Zero Project Report 2022

For a world with zero barriers

Accessibility

76 Innovative Solutions from 35 countries

An international study on solutions supporting the implementation
of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD):
The Zero Project Research, Network, and Impact.

Imprint

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Removing barriers together

FOREWORD BY MARTIN ESSL, FOUNDER AND CHAIRMAN OF ESSL FOUNDATION

For the past two years the pandemic has left its mark on life. Amid all the various challenges and consequences that people – especially people with disabilities – have had to face, I would like to acknowledge the potential for innovation that this situation offers, because it is the art of innovating and creating solutions that is at the very heart of the Zero Project mission.

And as we find solutions, we have learn collectively. Let me share some thoughts and insights on how the Zero Project works to support exactly this.

Zero Project Database

The Zero Project's mission is to find and share solutions that improve the lives and legal rights of people with disabilities. Each year a global peer-reviewed research process identifies proven and innovative solutions: the Zero Project Awardees. Together, these 700+ practices and policies, which have been selected since the research began in 2012, now constitute the Zero Project Database.

The Zero Project Database is available to everyone, free-of-charge, via zeroproject.org. We envisage it as a public utility, as it not only offers proven solutions to challenging situations but also allows the user to connect with and learn from those who created them: more than 600 organizations and people from more than 100 countries around the world.

Zero Project Conference 2022

A large number of these innovators and organizations meets once a year at the Zero Project Conference (#ZeroCon), and on 23–25 February 2022 they will once again be sharing and discussing solutions and innovative approaches with fellow experts, policy makers, and change-makers.

This year the conference will take place in a hybrid format for the first time, with a select audience at the United Nations Office in Vienna (UNOV), and everyone who wants to listen and learn will be able to do so online via an accessible live broadcast. We are grateful that the United Nations Office at Vienna is once again hosting us this year, and we especially want to thank Ms. Ghady Waly – the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and Director-General of the United Nations Office at Vienna – for the excellent working relations that we have developed over the past years."

Given that the theme of ZeroCon22 is Accessibility, the Conference will highlight 76 Zero Project Awardees from 35 countries for their proven commitment and impact in creating and improving accessibility for all. Alongside much-loved formats, such as the annual Award Ceremony, #ZeroCon22 will also feature some premieres. Among others, the Ambassador Circle will be formerly introduced, and the Zero Project Asia Summit will see policy makers and organizations of persons with disabilities discuss an accessibility blueprint for the region.

For the third time, we are also proud and honoured to co-host an event in the Austrian Houses of Parliament with the President of the National Council, Mr. Wolfgang Sobotka, where selected Awardees are co-presented with members of the Austrian Parliament.

A global network for inclusion

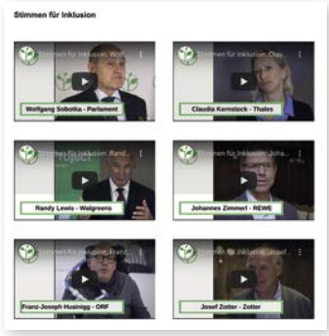
The global dimension of the Zero Project Conference is something the team is very proud of – and I would like to note that this isn't limited to the annual Conference in Vienna. In May 2022, Zero Project Latin America will host its Zero Project Conference for all the Spanish-speaking communities of the world. Throughout the year the Zero Project Team labours to establish partnerships and build opportunities to share what has been proven to work and create impact. This growing network – consisting of more than 9,000 experts with and without disabilities who have contributed in the past five years – addresses a range of topics as diverse as the countries and people that are contributing. To name just a few examples:

In 2021, the European Network for Accessible Tourism officially signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Zero Project to bring greater attention to policies and practices that can serve visitors with disabilities and other travellers with specific access requirements.

The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement (of Drake University, Iowa, United States) partnered with the Zero Project and the National Center on Disability and Journalism (headquartered at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Mass Communication, Arizona State University, United States) to host a conversation with Amanda Morris, The New York Times' first Disability Reporting Fellow.

Zero Project Impact–Transfer

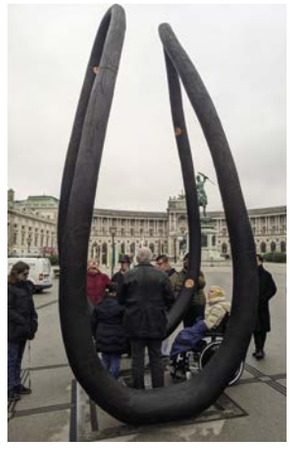
One of our most prominent initiatives supports those Zero Project Awardees that have the highest potential to scale or replicate their solutions in other regions



In the past year we have strengthened existing partnerships in Austria in the corporate sector through the Zero Project Unternehmensdialoge – Zero Project Business Dialogues.

The Zero Project Database encompasses all Awardees since 2013 and the data, facts, pictures, and videos that highlight these solutions.

The Zero Project Latin America Conference, thanks to our partners and friends from Fundación Descúbreme!



The accessible COVID-19 Memorial of Hope sculpture currently accentuates the Heldenplatz square in Vienna.

or countries. To this end, the Zero Project Impact–Transfer functions as an accelerator, and is organized in collaboration with Ashoka and co-financed with Fundación Descúbreme.

Since 2017, ten Impact–Transfer fellows have been selected out of all Awardees every year; To date, a total of 50 Zero Project Solutions have been supported through this very special accelerator programme, connecting them with mentors, expertise, and localization partners.

Zero Project Austria

The Zero Project Network reaches far, but it is also very close to home. In the past year we have strengthened existing partnerships in Austria in the corporate sector through the Zero Project Business Dialogues. Since 2017 more than 30 Business Dialogues have been organized, all focused on supporting inclusive employment by showcasing good practices and creating networks for businesses, the public sector, and service organizations.

To further encourage the dissemination of good practices, the Zero Project continues to annually publish – on the International Day of Persons with Disabilities – a supplement magazine centered around Inclusive Employment in *Die Presse*, one of Austria's leading daily broadsheet newspapers.

Another joint initiative with *Die Presse* is the co-sponsoring of the annual Austrian Leading Companies Award. In addition to this prestigious award for Austrian businesses, the Zero Project sponsors a special award for outstanding leadership in inclusive employment in each of the nine Austrian country states.

A Corona Monument, accessible for all

Those who know me and my family will be aware of the importance we attribute to the arts. In late November we unveiled a COVID-19 Memorial on the grounds of the Imperial Palace in Vienna, together with artists and the Institute for Sustainable Development. Coming back to what I wrote at the beginning of these remarks, the past two years have certainly been filled with tremendous challenges for all of us. However, beyond simply reminding us of what the world has experienced, the Corona Memorial is a symbol of hope. Indeed, I have genuine hope that as we connect and collaborate, we will create a post-pandemic society that is significantly more inclusive and sustainable.

I would like to end by recalling the Zero Project's goal: a world with zero barriers. I invite you to learn about the contributions that are presented in this Report as a source of inspiration for how, working together, we can achieve such a world, and how we must all constantly search for better solutions to remove the barriers that we and our fellow citizens encounter.

“A partnership for a world without barriers”

FOREWORD BY CATALINA SAIEH, PRESIDENT OF FUNDACIÓN DESCÚBREME

I am excited to address, for a third year in a row, the Zero Project community, and I would like to thank the Zero Project for allowing me once again to share our message.

At Fundación Descúbreme we have been working for over a decade to promote the inclusion of people with cognitive disabilities in all areas of human life, with a particular focus on access to inclusive education and equitable employment.

In early 2019, after several conversations, we started a partnership with the Zero Project to expand its mission for a world with zero barriers into Latin America and to the Spanish-speaking community worldwide. Almost four years later, we are grateful for the opportunity and amazed at what has been possible to achieve through collaboration.

During these past two years we have all faced an incredible challenge. We cannot deny the great impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had in all our lives – in our ways of communicating with each other, in how we conceive work and education – and this has been especially true in the lives of people with disabilities.

In these difficult times one thing has been clear: innovation and collaboration are key to supporting one another, to adapting ourselves to this new scenario, and to finding the best possible solutions to keep enabling disability inclusion worldwide. Let me now share with you some of our joint work.

Zero Projects Reports in Spanish language

One of the biggest gaps we identified a few years ago was access to information. The Zero Project has always stood out for the quality of the content produced and shared freely with its entire network. We at Fundación Descúbreme are also committed to sharing knowledge and to producing content that is accessible to all.

To this end, we have translated into Spanish and made available all the official research of the Zero Project. Now, anyone interested may find the Zero Project Report 2020 on Education, the Zero Project Report 2021 on Employment and ICT, and the Zero Project Almanac 2013–2021 in Spanish. And later this year this Report on Accessibility will also be available for the entire Spanish-speaking community.

Zero Project Conference for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community

We are also committed to bringing innovative and relevant solutions to the context of Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community, and for this we have successfully organized two regional Zero Project Conferences. In 2020 we focused on the topic of Inclusive Education, and in 2021 the focus was on Employment and ICT. We are tremendously excited to host the third Zero Project Conference for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community, which will be on Accessibility and ICT and will take place on 25–26 May 2022. We are already expecting your participation!

Zero Project Impact–Transfer

At Descúbreme we strongly believe in the power of replication and internationalization to improve the lives of people with disabilities worldwide. This belief was the reason why, in 2019, we partnered with both the Zero Project and Ashoka to develop the Zero Project Impact–Transfer programme in order to support solutions from Spanish-speaking countries, as well as to provide a regional and linguistic focus to the programme.

Today, we are delighted to offer opportunities for replication to some of the Impact–Transfer alumni, and to be co-mentors of two projects from the 2021–2022 cohort. We are thankful for the opportunity to support these outstanding innovations, and to pass on all the tools we have learned during these last three years.

The ICT – Innovation for Inclusion programme

Finally, I am very proud to share with you the ICT – Innovation for Inclusion programme, a joint initiative of Pacto de Productividad Chile, Fundación Descúbreme, IDBLab, and the Zero Project Impact–Transfer. ICT – Innovation for Inclusion is a clear example of what is possible to achieve through collaboration with a regional focus.

Together, we have selected three initiatives from Brazil, Spain, and India that support disability inclusion through technology, and they are now replicating their solutions with three Chilean organizations from the public and civil sectors. This could not have been achieved without the support of all parties involved.

I cannot end these words without thanking Martin Essl and his family for the trust they have put in us to work together towards an inclusive world for all. We have built a dear friendship based on a joint mission, culture, and ambition to support people with disabilities to live better and more decent lives.

I would also like to thank the whole team behind the Zero Project and Fundación Descúbreme. This fruitful collaboration would not have been possible without the hard work of everyone involved. We are eager to continue our journey together towards building a world with zero barriers for people with disabilities around the globe.

Executive Summary

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How the Zero Project creates impact with its network

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How the Zero Project evolved, 2008–2022

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Selection
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About the Zero Project

THE MISSION OF THE ESSL FOUNDATION AND THE ZERO PROJECT

The Zero Project's mission is working for a world with zero barriers and supporting the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). Worldwide, the Zero Project finds and shares solutions that improve the daily lives and legal rights of persons with disabilities.

The Essl Foundation

In 2008 the Essl Foundation MGE gemeinnützige Privatstiftung – an Austrian charitable foundation that focuses on scientific research and charitable giving – initiated the Zero Project to identify, curate, and share inclusive solutions, as intended and encouraged by Article 32 of the UN CRPD.

The original impetus for what would later become the Zero Project occurred in 2008, when the Essl Foundation carried out a preliminary study on existing data related to persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups. On this basis, the Essl Social Index was introduced as a means of measuring the implementation of the UN CRPD.

Since then, this index has evolved into what is now known as the "Zero Project." A dedicated team has developed the original idea into a renowned research-driven initiative that engages with more than 9,000 experts from around the world. More than 700 Zero Project Solutions have been identified to date, all of which share the key criteria of innovation, scalability, and impact to improve the lives and legal rights of persons with disabilities.

Zero Project Database: an accessible, user-friendly tool allowing searches in the vast database of more than 700 curated solutions from more than 100 countries.

An international team

The Zero Project is managed out of its headquarters at the Haus der Philanthropie (House of Philantrophy) in Vienna. An international team connects with representatives of all sectors of society, conducts research based on an annual theme, and organizes local as well as global events – such as the annual Zero Project Conference in the UN headquarters in Vienna. Special support is given to initiatives directly impacting the lives of persons with disabilities.

Since 2019, Chile's Fundación Descúbreme has formalized its long-lasting partnership with the Essl Foundation to function as the Zero Project's Latin American arm. Throughout the year, Zero Project Latin America amplifies and promotes the Project's research and impact throughout the Spanish-speaking world. The annual highlight of this partnership is the Latin American edition of the Zero Project Conference, which will next take place on 25–26 May 2022.

A global network

The Zero Project is proud of its global network of partners, experts, decision-makers, opinion leaders, and other changemakers. By fostering close collaboration among all parts of this vast network, the impact of proven solutions can be amplified and replicated elsewhere.

The Zero Project believes that the diversity of relationships is a strongpoint, and continues to deepen trusted partnerships, such as our official cooperation with Fundación Descúbreme, and more recently through a memorandum of understanding with the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT).

Finding and sharing solutions

All network activities are based on the Zero Project's unique research method, with its three pillars of (1) selecting solutions based on their innovativeness, impact, and potential to scale; (2) engaging with thousands of Zero Project Network members as part of the selection process; and (3) supporting the selected solutions in order to increase their impact.

Based on a revolving four-year cycle, the research concentrates on one of the following four themes each year: Employment, Education, Independent Living/Political Participation, and Accessibility. Due to the increasing importance of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), this topic is covered every year in its relation to the main research theme.

In 2022 the research was centred on creating and improving Accessibility for all.

Zero Project Database

Digitalization plays an important role in making proven solutions known, and in facilitating knowledge transfer internationally. To that end, we are happy to announce that the new Zero Project Database will be launched at Zero Project Conference 2022 – an accessible, user-friendly tool to allow anyone to conduct keyword-based searches in the Zero Project's vast database of more than 700 curated solutions. The Database also encourages the direct exchange with more than 600 organizations and 600 experts in over 100 countries.

It is available free-of-charge at zeroproject.org.

The Zero Project methodology

A UNIQUE RESEARCH-DRIVEN APPROACH AND SOLUTIONS THAT ARE PROVEN TO WORK

The Zero Project has created a unique approach to identifying solutions across all sectors of society by leveraging the expertise of thousands of people and organizations worldwide. The methodology also comprises the promotion of these solutions across a multitude of formats, both online and offline.

Necessity and impact of sharing solutions

As outlined in Article 32 of the UN CRPD, the "sharing and promotion of best practices" is important for the realization of the CRPD's goals. The Zero Project's methodology works to apply this principle on all levels – local, regional, and international – and with a cross-sectoral approach.

The Zero Project engages with autonomous associations independent of the state in order to identify grassroots approaches that are inclusive, accessible, and remove barriers for all. As important as the role of Civil Society is the potential power of start-ups, small and medium sized enterprises, and corporations, as well as the political backing of public institutions and services. Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and their application to all kinds of technologies for the Civil, Public, and Business Sectors must become inclusive, as they are now all-pervasive.

Extensive peer-reviewed research process

Every year in May the "ZeroCall" for nomination marks the beginning of the research process. Criteria for selection are published, and the Zero Project Network of more than 9,000 experts both with and without disabilities – from all continents and all sectors of society – are invited to nominate organizations that have applied good practices in removing barriers.

While the global network collectively determines the selection, the Zero Project provides a framework for this process. Solutions that are shortlisted, and those ultimately awarded, all reflect the three main criteria of (1) innovation, (2) impact, and (3) scalability.

Innovation

Any practice or policy will have demonstrated an innovative and effective solution in support of removing barriers in one of the five areas of the Zero Project's research focus. The research takes into account the local context, geographies, and groups of beneficiaries.

Impact

The impact of a particular solution could refer to the number of beneficiaries or people using a service, the solution's growth rate, or the influence on improved public services, among others.

Any selected solution must have been deployed and created impact; the selection process does not consider projects, or products at a concept stage.

Scalability

All nominations are reviewed for their potential in replicating and expanding to new geographies or growing in another way that allows a maximum number of persons with disabilities to benefit from the innovation.

Among the 700+ Solutions that have been selected since 2013, scalability has been indeed multifaceted, ranging from open-source applications to the replication of effective policies, to the expansion of inclusive start-up solutions to new countries.

From finding to sharing solutions

The solutions that the Zero Project supports through its global network beyond the research itself aim to bring them to all sectors, to positively impact a maximum number of persons with disabilities, and to grow and expand wherever possible.

THE FOUR SECTORS

1. Civil Society
2. Public Sector
3. Business Sector
4. ICT (across all sectors)

THE THREE CRITERIA

1. Innovation
2. Impact
3. Scalability

THE FIVE FOCUS AREAS

1. Employment (last in 2020–21)
2. Accessibility (this year)
3. Independent Living and Political Participation (next in 2022–23)
4. Education (next in 2023–24)
5. ICT (every year)

Timeline of the Zero Project, 2008–2022

THE MILESTONES OF THE ZERO PROJECT

The roots of the Zero Project go back to 2008. Since then the Essl Foundation, organizer of the Zero Project, has enhanced and expanded it year by year. This timeline shows outstanding milestones.

2008

The Essl Foundation starts a **preliminary study on existing data** related to persons with disability and other disadvantaged groups.

2009

The Essl Foundation starts to research and create a whole new set of indicators, called the **Essl Social Index**, to measure the implementation of the CRPD, which are newly launched and are as yet ratified by only a small number of countries.

2010

The Essl Foundation starts to include research on Innovative Practices and Policies in its work, and joins forces with the **World Future Council**, which covers the research on "future-just" Innovative Policies.

The **first Report, entitled Essl Social Index Pilot Study 2010**, is published, based on research using the newly developed social indicators undertaken in Austria and 15 other countries.

2011

The first **Zero Project Report** is published on 3 December, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities.

The Essl Foundation decides to expand its activities to include the research and selection of both **Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies**. It also decides to rename the initiative **THE ZERO PROJECT – FOR A WORLD WITHOUT BARRIERS**.

2012

For the first time, the Zero Project is **presented outside Europe**, at a conference on Disability and Work organized by McGill University in Montréal, Canada.

The Zero Project decides to start its **four-year research cycle**, beginning with Inclusive Employment, and not to cover the whole CRPD every year.

January of this year marks the **inaugural Zero Project Conference**. Organized in Vienna, it takes place in the historic Palais Niederösterreich. Over 200 practitioners and experts on the rights of persons with disabilities from 30 countries come together.

"Every year we are taking new steps to expand the reach of the Zero Project, using our expertise, our network, and technology."

Martin Essl

2013

Zero Project research is **presented for the first time at the United Nations**, in a Side Event organized by the Permanent Mission of Austria to the United Nations, at a session of the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva.

The year's **Zero Project Conference** takes place for the second time in Palais Niederösterreich, a two-day event.

2014

The Essl Foundation obtains Consultative Status with **ECOSOC**, which allows NGOs to formally consult with United Nations agencies.

The 3rd **Zero Project Conference** takes place, for the first time, at the United Nations in Vienna. More than 300 participants from 50 countries attend.

The Zero Project co-sponsors its first **Side Event at the Conference of States Parties to the CRPD** in New York, in cooperation with the Permanent Mission of Austria to the UN, and has sponsored Side Events annually ever since.

2015

The 4th **Zero Project Conference** gathers more than 400 participants in Vienna. For the first time, the Conference includes the prestigious Award Ceremony, and now lasts for three days.

In Austria the Zero Project organizes the **Independent Living-Tour** throughout all nine country states, supported by the Ministry of Social Affairs.

2016

The Zero Project headquarters moves into the newly founded **Haus der Philanthropie** in Vienna, jointly with several other Austrian foundations and co-initiated by the Essl Foundation.

The **Zero Project Conference 2016** brings more than 450 participants from over 70 countries to Vienna.

2017

The **Zero Project Conference 2017** hosts more than 450 participants from over 70 countries at the United Nations Office in Vienna.

The first **Zero Project Almanac** "2013–2016" is published and made available at the Conference, a comprehensive analysis of the development, scope, and impact of the Zero Project.

In Austria the Zero Project launches its first **Unternehmensdialoge**, a series of regional and sectoral conferences promoting inclusive employment, supported by the Austrian Ministry of Social Affairs.

Also in Austria, cooperation with the Austrian newspaper ***Die Presse*** is initiated, with the Project publishing an annual supplement "Inklusive Beschäftigung" and joining with the prestigious **Austrian Leading Companies Award** by presenting a special Award for outstanding leadership in inclusive employment.

In 2021 and 2022 the Zero Project added the Database, the Ambassador Circle, and the Discover Vienna programme to its work, among many other initiatives.

2018

The **Zero Project Conference 2018** gathers more than 500 participants from over 70 countries in Vienna, also handing over the artwork ***Zero Project Wesen*** to the UN and presenting the **Zero Project Anthem.**

In Austria the Essl Foundation organizes the **Inclusive IT-Academy**, a pilot study on disability-inclusive job creation in the IT-industry, supported by the Ministry of Economy and Science.

The **Zero Project Impact–Transfer** programme is launched in cooperation with Ashoka, an accelerator programme for a selected group of 10 Awardees. With this new focus, the Essl Foundation decides to discontinue its work on social indicators.

2019

The **Zero Project Conference 2019** brings more than 600 participants from over 70 countries to Vienna.

The **Essl Foundation** and **Fundacíon Descúbreme** begin their cooperation to promote the Zero Project in Spanish-speaking countries and to co-sponsor the Zero Project Impact–Transfer programme.

2020

Fundación Descúbreme organizes the first **Zero Project-Conference for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking communities**.

Fundación Descúbreme presents the first **Zero Project Report in Spanish**: "Educación Inclusiva."

The **Zero Project Conference 2020** becomes the biggest Zero Project Conference yet, with 800 participants from 80 countries gathering at the United Nations Office in Vienna.

2021

The **Zero Project Conference 2021** moves online in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, hosted by UniCredit Bank Austria, with more than 10,000 conference site visits.

The Zero Project launches its **Almanac 2021**, a summary of its activities and impact since 2013, also translated into German and Spanish.

The **Discover Vienna** programme is launched, jointly with the Vienna Business Agency.

2022

The **Zero Project Conference 2022** is back in the United Nations building in Vienna with a hybrid event, featuring both an in-person audience (by invitation) and a live broadcast.

The Zero Project launches the **Zero Project Database**, which allows the public to access the Project's vast database of 700+ Solutions.

The Zero Project's **Ambassador Circle** is officially launched, composed of ambassadors located in Vienna, all of whom are supporting the Zero Project's mission.

TODAY

About this year's research topic

DEFINITION OF ACCESSIBILITY IN THE CRPD AND ITS CONNECTION TO THE ZERO PROJECT

The Zero Project Report 2022 focuses on Article 9 (Accessibility) of the CRPD, revisiting this topic within the Zero Project's 4-year cycle. This page explains the relationship between the Zero Project's research in this Report and the CRPD.

Article 9 of the CRPD is on Accessibility. It defines the following rights, to be recognized by the States Parties that have ratified the Convention:
1. To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and participate fully in all aspects of life, States Parties shall take appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:
(a) *Buildings, roads, transportation and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces;*
(b) *Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services.*
2. States Parties shall also take appropriate measures:
(a) *To develop, promulgate and monitor the implementation of minimum standards and guidelines for the accessibility of facilities and services open or provided to the public;*
(b) *To ensure that private entities that offer facilities and services which are open or provided to the public take into account all aspects of accessibility for persons with disabilities;*
(c) *To provide training for stakeholders on accessibility issues facing persons with disabilities;*
(d) *To provide in buildings and other facilities open to the public signage in Braille and in easy to read and understand forms;*
(e) *To provide forms of live assistance and intermediaries, including guides, readers and professional sign language interpreters, to facilitate accessibility to buildings and other facilities open to the public;*
(f) *To promote other appropriate forms of assistance and support to persons with disabilities to ensure their access to information;*
(g) *To promote access for persons with disabilities to new information and communications technologies and systems, including the Internet;*
(h) *To promote the design, development, production and distribution of accessible information and communications technologies and systems at an early stage, so that these technologies and systems become accessible at minimum cost.*

Based on research from former years, the Zero Project recognized that solutions meeting the criteria of the Zero Project – innovation, impact, and scalablity – are focusing only on some of the areas mentioned in Article 9. As a consequence, the following themes were specifically mentioned in the Call for Nominations for 2021–2022:

- *Built environment*
- *Information and Communication Technology (ICT)*
- *Products and services*
- *Urban development*
- *Tourism*
- *Arts and museums*
- *Emergency and disaster recovery*
- *Access to financial services*
- *Workplace adaptation*
- *Universal Design (UD)*

Zooming in on ICT, the following themes were also specifically mentioned in the Call for Nominations:

- *Workplace adaptations*
- *Assistive technologies*
- *Mobile services and smartphone apps*
- *Artificial Intelligence*
- *Social media*
- *Internet of Things, 3D-printing, Robotics*

For further research, the Zero Project team also used several publications and reports as a baseline for designing the Call for Nominations, the selection criteria, and the selection process, including those from the ITU, G3ICT, and the EASPD.

Article 32, on International Cooperation

Article 32, on International Cooperation, is another guiding principle of the Zero Project, closely linking its work with the CRPD. Section 1 (b) states:
1. States Parties recognize the importance of international cooperation and its promotion . . . and will undertake appropriate and effective measures in this regard, between and among States and, as appropriate, in partnership with relevant international and regional organizations and civil society . . . .
(b) *Facilitating and supporting capacity-building, including through the exchange and sharing of information, experiences, training programmes and best practices.*
Every year the Zero Project, as a project of Civil Society, is working to fulfil this role as defined in Article 32.

How the Awardees of 2022 were selected

NOMINATION – PEER-REVIEW – SHORTLISTING – VOTING – FACTSHEETS – FINAL SELECTION

For 2021–2022, the Zero Project selected and awarded 76 Solutions from 35 countries, with 31 originating in Civil Society, 9 in the Public Sector, 16 in the Business Sector, and 20 mainly ICT-based approaches. In this section the nomination and selection process is described in detail.

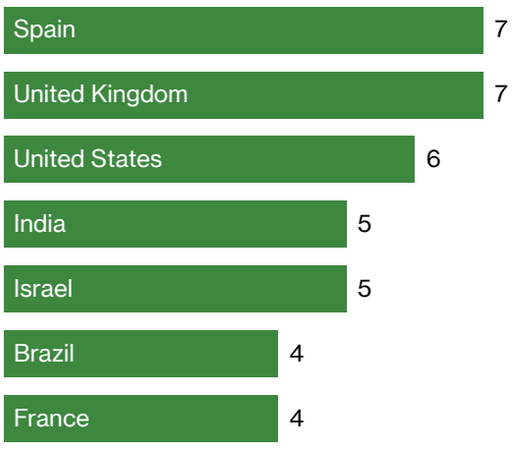
As in past years, in 2021–2022 the selection process was conducted in five steps, following an initial 'charting of the territory' period in March and April 2021.

The subtopics relating to this year's research on Accessibility were defined as follows:

- Built environment
- Public transport and public infrastructure
- Products and services
- ICT-based approaches working in such areas as orientation systems, communication platforms, learning tools
- Workplace adaptations
- Sign language and easy-language applications,
- Urban development and 'smart cities'
- Tourism
- Culture and arts, sports, and leisure

Special emphasis was given to responses to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as to disasters and emergency situations.

COUNTRIES WITH THE MOST AWARDEES IN 2021–22



1. Call for Nomination

Starting from 1 May and ending by 30 June, more than 9,000 experts from nearly every country in the world were approached to spread the call for and to nominate solutions that create or improve accessibility. The call was circulated by email as well as across the Zero Project's social media channels, and was shared broadly by members of the vast Zero Project Network.

Nominations were accepted through the Zero Project nominations platform (a tool developed by the Austrian NGO 'World Summit Award'), which the Zero Project has been using since 2018, and which is available in Arabic, English, French, German, Russian, and Spanish, or via an accessible Word document in all these languages. The nominations were then divided into the four sectors of the Zero Project (Civil Society, Public Sector, Business Sector, and ICT) with questions adapted to the specifics of these four sectors.

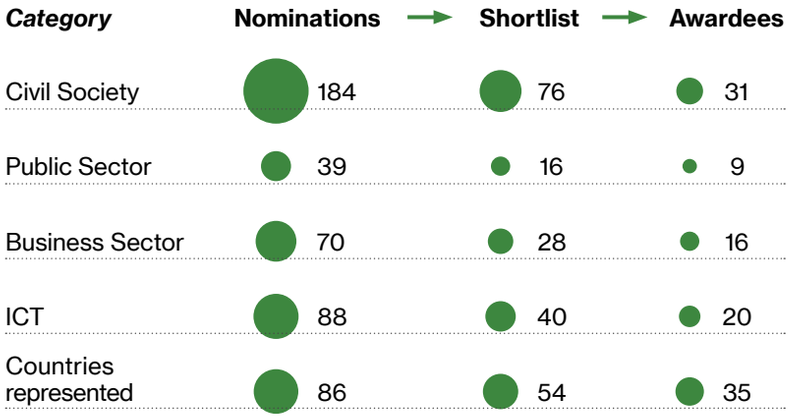
By June 30, 381 nominations were received: 184 from Civil Society, 39 from the Public Sector, 70 from the Business Sector, and 88 ICT-related.

2. Internal and external peer-review, compilation of the Shortlist

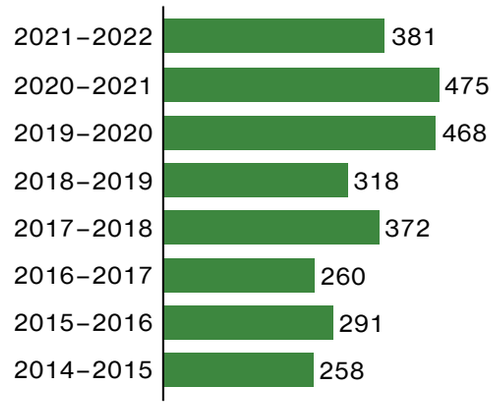
In July the Zero Project team – which included members of the Zero Project's Latin American partner, Fundación Descúbreme – began an 'internal peer-review' process, determining if the nominations correctly addressed the annual topic of Accessibility. They also assessed if they each demonstrated an already proven impact on the lives of persons with disabilities, as well as the two other main selection criteria: innovation and scalability.

Of those that were judged to fit all the criteria, 80 nominations proceeded directly onto the Shortlist, with more than 100 identified as requiring further analysis, as part of the 'external peer-review' by members of the Zero Project Network.

2021–2022 research by sectors and countries



Total number of nominations received since 2014



More than 100 experts from the Zero Project Network participated in the external peer-review, a process based on 24 online webinars.

In total, the external peer-preview provided some 1,000 individual scores. On that basis of data and qualified feedback from the network, the Shortlist of nominations was compiled with a total of 160 nominations.

Based on the Zero Project Shortlist, the 10 participants of the Zero Project Impact–Transfer initiative were selected in parallel (see page 106).

3. Voting

In August over 5,000 experts and leaders in the wider Zero Project Network were invited to vote and comment on the shortlisted applications, with each expert being assigned randomly to a group of up to 15 projects. Within this group, each voter is encouraged to give a vote to those solutions that they consider more relevant than the others, from their personal experience but also from a general perspective, along the three criteria of the Zero Project.

A total of more than 2,000 votes were received, which determined the selection of this year's Awardees.

4. Fact-checks and Factsheet writing

Based on the votes and feedback, and with additional analysis by topic and geographical region to account for bias and country income levels, 76 solutions related to accessibility were ultimately selected as Zero Project Awardees.

In this final step of fact-checking and composing the Zero Project Factsheet on each of the awarded nominations, the Zero Project team conducted additional, thorough research and requested additional photos and videos, to complete the dataset needed from each Awardee.

This final step is also needed to ensure that Awardees are willing to share their expertise and to connect with the Zero Project network.

In addition, personal Life Stories of those who have benefitted from the projects were solicited.

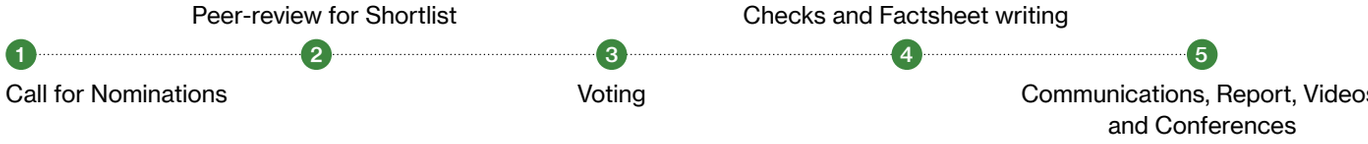
5. Presentation of the Awardees

The Zero Project communicates its Awardees of 2021–2022 in several ways:

- Via this Zero Project Report 2022, both as a printed publication and in an accessible pdf format;
- In a Spanish version of this Report, produced by Fundación Descúbreme;
- The Zero Project Database, a new online tool;
- Via a short video of each Awardee on social media;
- The Zero Project Conference, 23–25 February 2022;
- The Zero Project Conference Latin America, currently scheduled for May 2022.

THE ZERO PROJECT – PROCESS

Five steps from the Call for Nomination to Report and Conference



Overview: All Solutions of 2022

Country by country from A to Z: All 76 Solutions on Accessibility of this year.

