



# **AMPLIFYING NEURODIVERGENT VOICES IN CAMBRIDGE**

**Event Date: June 7, 2024**

**Duration: 10:00 AM – 4:30 PM**



## **Participant guide for discussions**

# Rules of engagement

Welcome to the "Amplifying Neurodivergent Voices in Cambridge" event. As a participant, you will have the opportunity to engage in meaningful discussions with a diverse group of individuals, including those who are neurodivergent (diagnosed or undiagnosed), family members, allies, and researchers working on neurodiversity. The aim is to share thoughts and experiences on navigating neurodiversity in educational and workplace settings.

To ensure a respectful and inclusive environment during the discussion sessions, please adhere to the following rules of engagement:

## **1. Respect others**

Treat all participants with respect and kindness, valuing their unique perspectives and experiences. Refrain from interrupting others or engaging in any form of discrimination or prejudice.

## **2. Active listening**

Practice active listening by giving your full attention to the person speaking. Avoid side conversations or distractions that may disrupt the flow of the discussion.

## **3. Balanced participation**

Ensure that everyone has an equal opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Be mindful of the time you spend speaking.

## **4. Use clear language**

When expressing your ideas, use simple, clear language and articulate your words carefully. This will help ensure that all participants can easily understand and follow the conversation.



## Rules of engagement

### **5. Embrace diverse communication styles**

Recognise that participants may have different communication styles and needs. Be patient and understanding, allowing sufficient time for each person to process information and respond in their own way.

### **6. Utilise alternative modes of participation**

If you prefer to contribute in a way other than speaking, feel free to use the provided post-its to share your thoughts and place them on the allocated board or flip chart. For an even more anonymous option, you can enter your thoughts on our dedicated Miro page (Miro link will be shared on the day).

### **7. Maintain confidentiality**

Respect the privacy of all participants by keeping the content of the discussions confidential. Refrain from sharing personal information or experiences of others without their explicit consent.

### **8. Take breaks as needed**

If you feel overwhelmed or need a moment to process the information shared during the discussion, feel free to take a break as needed. Prioritise your well-being and comfort throughout the event.

By following these guidelines, we can create a safe and inclusive space where all participants feel valued, heard, and supported. Thank you for your commitment to fostering a respectful and engaging discussion environment.



# Discussion Prompts & Questions

Here is a list of guiding prompts and questions that our facilitators will be using during the group discussion sessions.

## 1. Reflections on panel sessions

- Have there been any stories or anecdotes that the panellists shared which particularly resonated with you? If so, what did you feel and think about these when you listened to the stories?

## 2. Addressing misconceptions

- What misconceptions have you personally had to deal with when it comes to your neurodivergence in education or in the workplace?
- Have you received any support from your organisation when navigating the effects of these misconceptions?

## 3. Career concerns

- In relation to your neurodivergence, what keeps you awake at night in terms of either your academic or professional career?
- How have each of you dealt with disclosing you are neurodivergent in work or academic settings? Do you have any insights or reflections to share from these experiences for people who may be dealing with similar situations?



# Discussion Prompts & Questions

## 4 .Overcoming barriers

- What are some of the key barriers each one of you may have faced in your academic or professional career? What did you do to mitigate these challenges?
- If you could go back and start over, would you handle things differently?
- As someone who is neurodivergent, how can we better advocate for the accommodations we need, whether in school or in the workplace?

## 5. Fostering inclusive cultures

- What can we all collectively do to make the settings we are in, whether academic or professional, more inclusive and welcoming of people from all backgrounds?
- How can we initiate more productive discussions about neurodiversity? What can we do to build a stronger network and advocate for more inclusive workplace and education policies?



# Optional Interviews

In addition to the group discussions, we will also be conducting individual interviews to gather more in-depth insights and personal experiences. The interviews will take place in a private setting (Boardroom 2), parallel to the main sessions.

The interview process will be semi-structured, allowing you to share your experiences and perspectives on navigating neurodiversity in educational and workplace settings at your own pace. You are encouraged to discuss any challenges, successes, or insights you feel comfortable sharing, as your contributions will help shape future initiatives and support systems for the neurodivergent community.

## **Important Notice**

If you are interested in participating in an audio or video interview, please fill in the linked [consent form](#) ahead of the event, or ask for help from a ThinkLab team member during the event to complete this 2-minute form online on your phone, tablet, or laptop.

## **Consent and Usage Information:**

- Any written, audio or video materials collected may be used in various formats, including but not limited to the ThinkLab affiliated websites, social media platforms, promotional content, or for research purposes.
- Please be assured that your participation is completely voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw your consent at any time.
- All information shared during the interviews will be handled in accordance with the consent you provide. Your anonymity will be protected in any resulting reports or publications, as outlined in the consent form.

If you have any questions or concerns about the interview process, please don't hesitate to reach out to ThinkLab. We appreciate your willingness to contribute to this event and help amplify the voices of the neurodivergent community in Cambridge.



# Interview Questions

## **Reflections on Panel Sessions**

- Could you briefly introduce yourself and share your relationship to neurodivergence?
- Were there any particular stories or anecdotes shared by the panellists that resonated with you? How did these stories make you feel?

## **Addressing Misconceptions**

- What are some misconceptions you've encountered regarding your neurodivergence in education or the workplace?
- How have you navigated these misconceptions, and what support have you received from your organisation?

## **Career Concerns**

- Considering your neurodivergence, what are your main concerns regarding your academic or professional career?
- Can you share your experiences with disclosing your neurodivergence in academic or work settings? Any advice for others in similar situations?

## **Advocating for Accommodations**

- As a neurodivergent individual, what strategies can be used to better advocate for necessary accommodations in school or the workplace?

## **Fostering Inclusive Cultures**

- What steps can we take to make academic and professional environments more inclusive and welcoming for everyone?