

Amaze Lived Experience Network

Terms of Reference

OCTOBER 2025

Amaze is committed to ensuring that Autistic people and their families are meaningfully included in the design, development, and evaluation of policies, programs, and communications that impact their lives.

The Amaze Lived Experience Network will provide a structured, transparent, and respectful channel for Autistic people and their parents/carers to contribute to key initiatives. Through this program, Amaze aims to build stronger, ongoing partnerships with the community it serves, and ensures that lived experience remains central to our work.

1. Purpose and Objectives	The purpose of the Amaze Lived Experience Network is to reinforce the principle of “nothing about us, without us,” by meaningfully embedding the voices of Autistic people and their families in our work. The program aims to ensure that Autistic and autism communities are actively engaged in suitable participation opportunities where appropriate. Objectives of the Amaze Lived Experience Network are to: • Provide insight and lived experience perspectives across relevant projects and initiatives. • Support the identification of systemic and service gaps affecting Autistic people and their families. • Validate resources and materials to ensure they reflect lived experience and meet the needs of their primary audiences. • Contribute to media and communications activities, where appropriate. • Participate in consultation, co-design, and policy development opportunities.
2. Scope	The Amaze Lived Experience Network provides a mechanism for engaging Autistic people and/or their carers in project-based activities. It facilitates the connection of community members with opportunities to share their lived experience. Opportunities may include (but are not limited to); government submissions, focus groups, media engagements, project co-design and policy consultation.
3. Membership	Membership will include a mix of Autistic adults and parents/carers of Autistic people.

	Diversity in membership will be prioritised across factors such as age, gender and location. Membership is voluntary and unpaid; however, project-specific activities may offer remuneration. Members can choose whether to participate in any given opportunity; participation is not mandatory.
4. Roles and responsibilities	Members contribute insights and feedback based on their lived experience. Members are expected to engage respectfully and constructively with Amaze staff.
5. Engagement and Participation	Opportunities to contribute lived experience may include (but are not limited to); government submissions, focus groups, media engagements, project co-design and policy consultation. Participation in opportunities is flexible and not compulsory. Members may be contacted based on self-identified personal details or areas of interest and experience as collected during the expression of interest submission. Expressing an interest in contributing lived experience does not guarantee participation. Amaze reserves the right to apply further selection criteria beyond the initial criteria advertised to ensure the suitability of candidates selected.
6. Selection process	Membership will be determined via an Expression of Interest (EOI) process. Selection will be based on: • Lived experience as an Autistic person or parent/carer of an Autistic person. • Representation across diverse demographics and experiences. • Commitment to respectful and inclusive engagement. Data from the EOI process will be stored securely as per the Amaze Privacy Policy and used only for selection and engagement purposes.
7. Meetings	The network will not convene group meetings. Instead, engagement will occur through targeted participation opportunities such as (but not limited to) surveys, interviews, co-design workshops, or media requests.
8. Confidentiality and Privacy	All information shared with or by members must remain confidential unless explicitly stated otherwise.

	Personal information will be managed in accordance with relevant data protection legislation (Privacy & Data Protection Act 2014).
9. Conduct	Members agree to: • Respect the diverse views, experiences, and identities of other members. • Communicate constructively and respectfully. • Uphold the values of inclusion, equity, and lived experience leadership.
10. Termination of membership	Members can withdraw at any time by notifying Amaze via email (community@amaze.org.au). Removal from the program mailing list will occur within 5 business days. Amaze reserves the right to remove members who breach conduct expectations or confidentiality requirements.
11. Use of the network	Access to the network and distribution of opportunities will be managed by designated Amaze staff. Members will receive only those opportunities relevant to their self-identified experiences and areas of interest.
12. Media Engagement	Any Network member who engages with media does so in a personal capacity only and does not speak on behalf of Amaze.
13. Reporting and Decision-Making	The Amaze Lived Experience Network is not a formal decision-making body and does not hold governance responsibilities, voting powers or accountabilities.
Approval date: Review date:	22 October 2025 October 2026 (12 months from date approved)