



# Deafblind International Dbl

COMMUNICATION NETWORK

## Deafblind International Communication Network webinar

The Deafblind International Communication Network is delighted to host a webinar on

**Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026.**

In this webinar, we have a team of guest speakers, A/Prof. Louisa Willoughby from Australia, and Mr. Jonathan Reid and Ms. Jacky Smith from Scotland. Our guest speakers have explored humour among both people with acquired and congenital deafblindness. The team will introduce why humour is important for cognition and relationship building before exploring examples of humorous interactions. These lead into a discussion of implications for practitioners and how and why we might foster humour in interactions with people with deafblindness.

The webinar series is aimed at **family members** of children and adults who were born with deafblindness or those with limited language (speech or sign) who wish to develop their own communication skills and the skills of their deafblind family members. Professionals are welcome to join bearing in mind the shared audience.

There will be two webinars on the same topic run in different time zones, participants can choose the time zone from their region or the best time that suits their schedule. We are working with local partners to provide different language interpretation; we would be keen to hear from members about their language needs and will provide more information on this when available.

During the webinar it is possible to ask questions. Registrations are essential.

All times are listed in presenter and panellists' local times. To support you to work out the time of the webinar that suits your schedule we advise you to [check your local time zone](#)

## Webinar 7: Humour in deafblind interactions

Humour is a central way that humans build relationships with each other. But navigating humorous interactions can also be challenging without access to the visual and auditory cues that speakers typically use to mark an utterance as humorous. This presentation brings together researchers who have explored humour among both signing deafblind adults and support staff and congenital deafblind clients. We begin by introducing why humour is important for cognition and relationship building before exploring examples of humorous interactions in our data. These lead into a discussion of implications for practitioners and how and why we might foster humour in interactions with clients.

### **Session 1: Australia / Asia focused session – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

Time: Coordinated Universal Time: 09.00am-10.30am (+0 UTC)  
Australian Eastern Standard Time: 7.00pm-8.30pm AEDT (+10 UTC)  
British Summer time: 10.00-11.30am (+1 UTC)  
Central European Summer Time: 11.00am-12.30pm (+2 UTC)  
Indian Standard Time: 1.30pm-3.00pm (+5.5 UTC)

Presenter: A/Prof Louisa Willoughby, Mr. Jonathan Reid and Ms. Jacky Smith

Facilitators: Dr. Meredith Prain and Mr. Steve Rose, Australia

Register in advance for this webinar: [https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Pj3t\\_-0VQEqpityMFAp5sg](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/Pj3t_-0VQEqpityMFAp5sg)

### **Session 2: Africa / Americas / Europe focused session – Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

Time: Coordinated Universal Time: 1.00pm-2.30pm (+0 UTC)  
Australian Eastern Standard Time: 11.00pm-12.30am (+10 UTC)  
British Summer time: 2.00pm-3.30pm (+1 UTC)  
Central European Summer Time: 3.00pm-4.30pm (+2 UTC)  
East Africa Time: 4.00pm-5.30pm (+3 UTC)  
Eastern Daylight Time: 9.00am-10.30am (-4 UTC)  
Pacific Daylight Time: 6.00am-7.30 am (-7 UTC)

Presenter: A/Prof. Louisa Willoughby, Mr. Jonathan Reid and Mr. Jacky Smith

Facilitators: Prof. Saskia Damen, the Netherlands and Ms. Helle Buelund Selling, Denmark

Register in advance for this webinar: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/uli7CbHSSlyg1-Wi6UFIUg>

## About the speakers

### **A/Prof Lousia Willoughby**

A/Prof Louisa Willoughby is an applied linguist at Monash University. For the last 15 years she has conducted research on deafblind signing and the teaching of Auslan. She is currently an Australian Research Council Industry Fellow with Melbourne Polytechnic and the Victorian Deaf Education Institute, looking at how best to support Auslan teachers who work in adult education contexts. In addition to her sign language work, she also researches on the teaching and use of migrant languages in Australian society and on communication between people who speak different languages.

### **Ms. Jacky Smith MSc.**

Jacky lives and works in Scotland and has supported people who are congenitally deafblind since 1995, working as a Support Worker, Service Manager, Inclusive Communication Practitioner and researcher. Since 2012 she has focused on inclusive communication, personal outcomes and quality service provision, and how those things fit together to support people to live the life they want.

She is currently studying for a PhD at Birmingham City University in England and is interested in how we find out what congenitally deafblind individuals want from their social care services, and how we judge the quality of the service.

### **Mr. Jonathan Reid MSc.**

Jonathan is a dedicated and recognised professional in the field of deafblindness with over 25 years of experience spanning disability rights, education, research, cognition, assessment, identity, and tactile communication. Committed to fostering inclusive, co-created understanding, he brings innovative methodologies to his work.

Jonathan holds an MSc in Deafblind Education from the University of Groningen, graduating with a thesis on the co-construction of psychological I-positions in the field.

He has coordinated The Nordic Cognition Network in Relation to Congenital Deafblindness, and led collaborative research across the Nordic region, frequently publishing and presenting internationally on communication, cognition, identity, and assessment. His work includes advancing communication strategies, refining assessment tools, shaping policy and advocating for the rights of individuals with deafblindness.

Jonathan has coordinated Scotland's See Hear Strategy, developed and managed the Scottish Sensory Hub at the Health and Social Care Alliance Scotland. He worked for Deafblind Scotland and was heavily involved in calling for the adoption of the Nordic definition of Deafblindness in Scottish Law. He now works as Head of Research and Education for Deafblind UK.