Sectors: Business Sector · Civil Society · Public Sector · ICT · Zero Project Impact–Transfer

Country of Origin	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Solution	Sector
Argentina	Network of users with visual disabilities creating and growing its digital library	Asociación Tiflonexos – Biblioteca Tiflolibros	Business
Argentina	University teaching principles and practical applications of Universal Design	Tucuman University – Teaching Accessibility Program	Civil Society
Australia	Government-produced model toolkit for accessible websites and online content	Government of South Australia – Accessibility Toolkit	Public Sector
Australia	Website collecting comprehensive facts about accessible travelling in a whole region	Travel For All online guide	ICT
Austria	Accessible mail pick-up-stations for people with visual impairments	Österr. Post – Accessible pick-up-stations	Business
Bangladesh	Comprehensive accessibility programme for large refugee camps	CDD – Inclusive Rohingya Response	Civil Society
Bangladesh	University-based accessible e-learning centre for students with disabilities	YPSA – E-Resource Centre in the University of Chittagong	Civil Society
Belgium	NGO supporting the government with an accessible response to the pandemic	Inter – Fighting Isolation During the Pandemic	Civil Society
Brazil	A city organizing weekly conversations in public spaces with citizens in sign language	Curitiba City Hall – Conversation in Libras	Public Sector
Brazil	Accessible platform screening events for 12 accessibility features	Escola de Gente – VEM CA Accessible Culture App	ICT
Brazil	A city offering a free 24-hour video-sign language translation service for all public services	SMPED – Central de Intermediação em Libras App	Public Sector
Brazil	Audio-visual books in multiple accessible formats	Mais Diferenças – Books in multiple accessible formats	Civil Society
Cambodia	Accessible agriculture technology creating inclusive jobs in rural areas	Light For The World – Accessible Agriculture	Civil Society
Canada	Accessible Canada Act: first federal accessibility legislation in Canada	Government of Canada – Accessible Canada Act	Public Sector
Chile	Literacy app to stimulate reading development for children with Down Syndrome	CEDETi – La Mesita app	ICT
Chile	Model for accessible parks and nature spaces going international	Fundación Eres – Senderismo sin Limites	Civil Society, Zero Project Impact–Transfer
Chile	Online accessibility training for civil servants	SENADIS – Preparados para Incluir	Public Sector
Colombia	Government-sponsored radio station targeting blind and visually impaired listeners	INCIRadio – La Radio Incluyente	Civil Society, Zero Project Impact–Transfer
Croatia	A city collecting all the information about its accessibility for a smartphone app	City of Zagreb – Accessible Zagreb online service	ICT
Czech Republic	Mobile app that identifies banknotes from more than 100 currencies	Hayaku – Cash Reader	ICT
Denmark	Smartphone app connecting visually impaired users in need with supportive volunteers	Be My Eyes app	ICT
Denmark	Smartphone app that offers audio subtitles to foreign language movies and series	SubReader app	ICT
Ethiopia	Mobile phone-based information service for disability-related topics	ECDD – Minch platform	ICT
France	Web-browser extension for looking up explanations in sign language	Signes De Sens – La Bulle Elix	ICT
France	Global accessibility and digital inclusion strategy for a multinational IT company	Atos – Global Accessibility & Digital Inclusion Governance	Business
France	Free browser-extension to adapt websites with a variety of accessibility features	FACIL'iti website adaption tools	ICT, Zero Project Impact–Transfer
France	Inclusive design agency promoting access to arts and culture	Tactile Studio – Inclusive & multi-sensory pathways	Business
Germany	Making flood-preparation and training accessible to all in the community	CBM – Disability inclusive/disaster prepared communities	Civil Society
Germany	Wheelchair control via smart glasses	MUNEVO – munevo DRIVE	ICT
India	Design studio that produces playgrounds for all children and all senses	Gudgudee – Inclusive play areas for children	Business
India	E-Health improving the quality of services for children with disabilities in the rural area	Jan Vikas Samiti – Project Sambhav	Civil Society, Zero Project Impact–Transfer
India	IT-company funding an incubator programme for assistive technology start-ups	Mphasis – BIRAC Investing in Assistive Tech.	Business
India	Cooperation of an IT-company with Uber for improving the accessibility of taxi services	Mphasis uberASSIST and uberACCESS	Business
India	Mobile therapy for children in remote areas delivered by an accessible bus	Samphia Foundation – Therapy On Wheels	Civil Society
Indonesia	Participatory collection of disability data in cities to improve public service	Kota Kita	Civil Society, Zero Project Impact–Transfer
Indonesia	Cross-sectoral effort to build accessible homes for people with disabilities in poverty	Puspadi Bali – Accessible Housing	Civil Society

Country of Origin	Headline of the Factsheet	Organization/Solution	Sector
Indonesia	Online community puts competitive pressure on online services to be more accessible	Suarise – A11yID	
Israel	Mystery Clients with disabilities evaluating the accessibility and usability of services	Access Israel – Accessibility Testing & Evaluation	
Israel	Quick rollout of guidelines on how to treat patients with disabilities in pandemic times	Access Israel – Accessible Emergency Services	
Israel	Accessible tourism for people with psychosocial disabilities in-country and abroad	Enosh – Nofesh Programme	
Israel	Training civil servants in the Israeli legal system to provide more inclusive legal services	JDC Israel Unlimited – Accessible Legal Service	
Israel	App-based machine learning enabling persons with speech disabilities to be understood	Voiceitt speech recognition	
Japan	Regular sign language TV programme on the topics of welfare and community	Okayama Broadcasting – Sign Language Program	
Kenya	African telecom provider aiming at an inclusive workforce and accessible customer experience	Safaricom – Diversity & Inclusion Programme	
Poland	Regional railway company becoming accessible and a role model for the whole country	Łódzka Kolej Aglomeracyjna – Railway accessibility	
Poland	Countrywide policy to improve accessibility on all levels, backed by a substantial budget	Ministry of Development – Programme Accessibility Plus	
Romania	Inclusive club engaging with urban planners to create more accessibility for the blind	The Urban Mobility Club	
Russia	IT-platform for planning and booking accessible travel	Globe Media – Globe4all	
Saudi Arabia	Comprehensive programme to make a university accessible for all students	King Abdulaziz University – Higher Education for All	
Singapore	Multinational IT-manufacturer developing an accessible hiring and workplace programme	Flex Ltd. – Corporate barrierfree programme	
Spain	Eye and head-controlled digital musical instrument	EyeHarp Association – EyeHarp	
Spain	A 24-hour sign language interpretation service via video call	Fundacion CNSE – SVIsual	
Spain	ICT solution for people with reduced mobility to use public transport	Mass Factory – App&Town Compagnon	
Spain	Website and TV-channel with easy access to news and information	Plena Inclusión España – Planeta Fácil	
Spain	Free online Spanish dictionary written according to easy reading guidelines	Plena Inclusion Madrid – Diccionario Fácil	
Spain	City metro passenger setting new standards of accessibility for all	Transportes Metropolitanos de Barcelona – Metro Accessibility	
Spain	Web/App identifying the location of parking spaces for people with disabilities	AsoPMR – Park4Dis	
Sweden	Collection of digital and technical solutions for universally designed workplaces	Nordic Welfare Centre – The Future of Working Life	
Thailand	University organizing courses for multidisciplinary teams to build accessible homes	Mahasarakham University – Home for Life	
Turkey	International airport that provides a diverse accessible airport experience.	Istanbul Airport – IGA Cares	
Uganda	Forum theatre alleviates war trauma and creates an inclusive stage and art experience	Northern Uganda Hip Hop Culture – Forum Theatre	
United Kingdom	Picture galleries providing comprehensive insight into a venue's accessibility	Blue Badge Style Access Gallery	
United Kingdom	An online toolbox of symbols enabling communication for all, without the use of language	Global Symbols CIC	
United Kingdom	Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard for companies	Hassell Inclusion – Scorecard for accessibility self-assessment	
United Kingdom	Advisory board supporting the London Transport Authority in accessibility matters	Transport for London – Disability Advisory Group	
United Kingdom	Accurate navigation system for the blind and visually impaired to improve public services	Waymap orientation app	
United Kingdom	Audio-descriptive commentary for blind and partially sighted people in football stadiums	Centre for Access to Football in Europe – ADC	
United Kingdom	Toolkit and training to make health facilities in low-income countries more accessible	Sightsavers – Accessibility Standards and Audit Pack	
United States	Major outdoor park developments based on Universal Design principles	ACT Services – Universal Design in Outdoor Parks	
United States	Colour schemes that make texts on screens easier to read	BeeLine Reader app	
United States	Accessibility certification programme for eBook publishers	Benetech – GCA publisher certification programme	
United States	Global accessibility and inclusion programme of a multinational pharmaceutical company	Eli Lilly – Access Lilly	
United States	Government-led crowdsourcing platform to guide policy-making for inclusive workplaces	US Department of Labor – ePolicyWorks Initiative	
United States	Creating accessible water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities for disadvantaged groups	World Vision – WASH Programme	
United States	Online library of multilingual signed stories, jointly edited and developed	Rochester Institute of Technology – WAY Programme	
Zambia	GIS-based mapping and improving of accessible water, sanitation , and hygiene (WASH) facilities	Zambia Water Sanitation and Hygiene (ZWASH)	

Innovative Solutions around the world

For Europe see page 18

- Business Sector
- Civil Society
- Public Sector
- ICT
- Zero Project Impact–Transfer

Canada

Accessible Canada Act: first federal accessibility legislation in Canada
Government of Canada – Accessible Canada Act

United States

Major outdoor park developments based on Universal Design principles
ACT Services – Universal Design in Outdoor Parks

Colour schemes that make texts on screens easier to read
BeeLine Reader app

Accessibility certification programme for eBook publishers
Benetech – GCA publisher certification programme

Global accessibility and inclusion programme of a multinational pharmaceutical company
Eli Lilly – Access Lilly

Government-led crowdsourcing platform to guide policy-making for inclusive workplaces
US Department of Labor – ePolicyWorks Initiative

Creating accessible water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities for disadvantaged groups
World Vision – WASH Programme

Online library of multilingual signed stories, jointly edited and developed
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Colombia

Government-sponsored radio station targeting blind and visually impaired listeners
INCIRadio – La Radio Incluyente

Chile

Literacy app to stimulate reading development for children with Down Syndrome
CEDETi – La Mesita app

Model for accessible parks and nature spaces going international
Fundación Eres – Senderismo sin Limites

Online accessibility training for civil servants
SENADIS – Preparados para Incluir

Argentina

Network of users with visual disabilities creating and growing its digital library
Asociación Tiflonexos – Biblioteca Tiflolibros

University teaching principles and practical applications of Universal Design
Tucuman University – Teaching Accessibility Program

Brazil

A city organizing weekly conversations in public spaces with citizens in sign language
Curitiba City Hall – Conversation in Libras

Accessible platform screening events for 12 accessibility features
Escola de Gente -VEM CA Accessible Culture App

A city offering a free 24-hour video-sign language translation service for all public services
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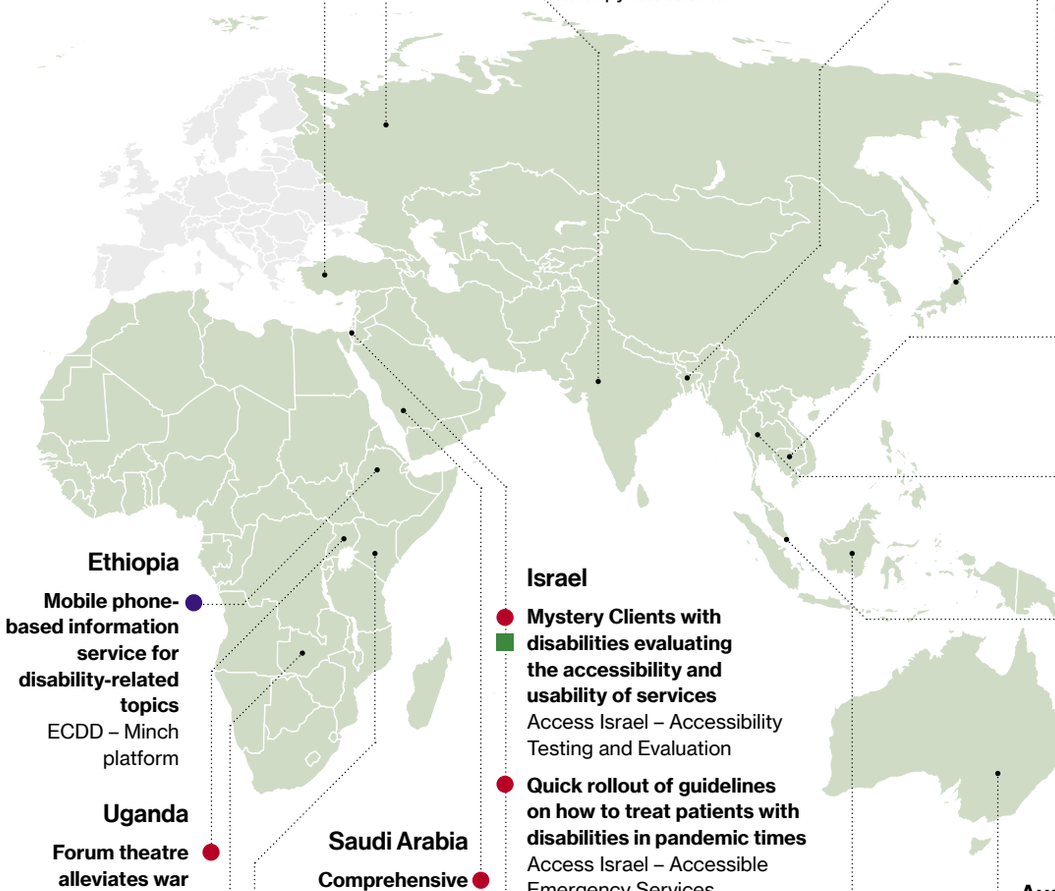
Audio-visual books in multiple accessible formats
Mais Diferenças – Books in multiple accessible formats



India

Design studio that produces playgrounds for all children and all senses
Gudgudee – Inclusive play areas for children

E-Health improving the quality of services for children with disabilities in the rural area
Jan Vikas Samiti – Project Sambhav

IT-company funding an incubator programme for assistive technology start-ups
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Cooperation of an IT-company with Uber for improving the accessibility of taxi services
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Mobile therapy for children in remote areas delivered by an accessible bus
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Okayama Broadcasting – Sign Language Program

Cambodia

Accessible agriculture technology creating inclusive jobs in rural areas
Light For The World – Accessible Agriculture

Thailand

University organizing courses for multi-disciplinary teams to build accessible homes
Mahasarakham University – Home for Life

Singapore

Multinational IT-manufacturer developing an accessible hiring and workplace programme
Flex Ltd. – Corporate barrierfree programme

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Mobile phone-based information service for disability-related topics
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Safaricom – Diversity & Inclusion Programme

Saudi Arabia

Comprehensive programme to make a university accessible for all students
King Abdulaziz University – Higher Education for All

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Access Israel – Accessibility Testing and Evaluation

Quick rollout of guidelines on how to treat patients with disabilities in pandemic times
Access Israel – Accessible Emergency Services

Accessible tourism for people with psychosocial disabilities in-country and abroad
Enosh – Nofesh Programme

Training civil servants in the Israeli legal system to provide more inclusive legal services
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Online community puts competitive pressure on online services to be more accessible
Suarise – A11yID

Innovative Solutions in Europe

Business Sector · Civil Society · Public Sector · ICT · Zero Project Impact–Transfer

United Kingdom

Picture galleries providing comprehensive insight into a venue's accessibility
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An online toolbox of symbols enabling communication for all, without the use of language
Global Symbols CIC

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Hassell Inclusion – Scorecard for accessibility self-assessment

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Sightsavers – Accessibility Standards and Audit Pack

France

Web-browser extension for looking up explanations in sign language
Signes De Sens – La Bulle Elix

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Atos – Global Accessibility & Digital Inclusion Governance

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FACIL'iti website adaption tools

Inclusive design agency promoting access to arts and culture
Tactile Studio – Inclusive & multi-sensory pathways

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Eye and head-controlled digital musical instrument
EyeHarp Association – EyeHarp

A 24-hour sign language interpretation service via video call
Fundacion CNSE – SVIsual

ICT solution for people with reduced mobility to use public transport
Mass Factory – App&Town Compagnon

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Plena Inclusión España – Planeta Fácil

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Plena Inclusion Madrid – Diccionario Fácil

City metro passenger setting new standards of accessibility for all
Transportes Metropolitanos de Barcelona – Metro Accessibility

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AsoPMR – Park4Dis

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SubReader app

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Österreichische Post – Accessible pick-up-stations

Germany

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CBM – Disability inclusive/disaster prepared communities

Wheelchair control via smart glasses
MUNEVO – munevo DRIVE

Belgium

NGO supporting the government with an accessible response to the pandemic
Inter – Fighting Isolation During the Pandemic

Sweden

Collection of digital and technical solutions for universally designed workplaces
Nordic Welfare Centre – The Future of Working Life

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Regional railway company becoming accessible and a role model for the whole country
Łódzka Kolej Aglomeracyjna – Railway accessibility in Łódź

Countrywide policy to improve accessibility on all levels, backed by a substantial budget
Ministry of Development – Programme Accessibility Plus

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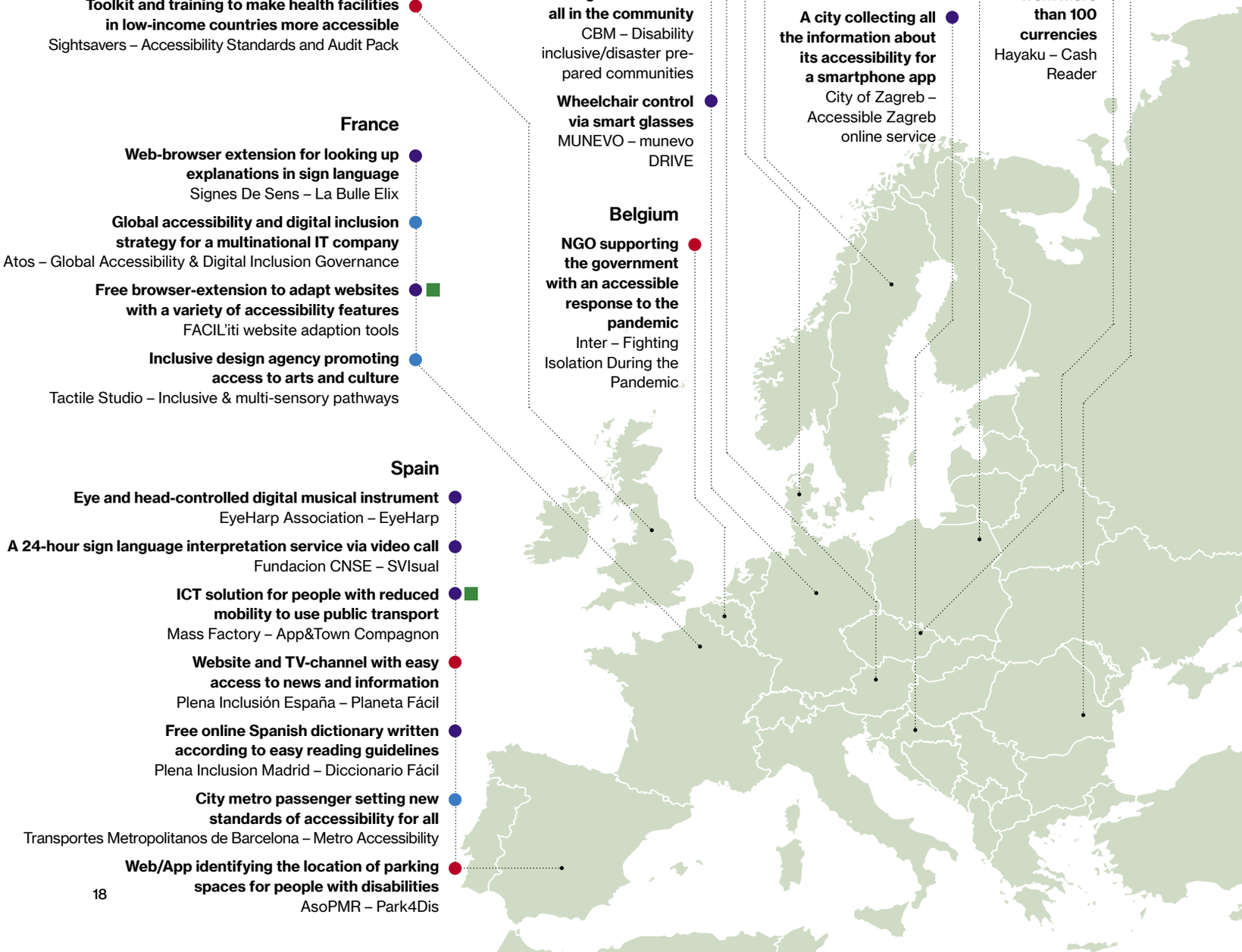
A city collecting all the information about its accessibility for a smartphone app
City of Zagreb – Accessible Zagreb online service

Romania

Inclusive club engaging with urban planners to create more accessibility for the blind
The Urban Mobility Club

Czech Republic

Mobile app that identifies banknotes from more than 100 currencies
Hayaku – Cash Reader



SECTION 1

Zero Project Network

Publications

Zero Project Report in English and Spanish, “Explaning the Basics” and more

Conferences

Zero Project Conferences in Vienna and Santiago de Chile; presentations at global conferences worldwide

Database

Free search through the research of 700+ Solutions

Social Media

Engagement by Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, etc.

Webinars

Sharing content and creating networks online

Videos

Zero Project Streaming Portal and Youtube Channel

Accelerators

Zero Project Impact–Transfer, Discover Vienna, ICT for Inclusion Award

Crowd-Intelligence

Using the “Wisdom of the Network” in the nomination, peer-review, and voting of the Zero Project

OUTSTANDING SOLUTIONS TO REMOVE BARRIERS

Zero Project Awardees

The core of the Zero Project is the research and selection of outstanding solutions in terms of innovation, impact, and scalability. The whole Zero Project Network is encouraged to contribute to this process by nominating, peer-reviewing, and voting.

FLAGSHIP EVENT IN THE UN HEADQUARTERS IN VIENNA

Zero Project Conference

The Zero Project Conference, which is held annually in the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna, is all about presenting the Awardees of each year, sharing their inspiration and expertise, and creating meaningful connections for them and, thus, for the whole Zero Project Network.

CONFERENCE FOR THE SPANISH-SPEAKING COMMUNITY

ZeroCon Latin America

Since 2020, Fundación Descúbreme organizes an annual Conference for Latin America and Spanish-speaking communities worldwide with the same mission as the Conference in Vienna. Due to the pandemic, the two Latin American Conferences held so far have been virtual events.

SUPPORTING AWARDEES TO START IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Zero Project Impact–Transfer

Impact–Transfer is the accelerator programme of the Zero Project, organized jointly with Ashoka, the global network for social entrepreneurship, and a group of experienced mentors. Each year ten Awardees are chosen as Impact–Transfer Fellows.

ACTIVITIES IN THE HOME COUNTRY OF THE ESSL FOUNDATION

Zero Project Austria

Since 2017 a team within the Essl Foundation is in charge of local activities in Austria. Its pillars are the Unternehmensdialoge, which are regional conferences supporting inclusive employment, and cooperation with the Austrian newspaper *Die Presse*.

FUNDACIÓN DESCÚBREME AND ITS PORTFOLIO OF ACTIVITIES

Zero Project Latin America

Since 2019, Fundación Descúbreme is Zero Project's partner supporting its presence in Latin America and in Spanish-speaking communities worldwide with publications, conferences, and network activities, as well as co-organizing the Zero Project Impact–Transfer programme.

NETWORK PARTNERS THAT HAVE SIGNED AN MOU

Memoranda of Understanding

A growing number of international organizations and networks are signing Memorandums of Understanding with the Zero Project, among them ENAT (European Network of Accessible Tourism) and DATEurope, an association of leaders in ICT.

Klaus Höckner

Susan Scott-Parker

AWARD OF HONOUR TO KEY SUPPORTERS

Zero Project Ambassadors

Since 2019 the Zero Project has been honouring persons who have demonstrated outstanding support of its mission. Currently, these include: Caroline Casey, Klaus Hoeckner, Michal Rimon, Rupert Roniger, Carola Rubia, Nevgul Bilsel Safkan, Susan Scott-Parker, and Luk Zelderloo.

AMBASSADORS FOR INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY

Ambassador Circle

In 2022 the Ambassador Circle was introduced – ambassadors stationed in Austria who are committed to disability-inclusion. Members include: Australia, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Kenya, and Spain.

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Consultative Status with ECOSOC

Since 2014, the Essl Foundation has held Consultative Status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council, enabling civil society to cooperate with UN agencies. The Zero Project, among others, has organized Side Events at UN conferences and has contributed to the publications of UN agencies.

FINANCIAL SUPPORTERS OF THE ZERO PROJECT

Sponsors

Whereas the main funding of the Zero Project is provided by the Essl Foundation (with Impact–Transfer co-sponsored by Fundacíon Descubreme), the Zero Project is grateful for dedicated sponsors. Currently these include: UniCredit Bank Austria and Digital Reality.

THE U.N. IN VIENNA AS A HOST AND PARTNER

United Nations in Vienna

The United Nations Office in Vienna has not only hosted the Zero Project Conference since 2014 but it has also become a valuable partner with an increasing number of shared activities, such as webinars that support inclusive employment within the UN system.

PROUD FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE GLOBAL CAMPAIGN

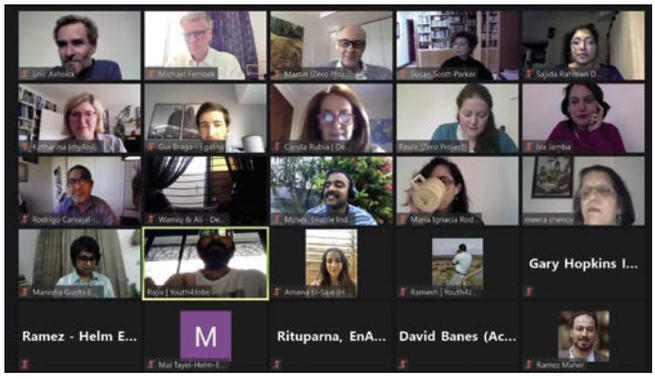
#WeThe15

In 2021 the Zero Project was asked to join the #WeThe15 campaign as a founding organization, which was initiated by the International Paralympics Committee and aims to become the biggest ever human rights movement to end the discrimination of persons with disabilities.

JOINTLY ORGANIZING ONLINE EVENTS WITH THE NETWORK

Joint webinars

Since 2020 webinars have become a backbone of collaboration. The Zero Project actively uses this IT-tool to promote Awardees and to co-organized webinars, e.g, with USAID, Access Israel, the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism (University of Arizona), and The Harkin Institute for Public Policy & Citizen Engagement.



ENGAGING WITH THE NETWORK: PEER-REVIEWING SOLUTIONS

Peer-reviewing

The primary step in the Awardee selection process is the creation of a Shortlist by engaging with the most active members of the Zero Project. More than 100 experts both with and without disabilities contribute each year with qualitative feedback on nominations.

INVITATIONS FOR EVENTS OF THE NETWORK PARTNERS

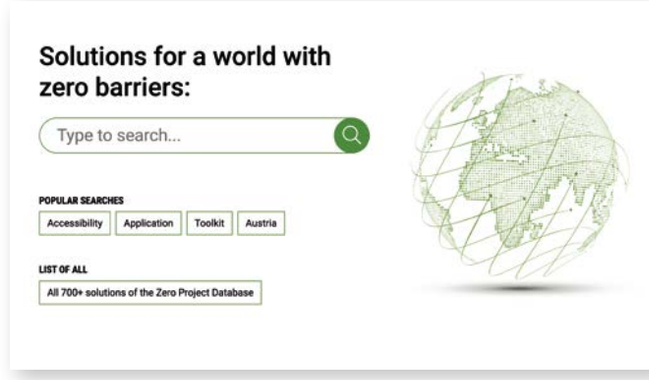
Congresses and presentations

The Zero Project is proud of its partnerships with organizers of conferences, seminars, and workshops, and for the opportunities to share innovative solutions. Recent partnerships include the ITU, the EASPD, Sabanci Foundation, and Access Israel.

ENGAGING WITH THE NETWORK: VOTING FOR THE AWARDS

Voting

Voting is the crucial next step to select the Awardees from the Shortlist. For the voting, the Zero Projects asks thousands of its Network members to give their opinion and expertise on a group of shortlisted solutions. Hundreds of voters join in each year.



BUILDING A NETWORK OF INNNOVATORS AND NGOS

Asia Network

In 2021 the Zero Project actively started building a network of NGOs and advocates of disability-inclusion in South-East Asia, currently including members from Brunei, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, and Thailand.

SEARCH 700+ ZERO PROJECT AWARDEES SINCE 2013

Zero Project Database

The Zero Project has built a database for all shortlisted and awarded solutions since 2013. By late 2021 this database is now available for free via zeroproject.org, enabling the user to search through (currently) 735 Awardees, including videos and photos.

ENGAGING WITH THE NETWORK: NOMINATING SOLUTIONS

Nomination

The first and still most important of all Network activities is the nomination of solutions that are innovative, scalable, and create impact. The Project's nominations process – involving more than 350 nominations every year since 2017 – is unique and invaluable.

ALL VIDEOS OF THE ZERO PROJECT AND ITS AWARDEES

Zero Project Videos

The Zero Project now manages a vast number of videos, such as Awardee videos and Conference presentations. Most are available on the Zero Project YouTube Channel and the Zero Project Streaming Portal.

A VIDEO FOR EACH AWARDEE OF 2021–2022

Awardee Video Campaign

For the first time, the Zero Project produced a special video for each Awardee of 2021–2022, which were shared as 'Awardee-of-the-Day' videos on a daily basis via Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, and YouTube. All Awardee of the Day videos are available on-demand on the Zero Project YouTube Channel.

THE ZERO PROJECT ON FACEBOOK, LINKEDIN, TWITTER, ETC.

Social media

The Zero Project actively uses Facebook (with appx. 8,000 followers), Twitter, LinkedIn, Instagram, YouTube, and a blog on its website (zeroproject.org) to share and communicate its news and solutions, and to support its Conferences, webinars, etc.

AWARD OF PACTO DE ACCESSIBILIDAD FOR LATIN AMERICA

ICT–Innovation for Inclusion

In 2020, Fundación Descubreme and Pacto De Accessibilidad started the accelerator programme 'ICT-Innovation for Inclusion'. Three Awardees were selected and their replication in Latin American countries was supported financially and non-financially.

OUTSTANDING IT-INNOVATORS & START-UPS

Tech Leaders Group

The Zero Project runs a group of promising ICT-solutions and start-ups that are promoting inclusion and accessibility through technology. The International Telecommunication Union often partners with the Zero Project in curating this group and giving them opportunities to present and connect.

SUPPORTING THE CONFERENCE AND IT-INNOVATORS

UniCredit Bank Austria

UniCredit Bank Austria AG has supported the Zero Project since its beginnings, financially but also by hosting events such as the annual after-Conference event. In 2022 the bank, as the main sponsor, presented the Zero Project's Financial Inclusion Award.

HOST OF THE ANNUAL PARLIAMENT EVENT IN VIENNA

Austrian Parliament

Since 2020 the Zero Project hosts an annual event in the Austrian Houses of Parliament, sponsored by the President of the Austrian Parliament. Selected Awardees present in front Members of Parliament and other Austrian stakeholders.

LEADERS IN ACCESSIBLE AND INCLUSIVE IT FROM AUSTRIA

Austrian ICT-Innovators

ICT-Innovators from Austria get special attention from the Zero Project, in an attempt to strengthen the Austrian networks. Current members include: atempo, GuideMe, Inclusion24, InnoMake, JKU Linz, Lifetool, Oskar, Simax, and WheelSim24.

PARTNERSHIP WITH THE VIENNA BUSINESS AGENCY

Discover Vienna

In 2021 the Zero Project teamed up with the Vienna Business Agency and initiated the Discover Vienna Programme on Accessibility, by which ten tech-related start-ups are invited to Vienna to explore opportunities to start working in or from the Austrian capital city.

CONNECTING AWARDEES WITH AUSTRIAN STAKEHOLDERS

Go Austria

Using a different approach, Go Austria is a pilot project of the Zero Project team designed to connect innovative solutions from abroad to interested parties in Austria by (1) exploring good fits, (2) nudging, and (3) match-making.

CONFERENCE SERIES IN AUSTRIAN COUNTRY STATES

Business Dialogues Austria

The Zero Project Austria team has organized the Unternehmensdialoge since 2017, a series of conferences in regional capitals of Austria or within business sectors (such as retail, health, energy) to promote good practices in inclusive employment.

NEWSPAPER SUPPLEMENT AND ENTREPRENEUR AWARD

Cooperation with *Die Presse*

Since 2017 the Zero Project teams up each year with *Die Presse*, a leading Austrian daily newspaper, to (1) produce an annual supplement focusing on good practices in inclusive employment, and (2) to announce the Inclusive Employment Award.

ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSION OF MUSEUMS

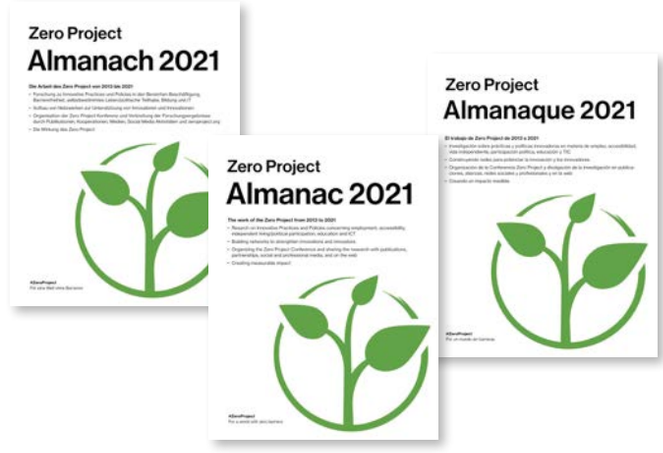
Arts and culture

The Zero Project organizes a dedicated group of museum managers and other arts experts to promote inclusion and accessibility in the arts and in exhibitions in its broadest sense, starting with arts education in museums by persons with disabilities.

ACCESSIBLE MONUMENT SYMBOLIZING HOPE

Corona Memorial of Hope

Martin Essl, Founder and Chairman of the Essl Foundation set up a Corona Memorial of Hope – an accessible sculpture situated on the Heldenplatz square in Vienna.



ON THE IMPACT OF THE ZERO PROJECT

Zero Project Almanac

In early 2021 the Zero Project published its second Almanac, a collection of all Awardees 2013–2021 as well as of the impact the Zero Project and its Awardees created in these years. The Almanac was also published in German and Spanish.

ANNUAL RESESARCH SUMMARY OF THE ZERO PROJECT

Zero Project Report

The Zero Project Report has been published annually since 2012. Since 2013 it focuses on one of the four core topics of the Zero Project and is a collection of all Awardees of that year, presented in the form of Factsheets and augmented by Life Stories and more.

NEW PUBLICATION BOTH TEXT-BASED AND AS A PODCAST

Explaining the Basics

In early 2022 the Zero Project launched its newest publication series, Explaining the Basics. Starting with Artificial Intelligence, it focuses on important themes and explains them in a printed publication, as well as in audio and video formats.

SECTION 2:

The 76 Awardees

Factsheets

Factsheets from all 76 Solutions 2021–2022 listed by country

Life Stories

Persons with disabilities or their peers explain how Zero Project Awardees have changed their lives.

Network of users with visual disabilities creating and growing its digital library

ARGENTINA/ASOCIACIÓN TIFLONEXOS – BIBLIOTECA TIFLOLIBROS

Asociación Tiflonexos is a local NGO from Buenos Aires, Argentina, that was founded in 2001 to develop the Biblioteca Tiflolibros online library. Tiflolibros is a digital library of accessible books for people who are blind or visually impaired. The library is crowd-sourced and consists of books that have been digitalized by its users, in partnership with other organizations, publishers, schools, and libraries. As of 2021 more than 10,000 people from 50 countries are using Tiflolibros.

Problem targeted
Visually impaired people in Latin America find it difficult to access books in accessible formats, causing barriers to education and culture.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Biblioteca Tiflolibros is a digital library for visually impaired people living in the Spanish-speaking world, built as a network of books digitalized by the users themselves. Asociación Tiflonexos coordinates the projects and engages with libraries, publishers, schools, etc. Books are adapted either through scanning and uploading hard copies, or digital copies are obtained from the publisher and then adapted into accessible digital formats. The Marrakesh Treaty allows for these copyright exceptions.

How to listen to a library.

> "Tiflolibros showed me the transformative power that ICTs and networking have."
>
> Pablo Lecuona, Founder of Biblioteca Tiflolibros

Biblioteca Tiflolibros also runs the Reading Access Points programme, which connects visually impaired people who do not yet have access to adapted devices to the library and the community and strengthens the ICT-related abilities of its community. By 2021 more than 65,000 accessible books are available free of charge and are being used by more than 10,000 people from 50 countries, as well as by 450 organizations.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The model is funded through a mixture of income streams, which includes donations, project grants, and self-financing activities such as selling services and work as accessibility consultants. In the coming years, Asociación Tiflonexos is aiming to reach at least 5 per cent of the visually impaired population in Latin America, with an estimated 1 per cent reached in 2021. In addition, it is looking to work with companies, NGOs, and governments to include accessibility in their products, policies, and services to enable autonomy and access to information for people with disabilities.

Mr. Pablo Lecuona
pablol@tiflonexos.org – https://tiflonexos.org

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2010

- 65,000 accessible books have been made available free of charge.
- Accessible books are available at 450 organizations in 50 countries.
- Some 10,000 people are currently using the Tiflolibros service.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

University teaching principles and practical applications of Universal Design

ARGENTINA/TUCUMAN UNIVERSITY – TEACHING ACCESSIBILITY IN THE ACADEMIC ENVIRONMENT

Universidad Nacional de Tucuman in San Miguel de Tucuman, Argentina, has been teaching about incorporating accessibility within an academic environment since 2011. Students of the Faculty of Architecture and Urbanism can take part in these lessons as an optional subject, learning about Universal Design in urban, architectural, transport, and communication spaces. In 2011 the courses started with 25 students, and by 2021 there were well over 300 students per year. The courses have also influenced national building codes, laws, and standards.

Problem targeted
Professionals working in architecture often do not design buildings and spaces with the diversity of the entire population in mind.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Universal Design has been taught as an optional subject in the Faculty of Architecture since 2011, with courses run by people both with and without disabilities. Curriculum is adapted and implemented for complete accessibility, such as the provision of audio description, subtitling, image description, and materials in accessible formats. The course also covers a range of concepts of accessibility, considerations of human diversity and needs, as well as understanding the different types of disability. Students are trained in the practical application of Universal Design in order to implement their learnings into the professional environment and in settings such as urban, architectural, transport, and communication spaces. The practice has influenced public policies in the country, such as the modification of building codes and laws, regulations, and standards relating to urban and architectural accessibility.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Courses are provided for free through the public university funding system. The university has worked through the Secretariat of Extension and with communes and municipalities of the province of Tucumán, such as the Municipality of Concepción, Commune of San Pablo, Municipality of Monteros, Municipality of Aguilares, and Municipality of Yerba Buena. It is also working to include accessibility as a theme across all subjects and modules offered within the architectural degree programme. In addition, there are plans to incorporate accessibility within postgraduate courses and, by extension, other research activities. The practice is believed to be highly replicable in other universities by copying the teaching practices and technical knowledge.

Architecture class with a difference: a group of students learning playfully about Universal Design.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2011

- The course has grown from 25 in 2011 to 300 students in 2021.
- Approximately 2,800 students have been trained to date.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Ms. Josefina Ocampo
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Government-produced model toolkit for accessible websites and online content

AUSTRALIA/GOVERNMENT OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA – ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND TOOLKIT

The Government of South Australia has developed the Online Accessibility Toolkit, a free and publicly available repository to help people make their websites and online solutions more accessible and inclusive. The repository consists of eight topics, including visual design and user experience, and was co-designed in consultation with people with disabilities. The approach is drawing significant global recognition and is now considered a co-design benchmark across all levels of government in Australia.

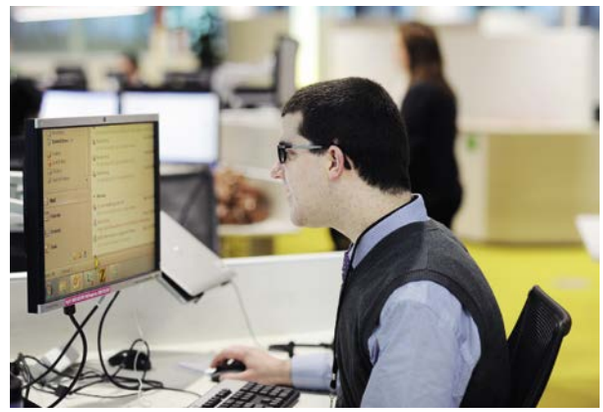
Problem targeted
With more and more essential services turning digital, many websites and applications are not created with the diversity of the whole community in mind.

