

DIVERSITY CALENDAR

The purpose of this calendar is to celebrate and raise awareness and understanding of significant events for people who may identify with different diversity groups.

Developing an effective Diversity and Inclusion culture is an important part of being a world leading university. Diversity adds value to our problem solving, decision making and creativity. Inclusion fosters collaboration, trust and respect and supports psychosocial safety and wellbeing.

Please note: we have attempted to ensure dates and information are accurate and that most major events are included, however mistakes or omissions may occur. If you believe this is the case, please contact the staff Diversity Consultant. We always welcome the opportunity to engage more.

JANUARY 2016



Multifaith – 17 January

World Religion Day

Observed in over 80 countries, the aim of World Religion Day is to foster interfaith understanding and harmony by emphasising the common elements underlying all religions.



Australian – 26 January

Australia Day

On Australia Day we come together as a nation to celebrate what's great about Australia and being Australian. Australia Day celebrations are held in communities across the country. <http://www.australiaday.org.au/>

FEBRUARY 2016



Chinese – 8 February

Chinese New Year – Year of the Monkey

恭喜发财 Gong Hei Fat Choi

An important festival, also known as the Spring Festival, at the turn of the Chinese calendar. It is an occasion for families to gather for an annual reunion dinner.



Buddhist – 8 February

Nirvana Day

This day is to commemorate Buddha's death at the age of 80, when he reached the zenith of Nirvana. February 15 is an alternative date of observance.



Multicultural – 12 to 14 February

National Multicultural Festival, Canberra

This vibrant festival features local, national and international music, dance, food and creative arts. <http://multiculturalfestival.com.au/>

Gender

Women – 14 February

One Billion Rising

1 in 3 women and girls on the planet will be beaten or raped during her lifetime. This campaign is a call for system change to end violence against women and girls.

<http://www.onebillionrising.org/>

Disability

Asperger – 18 February

International Asperger's Day

This event, which aims to highlight the significance of Asperger syndrome for both society and individuals, also illustrates one of the many challenges to the newcomer trying to understand the autism spectrum. <http://www.asperger.asn.au/>

MARCH 2016

Disability

Mobility – 1 March

International Wheelchair Day

This annual day of events and activities take place around the World when wheelchair users celebrate the positive impact a wheelchair has on their lives.

<http://wheelchairsteve.com/international-wheelchair-day/>

LGBTI

Gender and Sexual Diversity – 5 March

Sydney Mardi Gras Parade

Starting in 1978 as a protest march, the Mardi Gras is today one of Australia's most famous events. It captures the imagination of Australia's LGBTQI and mainstream communities, culminating in the world-famous Parade: a colourful and dazzling night of pride, celebration and self-expression. <http://www.mardigras.org.au/>

Gender

Women – 8 March

International Women's Day

First observed in 1911 in Germany, it has now become a major global celebration honouring women's economic, political, and social achievements.

<http://www.internationalwomensday.com/>

Culture

Multicultural – 14 March

Canberra Day

The annual holiday celebrates the official naming of Canberra. The name means 'meeting place' in local Indigenous languages as a reference to the corroborees held during the seasonal migrations.

Indigenous

Indigenous Australians – 17 March

National Close the Gap Day

The campaign's goal is to close the health and life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation.

<https://www.oxfam.org.au/what-we-do/indigenous-australia/national-close-the-gap-day/>

Culture

Multicultural – 21 March

Harmony Day

Harmony Day celebrates the cohesive and inclusive nature of our nation and promotes the benefits of cultural diversity. Schools, community groups and organisations across Australia host Harmony Day events. <http://www.harmony.gov.au>

Culture

Multicultural – 21 March

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights”. This day reminds us of our collective responsibility for promoting and protecting this ideal. <http://www.un.org/en/events/racialdiscriminationday/>

Disability

Down Syndrome – 21 March

World Down Syndrome Day

We encourage our friends all over the world to choose your own activities and events to help raise awareness of Down syndrome, what it means to have Down syndrome, and how people with Down syndrome play a vital role in our lives and communities.

