

Aspect's Night at Google

Visual Story



What is a Visual Story?

- Visual stories are for **everyone!**
- It uses words and pictures to explain what might happen in a new place or situation.
- It can make it easier to understand what to expect, and can help things feel a bit more predictable.
- It is written in a clear way, so the information is easy to follow.



Everyone is welcome here

- You are welcome just as you are.
- You can take breaks, move around, and leave early if needed.
- Aspect staff are there and it's okay to ask them for help.
- There is a quiet room you can use at any time.
- There's no pressure to talk, socialise, or do anything you don't want to.
- You are allowed to feel however you feel. Excited, nervous, quiet, happy, unsure, it's all okay!



About this event

- This event is part of a series that celebrates Autistic people's strengths, interests and experiences.
- This year, we're talking about **technology**.
- The evening will be hosted by Rae Johnston, an award-winning technology journalist.
- Speakers from Aspect and Google will talk about how technology can help make Australia more autism-friendly.



Quick Find

Tap an icon to go to the start of that section



Getting There

Travel and
Parking



Arriving

Entry and
Registration



What's planned

Presentations and
Networking



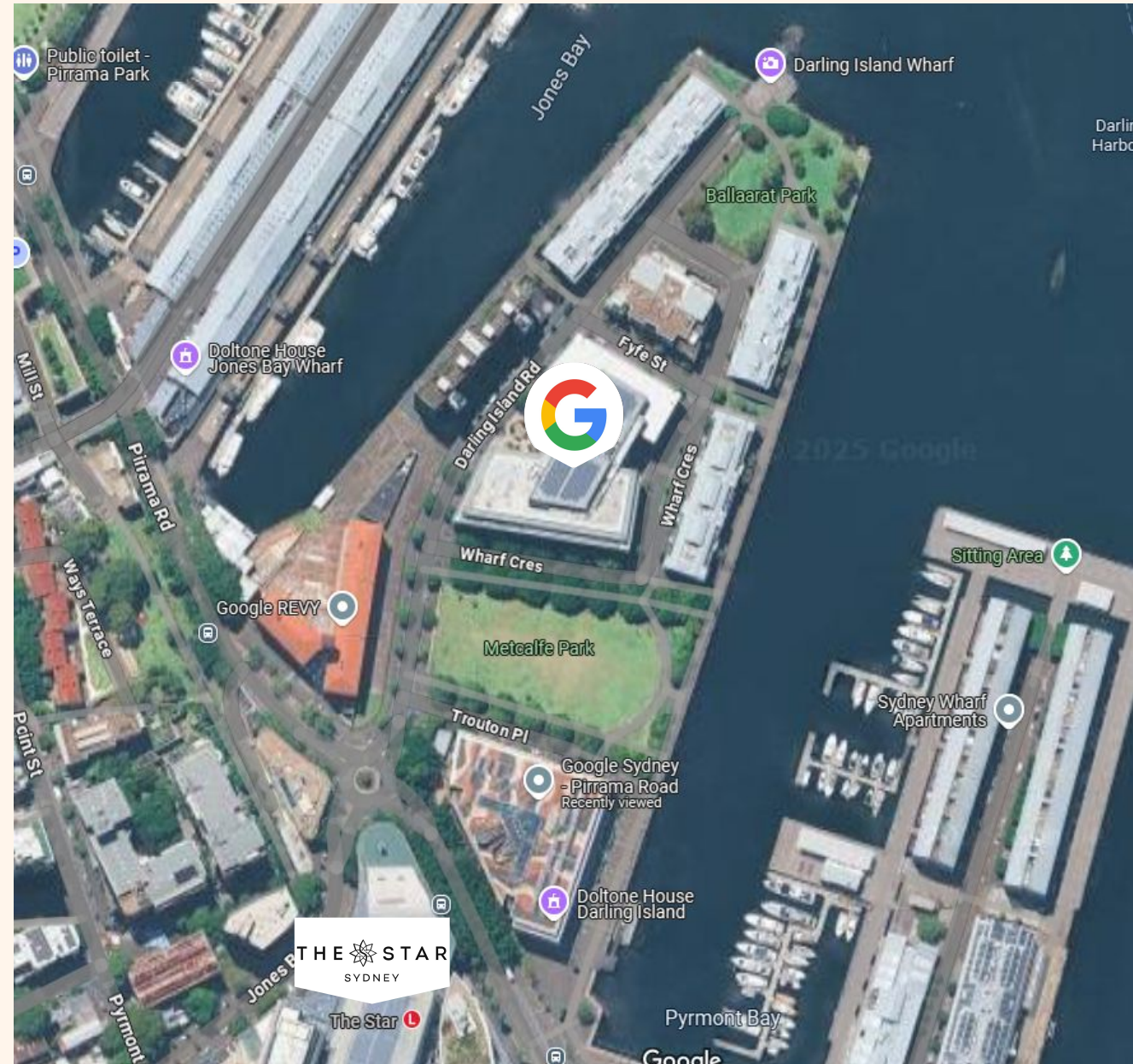
Things to know

What to Wear and
Sensory plans



Getting there

- **By bus**, routes 389 and 501 stop at Pirrama Rd opposite Pirrama Park, which is about a 1-minute walk from the building.
- **By light Rail** take the L1 Dulwich Hill Line and get off at The Star Light Rail Station. It's approximately a 6-minute walk to One Darling Island.
- **By ferry** The Pyrmont Bay Wharf is about a 12-minute walk away. Ferries F3, F4, and F10 go to this wharf.
- **Walking** from Town Hall Station, it's about a 20-minute walk across the Pyrmont Bridge to One Darling Island.
- **By car** there is some street parking available nearby. It is a 5 minute walk from paid parking is available at The Star Casino, 55 Pirrama Road, Pyrmont. [Click here for information on parking at The Star.](#)



[Click the map to get direction to Google](#)

About this place

- The address of Google's Sydney headquarters is [1 Darling Island in Pyrmont.](#)
