Human library workshops

School and workplace human library workshops are run like a ‘speed dating’ forum, with groups of 4-6 people ‘reading’ a ‘book’ for 8-12 minutes then moving on to another ‘book’. Short introduction and debrief sessions ensure that participants have an opportunity to discuss the links between stereotyping and discrimination.

Librarians supervise all workshops and reading is based on mutual respect: all ‘books’ must be returned in the same condition in which they were borrowed.

COST

Session costs quoted are for 90 minutes with 6 ‘books’ (25 adults or 30 students). Other group sizes and durations can be negotiated. Discounts are available for multiple workshops.

Workplaces, conferences & public events

Member: $1,500 ($1,650 including GST)
Non-member: $1,650 ($1,815 including GST)

Schools & community groups (subsidised by a Tasmanian Community Fund grant)

Member: $950 ($1,045 including GST)
Non-member: $1,100 ($1,210 including GST)

The Hobart Human Library is a project of A Fairer World and was established with assistance from Amnesty International, Anglicare Tasmania, Working It Out, LINC Tasmania and Equal Opportunity Tasmania.

Don’t judge a book by its cover!

The Hobart Human Library uses the art of storytelling to break down barriers and build empathy.

The library provides a comfortable space for ‘readers’ to speak informally with a living ‘book’.

The ‘books’ are Tasmanians who have experienced stereotyping, prejudice or discrimination – perhaps because of their culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, appearance or wellness.

For schools, the Hobart Human Library workshop has been developed to support the Respectful Schools and Workplaces Framework.

For workplaces, the human library is an excellent addition to diversity and inclusion training.

The Hobart Human Library can also be booked for public or private events, including conferences.

The human library workshop was inspirational. The incredible strength and determination of the ‘books’ was humbling, and I was amazed when one of the ‘books’ told me how empowering she finds it to tell her story. The experience demonstrated how challenging it can be to face discrimination and strengthened my resolve to avoid being judgemental. Government House professional development workshop participant
Hobart Human Library – feedback from workshop participants

10 out of 10 is the most frequent rating by participants for both quality and usefulness of the workshops.

Teachers

Stories from people I would not normally have cause/opportunity to speak to. Excellent "resource" - very worthwhile - use it as a starting point. Cosgrove High School

Reminding teachers to include everyone - students with differences are not an imposition. Rosny College

The Hobart Human Library is well worth it - a great way for students to learn of diversity in a sheltered community. Marist Regional College

Conferences

Attending the Hobart Human Library was a thoroughly mind-changing experience. The stories of the ‘books’ put their life experiences right in front of you in a personal and very private way, and showed what life in their shoes was really like. Through the art of conversation and learning, I now consider some things that I’d never thought about before. As a professional development opportunity, the Hobart Human Library takes you one step further and will provide a lasting impact on those who experience it. Paula Leishman, Managing Director, Leishman Associates, Conference and Event Management

Students

I was challenged by how some of the things my friends and I joke about are real problems for people and can be hurtful. Year 11, Marist Regional College

I would say the human library is super Inspirational and that it teaches you about others but also yourself. Year 6, Kids for Kids Conference

It was great stories about people’s lives and it would inspire you! It was really fun and I loved it. Year 7, Huonville High School

…a celebration of life, diversity and humanity. It showed me that it doesn’t matter what you look like or if you have a disability the only thing that matters is who you are on the inside. Year 7, Rose Bay High School

Workplace staff

It was very challenging listening to people’s difficult stories but the human books were skilled in their telling which made it easier. School of Natural Sciences, University of Tasmania

Wonderful & enlightening experience! … encourages compassion through lessening ignorance. Tasmanian Symphony Orchestra

Surprised how emotional the session made me feel. I was challenged as I realised the effect of one’s behaviours toward another. State Service Management Office

I will use it to better support people in my life, and hopefully to improve diversity inclusion at work. Department of Premier and Cabinet

I came today with very little understanding of the program and initially I was quite challenged. However it has been one of the most rewarding things I have done. I will definitely try and think about a person’s story whenever I come to meet any new people. Department of Education, Curriculum Services

The human ‘books’ recount their lived experience of stereotyping to four or five readers at a time. All ‘books’ are trained as community educators so they can adapt their stories to audiences from Grade 5 students to senior managers in the public, private and community sector.