



The Zero Project announces its 77 Awardees of 2024

Vienna, Austria, December 3, 2023: The Zero Project has announced the Zero Project Awardees 2024, centred around Inclusive Education, and ICT. 77 Innovative Solutions from 43 countries will receive the Zero Project Award at the Zero Project Conference 2024 in Vienna, Austria.

2024 Research Theme: Inclusive Education, and ICT

The Zero Project is committed to supporting the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), by researching, identifying, communicating, and supporting innovative solutions globally and across all sectors of society. The Zero Project 2024 annual research cycle was dedicated to the theme of Inclusive Education, and Information and Communication Technologies (ICT).

The UN CRPD emphasises that persons with disabilities have the right to education and lifelong learning, without discrimination and based on equal opportunity, as stated in Article 24. The Zero Project deliberately went beyond this definition, as many innovative solutions have identified gaps in the formal education system – from early childhood to adulthood – as a major barrier for making Inclusive Education work, for instance, with respect to transition models, the training of teachers, parents and professionals, non-formal education, and ICT-driven tools.

ICT has become very important for persons with disabilities. It is therefore addressed in each annual research cycle, identifying innovative solutions across a wide spectrum, such as Orientation Systems, Artificial Intelligence, and Computer Steering Technologies.

The Innovative Solutions of Awardees 2024

From leveraging gaming and social media for education, strategies during humanitarian crises, and innovative tech solutions to enhance sign language, to inclusive practices in higher education, and high-tech products or services expanding to global markets – the Awardees 2024 provide a wide variety of innovative solutions, towards a world with zero barriers and inclusive education.

Please find the full list of Awardees on the Zero Project Website:

<https://zeroproject.org/research/zero-project-call-for-nominations-2024/zero-project-awardees-2024>.

Global representation from all sectors of society

The 77 Awardees come from 43 different countries and from all six continents, with Europe (24 Awardees), Asia & Pacific (23), North America (10), Latin America & Caribbean (11), Africa (6), and Australia & Oceania (3).

The countries with the highest numbers of Awardees are the United States of America (9); India (6); Austria (5); Spain (4); and Australia, Brazil, and Japan (3 each).

All awarded solutions are scalable, with many already operational in several countries. The number of innovations from and implemented on the African continent, is at its highest compared to any previous research cycle, reflecting the significant potential and steadily growing innovation landscape in these countries.



Zero Project Research Process

The Zero Project's annual research cycle is centred around four main areas of research: independent living and political participation; accessibility; employment; and education. ICT-related innovations are specifically covered each year and receive dedicated attention within the Zero Project research cycle.

The Zero Project's research process is marked by its commitment to an extensive peer-review process and the three main criteria: innovation, impact, and scalability. Thanks to its vast global network, the Zero Project organizes a multi-step nomination, evaluation, and selection process, which culminates in the announcement of the annual Awardees. The Awardees receive the opportunity to showcase their innovative work at the Zero Project Conference and receive dedicated space in the annual Zero Project Report that will be shared online and in print with disability inclusion experts. In collaboration with partner organisations, the Zero Project operates initiatives and regionalised activities to enhance the Awardees' impact, such as the Zero Project Scaling Solutions Programme, the Zero Project Technology Forum.

Zero Project Conference 2024

Following the announcement of the Awardees of 2024, the Zero Project will present and promote these during the invitation-only Zero Project Conference 2024 – #ZeroCon24 – at the United Nations Office at Vienna. This global gathering will be broadcast live and for free from Vienna from February 21 to February 23, 2024. For more information about #ZeroCon24, please visit: zerocon24.zeroproject.org.

To celebrate its Awardees of 2024 leading up to #ZeroCon24, the Zero Project will showcase thematic groupings of Awardees on all social media platforms, sharing these impactful solutions globally. Ultimately, the Awardees 2024 will join the free online database of innovative solutions hosted by the Zero Project.

About the Essl Foundation

The Essl Foundation MGE gemeinnützige Privatstiftung is an Austrian Foundation established in 2007 by Martin and Gerda Essl, and their children, for social purposes and scientific research. Its mission is to support social innovation, social entrepreneurship and persons with disabilities.

About the Zero Project

The Zero Project's mission is working for a world with zero barriers. Worldwide, the Zero Project finds and shares solutions that improve the daily lives and legal rights of all persons with disabilities, as intended and encouraged by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

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