<https://www.worlddownsyndromeday.org/>

Culture

Persian – 21 March

International Nowruz Day

Nowruz is an ancestral festivity over 3,000 years old marking the first day of spring and the New Year's Day of the Persian/Zoroastrian calendar. The date is proclaimed by the United Nations and celebrated by 300 million people worldwide.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/nowruzday/>

Religion

Jewish – 24 March

Purim

Purim is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from Haman, in the ancient Persian Empire, as recorded in the Biblical Book of Esther. Begins at sundown on 23 March.

Religion

Christian – 25 to 28 March

Good Friday, Easter Saturday, Easter Sunday, and Easter Monday

Easter commemorates the resurrection (return to life) of Jesus Christ following his death by crucifixion. It is one of the most significant events of the Christian calendar.

In addition to its religious significance, this long weekend in Australia is an opportunity to take a holiday or get together with family and friends.

LGBTI

Trans* – 31 March

International Transgender Day of Visibility

This day is dedicated to celebrating transgender people and raising awareness of discrimination faced by transgender people worldwide.

APRIL 2016

Disability

Autism – 2 April

World Autism Awareness Day

This internationally observed day, encourages Member States of the United Nations to take measures to raise awareness about children and adults with autism throughout the world. <http://www.autismspectrum.org.au/>

Religion

Jewish – 16 April

Yom HaShoah - Holocaust Remembrance Day

This day remembers the six million Jews killed by the Nazis between 1933 and 1945. It is observed by many people of Jewish and other faiths.

Religion

Jewish – 23 to 30 April

Pesach - Passover

Passover is one of the most important Jewish festivals. It commemorates the liberation by Moses of the Jewish people from slavery. Begins at sundown on 22 April.

Culture

Australian – 25 April

ANZAC Day

This is one of Australia's most important dates of national commemoration. It marks the anniversary of the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War (1914-18), at Gallipoli. Dawn services at war memorials honour the sacrifice of those who died in war. Marches and reunions are held during the day.

Disability

Visual Impairments – 28 April

International Guide Dog Day

The day celebrates the important role Guide Dogs play in enabling people with vision loss to stay safe and be independent.

<http://www.guidedogsaustralia.com/>

MAY 2016

Religion

Buddhist – 4 May

Vesak Day or Buddha Day

Commemorates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha. The date varies by region and tradition. Some Buddhists celebrate Buddha Day on 1 or 2 June.

Religion

Christian – 14 May

Ascension of Christ

This day observes the departure of Jesus from earth after his resurrection. It is possibly the earliest observed celebration in Christianity.

Religion

Christian – 15 May

Pentecost (Western)

Pentecost celebrates the gift of the Holy Spirit and is regarded by some Christians as the birthday of the Christian church.

Disability

Schizophrenia – 17 to 23 May

Schizophrenia Awareness Week

This day provides an opportunity to raise community awareness of schizophrenia and mental health in general. <http://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/media-centre/events/national-schizophrenia-awareness-week.aspx>

LGBTI

Gender and Sexual Diversity – 17 May

IDAHOBT

The International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBT) was created in 2004 to draw the attention to the violence and discrimination experienced by LGBTI people internationally. <http://dayagainsthomophobia.org/>

Culture

Multicultural – 21 May

World Day for Cultural Diversity

The United Nations sanctioned international day provides us with an opportunity to deepen our understanding of the values of cultural diversity and to learn to live together better. <http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/>

Culture

African – 25 May

Africa Day

This day commemorates the founding in 1963 of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) and celebrates the unity of African people. <http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/>

Indigenous

Indigenous Australians – 26 May

National Sorry Day

The national day is to remember and commemorate the mistreatment of the country's indigenous population. <http://www.nsd.org.au/>

Indigenous

Indigenous Australians – 27 May to 3 June

National Reconciliation Week

This week celebrates the rich culture and history of the First Australians and fosters reconciliation discussion and activities. <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/>

Religion

Baha'i – 28 to 29 May

Ascension of Baha'u'llah

This day marks the death of the founder of the Baha'i faith, Baha'u'llah, in 1892. Work is suspended on this day. Ascension of Baha'u'llah begins at sundown on 28 May.