- The building is on the traditional land of the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation, who have cared for this land and waterways for tens of thousands of years.
- This area was once part of a working shipyard and has a long connection to Sydney's maritime history.
- The current building was completed in 2006, and the front courtyard was added in 2012.



Things to know: What to Wear

At events like this one, some people choose to wear clothes they might not wear every day. They might take extra time to clean and iron their clothes to look nice. I can too if this makes me feel good!

Some things people wear are:

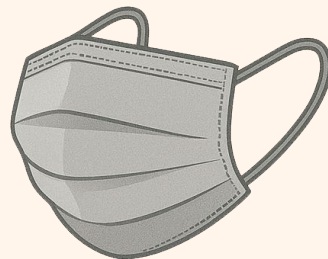
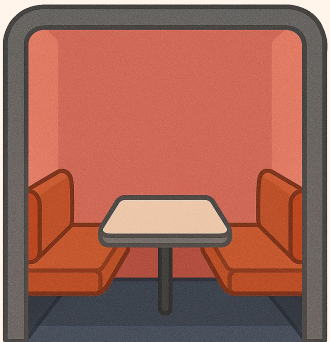
- Pants, skirt or dress
- Button up shirt or blouse
- clean shoes or high heels

People might **choose to wear any clothes** that:

- **Feel good** to wear
- Make them feel good when they wear them
- **Are special** to them



Things to know: Sensory



What to expect

Sounds, like microphones, music or videos playing through speakers, and people talking.



The **lighting** might feel bright. There are screens with moving images and video



It may feel **crowded** at the start and end of the event when people are talking and eating.



Some seats might feel different to **touch**. The airconditioning may be cold



Food and drinks may have **smells**, and some people may wear perfume.



What you could do

- Wear noise-cancelling headphones or earplugs
- Move to a booth or the quiet room
- Ask staff where it's quieter

- Wear sunglasses or a hat
- Sit facing away from screens
- Ask staff to guide you to a dimmer area
- Use the quiet room with soft lighting

- Sit at the edge of the room or near an exit
- Move to a booth or the quiet room
- Ask a staff member to help you find space
- It's okay to take a break

- Choose where you feel most comfortable
- Bring your own cover, weighted item, or comfort tool

- Move near the entrance or quiet room
- Wear a mask or bring something to smell



Going inside

- To enter the building, you'll use a revolving door, this type of door turns in a circle.
- When there is space, you can walk slowly into it and keep walking gently as the door moves.
- It's designed to be **safe** and easy to use.
- If you don't feel comfortable using the revolving door, that's okay.
- There is an accessible door to the **left**, and staff can help you find it if you'd prefer.

