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2018
Conference Programme

THE AUSTRALIAN
**LONELINESS
DIALOGUE**





Friends for Good is proud to present the first national conference on loneliness in Australia, *The Australian Loneliness Dialogue: Breaking Down the Stigma of a Hidden Suffering*.

The aim of the conference is to work together to understand loneliness in our communities, raise the profile of this issue and to develop recommendations for actions required by government, policy makers and practitioners.

Sponsored by:



Friends for Good sees loneliness as a critical health issue in the Australian community; one of national importance.

This significant work has been taken up in response to the loneliness experienced by all of us, ourselves, our families and friends and people we have worked with.

As we know for some people loneliness is temporary or transient and may be a signal that we need more human connections, but for others it is chronic, becoming a serious mental health issue.

Friends for Good has begun work to understand the prevalence of loneliness in Australia by conducting the Time We Talked online survey. We have a significant online presence through social media, a blog and website where we

are having the conversation about loneliness in order to break down the stigma that surrounds it. We have begun the development of services, the first of which is FriendLine, for anyone to call and speak with a friendly volunteer if they are feeling lonely or to prevent loneliness.

We are working to undertake community education and research as well as developing resources and building strong networks to improve outcomes for lonely people.

The Australian Loneliness Dialogue is another opportunity to raise the profile of loneliness and develop recommendations to make a difference.

SPEAKERS & WORKSHOP FACILITATORS



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Susan Alberti AC

Keynote Address
10.00am – 11.00am

Susan is one of Australia's pre-eminent philanthropists, having donated millions of dollars to medical research and other charitable causes over her successful business career.

Susan developed a passion for medical research when her only child, Danielle, was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes in the 1980s. Danielle tragically died from the complications arising from the chronic disease. It was at that point Susan's lifelong commitment to raise funds for better prevention, treatment and to find a cure for Type 1 diabetes became a dedicated mission. This has subsequently led her to focus on medical research more broadly.

Susan Alberti was a finalist in the Australian of the Year Award in 1997 and again in 2009. In 1997 she received an AM (Member of the Order of Australia) for her contributions towards the cause of diabetes research. Susan was awarded an AO (Officer of the Order of Australia) on January 2007. This recognised her long and outstanding contribution to major medical research institutions, particularly as a philanthropist, fundraiser and advocate for Type 1 diabetes care and research.

On Australia Day 2016, Susan was awarded the Companion of the Order of Australia (AC) Award in recognition of her eminent service to the community, particularly through philanthropic and fundraising support for a range of medical research, education and as a role model and mentor to young women.

Susan is Chair of the Susan Alberti Medical Research Foundation, Retired Chair of the St Vincent's Institute of Medical Research Foundation, Director of the Western Health Foundation, Retired Chair of the DANII Foundation, Chair of the Victoria University Foundation, Retired Vice President of the AFL Western Bulldogs Football Club, Director of the Western Bulldogs Forever Foundation, Retired President of the VFL Footscray Bulldogs, Director of the AFL National Women's League Advisory Group, Director

of the National Australia Day Council. In August 2017, Susan was appointed as part-time general member of the Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission (ACNC) Advisory Board for a period of three years.

Susan received the 'Person of Sporting Influence 2017' Award during the prestigious Australian Women's Health 2017 Women in Sports Awards and on November 18, 2017 Susan was crowned 2017 Melbournian of the Year. During the 2017 AIS Sport Performance Awards, Susan was presented with the Leadership Award for her vision and influence in driving the launch of the inaugural AFL Women's competition. In July, Susan was announced as the 2018 Victorian of the Year. Susan received the Victoria Day Council Award for Community and Public Service.



Ryan Hubbard

Workshop A: Modern Friendships
1.45pm – 3.15pm, Exhibition Room

Ryan has more than a decade of experience with work that blends rigour and heart.

Ryan is the Principal at Hinterland Innovation and an associate at The Australian Centre for Social Innovation (TACSI) where he has worked for the past five years designing strategy, policy and programs for social change organisations.

Ryan has worked for a digital healthcare startup connecting patients to doctors, an online collaboration startup in London, and a primary school software startup in Austin.

