

VALID in association with Inclusion Australia presents the

# Having a Say Conference 2024

## The Future is Ours!

**5th - 6th February 2024**

Deakin University, Waterfront Campus  
1 Gheringhap Street Geelong



## INFORMATION BOOKLET

**VALID**



Inclusion Australia

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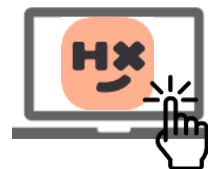
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## Aims of the Having a Say Conference

The Having a Say Conference aims to empower people with disability through:

- The opportunity to 'have a say' about issues that affect their lives
- Participation in an annual conference in a rural location of Victoria
- Opportunities to celebrate ability and achievement
- Being part of the planning and running of the conference
- Opportunities to be heard by politicians, government and service providers
- The opportunity to meet people from around Victoria, Australia and overseas
- Support to be part of developing strategies to address issues and recommendations made at the conference



## Geelong

Geelong is a popular tourist destination, with beautiful beaches and the Great Ocean Road on its doorstep.

There are many great attractions around Geelong that make lovely afternoon or day trips.

If your group is coming up early or staying on after the Conference, you can get information about accessible tourist activities from the Tourism Greater Geelong & Bellarine Visitor Information Centre on 1800 620 888 or website: [www.visitgeelongbellarine.com.au](http://www.visitgeelongbellarine.com.au)

## Sponsors of the Having a Say Conference



## About Having a Say

**VALID** VALID is a not for profit organisation run by people with disabilities and family members.



VALID is funded by the State Government to provide advocacy support to adults who have an intellectual disability, but also undertakes other activities to empower people with disabilities, such as self-advocacy training and the Having a Say Conference.



The Having a Say Conference helps people to find their voice, to speak up, to be heard and to be respected.

This is the conference where people listen to each other, not just to the speakers on stage. This is the conference where people respect each other's views and opinions, and celebrate their common cause.

The conference gets fantastic support from local disability services, the Local Reference Committee, City of Greater Geelong, Tourism Greater Geelong and Bellarine and local Geelong businesses.



The first Having a Say Conference was held in Maryborough in the year 2000. There were almost 190 people involved in the conference and the enthusiasm generated inspired those involved to do it again the next year. Since then the conference has grown each year, with over 1000 participants being involved in the 2020 conference.



People enjoy coming to the conference for a range of reasons. Some are keen advocates for people with disability and want to debate about issues, others find the whole environment empowering and some just want to have fun!

Many people come to the conference to have a say, such as open microphone to present or perform. We often get comments on the Evaluation Forms saying things like *"It was great I felt important because everyone listened to what I said"*.



The Having a Say Conference has been around for long time, because there is nothing else like it in Australia! As services change we need to get together to lobby about issues - until the 'system' is perfect out there!!! Apart from that there will always be a need for people to get together to share experiences and to celebrate our achievements. People also tell us that they want to keep getting together with other people from across Australia and now from overseas to network and learn different ways of doing things.

## Conference Theme:

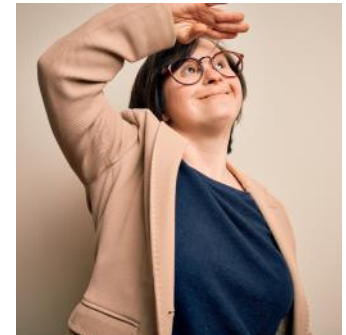
### The Future is Ours!

The Having a Say Conference is back in 2024!

The disability community has had some hard times over the last few years – but we have come together to make positive change.

People with disability have shared a lot about their experiences this year. The Disability Royal Commission (DRC) and the NDIS Review have been listening. We now look forward to their ideas to make things better.

Come and join us for the Having a Say Conference 'The Future is Ours'! It's going to be a wild ride!



## Our Choice Expo

Part of the  
**Having a Say Conference 2024**

**9.30am - 4.00pm**

**Monday 5th & Tuesday 6th**

**February 2024**



Take the opportunity to browse around 100 exhibits and see what is available to support you to get the best out of the NDIS and be involved in your community. **Free entry** to the public.

**More Information - [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)**

Christine Scott M: 0475 698 884

E: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)

[www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)



## Welcome from the Local Reference Committee

This will be the twenty third annual Having a Say Conference and the sixteenth one held in Geelong.