Solution, innovation, and impact
As a result of more than 50 workshops and in consultation with a focus group of over 1,000 people with disability, the Australian disability sector, and more than 100 public, civil society, and business organizations, the Government of South Australia (population 1.77 million) created an Online Accessibility Toolkit. The toolkit provides practical solutions for organizations and governments to make their digital platforms more accessible for a range of people, including those with disabilities, those subject to geographic immobility, and users who do not speak English as their first language.

> "The accessibility Toolkit is an inspiring example of co-designing a truly inclusive online service."
>
> The Digital Gap Initiative – advocating for an inclusive digital world

The material is designed to support various professions, such as developers, project managers, or content creators, and provides step-by-step guidance such as how to test for accessibility and to use colour and contrast effectively. The success of the project has led to the South Australian Government working with governments around the world, including the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, to help improve their approaches to online accessibility.

Ms. Gisele Mesnage
gisele@digitalgap.org – www.accessibility.sa.gov.au



The Online Accessibility Toolkit contributes to web accessibility across South Australia and already beyond.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The costs to support the policy are covered under a cost recovery model through the provision of the South Australian Government Website Design System.

Website Design System is available to all South Australian Government agencies and provides agencies with simple and modern websites that maintain and exceed compliance to internationally recognised accessibility standards. In addition, all jurisdictions in Australia support the toolkit initiative for adoption at the national level, which is a short-term ambition of the project.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- Over 1,000 people with disability consulted on the project.
- 2,000 government staff surveyed.
- 120,000 unique visitors to the toolkit between 2019 and 2021.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

See corresponding Life Story on page 53.

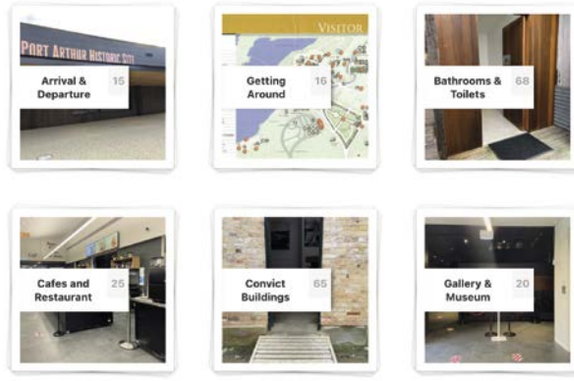
Website collecting comprehensive facts about accessible travelling in a whole region

AUSTRALIA/TRAVEL FOR ALL ONLINE GUIDE

Based in Australia, in 2020 the social business Travel for All launched the Travel For All Guide, a TripAdvisor-style guide for travellers with disabilities. The website offers access to trusted, verified, and complete information on how to plan and experience accessible travel, co-created by its users. In addition, it offers a toolkit on accessibility topics for tourism operators. In 2021, Travel for All had 6,000 email subscribers.

Problem targeted
Travellers with disabilities often do not have access to reliable and verified information on accessible and inclusive services.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Travel For All is a comprehensive website for tourism operators and customers to find accessible travel services, providing detailed and verified information to help persons with disabilities to plan and book accessible travel. The company uses both self-inspection and authenticated user reviews as verification sources. Like TripAdvisor, it offers several travel and accommodation options, according to the demand and type of disability of the individual client.



Based on user reviews, Travel For All provides comprehensive tourism-related accessibility information.

> "So many disabled people tell me that they really want this type of information to plan their holiday or outing"
>
> Dale Reardon, Founder, Travel For All

In addition, Travel For All helps business owners create an 'accessibility statement' about their accessibility features, using a detailed checklist and photographs – information that customers need while planning a trip. Travel For All also has an online community and a forum where people can read authentic user reviews, and it provides training on disability awareness and attitudes for tourism and travel businesses. In 2021, Travel For All developed a training programme on accessibility and marketing for Port Arthur, Australia.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The company aims to earn revenue and finance itself through annual subscriptions, verification fees for listings, training, advertising, and commissions on bookings and tickets once travel activities have resumed. Travel For All has various package plans for businesses seeking to create accessibility statements, ranging from $150 for smaller companies to $370 for large-sized companies. All prices are valid for a year and include the Accessibility Toolkit to create and host an accessibility statement. Travel For All aims to develop its technology and expand operations to more sectors within the next five years.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- The website had over 6,000 email subscribers in 2021.
- In 2021 there were 45,000 Social Media followers across all channels.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Mr. Dale Reardon
dale@travelforall.guide – www.travelforall.guide

Accessible mail pick-up-stations for people with visual impairments

AUSTRIA/ÖSTERREICHISCHE POST – ACCESSIBLE PICK-UP-STATIONS

In 2019 Österreichische Post AG (Austrian Post), the leading logistics and postal service provider in Austria, introduced an accessible pick-up service for blind customers to collect items that could not be delivered to their home. First, the customer finds an accessible deposit slip in the post-box at home. At the pick-up station there is audio guidance, and when the box opens it produces a clacking sound to aid navigation. Austrian Post has rolled out this service to all 479 pick-up stations in Austria.

Problem targeted
Pick-up stations for undeliverable postal items are difficult to navigate for people with visual disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
A pilot operation with individual devices was started in 2019. Several inspections were carried out with the Austrian Association of the Blind, which shaped and improved the model. The final solution was rolled out nationwide in 2019 and early 2020. Austrian Post employees now leave notification slips with accessibility features at the customer's address when a delivery is not possible.

The slip has a cut-off corner and two holes, allowing blind people and people with visual impairments to know it is a collection slip, but also to navigate to the barcode needed for collection.

"In close consultation with stakeholders and associations, we have successfully made our 24/7 services more inclusive."

Markus Wimmer, Head of Product Management, Österreichische Post AG

Once at the pick-up station, tactile inscriptions below the touchscreen and audio guidance support the customer to deposit the slip. The compartment with the deposited item opens and produces a clacking sound, which guides the customer to the correct box. The clacking continues until the box is closed. The project was designed and developed in cooperation with Austrian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted. In 2021 the company operates 479 pick-up stations with 94,000 boxes. The solution has been rolled out nationwide and has also been replicated in Switzerland.

Picking up parcels will no longer be a problem for blind customers of the Austrian Post.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The pick-up stations are increasingly developing into a mainstay of branch operations. Austrian Post will continue to expand this initiative as the parcel business is expected to continue growing.

Austrian Post will continue to work on accessible services, such as franking and dropping off parcels and letters in self-service, and to improve the accessibility of its website and branch offices.

Mr. Markus Wimmer
markus.wimmer@post.at – www.post.at

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- In 2021 accessible pick-up facilities are in operation across all 479 stations in Austria.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Comprehensive accessibility programme for large refugee camps

BANGLADESH – UKHIA, COX'S BAZAR/CDD – INCLUSIVE ROHINGYA RESPONSE

The Centre for Disability in Development (CDD), a leading NGO in Bangladesh, has launched the Inclusive Rohingya Response to improve living conditions in refugee camps of the Rohingya people in Ukhia, in the district of Cox's Bazar. The programme identifies and modifies inaccessible structures such as homes, sanitation facilities, and food distribution centres, supported by continuous staff training on the principles of accessibility and inclusion. To date, hundreds of camp residents with disabilities have benefitted.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities in Rohingya camps and surrounding host communities face challenges due to inaccessible facilities and service points at shelters.

Solution, innovation, and impact
CDD, supported by its partner CBM, the international NGO headquartered in Germany, provides health and rehabilitation services at the camp and host communities. Services include general health assessment and rehabilitation, eye and ear screening, provision of assistive devices (including artificial limbs and prosthetics), cataract surgery, and ambulance service. The project has also installed accessible facilities, such as curb ramps, handrails, and step modifications using locally available materials such as bamboo, wood, and concrete. People with disabilities are consulted at all stages of service provision and are also part of the access audit teams. From 2018 to mid-2021 more than 250 people with disabilities were directly supported and more than 50 facilities were improved. These measures increased access to related services, e.g., health care, livelihoods, and the government's social safety net programmes in the camps. CDD also provided capacity-building training and onsite technical support on accessibility to 1,080 staff members of mainstream humanitarian organizations between 2017 and 2021.

"The ramp installed by CDD helps me access the Camp-In-Charge's office regularly so that I can access various services."

Abdul Halim, diagnosed with Post Polio Syndrome, living in Rohingya Camp in Bangladesh

Now, also wheelchair users can enter the refugee camp facilities without barriers on their way.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The whole project is grant-funded, with the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, and the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade being the primary donors. The total programme budget for the period January 2018 to June 2021 was approximately $4 million. The programme is designed to support 200 additional beneficiaries and to build new facilities in the camp every year.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- 12,000 occupational therapy sessions were conducted between December 2017 and September 2020.
- 4,211 assistive devices were distributed between December 2017 and September 2020.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Mr. Monjurul Habib
monjurulshagar@yahoo.com – https://cdd.org.bd

Toolkit and training to make health facilities in low-income countries more accessible

BANGLADESH/SIGHTSAVERS – ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS AND AUDIT PACK

Launched in 2018 by the UK-based NGO Sightsavers, the Accessibility Standards and Audit Pack is a toolkit used to assess the accessibility of health facilities and to execute renovation or construction. It is freely available online and includes multiple modules, including a training unit by Sightsavers. Using the toolkit, 50 hospitals in eight countries in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa have been audited, and 16 renovations had been completed by September 2021.

Problem targeted
Governments, health service providers, and DPOs often lack the necessary tools and knowledge to address accessibility barriers in health facilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Sightsavers' Accessibility Standards and Audit Pack is a toolkit – available for free online and in hard copy – to audit the accessibility of health facilities and develop action plans for accessibility renovations. The pack includes (1) a training module by Sightsavers, (2) the accessibility standards manual, (3) an audit checklist, (4) a report template, (5) a planning and budgeting tool, and (6) a scoring card. Tools are designed to be accessible to ensure that people with disabilities can lead the process and are organized in chapters focused on different environments (e.g., parking, reception, and toilets) and referring to specific components (e.g., doors, steps, and ramps).

"In all our current work, we are incorporating measurements and recommendations from Sightsavers' standards."

Ikechukwu Ngwu, Federal Capital Territory Authority, Nigeria

Over 200 members of DPOs, governments, and the private sector have participated in the audit training. From 2018 to September 2021 the pack has been used in eight countries to audit 50 hospitals and conduct eleven accessibility renovations across Bangladesh, Malawi, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Pakistan. Sightsavers has also created an alternative version focusing on the wider built environment.

Mr. Andrea Pregel
apregel@sightsavers.org – www.sightsavers.org/disability/health/accessibilitystandards

The Pack is designed to put people with disabilities in the centre of the auditing process.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Sightsavers funded the production of the toolkit at a cost of $11,000. For the projects that use the pack, activities such as training and auditing are funded by Sightsavers, often by UK Aid, costing $5,000 to $10,000. Any costs for accessibility renovations must be covered by governments as well as the private sector.

The NGO plans to scale up the dissemination and use of the toolkit worldwide, and will also explore the design of free online training on their accessibility auditing methodology.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- 50 hospitals have been audited and 16 renovations completed in eight countries across two continents by 2021.
- There have been 100+ downloads of the digital toolkit to date.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

University-based accessible e-learning centre for students with disabilities

BANGLADESH/YPSA – E-RESOURCE CENTRE IN THE UNIVERSITY OF CHITTAGONG

In 2019 Young Power in Social Action (YPSA), a national NGO, built an accessible e-learning centre for visually impaired students at the University of Chittagong to make higher education more accessible. It is equipped with accessible learning material and has two dedicated volunteer groups. While still in its pilot phase, two other universities will also be developing an inclusive e-resource centre, funded by the A K Khan Foundation, a local foundation, and in cooperation with the Bangladesh Government.

Problem targeted
Students with visual impairments in universities across Bangladesh face challenges obtaining equitable education due to inaccessible materials and learning environments.

Solution, innovation, and impact
In 2019, YPSA launched the Inclusive University Initiative to support the academic and upcoming professional life of students with visual impairments. Along with the A K Khan Foundation, a philanthropic arm of A.K. Khan & Company Ltd., and the Access to Information Programme (a2i) of the Government of Bangladesh, YPSA established an accessible e-learning centre at the University of Chittagong, which provides students with professional ICT development training. The centre includes software and hardware, accessible reading material, digital talking books, Braille books, and other resources. People with disabilities comprise 80 per cent of the project staff and are also involved in the production of accessible reading materials, monitoring, evaluation, and training. In 2019 Chittagong University was declared the first inclusive university of Bangladesh. From its inception until mid-2021, 60 blind students have received ICT-based skill training.

> "The university's e-learning centre has become the catalyst for my educational and professional skill development."
>
> Shopna Akter, Masters Student of Sociology, University of Chittagong

Mr. Mohammed Arifur Rahman
ypsa_arif@yahoo.com – www.ypsa.org

Visually impaired persons studying, building up skills, and supporting each other in the e-learning center.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The total budget for the project was approximately $50,000, with $32,650 coming from the Corporate Social Responsibility arm of the A K Khan Foundation. Chittagong University provided in-kind contributions, such as space for the centre, four additional desktop computers, utility costs, and security maintenance of the e-learning centre. YPSA provided the salaries of project personnel, additional accessible publications (such as 25 Braille books), and digitally accessible books. YPSA aims to scale up the programme by replicating the model in at least five more universities and creating an online self-learning portal in the next three to five years.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- 60 visually impaired students have received ICT-based skill development training as of 2021.
- The e-learning centre is equipped with over 200 digital audio books and 50 Braille books.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

NGO supporting the government with an accessible response to the pandemic

BELGIUM – FLANDERS AND BRUSSELS/INTER – FIGHTING ISOLATION DURING THE PANDEMIC

Inter is a local NGO based in Hasselt, Flanders, advocating for accessibility and inclusivity. To support inclusion during the pandemic and social distancing, and to fight the isolation of people with disabilities, Inter launched several initiatives. These include an online meeting platform, guidelines for the social distancing society, and accessibility guidelines for vaccination centres. Inter's activities were widely shared by the government as well as on regional television and in local newspapers.

Problem targeted

The pandemic raised several disability-related challenges for people with disabilities, such as increased isolation, inability to lip read due to face masks, and difficulties in social distancing.

Solution, innovation, and impact

Inter implemented several measures to ensure that people with disabilities were not left isolated during the pandemic. It created inclusive guidelines for the community during social distancing restrictions, and it supported governments and businesses to make their decisions and buildings as accessible as possible while adhering to COVID-19 regulations. In addition, guidelines were specifically developed and published to make vaccination centres more accessible to all. In response to daily life and work shifting rapidly to online, Inter developed guidelines through consultations with blind and hearing-impaired people for accessible online meetings and webinars. It also created a new online platform – called Circuit Sortie – that brought together both people with and without disabilities for activities in small groups.

Transparent face masks enabling lip reading is just one of the many diverse measures introduced by Inter during the pandemic .

Outlook, transferability, and funding

Inter is a direct partner of the Flemish Government and approximately a third of its work is funded by the Department of Equal Opportunities.

In rolling out Circuit Sortie, Inter worked with the Health Department of the Flemish Government. It aims to continue and grow Circuit Sortie beyond the pandemic as the initiative has proven to bring people together and improve inclusion in a sustainable way.

> "Everybody everywhere, that's our goal. And a pandemic is not going to stop us."
>
> Wendy Metten, General Director, Inter

Inter's activities were broadly supported, used by the government, and covered by the media. Through the Circuit Sortie IT-platform, almost 200 individuals have been matched to provide each other with company and support during the pandemic.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- 30 COVID-19 vaccination centres were helped to implement accessibility guidelines.
- 92 per cent of people surveyed rated the accessibility of the centres at 9 or 10 out of 10 points.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Ms. Marjolijn Clijsters
marjolijn.clijsters@inter.vlaanderen – https://inter.vlaanderen

A city offering a free 24-hour video-sign language translation service for all public services

BRAZIL – SÃO PAULO/SMPED – CENTRAL DE INTERMEDIAÇÃO EM LIBRAS APP

In 2018 the SMPED secretariat – a part of the city administration of São Paulo, Brazil – launched the Central de Intermediação em Libras (CIL), a free video-sign language translation service. CIL allows the hearing impaired to receive public services in Brazilian sign language without affecting the data download limit on their mobile device. The mobile application can be used any time and has provided over 580 hours of sign language translation in 2020, notably in medical services.

Problem targeted
People who speak only sign language often have difficulty communicating with municipal services without a translator.

Solution, innovation, and impact
CIL is a free service that operates as an app that can be downloaded to both Android and IOS smartphones. The service provides access to 24-hour Brazilian sign language (Libras) for use when communicating with municipal civil servants and emergency services personnel. Mobile network operators must agree to allow this service free of charge, an important feature given that a video call may easily consume 100MB of data volume. For example, if a deaf person has a medical appointment and the hospital professionals are not fluent in Libras, the person can make a video call via the app to a Libras interpreter who can translate the conversation. CIL allows for key details such as medical records or dosages to be communicated correctly, avoiding potential translation mistakes. Further, all emergency calls are fully supported by CIL. Between its launch in 2018 and mid-2021, CIL has been downloaded 9,470 times, received 20,347 incoming calls, and provided 1,327 hours of video call service.

> "CIL ensures inclusion, autonomy, and equality for deaf people to public services in São Paulo city."
>
> Silvia Grecco, Municipal Secretary for People with Disabilities, City of São Paulo.

Ms. Silvia Regina Grecco
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A person with a hearing impairment watches the sign language on a her smartphone while conversing with a security guard.

CIL usage has been further improved by legislation passed in June 2020 that defines all the minimum technical requirements (use of cameras, etc.) that municipal public services must meet.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
CIL costs are covered by the SMPD budget of approximately €40,000 per year. The app is free to download and is free for the end-user. The CIL model has already been adopted by other Brazilian states and cities, and the short-term goal is to increase usage of the app by 50 per cent between 2022 and 2025.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- CIL was downloaded 9,470 times between April 2018 and May 2021.
- Hours of services provided through CIL increased from 115 in 2018 to 589 in 2020.
- 20,347 calls were received by CIL between 2018 and 2021.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

A city organizing weekly conversations in public spaces with citizens in sign language

BRAZIL/CURITIBA CITY HALL – CONVERSATION IN LIBRAS

The Curitiba City Hall is part of the city administration of Curitiba, the capital of Brazil's southern state of Paraná. As part of its inclusion strategy, it launched the Conversation in Libras programme, offering weekly face-to-face meetings in its public spaces that improve the interaction and communication in Libras, the Brazilian sign language. When the pandemic hit, conversations switched to online. Between 2018 and 2020, some 4,500 citizens of Curitiba met and communicated in Libras.

Problem targeted
It can be difficult for deaf people to communicate with people who do not know Libras sign language that is guaranteed by the Brazilian Inclusion Law. Subsequently, this barrier hinders deaf people to access their rights.

Solution, innovation, and impact
To support the spread of Libras, the City of Curitiba decided to launch a Conversation in Libras series. In these weekly face-to-face meetings, fellow Curitibans aim to improve the interaction between deaf people and other citizens. The meetings are particularly useful for those who are unable to invest in Libras courses or have completed a formal course but do not have anyone to practice Libras with.

> "Libras Conversation allows people to listen with the eyes, talk with the hands, and feel in the heart."
>
> Rafael Greca, Mayor, City of Curitiba

The meetings prioritize the use of Libras, with the support of interpreters, and are centred around the deaf participants. The meetings discuss strategies to inform others on the history, language, and culture of the deaf community. Examples include casual meetings in bookstores, in which the Libras alphabet is introduced. The topics and formats are often decided by the community itself at the venue. The move to an online platform necessitated by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has helped to increase participation with people from other Brazilian cities and states.

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Libras-translators in remote action.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The model was designed to be inexpensive, with the use of Google Meet, and uses free public space for the in-person meetings. Any miscellaneous expenses are covered by the general budget of Curitiba City Hall. Due to its simplicity and affordability, the model is easily replicable in other countries or cities. In the coming years the project is aiming to encourage the participation of more people and to take the conversation to other public spaces, such as parks in the city of Curitiba. It also aims to develop formats – both online and in-person – for participants from other Brazilian cities and states.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Approximately 4,500 people have participated between 2018 and 2020.
- Past meetings have attracted participants aged 9 to 68.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

See corresponding Life Story on page 52.

Accessible platform screening events for 12 accessibility features

BRAZIL/ESCOLA DE GENTE – VEM CA ACCESSIBLE CULTURE APP

Escola de Gente is a large NGO based in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, which works on inclusion, accessibility, and diversity. In 2018 it created VEM CA, a free and accessible phone app that informs the user where and when accessible events are happening all over the country. Specifically, it enables searches for 12 accessibility features – such as captions, tactile flooring, sign language, and easy language – across 24 event categories, including theatres, cinemas, museums, etc. Between 2018 and 2021, VEM CA had featured almost 600 events.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities often do not participate fully in the cultural life of their cities due to a lack of information on accessibility provisions.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The VEM CA app is available on Android and iOS for free, and is fully accessible with sign language, subtitles, audio description, easy language, enlarged letters, and colour contrast. It provides information on cultural events – such as theatre performances, exhibitions, and movies – that users can attend in person; and since the COVID-19 pandemic it also provides information on cultural events taking place online. VEM CA provides details on 12 accessibility features and indicates which are offered at each event, including accessible seating, audio description, accessible restrooms, elevators/ramps, easy language, tactile flooring, and accessible publications. The app was created in consultation with people with disabilities, who now form part of its creative committee. More than 15,000 people downloaded VEM CA in 2019. In 2021, VEM CA was updated with the first online database for accessibility professionals to offer their services.

> "VEM CA will always be expanding, as without accessibility art and knowledge do not live."
>
> Claudia Werneck, founder of Escola de Gente

Outlook, transferability, and funding
VEM CA is financed by sponsorship from large companies and the app is free to the end users. Escola de Gente has created a plan for individuals or companies to make donations directly via the app, which will go towards maintenance and improvement. In addition, the plan includes the provision of app services sponsored by companies interested in offering their workforce accessible content on inclusion. Escola de Gente plans to triple the number of users through media campaigns and digital marketing. Other ambitions include making VEM CA a global reference for accessible apps, partnering with a university to conduct research through the app, and creating a network to train young people with and without disabilities about accessibility and inclusion.

Claudia Werneck of Escola de Gente shows the VEM CA app.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- VEM CA was downloaded over 15,000 times in 2019.
- 24 types of cultural events are listed on the app.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

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Audio-visual books in multiple accessible formats

BRAZIL/MAIS DIFERENÇAS – BOOKS IN MULTIPLE ACCESSIBLE FORMATS

Livros Em Múltiplos Formatos Acessíve is is an audio-visual software developed in 2014 by Mais Diferenças, an NGO based in the state of São Paulo, Brazil. The software provides a single audio-visual version of a book that incorporates text, narration, and interpretation in Brazilian sign language as well as other formats. As of 2021 more than 60 books have been produced and disseminated online, which have received more than 380,000 views. These books are also available in over 3,500 public, community, and school libraries.

Problem targeted
Brazil has high levels of illiteracy and many people do not have the habit of reading because they face multiple barriers to access books in traditional formats.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Mais Diferenças has created free and accessible audio-visual books that incorporate a range of accessible formats into one single version for children, youth, and adults – both with and without disabilities. People of various ages and with a range of disabilities were involved in every step of the programme development. For example, deaf individuals were involved in the translation of books into Brazilian sign language, and people with disabilities selected the titles, oversaw the development of the books, and reviewed the final product.

Experiencing the same digital book with different accessibility features of your choice.

> "A book in multiple accessible formats benefits all people, with and without disabilities."
>
> Carla Mauch, Founder and General Coordinator, Mais Diferenças

To promote access to books and an inclusive reading culture, Mais Diferenças trains the staff of educational and cultural institutions on inclusion and accessibility. The NGO also organizes inclusive reading sessions using its accessible audio-visual books that engage people with and without disabilities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The programme is sponsored by Brazil's municipal, state, and national institutions, such as the city of São Paulo and the Brazilian Ministry of Culture, as well as such corporate foundations as the Volkswagen Group Foundation and the Itaú Foundation for Education and Culture. In the coming years, Mais Diferenças plans to scale up its development of books and its promotion of inclusive reading culture by training other organizations to run inclusive reading sessions, clubs, and other activities.

The NGO has already trained librarians from ten countries and advised the public library systems of Brazil, Panama, and Costa Rica on accessibility.

Because the books are free and follow Universal Design principles, they have also benefitted people who communicate in Portuguese as a second language.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2014

- 60+ books have been viewed online 380,000+ times.
- 3,500 public, community, and school libraries have made the books available.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

See corresponding Life Story on page 79.

Accessible agriculture technology creating inclusive jobs in rural areas

CAMBODIA/LIGHT FOR THE WORLD – ACCESSIBLE AGRICULTURE

Light for the World is a global disability and development NGO based in Austria that works primarily in low-income rural communities. Since 2017 its Accessible Agriculture – The Agri-Lab Experience project has been assisting farmers with disabilities and older persons to participate in farming through the development of personalized assistive technology. Solutions are co-designed with users and have supported such processes as water transportation and mushroom growing. In 2021 the project covered six sites, including one in Indonesia.

Problem targeted
Agriculture can often be an inaccessible environment for farmers with disabilities and older persons.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Accessible Agriculture – The Agri-Lab Experience partners with local design and technology experts and focuses on the needs of individual farmers and the type of farming that they wish to carry out. Prototypes are then designed and tested by the end users, and where successful they are then scaled up.

Eight innovative farming solutions have been created, such as modified rice seeders for older farmers and motorized harvesting carts for mobility impaired farmers. The model has been adapted for diverse communities, including floating villages, and the Cambodian Ministry of Agriculture has shown interest in the model. In Indonesia the local partner, Pusat Rehabilitasi YAKKUM (PRY), has added an 'agrilab' to its existing Inclusive Villages programme, which is supported by the local village and district administration. The process was showcased to and supported by the district level government, and has been integrated into local agricultural planning. The project began as a pilot programme in 2017 in Cambodia, and it has since grown to cover six sites as of 2021, including in Indonesia

Personalized assistive technology, in this case a trailer for the wheelchair, support people with disabilities and older persons in farming.

> "If there is enough material in my village, I can make tools now by myself."
>
> CBD Participant

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The Agri-Lab Experience was initially funded through Light for the World's core funding, and it has since secured funding from a partner organization in Australia, from a European Foundation, as well as from a donor consortium. These organizations have supported the expansion into Indonesia. Moreover, the organization is starting to sell the developed innovations locally, generating sales for further growth. Light for the World Cambodia is now looking to expand the project into three Asian and three African countries over the coming years.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- Over 200 farmers have participated in the project to date.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Accessible Canada Act: first federal accessibility legislation in Canada

CANADA/GOVERNMENT OF CANADA – ACCESSIBLE CANADA ACT (ACA)

The ACA, passed by the Government of Canada in 2019, applies to all government departments and federally regulated agencies. It reflects input received through Canada's largest and most accessible consultation process. All legal entities are required to develop and publish multi-year accessibility plans and feedback mechanisms, enforced by the Accessibility Commissioner, who can also sanction with monetary penalties. A $229 million budget has been allocated to support the implementation.

Problem targeted
Although 22 per cent of Canadians live with a disability, there was no national law to make and enforce accessibility standards and regulations in the country until 2019.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The ACA is Canada's first national law on accessibility, whose purpose is to make Canada barrier-free by 2040. It applies to all organizations under federal jurisdiction, including the Government of Canada and parts of the private sector that are federally regulated, such as banking, telecommunications, and transportation. Organizations are required to adhere to accessibility regulations and develop accessibility plans and feedback mechanisms. Enforcement differs depending on the organization or sector. The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission oversees compliance and enforcement for broadcasting and telecommunications services; the Canadian Transportation Agency oversees compliance and enforcement for the transportation sector. For all other organizations under federal jurisdiction there is an Accessibility Commissioner, who can issue penalties of up to $250,000 per violation.

Part of the ACA: local policy makers meeting the community members on eye-level.

"ACA assures that all communities will welcome and celebrate the full participation of people with disabilities."

Bill Adair, Executive Director, Spinal Cord Injury Canada

The law also establishes Accessibility Standards Canada, which develops standards in areas such as the built environment and employment. These standards can then become mandatory regulations.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Some $226 million has been allocated to the ACA over six years. Parliament will review the ACA five years after the first regulation is made, and the responsible minister will launch independent reviews of the Act every ten years. Accessibility requirements will be incorporated into all Government of Canada departments and agencies going forward.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- 6,000 Canadians consulted for the development of the ACA.
- ACA penalties can amount to $250,000 per violation.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

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www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/accessible-people-disabilities/act-summary.html

Literacy app to stimulate reading development for children with Down Syndrome

CHILE/CEDETI – LA MESITA APP

The Catholic University of Chile is headquartered in Santiago de Chile. In 2017 its Research Centre CEDETi launched La Mesita, an app stimulating the reading development of children with Down Syndrome. The app allows users to explore several different thematic worlds, such as a nature reserve or the home. Each world contains about 25 words with illustrations, which can be selected for different activities. Between 2017 and 2021 the app has been downloaded more than 10,000 times. An English version has already been launched.

Problem targeted
According to UNESCO, illiteracy levels in people with disabilities exceed those of non-disabled populations, often due to inappropriate learning tools for different groups.

Solution, innovation, and impact
La Mesita is a flexible application that supports the reading development of children, targeted at those with Down Syndrome. Users can select a specific environment, such as a fair or an amusement park, and then drag illustrations to a virtual desktop where different literacy activities can be carried out. The application can be played independently, but the company of an adult or a child with more advanced reading skills is recommended. The application is based on scientific research and adapts to the user, allowing an endless number of activities to be generated according to the user's characteristics and needs. People with disabilities participated in the app development, including the design and testing phases. La Mesita can be downloaded for free on touch devices with iOS and Android operating systems. Research has shown that 69 per cent of participants made significant progress in literacy learning when using the app.

> "We have designed a space for conversation, entertaining, fun, and attractive for all children."
>
> Ricardo Rosas, Director, CEDETi UC

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The application was created through funding from donors, including the Agencia Nacional de Investigación y Desarrollo, a funding agency for high quality research. CEDETi's intention is to continue providing the app for free with the support of public and private funds. An English version of the app, called Tiny Table, was launched in 2020, and CEDETi is aiming to expand the geographical reach by incorporating additional languages. There are also plans to include new features to ensure the app stays up to date, while undertaking additional research based on the experience of users to measure and improve the impact of the app.

Playfully expanding the vocabulary with La Mesita.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- In 2020 the Spanish version of the app had more than 6,000 downloads.
- 69 per cent of users made significant progress in learning when using the app, according to an internal impact analysis.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

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Model for accessible parks and nature spaces going international

CHILE/FUNDACIÓN ERES – SENDERISMO SIN LIMITES

Fundación Eres is a Chilean national DPO that initiated the programme Senderismo sin Limites (Hiking Without Limits) in 2015, ensuring that hiking and natural spaces can be accessed by all persons with disabilities. The programme incorporates training for tourism professionals, self-assessment tools, improvement plans, and single-wheel transport vehicles. It started in the Santiago metropolitan area and has since expanded to other provinces as well as to Paraguay.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities, in particular those mobility impairments, often cannot enjoy large parts of the natural environment due to inaccessible paths and hiking routes.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Senderismo sin Limites uses multiple methods to make natural spaces more accessible to all, and currently manages 16 national and private parks and green spaces. The programme works with civil servants, tourism professionals of the National Tourism Service, and future professionals; and park rangers from the Corporación Nacional Forestal (National Forestry Corporation) have also been trained. Further, Senderismo sin Limites has designed self- assessment tools and action plans to support the improvement of tourism organizations, and has produced a single-wheel carriage to help people with mobility impairments to reach natural spaces that have poor accessibility.

"We work collaboratively every single day to ensure everyone's access to nature, so we can all enjoy and take care of it."

Glenda Durán, Founder, Fundación Eres.

Senderismo sin Limites started in the Santiago metropolitan region and has been replicated in eight of Chile's 16 provinces as well as in Paraguay, where the practice is run by the Sendero de Chile Foundation, a local NGO.

Ms Glenda Virginia Durán Caro
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Enjoying nature to the fullest: People with mobility impairments can experience national parks, for example, in a single-wheel carriage.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Senderismo sin Limites is supported by public and private funding, along with donations. The organization also generates revenues through the sale and marketing of its unicycles to tourism providers, along with charging for accessibility training.

In the next few years Fundación Eres is aiming to improve accessibility in the recreation and leisure sectors, with a focus on the benefits for those with mental health conditions who have been affected by the pandemic. The model has been replicated in Paraguay, and training activities have started in Bolivia (run by the Comité Impulsor del Turismo Accesible de Bolivia) and Guatemala (organized by the Rotary Club of La Reina).

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- Three courses have been designed on accessible tourism.
- More than 60 future professionals have been trained.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Online accessibility training for civil servants

CHILE/SENADIS – PREPARADOS PARA INCLUIR

SENADIS, the National Disability Service of Chile, is a government entity and part of the Chilean Ministry of Social Development and Family. In 2020, SENADIS launched an online accessibility training programme for civil servants that offered three courses centred around: (1) the Right to Universal Accessibility: Challenges for Public Services; (2) Universal Accessibility: Basis of Building and Public Space Regulations; and (3) Universal Access to Information and Communications for the Inclusion of People with Disabilities.

Problem targeted
Civil servants in Chile currently do not have a suite of courses that teaches them the necessary knowledge or skills to implement accessibility and inclusion requirements.

Solution, innovation, and impact
SENADIS collaborated with the National Directorate of Civil Service, another government entity, to create a suite of online accessibility courses that target the needs of civil servants throughout Chile. The online courses offered via the Campus Servicio Civil online portal are the first of their kind in Chile and national in scope. All three courses are open to all 960,000 Chilean civil servants, being designed both for those who interact directly with citizens and those who develop or manage public services and programmes. The training is for beginners, consisting of three self-paced courses that cover topics such as international and national legal and regulatory frameworks related to accessibility and inclusion, accessibility in the built environment, public spaces, and access to information and communication.

Course participants must pass several tests to receive a certificate upon completion. The course series was launched in 2020, and by 2021 more than 2,400 civil servants have enrolled and more than 700 have completed the training.

You never stop learning: A civil servant participating in the SENADIS online accessibility training programme.

> "The courses deepened my knowledge on disability and inclusion and bettered my community outreach."
>
> Catalina Peña, Professional, Municipality of Buin

Outlook, transferability, and funding
SENADIS funds the training through the Public Services Accessibility Programme, which supports public sector institutions to develop and implement accessibility action plans.

By 2022, SENADIS aims to add two new courses to the course directory; to reach more civil servants; to open its courses to institutions outside the public sector; and to use the training to support the creation of a national accessibility reporting system.

SENADIS training can be transferred to other countries since more than half of the regulations already meet international standards.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- 2,000+ civil servants have been trained between 2020 and 2021.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

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Multinational IT-manufacturer developing an accessible hiring and workplace programme

CHINA ZHUHAI/FLEX LTD. – CORPORATE BARRIERFREE PROGRAMME

Headquartered in Singapore, Flex Ltd. (Flex) is a multinational provider for technology, supply chain, and electronic manufacturing solutions. In 2015 Flex Zhuhai, the China subsidiary company with more than 12,000 employees, set up a comprehensive barrier-free programme – including accessible recruitment and internship programmes, improved workplaces, and IT accessibility. The percentage of employees with disabilities has increased from 0.1 per cent in 2015 to 2.0 per cent in 2021.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities can face many barriers to the workplace, including during the recruitment process, with IT equipment, and with office navigation.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Flex Zhuhai worked with NGOs, the government, and accessibility experts to improve accessibility throughout the organization. As a result, the company has built ramps and elevators, installed alarm systems with lights, employed sign language teachers, put in place improved accessible IT infrastructure (screen readers, larger fonts, higher contrasts), employed job coaches to support people with intellectual disabilities, and installed tactile flooring and strong colour contrast signs for indoor orientation.

> "The barrier-free programme provides equal job opportunities for people with different types of disabilities."
>
> Angela Gu, Global Inclusion & Diversity Manager, Flex Zhuhai

In addition, Disability Equality Trainings (DET) are held for all employees, and various communication and feedback mechanisms are in place for people with disabilities to provide input into the measures. Between 2015 and 2021 the number of employees with disabilities increased from 13 to 239. Employees hired have a range of disabilities, including hearing and speaking impairments, wheelchair users, intellectual disabilities, and visual impairments. Notably, the performance measurement, salary, and social benefits are the same for all employees.