Other projects include helping global non-profit Ashoka to accelerate social innovation in US cities, a stove for rural Guatemalan families, and a product to reduce HIV transmission in Africa.

Ryan studied complex systems and was proudly part of the first class at the start up engineering school Olin. He was later part of the first class at another start up school, the Austin Centre for Design, which was specifically set up to apply design to big social challenges.



Robin Parkin

Workshop A: Modern Friendships
1.45pm – 3.15pm, Exhibition Room

Robin has a fascination with community development, the anatomy of connection, and qualitative research.

Robin has a background in political science, music, and climate change organising and is the co-founder of Hinterland Innovation.

Robin has been involved in projects including a year-long design research piece investigating social capital and close friendship, and an experimental project designed to connect people to nature while re-shaping the community narrative in South Australia about valuing the environment.

Robin has run workshops to build the capability of social enterprises, associations, and large organisations to use human-centred design in shaping up innovative projects.

He has honed his skills as a group facilitator working with individuals in hundreds of sessions with young people as a climate activist and music educator.



Dr Michael Cowling

Workshop B: Technology
1.45pm – 3.15pm, Exhibition Room

Michael is a technology communicator with a keen interest in educational technology, computer science education and digital ubiquity and acceptance.

He is currently a Senior Lecturer in Educational Technology at CQUniversity Australia, where he is the founder of The CREATE Lab, which focuses on collaborative research and education around technology and education, and is a co-founder of The Mixed Reality Research Lab in collaboration with Bond University. In 2016, Michael was the recipient of an Australian Government Citation for Outstanding Contributions

to Student Learning; in 2018 he was appointed an Advance Queensland Community Digital Champion; and he is a current partner in an Australian Office for Learning & Teaching Innovation & Development grant. As a core tenant of his work, Michael lives by the mantra 'pedagogy before technology' and believes that all technology needs to maintain the underlying purpose of enriching our lives.



Dr Robert Vanderburg

Workshop B: Technology
1.45pm – 3.15pm, Exhibition Room

Robert has a background in developmental psychology and digital education.

He is currently an academic and lecturer at CQUniversity. While in the United States, he has received over 3 million dollars in research grants. One of his grants was a literacy program entitled The Claflin Saturday Academy.

Robert's current research focus is looking at effectively integrating digital technology in education.



Matiu Bush

Workshop C: Seniors
1.45pm – 3.15pm, Yarra Suite Room

Matiu founded One Good Street, a social impact initiative to encourage neighbour initiated care for older residents at risk of social isolation and loneliness.

This includes Australia's first Library of Aged Care Things, which lends out free aged care equipment to those in need. Matiu is Design Integration Lead at Bolton Clarke, driving innovation and creativity in the aged and community sector. Matiu has a Master's degree in Public Health and broad clinical and managerial nursing experience, including working in Tijuana, Mexico with Nobel Prize Laureate Mother Teresa in international border aid, and as an emergency,

oncology, intensive care nurse. He is also a sexual health Nurse Practitioner.

Matiu contributes to health system innovation through involvement with Better Care Victoria as a board member and the Emerging Leaders Clinical Advisory Committee and mentors the next generation of undergraduate and postgraduate science students through the University of Melbourne Science Industry Mentoring Program.



Shanton Chang

Workshop D: International Students
1.45pm – 3.15pm, Yarra Suite Room

Associate Professor Shanton Chang became an international student at the age of 11 and continued as one through to his PhD.

He has been involved in international education in Australia since 1992 and is currently an academic at the University of Melbourne, where he was the Assistant Dean (International) of the Faculty of Science and the Melbourne School of Engineering.

He completed his PhD in intercultural management at Monash University and has run courses in intercultural facilitation and teaching for more than 30 institutions internationally.

In 2000, he received the IDP award for outstanding contribution to the Australian international education industry. In 2006, he received the Dean of Science's Award for Excellence in Teaching. In 2008, he received the ISANA International Education Assoc. Award for his contribution to the organisation. He has also received an Australian National Citation for Excellent Contribution to Teaching (2011) and was the Australian Computer Society's ICT Educator of the Year in 2017.



