

THE INCLUSIVE ISSUE

DESIGNING INCLUSIVE COMICS
SPACES FOR AUTISTIC CONNECTION



ALEX



JONATHAN



SANDRA

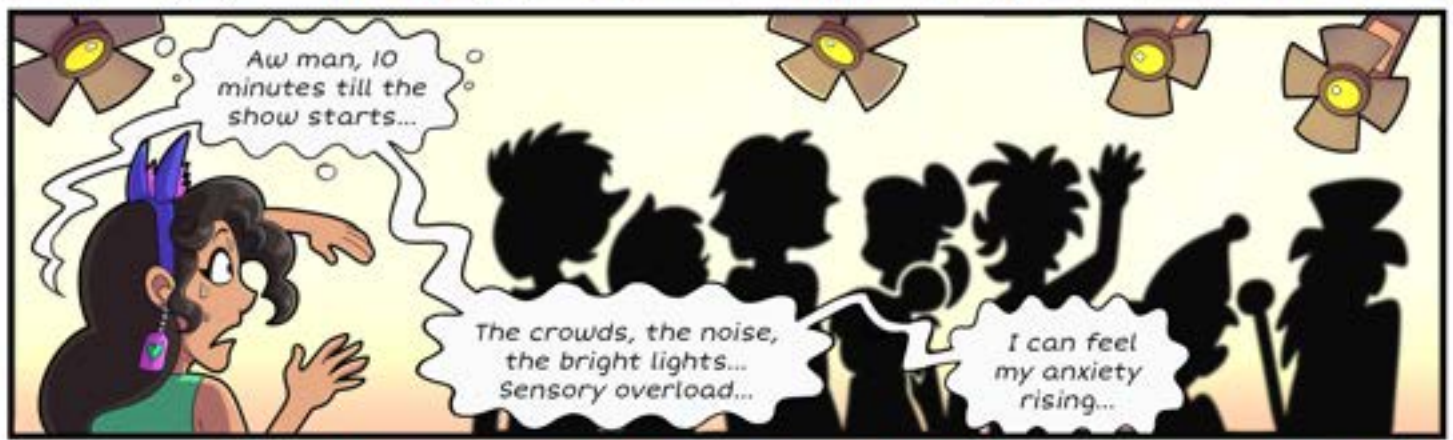


DANESH



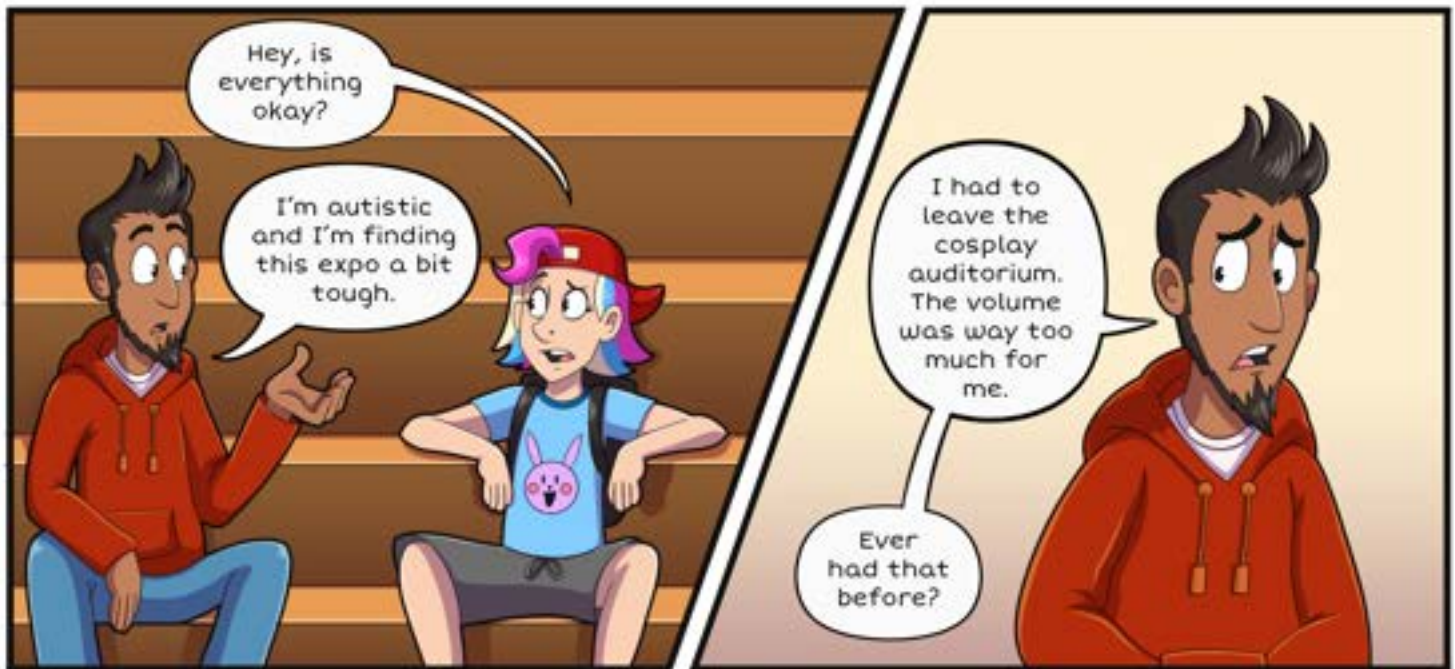
















AND SO...

