



WDS 2024
BRISBANE, AUSTRALIA

World Down Syndrome Congress 2024

Brisbane, Australia

9-12 July, 2024

About the World Down Syndrome Congress



We invite you to join us at the 2024 World Down Syndrome Congress.



Congress is a conference where people give talks about Down syndrome.



Speakers from around the world share what they know about Down syndrome.



Congress is a great place to learn about Down syndrome.



You can also meet other people and make connections.



The 2024 Congress will be in Brisbane, Australia from 9–12 July, 2024.



Down Syndrome Australia are the hosts for the 2024 Congress.



We are excited about the Congress in 2024.

The theme is: “Together we can: celebrating diversity and inclusion”.



You can find out more about the Congress on the Congress website.

www.wdsc2024.org.au



If you have questions, email info@wdsc2024.org.au

Where is the Congress?



The Congress will be at the Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre.



The Convention Centre is in Southbank, near to the Brisbane River.



Southbank is an exciting part of Brisbane. There is lots to see and do.



You can enjoy activities like:

- music
- theatre
- walks and rock-climbing
- shopping
- restaurants and cafés



What happens at Congress?



At Congress, there are talks and workshops from 9-12 July 2024.

There are also events where you can meet other people.



There is a Meet and Greet event on Monday 8 July 2024.



There is a Self-Advocates Forum on Tuesday 9 July 2024.



There is a Welcome Reception on Wednesday 10 July 2024.



There is a Congress Dinner on Friday 12 July 2024

Preparing an abstract for Congress

Down Syndrome Australia would like people with Down syndrome to be presenters at Congress.

Presenting at Congress is a chance to share your stories and experiences.

If you want to present at Congress, you must submit an abstract.

This article explains what an abstract is and how you can submit one for the 2024 Congress.

What is an abstract?

The people who organise Congress ask for abstracts. An abstract is a summary of what you want to present.

Not everyone who sends in an abstract will be chosen to speak at the conference.

The people who organise Congress will choose the abstracts they think match the themes of the conference. There is another way of saying topic.

You will need to make sure your abstract is submitted by the closing date.

The people organising the conference will let you know if they would like you to present or not.

Choosing a topic to present at Congress

If you want to put in an abstract to present at the 2024 Congress, it must be about one of these themes:

- Health and therapy
- Education and employment
- Advocacy and social inclusion
- Family life
- Personal development

It is important for your presentation or story to be about one of these themes.

Submitting your abstract

If you want to submit an abstract, you need to read the information in this link carefully:

<https://wdsc2024.org.au/call-for-abstracts.html>

From there, you can follow the information to submit your abstract. You will need to create a new account using your email address.

You can ask a support person to help you with this. You can draft your abstract and work on it a few times before you submit it.

Abstracts must be submitted by **2 February 2024**.

You will find out if you have been chosen as a presenter in March 2024.

Preparing your abstract

Your abstract must include:

- A name for the presentation.
- A biography. A biography tells us who you are – it is an introduction to you.
- The abstract text. The abstract text is a short summary of what you would like to talk about.

When submitting your abstract, there are other questions in a list that you need to answer. These are:

- The type of presentation you want to give. There are a few ways presentations can be given so you can choose what you would like from the list.
- The theme of your presentation. Select one from the drop-down box.
- Any affiliations. This means if you are speaking on behalf of an organisation or group.
- Any support you might require.
- If you are a person with Down syndrome.

You can then Review your abstract, and once you are happy with it, press Submit.

If you need any help submitting your abstract, you can contact: program@wdsc2024.org.au

Presenting at Congress

Once you have submitted your abstract and the conference organising people have let you know they would like you to present your topic, you will have questions like:

- What do I do now?
- How will I present my story or topic?

You will need to decide if you want a support person to help you prepare the presentation.

You will need to decide if you want a support person to help present with you.

If you do want support to prepare or present your presentation, you will need to decide who would be good and ask them if they would like to support you.

Before you start

Decide how you would like to share your message. Would you like to present your story by:

- Making a PowerPoint presentation?
- Making a video before and sharing it at the conference?
- Another way?

