

A woman with dark curly hair and glasses, wearing a light pink cardigan over a peach top and grey trousers, stands in a futuristic, brightly lit environment. She is holding a tablet computer. The background features curved architectural elements, a globe, and various pieces of technology. The overall aesthetic is clean and modern.

AUTONOMY, FREEDOM & MOBILITY

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Technologies are important to me. I have low vision. I am also a disability advocate for people with disabilities from minority ethnic backgrounds. I am from a South Asian background, myself.



Technology gives me freedom and independence, so I can work.



I use technology to plan my daily travel around Sydney. I also use them to do my work. This involves seeing other people with disabilities, attending professional workshops and policy forums.



I also use it for my own personal mobility needs. For example, when I need to travel somewhere new, I receive emails from a mobility specialist telling me how to travel. They provide me with instructions around routes, transport options, costs and time it will take along with safety precautions. The instructions are read out to me via my screen reader software. This ensures that I remain independent and do not have to rely on others to translate information from emails.



I use a screen reader on my computer both at home and at work. The screen reader can be installed through Chrome add-ons for free. This is a great option as many people with disabilities live in poverty and cannot afford expensive assistive technology and addons.



With a screen reader, I can just click the "Listen" button on the screen to have the content read out to me. It's really easy to learn how to use and to maintain access to the information I need.



I also use Google Maps on my phone to know which buses and trains to catch and at what times. This includes mapping out clearly connections between different public transport systems which I rely upon.



As a disability advocate who also has multiple disabilities, affordable and accessible technologies that I can download for free from the internet have become essential to my life. I can remain independent, maintain my job, and work with my disability peers and colleagues.



Importantly, everyday technologies, platforms and apps have really helped me to develop different friendships and relationships. I do not have to rely on my family for help. I can go where I want, see who I want and enjoy myself. They have given me greater autonomy and control over my life in very important ways.



I can continue to be a strong advocate and support my peers in my professional role.

This book was created as part of the ADDEPT - Autonomy, Diversity & Disability: Everyday Practices of Technology funded by ARC Linkage Project LP190100099.

The digital narratives were co-created with participants across a set of online and face-to-face workshops in addition to focus groups and follow-up one-to-one interviews. Each of the participants worked with the project team to examine, explore and create these digital accessible books of their personal experiences with everyday technologies to share the impact of such technologies upon their daily lives.

Over a period of two years, research participants were able to critically engage with AI technologies and create these books to publicly disseminate their diverse experiences with the aim of enabling others to learn from their personal experiences. The stories are developed from the narratives of the participants, using AI technologies such as Mid Journey to generate illustrations and Chat GPT to develop the alternative text that describes the illustrations.

Citation Information:

Shekaran, N., Liao, A., and Soldatić, K. (2023). *Autonomy, freedom and mobility*, Western Sydney University, Penrith.
DOI: 10.26183/t2qf-0970

Story books in the ADDEPT project:

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DOI: 10.26183/j4nv-yk68

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DOI:10.26183/bv22-kv79

Grundy, L., Liao, A., and Soldatić, K. (2023). Lifelong learning and remembering Sadie Daher, Western Sydney University, Penrith.

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DOI: 10.26183/t2qf-0970

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DOI: 10.26183/94rz-3e98