Religion

Orthodox Christian – 28 to 29 May

Pentecost

The Coptic Church has major celebrations and a feast on this day.

JUNE 2016

LGBTI

Gender and Sexual Diversity – 1 to 30 June

LGBTI Pride Month

This month recognises the impact that gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex individuals have had on the world. This is a time for celebration as well as memorials for those lost to hate crimes and HIV/AIDS. The end of the month commemorates the Stonewall Riots.

Religion

Buddhist – 1 June

Vesak Day or Buddha Day

This is a major Buddhist festival in the year and celebrates the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha. The date varies by region and tradition. Some Buddhists celebrate Buddha Day on 4 May or 2 June.

Indigenous

Indigenous Australians – 3 June

Mabo Day

This day commemorates Eddie Koiki Mabo, an Torres Strait Islander whose campaign for Indigenous land rights led to a landmark decision of the High Court of Australia in 1992 that overturned the legal fiction of terra nullius.

Religion

Islamic – 6 June to 5 July

Ramadan

Ramadan is the most auspicious month on the Islamic calendar, when the first verses of the Qur'an were revealed to the Prophet Muhammad. Islamic people around the world fast from sunrise to sunset. Ramadan begins at sundown on 5 June.

Religion

Jewish – 12 to 13 June

Shavuot (Pentecost)

Shavuot is a Jewish celebration of Moses's descent from Mount Sinai with the Ten Commandments. Shavuot begins at sundown on 11 June.

Religion

Sikh – 16 June

Martyrdom (Shahidi) of Guru Arjan Dev Sahib

On this day Sikhs remember those who have suffered for the faith. The day is observed by reading the Guru Granth Sahib.

Culture

Multicultural – 19 to 25 June

Refugee Week

Since early 1945, more than seven million people have come to Australia as new settlers, including around 800 000 people under humanitarian programs, initially as displaced persons and more recently as refugees. <http://www.refugeeweek.org.au/>

Culture

Multicultural – 20 June

Refugee Day

"On this World Refugee Day, let us recall our common humanity, celebrate tolerance and diversity and open our hearts to refugees everywhere." Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General <http://www.un.org/en/events/refugeeday/>

JULY 2016

Indigenous

Torres Strait Islanders – 1 July

Coming of the Light Festival

This day recognises the adoption of Christianity through Torres Strait Island communities during the late nineteenth century. Torres Strait Islanders living on the islands or on the mainland come together to honour this anniversary every year.

Religion

Buddhist – 2 July

Asalha Puja (Dhamma) Day

This date commemorates the first sermon delivered by the Buddha after his enlightenment.

Indigenous

Indigenous Australians – 3 to 10 July

NAIDOC WEEK

National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) week celebrates Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements and recognises the contributions Indigenous Australians make to our country and society. <http://www.naidoc.org.au/>

Culture

American – 4 July

Independence Day

This celebration commemorates the adoption of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776, declaring that the thirteen American colonies regarded themselves as a new nation, the United States of America, and no longer part of the British Empire.

Religion

Baha'i – 9 July

Martyrdom of the Báb

The Báb was executed in 1850. He was a prophet and forerunner of the Baha'i faith. Work is suspended on this day. Martyrdom of the Báb begins at sundown on 8 July.

Culture

French – 14 July

Bastille Day - La Fête nationale

This day commemorates the Storming of the Bastille on 14 July 1789, an important event in Paris in a violent revolution that had begun two days earlier, as well as the Fête de la Fédération which celebrated the unity of the French people on 14 July 1790.