You'll see the Google logo next to the entrance – that's how you know you're in the right place.



Registration

- The registration desk will be **to the right** after entering through the revolving door.
- Before going into the main event room. Everyone will go to Aspect's registration desk and tell staff their **name**.
- This let's organisers know I have **arrived**; they will give me a **name badge**.
- You may be asked to show your **ID**.
- After getting a name badge, people can go into the room and get some **food** and a **drink**.
- Guests will be handed an information brochure and pin once registered.
- It's **okay** to not stay in the main room if it's overwhelming, the **quiet room** will be open
- Aspect staff will be located at the registration desk, and will have an Aspect branded name tag on.



Getting to the Quiet Room

The Quiet Room is in a quieter part of the building but there will be signs and staff to help.

- After registration, there is a large open room with lights, seating, and people.
- At the far end of the event space, there is a doorway on the right.
- Event staff will be nearby and can offer help or directions.
- Through the doorway is a quiet hallway.
- At the end of the hallway, the Quiet Room is in the door on the left.

The Quiet Room can be used at any time – staff will be nearby to help, and it's always okay to ask for directions.



Things to know: Quiet Room

The Quiet Room is a calm and quieter space.

- Inside, there will be: Places to sit and rest, sensory tools and an accessible toilet.
- It's okay to bring things into the Quiet Room that help — like a phone, headphones, a drink of water, or a bag.
- It's also okay to feel overwhelmed or have a meltdown. Aspect staff will be nearby and can offer help or support if needed.
- The Quiet Room isn't a place for chatting, but it's okay to make noises or talk to someone if it helps.
- When ready, it's helpful to leave the Quiet Room so someone else can use it if they need a quiet space.



6:00 PM – 6:45 PM

Networking

A social time where people may eat, drink, and talk to others.

- It will be busy but relaxed— move around, look at the information stands or find a quiet seat.
- Snacks and drinks will be available.
- Aspect staff can assist you with food or seating.

Socialising is optional — it's okay to just enjoy the time quietly, find a space to just watch, or use the quiet room until the speakers start.



Things to know: Networking

Inside the event space, there are **two stands** with friendly staff.

One stand is about **Autism Friendly spaces**. It shares ideas for making places more **comfortable and welcoming for Autistic people**.

The other stand is about **Education**. It shows how Aspect supports students through **autism-specific schools and a new Senior College**.

There will be some **technology to try out**, and it's okay to look, listen or ask questions.

People can:

- Say hello and have a chat
- Watch and explore quietly
- Ask staff for more information
- Take a break and come back later

Everyone is welcome to engage in their own way.



Food and Drinks

6:00PM - 6:45PM

- Wagyu beef charcoal small burger
- Asian chicken satay, sweet chilli sauce
- Cornmeal crusted cajun prawns with lemon myrtle & chili mayo
- Mushroom and gruyere tartlets (V)
- Veggie spring roll with plum sauce (VG)
- Pumpkin with potato rosti (VG, GF)
- Vegetable rice paper roll with house made dipping sauce (VG,GF)

8:30PM - 9:00PM

- Peking duck crepes with davidson plum hoisin sauce
- Assortment of premium sushi and maki roll
- Inari veggie maki (VG, GF)
- Petit-Fours St Germain (V)
- Triple chocolate brownie (V, GF)

V - Vegetarian

VG - Vegan

GF - Gluten Free



Things to know: Food and Drinks

- Light snacks and desserts will be available before and after the talks.
- People may stand while they talk, eat and drink with each other.
- Some people will eat and some others won't.
- There will be drinks with alcohol and drinks without.
- People can bring their own food or drinks, if they have dietary requirements.
- Some people choose to eat a meal beforehand, especially if they might get hungry later.
- To help keep things tidy, **please enjoy food and drinks in the area where they're provided**, as they can't be brought into the presentation room.