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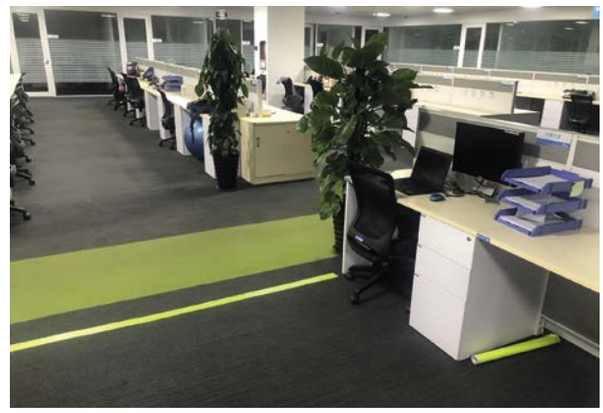

An accessible office of Flex in China.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Chinese Government policy requires large organizations to ensure that at least 1.5 per cent of their workforce is made up of people with disabilities. Organizations that fail to comply are required to pay an additional tax penalty. Flex Zhuhai is able to utilize these penalties as part of its overall funding strategy. In addition, the China Disabled People Federation provides a subsidy towards the programme. As part of its pledge to The Valuable 500, Flex Ltd. is committing to increase employment of people with disabilities by 10 per cent or more by 2025.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- Between 2015 and 2021 the number of employees with disabilities grew from 13 to more than 200.
- People with disabilities make up 2 per cent of the workforce.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Government-sponsored radio station targeting blind and visually impaired listeners

COLOMBIA/INCIRADIO – LA RADIO INCLUYENTE

In 2015 the Instituto Nacional para Ciegos (INCI), part of the Ministry of Education of Colombia, launched a radio station to produce audio content targeted towards the needs of people who are blind or visually impaired. It includes programmes and podcasts on a range of topics, such as arts and culture, stories, law, etc. In 2021, six years after its launch, the radio station has over 34 programmes and 30,000 listeners not only in Colombia but in almost 100 countries.

Problem targeted
Radio stations rarely produce content, news, and information catered to and relevant for people with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
INCI radio started as a tool to strengthen the communication skills of people with visual impairments in Colombia. In 2021 the station produced approximately 32 programmes a week that address such disability-specific topics as inclusive education, labour inclusion, paralympic sport, stories, digital literacy, culture, and legal guidance.

One example is a programme called "Letras a ciegas," which motivates listeners to read and updates them with new books. Another is "La voz jurídica," in which law students and other experts provide guidance and legal advice to blind and visually impaired people of Colombia.

"INCI Radio is a station with inclusive content that has managed to unite the population from Colombia and the world."

Carlos Parra Dussan, CEO Instituto Nacional Para Ciegos INCI

Anyone can listen to the radio station for free by downloading the INCI radio mobile application, available on Google Play and Apple's AppStore. In addition, RCN Radio, one of the main radio networks in Colombia, has created an alliance with INCI to disseminate its content. In 2021, 28 people with visual impairments were involved in the daily radio productions.

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Now we are talking – the radio hosts produce 32 programmes a week.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
INCI Radio is a subsidiary of the National Institute for the Blind (INCI), which is an entity of the Ministry of National Education. The annual budget is approximately $40,000, which includes hosting the streaming platform and payment for a team of five members who are in charge of recording, production, and participation in programmes. It has a non-profit model designed to inform and create a network. External collaborators who participate in the station do soon on a volunteer basis.

Over the next few years the radio station wants to increase its outreach and include more programmes for its target audience.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- In 2021, INCI Radio had 30,000+ listeners in 99 countries.
- 29 out of 34 specialized programmes feature people with visual impairment.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

A city collecting all the information about its accessibility for a smartphone app

CROATIA/CITY OF ZAGREB – ACCESSIBLE ZAGREB ONLINE SERVICE

Accessible Zagreb is a multi-layer service created by the City of Zagreb providing information on city accessibility via a smartphone app. It provides information on the accessibility of public buildings, facilities, streets, and pedestrian zones. In 2021 public transport accessibility was initiated, including real-time information on the location and accessibility of each vehicle, to be released in 2022. The app is based on cooperation with local DPOs and is collecting data via crowdsourcing of both service providers and users.

Problem targeted
City navigation without an information system can be difficult for persons with disabilities due to inaccessible buildings, streets, and public transport.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Accessible Zagreb service provides several layers of city accessibility information. The first layer targets buildings and facilities, referencing them as accessible, inaccessible, or partially accessible, with detailed listings of accessibility features. The second layer targets city streets and possible obstacles, such as stairs, high curbs, and insufficient pavement width. The third layer provides real-time information on public transport, such as the location and accessibility of individual buses and trams.

"The Accessible Zagreb service is being developed by persons with disabilities through a co-creation process based on design thinking."

Mustafa Sharifi, Project Coordinator

All key public infrastructure data is maintained by the respective service providers, and there is active participation by citizens. The service is accessed through a mobile app and web page in Croatian, English, and German. The service was developed in cooperation with various associations of persons with disabilities, the University of Zagreb, the private IT sector, and the City of Zagreb. The service covers over 2,500 buildings and features 20km^2 of mapped streets.

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https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.crocoder.pristupacnizgb

Quickly checking the accessibility before crossing the street.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The City of Zagreb and the Office for Social Protection and Persons with Disabilities will provide continued funding for the development and maintenance of the service. Additional resources have been obtained through Horizon 2020, an EU financial instrument to drive economic growth through research and innovation. Future service development plans for tactile surfaces and guidelines, exact geo-coordinates for building entrances targeting blind users, adding communication channels with public transport vehicle drivers, as well as expanding the service into additional languages.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- The app provides details of accessibility features for over 2,500 buildings.
- Between 2019 and mid-2021, over 2,500 people have used the service.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

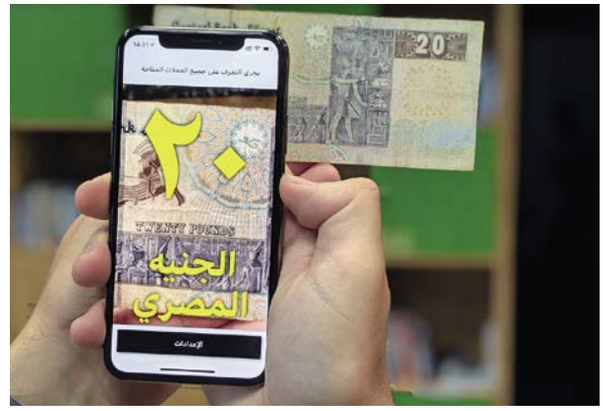
Mobile app that identifies banknotes from more than 100 currencies

CZECH REPUBLIC/HAYAKU – CASH READER

In 2019, Hayaku – a start-up company based in Brno, Czech Republic – launched Cash Reader, a smartphone app that enables persons with visual impairments to identify banknotes from many countries. The user points their smartphone's camera at a banknote and the app announces the currency and denomination, either through speech or vibration patterns. The basic version is free, and the full version is a subscription or payment model. In 2021, Cash Reader was able to identify more than 100 currencies.

Problem targeted
People with visual impairments can find it difficult to identify banknotes when running a business or when paying with cash.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Cash Reader is an app available on iOS or Android phones that identifies banknote values for almost every currency globally. Users point their smartphone's camera at the banknote and the app informs them of the value, either using speech or vibration patterns, which provides more security in public places.



No risk of confusion: accurate identification of a banknote.

"Cash Reader makes banknotes accessible to strengthen the independence of the visually impaired worldwide."

Tomas Jelinek, Founder, Cash Reader

The app can read even a small portion of a bank note at almost any distance and at various angles or light conditions thanks to Artificial Intelligence and deep learning. To make this happen, over 10,000 photos are taken of each type of banknote in circulation to account for different conditions and surroundings. By 2021, Cash Reader has been used by more than 150,000 people around the world. The technology has also been implemented into third-party devices aimed at visually impaired or elderly people, such as smart glasses and specialized phones.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Hayaku offers the basic version of Cash Reader for free, and a subscription model that is targeted towards companies. The full version is available as a monthly or yearly subscription ($4 to $12) or one-time purchase ($14 to $28). The pricing is different depending on the standard of living in each region. The money-reading technology is also being licenced as an easy-to-integrate Software Development Kit for companies, such as when integrating into smart glasses. The company employs six blind "ambassadors" in places such as Argentina, China, and India to promote the Cash Reader in their region, as well as to perform necessary translations and organize business opportunities. In the coming years Hayaku aims to collect banknotes from African and Asian countries, with a long-term goal of making every banknote in the world accessible.

Mr. Tomas Jelinek
tomas@cashreader.app – https://cashreader.app/de

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- The app was downloaded more than 150,000 between 2019 and 2021.
- In 2021, Cash Reader can distinguish among more than 100 currencies.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Smartphone app connecting visually impaired users in need with supportive volunteers

DENMARK/BE MY EYES APP

Be My Eyes, a Danish start-up company with headquarters in San Francisco, United States, introduced a free app in 2015 that connects blind and low-vision people with sighted volunteers. The app consists of a two-way audio and one-way video feed that allows the sighted volunteer to be the eyes of the blind user. It can be used at home, at work, and in public spaces to complete almost any task. In 2021 the app was available in more than 180 languages and had 5.25 million volunteers.

Problem targeted
Blind and low-vision people often rely on a small network of friends and family to assist them with everyday tasks.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Be My Eyes is free of charge and can be used on both iOS and Android devices. Blind or low-vision users request visual assistance through the app for any kind of task, such as checking expiry dates, reading instructions, or navigating new surroundings. They are connected with a sighted volunteer through a live video call, who guides the user to point their camera in a certain direction or turn on their flashlight. The solution has steadily expanded and has been adapted into the so-called Specialized Help service, an extension of Be My Eyes targeted towards companies. It is used by corporations such as Google and Procter & Gamble and by the UK National Health Service, connecting users with representatives for accessible customer support. An internal Google analysis showed that clients using the service expressed a satisfaction rate of 90 per cent. In 2021 the app had over 340,000 blind and visually impaired users, and calls were being made in more than 150 countries.

> "Be My Eyes harnesses the power of tech and human generosity to enable people to live independently."
>
> Alexander Hauerslev Jensen, CCO of Be My Eyes

Mr. Alexander Hauerslev Jensen
alexander@bemyeyes.com – www.bemyeyes.com

A sighted volunteer is receiving a request for visual assistance via the BeMyEyes app.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Companies pay a yearly fee to access either Specialized Help or Be My Eyes for Work, allowing them to gain insights into how to make their services more accessible in the future while providing improved customer support. The paying corporate customers allow the service to be free for the end user. The company aims to grow the number of companies using Specialized Help and Be My Eyes for Work services. They will also improve its use in the field of health care, where it already offers pharmaceutical and at-home COVID-19 testing services with its partners.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- There are currently 300,000+ blind and low-vision users and 5.25M volunteers.
- The app is used in 150+ countries in 180+ languages.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Collection of digital and technical solutions for universally designed workplaces

DENMARK/NORDIC WELFARE CENTRE – THE FUTURE OF WORKING LIFE

The Nordic Welfare Centre is part of the Nordic Council of Ministers' social and health sector, consisting of eight Northern European and regional governments. The Future of Working Life programme compiles knowledge on digital and technical solutions for universally designed workplaces, targeted towards employers, employees, and experts. In 2021 its solutions have been shared with Nordic authorities that support people with disabilities in working life, such as all 94 job centres in Denmark and the 242 employment offices in Sweden.

Problem targeted
There is a lack of systematic information about the tools and solutions that enable a universally designed workplace.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Future of Working Life programme identifies and provides solutions in 18 technology areas that have the potential to improve the situation in the labour market for people with disabilities. It supports employers, employees, and civil servants by informing them about technical solutions and how to implement them. Examples include new possibilities of telepresence and teleworking, as outlined by the Technical University of Denmark, which has developed a VR-based simulator that enables persons with disabilities to train robotic elements using gaze-control. As a result, persons with disabilities get to shape the product development cycle using innovative tools in industries, such as robotics.

"The project has put digital solutions on the agenda. This will create opportunities for people with disabilities."

Ingrid Ihme, Director, Telenor Open Mind

The growth of the programme has been supported by two webinars, which had 650 registered attendees and have since been published on YouTube. The information has also been distributed to all job centres in Denmark and employment offices in Sweden and Norway, covering around 15,000 employees.

Mr. Lars Lindberg
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The future of work is inclusive: a universally designed workplace in Scandinavia.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The project's annual cost of €165,000 is funded by the Labour Market Committee of the Nordic Committee of Senior Officials for Labour. As of 2021 discussions are taking place with Nordic authorities about continuing the work, and with research funders about increasing investment for research and innovation beyond the €150,000 grant that currently funds the majority of the project. The Nordic Welfare Centre will also review internal proposals on how to further grow the repository of digital and technical solutions, including the option to source peer-reviewed articles published in languages other than English.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- Over 4,000 peer-reviewed articles have been produced.
- Two webinars with 1,000 live viewers were organized.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

Smartphone app that offers audio subtitles to foreign language movies and series

DENMARK/SUBREADER APP

SubReader is a start-up company based in Copenhagen, Denmark, founded in 2016. The SubReader smartphone app reads subtitles of movies and TV-series aloud, thus supporting all persons with reading difficulties such as dyslexia or visual impairments. The app, which can be used independently, employs technological (non-human) voices, making it compatible with an unlimited number of films and television programmes. In 2021, SubReader users watched more than 500 hours of movies every day.

Problem targeted
Enjoying movies in different languages when using subtitles can be difficult for people with dyslexia, visual impairments, or language disabilities, as well as for younger children and the elderly.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Users can download the SubReader app to their smartphone, then search for thousands of movies and TV series across streaming services. The app can then be automatically synchronized with the audio track and the user can choose a preferred voice. Most importantly, the app enables users with reading difficulties to be independent of others. Also, since the app is used with headphones each individual can enjoy the movie with others without interfering their experience. SubReader is also used by younger children who have not yet learned to read quickly enough, and by older people who find subtitles too fast to keep up.

"Today I saw an English film for the first time in my life – SubReader has opened a new world for me."

Camilla Møller, user

The app is available in more than 40 languages and is used in homes, cinemas, and at schools. In 2021, SubReader was available in more than 100 cinemas in Denmark, Sweden, and the Netherlands.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Parts of the app are available for free use at home, with extras – such as streaming services – available by subscription. Cinemas pay for a SubReader server, which allows the service to be free for their patrons. For schools, either the municipality or the individual schools can purchase a licence, which allows the students free use.

The main objective in the coming years is to continue expanding into new markets and to develop the product to include more streaming services and TV channels. Other aims are to build in the possibility for using the app with live TV and videos, along with making it available for more people by providing descriptive text in addition to the subtitles.

A family enjoying foreign language movies together, with the mother receiving the audio-translation via earphone.

Ms. Isabelle Broddén
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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2016

- Between 2016 and 2021, the app had 100,000+ downloads.
- During the same period, people have streamed more than 120,000+ hours of film.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Mobile phone-based information service for disability-related topics

ETHIOPIA/ECDD – MINCH PLATFORM

The Ethiopian Center for Disability and Development (ECDD) is an NGO with offices in Addis Ababa. In 2021, ECDD launched Minch, an interactive voice-response telephone platform to connect people with disabilities, as well as others, to disability-related information in Amhari, the Ethiopian national language. The toll-free service provides users with audio information or text messages on topics such as health, skills training, and employment. In the first half of 2021 more than 24,000 calls were made to the platform.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities living in rural areas often have little access to information such as finding suitable education or gaining new skills.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Minch is accessed using a toll-free number through a basic mobile phone and requires no Internet connection. Users can navigate to the information they require using voice commands or with an SMS-based option available for hearing impaired users. Information includes topics of work and skills, vocational training, general disability information, upcoming events, education, and health. The service is aimed at sharing information and collaborating between people with disabilities and others, such as family members, caregivers, rehabilitation service providers, government officials, and providers of assistive aides, devices, and technology. The programme is a direct result of participation in the Zero Project Impact–Transfer programme. A similar service – Enable Vaani – has been running in India for several years by the Bangalore-based NGO Enable India, which supported ECDD to replicate the model in Ethiopia.

> "Minch is a one-stop shop, free to use, and interactive telephone platform."
>
> Simon Getahun, Executive Director (ECDD)

Outlook, transferability, and funding
ECDD secured a three-year funding contract with the United Nations Population Fund, which covers much of the project costs. Minch is also partially funded by Ethiotelecom, a leading telecommunications company in Ethiopia, through its Corporate Social Responsibility programmes. ECDD is continuing to seek extensions and different funding streams from other UN agencies, bilateral organizations, and other donors.

ECDD plans to use Artificial Intelligence to make Minch a social collaborative platform and to develop a mobile app that will better engage users with hearing impairments. In addition, ECDD will add regional languages for specific regions of Ethiopia, along with creating a recruitment team to support callers who seek information and assistance regarding job vacancies.

A women recording disability-related information for the Minch platform.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2021

- Minch received over 50,000 calls until the end of September 2021.
- Approximately 46 per cent of all calls concern general updates and upcoming events.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

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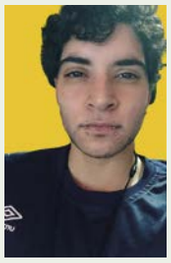
Life Stories from around the world

THE STORY OF KAITO BENAYON, AN ADVOCATE, CAMPAIGNER, AND USER OF THE ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND TOOLKIT

“Sign language helps not only deaf people. As an autistic person I benefit from this learning as well.”

Curitiba, Brazil



My name is Kaito and I am autistic. Learning Libras, the Brazilian sign language, is very important to me. There are moments in my day-to-day life when I am nonverbal. That does not mean that I do not want to communicate, but that I am not comfortable using my voice to do so. Also, noises and sounds can disturb me, so sign language helps me a lot.

Since I use headphones almost every time that I am out of my house, with sign language I am still able to talk to people and feel comfortable doing so.

More people should understand the importance of sign language. All people should join the conversation!

See also Factsheet on page 36.

THE STORY OF WANDA NASTAROWICZ, USER AND ADVISOR OF ŁÓDŹ AGGLOMERATION RAILWAY

“The most important thing for me is accessing information through audio and Braille.”

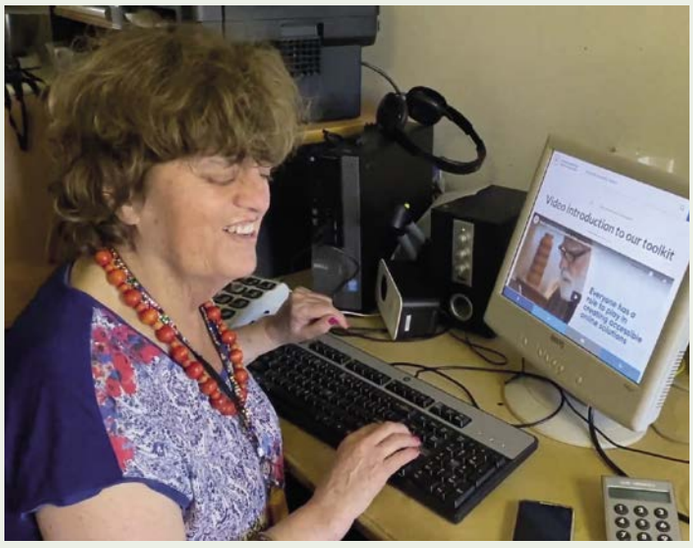
Łódź, Poland

I belong to the group of people with visual disabilities since early childhood, and I am also a member of the older generation, having been born in 1954. I move independently with a white cane, with a guide dog, or with an accompanying person. For me, the ability to leave home on my own, to move around the city and beyond its borders, is extremely important. Whenever possible, I choose to travel by train.

Since Łódź Agglomeration Railway started operating, my travels have become much easier. The most important thing for me is accessing information through audio and Braille. Convex seat markings allow you to find a place on your own. Braille buttons next to doors and in the toilets allow me to travel independently.

I am very proud that I was part of this project, actively participating in marking 20 trains with Braille signs. I also participated in the training of the train crew. This was very important for the mutual understanding between passengers and crew members, and for ensuring their full professionalism towards blind passengers.

See also Factsheet on page 74.



THE STORY OF GISELLE – ADVOCATE, CAMPAIGNER AND USER OF THE ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY POLICY AND TOOLKIT

As an advocate, I now have a practical how-to resource that I can share.

Sydney, Australia

I am blind and my guide dog, D'Artagnan, is my eyes when I am out and about in the physical world. But I also want to access the amazing digital world. While a computer or smartphone together with assistive technology bring the digital world to my fingertips (for example, I can correspond with my friends, read the newspapers, research subjects of interest), I still encounter accessibility barriers daily, even when I need to access essential digital services.

For me, the Online Accessibility Policy and Toolkit is impactful in several ways. As a blind digital technology user, the Toolkit contributes to removing the barriers that I face and expanding my access to the larger digital world.

As an advocate, I now have a practical how-to resource that I can share with ICT developers or policy and lawmakers when I speak about digital accessibility. In 2015, I started a campaign under the Digital Gap Initiative banner after resolving that something had to be done to bring about systemic accessibility reforms across Australia's legal and social policy frameworks.

My late father, who was an electronics engineer who designed a robotic arm, insisted that accessibility barriers made no sense in the digital world. He would take my arm and move it about and would say, "If I want my robotic arm to do this, I programme it to do this. It's all about coding." His words have been the driving force for my digital accessibility advocacy work for 20 years now.

See also Factsheet on page 28.

THE STORY OF NIKITA, A CHILD WITH CEREBRALY PALSY SUPPORTED BY PROJECT SAMBHAV

Since the parents are seeing these improvements, they are eager to make even greater efforts themselves.

Buipal village, Madhya Pradesh, India

Nikita was born with cerebral palsy into a poor family. Her father is a bus driver and her mother a housewife. Nikita has high support needs, but because she lives in a remote village she was deprived of rehabilitation services.

In 2018, at the age of four, Nikita was enrolled in the tele-rehabilitation Project Sambhav through the project's affiliated partner organization, St. Paul Service Society. Through Project Sambhav a proper assessment and an individual rehabilitation plan were prepared, and home-based therapy was initiated by the local facilitator.

Nikita's mother was coached on basic therapy, like proper positioning, stretching exercises, and functional activities. Regular monitoring and real-time parent guidance and counselling were provided by an expert from Project Sambhav.

As a result, with the participation of parents and the efforts of the facilitator, Nikita's condition started improving, particularly a reduction in excessive salivation and improvement in hand coordination while handling objects. Today she can sit without support, is able to stand with support, and can walk through the parallel bar.

Nikita's parents say they are delighted with their daughter's progress and are eager to make even greater efforts for her further improvement.

See also Factsheet on page 60.

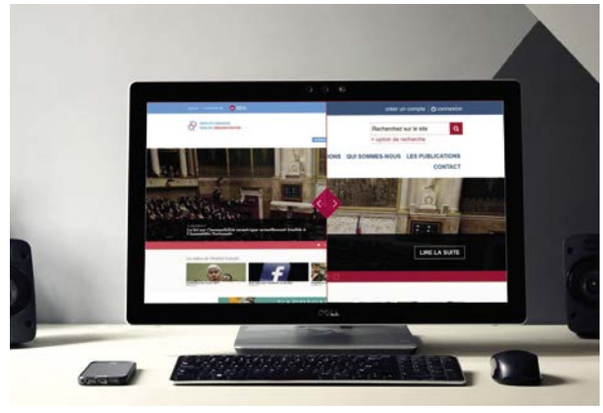
Free browser-extension to adapt websites with a variety of accessibility features

FRANCE – JAPAN, UNITED STATES, ETC./FACIL'ITI WEBSITE ADAPTION TOOLS

In 2018 FACIL'iti – a start-up company based in Limoges, France – launched its website and intranet adaptation tool for companies to improve accessibility for their users with visual, physical, and/or intellectual impairments. The tool allows for a large set of adaptations to the user's screen (computer, tablet, or smartphone), such as larger characters as well as enlarged click zones or reading aids. The service is free for end users, is easy to install, and in 2021 had more than 800,000 users globally.

Problem targeted
Many websites are not accessible for persons with disabilities, and companies often lack the skills or resources to improve accessibility.

Solution, innovation, and impact
FACIL'iti makes websites more accessible without affecting their code, structure, or content, which would be costly and complicated to modify. Instead, the service adapts the way a website appears on the user's screen through the user's own browser. Many different support options, such as larger fonts or greater screen brightness, are available. Users select what they need, and the screen adapts instantly.



A bigger font size on your website for those with low vision.

"FACIL'iti is on a crusade to fight e-exclusion at work and on the web by offering a custom-made browsing experience."

Yves Cornu, General Manager of FACIL'iti

Users can choose between pre-defined profiles for specific disabilities or conditions, such as low vision, multiple sclerosis, and dyslexia, or build their own profile according to their needs. The service was tested by 14,000 people before going to market. It is free for end users, does not collect data about them, and does not require an account. The profile they set on their browser applies to all websites that have installed FACIL'iti.

First launched in France in 2018, in 2021 hundreds of companies such as EDF, Lacoste, and Total subscribe to the service for their websites or intranet solutions. Internal research showed that 81 per cent of users want to have FACIL'iti installed permanently.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
FACIL'iti is available for free for NGOs. Corporate customers pay a one-time set-up fee and a service subscription. FACIL'iti had an annual turnover of €1.5 million in 2020. The company has already expanded to Japan, the United States, and other European countries, and the service is compatible with many languages. FACIL'iti will continue to conduct research and development to add new adaptations, and over the next three years will focus on more adaptations for persons with intellectual disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- FACIL'iti has approximately 800,000 end users in 2021.
- The company has several hundred corporate customers in France, Japan, and the United States.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

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Web-browser extension for looking up explanations in sign language

FRANCE/SIGNES DE SENS – LA BULLE ELIX

Signes De Sens is an NGO located in Lille, France, that specialises in Universal Design and accessibility features for persons with disabilities. In 2018 it introduced Elix Bubble, a free extension for web browsers like Edge, Chrome, or Safari. Users can look up words or expressions and access sign language videos via the bilingual French/French Sign Language Elix Dictionary without leaving the web page. In 2021 the Elix Dictionary contained more than 40,000 signs and expressions, and Elix Bubble had more than 1,500 users.

Problem targeted
Using the Internet can be difficult for people who are deaf or hard of hearing due to the need to constantly switch between tabs to find the definition of a word.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Signes de Sens has for several years been providing Internet users with a bilingual French/French sign language (FSL) video dictionary. As of 2018, FSL users can now access Elix Dictionary at the click of a button when browsing the Internet using the Elix Bubble. This browser extension provides translation of text on web pages via a tooltip (a box opens when right clicking a word), meaning users do not have to leave the page. The dictionary also offers multiple meanings of words.

> "Elix Bubble improves the lives of deaf people by facilitating access to reading and written French on the web."
>
> Simon Houriez, CEO, Signes De Sens

Users can also request sign language videos that have not already been requested and share the videos on social networks. The project collaborates with people who are deaf as critics, contributors, and promotors, and several deaf employees are involved in the project itself. The services are aimed at deaf people practicing sign language along with professionals, caregivers, educators, and family members. As of 2021 there were 71,000 active users of the Elix Dictionary, with 1,500 using Elix Bubble.

Mr. Simon Houriez
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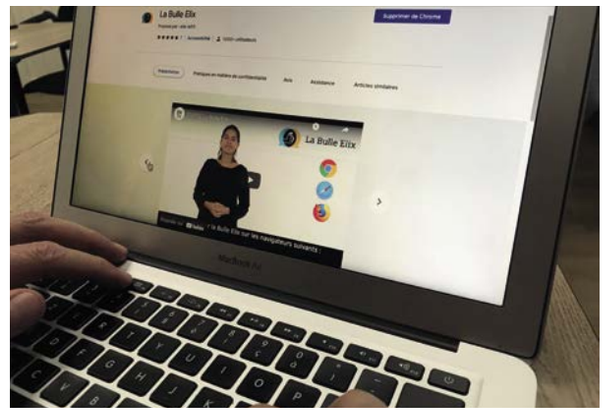

What a sign language to text dictionary looks like.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Elix and Elix Bubble are financed by a range of grants, including public funding from the French Ministry of Culture, and individuals and foundations. Other models are being explored to ensure financial sustainability, including income through advertisements, new paid features, or the sale of features such as of books and games.

Signes de Sens is aiming to have 150,000 regular users of Elix Bubble, along with expanding it to other countries, by 2025. Another goal is to explore the possibilities of a gateway between various sign languages, such as American Sign Language and others.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- The Elix Dictionary had 71,000 users in 2021.
- Around 6,000 people use the Elix Dictionary every day.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Inclusive design agency promoting access to arts and culture

FRANCE/TACTILE STUDIO – INCLUSIVE & MULTI-SENSORY PATHWAYS

Tactile Studio – an inclusive design agency and workshop headquartered in Paris, France – creates accessible, multisensory experiences for museums and other cultural institutions by combining tactile, acoustic, visual, and olfactory elements targeted at all persons, including those with visual impairments. Tactile Studio has offices in Germany and Canada; and several of its clients have received awards, such as the Gruuthusemuseum in Bruges, Belgium.

Problem targeted
Experiences offered by cultural institutions, such as exhibitions and tours, are often not accessible to visitors with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Tactile Studio uses a universal design approach to make cultural content accessible for all visitors, often combining digital and multisensory elements. Their projects link tools such as sensory stations that use touch, smell, sound, and sight; interactive devices; relief depictions of images, architecture, and objects; and tactile museum labels. These incorporate Braille, large print, contrasted writing, and other inclusive design features.

"In museums, thinking inclusively helps to create a highly stylized content for all."

Philippe Moreau, Founder, Tactile Studio

Tactile Studio works with its customers to design the various tools using sketches and 3D rendering. The company then enlists people with different disabilities and of different ages and cultural backgrounds to test the prototypes to ensure they are inclusive. Once tested and approved, the tools are manufactured by their WAM (We Are Makers) production team. The company also trains the staff of cultural institution. Between 2015 and 2021, Tactile Studio had worked with clients in ten countries in Europe and North America.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Tactile Studio uses a personalized sales model. Each project is unique, and costs vary depending on the type of tools and devices that are developed, and on which materials and techniques are used. Clients typically pay for a project through their annual accessibility budgets in combination with private and public funding. Tactile Studio will continue its multisensory pathway approach, which leads from basic accessibility needs to full inclusion and the creation of shared spaces of all audiences. It will do so by working with more cultural institutions to explore hybrid exhibition models using digital and multisensory tools and devices to make cultural content not only more accessible but an experience for the various senses.

A hybrid orientation plan for the Parc de La Villette in Paris.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- Since 2015, 250 inclusive projects have been created in more than 130 cultural institutions.
- 32 cultural institutions have made a complete multisensory trail, like the Louvre Paris with 30 devices.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

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See corresponding Life Story on page 78.

Wheelchair control via smart glasses

GERMANY/MUNEVO – MUNEVO DRIVE

In 2019 the technology company Munevo, based in Munich, Germany, introduced munevo DRIVE – a technology based on smart glasses that allows the steering of a wheelchair through head movements. The glasses are easily connected to any conventional wheelchair via a small adapter, thus supporting those users who are unable to steer their electronic wheelchair through the conventional joystick. Munevo works with specialist dealers and manufacturers regarding the product's distribution, and in 2021 it had over 100 users in more than five countries.

Problem targeted
Many wheelchair users are unable to steer standard electric wheelchairs using their own hands or conventional steering devices.

Solution, innovation, and impact
munevo DRIVE is a hands-free wheelchair control system that allows the user to steer their wheelchair with head movements using smart glasses that pick-up sensors and translate them into control signals. These signals are transmitted to the wheelchair control unit via a small adapter, which can connect to any conventional electric wheelchair. The adapter is quick to install and to calibrate according to the user's usual posture and current sitting position.

Steering the wheelchair with the movements of her eyes.

"munevo DRIVE makes life worth living again."

Dirk, a test user of munevo DRIVE

munevo DRIVE also allows users to share their location in case of an emergency, adjust their seating position, and take and share pictures using a camera integrated into the glasses. Munevo collaborated with the Pfennigparade Foundation, an assisted living community for wheelchair users in Munich, to develop and test the system in 2018. The number of people using munevo DRIVE has steadily grown from ten in 2019 to over 100 in 2021.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
munevo DRIVE is distributed through specialist distributors and manufacturers, which act as coordinator among the clients, social security offices, and health insurance providers The price of the basic version is €7,700, and in many cases the cost is covered by health insurance providers.

Going forward, Munevo plans to make munevo DRIVE available in more countries, and it will also add more features so that the system can support users with everyday tasks, such as navigation. These planned add-ons will allow the user to control not only a wheelchair but also smartphones, computers, smart home systems, and robotic arms.

Mr. Claudiu Leverenz
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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- munevo DRIVE takes approximately five minutes to install and 20 seconds to calibrate.
- The system is currently sold through 27 distributors and five manufacturers.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Mobile therapy for children in remote areas delivered by an accessible bus

INDIA – HIMACHAL PRADESH/SAMPHIA FOUNDATION – THERAPY ON WHEELS

In 2019 the Samphia Foundation, an NGO based in Kullu in Himachal Pradesh, a mountainous state in India, started Therapy on Wheels. A team consisting of a therapist, a nurse, a social worker, and a driver travel from village to village in an accessible bus, providing services such as physio, occupational, and speech therapy to children with disabilities. Between 2020 and 2021 some 100 children received therapy, visited on average once a week.

Problem targeted
Children with disabilities in India's mountainous regions often do not get access to early intervention therapy.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Therapy on Wheels is an accessible mobile therapy bus equipped with tools and equipment such as a treadmill, therapy balls, positioning blocks, therapy toys, books, flash cards, physiotherapy modalities, portable speech, audiology equipment, and first aid tools. Depending on the needs of the child, the therapy tools can be used directly on the bus itself. There is also a portable projector and a tablet-PC, which are used for training and video demonstrations.

Even the youngest benefit from Therapy On Wheels.

"The idea is to reach every last mile child with developmental disability in need of therapy intervention."

Dr. Rekha Thakur, Physiotherapist, Therapy on Wheels

The bus travels from village to village in Kullu, providing counselling to children and their caregivers. The built-in projector and a public address system are used to spread awareness of the importance of early childhood intervention. Parents are also provided with programmes that they can conduct at home to supplement the activities that are conducted on the bus. The Samphia Foundation also uses the bus to conduct health check-ups in villages for early detection, assessment, and the provision of intervention strategies for children with disabilities. On average, a child receives one or two visits per week, and by mid-2021 this service was being delivered to 84 children with just one bus.

Ms. Shruti More
moreshruti@gmail.com – www.samphiafoundation.org

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The project received approximately $47,680 from the Corporate Social Responsibility fund of the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency, a public limited government company.

By 2022 the Samphia Foundation aims to replicate the Therapy on Wheels model in two additional districts of Himachal Pradesh. The foundation is currently coordinating with the local government to include the project as part of existing rural health mission programmes.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- Since 2020, 210 assessments have been made to identify developmental disabilities of children.
- 24 blocks in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh were covered.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Design studio that produces playgrounds for all children and all senses

INDIA – MUMBAI, PANCHKULA ETC./GUDGUDEE – INCLUSIVE PLAY AREAS FOR CHILDREN

Gudgudee is a product and space design studio, based in Thane, India, that designs and builds inclusive playgrounds for children with disabilities while also providing a range of indoor and outdoor products for playgrounds. Starting in 2014 the company has worked with occupational therapists, child experts, psychologists, parents, and children. Gudgudee caters to all disabilities, looking beyond only wheelchair-accessible spaces by introducing elements that encourage play through all senses.

Problem targeted
Playgrounds in India are often not accessible to children with disabilities, and thus they cannot play with their non-disabled peers.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Gudgudee is building customized playgrounds for children with and without disabilities and creating innovative play areas with interactive elements of sound, smell, touch, and visuals. The concept includes unique play elements, such as life-sized lollipops that rotate and allow a child to see the playground in different colours, large drums, macaron-shaped swings, and xylophones and bells for sensory stimulation.

A child playing with the coloured lollipops.

"Our students love spending time in the garden; it is being used for free play and sensory therapy."

Dr. Salil Jandyal, Ceo, Victoria Memorial School for the Blind, Mumbai

In addition to design consultation and execution, the company offers maintenance of executed playgrounds and a ready-to-install product catalogue. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Gudgudee also launched a range of indoor play products that children could enjoy at home.

Between 2014 and June 2021 the design studio has implemented 45 projects for inclusive play areas in 14 cities in India. Its clients include schools and NGOs in Mumbai and Bengaluru, among other places, as well as government bodies. Gudgudee is also working with leading Indian real estate developers to provide inclusive playgrounds for large residential buildings.

Ms. Aditi Agrawal
aditi@gudgudee.in – www.gudgudee.in

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Prior to COVID-19, Gudgudee had an annual revenue of about $2.5 million. The company generates sustainable revenues on the sale of its catalogue products and through its design and consulting services. Over the next three to five years, it aims to increase its annual revenue to $20 million and build at least 30 inclusive playgrounds per year. Gudgudee has already partnered with the National Institute of Urban Affairs to create a guide for creating accessible playgrounds in Indian cities and for various smart city projects and decision-makers across the country.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2014

- Between 2014 and 2021, Gudgudee has implemented 45 projects in 14 cities.
- The company's revenue in 2019–2020 was $2.5 million compared to $0.8 million in 2018–2019.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

E-Health improving the quality of services for children with disabilities in the rural area

INDIA – NORTH-/NE-INDIA/JAN VIKAS SAMITI – PROJECT SAMBHAV

Jan Vikas Samiti, an NGO based in Murdaha, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh, launched Project Sambhav in 2018, an IT tool providing community-based rehabilitation (CBR) services to rural children with developmental disabilities in low-income communities. Project Sambhav works with 19 grassroots organizations whose facilitators use a web portal and smartphone app to deliver e-health support, mainly by sharing pictures and videos. Service plans are quick and cost-efficient, and traveling is reduced dramatically. In 2021 more than 700 children used the service.