The workshops, presentations, performances, dreams and aspirations and the Come & Try activities provide fun and interactive ways to put the theme of the conference into practice. The Having a Say's Got Talent auditions and the Dinner Disco are both fun and a great place to let your hair down, and celebrate the conference.

The Local Reference Committee would like to invite you to attend the Having a Say Conference and join in the celebrations and look forward to seeing you in Geelong, in 2024.



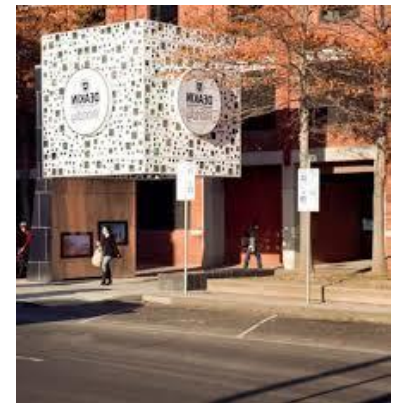
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## Conference Venue

Deakin University's Waterfront Campus in Geelong will be the main venue and is a great place to hold the conference.

Deakin University is located on Gheringhap Street and situated right in the heart of Geelong, with beautiful views of Corio Bay and the You Yangs. Deakin University's Waterfront Campus offers a welcoming and accessible venue for delegates to get together and have a say!

Parking is usually available in the Deakin Uni car park but due to building works this may not be available. Parking at a reasonable cost (\$14.75 per day - as of Aug. 2023) available on street and in Council Carpark across from Deakin Uni - see map. More info via this link to [council website](#)



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## The VALID & Inclusion Australia Streams

The Having a Say conference is not just about self advocacy, it is also about current advocacy issues and building skills for people to be effective representatives for other people.

The VALID and Inclusion Australia Streams will bring together families, advocates, workers and other interested people who share the VALID Advocacy Mission.

There are a number of presentations at the conference with a focus on providing information to families / carers and workers in the disability sector.



## Conference Dinner

### Dinner Disco (*The Pier*)

The dinner disco will be held from 6.45 - 10.30pm at 'The Pier Geelong', located on Cunningham Pier with views of the bay, You Yangs and city lights. The conference Dinner Disco gives people the chance to let their hair down and enjoy a night filled with fun, good food and dancing!

The dress theme for the Dinner Disco is to be decided, so watch our [HaS Facebook](#) site for news of this.

The band 'Un-Limited' will be playing party anthems by the truckload including rock n' roll, funky hits and rarities of the 80's.

Thanks to our Disco sponsor Victorian Disability Worker Commission!



### Dinner and Chat (*Wah Wah Gee Restaurant*)

As an alternative to the action packed Dinner Disco, a dinner and chat will be held in the Wah Wah Gee Restaurant. A Guest Speaker will speak at the Dinner and Chat. You can also let your hair down and join in the fun in the Disco as it is just across the foyer.



### Important things to remember:

- The Dinner Disco is a very popular event which usually sells out quickly. To make sure that you don't miss out register early!
- Make sure you choose the right 'ticket' for the dinner you would prefer to attend when you register. (Dinner Disco or Dinner & Chat)
- Drinks are not included in the registration fee, but are available at bar prices

For how to get to The Pier see the map on page 18, there is also a map included in the Conference Program Booklet in your registration bag.

## Parking

Parking on the pier has changed 'owners' and currently (Aug. 2023) it is free after 5pm, so you will need to check when you park, but otherwise there is free parking available along Western Beach Road.

You are also able drop to people off at the front of the venue (The Pier Geelong) and then park your vehicle. *See map on page 18*



## What's on at the conference?

### Highlights:

#### Day 1 Monday 5th February

Opening Ceremony

Welcome to Country

Open Microphone

Presentations, Workshops and Performances

Dreams and Aspirations

Come & Try Activities (C&T)

**Evening:** optional Having a Say's Got Talent show Auditions  
(see page 10)

#### Day 2 Tuesday 6th February

Keynote Presentations

Presentations, Workshops and Performances

Dreams and Aspirations

Come & Try Activities (C&T)