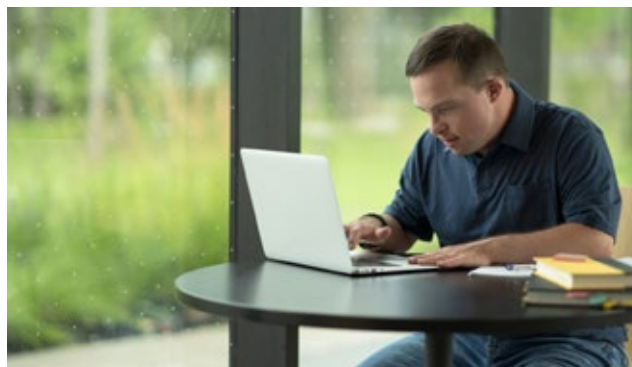
Find out how much time you have to present.

Find out who your audience will be. This will help you know what they may want to hear about.

Be clear about the main message of your presentation

Two questions to ask yourself before preparing your presentation:

- 1 What do I want my audience to remember?
- 2 Why do the audience care about my message?



Preparing the presentation

You should have 3 parts to your presentation:

- 1 **The Beginning** – tell them what your presentation is about.
 - Use a powerful opening. You can start with a story, a statistic or a quote. This is what most of the audience will remember.
 - Introduce yourself.
 - You should acknowledge the traditional owners of the land after you have introduced yourself.
 - Tell the audience what you will be talking about.
- 2 **The Middle** – keep it simple and tell the audience a bit more about your topic.
 - Help the audience understand your topic with pictures.
 - You could use a story or share your personal experience to highlight your main message.
 - No more than 3 or 4 points here is good. Use short stories about things that have happened to you to help the audience understand what you mean. Use a picture or a photo to help the audience understand what your point is.
 - You can tell them something funny if it helps get your message across.
 - If you use a PowerPoint, don't put too many words or information on each slide.



3 The End – repeat your main message. Tell them what you told them.

- End strong – maybe ask your audience to do something that will help with your message.
- Make sure they remember your message from your opening.
- Give the audience time to ask questions.
- Put the 3 main parts together in the way you have decided to present. That may be by doing a PowerPoint or video presentation.

Presenting

Sometimes people can get nervous when they are presenting to an audience.

These 8 tips may help you to be calmer so you can give your best presentation:

- Smile – people in the audience will feel so much better if they think you are happy to be there.
- Look confident – even if you feel a little nervous. Stand up tall or sit up straight. Try not to cross your arms, wring your hands or put your hands in your pockets.
- Breathe deep and steadily.
- Have water and take a few sips if you need it.
- Don't worry about what others think. If you don't say the words or present exactly the way you want, it doesn't matter. Just keep going.
- PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE – the more you practice, the more confident you will be.
- Perhaps practice in front of your friends and family and ask them what they thought was good and what could be made better.
- Enjoy the experience of being a presenter.

Experiences of Congress

Spend time with Claire Mitchell and Ruth Faragher and you may just find yourself registering to attend World Down Syndrome Congress 2024!

Claire and Ruth are both members of the Congress organising committee and of the sub-committee in charge of the over 18s program.

Their responsibilities involve organising:

- the meet and greet social event,
- a Self-Advocates forum,
- the speakers and workshops throughout Congress, and
- the 'come and try' activities such as public speaking, drama and art.

Both Claire and Ruth are seasoned attendees of Congresses.

Ruth has been to South Africa, Amsterdam, Chennai, Glasgow and Singapore to name a few. Claire has been to Singapore and Sydney. Between them, they have plenty of experience to know what makes a good Congress!

Ruth and Claire are enthusiastic advocates for WDSC2024. You can sense their excitement building when talking about this event to be held in their home city of Brisbane in July next year.

DSA's Advocate, Rachel Spencer, who is also part of the over 18s program sub-committee, invited them to share reflections from previous Congresses.

What did you enjoy about Congress?

Ruth: I enjoyed group discussions and presentations. I liked doing activities. In India they did henna tattoos which was so fun!

Claire: I enjoyed the main Congress where everybody got together as well as doing the social program. It is always enjoyable getting on a plane and going. Flying is part of the enjoyment.



Learnings at Congress

Ruth: I talked about education a lot in Congresses in these countries. I learnt a lot from other people with Down syndrome.

Claire: A lot of it I just loved. The ones that stand out are about employment and health.

Meeting people at Congress

Claire: It is very important for people to meet new people. Giving people Australian gifts was nice.

Ruth: I enjoyed meeting new people from other countries. I love going around the world and making new friends.

What are you looking forward to at next year's Congress in Brisbane?