Problem targeted
Children with disabilities in rural and low-income communities do not have access to CBR or any other health services due to a lack of trained personnel and limited infrastructural services.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Jan Vikas Samiti initiated Project Sambhav to reach and support children with developmental disabilities in rural parts of India with the help of a mobile application and a web portal. Project Sambhav partners with local NGOs and provides training to CBR workers on how to conduct a physical assessment, as well as to film videos and use the mobile application and web portal. These specialists then use the International Classification of Functioning, Disability, and Health to assess each child's needs and create a customized rehabilitation plan.

Specialists use the app to share pictures, videos, and checklists while communicating with CBR workers or parents, thus eliminating the need for the child to travel to the rehabilitation centre for treatment. In 2021, Project Sambhav was used by 722 children with disabilities in ten states of India. Since Project Sambhav not only improves the speed and quality of service delivery significantly but also reduces its cost by half on average, it has won awards and is increasingly influencing the work of local government agencies, such as District Rehabilitation Centres.

Now, local CBR workers have direct access to knowledge and support – and kids love it!

> "Reaching the unreached, making rehabilitation possible through Project Sambhav."
>
> Fr. Chandran Riymonds, Jan Vikas Samiti

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Jan Vikas Samiti received €88,750 from the Netherlands-based Liliane Foundation to establish and run Sambhav as a pilot project, and it has contributed €3,850 towards the project from its own funds. In addition, 19 partner organizations contributed an annual subscription fee of €282 in 2021 as part of the project's sustainability phase. Looking ahead, Project Sambhav aims to expand to ten Indian states and reach 2,000 children with disabilities by 2024, as well as to include more services on its mobile application and web platform.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Remote services have reduced by half the rehabilitation cost per child.
- In 2018 the project was initiated in five Indian states.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Mr. Fr. Chandran Riymonds
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See corresponding Life Story on page 53.

Cooperation of an IT-company with Uber for improving the accessibility of taxi services

INDIA/MPHASIS UBERASSIST AND UBERACCESS

In 2017, Mphasis, a major IT-provider based in Bengaluru, India, partnered with Uber, the app-based taxi service, to launch two services: uberASSIST, a service option for additional assistance; and uberACCESS, a wheelchair accessible car. Mphasis and its affiliated Mphasis F1 Foundation have funded the programme as part of their social sponsoring programme, and Uber has implemented it. While the rollout of both services was limited due to the pandemic, 50 accessible taxis were already on the road by mid-2021.

Problem targeted
Public transport in India is mostly inaccessible for people with disabilities, older people, pregnant women, and parents with young children.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Mphasis F1 Foundation partnered with Uber to launch two accessible public transport services: uberASSIST and uberACCESS.

uberASSIST is a service option designed to provide additional assistance to passengers. Driver-partners are trained to assist riders and can accommodate folding wheelchairs, walkers, and other aids. uberACCESS is a wheelchair-accessible service in which the vehicle is equipped with a hydraulic lift, extra ratchets, and forward-facing for the passenger's safety (whereas many transport cars place the wheelchair backside-facing).

"Let's hope ACCESS can help me explore every corner of Bengaluru."

Mrunmaiy Abroal, The first Mphasis-uberACCESS rider

To start the project, the Diversity and Equal Opportunity Center, a professional consultancy company, trained 500 Uber driver-partners on disability etiquette so as to address the daily transportation requirements of senior citizens and those with accessibility needs. To book a ride, passengers simply open the Uber app, select their destination, and choose the preferred service. As of August 2021, uberASSIST includes 500 vehicles, and uberACCESS offers 50 retrofitted vehicles in Bengaluru (Bangalore). Average fares on uberACCESS range from 50 to 100 per cent higher than for Uber cabs.

Ms. Sarojini Subbiah
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One of the numerous uberACCESS Cars funded by Mphasis.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Mphasis has solely funded the capital expenses and ongoing operational subsidies of the service. Some operational expenditure is also subsidized to make the service sustainable over time. Uber was responsible for the entire operations: cab procurement, identifying drivers, retrofitting design, and the necessary regulatory approvals in Bengaluru. The service is highly replicable in other cities in India and elsewhere as a model for corporations to partner with Uber and to fund taxis and their accessibility services.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- As of August 2021 more than 19,000 trips have been taken via uberACCESS,
- Some 3.6 million people have used uberASSIST.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

IT-company funding an incubator programme for assistive technology start-ups

INDIA/MPHASIS, LTD. – BIRAC-SOCIAL IMPACT INVESTING IN ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGIES

In 2019 Mphasis, a major IT provider based in Bengaluru, India, teamed up with Social Alpha, an investing company for start-ups, to create a joint programme. Fourteen start-ups working on assistive technologies and innovative solutions for persons with disabilities, such as a Braille lab and an electric wheelchair for Indian terrain, were selected. Each of the 14 received free incubation support, direct funding by Mphasis, and mentorship. Mphasis invested approximately $350,000 in this programme.

Problem targeted
India lacks a vibrant market of assistive technologies and funding support for early-stage technologies.

Solution, innovation, and impact
"BIRAC-Social Alpha Quest for Assistive Technologies – supported by Mphasis" is the full name of the incubator programme, where Mphasis has teamed up with Social Alpha, a start-up financier, and BIRAC, a publicly funded research centre. The Quest chose 14 participants from over 100 applications based on their (1) business model, (2) innovation, (3) product-market fit, (4) socio-economic impact, and (5) focus on accessibility. In addition to grant funding from Mphasis, each start-up has been offered free incubation support from Social Alpha for the next two years, and each is also supported by a portfolio manager who provides support for strategy and execution.

"This fund has been critical to provide an affordable solution and to scale up despite the pandemic."

Aman Srivastav, Founder, Thinkerbell Labs

The programme has helped the start-ups to connect with manufacturers and distribution channels, as well as with hospitals for clinical trials; and to highlight products through physical events and digital promotions. It also provided grants to facilitate their journey to market.

The selected innovations include slip-proof crutches, electric wheelchairs for Indian terrain, and a tool for screening autism, among others.

Ms. Sarojini Subbiah
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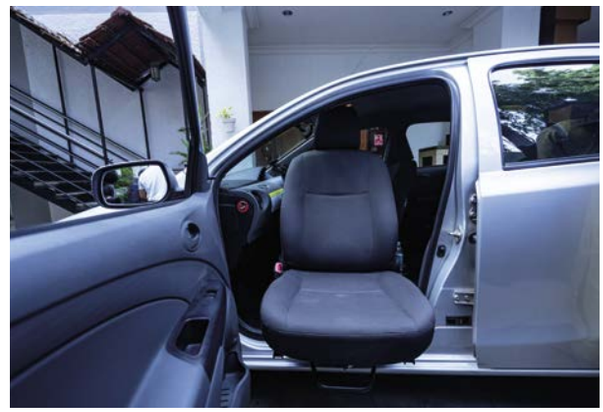


This rotating car seat is one of the assistive technology innovations Mphasis has invested in.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Mphasis supported Social Alpha with $337,250, with each winning innovation receiving a grant of up to $27,000.

Many products have already found distributors, onboarded new partners, won awards, and entered the market with a large customer base. Over the next few years Mphasis will continue to support similar programmes, such as the Social Alpha Assistive Technology Fellowship programme, a course designed for innovators to learn accessibility, inclusion, and Universal Design.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- 14 start-ups have been selected and received grants of up to $27,000.
- Ten companies have already rolled out their products to end users.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

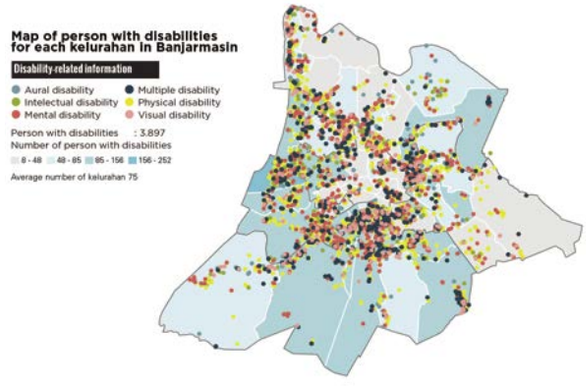
Participatory collection of disability data in cities to improve public service

INDONESIA – SURAKARTA AND BANJARMASIN/KOTA KITA

Kota Kita – an NGO from Solo City, Indonesia, focused on participatory urban planning – conducted a data collection initiative in 2016, supported by UNESCO. Kota Kita documents persons with disabilities in two cities by collecting real-time, nuanced data using a geo-tagging app. This information allows city government officials and service providers to better understand the needs of the community. Between 2016 and 2021, 2,824 persons with disabilities in Surakarta and Banjarmasin were documented.

Problem targeted
There is no universal dataset regarding persons with disabilities in Indonesia, making it a challenging task for policy makers to improve physical access and mobility and other basic services.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Kota Kita collects data about the disability-inclusive profile of a city using real-time, app-based technology with geo-tagging to understand how many residents with disabilities live in each city, where they live, and what needs they have. Once the data has been collected, Kota Kita gathers people with disabilities in the city to meet with city government officials, DPOs, civil society organizations, and academics in a forum to discuss how their city can be made more disability friendly. The initiative has been implemented in the cities of Surakarta and Banjarmasin.



Baseline for evidence-based decision-making: How many people with what kind of disabilities are living where exactly?

> "The localised data has assisted many initiatives in providing targeted support for persons with disabilities."
>
> Syahreza, Co-Founder, Kota Kita Banjarmasin

In Banjarmasin the process helped determine that there were close to 3,300 persons with disabilities who were eligible voters, as compared to previous official data showing only 991. The data has been used to improve mobility, safety, and aid delivery. For example, city officials and their partners developed accessible three-wheeled vehicles, as well as ensured safer school zones. The data also allowed officials to deliver assistance to persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as disaster relief after the flooding in January 2021.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The initiative received $36,000 from UNESCO in 2017–2018 to conduct the participatory data collection in Solo and Banjarmasin. In 2019 the follow-up research on assistive technology was funded by the UK Government and the German Government. Moreover, the results of the initiative have fostered ties with universities in Solo and Banjarmasin about disability and inclusive planning throughout Indonesian cities.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2016

- Two disability-inclusive datasets have been created for Surakarta and Banjarmasin.
- Between 2016 and 2021, some 5,000+ persons with disabilities were documented in these two cities.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

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Cross-sectoral effort to build accessible homes for people with disabilities in poverty

INDONESIA/PUSPADI BALI – ACCESSIBLE HOUSING

In 2015, Puspadi Bali, an NGO based in Bali, Indonesia, launched an accessible housing project to support people with physical disabilities. The model is based on collaboration with the Faculty of Architecture of Warmadewa University in Bali and Journeyman International, a US-based NGO focusing on architectural services in a humanitarian context. Between 2015 and 2021 the project has built or improved 12 accessible houses and one public library, all of them based on the assessment of individual needs.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities living below the poverty line in Bali do not have access to affordable and accessible housing.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Puspadi Bali began its accessible housing project to support people with disabilities who live in poverty, especially those in wheelchairs. The Faculty of Architecture of the Wamadewa University in Bali designs the homes, and Journeyman International, a US-based nonprofit, provides architecture, engineering, and project management services.

"My disability does not prevent me from taking full participation in the community development."

I Nengah Latra, Founder and Director,
PUSPADI Bali Foundation

Puspadi Bali identifies and selects the beneficiaries; and once the design is mutually agreed upon, including the cost of construction, it raises the necessary funds. Construction of the house then begins, with close supervision from university representatives as well as the families of the beneficiaries, the communities, Puspadi Bali volunteers, and university students as part of raising their awareness. The programme also liaisons with local schools to ensure that children with disabilities are able to get access to institutions of education by building wheelchair ramps and providing other accessible solutions such as desks that can fit wheelchairs.

Mr. I Nengah Latra
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Many hands make light work – the Puspadi Bali community constructing an accessible house for people with physical disabilities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Puspadi Bali fundraises from a diverse group of donors, including Hands Up Community, Labour for Wheelchair Access, Movenpick Hotels and Resorts, Taman Hati Community, as well as from the Direct Aid Programme of the Australian General Consulate in Bali. The Bali International Women's Association, Bali Island School, and individual donors have contributed some $2,500 for building an accessible public library. Puspadi Bali aims to build at least two accessible houses every year and implement the project more widely across Bali between 2024 and 2026.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- 65 per cent of Puspadi Bali's staff involved with the project are people with disabilities.
- Between 2015 and 2021, Puspadi Bali built eight accessible homes, one public library, and reonvated three homes.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Online community puts competitive pressure on online services to be more accessible

INDONESIA/SUARISE – A11YID

Suarise is an Indonesian social enterprise whose mission is to change the digital industry to create accessible online services. In 2020 it started A11yID, an online community that brings together people involved in creating digital products and persons with disabilities. One of the main activities is videos that analyse the accessibility of websites, apps, and content, which is shared by using the hashtag #TantanganAksesibilitas (Bahasa for Accessibility Challenge). By mid-2021, 337 people were involved in the community.

Problem targeted
There is little awareness about digital accessibility, and regulations on accessibility are slow to develop. Many websites and apps are therefore inaccessible to persons with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The A11yID community has created a unique method of encouraging companies to ensure that their products are accessible. Using the hashtag #TantanganAksesibilitas, the online community creates and shares videos reviewing how accessible a company's website, application, or content is in comparison with its competitors, thereby applying pressure to improve current products. The hashtag has gained traction within banking services, higher education institutions, as well as local tech boot camps, and these organizations have engaged with the A11yID community to incorporate accessibility in their products and services.

"#TantanganAksesibilitas shows that we can change a billion-dollar company. Make more of it!"

Rahma Utami, Founder, Suarise & A11yID

A11yID also organizes monthly online sessions during which members learn from each other's work on digital accessibility, such as interface design or web development. The A11yID community has grown from three people in 2020 to 337 in 2021; and it has organized 18 sharing sessions since June 2020, each attended by 50 to 100 people.

Ms. Rahma Utami
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A community jointly testing the accessibility of a corporate website, sharing it with #TantanganAksesibilitas.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
A11yID is self-financed by Suarise as well as through donations from community members, which amount to as little as $500 a year. Suarise aims to secure external corporate funding to scale up its sharing sessions. Suarise organized its first digital accessibility hackathon in December 2021, which will be held annually. #TantanganAksesibilitas can easily be replicated in other countries, even where accessibility regulations do not exist, due to its model on product competitiveness.

A11yID plans to expand its accessibility challenge to target public services and the education, financial, commerce, health, media, transport, and logistics sectors.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- There were 337 A11yID community members by 2021.
- 18 sharing sessions have been conducted from June 2020 to July 2021.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Creating accessible water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities for disadvantaged groups

IRAQ – KIRKUK, ERBIL ETC/WORLD VISION – WASH PROGRAMME

The Accessible Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) programme of World Vision, a major US-based international NGO, has been implemented by local DPOs in Iraq since 2016. The DPOs plan and manage projects to build accessible WASH facilities in schools, health clinics, camps for displaced persons, and households. Starting in the city of Kirkuk, hundreds of ramps, showers, and latrines had been built in four provinces by 2021. The programme will expand nationally in the coming years.

Problem targeted
There are few facilities accessible to persons with disabilities in Iraq, especially in conflict-affected areas.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Accessible WASH for an Accessible Society programme targets persons with disabilities in northern Iraq, especially those who are internally displaced or returning home. World Vision trains two local DPO partners, the Zheen Handicap Association and Roz Society Kirkuk, to plan and manage every phase of the construction projects.

Three beneficiaries of the WASH programme.

"Persons with disabilities are no longer facing obstacles after the installation of ramps."

Mr Loi, Professor, Kirkuk Technical Institute

The DPOs assess the WASH needs of persons with disabilities and then work with World Vision and local administrative services to develop a plan to meet those in homes, health facilities, schools, and other public buildings. New facilities are then built or, where possible, existing facilities are adapted. DPOs then test the new infrastructure for accessibility, and conduct educational activities in public spaces to train the community on how to use the facilities.

The programme began in the city of Kirkuk in 2016, and by mid-2021 it has been replicated in the provinces of Ninewa, Erbil, and Salah Al-Din. Accessible facilities have been built in 12 health centres, 35 schools, two camps for internally displaced persons, and 170 households.

Mr. Khalil Hamad
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Outlook, transferability, and funding
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Finland and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs initially funded the programme, which is now operational primarily through private grants.

In 2022, World Vision plans to expand the programme across Iraq by partnering with and training more DPOs in all stages of the project's life cycle: planning, design, implementation, and monitoring. World Vision and its partners will continue to advocate for more inclusive laws and regulations to improve services for persons with disabilities.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2016

- By mid-2021 almost 200 WASH facilities had been built.
- Two DPOs lead the implementation of the programme.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Mystery Clients with disabilities evaluating the accessibility and usability of services

ISRAEL/ACCESS ISRAEL – ACCESSIBILITY TESTING AND EVALUATION

In 2018 Access Israel, a leading DPO and advocacy organization based in Tel Aviv, launched a tool for companies to assess the level of accessibility and usability of their services. The assessment is done by persons with various disabilities who are trained to systematically test, for example, supermarkets, call centres, and smartphone apps. Over three years the test teams have performed more than 300 evaluations, paid by the companies whose services they have assessed.

Problem targeted
Many services in Israel are not fully accessible and inclusive for persons with disabilities despite being compliant with local laws.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Access Israel trains persons with disabilities to test and evaluate how usable and accessible services are by conducting undercover accessibility audits. The process of using undercover customers is also known as 'covert customer control' or 'mystery shopping'. An individual who behaves like a regular customer assesses the business services by using a pre-determined script to check various parameters of its accessibility and usability. For example, to assess a supermarket Access Israel prepares various scenarios and puts together a cross-disability team comprised of one person who is blind, one with a hearing disability, another who uses a wheelchair, and someone with a hidden disability. The team tests the accessibility of various features in the supermarket, such as ordering, shopping, customer service, online shopping, and mobile application. The information is then recorded and compiled in an evaluation report that includes recommendations for improvement. Over a period of three years Access Israel has conducted more than 300 evaluations, including companies that test their accessibility every few years.

"Our focus is on how persons with disabilities receive services, understanding their needs, wants, and experiences."

Michal Rimon, CEO, Access Israel

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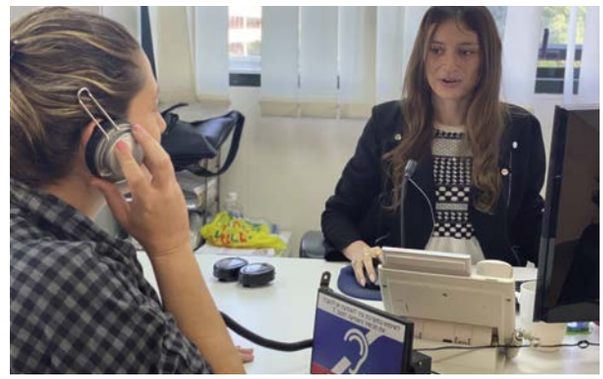
noab@aisrael.org – www.aisrael.org



Covert customers at work, testing online services such as call-centers on accesibility.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Access Israel charges between €200 and €550 for different assessments, and the price is evaluated after determining the scope of the project. It defines various scenarios for each assessment, such as the size of the undercover team, the analyses and documentation process, and the final corporate presentation. Companies pay for the assessment service, which helps them to improve and learn, and many use the service once or even twice a year to continually track their performance. Access Israel offers discounts to NGOs and other low-income organizations, using funding from donations.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- 50 clients have been served over the past year.
- Over 200 assessments have been conducted between 2019 and 2021.
- 12 Mystery Shoppers carry out the assessments.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Quick rollout of guidelines on how to treat patients with disabilities in pandemic times

ISRAEL/ACCESS ISRAEL – ACCESSIBLE EMERGENCY SERVICES

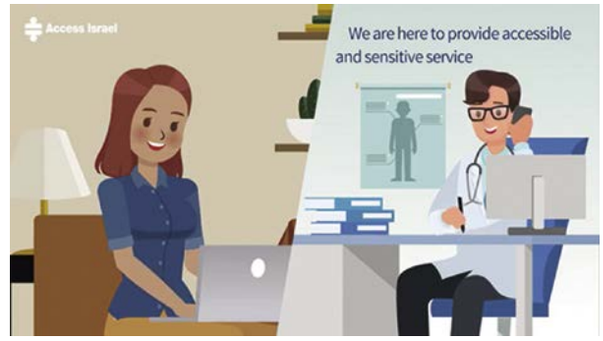
Access Israel, a leading national NGO, launched the Accessible Emergency Services programme in 2020 to quickly produce and share guidelines on how to treat COVID-19 patients with disabilities. The production of customized guidelines and training for emergency service personnel was soon expanded to all kinds of emergencies and other public services, such as the police. Within one year, tens of thousands of emergency personnel were equipped with guidelines or informed via IT-platforms.

Problem targeted
Emergency services are not always appropriately set to support and interact with people with disabilities in times of crisis.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Accessible Emergency Services project started out by providing guidelines and videos for health services on how to better interact with people with disabilities both remotely and face-to-face during the COVID-19 pandemic, and then quickly expanded to other organizations providing vital services during the pandemic, such as the police and the Home Front Command, which is responsible for the safety of citizens. Additionally, Access Israel has educated municipality officials on interacting with people with disabilities through various communication platforms.

The practice was used particularly for informing response action during epidemiological investigations to contain the pandemic. The guidance was written in consultation with people with disabilities and tailored to the needs and services of each organization.

Tens of thousands of employees and soldiers across all first responder organizations and many other responders can access the guide, and it is believed that it has played a leading role in maintaining protocols and containing contagion outbreaks during the pandemic.



A slide from the online courses on emergency services.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Access Israel primarily funded the project itself, with some recipient bodies paying for the guidance training. Access Israel plans to use the ties developed with emergency services decision-makers to provide their organizations with more content, training, and workshops on accessibility issues during emergency situations.

The training is believed to be highly replicable in other countries and regions for emergency situations and has already been replicated and shared in English.

"Accessibility education enhances that inherent sensitivity of first responders."

Michal Rimon, CEO, Access Israel

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- Accessibility education provided to approximately 3,000 staff.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Ms. Noa Biron
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Training civil servants in the Israeli legal system to provide more inclusive legal services

ISRAEL/JDC ISRAEL UNLIMITED – ACCESSIBLE LEGAL SERVICE

In 2018, JDC Israel Unlimited, a branch of the Jewish Development Council, a leading Israeli charity, launched a three-year training programme jointly with Israel Elwyn and the Israeli Ministry of Justice. Representatives of the judiciary system are trained, especially for improving their services towards people with intellectual and psychosocial disabilities. Between 2018 and 2021 more than 1,000 legal system representatives received training to create accessible legal services and proceedings.

Problem targeted
The legal system in Israel is not always accessible for persons with disabilities, making it difficult for them to have an active part in the legal process.

Solution, innovation, and impact
JDC Israel Unlimited launched a three year pilot programme called Accessible Legal Services for Persons with Disabilities to train representatives of courts, the police, and other civil servants working in law enforcement in cooperation with Israel Elwyn, and the Ministry of Justice. The programme has two main components: (1) a comprehensive training for legal professionals; and (2) tools to facilitate communication with persons with disabilities.

"Such a unique experience – I learned from the best professionals and witnessed a change in mindset."

Dr. Meytal Segal-Reich, Adv. National Supervisor, Department of Representation in Legal Capacity Procedures and Older Persons

The training provides professional knowledge regarding disability and its interactions with legal professionals and the legal system itself. The syllabus includes types of disabilities, relevant legislations, and tools such as a lexicon of easy language expressions for legal terms.

The lexicon was reviewed by people with disabilities to ensure that complicated legal terms were linguistically and intellectually accessible.

In 2019 and 2020 the programme had 320 participants each year. In 2021 this number more than doubled to 720 participants.

Ms. Ayala Davidowitz
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First-hand experience can change the rigid procedures of law enforcement.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
JDC Israel Unlimited jointly funds the entire pilot project (30 per cent) together with the Ministry of Justice (70 per cent), which amounts to €282,664 annually. It is operated by Israel Elwyn. In the next three to five years the Government of Israel will adopt the pilot programme and will continue to train over 250 legal professionals each year. Since all training sessions were successfully conducted online during COVID-19, the Ministry of Justice is also considering an online platform for future training, along with in-person sessions.

The programme has received requests from the police, the Police Prosecution Unit, and the Prisons Service to be trained as well.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- 12 methodological tools for various target audiences were developed.
- The programme had 720 participants in 2021.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

App-based machine learning enabling persons with speech disabilities to be understood

ISRAEL/VOICEITT SPEECH RECOGNITION

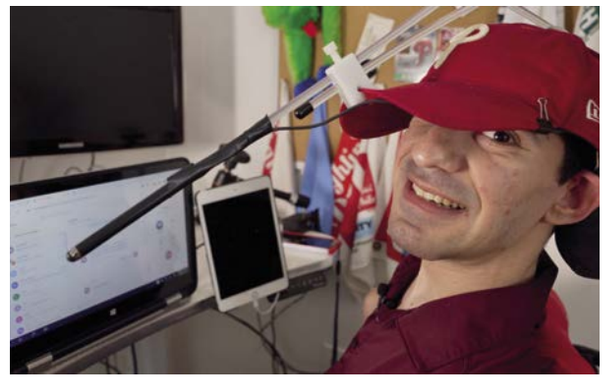
In 2018 the startup company Voiceitt, based in Tel Aviv, Israel, introduced a speech recognition app for persons with speech disabilities. With machine learning, the smartphone app identifies the unique speech patterns of its users and enables them to communicate with family and friends without an intermediary. Moreover, Voiceitt developed an interface enabling other companies with voice-enabled products and services to make their products accessible. In 2021, Voiceitt was available in app stores and had hundreds of users worldwide.

Problem targeted
Most speech control IT-solutions on the market today do not cater to people with speech disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Voiceitt' s speech recognition app is designed for individuals with non-standard speech. It has two main functions: Voiceitt Talk and Voiceitt Home. The app's AI-component enables it to continuously develop its Automated Speech Recognition (ASR) capabilities by learning to identify speech patterns from specific voice samples around the world and by analysing individual users' speech patterns, including utterances, breathing pauses, and more. The more people who use the app, the larger the corpus of voice samples and, subsequently, the smarter and more effective the AI technology becomes. The app allows users to communicate directly with other people, such as family and caregivers, in their own voice and speed. The Home function relates to Alexa smart home devices, enabling users to perform daily tasks such as switching lights on and off or watching TV by using their voice commands. From 2018 to 2021 the Voiceitt user base grew from 12 individuals in a small pilot to 200 beta testers to several hundreds of users worldwide.

> "Voiceitt improves independence and quality of life for people with disabilities, and those who care for and about them."
>
> Sara A Smolley, Co-Founder

Ms. Sara Smolley
sara@voiceitt.com – www.voiceitt.com



Giving back control to those with speech impairments.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
A funding round in 2020 drew such investors as M12 (Microsoft's Venture Capital Fund), Amazon Alexa Fund, Connecticut Innovations, AARP, and others. By 2021, Voiceitt raised more than $17 million. The company's business model is based on license sales and its API business – when other companies integrate Voiceitt technology with their existing products. Voiceitt will expand its user base, particularly among health care professionals who use the app to communicate with their clients and patients., making them accessible to people with speech and motor disabilities. The company will also combine the app with more products and services offered to persons with speech impairments.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Voiceitt gives users with speech disabilities the possibility to express themselves in their own voice.
- $17 million had been raised by 2021 for the further development of the app.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Accessible tourism for people with psycho-social disabilities in-country and abroad

ISRAEL/ENOSH – NOFESH PROGRAMME

Nofesh is an accessible travel programme developed in 2015 by Enosh, an Israeli NGO that works with individuals with psychosocial disabilities. Nofesh-facilitated travel tour groups can range from a one-day tour to a five-day vacation that includes visits to museums and cultural events nationwide and abroad. Participants are part of the entire planning process, and each trip starts with an individual consultation. Mental health professionals and peers travel together to provide mutual support.

Problem targeted
Important components to mental health, such as recreation and leisure time, are often overlooked regarding people with disabilities

Solution, innovation, and impact
Nofesh provides tailor-made leisure experiences to people with psychosocial disabilities in Israel. Examples include one day tours, three-to-five-day vacations, cruises, museum trips, recreation activities, and cultural events. The preparation phase usually covers discussions on emotional, financial, physical, and technical aspects of the trip.

Hanging in there – supported by qualified peers and guides.

"Being far away from the usual routine and coping with new challenges opens up new opportunities to build new skills."

Shirit Perl-Levy, Director of Community Outreach & Nofesh, Enosh

Participants experience the vacation in a group setting with peers and professionals who provide accommodations for physical and psychosocial needs. Each trip includes a social guide for every six participants, a coordinator, and a nurse. Managing the vacation budget is also an inseparable part of participants' recovery process. Enosh works with travel agencies that specialize in the planning of vacations, and it considers any special needs that may require adequate responses while also enjoying group benefits and accessible prices in Israel and abroad. Since its launch in 2015, Nofesh has seen an average of 500 participants each year. During the pandemic, the organization switched to virtual daily tours and lectures in various locations worldwide in which 200 participants were involved.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The annual cost of the accessible tourism project is $100,000–120,000. Participants pay for the cost of their own vacations, which includes the fees for the supportive mental health professionals. Over the next three to five years Enosh aims to expand its designed vacations to other groups, such as young adults, religious communities, women tours, and people with multiple disabilities. To do so, it hopes to secure funding from the Israeli Government and private donors.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- Some 4,000 participants join in a one-day tour, organized twice a year.
- An average of 500 participants per year take vacations using Nofesh.
- 200 participants took part in virtual tours.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

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Regular sign language TV programme on the topics of welfare and community

JAPAN/OKAYAMA BROADCASTING – SIGN LANGUAGE TALKS WELFARE PROGRAM

The Okayama Broadcasting Corporation is a regional TV-broadcaster in Okayama City, Japan, an affiliate company of the large Fuji TV Network. Sign Language Talks Welfare is a regional programme with sign language interpretation, informing the deaf community on topics such as the welfare system, emergency care, and community issues, and mainly produced by people who are deaf themselves. The programme was launched in 1993, is fully self-funded by advertisements, and has about 300,000 regular viewers.

Problem targeted
People who are deaf or hard of hearing can miss out on important societal information, such as the welfare system and emergency care.

Solution, innovation, and impact
For 28 years the Okayama Broadcasting Co. Ltd. (OHK) has informed the deaf community about important aspects of society through a special TV programme. Every episode relates to welfare, especially about persons with disabilities, including but not limited to the deaf and hard of hearing.

Sign Language Talks Welfare keeps the deaf community up to date.

> "OHK's sign language programme is a true epitome of the implementation of the CRPD as well as disability-inclusive SDGs."
>
> Aiko Akiyama, Social Affairs Office, ESCAP

The programme carries superimposed sign language interpretation provided by the deaf members of the production team. OHK has expanded the initiative to areas such as sign language lectures, production of original songs with sign language, and production and airing of videos of dance classes for deaf and hearing children. The monthly programme with 10 minutes exclusive airing time is also available on the Fuji Network's on-demand video platform and on YouTube. In 2020 the Japanese Government awarded OHK the Excellence Award in Universal Design, the first for a TV broadcaster. On 23 September 2021, the International Day of Sign Languages, OHK carried out a major campaign and produced a special programme on "Information accessibility thinking from sign language," for which companies have sponsored the sign language interpretation.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
OHK is a free-to-air commercial broadcaster, whose business model is based on selling advertisements. In addition, OHK has been working under the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications to support the improvement of TV programmes with sign language interpretation across the country, along with signing an agreement with Keio University to conduct joint research on accessibility and accessible broadcasting. OHK wants to expand its scope to cover other neglected groups in the future, and aims to demonstrate that accessibility is not charity, and that it can be sustained.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 1993

- Sign Language Talks Welfare has been broadcasting for over 28 years.
- The programmes have around 300,000 regular viewers.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

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African telecom provider aiming at an inclusive workforce and accessible customer experience

KENYA/SAFARICOM – DIVERSITY & INCLUSION PROGRAMME

Safaricom is a mobile telephone network operator headquartered in Nairobi, Kenya. Through its Diversity & Inclusion Programme, which was launched in 2016, the company has committed to having persons with disabilities constitute 5 per cent of its workforce by 2025. The company has made adaptations to its workplace and made all offices and sales outlets accessible. At the same time, it is making its products and services more accessible. Safaricom had approximately 5,600 employees in 2021.

Problem targeted
Persons with disabilities in Kenya cannot easily access jobs because the workplace is not inclusive, and many products and services are not accessible.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Safaricom's Diversity & Inclusion Programme is focused both on its own workplace and its customers. In 2021 persons with disabilities made up 2.6 per cent of the company's total workforce. To reach the target of 5 per cent, Safaricom is working with DPOs to create a recruitment pipeline. The company is also adapting its workplace to be more inclusive, for example, through ramps, adjustable desks, and assistive technologies. In addition, almost 400 line managers have undergone inclusion training. Among its inclusion measures for customers with disabilities are accessible shops and a priority assistance service. Some 600 staff, mostly in customer service, have been trained in Kenyan sign language. In addition, Safaricom's M-Pesa service, which is a mobile money transfer and payments service, has been adapted for users with visual disabilities. They can conduct financial transfers in Braille from a special smart watch and use the service through the M-Pesa Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system.

> "Our aim is to promote a diverse, inclusive workplace, free from any form of discrimination."
>
> Peter Ndegwa, CEO, Safaricom

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Turning words into action: Aiming to be a diverse and inclusive employer, Safaricom completely reworked its workplace and sales outlets .

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The Diversity & Inclusion Programme is funded entirely by Safaricom and is managed by a special unit. Since 2016, the company has spent approximately $2.7 million on the programme. Safaricom is active nationally and internationally to promote disability inclusion. In Kenya the company works with the National Council for Persons with Disabilities, the Kenya Union for the Blind, and the Kenya National Association of the Deaf, among others. It is also a consortium leader for the Global Disability Summit. The company aims to further facilitate the availability and affordability of assistive devices and technologies through its own products and services.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2014

- In 2021, 2.6 per cent of the workforce are persons with disabilities, 16 per cent of whom are in management.
- The company's M-Pesa IVR service currently has an average of 2,658 daily users.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Regional railway company becoming accessible and a role model for the whole country

POLAND/ŁÓDZKA KOLEJ AGLOMERACYJNA – RAILWAY ACCESSIBILITY IN ŁÓDŹ

Łódzka Kolej Aglomeracyjna (LKA), the railway company of the region of Łódź, Poland, started a customer accessibility programme in 2014 targeting persons with diverse disabilities. For example, LKA is using accessible transport cars where platform and train doors have the same level, and induction loops and sign language translation services are broadly available. Other railway companies in Poland are following the example of LKA, and its staff are involved in developing national guidelines.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities in Poland cannot freely access train travel due to limited assistance and inaccessible rolling stock.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Łódzka Kolej Aglomeracyjna (LKA) offers an accessible travel experience to its passengers with disabilities by providing wheelchair lifts, wide doors, accessible website, and Braille signage, among others. People with hearing impairments can connect with an online sign language interpreter at any point in the journey – at cash and information desks in the Łódź station and onboard each train.

> "LKA is the only carrier in Poland with complete digital and communication accessibility."
>
> Maciej Kowalski, Polish Association of the Deaf, Łódź Branch

In 2021, 14 of the 34 trains in its fleet had induction loops. Seat numbers are equipped with a QR code, Braille signage, NCF tags, as well as numbers in larger size to guide passengers with visual impairments to their reserved seat. LKA also follows the WCAG Guidelines for its website and online services and has implemented processes to ensure an accessible travel experience before, during, and after the journey. The company goes beyond the European Regulation (EC) No. 1371/2077 and does not request passengers with disabilities to provide a 48-hour notice prior to the start of their journey.

Other railway companies are following the example of LKA, and LKA staff members are involved in a national project to develop guidelines for training,

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Facilitating individual mobility: This ramp enables people in wheelchairs to get off the train without any barrier.

led by the Polish Rehabilitation Fund for People with Disabilities (PFRON).

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Łódzka Kolej Aglomeracyjna is a limited liability company and uses European funds for purchasing accessible train carriages. By 2025 the company plans to provide more accessible information on its travel services for the elderly and for passengers with autism. Another focal point of LKA's strategy concerns the accessibility of its office buildings (tactile flooring, orientation systems, and induction loops in conference rooms, among others).

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2014

- 14 out of LKA's 34 trains are equipped with induction loops.
- In 2019 approximately 14% passengers were of reduced mobility.
- LKA provides three hours of training per year for each staff member.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

See corresponding Life Story on page 52.

Countrywide policy to improve accessibility on all levels, backed by a substantial budget

POLAND/MINISTRY OF DEVELOPMENT FUNDS – PROGRAMME ACCESSIBILITY PLUS

Programme Accessibility Plus 2018–2025 supports accessibility on all levels of policy making in Poland. Administrated by the Ministry of Development Funds and Regional Policy, it works through legal provisions, investment in the competencies of architects and other key stakeholders, and the development of new assistive technologies based on Universal Design principles. The programme is backed by approximately €5 billion. The implementation is monitored by indicators, and the first report has been published in 2021.