Presentation of Awards

Closing Ceremony

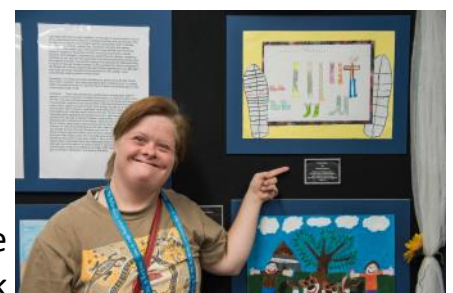
**Evening:** Dinner Disco (see page 7)



### Don't forget to check out:

**Sponsors Expo** is in the foyer and the **Our Choice expo** is held in the gallery area near the coffee cart

**Art Competition display** opposite Registration Desk





## Come & Try Activities

Come & Try Activities (C&T's) are a popular feature of the conference, providing delegates with the chance to relax and have some fun and try something new.



Some people think the C&T's are what the conference is about, but they are really 'an added extra'.

C&T activities **should be seen as:**

- An alternative to workshops and presentations
- Providing an opportunity for social interaction and networking
- An opportunity to try new activities and learn new skills



### How do I book my Come & Try Activities?

- A Come & Try booking sheet will be sent to you after VALID receives your registration form
- You will be able to download a Come & Try booking sheet when available from the VALID website: [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au) or email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)



### How do I know what activities I have booked in to?

- Confirmation of your Come & Try bookings will be emailed to you
- Don't forget that your Come & Try bookings will be printed on the back of your name badge



### How many Come & Try activities can I do?

- Delegates (*people with disability*) attending both days of the conference get to do **two** Come & Try activities (*note: **not** 2 activities per day, 2 in total*)
- Delegates attending for one day only get to do **one** come & try activity

**2**  
**1**

### What if I forget to book my Come & Try activities?

- You can book your Come & Try activities at the conference at the Come & Try desk next to registration

**Note:** *Many of the Come & Try activities book out before the conference so your choices may be limited*

Registration  
Desk

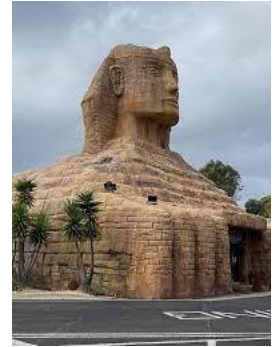


**Please note:** *Activities may be cancelled by the Organisers due to unforeseen circumstances e.g. bad weather.*

## Having a Say's Got Talent (HGT)

The Having a Say's Got Talent (HGT) will be held in the Luxor Lounge at the Sphinx Hotel, 2 Thompson St, North Geelong on Monday evening, 6th February 2024 from 7pm.

If you want a meal in the Bistro, **booking a table** (ph: 03 5278 2911) is recommended **or** you can have something from the Bain-Marie in the Luxor Lounge. Please note: No need to book a table if you are eating in the Luxor Lounge i.e. where HGT show is held.



The Having a Say's Got Talent **Auditions** is a great night out, full of fun and laughter. The audience are entertained by the many talented artists who sing, dance and sometimes do magic tricks. The 20 acts are judged and the 3 finalists from the auditions will perform in the **Finals** in the closing ceremony at 3.15pm on Tuesday, 6th February in Costa Hall.

If you would like to perform in HGT, you can download a form from the VALID website or call the office ask for Jon (03) 9416 4003

# Having a Say's Got Talent

**Auditions on Monday, 5th February 2024**



**All performers must sign up to  
audition by  
Friday, 19th January 2024**

To sign up, fill in the Red Faces  
Registration Form on website  
or  
Email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)

*Please note: There is a limit of 20  
places and registrations will not be  
accepted on the night.*



**Book  
early as  
places are  
limited**

*Finalists from the Auditions will perform **at the Having a Say's Got Talent Finals** during  
the conference Closing Ceremony in Costa Hall  
Tuesday, 6th February 2024*

## Barbara Donovan & Sarah Guilfoil Art Competition



The art competition has been named the Barbara Donovan Art Competition in honour of Barbara's 50 years of service to people with disability and ten years of volunteering at the HaS conference. Sadly Barbara's daughter Sarah Guilfoil passed away in May 2020. Sarah has won the Art Competition several times. The HaS Art Competition is now named in memory of both Barbara and Sarah.



