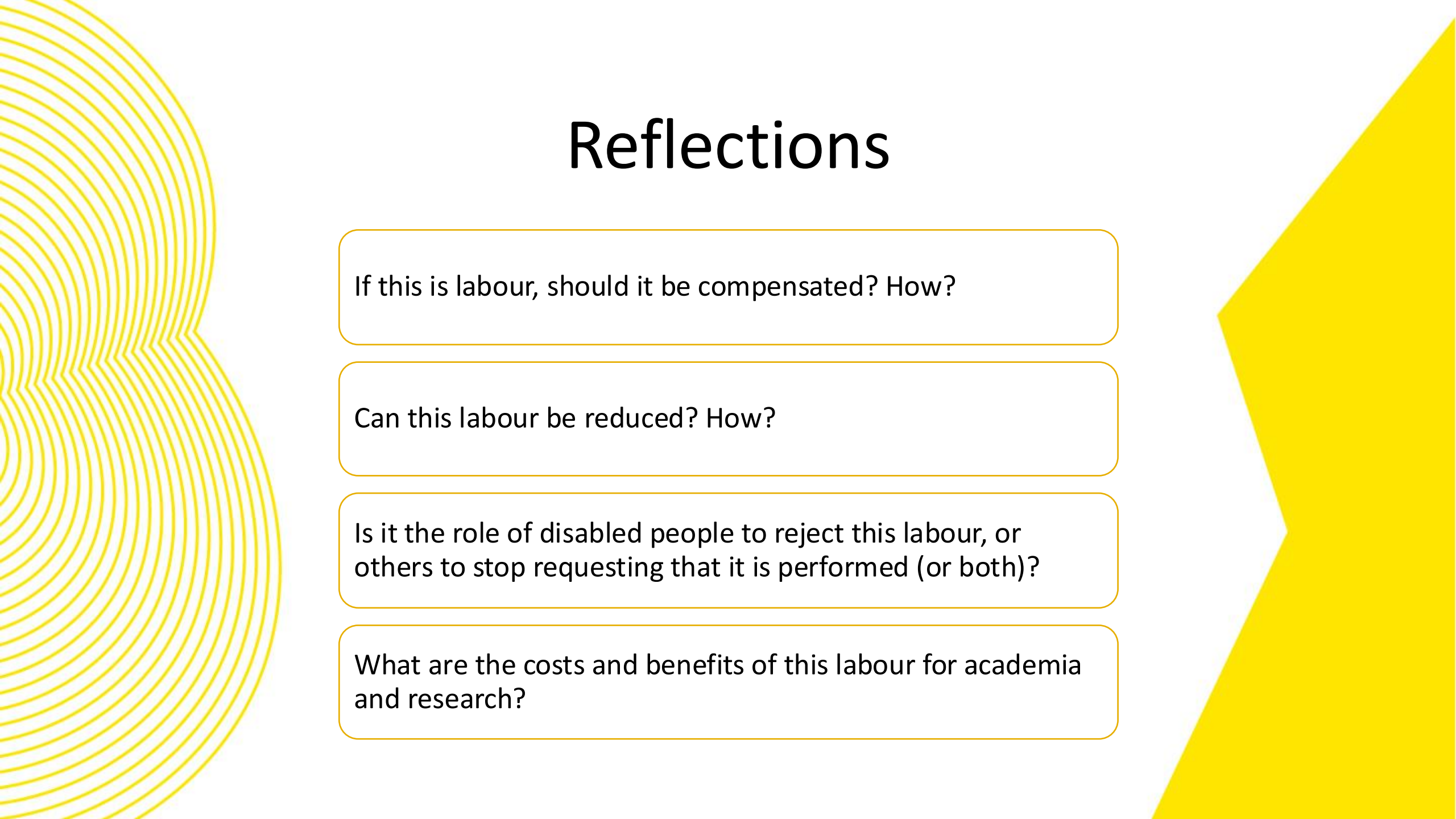
Advocating for change and rejecting free labour



The labour of giving feedback



Emotional labour within our community



Reflections

If this is labour, should it be compensated? How?

Can this labour be reduced? How?

Is it the role of disabled people to reject this labour, or others to stop requesting that it is performed (or both)?

What are the costs and benefits of this labour for academia and research?



Questions?

Thank you

Stay in touch

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