Problem targeted
There is a lack of accessible standards in Poland and insufficient legal provisions for inaccessible public infrastructure, such as health care, architecture, and education.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Programme Accessibility Plus 2018–2025 (Dostępność Plus in Polish) includes a twin-track strategy to achieving accessibility in Poland. The first approach focuses on legal provisions; developing and using assistive technologies; and investments in skills and knowledge, such as urban planning, architecture, and accessibility experts. The second approach includes investments to make existing public infrastructure accessible, such as schools, transportation, and hospitals. The Ministry of Investment and Economic Development is responsible for coordinating the entire programme, consisting of 44 clearly defined measures. Several other national and state institutions are involved in the implementation, such as the Public Procurement Office and the ministries of Education, Health, Digitalization, and Infrastructure.

> "Design universally, with everyone in mind. Accessibility starts with the other person."
>
> Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak, Secretary of State, Ministry of Development Funds

By 2025 the programme aims to eliminate architectural, technical, and communication barriers in 1,000 places and public utility buildings. Among other objectives, the programme seeks to ensure that all public office websites and newly purchased buses and trams are accessible.

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The proud Polish Accessibility Board and its Chairman, Minister Małgorzata Jarosińska-Jedynak (center, second row)

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The total programme budget for 2018–2025 is approximately 23 billion Polish Złoty (PLN) – equivalent to €5billion. This amount is raised by foreign public funding (19.6 billion PLN); national public funding (2.3 billion PLN); and private funds (1.3 million PLN). By 2025 the aim is to implement all 44 measures of the programme within its eight focus areas; (1) architecture; (2) transport; (3) education; (4) health care; (5) digitalization; (6) services; (7) competitiveness; and (8) coordination.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- By 2025 the programme aims to make half of all TV airtime accessible for everyone.
- The programme will renovate and reconstruct 200 passenger stations in Poland.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

Inclusive club engaging with urban planners to create more accessibility for the blind

ROMANIA – BUCHAREST/THE URBAN MOBILITY CLUB

The Urban Mobility Club is a skill-sharing community founded in 2017 by the Alternative Methods of Social Integration Association, an NGO based in Bucharest, Romania. The club brings together people with and without visual impairments to develop more accessible solutions for public spaces; and has produced various tools and services, such as tactile maps of the city of Bucharest, and has organized more than 100 webinars.

Problem targeted
People with visual disabilities in Romania have few opportunities to participate in urban life because there is little awareness of accessibility and inclusive design.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Urban Mobility Club (UMC) organizes a community that promotes participatory learning and collaboration on accessibility and inclusive design through a range of activities. Persons with visual disabilities and professionals who impact the built environment – such as architects, urban planners, and public administrators – are particularly encouraged to join.

Urban Mobility Club in action: The community is working with a tactile map of the city of Bucharest.

"It initiated my first steps, I let my guard down, emotions aside, and learned to get rid of inhibitions."

Elisabeta Plaiasu, Visually Impaired Member

Through its workshops, UMC has been able to produce the first tactile maps of the city of Bucharest, which has helped improve navigation for the approximately 6,000 people with visual disabilities who live in the city. The club also runs trainings for members with visual disabilities on urban mobility and coding, with the intention to further improve and expand digital applications such as Tandem, an app that helps visually impaired users navigate the subway system.

Other activities include workshops focusing on ceramics, cooking, personal development, and music. Workshops and online chat groups are entirely free, and participants both with and without disabilities are able to learn from professional trainers.

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Outlook, transferability, and funding
UMC's annual budget is €35,000, which covers rent, human resources, equipment, and transportation. Since 2017 it has received €159,000 in funding from the Orange Foundation, ING Tech, and Société Générale.

UMC will also scale up its activities in the city of Cluj and will launch more technology-related activities, such as an IT hub to teach children with visual impairments how to code.

The whole UMC model can be easily replicated in other cities.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- 500+ people have participated in 104 workshops between 2017 and 2021.
- UMC has organized nine urban mobility challenges.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

IT-platform for planning and booking accessible travel

RUSSIA/GLOBE MEDIA – GLOBE4ALL

In 2018 Globe Media – a Russian start-up company based in Saint Petersburg – launched Globe4all.net, an accessible info and booking IT-platform supporting tourists with special needs in Russia, and at the same time educating guides and the whole tourism sector on how to make themselves more accessible. In the first half of 2021, despite the pandemic, more than 100 tours and 127 guide services had been booked, and Globe4All had built a community of more than 10,000 users.

Problem targeted
Travellers with disabilities often cannot find accessible travel services, while the travel industry often lacks the knowledge to cater to tourists with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Globe4all provides travellers with disabilities with travel advice, such as which destinations are accessible and how to get there, and publishes inspirational content about accessible travel. This content is available in Russian and English and includes product reviews, interviews, and stories. Globe4all is also an online marketplace, allowing travellers to search for and book accessible travel services such as tours, excursions, transfers, and rentals. Tourism professionals with disabilities and travel companies use the platform to offer their services.

> "We make travel simple for people with special needs."
>
> Renat Anpilogov, Founder, Globe4all

In addition, Globe4all provides business training for persons with disabilities to become tourist guides and educates the travel industry on becoming more accessible by showing best practices and giving recommendations for accessible infrastructure. Trainings take place online or during team visits in Russian cities. Between 2018 and 2021, Globe4all published 372 accessible travel services and registered 127 tour guides, of whom 10 per cent have disabilities.

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Enthusiastic mountaineers – Globe4all demonstrates what accessible tourism looks like.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The platform is funded by two revenue streams: advertising on the Globe4all website and social networks and a 10 to 30 per cent commission on services booked through the platform. Globe Media plans to expand Globe4all to international markets, starting with the EU, and to work more with travellers with intellectual disabilities.

The company will also offer new products and services, such as virtual reality excursions, a mobile app, and a multilingual support service. By 2024 the company aims to have had 11,000 tourists with disabilities travelling through Globe4all.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- In spite of COVID-19, between August 2020 and August 2021, 100+ travellers with disabilities have used the service.
- 1,300 stories about accessible tourism have been published in Russian and English.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Life Stories from around the world

THE STORY OF ADRIANI BOTEZ: ARTS FAN AND USER OF WORKSHOPS BY TACTILE STUDIO

“Even the painting technique used by van Gogh has been displayed in a tactile form.”

Berlin, Germany

My name is Adriani, aged 31, and I have been living without sight since birth. I live in Germany and like to travel to different cities to explore the culture and art as well as the landscapes of various regions. Being a fan of such varied artists as Pierre-Auguste Renoir and the contemporary American artist Kara Walker, I had always the hope to perceive their artistic work independently.

I first heard about Tactile Studios in August 2021, and I was very interested to participate in one of their workshops in Berlin where they presented a tactile model of a self-portrait of Vincent van Gogh. The details of the tactile model as well as the audio description that accompanied the experience were very impressive. It felt like I had discovered a new world in which I could get information that had been totally inaccessible before. Even the painting technique used by van Gogh was displayed in a tactile form.

See also Factsheet on page 56.

THE STORY OF ALEXANDRA NOTHNAGEL– PROGRAMME MANAGER AT ATOS, THE MULTINATIONAL CONSULTANCY

A dance therapist showed her how easy it is to make friends on the dancefloor without even talking.

Germany/France

Alexandra Nothnagel was born in Germany, growing up with her mother, who works as a hairdresser, and her dad, a construction director in public services. She lives with a rare chronic disease and is in the autism spectrum.

People who have known her since childhood remember that she loved to observe the world and asked a lot of detailed questions. They recall that when at age four she was told that only researchers could have helped her beloved aunt to survive cancer, she decided to become a scientist and help people to live better and longer lives. Passionate about imaging and molecular cell biology, Alexandra became a fellow of the German Cancer Research Centre programme for talented students in the STEM field – the Heidelberger Life Science Lab. Since then she has joined or initiated various projects, working groups, and NGOs, such as the Marie Curie Alumni Association, ResearchAbility, 100% Handinamique, and the Young European Biotech Network.

Nevertheless, health and life were very difficult for Alexandra, and leisure activities and making friends were not easy to find. However, after a dance therapist showed Alexandra how easy it is to “make friends” on the dancefloor without even talking, Alexandra became an active social dancer, knowing the basics of over 25 social dances today.

Looking to the future, Alexandra decided with the help of her friends and family to find a more inclusive work environment and to put her career in academia on hold. She found that informatics and programming, data analysis, and task automation would be a good choice for her to restart.

Alexandra joined Atos as a Java techno-functional consultant and became a certified Agile Scrum Product Owner, providing accessibility consulting on client projects in the public sector and defence arena as well as for health and life science projects. In 2021 she became Assistant Programme Manager of Atos Global Accessibility & Digital Inclusion Governance.

For Alexandra, this new and successful ‘normal’ is a team achievement, possible due to the daily help of friends, family, colleagues, and management – everyone allowing her to feel welcome the way she is.

See also Factsheet on page 97.

THE STORY OF EMEKA NNAKA,
CONSULTANT AND VOLUNTEER AT GATHERING PLACE, A COMMUNITY PARK

“Whenever I get to the park, I don’t feel like I have any barriers.”

Tulsa, Oklahoma, United States

My name is Emeka Nnaka and I’m a 34-year-old inspirational speaker in Tulsa. When I was 21, I injured my neck in a football accident and became paralyzed. Since then I have been an advocate for hope. I graduated with a Bachelor’s degree in Rehabilitation Services from Langston University and a Master’s degree in Human Relations and Clinical Mental Health Counseling from the University of Oklahoma.

Gathering Place is a community park unlike any other in Tulsa. It’s all about accessibility. The park was designed to bring all Tulsans together regardless of their background. Whenever I go to the park I don’t feel like I have any barriers. I can move around independently, and I don’t feel blocked. Before the park opened, consultants visited the Center for Individuals with Physical Challenges in Tulsa and asked for volunteers to tour the park and provide experiential feedback. I participated, and checked button placement and ensured that items were at the correct level for someone like me in a powerchair.

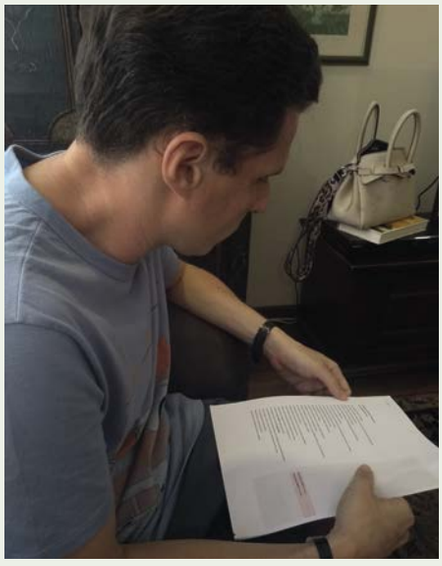
I work with a local youth shelter and bring kids to the park. Many of these kids are homeless or at-risk teenagers in our community. When I go to the park my favourite thing to do is watch the kids run, jump, and have fun.

See also Factsheet on page 98.

THE STORY OF MARIO PAULO BOVINO GREGGIO,
USER OF ACCESSIBLE BOOKS BY MAIS DIFERENÇAS

“The accessible books made me become an avid reader!”

Brazil



I am 42 years old and have Asperger’s Syndrome. My school path was not easy. I stopped studying in the sixth grade. I also did not like to read and thought books were very boring.

When I started working at Mais Diferenças, at the age of 31, the coordinators always tried their best to get me closer to books. One day they took me to a library that was close to the Mais Diferenças head office, and I went to get my card so I could borrow books to take home. The librarian was very attentive, showed me how to find the various the books, and I became interested in one of them.

When Mais Diferenças started to make books accessible, the coordinators called upon me to read and to help in the development of the easy-to-read versions. They would ask me if I could understand the meaning, which words were more difficult, and what I could do to improve understanding.

That’s when I started to enjoy reading. The accessible books helped me to become an avid reader! I read many things: books of fables, adventures, science. I also read newspapers, magazines, and comics.

Reading finally helped me to go back to school, and today I have a degree in Information Technology and am thinking about going to another college.

See also Factsheet on page 38.

Comprehensive programme to make a university accessible for all students

SAUDI ARABIA – JEDDAH/KING ABDULAZIZ UNIVERSITY – HIGHER EDUCATION FOR ALL

The King Abdulaziz University (KAU) is a leading higher education institution in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. In 2014 it initiated the Higher Education for All programme, which provides a variety of services for persons with disabilities, from adaptions within the university's built environment to a review of academic acceptance procedures. Between 2014 and 2021, KAU had over 1,000 students with disabilities graduating from its programmes. The programme has also led to the establishment of the Vice Deanship for persons with disabilities.

Problem targeted
Students with disabilities in Saudi Arabia do not have equal access to higher education due to inaccessible environments and educational material.

Solution, innovation, and impact
In 2014, KAU launched a programme called Higher Education for All, which improved the accessibility of its campus and academic curriculum, simplified the admission process, provided full participation in university life, and assisted with placement opportunities after studies. As part of this initiative, KAU enhanced its built environment by installing ramps, automatic doors, parking spaces, and tactile paving, among other features. It also introduced books in accessible formats along with a curriculum for students with hearing disabilities.

"We are committed to providing the most inclusive learning experience possible for students with disabilities."

Dr. Wajdi Wazzan, Vice Dean for Persons with Disabilities, KAU

The university formed special committees to grant admissions to students in Bachelors, Masters, and PhD programmes. In 2014, 68 students with disabilities enrolled in the university, and this number increased to 1,078 in 2020. Due to this increase, the university also established a Vice Deanship for Persons with Disabilities, a position that ensures accessibility in all areas of the university from staff management to programme development.

Dr. Wajdi Wazzan
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The Vice Deanship for Persons with Disabilities is testing new Braille devices.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
KAU is a public university funded by the Saudi Arabian Government, and it receives grants from the Ministry of Education for the Higher Education for All programme. Changing the built environment cost the university $2 million, and purchasing learning equipment such as Braille Sense amounted to $1.5 million.

The university intends to replicate features such as installing Bluetooth technology pathways at Umm Al-Qura University (Mecca) and at Kuwait University. In 2022, KAU plans to open its Institute on Empowering Persons with Disabilities, which will be a first of its kind in the Middle East for inclusion and disability research

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2014

- The number of staff with disabilities at KAU increased from two in 2014 to 12 in 2021.
- The number of students with disabilities increased from 68 in 2014 to 1,078 in 2020.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

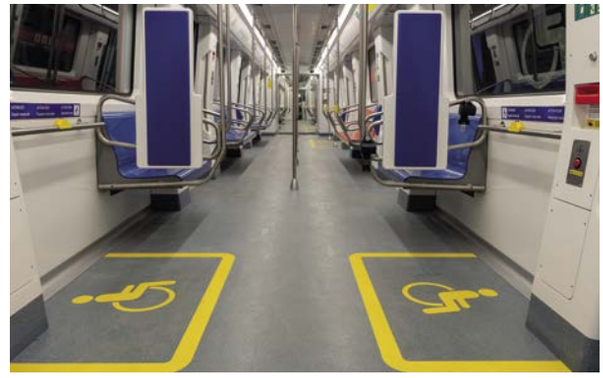
City metro passenger setting new standards of accessibility for all

SPAIN – CATALUNYA/TRANSPORTES METROPOLITANOS DE BARCELONA – METRO ACCESSIBILITY

Transportes Metropolitanos (TMB) de Barcelona is the main public transport operator in Barcelona and the province of Catalunya. In 2021, TMB renewed its train fleet and used this opportunity to introduce new passenger cars that are highly accessible for travellers with various needs, among them the communication system NaviLens, emergency measures useable for wheelchair users, and all warning messages in acoustic and visual formats. By 2027 only this kind of passenger cars will be in use.

Problem targeted
Public transportation is often inaccessible for persons with disabilities, and often only covering some additional needs.

Solution, innovation, and impact
In 2021, TMB incorporated new vehicles into its fleet and introduced major accessibility improvements for passengers with disabilities. Features include wider automatic doors, acoustic warning lights, intercoms located at an optimum height for wheelchair users, emergency handles, and colour contrast signage.



A glimpse into the new train cars of the Barcelona metro.

"Committed to people with disabilities, Barcelona Metro sets new accessibility standards for all."

Raül Casas, Transports Metropolitans de Barcelona

Two notable developments are the arrangement of two spaces reserved for wheelchairs, scooters, and child carriages and the onboard NaviLens system – a navigation and labelling app specially designed for blind and partially sighted users. TMB has also improved the accessibility of its bus fleet by including features such as visual and audible stop warnings, and signs in Braille and colour contrast. TMB works closely with ALSTOM, the French manufacturing company, which has implemented all the improvements proposed by TMB. The new acquisitions meet all the criteria stipulated for UNE 170001 Universal Accessibility Certification.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The financing of TMB's accessibility is different in the metro area than in the bus area. New works related to vertical accessibility systems are financed by the Departamento de Política Territorial y Obras Públicas, whereas TMB finances stair maintenance, routing, and platform expansion works with its own budgets. TMB has an annual budget of €360,000 for accessibility improvements. Different departments invest part of their own budget for singular projects: for example, the cost of implementing the NaviLens system in Metro and Bus networks was €575,000. The Metropolitan Transport Authority plans to make a significant financial effort to purchase 95 new trains by 2026 and refurbish 107 trains in the current fleet by 2027 while incorporating accessibility standards.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2021

- The new TBM metro trains have a total of 20 reserved seats for passengers with disabilities.
- 148 of the 162 stations of the Barcelona metro network are accessible.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Eye and head-controlled digital musical instrument

SPAIN – TURKEY/EYEHARP ASSOCIATION – EYEHARP

Founded in 2019 and based in Barcelona, Spain, the non-profit organization EyeHarp Association has developed the Eyeharp, an eye or head-controlled digital musical instrument. Using the EyeHarp software and a tracking device, it captures eye and head movements so musicians can play melodies simply by looking at the notes on the screen. The basic version of EyeHarp is free, and there are advanced options that can be purchased. In 2021, EyeHarp had more than 900 users worldwide, some of whom have played in concert halls and online concerts.

Problem targeted
Most musical instruments need players with excellent motor skills, making the experience of learning and playing music inaccessible to people with physical disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
EyeHarp is a digital musical instrument controlled by the player's eye or head movements, and that consists of an eye-tracking device that communicates with an intuitive musical interface. This allows users to play a melody simply by looking at the notes displayed on the screen. EyeHarp's interface is adaptable to the musical level and physical capabilities of each individual, and includes learning tools and exercises, performance evaluations, musical memory games, and various instrumental sounds.

"Our main mission is to improve the life of people with disabilities through music."

Zacharias Vamvakousis, CEO, EyeHarp Association

EyeHarp offers all the musical capabilities of any other traditional instrument and can be played alone or together with other musicians and in concerts.

In 2020 the Association began teaching online EyeHarp classes, thus reaching more students from various countries. EyeHarp musicians and students have performed in concert halls, such as the Gran Teatre del Liceu in Barcelona, Spain.

Mr. Zacharias Vamvakousis
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Playing the EyeHarp.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The instrument development started at Pompeu Fabra University, as a PhD research project. EyeHarp has a "freemium" business model, with a basic version available at no cost. The premium version is available at a subscription of €15 a month, €150 a year, or a one-time lifetime subscription of €589. The focus of EyeHarp' s business model is selling software licenses to music therapists and to music students and musicians with disabilities. It also started a crowdfunding campaign to expand development in 2022 and is seeking full or partial funding investors. Looking further ahead, EyeHarp aims to develop versions for platforms other than Windows and to create a certified course for music therapists.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- EyeHarp' s premium version costs €150 per year.
- In 2021, EyeHarp had 945 users worldwide.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

A 24-hour sign language interpretation service via video call

SPAIN/FUNDACION CNSE – SVISUAL

The Fundación CNSE, a foundation related to the National Association of the Deaf and based in Madrid, promotes research and study of Spanish sign language. In 2009 it started SVIsual, a free video interpretation service in Spanish sign language that operates 24 hours a day on smart communication devices, using human sign interpreters. SVIsual is financed by services provided for companies and by government subsidies. In 2020 more than 170,000 calls were handled.

Problem targeted
Deaf and hard of hearing persons often have difficulty in accessing telephone communication with hearing people.

Solution, innovation, and impact
SVIsual is a free real-time video interpreting service that allows a deaf person to communicate with hearing people. After the user accesses the platform, he or she is supported by a sign language interpreter who contacts the recipient on their behalf and interprets the conversation between them. Almost 95 per cent of users communicate through the service via sign language, but lip reading, and written text chat are also possible. SVIsual can be opened through any smart device, such as mobile phones and tablets, or alternatively via the website or using videophone.

"SVIsual is an essential resource for deaf people, as it makes communication accessible in any situation."

Concha Díaz, President of CNSE

Besides being targeted towards the deaf population in Spain, SVIsual works with public administrations and private companies such as telephone operators that want to make their products and services more accessible. Forty per cent of Fundación CNSE staff are deaf professionals who use SVIsual in their private lives. From 2009 to 2021 the number of calls received has grown by over 300 per cent. There has been a substantial increase of calls during the pandemic, with calls to the health care sector seeing the largest surge in volume.

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Regardless of the time of day or night, deaf persons can use the free video interpretation service.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
SVIsual is funded through support from the Spanish Ministry of Health, along with contracts with private companies that provide access to SVIsual for their deaf customers. SVIsual is a replicable model that has proved useful during the pandemic, ensuring access to key COVID-19-related information and psychological care via preferential queueing systems. In the coming years Fundación CNSE will seek to increase the number of service users as well as the number of interpreters. It is also aiming to offer new functionalities, such as geolocation and on-demand booking.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2009

- Between 2009 and 2020 the service has received more than 1 million calls.
- SVIsual is available in the medical offices of 32 hospitals throughout Spain.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

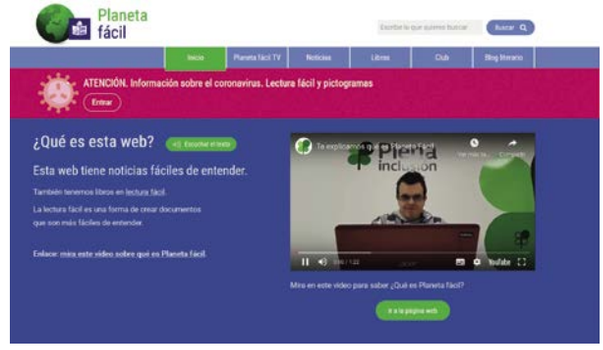
Website and TV-channel with easy access to news and information

SPAIN/PLENA INCLUSIÓN ESPAÑA – PLANETA FÁCIL

In 2017, Plena Inclusión España, a leading national NGO, launched Planeta Fácil (Easy World), an easy-to-read news site for people with intellectual disabilities. The website presents current news in easy language, hosts blogs, and has developed an audio-visual programme. As of 2021 it has received more than a half-million visits, and the news channel is broadcasted by a network of local TV stations in Spain.

Problem targeted
People with intellectual or developmental disabilities in Spain are often faced with challenges in consuming information of public interest in accessible formats.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Plena Inclusión España launched Planeta Fácil as an easy-to-read website with news and easy-to-understand publications about the world and disability. The website complies with the European guidelines for easy reading and has an online book club to read and discuss books together, creating also a reading community. As of mid-2021 the website had received more than a half-million visits.



Planeta Fácil offers not only current news in easy language but also blogs and an audio-visual programme.

> "We all have the right to be informed. With Easy Planet we want to ensure that everyone can understand the news."
>
> Antonio Hinojosa, person with intellectual disability and Planeta Fácil digital newspaper's Director

In early 2021, Plena Inclusión España announced the creation of the Planeta Fácil TV channel, specially designed for people with cognitive disabilities to cover needs that public media do not meet. Content is kept uncomplicated, with no programme exceeding 15–20 minutes.

The presenters offer current information with simple news headlines, which are also available in an easy-to-read version on the website. The coordinator and two presenters of Planeta Fácil TV are all persons with intellectual disabilities. Although Planeta Fácil TV is offered monthly through YouTube and the social networks of Plena Inclusión and Servimedia (a leading Spanish news agency), several public television studios in the province of Andalusia and the city of Melilla now broadcast it on their networks.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Planeta Fácil received funding from the Ministry of Culture and Sport of the Government of Spain. Planeta Facil TV is financed by Fundación ONCE and is produced in collaboration with the news agency Servimedia. Over the next five years Plena Inclusión hopes its initiatives will serve as an example for more public media channels to apply more accessible and simple-language-based formats in their content and programme.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- Between 2017 and 2021 the website has had 500,000+ visits and 900 news items published.
- In 2021, Planeta Facil TV was broadcasted by three regional public network channels.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Free online Spanish dictionary written according to easy reading guidelines

SPAIN/PLENA INCLUSION MADRID – DICCIONARIO FÁCIL – EASY DICTIONARY

Plena Inclusion Madrid launched Diccionario Fácil (Easy Dictionary) in 2017 – a free online Spanish dictionary service that provides definitions according to easy reading guidelines. After entering a search term, a user receives up to three definitions. Easy Dictionary had 3,000 words and 12 million page views in 2020. The service is also a source of income for people with intellectual disabilities that work as easy-to-read validators in organizations associated with Plena Inclusión Madrid.

Problem targeted
People with intellectual disabilities and other reading comprehension difficulties often find it difficult to understand dictionary definitions.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Users can access the Easy Dictionary online and look up both words and expressions. Up to three definitions are provided in line with easy-to-read guidelines, as well as an example of usage and a picture, if necessary, which aids understanding. The Easy Dictionary incorporates complex and infrequently used terms so that people with reading difficulties have a support tool for better understanding. The word process includes a review by a lexicographer and a validation or comprehension test with people with intellectual disabilities to ensure that the definition is understood. The dictionary is available on an accessible and user-friendly website. From its launch in March 2017 to December 2020 the Easy Dictionary had 6.6 million visitors and 25.4 million page views. Around 80 per cent of visits are from Latin America, 11 per cent from Spain, and 9 per cent from the rest of the world.

How the Easy Dictionary explains a gabardina (coat).

> "Easy Dictionary shows the value of easy read as an inclusive tool for culture and education."
>
> Javier Luengo, Plena Inclusión Madrid

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The project is funded through a range of sources, including public money via taxes that are used to finance social initiatives, and non-profit organizations such as Fundación ONCE and Fundación Repsol via the More Culture More Inclusion project.

In the coming years, Plena Inclusion Madrid aims to upgrade the platform to manage the growing database and accommodate more visitors. The number of terms within the dictionary will expand to a minimum of 10,000, which would represent 10 per cent of the Spanish vocabulary. In addition, there are plans to replicate the model into other languages, use the tool more directly in educational environments, and build the technology to enable the dictionary to be integrated into external website.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- The Easy Dictionary had published 3,000 words and had 2,000 more in the editing process in 2021.
- The website received more than 12.7 million page views in 2020.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Web/App identifying the location of parking spaces for people with disabilities

SPAIN/ASOPMR – PARK4DIS

Park4Dis is a web/app developed in 2019 by the Asociación de Personas con Movilidad Reducida (AsoPMR), an NGO based in Spain, to locate accessible parking spaces for persons with disabilities. Park4Dis works at no cost in all EU cities that have adhered to the disability legislation recommendation. It also connects users with local police at the touch of a button and can report illegally parked vehicles. By 2021 the app was working in 230 cities of Europe.

Problem targeted
People with disabilities often do not know the location of reserved parking spaces or whether or not they are available.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Park4Dis is a web and app platform for people with disabilities to locate parking spots closest to their destination, in addition to showing regulations that apply in each municipality. It also allows users to notify incidents such as poorly marked parking spots, obstacles preventing access, illegally parked cars, etc. Available for both Android and Apple phones, the objective of the application is to reduce the hassle of referring to multiple resources and applications to find a parking spot. For example, for a tourist it will be enough to use the Park4Dis app without using a separate application for each city.

"Thanks to Park4Dis I have solved a problem that I share with more than 5 million drivers with reduced mobility."

Carlo Castellano, Park4Dis CEO & Founder

Park4Dis also forms alliances and is collaborating with local, regional, and national entities. By mid-2021 the app had reserved more than 35,000 parking spaces for people with disabilities in over 230 Spanish municipalities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Park4Dis was initially founded with FSE European funds through an ONCE Foundation programme, and launched in 2019 with the support and funding of Fundación ONCE, a leading DPO in Spain. The total budget to create and launch the mobile app was €100,000. In addition to this, Park4Dis also received two prize grants from the Barcelona City Council and the Ship2B Foundation. Its primary funding model is the sale of this service to municipalities. The cost for each municipality to adopt this service depends on the country, dimensions of the municipality, and the range of services requested. Annual subscriptions of Park4Dis is also sold to councils, tourism boards, and large shopping centres.

Moving forward, AsoPMR aims to extend the project to more countries of the EU and to train local councils and municipalities on accessibility and inclusion.

Reducing barriers for individual mobility: Where are accessible parking spaces located in Barcelona?

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- Between 2019 and mid-2021 more than 35,000 parking spaces have been identified on the application.
- During this same period Park4Dis has grown to 1,300 users.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

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ICT solution for people with reduced mobility to use public transport

SPAIN/MASS FACTORY URBAN ACCESSIBLE MOBILITY, S.L. – APP&TOWN COMPAGNON

In 2019 the technology company Mass Factory Urban Accessible Mobility, based in Barcelona, Spain, developed the App&Town Compagnon, which allows people with reduced mobility to autonomously use public transportation as a regular means of transport. The app includes route planning, personalized guidance, and – in case of emergency or deviation – remote or on-site assistance. In 2021 the app was available in Spain and Canada, with more than 400 individual users.

Problem targeted
It is difficult for many people with reduced mobility to use public transportation independently, while providing adapted transport services can be very costly.

Solution, innovation, and impact
App&Town Compagnon caters to anyone with reduced mobility who may need assistance to use public transportation, such as persons with mental health issues, but it can also be used by older people, children, and any person who needs support.

> "The app reduces anxiety experienced by people when taking public transit and empowers them to be confident."
>
> Pierre Lavigueur, Société de Transport de Laval

The business model is geared towards transport authorities and service providers that cater to users with various disabilities. Users create a route via their web app and receive door-to-door guidance in real time, for example, exactly when to get off a bus. The app's interface is fully customizable with easy-to-read text, audio, images, and vibration. A control centre monitors the user's journey to detect any problems, such as a user going off-route, losing the GPS signal, or pressing the 'Help' button. An operator then provides the user with remote help or organizes on-site assistance. Remote monitoring can be enabled for a user's family members as well. Following a 2019 pilot in Barcelona, App&Town Compagnon has been deployed in Madrid and in the Canadian cities of Laval and Longueuil. In 2021 there were more than 400 individual users.

Mr. Faustino Cuadrado
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The App& Town Compagnon facilitates mobility for all, in this case a journey to Sagrada Familia .

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The app is free for the user. App&Town Compagnon generates revenues through an annual licensing scheme paid for by local transportation companies. The actual amount depends on the number of individual users: for example, it costs €40,000 per year for up to 25 users. Mass Factory broke even in 2019 and became profitable in 2020.

Going forward, the company plans to deploy the app in other Spanish cities, working with local transportation companies, and to further expand internationally, starting in the Netherlands.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- In 2021, there were 250+ users in Spain and 150+ in Canada.
- On average, an individual uses the app for 200 trips per year.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

University organizing courses for multidisciplinary teams to build accessible homes

THAILAND/MAHASARAKHAM UNIVERSITY (MSU-UDC) – HOME FOR LIFE PROGRAMME

In 2017 the MSU–UDC in Bangkok, Thailand, developed Home For Life, a three-day training workshop for civil servants, urban developers, and public health practitioners focused on creating accessible indoor and outdoor built environments. The training is targeted specifically for individuals with physical disabilities, and – by working in multidisciplinary teams – significantly improves knowledge and skills. By 2020 training was completed by more than 20 teams and a train-the-trainer programme was launched.

Problem targeted
Many people and organizations are involved in planning and implementing home modifications for people with physical disabilities, but they often lack the required knowledge of accessibility principles.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The MSU-UDC developed the three-day Home For Life training curriculum, which gathers people from various sectors and disciplines to learn about designing and planning home modifications, such as to accommodate bathing and dressing and going outdoors. The training strongly encourages that home modification teams be comprised of at least five individuals: a medical doctor or nurse; a physiotherapist; an engineer or architect from a local government organization; a community volunteer (builder) or contracted builder; and a person or persons with disabilities and their family members, who can even allow the teams to be trained 'on the job' in their homes.

"Home modifications empower people with disabilities to come back to live their life with confidence."

Katanyu Hawsutisima, MSU-UDC Director

The average cost of home modifications is based on three levels: build a new house (€1,582); partly rebuild (€1,054); and partly modify, such as adding a ramp and handrails (€527). These costs can be submitted to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security to be covered.

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Training the team: the doctor, the engineer, the volunteer, the builder, the person with disabilities, and family.

Between 2017 and 2020 more than 20 teams completed the training and modified 110 homes. In 2020 the MSU-UDC launched a train-the-trainer programme, which has been completed by teams who now provide the training in 42 of the country's 76 provinces.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The training programme is funded by the Thai Health Promotion Foundation, a government agency, at an annual cost of $30,000. The MSU-UDC will seek financial support from the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security both for scaling up the training programme and for home modifications.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- 21 teams were trained by 2020.
- By 2021 the train-the-trainer programme was active in 42 of Thailand's 76 provinces.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

International airport that provides a diverse accessible airport experience

TURKEY/ISTANBUL AIRPORT – IGA CARES

In 2019 Istanbul Airport (IGA) – the international airport of Istanbul, Turkey – launched IGA Cares, an accessibility programme that offers a range of measures and services for people with physical, sensory, developmental, and cognitive disabilities, including Loud Steps, a mobile navigation app, and info kiosks in sign language. It also trains staff on inclusion and accessibility. Between 2019 and 2021, IGA estimates that approximately 1.5 million passengers with disabilities have benefitted.

Problem targeted
Travelling can be difficult for persons with disabilities since airport facilities and services are often not accessible.

Solution, innovation, and impact
IGA Cares aims to go beyond basic accessibility requirements and to create an airport experience that is both accessible and enjoyable at the same time. It has developed a bundle of services, such as Special Passenger Service Points, which are resting spots that are used, for example, by passengers to charge their wheelchairs or remove their prosthetics.

Accessible restrooms are just one of the many diverse measures of the IGA Cares programme.

> "IGA Cares solutions at Istanbul Airport have made me feel safe even without getting any assistance service."
>
> Engin Yılmaz, Boğaziçi University, Technology Center for the Visually Impaired

Through the Very Special Guest Card service, passengers with disabilities who are sensitive to noise and crowds have access to quiet rooms where they can wait for their flight. The Accessible Route, a single-lane tactile pavement that works with the Loud Steps app and guides passengers to their chosen location, is available to those with visual disabilities.

IGA Cares has also introduced the Sunflower Lanyard campaign for passengers with non-visible disabilities, which makes IGA staff – who are also trained on accessibility – aware that they may need more support. When IGA Cares started in 2019, it was focused on meeting structural accessibility standards.

By 2021, however, the programme was creating new products and services after consultations with a variety of DPOs and evaluating user feedback.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
IGA Cares and its associated accessibility measures and services are funded entirely by Istanbul Airport. In 2020 the budget for accessibility was approximately €290,000. IGA aims to launch more services catering to passengers with sensory, cognitive, and neurodevelopmental impairments. Moreover, it aims to promote accessible and independent travel globally by using IGA Cares as an example.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- Between 2019 and 2021, 1.5 million persons with disabilities have requested assistance services.
- Istanbul Airport offers 2.7 km of tactile paving, 165 accessible toilets, and 33 accessible info points.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Forum theatre alleviates war trauma and creates an inclusive stage and art experience

UGANDA/NORTHERN UGANDA HIP HOP CULTURE – FORUM THEATRE

In 2018 the Northern Uganda Hip Hop Culture (NUHC), an NGO, launched its forum theatre, a method to promote inclusion and social cohesion. People with and without disabilities are involved as actors, and audience members are encouraged to explore together solutions to the problems faced by people with disabilities. Some 1,000 community members have participated between 2018 and 2021.

Problem targeted
Persons with disabilities in northern Uganda, especially those affected by armed conflict, often face discrimination in their own communities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
NUHC's Forum Theatre presentations portray the challenges experienced by persons with disabilities and uses audience interaction to explore different options for dealing with these problems. The plays are written by persons with disabilities and are based on their own lives, aspirations, and the issues they face, such as land grabs, denial of their rights, and divorce. Members of local DPOs and other people with disabilities – including landmine survivors – then perform the plays in their community and invite the audience to join them in acting out different scenarios. This process builds confidence and trust among community members. Elected officials and other decision-makers are also invited to attend the performances to raise their awareness of the problems experienced by persons with disabilities.

NUHC was trained in forum theatre models by In Place of War, a UK-based NGO. Between 2018 and 2021, Art and Disability plays had been held in the northern Ugandan districts of Gulu, Amuru, Nwoya, Kitgum, and Pader. To date, ten events have been held through outreach within schools, as well as international celebrations such as disability days.

Plays are based on their lives and the issues they face, such as denial of their rights.