Disability

Mental Health – 22 July

Stress Down Day

This fun and easy initiative is to reduce stress and raise vital funds for Lifeline. 90% of Australians need to stress less - with 74% of people reported being stressed from work. Australians are encouraged to recognise stress at ANY time of year.

AUGUST 2016

Indigenous

Multicultural – 9 August

International Day of the World's Indigenous People

"To create a better, more equitable future, let us commit to do more to improve the health and well-being of indigenous peoples." Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary General
<http://www.un.org/en/events/indigenousday/>

Disability

Hearing Impairments – 20 to 27 August

Hearing Awareness Week

This annual initiative raises awareness for the needs of Australians who are deaf or hearing impaired. <http://www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au/>

LGBTI

Gender and Sexual Diversity – 28 August

Wear it Purple

Wear it Purple seeks to raise awareness about the issues faced by these young people and the need to eradicate bullying based on sexuality and gender diversity.
<http://www.wearitpurple.org/>

SEPTEMBER 2016

Religion

Sikh – 1 September

Parkash (First Reading) Aadh Granth Sahib

The Aadh Granth (Original Scripture) was installed at Harmandir Sahib (Golden Temple) Amritsar in India. The first reading ceremony was on 1st September 1604. It is the day when the Guru Granth Sahib was bestowed with the title of being the eternal and final Sikh guru thus ending the line of Human gurus.

Disability

Dementia – 1 to 30 September

Dementia Awareness Month

<https://fightdementia.org.au/campaigns/dementia-awareness-month>

Gender

Women – 4 September

Equal Pay Day

A day to examine the barriers holding women back from earning, saving and being valued fairly at work and communicate that your organisation is taking steps towards equity.

Religion

Hindu – 5 September

Krishna Janmashtami

This festival is one of the most important events in the Hindu calendar. It celebrates the birth of Lord Krishna, a Hindu deity, more than 5000 years ago.

Disability

Mental Health – 10 September

World Suicide Prevention Day

This day is to speak up to reduce the stigma around talking about suicide prevention safely. We need to stand up to make a positive impact on our mental health and wellbeing. <http://wspd.org.au/>

Disability

Mental Health – 10 September

R U OK? Day

This day is to remind people to ask family, friends and colleagues the question, "R U OK?", because connecting regularly and meaningfully is one thing everyone can do to make a difference to anyone who might be struggling. <https://www.ruok.org.au/>

Religion

Islamic – 10 to 11 September

Eid al-Adha

This day commemorates the ordeal of Ibrahim (Abraham) who was asked to sacrifice his only son to prove his faith to Allah (God). Eid al-Adha begins at sundown on 10 September.

Disability

Brain Health – 14 to 20 September

Headache and Migraine Week

The aim is to reduce the incidence and impact of brain, spine and nerve disorders, diseases and injuries through the provision of support, community education and research. <http://headacheaustralia.org.au/>

Culture

Chinese – 15 September

Mid-Autumn (Moon) Festival

The Mid-Autumn Festival is a popular East Asian celebration of abundance and togetherness, dating back over 3000 years. The traditional food of this festival is the moon cake.

Culture

German – 17 September to 3 October

Oktoberfest

A large annual fair in Munich, Germany. Several Australian cities and local councils hold Oktoberfest festivals around this time to celebrate German culture and its contribution to Australia.

Religion

Jewish – 23 September

Yom Kippur – Day of Atonement

This holiest day of the Jewish year is observed with fasting and repentance. Many Jews will refrain from work and attend synagogue services. Yom Kippur - Day of Atonement begins at sundown on 22 September.

LGBTI

Bisexual – 23 September

Celebrate Bisexuality Day

Also referred to as Bisexual Pride Day, Bi Visibility Day, CBD, Bisexual Pride and Bi Visibility Day, this day is to recognise and celebrate bisexual people.

