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**

| Religion | 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.* |
| --- | --- |
| Culture | 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/](http://www.australiaday.org.au/)* |

**FEBRUARY 2016**

| Culture | 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.* |
| Religion | 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.* |
| Culture | Multicultural – 12 to 14 February  
National Multicultural Festival, Canberra  

Updated 05-02-2016
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.  

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.  

**MARCH 2016**

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/](http://wheelchairsteve.com/international-wheelchair-day/)

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.  

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.  

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 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.  
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

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/

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/

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/

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.

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.

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.*  

#### 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.*

**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.*  

### 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.*

**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.*
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.*

Schizophrenia – 17 to 23 May
Schizophrenia Awareness Week

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/](http://dayagainsthomophobia.org/)

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/](http://www.un.org/en/events/culturaldiversityday/)

African – 25 May
Africa Day

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.nsdc.org.au/](http://www.nsdc.org.au/)

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/](https://www.reconciliation.org.au/)

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.*
### JUNE 2016

| Religion | Orthodox Christian – 28 to 29 May  
| Pentecost  
The Coptic Church has major celebrations and a feast on this day. |
| 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, a 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. |

Updated 05-02-2016
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/](http://www.refugeeweek.org.au/)

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

JULY 2016

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.

Buddhist – 2 July
Asalha Puja (Dhamma) Day
This date commemorates the first sermon delivered by the Buddha after his enlightenment.

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.

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.

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.

Updated 05-02-2016
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.*

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**

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


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/](http://www.hearingawarenessweek.org.au/)

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.*


**SEPTEMBER 2016**

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.*

Dementia – **1 to 30 September**

**Dementia Awareness Month**


Updated 05-02-2016
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.

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.

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/](http://wspd.org.au/)

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/](https://www.ruok.org.au/)

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.

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/](http://headacheaustralia.org.au/)

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.

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.

Updated 05-02-2016
### 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.


### 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.


#### 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).

#### 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.


#### Disability

**Visual impairment – 9 October**

**World Sight Day**


#### 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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Range</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Islamic</strong></td>
<td><em>10 to 11 October</em></td>
<td>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).</td>
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<td><strong>Hindu</strong></td>
<td>11 October</td>
<td>Vijayadashami (Dasara)</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<td><strong>Carers</strong></td>
<td><em>11 to 17 October</em></td>
<td>National Carers Week</td>
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<td>National Carers Week is about recognising and celebrating the outstanding contribution unpaid carers make to our nation.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Islamic</strong></td>
<td><em>13 to 14 October</em></td>
<td>Al Hijra/Muharram - New Year</td>
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<td>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).</td>
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<td><strong>Jewish</strong></td>
<td><em>17 to 23 October</em></td>
<td>Sukcot/Sukkot - Feast of Tabernacles</td>
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<td>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.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Baha'i</strong></td>
<td>19 to 20 October</td>
<td>Birth of the Báb</td>
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<td>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).</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sikh</strong></td>
<td>20 October</td>
<td>Inauguration (Gurgadi) of Guru Granth Sahib</td>
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<td>This day commemorates the eternal installation of the Sikh holy book, Guru Granth Sahib.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Jewish</strong></td>
<td>23 to 24 October</td>
<td>Shemini Atzeret - Eight Day of Assembly</td>
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<td>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).</td>
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Updated 05-02-2016
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).

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/

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.
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

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/](http://internationalmensday.co/)

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.

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/](http://www.whiteribbon.org.au/)

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.

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

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.
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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.

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.