AND NOW WE HAVE SANDRA! SPORTING A FANTASTIC COSPLAY OF THE LATEST FRANCHISE: "GENSHINE IMPERIOR".



AS YOU CAN TELL: THE AUDIENCE IS LOVING IT!



BUT WHAT DO THE JUDGES THINK? ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT...



WHAT'S THIS? THEY LOVE HER CREATIVITY! ESPECIALLY THE CHOICE OF WEARING THAT KEYRING AS PART OF HER OUTFIT.

WHERE DID SHE GET IT?



Excuse me, but can I buy three of those keyrings?

Sure, but you're like the 9th person in 5 minutes. Why the sudden buzz?



Didn't you see the live-feed? This trending cosplayer is rocking your artwork as part of her outfit.

Wow... That's a lot of people!



Phew! Can't say I'm not thrilled for the sudden excitement in my art...

But dealing with sudden crowds isn't my strength... I think I need a break to decompress...





AND SO, AS THE COMIC EXPO EVENT ENDS, WE END OUR STORY HERE. BUT AS ONE EXPERIENCE ENDS, THERE IS HOPE FOR AN EVEN BETTER ONE IN THE FUTURE.



THE COLLABORATION FOR COMICS AND AUTISM:

We are a group of autistic and allistic people who love comics and want to make comics events even more inclusive places for autistic people. We gathered ideas from many autistic comics fans and artists about how to make things better. Together, we created this comic as a way to share the stories and insights people shared with us.

Bex Ollerton - Author and Cartoonist

Eliza Fricker - Author and Illustrator

Hannah Berry - Comics Cultural Impact Collective

Jenny Gibson - University of Cambridge

Joe Sutliff Sanders - University of Cambridge

Kai Holmström - Dekko Comics

Kai Mycelium - Cartoonist and VTuber

Matt Burke - Lakes International Comic Art Festival

Olivia Ahmad - Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration

Rach Idowu - Author, Advocate and Illustrator

Rachel Hill - Association of Illustrators

Stephanie Hogan - Manchester Libraries

Acknowledgements:

Thank you to the hundreds of survey respondents who shared their experiences and shaped this work.

This work was supported by an *AHRC Impact Acceleration Award* to Joe Sutliff Sanders & Jenny Gibson. Many thanks to Lily Rose Fitzmaurice and Stephanie Nowack for research assistance; to Becky Lawrence and Sophie Wilcox for administrative support; to Tom Kirk, Justin Hodgett and Clare Mackenzie for support with design and communications.

The art for this comic was produced by *Dekko Comics Ltd* (www.dekkocomics.com). The characters and story were designed and written by Rossie Stone. The artists who worked on producing the visuals included Luiz Gustavo, Kris Middleton, Sami Ross and CJ Broskin. Special thanks to Kai Holmström for all his support.

Comics events are great places for autistic fans and creatives to be their authentic selves.

Here's a quick overview of how to get started planning your comics event for autistic joy and sensory comfort:

- ✓ *Consult autistic people when planning your event.*
- ✓ *Staff and volunteers should know the basics of autism and neurodiversity.*
- ✓ *Include autistic creatives in programming ... and pay them for their contributions.*
- ✓ *Provide clear online information to make it easy for autistic people to plan their visit.*
- ✓ *Use clear and visible signage in your venue.*
- ✓ *Provide space for people to make noises/stim.*
- ✓ *Offer the option to listen to talks via headphones.*
- ✓ *Have ear protectors or noise-cancelling headphones available to borrow.*
- ✓ *Provide softer lighting / sunglasses.*
- ✓ *Arrange quiet spaces and schedule quieter times.*
- ✓ *Avoid overcrowding.*

Find more ideas and details for planning an inclusive comics event by following the QR code on the back cover of this comic or going to <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.126224>.

Cite this comic as: Gibson, J. L. & Sanders, J. S. and the Collaboration for Comics and Autism. (2026). The Inclusive Issue: Designing Inclusive Comics Spaces for Autistic Connection. Dekko Comics. <https://doi.org/10.17863/CAM.126227>

© CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

Autistic comics fans Alex, Danesh, Jonathan and Sandra are super excited about their local comic convention, but they're experiencing some challenges! Will baffled stewards and sensory overwhelm get in the way of epic cosplay? Will overcrowded spaces and muddled maps stop the crew from nerding out and meeting new friends?

For more information about designing inclusive comics events, scan the QR code:

