



Group Relations Working Conference  
Identity, Gender, Authority and Community at Work

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25 - 29 November 2019

Melbourne, Australia



*"Energising and illuminating. I felt engaged and keen to learn more about my relationship with authority and the roles I take in groups." Diana Renner*

## About the Conference

This conference offers the opportunity for conference members to learn about the dynamics of identity, gender and authority in the workplace; and how these enhance or detract from an integrated community. As a working conference, members and staff engage in group activities and learn from their experiences, rather than passively listen to speeches and papers.

To this end, the five-day conference is constituted as a temporary learning organisation in real time, with an organisational management staff focused in the here-and-now on supporting members in their learning. Various group settings allow members to explore small, large, intergroup and institutional dynamics. The temporary organisation works as a whole with differentiated components.

This is a working conference where you decide how you wish to engage as the temporary organisation unfolds.



There are A and B sub-conferences for those new to group relations and those with previous experience.

## What might be Learned?

Members have the opportunity to learn about the influence of identity and gender on how authority is taken up and experienced, and how leadership is exercised in groups and organisations. This is done through the here-and-now accelerated learning experience of working in a variety of groups on the task of the conference (see below). You can examine and study:

- How you and others take up roles both consciously and unwittingly;
- How you respond to authority and leadership, how you take them up and how others respond to you as you do so;
- Which identity groups you are drawn to and how others identify you;
- Deep collective assumptions about gender and identity;
- Your emotions while doing a task and how they affect your performance;
- How we all interpret the social dynamics around us in different ways;
- The ways in which organisations serve community with multiple identities, and how community lives in organisations.

The conference has a basic purpose to extend learning and has a connected primary task. These underpin and direct mutual work in the five days spent together.

## Conference Purpose

The conference purpose is to extend learning about how identity, gender and community operate in and affect authority and leadership in the workplace.

## Conference Primary Task

The primary task of the conference is to study the dynamics of identity, gender, community, leadership and authority as they occur in the conference organisation.



## Basic Concepts

**Authority** has many meanings but a central meaning here is: the legitimate power to make decisions on behalf of others.

**The study of group dynamics** is best done through experience, understanding the experience of others and reflection on experience. In order to study dynamics, one has to both be part of the action/thinking and feeling, as well as observing and studying one's place in the wider group and the dynamics of the group and organisation as a whole.

**Unconscious dynamics** occur at a **group level**. In the conference we are interested primarily in supporting an understanding of the group level dynamics. Conscious and unconscious group dynamics include but are not restricted to the formation and progress of the group(s); the ways in which roles emerge and are taken up by members; how identity, gender and authority are expressed and managed in the group; how community is built alongside structures such as hierarchy, leadership, relatedness, relationships and how these are affected by emotional dynamics. In addition to studying the group dynamics, members are able to apply their learning to themselves at an individual level.

**The conference as a temporary learning organisation** has its own purpose, task and structure. We come together – members and staff – in an organised form, albeit temporarily for 5 days. The structure has a management group (the staff), a membership group (the participants) and resources provided to support learning. The resources include the boundaries of time (timing of sessions), place/territories of sessions (i.e. the rooms provided) and the tasks of the different group sessions. Another important resource is the roles each of us take up throughout the conference. The conference structure and resources, as well as providing an organisation for learning to occur, are also available for study.

## Conference Design

The conference is designed in the mode of traditional group relations conferences held at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations (London) since 1957. However, themes and conference events have evolved since 1957 in line with current contexts.