The Connies

From 4.30pm

The Connies is a collective of tram conductors, performers and educators.

The Connies are a performance troupe born of the rich 112 year Melbourne Tram Conducting tradition. They continue the rites of bag and tickets and bring along a yarning, poetic and singing trammie tradition.

Dressed in uniforms that span the eras of tram fashion, they swing beautifully crafted

antique leather conductor's bags filled with cards and yarns.

The Connies entertain, educate and inform, creating and distributing beautifully crafted collectable swap-cards that illustrate themes of social, environmental and historic importance.

PRESENTATIONS & WORKSHOPS



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The Health Impacts and Prevalence of Loneliness

11.30am – 12.15pm

The world in 2018 is more connected than it has ever been thanks to the proliferation of the Internet.

The cost and ease of access has changed the way we work, shop, play, interact and communicate. Thanks to social media, I can be connected to thousands, tens of thousands of people at the tap of a screen. Yet we are facing a loneliness epidemic, with international research stating that as many as 1 in 3 adults report feeling lonely¹.

Loneliness has been an emerging social issue for many years; with International research showing the dire health

implications loneliness can have on individuals and communities.

Friends for Good aims to raise awareness of this issue and work to create an improved and shared understanding of loneliness, which breaks through the stigma and examines how community service professionals; government, social support services, healthcare and the voluntary sectors can work together in tackling loneliness.

Loneliness does not discriminate and can affect anyone regardless of age, gender, location, race or wealth.

This presentation will encourage us to consider the implications and alternatives when we examine the way we understand loneliness, how it might look, how it is identified in our clients and service users and the ways in which we talk and think about it.

¹ Cacioppo et al 2015



Presented by

Laura Rouhan

As a co-founder of Friends for Good, Laura strives to make positive contributions to help build a world that looks more like the world she wants to live in.

Working in the community services sector for over a decade, Laura has experience in Aged Care, disability and seniors services and currently manages a neighbourhood house in Melbourne's West.

Queer Loneliness

12.15pm – 1:00pm

Loneliness has become synonymous with being queer.

The loneliness queer people feel is often misunderstood, pathologized and belittled, it is often reduced to queer people not being able to 'fit in' or at worst part of their mental illness that stems from being queer. Whereas, for most queer people loneliness is more likely realised through stigma, LGBTIphobia and heteronormativity.

Queer people are still far more likely to be rejected, than their cisgendered and heterosexual peers from their family of origin, with many queer people spending considerable years looking for alternative

connections and a chosen family.

Even when meaningful queer connections are made in an individual's life, queer people continue to feel isolated and lonely in a world that is queer phobic, with many queer people feeling the need or pressure to assimilate or at least mute significant parts of their queer identities so that they can begin to find acceptance at school and then work. These actions leave many people feeling a deep sense of loneliness.

Although there is a range of campaigns, for example 'it gets better' that attempt to tackle these concerns and prevent the disastrous places where queer loneliness can lead, there is a need to further discuss what alienates and what connects us.

This presentation is about exploring queer loneliness and what meaningful connection looks like.



Presented by

Joe Ball

Joe Ball is the CEO of Switchboard Victoria, an LGBTIQA+ organisation that has been supporting the community for 27 years. Joe is non-binary, trans-identifying.

Joe is passionate about grassroots peer-based community driven responses to systematic problems and believes that connection is a tool of health promotion and suicide prevention.

WORKSHOP A

Modern Friendships

Exploring modern friendships in our society

1.45pm – 3.15pm, Exhibition Room

Though it feels intensely personal, loneliness and isolation aren't an individual problem, they're a societal one.

In this workshop, we'll start by reflecting on your own experience of friendship over your life. We'll then use that to look at the broader challenges of supporting strong ties in modern society and what action we might take as individuals and organisations.

Facilitated by

Ryan Hubbard & Robin Parkin

WORKSHOP B

Technology

Helping people address social interaction and isolation issues developed due to technology

1.45pm – 3.15pm, Exhibition Room

Are Australian's lonely due to technology or is it about how we use it? Is it about monologues instead of conversations?

The goal of this session is to elaborate on developmental, social interaction, problem solving and isolation issues caused from technology and provide solutions to the issues.