6:45 – 8:30 PM: Presentations

The night will be hosted by MC, Rae Johnston

Here's the order:

1. **Welcome and Introductions** – Rae Johnston, Uncle Michael West (Welcome to Country), Suan Yeo (Google) and Jacqui Borland
2. **Making Places Predictable with 3D Maps** – Tom Tutton, Emma Beardsley (Autism Friendly) & Lisa Herfert (Google)
3. **AI in Education** – Craig Smith (Positive Partnerships) in conversation with Rae Johnston
4. **Half-Time Guest Speaker** – Michael Theo (Actor, Podcast Host, Advocate)
5. **Aspect Schools** – Principal Joanne Tisdell and Aspect student, Jesse Gaitanis
6. **Closing Reflection** – Jacqui Borland
7. **Close** - Rae Johnston

Not sure what's next? Programs or screens may show the schedule. Staff can always help explain what's happening.

Need a break during talks? You can step out at any time. It's okay to return when you're ready.



Things to know: Presentations

- **Sit anywhere** — There are no assigned seats. Choose any place that feels comfortable to you.
- There will be a **pledge card and pen** on each seat.
- **Presenters will use microphones** — their voices will be heard through loudspeakers in the room.
- **Videos and sound** — Some presentations will include videos with music or sound.
- **Come and go anytime** — You can leave the room for a break and come back when you're ready. It's okay to step out for any reason.
- **Needing help** — Staff are nearby and happy to assist if you're unsure where to go or what's happening.



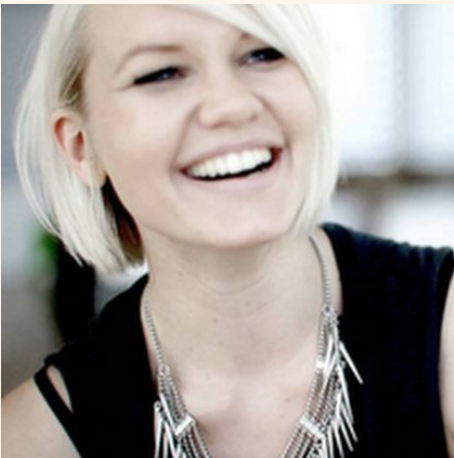
Master of Ceremonies (MC)



Rae Johnston

Born and raised on Darug & Gundungurra Country, Rae is a proud Wiradjuri woman and award-winning journalist. She hosts ABC's Download This Show, Sunday Mornings, and iHeartRadio's Weird Tech. Rae is a board member of the Telstra Foundation and Swinburne University, and has been a trailblazer in the tech and media space – previously as NITV's Science & Technology Editor and the first Indigenous editor of Junkee. She's also the host of several acclaimed podcasts and recipient of the Lighting The Way award for advocacy in the Australian games industry.

Speakers



Lisa Herfert

Partnerships Manager, Google Maps

Lisa is a Partnerships Manager at Google Maps for Australia and New Zealand. She works with a diverse range of partners to support and enhance the platform's features, including accessibility. With her background in digital marketing and a passion for impactful collaborations, Lisa is excited to share how Google Maps is working to create a more accessible experience for all users.



Speakers



Dr Tom Tutton

Executive Manager, Aspect Practice

Tom trained as a Clinical Psychologist in the UK and has worked for Aspect for 16 years supporting Autistic people in challenging situations in schools, family homes and communities through direct service, training, writing and research. Tom is passionate about working in partnership with Autistic people to deliver evidence-based supports that develop inclusive environments and communities that work for everyone.



Emma Beardsley (née Gallagher)

Senior Autistic Consultant, Aspect

Emma is a proud Autistic woman who works as a consultant, advocate and researcher with Aspect's Autism Friendly team. As an Autistic researcher and advocate, Emma provides valued insight and input into a wide range of Aspect projects at all stages. Emma is also a founding member of the Aspect Think Tank, a remunerated group of adults on the autism spectrum who provide advice for Aspect on day-to-day autism practice. Emma is a keen advocate for the rights and needs of Autistic people through sharing her personal journey on the autism spectrum and her expertise in providing support for children of all abilities. Emma holds a Bachelor of Early Childhood Education and Care.