## Sub Conferences

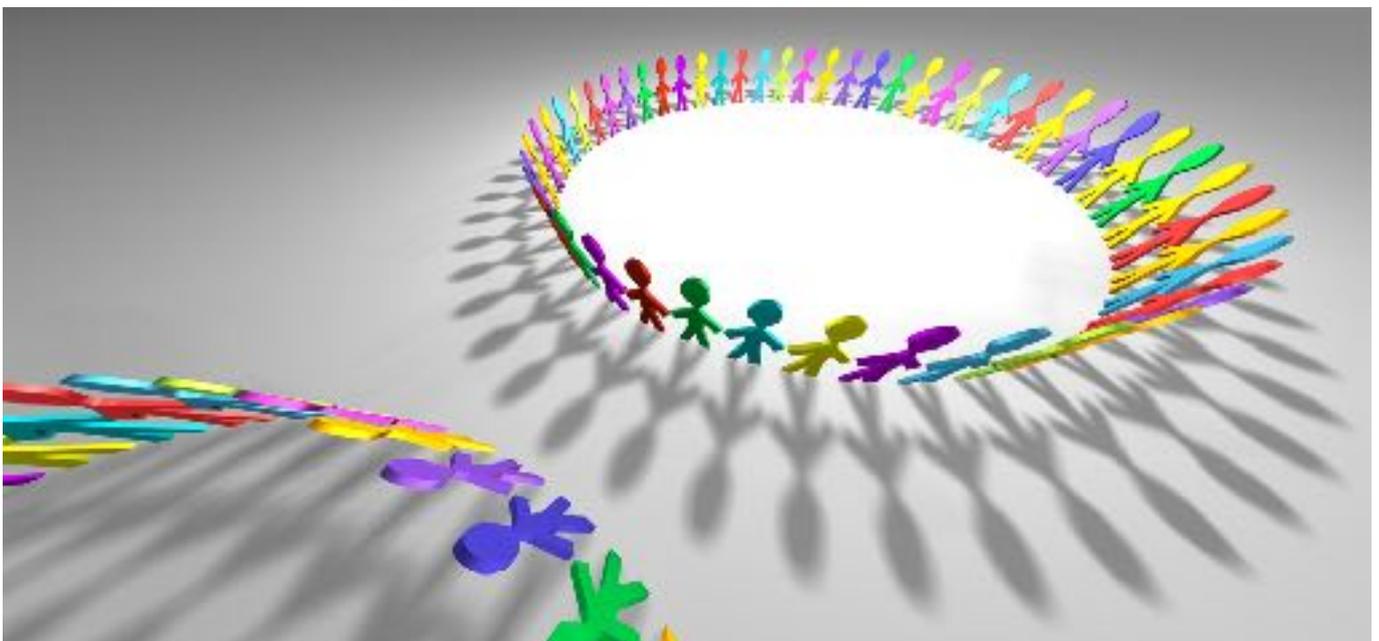
The NIODA 2019 conference offers two sub-conferences. Membership of the sub conferences work independently in some events but in a combined way in other events.

**Sub conference A** is for members who have no previous experience of group relations conferences. Members have their own small groups and their own review and application groups.

**Sub conference B** is for those who have had previous group relations experience and allows for an extension and deepening of their experience. Each sub conference has its own small study groups, and review and application groups.

## Conference Events

The staff as management have agreed a series of events in a conference timetable to support the work of the conference. These include small group dynamics; large group dynamics; intergroup and institutional dynamics; review and application; plenaries, social dreaming and a community event. The tasks of each of the groups within these events are set within the overall conference primary task: **to study the dynamics of identity, gender, community, leadership and authority as they occur in the conference organisation.** More detail of each event will be given at the conference although intending registrants are welcome to contact the Conference Director or the Director of Administration should they have queries.



## Membership: Who is the Conference for?

The conference is for all those interested in understanding more about group and organisational dynamics. This includes managers, organisational consultants, researchers, scholars, board members, workers, professionals, students and those between positions.

This conference is open to members who have had no previous experience of group relations conferences and to those who have had previous experience and wish to deepen their learning. Those without previous experience should register as A conference members and those who have had previous experience may register as either A or B conference members. The events described above for A and B conference membership are shared between the two membership groups in some instances and separate in others.



## Registration

Apply and register online at [www.nioda.org.au](http://www.nioda.org.au).

A tax invoice/receipt will be issued following successful registration.

Any registration enquiries should be sent to Sally Mussared, NIODA GRC  
[sally.mussared@nioda.org.au](mailto:sally.mussared@nioda.org.au)

## Dates

Monday 25th to Friday 29th November 2019  
(Registration 9am Monday, departure 5pm Friday)

## Venue & Accommodation

**St Hildas College**, 19-25 College Crescent, Carlton, Victoria

Accommodation is available for those wishing to be in residence. While it is not obligatory to stay on-site during the conference, there are many advantages in doing so for participants' learning. For example, the opportunity to immerse yourself completely in the learning experience without the distraction of back home relationships and obligations. We strongly recommend you stay on-site if you are able to do so.