2024 is the twelfth year of the Having a Say Art Competition sponsored by the Office for Professional Practice, Senior Practitioner. Experienced and budding artists are invited to enter their artwork.



Victorian Senior Practitioner

The Art Competition is open to all delegates (*people with disability*) of the Having a Say Conference & for the first time, two non-delegate prizes will also be awarded. The top 20 artworks will be on display in the Costa Hall foyer during the conference with the winners announced at the Closing Ceremony on Wednesday. The winning artworks are awarded cash prizes and certificates.

The artwork is to be based on the conference theme: **'The Future is Ours!'**

Entry forms and artwork must be handed in or sent to VALID by **22nd Dec. 2023** For more information or an entry form contact us by email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)

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## Conference Souvenir T-Shirts

Would you like to take home a souvenir from the  
Having a Say Conference?

*The T-Shirt displays the conference logo on the front.*

You can get an order form from the VALID website  
or email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)

Souvenir T-Shirts will still be on sale in the foyer of  
Costa Hall at the conference and are available in a  
range of sizes and colours.



## Volunteering

The Having a Say Conference needs your help. We are looking for volunteers to assist us with a variety of tasks. There is something to suit everyone's interests. You can volunteer for a day or the whole conference, it's a lot of fun and you will meet a great group of people.



What is the conference about? It provides opportunities for people with disabilities to experience new things, to participate, learn, present, perform and celebrate achievement. Being part of this conference is a wonderful experience for all involved.

**It's Australia's largest conference for people with disabilities, so why not volunteer?**

- *It's fun*
- *It's unique*
- *It's inspirational*

All volunteers receive morning and afternoon tea and lunch. People volunteering for all 2 days of the conference have the opportunity to attend the dinner disco at a discounted rate, providing there are places available.



Volunteers will also receive a complementary souvenir t-shirt.

For more information about volunteering at the Having a Say Conference look at the Volunteers Info booklet or phone 0475 698 884 or email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)

### **Feedback from volunteers:**

*"Sharing this time with both staff from VALID and the participants was a fantastic education and it has only reinforced to me that all people can contribute greatly including people with a disability!"*

*"Being a volunteer was a great way to be fully involved with the Conference and it gave me an opportunity to share a lot of great experiences."*

*"My volunteer experience for the Having a Say Conference was not only rewarding but gave me a much better understanding of people who have an intellectual and/or physical disability."*





## Program Timetable



Mon. 5th Feb. 2024		
9.30am - 10.30am	Registration open	Deakin University
10.30am - 12 noon	Opening Ceremony	Costa Hall, Deakin Uni
1.30pm - 2.30pm	Conference Sessions	Deakin University
3pm - 4pm	Conference Sessions	Deakin University
7pm - 10pm	Having a Say's Got Talent Auditions	The Sphinx Hotel



Tues. 6th Feb. 2024	Activity	Venue
9.30am -10.30am	Plenary (everyone together)	Deakin University
11am - 12 noon	Conference Sessions	Deakin University
1.00pm - 1.45pm	Conference Sessions	Deakin University
2.15pm - 3.00pm	Conference Sessions	Deakin University
3.15pm—4.15pm	Closing Ceremony	Costa Hall
6.45pm - 10.30pm	Conference Dinner Disco Conference 'Dinner & Chat'	The Pier & Wah Wah Gee on Cunningham Pier



## Conference DVD

You can order a copy of the Having a Say Conference DVD.

The DVD has memorable footage from all the main conference events and activities including the Dinner Disco, Presentations & Workshops, Having a Say's Got Talent, Opening Ceremony and Come & Try activities. See if you can spot yourself or friends in the conference footage.

Please note: It takes about 3 months for the DVD to be completed.

*VALID members and groups of three or more people who attend the conference will receive one **free copy** of the conference DVD.*



## Registration

**NOTE:** It is important that you read the information on the booking system as it explains the prices and the conditions, and what is included or not included with your registration.



## Sponsorship

We are pleased to advise that there will be a limited number of subsidies to assist people who are not able to pay their registration fees through their NDIS Plan. We also would like to thank the Victorian Disability Worker Commissioner, for subsidising the Dinner and Disco for all delegates with disability.

For more information about sponsorship please email Christine about Sponsorship.