"Today I am a leader and advocate for equality in my community thanks to NUHC."

Okot Jimmy Odokonyero,
Councillor, Gulu District

Outlook, transferability, and funding
NUHC has applied for grants from partners, such as "In Place Of War" and The Pollination Project, and it also funds itself through its agricultural farming work – termed the Hip-Hop Agribusiness. The Forum Theatre can be easily adapted to address different types of issues and trauma. For example, NUHC has created plays on girls' education and to promote COVID-19 vaccinations as part of a government campaign.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Between 2018 and 2021, plays in ten sub-counties within five districts in northern Uganda were held.
- Until 2021, some 1,000 Ugandan community members have attended and engaged.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

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An online toolbox of symbols enabling communication for all, without the use of language

UNITED KINGDOM – CROATIA, SERBIA ETC./GLOBAL SYMBOLS CIC

An NGO founded in 2017 and based in Milton Keynes, United Kingdom, Global Symbols provides sets of graphic symbols (such as a clock, food, body, house, etc.) and online tools to connect them for communication. It supports anyone with a communication disability, in any language, all for free and open source. A key feature enables users to create their own symbols. In 2021 more than 5,000 people used Global Symbols, with an increasingly global outreach.

Problem targeted
Symbols used to support augmentative and alternative forms of communication are often misrepresented and do not fit in multicultural contexts.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Global Symbols includes four key features: (1) Symbol Sets, (2) Board Builder, (3) Symbol Creator, and (4) training. The open-source store consists of multilingual graphic symbols to support individuals with complex communication needs. Symbol Sets are available on the website for free, reflect various languages and cultures, and mainly cover daily objects, commonly used adjectives, and words. The Board Builder allows users to add their own symbols to create customizable charts or boards. There are readily available templates, or a user can create their own from scratch. With the Symbol Creator, users can create new symbols by importing images and adding or resizing various shapes. Together with UNICEF, Global Symbols has developed a detailed free and open-licensed training programme on using and creating new symbols. The two organizations are currently working together in Croatia, Montenegro, and Serbia, and have started work in Bulgaria and Turkey. In 2021, Global Symbols also began a project in the slums outside Nairobi, Kenya. Since the website's launch in 2017, site visitors increased from 66 in the first month to some 5,000 users per month in 2021.

> "Global Symbols helps ensure that the right to communicate is not denied to those without a voice."
>
> David Banes and E. A Draffan,
> Directors, Global Symbols CIC

Mr. David Banes
davidbanes@hotmail.com – www.globalsymbols.com

How to describe your symptoms to your doctors without speaking their language.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Global Systems has a low-cost funding model. The cost to sustain the project is about €3,000 and the development budget is €20,000 per year, both covered through sponsorships. In the next three years Global Systems aims to add a minimum of three symbol sets from different languages each year; to develop technology integration to facilitate the use of the symbols in a more diverse range of products; and to establish a sponsorship programme to build sustainable income.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- Between 2017 and 2021 over 2,000 people used the Board Builder app to create communication boards.
- In 2021 the training programme had 280 learners from 30 countries.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Picture galleries providing comprehensive insight into a venue's accessibility

UNITED KINGDOM/BLUE BADGE STYLE ACCESS GALLERY

Blue Badge Style (BBS) is a London-based social business founded in 2015. Its Blue Badge Style Access Gallery provides images of venues, such as hotels and restaurants, overlaid with a grid and pointers to explain such accessibility features as the width of access doors and the accessibility features of bathrooms for multiple disabilities. The venues pay for this service and host a BBS Gallery link button on their website. In 2021, BBS had more than 50,000 site visits, and featured more than 1,000 venues across Europe.

Problem targeted
Without accurate information on accessibility features of venues, people with disabilities may face anxiety or unseen obstacles when visiting.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Blue Badge Style Access Gallery uses a proprietary, detailed questionnaire to review accessibility. BBS also enforces strict photographic guidelines to create high quality images. This enables an accurate virtual journey – applying images with pointers and alternative text – to describe accessibility features of hotels, restaurants, bars, etc. Features for multiple disabilities are explained, including for sight, hearing, and intellectual disabilities, and are described by consultants with disabilities. The information can be accessed via a mobile app, via the Blue Badge Style website, or through an embedded hyperlink on the venue's website. Once opened, the journey is organized into access points such as entrance, reception, lifts, and bathrooms. BBS offers three types of galleries, depending on the size of the organization: Quick, Full, and Virtual. The service is now partnering with hospitality groups such as Bespoke Hotels, a large independent hotel group with more than 120 properties worldwide.

> "Lack of access information makes life difficult for disabled people. Access Galleries are a way to improve this."
>
> Robin Sheppard, President, Bespoke Hotels

See all details as you hover over the pointers.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
BBS is funded through the sales of the various Gallery models. Costs start at €200 for a Quick Gallery, which uses three photos and can be created within 24 hours. A Full or Virtual Gallery takes seven days to create, using specialist photography equipment, at a cost starting at €2,400. Accessing the Galleries is always free for the end user.

Possible profits are reinvested, and BBS expects organic venue growth of 10 per cent in 2021 and 100 per cent in 2022. BBS created the Blue Badge Access Awards in 2018, honouring outstanding accessible design. In 2022 it plans to invest in an Augmented Reality version of the Gallery and app.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- Three types of Galleries are offered – Quick, Full, or Virtual – depending on cost and business need.
- Partnerships are in place with four major hospitality groups, including Bespoke Hotels.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

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Audio-descriptive commentary for blind and partially sighted people in football stadiums

UNITED KINGDOM/CENTRE FOR ACCESS TO FOOTBALL IN EUROPE (CAFE) – ADC PROGRAMME

The Centre for Access to Football in Europe (CAFE) is an NGO based in the United Kingdom dedicated to making the football experience accessible to all. The ADC Programme, an audiodescriptive commentary programme, was developed in 2018 especially but not only for blind and partially sighted fans in stadiums. Spectators can tune into an FM radio channel and enjoy the game alongside a commentator giving descriptions. As of 2021, CAFE had trained more than 100 commentators across 30 countries globally.

Problem targeted
Live football matches are often not inclusive for blind or partially sighted fans because there is no audio description available.

Solution, innovation, and impact
CAFE trains football commentators to provide audio-descriptive commentary (ADC) in cities hosting UEFA and FIFA matches where such a service is not yet available or does not meet required standards.

During the match, ADC is provided in English and local languages. The ADC broadcast is available throughout the entire stadium via an FM radio frequency, allowing fans to tune in from anywhere on their own devices or headsets that are offered by the venue. User surveys after each final game provide input for future improvements, such as the availability of headsets or the quality of technical equipment supplied.

> "Before ADC, matches were like watching a black and white movie. But now, I see a rainbow."
>
> Larissa Sayevich, Partially sighted fan

CAFE first provided ADC training before UEFA EURO 2012 in Poland and Ukraine. Based on this experience, the programme was launched in 2018. The ADC trainings for UEFA are renewed every four years before each UEFA EURO tournament and four times a year prior to every UEFA Club competition final. The NGO has also created a network of expert ADC trainers to expand the service beyond UEFA and FIFA tournaments.

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Extraordinary moments in life – CAFE supports football experiences for all, including the Portuguese striker Cristiano Ronaldo.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Training and equipment costs are covered by the UEFA. The cost of the ADC training and service provision for UEFA EURO 2020 amounted to €192,500 for 51 matches.

Moreover, CAFE will provide ADC training for the FIFA Arab Cup 2021 and FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, where the NGO will train 40 commentators to deliver the service in English and Arabic. In 2022, CAFE will also deliver trainings in Finland, Italy, and Spain. In general, if CAFE receives a request for the training from a national football association or club, the host venue covers the costs

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- 100+ commentators have been trained in 30 countries by 2021.
- 51 matches had ADC in English and local languages during UEFA EURO 2020.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

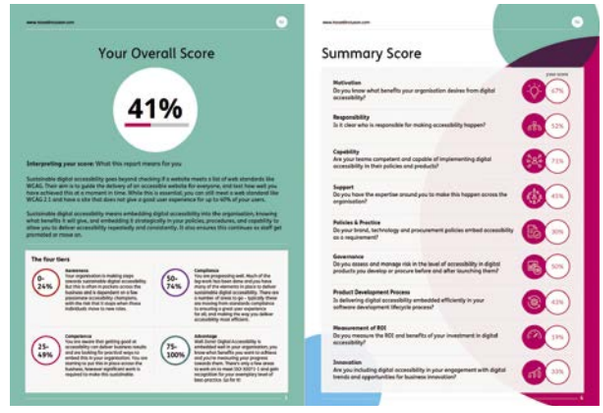
Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard for companies

UNITED KINGDOM/HASSELL INCLUSION – SCORECARD FOR ACCESSIBILITY SELF-ASSESSMENT

In 2020 the London-based Hassell Inclusion, a digital accessibility consultancy, created the Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard as a tool for companies to assess how well they perform regarding digital accessibility, based on principles of the ISO 30071-1 Code. In a second step, it provides personalized advice on how to improve along nine dimensions, including governance and measurement. From its launch until mid-2021 more than 300 organizations have used the tool.

Problem targeted
Organizations often focus only on technical requirements of accessibility, ignoring accessibility considerations regarding procurement policies and governance.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard provides a comprehensive self-assessment of an organization's current level of digital accessibility maturity with the help of a questionnaire. The scorecard looks at digital accessibility across nine dimensions: motivation, responsibility, capability, support, policies and practice, governance, product development, measuring the return of investment, and innovation.



In this case, the Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard shows that the organization still has a long way to go for achieving full digital accessibility.

> "Accessibility's a losing battle without a company-wide approach. The Scorecard helps us achieve that."
>
> Dafydd Owain, Snowdonia National Park Authority

These dimensions cover such questions as who in the organization is responsible for making accessibility happen, and how a company uses accessibility to create opportunities for product innovation. The nine dimensions align to the ISO 30071-1 Code of practice for creating accessible ICT products and services, an international process-oriented standard enabling organizations to embed accessibility into their 'business as usual' processes. The survey delivers a 20-page personalized report explaining the scores, benefits that would come from improving them, and suggestions for what the organization should concentrate on next. Since its launch in August 2020, more than 300 organizations have used the tool, including multinational companies, national and local governments, universities, and health care facilities, as well as charities and small start-ups.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard is created and maintained by Hassell Inclusion as a free tool. The business case is to encourage companies that have assessed their current status to use the paid services of Hassell Inclusion, such as auditing or consulting. Over the next few years Hassell Inclusion will extend the scorecard to groups of similar organizations.

Prof. Jonathan Hassell
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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- Since August 2020 more than 300 organizations have used the scorecard in over 30 countries worldwide.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Advisory board supporting the London Transport Authority in accessibility matters

UNITED KINGDOM/TRANSPORT FOR LONDON – INDEPENDENT DISABILITY ADVISORY GROUP

Since 2010, Transport for London (TfL), a local government body and part of the administration of the City of London, has had an Independent Disability Advisory Group (IDAG). IDAG has 10 paid members who have experience of different disabilities combined with professional expertise such as marketing, engineering, customer experience, equality, and transport. They are not employees so as to ensure independence. IDAG advised on 53 projects in 2020, including ones relating to the pandemic.

Problem targeted
It is difficult for most persons with disabilities to use public transportation due to physical barriers, untrained staff members, and a lack of accessibility services.

Solution, innovation, and impact
IDAG is composed entirely of people who have been appointed for their lived experience of disability and extensive knowledge of key issues and barriers to accessing public transport, and who are consulted at regular meetings or on an ad-hoc basis when needed. The advisory group helps TfL to better understand the impact of its policies and programmes on customers with disabilities; and it evaluates strategies, policies, and services to highlight where and what change is needed to reduce barriers to travel.

"IDAG's advice led to real improvements in the accessibility of new trains during our design process."

Dan Parsons, Project Manager, Transport-for-London

These barriers could be practical, such as lack of seating; psychological, such as feeling anxious; or attitudinal, such as the behaviour of TfL staff or other passengers. Examples of projects IDAG advised on in 2020 was support for disabled passengers travelling on buses and the underground during the pandemic, cashless stations, face covering exemptions, new design of train carriages, escalators, lifts, the redesign of streets in London to allow more space for people to socially distance, and a trial of e-scooters. The success of this work is monitored in a number of ways: the overall accessibility of the built environment

Mr. James Lee
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What real improvement of accessibility of an underground looks like.

under TfL's control, the impact of policies shaped by IDAG, and feedback from the commuting public. There are also softer measures of success, such as the attitudes of the public and TfL staff.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
TfL funds the work of IDAG, and its members are paid an industry-standard fee for their time spent on its projects. TfL does not employ the members so as to preserve their independence. The Diversity and Inclusion team at TfL provides administrative support to IDAG. In the next three to five years IDAG plans to continue working with TfL to improve public transportation access in London, and hopes to reach out to other cities worldwide to replicate their approach.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2010

- IDAG advised on 53 projects in 2020.
- IDAG strongly disagreed with TfL's approach at least twice in 2020.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

Accurate navigation system for the blind and visually impaired to improve public services

UNITED KINGDOM/WAYMAP ORIENTATION APP

Waymap, an IT start-up company based in the Greater London area of the United Kingdom, enables both indoor and outdoor orientation for the blind and visually impaired with a location accuracy of one meter. Users choose their destination on a smartphone app and the route is automatically created, considering their preferences for mobility, routing, and instructions. In 2021, Waymap worked with public transport companies in the United Kingdom and the United States, who pay for these services. The app is free for the end user.

Problem targeted
Navigating indoor and outdoor spaces is a challenge for people who are blind or have a visual impairment. Moreover, other approaches such as GPS and beacons often lack accuracy and reliability.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Waymap is targeted towards public transport companies that offer it as a personal navigation application to their customers with disabilities for free. The app guides and supports people both indoors and outdoors while delivering real-time orientation. It has an accuracy of up to one metre. Waymap supports anyone whether they have a disability or are simply unfamiliar with the location or lack confidence in travelling. It uses the existing sensors on smartphones that measure movement, direction, and elevation to navigate via dead-reckoning, a process of calculating current position. This technology has the advantage of requiring no technical infrastructure on location, such as beacons. Now available at five locations in the United Kingdom and in North America, 50 people are currently using the app; and a grand scale rollout is planned in the Washington, DC, area later in 2021. Waymap is following the CTA Standard 2076, which specifies requirements for the design of inclusive audio-based network navigation systems.

> "Waymap will change lives by making our breakthrough technology available to as many people we can."
>
> Ethan Brooks, Director of External Affairs of Waymap

Mr. Ethan Brooks
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Using the highly accurate personal navigation map.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Waymap's business model charges transit authorities an initial fee to map the venue and then a monthly subscription fee for continuing access to the technology. The application is free for users and is available on both the Apple App Store and Google Play. By 2024, Waymap aims to achieve annual revenues of over €35 million, focusing on contracts with city transport networks in cities across North America and Europe. Waymap also plans to partner with health care providers, museums, offices, and universities.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2019

- 50 people were using the app in mid-2021 during the pilot phase.
- In 2021, Waymap was working with five public transport providers in the UK and the US.
- *A project related to ICT.*

Global accessibility and digital inclusion strategy for a multinational IT company

UNITED KINGDOM/ATOS – GLOBAL ACCESSIBILITY & DIGITAL INCLUSION GOVERNANCE

Atos is a multinational information technology service and digital transformation company with 105,000 employees headquartered in Bezons, France. In 2010 Atos launched its Global Accessibility and Digital Inclusion Policy, led by its UK office, to engage with its employees with disabilities, to adapt its workplaces, and to provide accessible digital tools. Atos streamlines accessibility across its supply chain and its eco-branding, and it aims to implement measures that impact its 71 country offices.

Problem targeted
Companies often do not achieve fully inclusive environments due to focusing on a single element, such as assistive technology.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Atos addresses accessibility issues from all areas of the business environment. The company not only looks at the actions within the organization but also at those of suppliers. The policy is driven by four key principles: (1) designing, developing, and delivering inclusive technology; (2) delivering enterprise-wide inclusivity solutions and services that allow employees, customers, and partners to meet legal and ethical commitments; (3) driving forward the inclusivity agenda internally and with social partners; and (4) transparency, with the aim of being an example for reporting on inclusivity.

"Why just dream? Technology enables us to empower everyone to realize their full potential!"

Neil Milliken, Global Head of Accessibility, Atos

Procurement staff members, for example, are trained to require improvements of non-accessible products and services from potential business partners. By June 2021, Atos has assigned a unique country contact for disability and inclusion in 53 countries. The programme has grown from a small team of UK experts to a global programme with around 100 Atos staff members actively engaged.

Color palettes guarantee accessibility in the visual representation of text.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The budget allocated by Atos to the Global Accessibility and Digital Inclusion Strategy is over €5 million in 2021. It is considered as an investment into its own development since the programme saves money in the long-term through reduced absence of employees, retention of talent, increased productivity, sustainable working solutions, and satisfied customers. Atos' long-term aim is to be recognized as a leader in the industry for accessible and inclusive digital transformation. The company is actively engaging in membership, including the Valuable 500, Business Disability Forum, the ILO, Fundación ONCE, IAAP, and the#WeThe15 movement, as well as partnerships with IT-leaders such as Google and Microsoft

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2010

- In 2021 Atos identified unique country contacts in 53 country offices.
- By 2021 the programme was carried out in 71 countries, engaging with around 100 staff members.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

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See corresponding Life Story on page 78.

Major outdoor park developments based on Universal Design principles

UNITED STATES/ACT SERVICES – UNIVERSAL DESIGN IN OUTDOOR PARKS

ACTServices Inc. is a US-based accessibility consulting firm that specializes in creating accessible and inclusive parks and outdoor entertainment facilities. Since 2010, ACTServices has made two national parks accessible: Forest Glen Park (Illinois) and The Gathering Place (Oklahoma), considering especially children's ability to experience the park and nature in general. These parks have influenced other park planners and have won numerous awards, such as 'USA Today's Best New Attraction' and 'TIME for Kids World's Coolest Places, 2019.'

Problem targeted
Parks and recreational spaces often lack accessible features and services that could give children and adults with disabilities the opportunities to enjoy leisure activities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Accessibility Consultation and Training Services (ACTServices) is a consulting firm that specializes in accessibility of museum exhibits, recreational spaces, and applying Universal Design principles. The firm works with people with various disabilities, the parents of children with a disability, and professionals such as special education teachers, recreational therapist, physical therapist, etc. ACTServices has worked with two parks in the United States: the Forest Glen Park, a two-acre, universally designed park in Woodridge, Illinois; and The Gathering Place, a 100-acre open-space riverfront park in Tulsa, Oklahoma.

"I was honored to work on the award-winning Gather Place as a model for other parks."

Mark, Trieglaff, President, ACTServices, Inc.

Through the collaboration of architects, city planners, and people with disabilities, Forest Glen Park incorporated features such as walkways with gentle slopes and accessible playground surfaces for wheelchairs. The Gathering Place includes, among other features, accessible restrooms, walkways, play areas, and desensitization spaces. The park has received many awards and is recognized by the National Geographic Society as one of the 12 "mind-bending" playgrounds worldwide.

Mr. Mark Trieglaff
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Time for adventure in the park, accessible and inclusive for all kids!

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The Forest Glen Park received a grant from the Kellogg Foundation as part of its Access to Recreation programme. The grant covered all aspects of the park's development and its play elements. The Gathering Place was a huge investment of $465 million, funded by the Kaiser Foundation and other individual donations.

The two parks are proof of how universally designed and accessible park development and recreational facilities can be replicated anywhere.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2010

- The Gathering Place was voted as one of TIME magazine's 100 best places to visit in 2019.
- ACTServices has worked with over 20 zoos and national parks across the United States.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

See corresponding Life Story on page 79.

Colour schemes that make texts on screens easier to read

UNITED STATES/BEELINE READER APP

In 2015, BeeLine Reader was launched by a software start-up company by the same name, based in Menlo Park, California. BeeLine Reader is a web technology that makes text displayed on screen more accessible for people with a visual impairment or neurodiverse condition. It displays text using colour gradients, where the end of one line matches up with the beginning of the next line. This continuity makes reading smoother and faster. In 2021, BeeLine Reader was available in over 60 languages to over 25 million people worldwide.

Problem targeted
The way text is usually displayed on screens is not always easy to read for people with a visual impairment or neurodiverse condition.

Solution, innovation, and impact
BeeLine Reader makes reading onscreen easier, faster, and more enjoyable. The technology uses eye-guiding colour steps to pull the reader's eyes through blocks of text. Each line of text begins with one colour and slowly transitions to a second colour. The following line begins with the same colour that ended the previous line. The continuity of colour assists visual tracking and improves attention. The technology is available to individual consumers, businesses, and academic institutions, and can be downloaded as a browser extension or app to read e-mails, e-books, and other text.

"For my entire life, dyslexia has made reading a struggle. BeeLine helps me overcome this every day."

Colman Chamberlain, Unreasonable Group

In addition to choosing their preferred colour scheme, readers have the option to use OpenDyslexic, a font that facilitates reading for people with dyslexia. BeeLine Reader has entered into a collaboration with Blackboard, a leading web-based virtual learning tool that has 10 million users worldwide. California's Stanford University became a client during the pandemic with the goal of improving its distance learning programmes.

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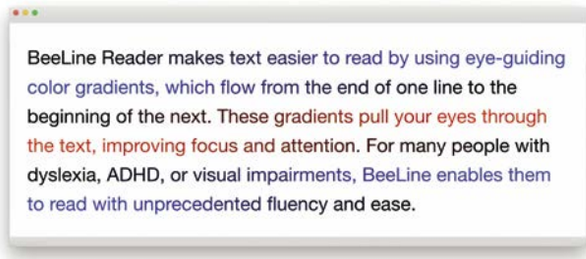

A simple adaptation – with enormous benefits to many.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
BeeLine Reader has three revenue sources: consumer tools, institutional purchasing, and technology licensing. Through this model, BeeLine Reader has been integrated by accessibility, technology, education, and e-book companies. Such licensed integrations are typically free for consumers to use, and through these licensing partnerships BeeLine Reader is available to 25 million readers. Because of the pandemic, there was a significant increase in demand, and in response BeeLine Reader offered its tools for free to thousands of users. Over the next five years the company aims to transition to a licensing-based revenue model, which will enable it to make its consumer tools completely free.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2015

- BeeLine reader is available in 120 countries and more than 60 languages.
- *A practice related to ICT.*

Accessibility certification programme for eBook publishers

UNITED STATES/BENETECH – GCA PUBLISHER CERTIFICATION PROGRAMME

Benetech is a US-based non-profit organization that is a leading provider of free and accessible software and is well-known for its online accessible library called Bookshare. Benetech launched the Global Certified Accessible ™ (GCA) certification in 2017, which provides accessibility certification for eBooks and certifies the entire workflow of publishers. In 2021, 17 leading publishers and eBook producers such as Jones & Bartlett, Guilford Press, and Macmillan have received certification.

Problem targeted
Reviewing the accessibility of eBooks traditionally looks at certifying individual publications rather than the entire production process.

Solution, innovation, and impact
Benetech's GCA™ certification programme supports publishers to ensure all eBooks are accessible from the start by reviewing the entire workflow process, therefore avoiding the need for reviews of individual titles. The certification process is a detailed analysis of over 100 accessibility features that follows the EPUB (electronic publication) guidelines and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0.

"I look forward to the day when all publishers make their books accessible as a first decision."

Kari Tapie, Los Angeles Unified School District

After the analysis has been completed, GCA™ recommends measures to improve accessibility where necessary. Work flows are given an overall score and a pass/fail notification, along with a narrative summary and an 'at-a-glance' snapshot of how each feature met certification criteria. Once accredited, a publisher is granted an annual subscription licence to auto-certify titles produced by that workflow. The publisher can then use Benetech's CGA™ certification seal on all promotional materials and to specify that its eBook title is certified. In 2021 over 40 more companies were in the process of certification.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
The one time-cost for the publisher covering accreditation of the workflow process varies between $2,000 and $8,000, and the annual subscription costs between $1,500 and $6,000. The programme is supported by a cooperative agreement with the US Department of Education and private funding and fee-based services. Benetech utilizes automated EPUB checking technology, which reviews around 25 per cent of the basic accessibility features, with the company conducting manual checks on the remainder. The use of Artificial Intelligence and machine learning being explored to speed up the process and bring down the costs. Benetech is aiming for at least 100 publishers over the next three to five years.

Using Global Certified Accessible ebooks.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2017

- In 2021, 600+ eBooks were available after certification.
- 17 publishers/eBook producers have received GCA™ certification as of 2021.
- GCA™ covers more than 100 accessibility features.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

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Government-led crowdsourcing platform to guide policy-making for inclusive workplaces

UNITED STATES/DEPARTMENT OF LABOR – EPOLICYWORKS INITIATIVE

Launched in 2018 by the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), ePolicyWorks is a virtual town hall enabling citizens to share good practices and ideas to remove barriers with regards to employment and the workplace. This crowdsourcing platform allows federal agencies, NGOs, and job seekers with disabilities to participate in well-structured and inclusive policy-making dialogues.

Problem targeted
The way the US Government usually engages citizens in policy-making is often not accessible to persons with disabilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact
ePolicyWorks uses a fully accessible online crowdsourcing tool that enables people with disabilities and other stakeholders to participate in national dialogues on employment and disability issues. Citizens can access virtual town halls from any Internet-enabled device to share their ideas for improving policies and programmes, in turn shaping future policies. The tool employs six specific steps towards implementation, such as the generation of ideas and votes on those ideas, and the assignment of moderators to engage with participants and help facilitate conversation around ideas. For example, the Federal Partners in Transition Dialogue collected ideas about improving work outcomes for youth with disabilities by removing regulatory barriers. In contrast with traditional ways of collecting input, such as in-person interviews, the tool is more accessible, more efficient, and less costly. To date (2012–2021), ODEP has hosted more than 50 national online dialogues engaging more than 25,000 individuals.

> "It is remarkable and inspiring to see this level of collaboration and communication between rule-makers and citizens."
>
> Abbey, Telecommunications Company, State of Indiana

Mr. Michael Reardon
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Representatives from the US Department of Labor's Office of Disability Employment Policy and its ePolicyWorks Team meet with the GE Cruise Autonomous Vehicle Design team.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
ePolicyWorks is financed with federal funds from ODEP and implemented by a federal contractor. The budget for the last one-year contract was approximately $591,000. With ODEP's support, several other federal agencies have instituted the ePolicyWorks model to improve public engagement in policy-making. These include the National Institutes of Health, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Executive Office of the President. ODEP plans to continue hosting national online dialogues to explore issues such as the COVID-19 economic recovery, emerging technologies, employee retention following illness or injury, telework, and career readiness.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Between 2018 and 2021 more than 5,600 ideas and 11,000 comments have been registered.
- 25,000+ individuals have participated between 2018 and 2021.
- *A policy from the Public Sector.*

Global accessibility and inclusion programme of a multinational pharmaceutical company

UNITED STATES/ELI LILLY – ACCESS LILLY

Eli Lilly, a US-based multinational pharmaceutical company, launched the Access Lilly programme in 2020 as part of its global disability strategy. The programme initially had four workstreams focused on (1) accessibility and inclusive design in the company's facilities; (2) information and digital solutions; (3) training; and (4) corporate communication. In addition, by autumn 2021 it intends to add (5) human resources and (6) procurement. To date, more than 3,500 employees had used the internal accessibility resources website.

Problem targeted
Mainstreaming accessibility and disability inclusion in a large multinational company requires a comprehensive approach.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The goal of Access Lilly is to create a disability-confident company culture that enables a barrier-free environment for employees and customers.

"Making life better is at the core of what we do, and that includes removing barriers to accessibility."

Darren Rowan, Program Manager, Eli Lilly

In its first phase, Access Lilly had four workstreams focused on (1) accessibility and inclusive design in the company's facilities; (2) information and digital solutions; (3) learning and development activities; and (4) corporate communications. Programme implementation is supported by: (a) the Lilly Design System, a collection of standards for designing digital products; (b) the Facilities Assessment Tool, used to audit facilities; and (c) the Accessibility Champions Community, a group of employees that champion disability inclusion in their respective teams. By 2021 the company had conducted 20 facility audits in eight countries, and 130 websites had been created using the Lilly Design System.

As examples of achievements, Eli Lilly has renovated a large cafeteria at its headquarters, redesigned over 100 building access maps, added QR codes for online navigation, and made its priority online global training courses accessible.

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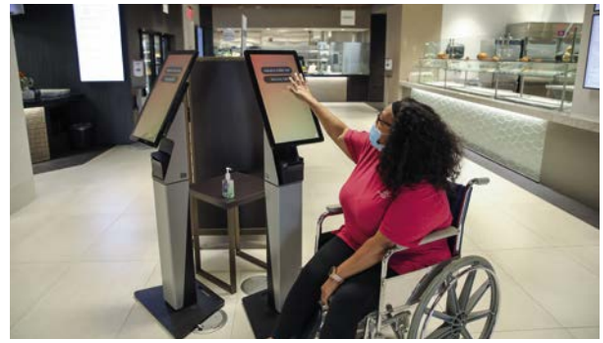

Eli Lilly's company cafeteria is more accessible to all its employees.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
Improvements under the Access Lilly workstreams are funded from existing operating expenses. For more significant investments, the cost is covered in the company's standard business planning process. In the second half of 2021 phase two of the programme started, which will last three years.

Eli Lilly will add human resources and procurement as additional workstreams and make structural changes to its buildings. The company will spend approximately $10 million in capital investment on the Access Lilly programme, of which a majority will be dedicated towards the built environment.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2020

- 20 facility audits have been conducted in eight countries.
- 130 websites have been created using the Lilly Design System by 2021.
- In 2021, 120 employees are part of the Accessible Champions Community.
- *A practice from the Business Sector.*

Online library of multilingual signed stories, jointly edited and developed

UNITED STATES – PACIFIC REGION/ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY – WAY PROGRAMME

In 2018 the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT), located in New York state, initiated the Deaf World Around You (WAY) IT-platform, which allows for the creation and distribution of multilingual signed stories, primarily for deaf children living in low-income countries. Content creators can combine images, text, and videos with signing storytellers into visual storybooks in different languages, available free and as open source. In 2021, 76 stories were online in seven languages.

Problem targeted
Accessing stories in their national and local sign languages can be difficult for children in low-income countries.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The WAY is an open-source, web-based library that allows the creation and distribution of multilingual signed stories with written text. It allows for crowd-sourced content contributors to combine images, text, and video of signing storytellers into web-based visual storybooks. When a new story becomes available, it is publicised through social media platforms. For example, if there is a story that is available only in Fijian sign language, a contributor can now create a video in Filipino sign language and add it to the story.

> "Playing with language increases social-emotional learning and executive functioning skills."
>
> Chris Kurz, Professor, Rochester Institute of Technology

The target groups are hearing impaired children and their families, including those in remote areas with limited or no Wi-Fi access. The RIT team, led by a deaf professor who has been working with deaf communities in Global South nations, is currently working with all deaf teams from Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, and Somalia. Each team has a deaf project coordinator who makes decisions on story selection for adaptation and creation. In 2021, WAY had over 4,300 views.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
RIT received funding from a partnership of USAID, World Vision, and the Australian Government that aims to improve reading outcomes for marginalized children. The stories are available at no cost to the users, and RIT provides open licences at no cost for technical teams who wish to modify or enhance the platform. WAY is seeking philanthropic funding to expand the library to other countries.

RIT will continue working with international teams to adapt or create up to 200 stories for preschool through Grade 2 in the six countries where it now operates. A second version of the platform is planned, with increased accessibility for deaf-blind users and a second written language for trilingual children.

How to jointly create a storybook.

Dr. Colin Allen
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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Over 6,500 views of stories between 2019 and 2021.
- In 2021 the WAY library held 76 stories translated by 18 sign language interpreters.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

Making flood-preparation and training accessible to all in the community

VIET NAM/CBM – DISABILITY INCLUSIVE AND DISASTER PREPARED COMMUNITIES

CBM, the international NGO headquartered in Germany, launched its Disability Inclusive Risk Reduction (DiDRR) programme in 2018 in the Nho Quan district, Viet Nam. As part of the flood and landslide disaster evacuation programme, among many other activities, accessible shelters and self-help forums were established. In 2020, 320 people were trained in managing DiDRR programmes, and 1,000 people with disabilities participated in evacuation drills.

Problem targeted
During the rainy season in Viet Nam people with disabilities have limited access to local disaster management measures and safety shelters.

Solution, innovation, and impact
The CBM project strengthens Disability Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction (DiDRR) measures in the Nho Quan district of Viet Nam with three objectives: (1) establishing self-help forums for people with disabilities and the local population, (2) creating accessible shelters, and (3) providing technical and financial support for the implementation of livelihood measures. One of the leading models of the project is to convert village cultural houses (usually a main and stable building in every village) into accessible shelters for persons with disabilities during flooding and landslides.

"Disability inclusion is key to effective risk governance. No one is safe until everyone is safe."

Mai Vu Thi Tuyet, CBM Viet Nam Country Coordinator

The project saw CBM trainers supplying the cultural houses with essential disaster preparedness equipment, such as loudspeakers, flashlights, generators, life jackets, signal lights, and raincoats. Between 2018 and 2020 some 2,000 people with disabilities living in six villages in the Nho Quan district have participated in evacuation drills as part of the project. A comprehensive DiDRR plan will also be integrated into the local socio-economic development plan.

Mr. Dennis Hehr
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Preparing for the next flood with accessible prevention, training, and emergency facilities.

Outlook, transferability, and funding
CBM implemented this project together with the Aid for Social Protection Programme Foundation, a Vietnamese NGO. Ninety per cent of the project's budget (appx . €770,000) comes from CBM, and the local district government pays the remaining 10 per cent.

Between 2024 and 2026, CBM will replicate the project in more areas and implement it at the community and district level.

CBM has already replicated this approach of making accessible shelters in disaster-prone areas in Indonesia (e.g., Yogyakarta) and in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2018

- Between 2018 and 2019, nine structures have been converted to accessible shelters.
- 1,000 people with disabilities participated in evacuation drills in 2020.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

GIS-based mapping and improving of accessible water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities

ZAMBIA – PEMBA DISTRICT/ZAMBIA WATER SANITATION AND HYGIENE (ZWASH)

In 2009 World Vision, an international US-based NGO, launched ZWASH – a water, sanitation, and hygiene programme. The project maps toilet facilities in schools and health centres using GIS to assess the accessibility of latrine facilities for persons with disabilities. World Vision and other local authorities then analyse the data to create accessible toilets and WASH facilities where and how they are most needed. As of 2021 the programme has analysed 630 schools and 198 health facilities.

Problem targeted

In Zambia adults and children with disabilities are not able to attend school or visit health facilities due to a lack of accessible toilets, water points, and sanitation facilities.

Solution, innovation, and impact

ZWASH conducts GIS-based mapping to assess the accessibility of toilet facilities in schools and health centres in the country, and it especially maps those areas where facilities are not accessible.

This data is made available through a web portal called mWater – a free, open-source data platform for managing water, sanitation, and health projects. This data is then used by World Vision and the ministries of Education and Health to prioritize work to make the toilets accessible. This work also involves WASH and community task groups that are comprised of people with disabilities. They ensure that facilities that have been adapted with jerry can tippers, toilet seats, and bathing seats are accessible to all.

A happy beneficiary of the ZWASH programme.

"The ZWASH programme has opened my heart to ensure children have access to WASH facilities at their homes."

Luundu Mwanakasale, Teacher,
Pemba Primary School

The GIS survey in 2020 covered 630 schools and 198 health facilities. The data is also being used and the methodology replicated by the Government of Zambia. Both the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education know which facilities are accessible in line with their policies, and they have started to address accessibility gaps. The ministries have also approved a design for accessible water points.

Outlook, transferability, and funding

World Vision combines funding from its ongoing long-term child sponsorship model with large institutional and private grants and uses this to fund the ZWASH programme. Since 2018 the project has spent nearly $19.2 million, including $9.3 million donated by private donors and $9.9 million from sponsorship and grants.

Between 2024 and 2026, World Vision plans to continue this programme throughout Zambia and to extend it to Ghana, Honduras, and 40 other countries.

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FACTS & FIGURES Start: 2009

- The programme reached 230,000 individuals in 2020 as compared to 133,200 in 2018.
- *A practice of Civil Society.*

SECTION 3:

Zero Project Impact–Transfer

This year's Fellows

- App&Town Compagnon of Mass Factory Urban Accessible Mobility, Spain
- Digital Inclusion Tool of FACIL'iti, France
- Kota Kita, Indonesia
- Deaf World Around You (WAY) of Rochester Institute of Technology, United States
- Project Sambhav of Jan Vikas Samiti, India
- ADC Programme of CAFE, United Kingdom
- Digital Scorecard of Hassell Inclusion, United Kingdom
- Senderismo Sin Limites of Fundación Eres, Chile
- INCIRadio La Radio Incluyente, Colombia
- Accessibility Testing by Undercover Clients with Disabilities, Access Israel

Get to know the 10 Impact–Transfer Fellows

This year's participants in the Zero Project Impact–Transfer programme come from around the world, and all work towards creating an accessible environment with zero barriers.