## Fees

Registration includes participation in the conference, lunch, morning and afternoon tea each day and dinner on the Wednesday evening. Accommodation is an additional cost. All fees are inclusive of GST. Credit card payments include a 1.75% charge.

Early Bird fees paid by June 20th	\$2,400 AUD
GRA Associate and NIODA board, committee & staff members	\$2,400 AUD
<b>Full Fee paid by November 15th</b>	<b>\$2,800 AUD</b>
Full fee for two or more members of the same organisation	\$2,500 AUD each

## Accommodation

This is in addition to the conference registration fee and includes linen and a continental breakfast.

- \$80 per night for a king single bed room with shared communal bathroom (+ GST)
- \$95 per night for a king single bed room with shared (between two) ensuite (+ GST)
- \$125 per night for a king single bed room with private ensuite (+ GST)

Other accommodation is also available at the Carlton Vibe Hotel, Royal Parade Parkville.

## Discounts

Please contact the conference director: [susan.long@nioda.org.au](mailto:susan.long@nioda.org.au) for information about partial bursaries for those unable to meet the full amount.

## Cancellation Policy

Cancellations before 11 August 2019, 100% refund (less \$100 booking fee). Before 20 October 50% refund. After 20 October, sorry no refund.



## Conference Staff

The Director/Director of Sub-conference A; the Associate Director/Director of Administration; and the Director of Sub-conference B constitute the directorate.

Conference Director & Director of Sub Conference A

**Susan Long** (*PhD*) Director of Research and Scholarship NIODA; Visiting professor EMCCC, INSEAD, Singapore; Distinguished Member ISPSO; Member GRA, Australia.

Director of Administration & Associate Director

**Leslie Brissett** (*JP, PhD, MSc, BSc*) Group Relations Programme Director, Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London; Magistrate; FE Governor; ISSAC Member, BPC, U.K.

Director of Sub Conference B

**Nuala Dent** (*M App Sci (OrgDyn)*) Academic staff and principal consultant, NIODA, Melbourne; Registered Analytic-Network Coach; Member ISPSO; Member GRA, Australia.

Pre-Conference and Conference Associate Administrator

**Sally Mussared** (*BA*) Board Secretary & Office Manager, NIODA Melbourne.



## Consultant Staff

Will be drawn from the following list:

**Leslie Brissett** (*JP, PhD, MSc, BSc*) Group Relations Programme Director, Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, London; Magistrate; FE Governor; ISSAC Member, BPC, U.K.

**Nuala Dent** (*M App Sci (OrgDyn)*) Academic staff and principal consultant, NIODA, Melbourne; Registered Analytic-Network Coach; Member ISPSO; Member GRA, Australia.

**Caroline Farmer** (*M App Sci (OrgDyn)*) B.A. Vis Arts; consultant; academic, NIODA; Member ISPSO; GRA.

**Ayin Jambulingam** (*MA Psychoanalytic Org. Consultation, MBA*) Founder and principal consultant of Glia Leadership, Kuala Lumpur; member Soc. for Org. learning (Singapore)

**Susan Long** (*PhD*) Director of Research and Scholarship NIODA; Visiting professor EMCCC, INSEAD, Singapore; Distinguished Member ISPSO; Member GRA, Australia.

**Charles Potter** (*M App Sci (OrgDyn)*) Director, The Contemplary, Centre for Contemplative Practice, Melbourne.

**James Yorston** (*BEng, BEcon, PG Dip, Applied Finance & Investment*) General Manager, Learning, Executive Education Melbourne Business School, University of Melbourne.

## Conference Sponsor

National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia Ltd (NIODA)

NIODA is a not-for-profit association whose primary purpose is delivering education for those specifically interested in understanding, applying and developing systems psychodynamic approaches to the improvement of work organisations.

The NIODA Academy offers a three-year, part-time Master of Leadership and Management (Organisation Dynamics) program and various workshops, including 'Insightful Leadership: a role analysis approach' workshop.

NIODA Consulting offers system psychodynamic-oriented consultancy to organisations, and NIODA Research conducts organisational research and an annual symposium.

*"There is really nothing like participating in a group relations conference to build awareness of how you perceive yourself, how you make your way in the world and what you might like to do differently. Group relations conferences are condensed learning environments where, with curiosity, humility and fortitude, you can grow deeply and make lasting changes to your life." Kristina Karlsson*



National Institute of Organisation Dynamics Australia Ltd (NIODA)

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