<http://www.bivisibilityday.com/>

OCTOBER 2016

Everyone

All people – 2 October

International Day of Non-Violence

The day is marked on the birthday of Mahatma Gandhi, leader of the Indian independence movement and pioneer of the philosophy and strategy of non-violence.

<http://www.un.org/en/events/nonviolenceday/>

Religion

Jewish – 2 to 4 October

Rosh Hashanah - Jewish New Year

Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year festival, commemorates the creation of the world. A synagogue ritual is the blowing of the Shofar, a ram's horn trumpet. Apples are dipped in honey as a symbol of the sweet New Year that lies ahead (begins at sundown on 2 October, to 4 October).

Disability

Mental health – 4 to 10 October

Mental Health Week

To promote social and emotional wellbeing to the community, encouraging people to maximise their health potential, enhancing the coping capacity of communities, families, individuals and increasing mental health recovery.

<http://www.mentalhealthcommission.gov.au/media-centre/events.aspx>

Disability

Visual impairment – 9 October

World Sight Day

Vision 2020 Australia uses World Sight Day to talk about the importance of eye health and vision care. <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/>

Disability

Mental health – 10 October

World Mental Health Day

This day is to promote social and emotional wellbeing to the community, encouraging people to maximise their health potential, enhancing the coping capacity of communities, families, individuals and increasing mental health recovery.

Religion

Islamic – 10 to 11 October

Ashura

Ashura marks Noah's departure from the ark, the exodus of Moses from Egypt and the martyrdom of Prophet Muhammad's grandson (begins at sundown on 10 October).

Religion

Hindu – 11 October

Vijayadashami (Dasara)

This Hindu festival marks the triumph of good over evil. The festival of Dasera concludes the festival of Navaratri, which extends over a number of days.

Disability

Carers – 11 to 17 October

National Carers Week

National Carers Week is about recognising and celebrating the outstanding contribution unpaid carers make to our nation.

<http://www.carersweek.com.au/>

Religion

Islamic – 13 to 14 October

Al Hijra/Muharram - New Year

Muharram is the first month of the year on the Islamic Calendar and marks the New Year for Muslims (begins at sundown on 13 October).

Religion

Jewish – 17 to 23 October

Succot/Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles

During this period Many Jewish people build a temporary dwelling called a Sukkah lasting seven days that reminds people about God's protection over those who wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, a story described in the Torah.

Religion

Baha'i – 19 to 20 October

Birth of the Báb

On this day Baha'i followers celebrate the birth of the Báb, a prophet and forerunner of the faith. Work is suspended on this day (begins at sundown 19 October).

Religion

Sikh – 20 October

Inauguration (Gurgadi) of Guru Granth Sahib

This day commemorates the eternal installation of the Sikh holy book, Guru Granth Sahib.

Religion

Jewish – 23 to 24 October

Shemini Atzeret - Eight Day of Assembly

Shemini Atzeret, meaning 'the eighth day of assembly,' is a Biblical Jewish holiday that follows the Jewish festival of Sukkot. Shemini Atzeret is a time when prayers and celebrations are held for rain and a good harvest (begins at sundown on 4 October).

Religion

Jewish – 23 to 25 October

Simchat Torah - Celebrating the Torah

Simchat Torah is a joyous event. The annual cycle of weekly Torah readings is completed at this time, which marks a period of great celebration. Special attention is given to children, who join the celebrations with flags and singing (begins at sundown on 23 October).

LGBTI

Intersex – 26 October

Intersex Awareness Day

A day of action and reflection to end shame, secrecy and unwanted genital cosmetic surgeries.

<http://intersexday.org/en/>

NOVEMBER 2016

Religion

Christian – 1 November

All Saint's Day

This day honours saints, known and unknown. Saints are men and women recognised for lives of holiness and devotion to God or who were martyred for their faith.