Ruth: I look forward to welcoming people to Brisbane from all over Australia and the world.

Claire: First and foremost, having Congress in Brissy, we've never hosted before, so that is something in itself. Everyone working together. You have to have the drive that we are making a difference in the lives of people with Down syndrome and the lives of others. Coming back to that same common goal: the best outcomes for people with Down syndrome.

Final words of welcome

Claire: Brisbane is a beautiful city with lots of things to see and do. It will be a chance to learn new things. It will be a chance to share your stories and your experiences.

Ruth: The congress will be a chance to connect with old friends and make new ones. We can't wait to welcome you to our amazing city. You won't want to miss it. See you in Brisbane!



Things to do in Brisbane

Brisbane offers a variety of inclusive and enjoyable activities for individuals with Down syndrome.

The city’s welcoming atmosphere, accessible attractions, and vibrant community make it an ideal destination for a memorable experience. The team at Down Syndrome Queensland have created this guide of things to do in Brisbane during your Congress visit.

South Bank Parklands

Start your Brisbane adventure at South Bank Parklands, a hub of entertainment and recreation. The park features accessible paths, a wheelchair-friendly playground, and a lagoon for a relaxing swim.

Wheel of Brisbane

Take a ride on the Wheel of Brisbane for panoramic views of the city. The comfortable cabins provide a safe and enjoyable experience, making it an inclusive activity for everyone.

Queensland Museum and Science Centre (SparkLab)

Explore the Queensland Museum, which offers interactive exhibits suitable for all ages. The SparkLab is particularly engaging, providing hands-on experiences to stimulate curiosity and learning.

City Botanic Gardens

Enjoy the tranquillity of the City Botanic Gardens. The wide pathways and lush surroundings make it an ideal place for a leisurely stroll or a picnic, providing a sensory-rich environment.

Cultural Precinct

Explore the Cultural Precinct, home to the Queensland Art Gallery, Gallery of Modern Art (GOMA), and the State Library of Queensland. These institutions often feature inclusive programs and exhibitions.

Lone Pine Koala Sanctuary

Hold a koala, feed a kangaroo, watch a sheep dog show, or get a photo with a snake to make your trip to Brisbane memorable through the Sanctuary's range of tours and encounters!

Brisbane Powerhouse

Check out the Brisbane Powerhouse, a cultural hub that often hosts inclusive events and performances. The accessible venue ensures that everyone can enjoy the diverse range of artistic expressions.

Brisbane Wheelchair Accessible River Cruise

Take a relaxing river cruise on the Brisbane River. Several operators offer wheelchair-accessible cruises, allowing everyone to appreciate the scenic beauty of the city.

Roma Street Parkland

Roma Street Parkland is another stunning green space with accessible features. The park offers themed gardens, water features, and open spaces for recreation.

Accessible Dining

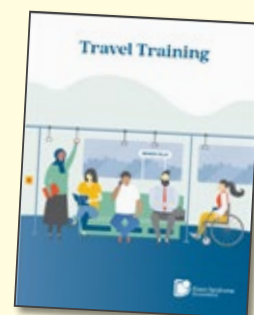
Brisbane boasts a diverse culinary scene, and many restaurants prioritise accessibility. Choose venues with spacious layouts, friendly staff, and menus that accommodate dietary preferences or restrictions.



Brisbane City Hall

Visit the historic Brisbane City Hall, an iconic landmark with guided tours and accessible facilities. The clock tower offers panoramic views of the city, and the building itself is an architectural gem.

To make the most of your stay and build confidence in navigating the city, explore *Down Syndrome Queensland's Travel Training manual* – a free resource designed to provide essential guidance and support for independent travel. Whether you're looking to explore popular landmarks, access public transportation, or simply find your way through the city's charming neighbourhoods, the manual can assist you on your journey, ensuring a seamless and enjoyable experience during your time in Brisbane.



Available now on our website at www.downsyndrome.org.au/shop/product/travel-training-2/

How to register for Congress



Registration for the World Down Syndrome Congress 2024 is now open.

You must register if you want to come to Congress in 2024.



You can register on the Congress Registration web page:

www.wdsc2024.org.au/registration



There are different costs to attend the Congress. You can see the costs on the Registration web page.



If you have questions about registering, email registration@wdsc2024.org.au



We hope to see you in Brisbane for World Down Syndrome Congress 2024!