

Autscope Events Policy

Autscope runs events in accordance with the objectives laid out in the constitution

Our policy is:

1. That all events follow our ethos
2. To publicise the existence of this policy
3. Responsibility
4. Monitoring and learning

I. Autscope's ethos

The purpose of Autscope events is to create autistic space. We expect tolerance, respect for autistic people and an open mind.

In order for an event to be considered an Autscope event, Event Managers are expected to organise the event so it follows these principles:

- A. It is **autistic-led**: autistic people have the majority control of organising the event, but don't have to do all the practicalities themselves.
- B. **Autistic needs** are accommodated and prioritised
- C. **Autistic-orientated environment and content**: The environment and content of the events are centred around autistic people's needs, interests and sensitivities
- D. **Autistic social space**: The event provides opportunities for autistic people to be themselves in the company of other autistic people, without judgement or scrutiny.
- E. **Freedom of choice and self-management**: Assume competence of autistic people to manage their own needs.
- F. **Acceptance and tolerance**: Autscope welcomes everyone regardless of their neurotype or any other characteristic.

Autistic-led

- Understanding that most/all organisers are also neurodivergent and have needs that need to be accommodated too
- Organising of the event needs to take into account the needs of autistic organisers. It is not acceptable to exclude people from organising based on having needs when they can be included with reasonable adjustments

Autistic needs

- Autistic needs are accommodated and prioritised
- When needs are in conflict, autistic needs take priority
- Venue staff will be educated about autism and the ways Autscope works, but perfection is not expected (see also 'Freedom of choice and self management - competence')
- Nobody is special

Autistic environment and content

- Autistic behaviour (e.g. stimming) is accepted and tolerated
- We do not have behaviour contracts
- We do not accept presentations about curing or eliminating autistic people
- Autistic people are free to be themselves
- We don't allow talks about cures, although autistic people who would rather not be autistic are welcome.
- We will make accommodations for social differences, communication differences and sensory processing
- We provide support for common autistic needs, e.g. transport, information

Autistic social space

- Autistic social space provides opportunities to be with other autistic people
- It is not talking about autism necessarily
- Be honest with each other and don't just give hints at things
- Not putting people on the spot, demanding answers, or requiring them to speak.
- When someone does something wrong, be forgiving and have a short memory for misdeeds.
- Social opportunities are available and adjusted for autistic needs.
- We have control over journalists and researchers

Freedom of choice and self-management

- Assumes competence.
- People can take care of their own needs, or bring a carer to help them
- We don't provide carers, but we facilitate their access to the extent we are able
- People who can't keep themselves safe or take care of their own needs are encouraged to bring a carer
- It isn't a 'safe space'.
- Freedom to choose activities and company
- No one is excluded from any activity as long as they are respectful of the topic and the people there.
- Activities may be provided in order to give structure, but no one is required to attend them.
- Conversely, no activities are exclusive to any specific group or characteristic, e.g. parents, a specific gender or occupation.
- Venue staff will be educated about autism, but their understanding will not be complete and participants are expected to be understanding of the limitations of staff familiarity with autism and limitations of organisers' ability to control this.

Acceptance and tolerance

- People without a diagnosis, non-autistic people, and people who are different in other ways (and may prefer autistic company) are all welcome, as long as they respect autistic space
- Everyone is accepted and tolerated regardless of personal characteristics or beliefs
- Not all behaviour is tolerate
- No hate speech (or actions)
- Some people celebrate their autism, others don't like it, but others may not enjoy being autistic and they are welcome too
- Programme contributions will be considered from anyone regardless of formal qualifications, but we still have standards for quality

- We don't do 'celebrities'. Even those who may be well known in the community or in society more widely are just participants like everyone else
- Diversity is a good thing
- Children are part of our community
- We accept different types and expression of autism, including those who may be more colourful or noisy
- No one should make anyone else feel like they don't belong
- An understanding that autistic people often have co-occurring mental health conditions, learning disabilities, physical health condition
- Religion, ethnicity, gender, etc. are all included on an equal basis
- Respect for privacy and that some people may be uncomfortable with photographs or with being 'out' about being autistic. Keeping real names private if they want that
- Everyone present has an investment in being at the event. Events that aren't free for everyone always have a minimum cost, even for people who get financial aid (discounts or bursaries) from Autscope. (External sources could fully fund them.)
- No individual or group is 'more special' or more important than any other.

2. To publicise the existence of this policy

This policy is available on our website

3. Responsibility

Responsibility for this policy lies with the board of directors

4. Monitoring and Learning

This policy will be reviewed regularly

This policy was adopted by the board on 25/03/2023