Religion

Hindu, Sikh, Jain – 11 November

Deepavali or Diwali - Festival of Lights

Australians of Hindu, Sikh, and Jain faiths celebrate Deepavali (Diwali), or the Festival of Lights. This is a very popular festival that celebrates the victory of good over evil, light over darkness and knowledge over ignorance.

Culture

Australian – 11 November

Remembrance Day

This day marks the anniversary of the armistice which ended the First World War (1914–18). We observe one minute's silence at 11am in memory of the millions who died or suffered in all wars and armed conflicts.

Religion

Baha'i – 11 to 12 November

Birth of Baha'u'llah

On this day people of Baha'i faith refrain from work and celebrate the birth of their faith's founder. Birth of Baha'u'llah begins at sundown on 11 November.

Religion

Sikh – 14 November

Birth of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib

Guru Nanak Dev was the founder of the Sikh faith and way of life. Sikhism stresses the importance of doing good deeds rather than merely carrying out rituals.

Everyone

All people – 16 November
International Day for Tolerance

"Tolerance does not mean indifference or a grudging acceptance of others. It is a way of life based on mutual understanding and respect for others, and on the belief that global diversity is to be embraced, not feared." UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon

Gender

Men – 19 November
International Men's Day

This objectives of this internationally celebrated day include focusing on men's and boys' health, improving gender relations, promoting gender equality, and highlighting positive male role models. <http://internationalmensday.co/>

Religion

Sikh – 24 November
Martyrdom (Shahidi) of Guru Tegh Bahadur

Guru Tegh Bahadur, the 9th Guru, sacrificed his life to defend the religious freedom of another faith.

Gender

Women – 25 November
White Ribbon Day

White Ribbon Australia observes the International Day of the Elimination of Violence against Women. It is the world's largest male-led movement to end men's violence against women. <http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/>

Religion

Christian – 29 November
First Sunday of Advent

Advent is observed with the lighting of advent candles, display of wreaths and special ceremonies. Advent also anticipates the coming again to earth of Jesus Christ.

Culture

Scottish – 30 November
St Andrew's Day

St Andrew is the patron saint of Scotland. His feast day, 30 November, is the national day of Scotland.

DECEMBER 2016

Everyone

All people – 1 December
World AIDS Day

World AIDS Day, since 1988, is dedicated to raising awareness of the AIDS pandemic caused by the spread of HIV infection, and mourning those who have died of the disease.

Disability

All people – 3 December

International Day of People with Disability

This is a United Nations sanctioned day that aims to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability and celebrate the achievements and contributions of people with disability.

Everyone

All people – 10 December

Human Rights Day

This day brings to the attention 'of the peoples of the world' the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as the common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations.

Religion

Islamic – 12 December

Mawlid (Eid Milad Un Nabi) - Birth of the Prophet

This day commemorates the birth of the prophet Muhammad. During this celebration, homes and mosques are decorated, large parades take place, and those observing the holiday participate in charity events. Begins at sundown on 11 December 2016.

Religion

Jewish – 24 December to 1 January

Chanukah or Hanukkah - Festival of Lights

Chanukah (Hanukkah) commemorates the recapture and rededication of the Jerusalem Temple. It lasts for eight days and nights, and each night an additional candle is lit. Begins at sundown on 24 December to 1 January.

Religion

Christian – 25 December

Christmas Day

Christmas celebrates the birth of Jesus, peace on earth and good will. Christmas lights and trees are displayed, carols are sung and children eagerly await the arrival of Santa Claus and gifts.

Culture

Multicultural – 26 December

Boxing Day

Boxing Day is a holiday traditionally celebrated the day following Christmas Day, when servants and tradesmen would receive gifts, known as a "Christmas box", from their bosses or employers.

Culture

Multicultural – 31 December

New Year's Eve

New Year's Eve is a time for communities, families and friends to celebrate the year past and the year to come. Fireworks light up cities and harbours around Australia.