App&Town Compagnon, Spain

Personalized assisted transportation system

App&Town Compagnon is the personalized assisted transportation system developed by Mass Factory Urban Accessible Mobility S.L. that allows people with reduced mobility to autonomously use public transportation via an innovative door-to-door guidance system that integrates remote supervision functions. App&Town Compagnon thus reduces the accessibility barriers that hinder the personal autonomy of vulnerable people.

Mass Factory Urban Accessible Mobility is looking to scale-up the use of this app by individuals with intellectual disabilities, psychosocial disabilities, as well as with sensory and physical disabilities. App&Town Compagnon is the only existing fully integrated solution that allows for the personalization of routes, knowing in real-time the course of the trip, and is a solution for all types of disabilities. The system can be used worldwide, but it is first necessary to establish a local presence in order to train users and to provide offline assistance when it is required.

"Our system improves the quality of life for people with disabilities, and our goal is to roll out this system worldwide."
—Faustino Cuarado, Mass Factory Urban Accessible Mobility S.L.

Find out more on page 87.

FACIL'iti Digital Inclusion Tool, France

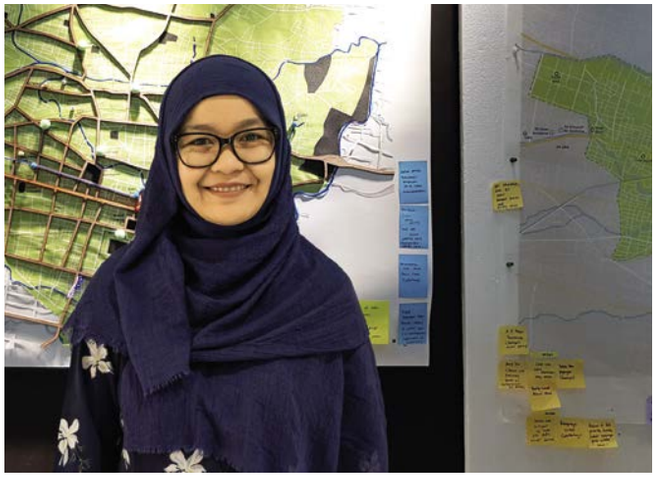
Customised browsing experience for all

FACIL'iti is an innovative digital accessibility solution from France that adapts the display of a website according to the user's needs for visual, motor, and/or cognitive comfort. FACIL'iti provides a significantly improved and customized browsing experience for older adults and people with disabilities. All end users with disabilities can enjoy the service on a free of charge basis, on all websites that have installed FACIL'iti.

With over 700,000 users, FACIL'iti has been adopted by hundreds of companies in order to provide a seamless and accessible browsing experience. The product is aimed towards all individuals with visual, motor, and/or cognitive disabilities, as well as senior citizens and web users looking for a more comfortable online surfing experience. The organization is looking to find partners from around the world who are able to adapt the programme to their local context. FACIL'iti has also been designed to be multilingual and can be adapted to any language.

"The web has become the new barrier for people with disabilities. And we have found the way to make this accessible to all."
—Yves Cornu, FACIL'iti

Find out more on page 54.



Kota Kita, Indonesia

Gathering data to ensure robust policy-making

Kota Kita, an Indonesian NGO, has developed the "Participatory Approach for Disability-Inclusive Cities," an initiative that gathers desegregated data on people with disabilities in resource-poor areas of Indonesia in order to ensure that social and welfare policies are able to deliver relief and aid in the event of a natural disaster. The participatory methodology, which maximizes the use of real-time, app-based technology with geotagging, has proven successful in fostering closer links among stakeholders.

This initiative is especially important during the COVID-19 pandemic in ensuring that people with disabilities are not left behind when accessing assistance. Kota Kita is looking to partner with local government stakeholders within developing communities and train them on creating spaces for inclusive dialogue, and to train government officials and key stakeholders on evidence-based policy through the development of an inclusive 'toolbox'. The organization is also looking to work with disabled peoples' organizations in order to increase collective agency, and to train advocates on critically engaging with community groups that work on urban data collection and analysis.

"At the core of our organization, we believe that sharing knowledge and replicating best practices with partners in other cities and even abroad is a crucial strategy in achieving our vision of a model city that is shaped and shared by informed and empowered citizens — A City for All."
—Nina Asterina, Kota Kita

Find out more on page 63.

Deaf World Around You (WAY), United States

Creation and distribution of multilingual signed stories

The Deaf World Around You (WAY) is an open-source, web-based library and authoring platform developed by the Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) that allows for the creation and distribution of multilingual signed stories with written text across the Internet. The RIT team is currently working with all-deaf teams from Fiji, Indonesia, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Samoa, and Somalia, and each team has a deaf project coordinator who makes decisions on the selections for story adaptation and story creation.

Deaf WAY is an open-sourced product, whereby stories are currently licensed by RIT under Creative Commons and are available at no cost to any technical teams. In order to scale up this innovation, the RIT team is looking to work with technical contributors such as developers and servers, content contributors such as writers and artists, as well as with other educational institutions that are willing to integrate the software into their existing library systems.

"While we have one live global platform and the number of stories available for free reading and viewing is increasing, we would like to focus on replication/scalability for the technical part of the platform."
—Christopher Kurz, Rochester Institute of Technology

Find out more on page 103.

Project Sambhav, India

Bringing essential services to children in rural areas

Jan Vikas Samiti is a non-profit organization based in Uttar Pradesh that works towards providing community-based rehabilitation services to children with developmental disabilities in rural communities. Project Sambhav is an integrated Tele-Rehabilitation app that creates personalized rehabilitation plans using video recordings. The platform reduced operational costs by up to 50 perc ent per child. Customised rehabilitation intervention helped 46 perc ent of children with disabilities to achieve mobility earlier than conventional methods.

Jan Vikas Samiti is looking to expand Project Sambhav, which is currently used by the families of over 700 children with disabilities spread over 10 states in India, through the adoption of the app by disability organizations operating within resource-poor areas. The organization is also looking for partners from government institutions, community-based rehabilitative organizations, and research agencies that are involved in the rehabilitation of children with disabilities. Jan Vikas Samiti is looking at a variety of models for replicating and scaling up this model – from helping organizations to adapt this technology to fit their service delivery landscape, to expanding the scope of services working in close collaboration with new partners.

"We believe that Project Sambhav has the potential to help many more children with disabilities who are looking for someone to help them overcome their impairment and to live a dignified life."
—Bins John, Jan Vikas Samiti

Find out more on page 60.

ADC Programme of CAFE, United Kingdom

Bringing the beautiful game to one and all

Established in 2009, CAFE aims to improve the live 'match day' experience for disabled spectators through their audio-descriptive commentary (ADC) programme for blind and partially sighted spectators so that they can follow the action in real-time alongside their fellow fans from anywhere within a stadium. The service is made available across the entire stadium bowl via an FM frequency, allowing fans to tune in from anywhere in the stadium via their own compatible devices.

The ADC Programme can be scaled-up and replicated easily through its adoption by national football associations and clubs by implementing ADC at their national and club games on match day, and by disabled peoples' organizations through partnerships that encourage more disabled advocates to understand local contexts and empower stakeholders to drive long-term improvements. It can also be promoted by disabled football fans themselves in order to understand potential barriers, and how they can be overcome. CAFE plans to apply to the Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) to provide ADC training for the FIFA Arab Cup 2021 and FIFA World Cup 2022 in Qatar, where it will train approximately 40 commentators to deliver the service in English and Arabic. In addition, CAFE plans to deliver further trainings in Spain, Italy, and Finland in 2022.

"Too frequently, blind and partially sighted fans are told they can only sit in certain areas of a stadium and are offered a standard radio commentary. We want to change this to ensure these fans have the same choice and options as non-disabled fans."
—Michael Rice, CAFE

Find out more on page 93.

Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard, United Kingdom

Assessing an organization's inclusive policies and practices

Hassell Inclusion has created a free online tool to quickly allow people to get a score on how their organization fares when it comes to inclusive and diverse policies and practices. The Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard provides an immediate score for any organization, and delivers a 20-page personalized report with suggestions for what the organization can do to be more accessible.

In order to replicate and scale this innovation, Hassell Inclusion is looking to work with multinational companies, national and local governments, universities, health care providers, as well as charities and start-ups. Large corporations will be able to adopt the Digital Accessibility Maturity Scorecard and benchmark themselves and improve their organizational access through customised feedback on policy, training, and both personnel and technical support. Hassell Inclusion also provides consultancy services to corporations in order to build case studies on the importance of accessible digitalization.

"We want to enable organizations both large and small, all around the world, to get good at digital accessibility and to help their users with disabilities."
—Jonathan Hassell, Hassell Inclusion

Find out more on page 94.

Senderismo Sin Limites, Chile

Ensuring natural spaces are accessible to all

Fundacion Eres is a Chilean disability organization that makes hiking trails and natural spaces accessible to all persons with and without disabilities. The Senderismo Sin Limites ("hiking without limits") programme includes collaborative training plans for officials and tour operators of the National Tourism Service, as well as self-assessment tools that can be developed into action plans to improve accessibility in natural spaces. This practice has been replicated in several regions of Chile, as well as in Paraguay and Bolivia.

In order to replicate their successes, Fundacion Eres is looking to work with more individuals with disabilities and their families, local communities, and volunteers within Latin America. It hopes to promote the participation and advocacy of individuals with disabilities and their families throughout Chile and beyond through programme diagnosis, design, implementation, and evaluation.

"Our purpose is to transform the culture for inclusion through Senderismo Sin Limites, which is a programme that includes tours, training, and the design of accessible materials, among other actions, and whose objective is to install the model in at least six Latin American countries as well as in other continents – all with a positive environmental impact."
—Glenda Duran Caro, Fundacion Eres

Find out more on page 42.

INCIRadio La Radio Incluyente, Argentina

Bringing information to the masses

Initiated in Colombia, INCIRadio is a radio station created by the Institute Nacional para Ciegos (INCI) in 2015 for and by people with visual impairments. The station was born as a tool to strengthen the communication skills of blind and people with low vision, and is the only media station in Colombia that has specialised disability programming, with information on education and culture, employment, sports, legislation, and a host of other topics.

With 30,000 listeners from 99 countries, INCIRadio is looking to replicate and grow its presence among people with disabilities, their families, caregivers, co-workers, as well as students with visual disabilities. INCIRadio aims to be the voice of people with visual disabilities on a global scale. The project that is currently being managed by both the Colombian National Institute for the Blind and the Ministry of Education is looking to partner with broadcasting organizations globally.

"We would like to be able to count on the participation of specialists from all over the world, people who tell their stories of rehabilitation, global disability organizations, and the different actors working for the visually impaired."
—Henry Díaz Chacón, Instituto Nacional para Ciegos INCI.

Find out more on page 45.

Accessibility Testing and Evaluation by Undercover Clients with Disabilities, Access Israel

Providing accessible services through mystery shopping

Access Israel has developed the Accessibility Testing and Evaluation programme that tests and evaluates the usefulness and accessibility of public services through the use of an undercover team of individuals with disabilities. The information is then recorded, and a document that outlines recommendations is developed.

This model fits organizations that believe in the importance of being accessible. The project is also designed to support accessibility leaders in organizations need to understand what needs to be improved and service providers who would like feedback on the level and quality of their services. The organization is also open to promoting this methodology within other countries and cultural environments.

"Our project works great on a local space, but we would love to bring it to an international level. We can generate high impact in a short period of time."
—Noa Biron, Access Israel

Find out more on page 67.

SECTION 4:

Zero Project Latin America

Fundación Descubreme

Outstanding activities 2021/22

The Zero Project for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community

Since 2018, Fundación Descúbreme and the Essl Foundation have been closely collaborating to promote the Zero Project in Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community worldwide, and in 2021–2022 this dynamic partnership has continued to expand the mission for a world without barriers.

by Fundación Descúbreme, Chile

In 2018, Carola Rubia, Executive Director of Fundación Descúbreme, approached the Zero Project with the idea of sharing and promoting the innovative ideas and solutions awarded by the Zero Project with Latin America and Spanish-speaking communities throughout the world. The idea was based on the underrepresentation of social innovation coming from Latin America in the project's annual call for nominations, and the inherent value of the research developed by the Zero Project, which then was only available in English.

To close both the geographic and the linguistic gaps identified, the collaboration aimed at making the Zero Project's publications, research, and opportunities available in Spanish, as well as at strengthening the community of social innovators working for inclusion in Latin America and the Hispanic community worldwide.

ABOUT FUNDACIÓN DESCÚBREME

Fundación Descúbreme is a Chilean non-profit organization founded in 2010 to promote the inclusion of people with cognitive disabilities in all areas of human development. To achieve this purpose, Descúbreme has focused on advancing the rights to employment and education for people with cognitive disabilities, leading the discussion on relevant topics for this group, as well as encouraging good practices on social inclusion at the national and international level.

Main activities during 2021–2022

During the past two years collaboration on the Zero Project Latin America has worked to strengthen the community of social innovators working for inclusion in the region, as well as to make the Zero Project better known in order to provide valuable collaboration opportunities for its local network. What follows are some of the key highlights of our work.

Zero Project Almanac 2013–2021

Following the commitment of the Zero Project Latin America to have all the official information of the Zero Project available in Spanish, on 5 August 2021 the Spanish-language Zero Project Almanac 2013–2021 was launched. A webinar was held for the occasion, which was welcomed by Dr. Michael Fembek, Director of the Zero Project, and Catalina Saieh, President of Fundación Descúbreme. The webinar also included the expert participation of Javier Güemes, Director of International Relations of Grupo Social ONCE, who addressed the challenges of an inclusive digital economy for people with disabilities.

Zero Project Conference 2021 for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community

On 29–30 September 2021 the second Zero Project Conference for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community was held, covering the topic of Inclusive Employment and ICT. The Conference brought together over 100 experts with and without disabilities from 30 countries, and offered close to 30 hours of discussion and conversation on innovative practices and policies from all sectors to advance the right to employment for people with disabilities, as well as on technologies to support inclusion.

The Opening Ceremony was welcomed by Martin Essl, Chairman of the Essl Foundation, and Catalina Saieh, as well as such relevant authorities as Mr. Wolfgang Sobotka, President of the Austrian Parliament;

The cover of the Spanish-language Zero Project Almanac 2013–2021.

On 5 August 2021 the Spanish-language Zero Project Almanac was launched. A webinar was held for the occasion, which was welcomed by Michael Fembek and Catalina Saieh, and included the expert participation of Javier Güemes from Fundación ONCE, who addressed the challenges of an inclusive digital economy for people with disabilities.

The collaboration aims to provide the Impact–Transfer programme with a regional and linguistic focus so as to offer better support for the practices from Spanish-speaking countries.

Mr. Pablo Mieres, Minister of Labour, Uruguay; and Karla Rubilar, Minister of Social Development, Chile.

Among the keynote speakers, the Conference had the pleasure of hearing from Caroline Casey from The Valuable 500, Daniela Bas from UN desa, Fabio Bertranou from the ILO-South Cone of Latin America, former US Senator Thomas Harkin, Kate Nash from Purple Space, Laurie Henneborn from Accenture Research, and Susan Scott-Parker from Business Disability International.

Zero Project Report 2021 on Employment
Another highlight of the Zero Project Conference for Latin America was the launch of the Spanish-language Zero Project Report 2021 on Employment and ICT – the third official Zero Project publication available in this language, together with the Almanac and the Zero Project Report of 2020.

Impact–Transfer programme
Fundación Descúbreme has also joined forces with the joint Zero Project/Ashoka accelerator programme known as the Zero Project Impact–Transfer, designed to enhance the replication of proven and highly effective solutions that improve the lives of persons with disabilities. The collaboration aims to provide the Impact–Transfer programme with a regional and linguistic focus so as to offer better support for the practices from Spanish-speaking countries. To achieve this, Fundación Descúbreme creates a variety of opportunities for our local stakeholders to engage in the benefits of being part of the programme.

To give two examples of these opportunities, all alumni of the Zero Project Impact–Transfer programme interested in replicating their programmes in Latin America are encouraged to participate in the Zero Project Conference for the region and to engage with local stakeholders. Second, we are proud to announce that 2021 marked the first time that Fundación Descúbreme provided support as a co-mentor to two initiatives going through the Impact–Transfer's training programme: INCI Radio from Colombia and Kota Kita from Indonesia (for more information on these programmes, see section 3). In this way, we have been able to pass on all the knowledge and skills learned during the past three years of collaboration.

FUNDACIÓN DESCÚBREME AND THE ZERO PROJECT

In 2017, Descúbreme was recognized as a Zero Project Awardee on Inclusive Employment for its programme on training, certification of labour skills, and job opportunities for young persons with disabilities. The "Inclusive Cycle" programme was jointly developed with SKBergé, OTIC CChC, and Chilevalora, and aimed to become a best practice on inclusive employment that could serve as an example to organizations dealing with similar topics.

The Spanish-language Zero Project Report 2021 was launched during the Zero Project Conference 2021 for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community worldwide.

On 29–30 September 2021 the second Zero Project Conference for Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community was held, covering the topic of Inclusive Employment and ICT. The Conference brought together over 100 experts with and without disabilities to discuss innovative practices and policies from all sectors to advance the right to employment for people with disabilities.

The ICT–Innovation for Inclusion programme

One of the most relevant opportunities born from collaboration at the regional level is the ICT–Innovation for Inclusion programme. Since 2020, Pacto de Productividad Chile, Fundación Descúbreme, the Zero Project, IDB Lab, and Impact–Transfer have joined forces to create the first version of the ICT–Innovation for Inclusion programme. Promoted by Fundación Descúbreme and the IDB Lab, Pacto de Productividad seeks to encourage public–private partnerships at the national level to consolidate a collaboration platform for the effective articulation of the actors within the inclusive employment ecosystem in Chile.

Led by Pacto de Productividad, the programme aims to implement technological innovations to support the employment of persons with disabilities in the workplace. Three innovations – identified in the last 2021 Zero Project Call for Nominations on Employment and ICT – were chosen to implement their solutions in Chilean organizations during the second semester of 2021 and all of 2022.

The three chosen initiatives are the following:

- Egalité Inclusion & Diversity, a Brazilian social business that developed an online recruitment platform, incorporating a behavioural profile evaluation tool and free e-learning courses adapted for persons with disabilities. The platform uses an algorithm to calculate the best opportunity for each candidate based on location, education, salary, expertise, and behavioural profile. Egalité's platform is being replicated by the Chilean public organization Bolsa Nacional de Empleo, an online matchmaking platform that serves as a bridge between employers and employees for both private and public-sector job opportunities.

- Enable India's Educate Yourself Easily (EYE) Tool, an open-source self-learning platform that supports persons with visual impairments to learn job-critical computer skills. Users can choose from over 400 exercises to develop skills, take part in job simulations, and test their progress. The EYE Tool is being replicated by Fundación Luz, a Chilean NGO with the mission to educate and train blind and low-vision persons to achieve autonomy in their lives, particularly in education and employment.

THE ZERO PROJECT LATIN AMERICA

In 2019, after many conversations and visits between members of Fundación Descúbreme and the Zero Project, both organizations made the decision to work together, making this partnership the first attempt at the regionalization of the Zero Project. The collaboration aims at expanding the Zero Project's mission of a world without barriers to Latin America and the Spanish-speaking community worldwide.

The chosen organizations have received support from members of the Pacto de Productividad Chile network, as well as acceleration support from the Impact–Transfer programme to clarify their replication model and needs.

- Fundación ONCE's 3D printing repository and methodology, an open-source bank of 3D support products based on the needs of persons and employees with disabilities. The 3D printing tool is being replicated by Instituto Nacional de Rehabilitación Pedro Aguirre Cerda, a public specialized rehabilitation and research centre in Chile.

The organizations behind these solutions have received support from members of the Pacto de Productividad Chile network, as well as acceleration support from the Impact–Transfer programme to clarify their replication model and needs.

The work developed by the programme and its partners was initially showcased during the Zero Project Conference 2021 and the Zero Project Conference 2021 for Latin America; and the work implemented will also be presented at both the Zero Project Conference 2022 on Accessibility in Vienna in February and in Santiago in May.

Challenges for 2022–2023

Both the Zero Project and Fundación Descúbreme are deeply committed to eliminating the barriers that hinder the full inclusion of people with disabilities and to ensuring the rights of all people to education, employment, accessibility, and independent living. It is impossible to deny the profound effect that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on all our lives, but especially on the full exercise of the rights of persons with disabilities. Therefore, our commitment to innovation, inclusion, and strengthening our communities is more relevant than ever.

One of our landmark events during 2022 will be the Zero Project Conference for Latin America, 25–26 May, bringing together the most relevant solutions on Accessibility and ICT for the Latin American region and the Spanish-speaking community worldwide. Additionally, later in the year we will launch the Spanish-language Zero Project Report 2022 on Accessibility and ICT, maintaining our pledge to provide access to all Zero Project information.

Finally, we are very excited for the new Zero Project cycle 2022–2023 on Independent Living and Political Participation beginning in a few months, a topic strongly related to persons with intellectual disabilities and, consequently, deeply close to the core mission of Fundación Descúbreme. There are still many barriers to overcome to achieve the right to live independently and to be included in one's community and society, and we are grateful for the opportunity to put our knowledge, abilities, and networks at the Zero Project's disposal to continue making life better for persons with disabilities.

THE MAIN WORK OF THE ZERO PROJECT LATIN AMERICA

The strategic long-term partnership focuses on four main fronts:

1. strengthening the community of social innovators working for disability inclusion in Latin America;
2. increasing regional and linguistic representation in the Zero Project platform;
3. creating Spanish-language content and communication channels;
4. organizing an annual Zero Project Conference in Chile for the Spanish-speaking community worldwide.

SECTION 5:

Nomination and Research Network 2021–2022

Zero Project Research Network 2021–2022

List by country (and within country: by organization name) of all peer-reviewers, voters, nominators, juries, and people with active roles in this year's research cycle. More than 600 experts with and without disabilities from appx. 80 countries contributed.

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANIZATION
Afghanistan		
Syed Waheed	SHAH	AABRAR – Afghan Amputee Bicylists for Rehabilitation and Recreation
Argentina		
Pablo	LECUONA	Tiflonexos Association
Olga Ines	PINTADO	Universidad de San Pablo Tucumán – Centro de Tecnología Disruptiva
Armenia		
Marine	MALKHASYAN	UNDP – United Nations Development Programme, Armenia
Armen	ALAVERDYAN	Unison NGO
Australia		
Graeme	SMITH	Ability Technology
Eileen	HOPKINS	Access Innovation Media
Amy	WHALLEY	AND – Australian Network on Disability
Trevor	CARROLL	Australian Federation of Disability Organisations
Gisele	MESNAGE	Digital Gap Initiative
Cher	NICHOLSON	HCSCC – Health Community Service Complaints Commissioner
Phia	DAMSMA	Sonokids Australia
Dale	REARDON	Travel For All
Trevor	PARMENTER	University of Sydney
Simon	GREEN	Youth Affairs Council Victoria
Austria		
Shadi	ABOU-ZAHRA	Amazon Austria
Markus	WIMMER	Austrian Post AG
Lukas	SUKAL	Berufliche Assistenz
Markus	LADSTAETTER	BIZEPS
Simone	PETER	Diakonie Katastrophenhilfe
Emanuela	ZAIMI	DSA – Down Syndrome Albania Foundation & Achievement and Development Center
Karin	ECKERT	equalizent Training and Consulting
Stefan	TRENKER	FH Burgenland
Klaus Peter	HOECKNER	Hilfsgemeinschaft – Austrian Association supporting the Blind and Visually Impaired
Christian	VOGELAUER	Hilfsgemeinschaft – Austrian Association supporting the Blind and Visually Impaired
Werner	ROSENBERGER	Hilfsgemeinschaft – Austrian Association supporting the Blind and Visually Impaired
Valerie	CLARKE	Inclusion24
Klaus	MIESENBERGER	Johannes Kepler University Linz
Karin	ASTEGGER	Lebenshilfe Salzburg
Stefan	SCHÜRZ	LIFEtool
David	HOFER	LIFEtool
David	CURTIS	Light for the World Austria
Christoph	MARVAN	Marvan & Marvan Produktentwicklung- und Vertriebs GmbH
Osman	IPSIROGLU	Mind the Gap – Academy Austria
Sebastian	BRETTL	myAbility Social Enterprise GmbH
Richard	JOHN	ÖBB-Personenverkehr AG
Wolfhard	DRABEK	OEZIV – Oesterreichischer Zivil-Invalidenverband, Bundesverband
Michael	SICHER	Roomchooser
Martin	MORANDELL	Smart In Life
Christian	SCHINKO	Unicredit Bank Austria AG
Farhan	WILAYAT BUTT	-
Sylvia	GOETTINGER	Vienna Business Agency
Katharina	KROESL	VRVis Zentrum fuer Virtual Reality und Visualisierung Forschungs-GmbH
Anna-Lisa	GROHS	Wiener Linien GmbH & Co KG
Stefan	RUSCHER	Wiener Linien GmbH & Co KG
Franz	WOLFMAYR	ZFSW – Zentrum für Sozialwirtschaft
Azerbaijan		
Davud	REHIMLI	Union of Disabled People Organisations Azerbaijan
Bangladesh		
Saidul	HUQ	BERDO – Blind Education and Rehabilitation Development Organisation
Monjurul	HABIB	CDD – Centre for Disability and Development
Johurul Islam	JEWEL	CSF – Child Sight Foundation – Global
Iftekhar	AHMED	CSID- Centre for Services and Information on Disability
Ashraful	ISLAM	Face of Art Technologies
Sajida	RAHMAN DANNY	PFDA – Vocational Training Center Trust
Mohammed Arifur	RAHMAN	YPSA – Young Power in Social Action
Vashkar	BHATTACHARJEE	YPSA – Young Power in Social Action
Barbados		
Phillip	LASHLEY	Aquarius Charity
Belgium		
Anne	ROSKEN	EASPD – European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities
André	FELIX	EDF – European Disability Forum

FIRST NAME	LAST NAME	ORGANIZATION
Kasper	VAN HEMELEN	Emino
Ivor	AMBROSE	ENAT – European Network for Accessible Tourism
Ines	BULIC COJOCAR-IU	ENIL – European Network on Independent Living
Laura	ALCIAUSKAITE	ENIL – European Network on Independent Living
Inmaculada	PLACENCIA PORRERO	European Commission – DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
Marjolijn	CLIJSTERS	Inter Vlandeeren
Tine	MISSINNE	Inter Vlandeeren
Sabine	LOBNIG	Mobile & Wireless Forum
Joris	VAN PUYENBROE-CK	Odessa University College
Dirk	ROMBAUT	Passwerk
Tally	HATZAKIS	Trilateral Research Ltf
Pieter	GHIJSELS	Visit Flanders
Brazil		
Alessandra	REIS	Curitiba City Hall
Claudia	WERNECK	Escola de Gente – Communication in inclusion
Alan	THOMAS	Escola de Gente – Communication in inclusion
Luisa	CALDERON	Self-Employed
Regina	COHEN	Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
Monique	FERRAZ	Federal University of Rio de Janeiro
Raquel	MESQUITA	IBM Brazil
Carina	ALVES	Instituto Incluir
Solange	ALMEIDA	Ktalise Assessoria e Tecnologias Ltda.
Carla	MAUCH	Mais Diferencas – Inclusive Education and Culture
Thaís	MARTINS	Mais Diferencas – Inclusive Education and Culture
Luis Henrique	DA SILVEIRA MAUCH	Mais Diferencas – Inclusive Education and Culture
Fernanda	MAIA	Oswaldo Cruz Institute
Silvia Regina	GRECCO	São Paulo Municipal Secretariat for People with Disabilities
Bulgaria		
Iva	TSOLOVA	JAMBA – Career for All
Kiril	ARNAUTSKI	Sozopol Foundation
Burkina Faso		
Rasmata	KONFO	Fundraiser
Cameroon		
Virginie	Toko	Cameroon Network of Women with Disabilities
Canada		
Marnie	PETERS	Accessibility Simplified
Orly	FRUCHTER	Azrieli Foundation
Neil	BELANGER	British Columbia Aboriginal Network on Disability Society
Susan L.	HARDIE	Canadian Centre on Disability Studies
Kevin	MURPHY	Canadian Department of Employment and Social Development
Kathy	Laszlo	DANI – Developing And Nurturing Independence
Sharmini	CONSTANTINES-CU	DDO – Diversability Development Organization
George	MASON	Fable Tech Labs
Neha	GULATI	Fable Tech Labs
Ines Elvira	DE ESCALLON	Family Support Network for Employment
Lisa Jane	DE GARA	Gateway Association
Keenan	WELLAR	Live Work Play
Fred	WINEGUST	Reena
Monica	ACKERMANN	Scotiabank
Linda	PERRY	Vela Microboard Association
Chile		
Maria There-sa	VON FUERSTEN-BERG LETELIER	Andres Bello University
Andrea	BOUDEGUER	BAU Accesibilidad Universal
Soledad	VÉLIZ CÓRDOVA	Catholic University of Chile, Centre for the Development of Inclusive Technologies
Pablo	VARAS	Centro Cultural Nuestras Manos
Andrea	LEGARRETA	Corporación Ciudad Accesible
Kristine	FRANCE ZUNIGA	Corporación Ciudad Accesible
Pamela	PRETT	Corporación Ciudad Accesible
Andres	BEROGGI	Fundación Descúbreme
Maria Ignacia	RODRIGUEZ	Fundación Descúbreme
Glenda Virginia	DURÁN CARO	Fundación Eres
Juan	GOMEZ	Fundación Luz
Hans	PETERS	FUNDACION RONDA
Jimena Luna	BENAVIDES	Independent Living Foundation Chile
Rene	ESPINOZA	Lazarillo Tec SpA
Jonathan	PALACIOS	SENADIS – National Service for the Disabled Chile
Karla	VICENCIO ROJAS	SENADIS – National Service for the Disabled Chile
Ivonne	MELLA	Universidad de Concepción / INCLUIDOS CONSULTORES
China		
Hua	YANG	Accessibility Research Association
Angela	GU	Flex Ltd.
Sarah	ALBERT	Flex Ltd.
Marina	KALNITSKI	Taicang Inclusion Factory
Zhen	DIAO	WeBank CO.,Ltd
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The Zero Project Research Network 2021–2022 (continued)

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The Zero Project Research Network 2021–2022 (continued)

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The Zero Project Research Network 2021–2022 (continued)

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Zimbabwe		
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Summary in Easy Language

What is Zero Project?

In 2008, the Essl Foundation started the Zero Project.

The vision of Zero Project is: “A world without barriers.”

Zero Project wants to improve the rights of people with disabilities all over the world.

The basis for this is the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which is a Convention of the United Nations.

People with disabilities are often disadvantaged.

However, there are always new and useful solutions to eliminate such disadvantages.

These solutions are the focus of the Zero Project.

Zero Project searches for, selects, and shares the best solutions and ideas.

How does Zero Project work?

Zero Project Report

Every year the Zero Project describes its work in a report.

The report is called the Zero Project Report.

The Zero Project Report 2022 is about the years 2021 and 2022

The main theme is Accessibility.

Zero Project Conference

Zero Project organizes a big conference every year.

It is called the Zero Project Conference – or ZeroCon for short.

It is pronounced like this: Siro Prodschekt Konfarens – or Siro Kon for short.

The conference is attended by professionals from all over the world, with and without disabilities.

They talk about good solutions for a barrier-free world and exchange experiences.

In 2021, due to the Corona virus, the conference had to be held over the Internet for the first time.

In 2022 the conference will be held both in person and on the Internet for the first time.

That means: Some people will really be there, and all other people will be able to participate online.

The conference will be held at the offices of the United Nations in Vienna.

The main theme this year is Accessibility.

In the conference, 76 organizations from 35 countries will present their projects, which we call “Solutions” because they help to solve problems for people with disabilities.

These projects have made a place or service accessible or improved their accessibility.

Each of these solutions will get an award. It is called the Zero Project Award.

There will also be new things at the Conference, such as:

- the Ambassador Circle, a group of Ambassadors in Austria who are also invited to the conference
- a discussion about proposals for more accessibility in Asia

Zero Project themes

Each year, the Zero Project focuses on a specific theme.

The themes repeat every four years:

- 2013, 2017, and 2021 was about Employment.
- 2014, 2018, and 2022 was/is about Accessibility
- 2015, 2019, and 2023 was/will be about Independent living and political participation
- 2016, 2020, and 2024 was/will be about Education

Topic 2022: Accessibility

Accessibility focuses on such areas as:

- Buildings and architecture
- Public transport and services
- Goods and services
- Modern technologies for guidance systems, communication platforms, and education
- Workplace equipment
- Sign language and easy-to-understand speech
- Urban development
- Tourism
- Arts and culture
- Sports and leisure

Many solutions use information and communication technology (called ICT for short).

They are becoming increasingly important.

Zero Project Award

Every year, Zero Project selects the best solutions and ideas.

In 2022, there were a total of 381 nominations from 93 countries.

A group of experts reviews the nominations.

The projects must meet three conditions:

- The idea must be new.
- The idea must do something better.
- You have to be able to implement the idea in other areas or places.

At ZeroCon 2022 there will be awards for the 76 best solutions from 35 countries.

Zero Project Database

Zero Project has collected all the good solutions in a database.

The database is called the Zero Project Database.

Here you can find more than 700 solutions that the Zero Project has awarded since 2012.

All information about these solutions is free.

One can easily search the solutions using keywords.

One can also contact more than 600 organizations and professionals in over 100 countries.

One can find the database at zeroproject.org

Zero Project and its partners

A very important partner for the Zero Project

is also the organization Fundación Descúbreme in Chile.

Fundación Descúbreme works to help people with disabilities find work more easily and better.

Together with Fundación Descúbreme, Zero Project can also reach many people in Latin America in the future.

Ashoka is a worldwide network of entrepreneurs in the social sector.

Together with Ashoka, Zero Project launched a programme called Zero Project Impact–Transfer in 2017.

The programme supports accessible solutions through training, mentoring, and contacts.

This is because particularly good solutions should be used all over the world.

Zero Project in Austria

In Austria, Zero Project deals a lot with the topic of work.

Companies should experience and understand that there are many advantages to employing people with disabilities.

For this reason, the Zero Project:

- provides information to companies and organizations.
- publishes an information supplement every year in the daily newspaper “Die Presse.”
- gives awards to companies that employ people with disabilities.
- maintains close contact with the Austrian Parliament, ministries, authorities, and organizations.

List of Acronyms

✉	Contact
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADHD	Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder
AI	Artificial Intelligence
Android	Operation system of smartphones
ANED	Academic Network of European Disability
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ASL	American Sign Language
AT	Assistive Technology
CBM	Christoffel Blind Mission
CBR	Community-based rehabilitation
CBS	Community-based services
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility
CV	Curriculum Vitae (resumé)
DAISY	Digital Accessible Information System
DPO	Disabled people's organization
DRC	DR Congo, Democratic Republic of Kongo
€	Euro
e.V.	eingetragener Verein (registered Association)
EAA	European Accessibility Act
EASPD	European Association of Service Providers
EC	European Commission (part of the EU)
ECI	Early childhood intervention
EDF	European Disability Forum
EEA	European Economic Area
EFC	European Foundation Centre
ENAT	European Network of Accesible Tourism
ENIL	European Network for Independent Living
Erasmus+	EU grant-funding programme
ESF	European Social Fund
EU	European Union
G3ICT	Global Initiative for Inclusive ICTs
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GPS	Global Positioning System
HI	Humanity & Inclusion
Horizon2020	EU grant-funding programme
HR	Human Resources
HTML	Hypertext Marker Language (Computer language used for websites)
ICT	Information and communication technologies
IDA	International Disability Alliance
IL	Independent Living
ILO	International Labour Organization
Inc.	Incorporated (for-profit organization in US, UK and other countries)
INEE	Inter-Agency Network for Education in Emergencies
IOS	Operating System of Apple smartphones
iPad	Tablet Computer, Trademark of Apple Computers
IS	International Sign (Language)
ISO	International Organization for Standardization
IT	Information & Technology (see ICT)
ITU	International Telecommunication Union
LLC	Limited Liability Company
Ltd	Limited (registered company)
MEP	Member of the European Parliament
MP	Member of Parliament
NFC	Near-Field Communication (a technology)
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NYC	New York City
OAS	Organization of American States
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
ONLUS	Organizzazione Non Lucrativa Di Utilitá Sociale (Non-Profit Organization, Italy)
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
PSE	Post-secondary education
QA	Quality Assurance
QR Code	Barcode for Scanning (Quick Response Code)
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
STEM	Science, technology, engineering, mathematics
TVET	Technical, vocational, and educational training
UAE	United Arab Emirates
UD	Universal Design
UEB	Unified English Braille Code
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UN CRPD	see CRPD
UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations Refugee Agency
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
US	United States of America
US$	US dollar
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VAT	Value Added Tax
VET	Vocational and educational training
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
WBU	World Blind Union
WCAG	Accessibility Standard for Web applications
WHO	World Health Organization
WIPO	World Intellectual Property Organization

Zero Project –
for a world with zero barriers.

NEXT YEAR'S TOPIC

The next research topic of the Zero Project is Independent Living & Political Participation and ICT. Nominations start on 1 May 2022.

Send us your contact details (name, job title, email, etc.) to office@zeroproject.org in order to receive our official Call for Nominations email.

#ZeroProject – join the Network!

Stay in touch on:
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