## Registration Payment Methods

This year Registration is through an online Booking service called Humanitix.

Humanitix is a not for profit organisation, whose profits go to children's charities.



To register, [use this link](#) to register yourself or your group online. NOTE: if you need an **individual invoice** to send to a Plan Manager, you will need to register as an individual not as part of a group.



Humanitix will provide you an Invoice to send to your accounts dept/Plan Manager.

OR

you can either pay Humanitix at the time using credit card or Paypal

*If you choose to pay VALID directly, please quote your Humanitix Invoice number and use these bank details:*

Make payment to:

Payee: Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability Inc

Bank: Bendigo Bank

BSB: 633 000

Account: 202 064 762



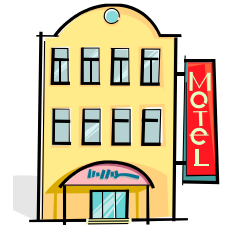
If you make a direct payment please email the remittance advice to [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)

## Accommodation

For information on a large range of accommodation please contact the Visitor Information Centre on 03 5223 2588

Websites: [www.tourismgeelongbellerine.com.au](http://www.tourismgeelongbellerine.com.au)

[www.visitvictoria.com/geelong](http://www.visitvictoria.com/geelong)



## Accessible Accommodation

Some accessible accommodation can be located through the Tourism Greater Geelong and the Bellarine service, contact details above.



## Catering

Please note this important information about catering.

- Morning and afternoon teas **are** included in the registration fee
- Lunch **is not** provided on either day, but there are food carts and a café on site where you can buy a range of take-away and sit down meals
- Remember to list any special dietary needs on your registration form



## Attendant Care

Attendant Care support is available for people who are attending the conference independently (i.e. without staff or family support). This support is **ONLY** for short-term personal care and meal assistance during the conference and conference dinner.



It is **important** for you to be aware that this support cannot be provided to people on a 1 to 1 basis for long periods of time during the conference.

If you are planning on attending the conference independently and have a higher need for support (i.e. require one to one attendant care support) please talk about your needs with your supporters/family or Support Coordinator or NDIS planner and the services that you use.

If you need more information about this, then please contact the HaS Coordinator Christine Scott, email [HavingaSay@valid.org.au](mailto:HavingaSay@valid.org.au) to discuss how we can assist you.



## Transport

### Trains

There are frequent train services between Melbourne & Geelong through V/line. The trip takes about an hour. V/Line buses also operate from other towns (e.g. Ballarat) directly to Geelong. People who require mobility assistance need to book with V/Line in advance. Timetables & more details are available at [www.vline.com.au](http://www.vline.com.au) or call **1800 800 007**.



### Airport Transfers

Gull Bus service operates regular buses from Melbourne's Tullamarine Airport to Geelong and this currently costs about \$38 one way, per person. For **Bookings & Info phone: 03 5222 4966** or [www.gull.com.au](http://www.gull.com.au)



Avalon Airport is only 15 minutes from Geelong. The Avalon Airport Shuttle will take you door to door to any motel/hotel in Geelong and costs about \$28 one way per person. For **Bookings and Info phone: 03 5278 8788**.



### Taxi

Geelong Taxi Network provides both a general and multi-purpose taxi service in the Geelong Region. **Phone: 131 008**

**Maxi Taxi:** We would **strongly advise** that you book in advance for a Maxi taxi (especially for Dinner Disco) up to 2 weeks prior to the conference. **Maxi Taxi Phone: 03 5278 5785**



### Queenscliff-Sorrento Ferry

Peninsula Searoad Transport operate the car/passenger ferry service 7 days a week, departing each hour on the hour between 7am and 7pm. **Bookings and Info phone: 03 5257 4500** or [www.searoad.com.au](http://www.searoad.com.au)



### Parking

Parking is **not** likely to be available in the Deakin University car park due to new building works. So, you will have to look for parking on the street or go up to the Westfield Carpark for the day. The parking inspectors are very active so make sure you obey the signs to avoid parking fines.



There are also metered car parking spaces at the conference venue. There are also many private car parks within walking distance from both venues. Mini Buses can park in the above mentioned car parks however there will also be designated Bus Parking in Gheringhap Street (outside Costa Hall) for Mini Buses with Disabled Parking Stickers.