Speakers



Craig Smith

Positive Partnerships Manager, Technology and Innovation

Craig Smith is an educator, author, and international speaker passionate about building inclusive communities. With over 20 years in autism and neurodivergent education, he is Manager of Technology and Innovation at Positive Partnerships. Craig has collaborated with inclusive educators globally - with the United Nations in China, education ministries in Dubai and Singapore, and schools across South Africa, New Zealand, and Australia. An Apple Distinguished Educator and TEDx speaker, he explores the role of AI in supporting neurodivergent minds. His platform, The Universal Sandpit, shares free inclusive AI tools with over 10,000 monthly visitors.



Michael Theo

Actor, Podcast Host, Advocate

Michael Theo is an Autistic actor, podcast host, and advocate best known for his breakout role on Love on the Spectrum, where his authenticity and warmth captured hearts around the world. Michael's recent lead performance in the comedy-drama Austin earned widespread acclaim, adding to his growing list of creative achievements. Today, he works at Aspect as an Autistic Consultant, drawing on lived experience to support inclusion and awareness. Diagnosed as a young adult, Michael describes the moment as life-changing, giving him clarity and pride in his identity: "Being Autistic is nothing to be ashamed of. It's who I am." Passionate about storytelling, Michael is committed to advancing authentic representation of Autistic people on screen and behind the scenes.



Speakers



Joanne Tisdell

Principal, Aspect South East Sydney School

Prior to joining Aspect as a class teacher, Joanne taught in both specialist and mainstream primary settings. She holds a Bachelor of Education (with Distinction in Special Education) and a Master of Special Education from Sydney University. Passionate about social skills and communication, Joanne has trained in several evidence-informed programs and embedded them into her teaching. She has lectured at Sydney University and is committed to inclusive education. Joanne now proudly leads Aspect South East Sydney School, one of NSW's largest special schools, working closely with Sydney Catholic Schools to support autistic students.



Jessie Gaitanis

Student, Aspect South East Sydney School

Jesse Gaitanis is a Stage 6 student at Aspect South East Sydney School, Jesse has also been a Student Representative Council member for the school. He enjoys spending time with friends, whether that's in person or online.



Things to know: Donations

At the event, there is an option to **fill out a donation pledge card**.

This means someone can choose to give money to support Aspect's work — now or later.

The card includes **different ways to donate**, such as supporting Autism Friendly projects, schools, and education.

Filling out the card is **completely optional**.

People can:

- Fill it out on the night
- Take it home to think about
- Choose not to fill it out

Anyone who does fill out a card may be **contacted later by Aspect** to talk more about how they'd like to help.

All donations go toward making Australia more **Autism Friendly**.



Be part of the change. Your support matters.



Your commitment today helps create life-changing opportunities for Autistic individuals. Choose how you'd like to make a difference, and we'll be in touch to discuss the next steps.

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO SUPPORT?	
<input type="checkbox"/>	Bridge the digital divide Fund iPads, laptops, and assistive tech to Aspect School students who need them most – equip a classroom or an entire school.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Champion inclusion – Autism-friendly workplaces Explore with our Autistic consultants how your workplace can become more inclusive – from designing welcoming environments to future employment programmes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Founders Walkway brick sponsorship Leave a legacy at our new Senior College at South East Sydney. Engrave your name or message on a brick in our Founders Walkway. (\$1,000 – \$3,000 per brick).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Build the future – Support the Senior College Fund an innovative, autism-specific learning environment. From naming a classroom (\$100,000) to an entire learning wing (\$500,000), at our new South East Sydney campus.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Contribute to the Aspect Impact Fund Support a student every year, forever. Your contribution is invested – earnings fund scholarships in perpetuity. e.g. \$100,000 could fund one school scholarship annually.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other ways to support I have an idea and would like to do something special. Can we chat?
<input type="checkbox"/>	One-off gift I would love to give a one-off donation of; _____

YOUR DETAILS

Please remember to hand this card to an Aspect staff member tonight or drop it off on your way out.

Name: _____ Email: _____
Company (if applicable): _____ Phone: _____

Aspect's Night at Google aspect.org.au

Toilets

- There are toilets in the event space room after registration and in the Quiet room.
- I can **follow the signs** to find the **toilet** that I need:
 - Female
 - Male
 - Accessible and/or all gender
- All **toilets** have **paper towels** to dry your hands.
- The **quiet room toilet** has a **hand dryer** but it will be turned **off**.

