

Autism Voices

in person, in words, in the arts

Bringing to life the unheard voices of Autism

'Before I was diagnosed with Asperger's, I knew little about autism spectrum conditions. I'd never even seen Rain Man.

I had much to learn, since the syndrome expresses itself very differently from person to person. I'd always supposed myself to be just like everybody else, which made the difficulties in my life inexplicable. Knowing I had Asperger's meant I could begin to make sense of them. It was an amazing relief.

However, I also realised that Asperger's was why social occasions were so difficult for me and most of all it was what makes finding work so difficult. Not working feeds my anxiety, since without work I lack the status and security it brings.'

Alexander, 46

Autism Voices is an agency managing a 'directory' of people who wish to be a voice in raising awareness of issues faced daily by people living with Autism Spectrum Conditions (ASC). These 'Voices' may personally have a diagnosis of ASC or be carers or family members. They are willing to feed into public events and tell of their experiences and how their life is challenged by Autism, thus raising public awareness of the issues faced by people on the spectrum.

Managed by:



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Scottish Charity No: SC041508 Company No: SC366262



Ruth Mutch
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In return for a fee paid by the organisation booking them, 'Voices' are 'heard'

- as public speakers
- as creative writers (in print or online) or
- via the visual arts, e.g. as an artist, videographer/filmmaker, illustrator or actor

Autism Voices is managed by IWORK4ME who will recruit interested parties, ensuring skills are both marketable and delivered in an appropriate manner.

IWORK4ME is well placed to manage Autism Voices, thanks to its staff team and established cohort of volunteer mentors trained in issues facing people with ASC, and its well-established position in the network of Autism service delivery agencies. Mentors will assist 'Voices' with any anxieties they may have over practical issues such as travel arrangements and venue liaison, as well as helping to secure appropriate contracts with interested organisations and thereafter assist 'Voices' with invoicing.

Membership of the Agency will form the basis of a self-employment microenterprise for each 'Voice' and will enable them to access the support required to move towards financial independence and increased self-esteem.

Through a variety of media and the arts, 'Voices' will have the opportunity to reach a wide audience. A robust marketing strategy has been designed by IWORK4ME to reach press and media, targeted community groups, the business community and educationalists. Information relating to the Agency and to the individual 'Voices' will appear on the agency website which will come under umbrella of IWORK4ME. This directory will include a brief profile and summary of each 'Voice's' areas of expertise.

By operating as the first point of contact for organisations seeking to employ the services of a 'Voice', IWORK4ME will 'filter' requests thus removing the anxiety for 'Voices' around having to take calls/emails directly and make immediate decisions. IWORK4ME will discuss with organisations their particular requirements and then contact appropriate 'Voices' via email, to put forward proposals. Once agreement is reached with a 'Voice' on a contract, IWORK4ME will further liaise with the organisation making the request to finalise terms.

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