Facilitated by

Dr Michael Cowling & Dr Robert Vanderburg

WORKSHOP C

Seniors

A less lonely future for older Australians

1.45pm – 3.15pm, Yarra Suite Room

A lonely persons future is determined by hundreds of actions taken daily by thousands of people, based on what they believe about a lonely persons future and their role in it.

This workshop will explore our individual and collective role in designing a less lonely future for older Australians.

Facilitated by
Matiu Bush

WORKSHOP D

International Students

Exploring potential causes of loneliness in the context of international students' online behaviour

1.45pm – 3.15pm, Yarra Suite Room

Differences in digital environments can include diversity in rules of engagement, information cues and sources of information. All of these factors have the potential to lead to social isolation.

This workshop will explore these behaviours and derive recommendations for practitioners, policy makers and educational institutions.

Facilitated by
Shanton Chang

Schedule

9.00am – 9.30am	Registration	1.00pm – 1.45pm	Lunch
9.30am – 9.40am	Welcome to Country Wurundjeri Elder	1.45pm – 3.15pm	Workshop A: Modern Friendships Ryan Hubbard & Robin Parkin <i>(Exhibition Room)</i>
9.40am – 9.50am	Welcome to Conference Patricia Lauria		Workshop B: Technology Dr Michael Cowling & Dr Robert Vanderburg <i>(Exhibition Room)</i>
9.50am – 10.00am	Opening Address Gerard Mansour		Workshop C: Seniors Matiu Bush <i>(Yarra Suite Room)</i>
10.00am – 11.00am	Keynote Address Susan Alberti AC		Workshop D: International Students Shanton Chang <i>(Yarra Suite Room)</i>
11.00am – 11.30am	Morning Tea		
11.30am – 12.15pm	The Health Impacts and Prevalence of Loneliness Laura Rouhan	3.15pm – 3.45pm	Afternoon Tea
12.15pm – 1.00pm	Queer Loneliness Joe Ball	3.45pm – 4.30pm	Plenary and Close George Kiosoglou
		4.30pm	Drinks and Canapés

Important Information

Tickets

Tickets are available at:
trybooking.com/XEZB

Purchased tickets need to be presented upon arrival in printed or digital format. If you don't have your ticket, a photo ID will be required to verify your ticket purchase.

Tickets can be reallocated to another delegate providing Friends for Good is notified before 10 November 2018.

Cancellations can be issued providing Friends for Good is notified before 30 October 2018. A full refund will be provided less the booking fee.

Registration

Please register for the conference upon arrival to receive your conference pack and programme. The

registration desk will be open from 8.30am.

Getting There

The Marriott is located on the corner of Exhibition and Lonsdale Streets, Melbourne, Victoria. Valet parking is available at the venue at delegates' own expense.

Parliament train station is an eight minute walk south. Tram lines 30, 35, 86 and 96 stop within 250m of the hotel and bus lines 250, 251, 302, 303, 304, 305, 309, 318, 350, 905, 906, 907 and 908 stop within 100m of the hotel.

Venue Facilities

Accommodation is available at the Marriott Hotel from \$222.00 per night.

Food and drinks are available in the hotel at The Essence restaurant (6.30am – 4.00pm)

and the Country Bred on Lonsdale coffee house (6.30am – 3.00pm).

Full disability access is available at the hotel.

Food & Drinks

A buffet lunch, morning tea, afternoon tea, coffee and tea on arrival and post conference canapés are included in the ticket price and will be served in the lounge area.

Drinks will be available at the bar after the close of the conference but are at delegates' own expense.

Dietary requirements can be accommodated but must be advised at the time of booking. If you have already booked a ticket, Friends for Good must be advised before 30 October 2018.

Help & Assistance

For all security concerns, please contact the concierge in the foyer of the Marriott Hotel.

For all other directions and assistance, please contact one of the volunteers at the registration desk.

Workshops

Each conference ticket allows attendance for one workshop only. Workshop allocation is required upon ticket purchase. If requested, workshop attendance may be changed if space permits.

Conference Packs

A conference pack will be available for each delegate upon registration including a printed programme, schedule and promotional items from our sponsors.