# Maps



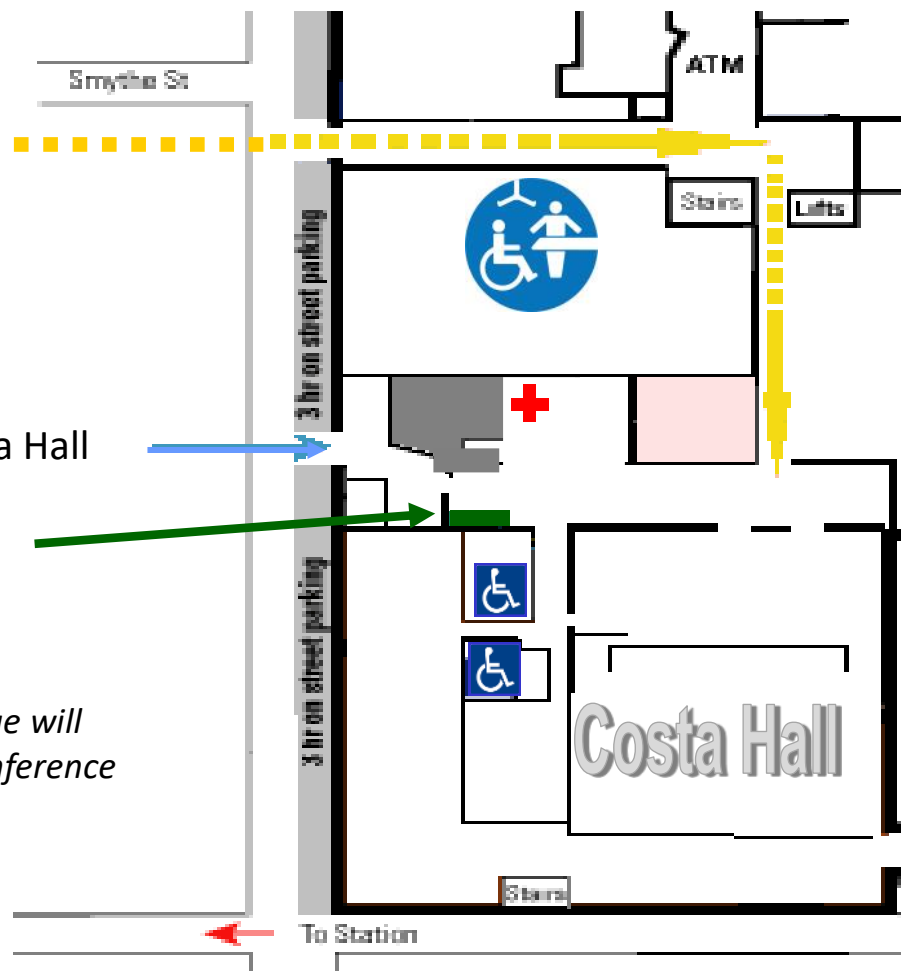
## Deakin University Waterfront Campus

Accessible Entry

Main Entry to Costa Hall

Registration Desk

A full map of the venue will be included in the Conference Program Booklet



## Conference Dinner Disco Venue

### The Pier & Wah Wah Gee Restaurant

Cunningham Pier, 10 Western Beach Foreshore Road, Geelong



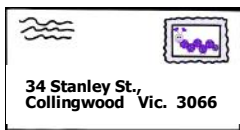
**Please note:** Parking on the pier is metered in daytime but we are unsure if it is in the evening, as changes are occurring. There is free parking available along Western Beach Road. You can **drop people off at the front** of the venue (The Pier Geelong) and then park your vehicle in a free parking area.



For more information, contact:



VALID (Victorian Advocacy League for Individuals with Disability Inc.)



### OFFICE CONTACTS

34 Stanley Street, Collingwood Vic 3066



Telephone: 03 9416 4003

*Overseas + 61 3 9416 4003*

Fax: 03 9416 0850



Website: [www.valid.org.au](http://www.valid.org.au)

### CONFERENCE CONTACTS



Mobile: 0475 698 884

Email: [havingasay@valid.org.au](mailto:havingasay@valid.org.au)



Conference website: <https://valid.org.au/valid-events/having-a-say-conference/>



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