The missing D in Diversity: Addressing disability inclusion through the UNOOSA Space for Persons with Disabilities project
Persons with disabilities (PwD) include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

(UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, article 1)

- Disabilities can be visible or invisible
- Distinguish between disability and impairment
- Disabilities can be congenital or adventitious
Global trends
• >1 billion PwD around the world
• Growing numbers due to aging population, longer life expectancy, natural disasters etc.

Challenges in STEM
• Discrimination and social stigma
• Inaccessible tools and work environment

Benefits to society
• Inclusive and diverse groups are more successful than homogeneous ones
• Wider talent pool

• Started in 2021
• Aims to promote inclusive and equitable development in the space sector by fostering cooperation towards disability mainstreaming
• Develops disability-specific programmes through informed and meaningful involvement of PwD in two focus areas:
  1. Innovative tools and technologies enabling accessibility
  2. Inclusive practices for employment and empowerment of PwD in the space sector
## Focus area 1:
**Innovative tools and technologies enabling accessibility**

### Sonification
- **Motivation**
  - Address the sector’s reliance on data visualization for research, outreach, and education
  - Raise awareness of sonification and makes recommendations for developing and implementing sonification as a universal tool

- **Output**
  - Nov 2022, online event, project showcase and panel discussion
  - May 2023, special report “Sonification: a tool for research, outreach and inclusion in space sciences”
  - “Sound of the Earth’s Magnetic Field” audio installation at COPUOS by Denmark

### Human spaceflight
- **Motivation**
  - Raise awareness of challenges and opportunities in human spaceflight for PwD
  - Highlight the importance of accessible and sustainable design in space architecture

- **Output**
  - Mar 2021, organized “Pushing frontiers: Human spaceflight and disability” webinar with support from ESA
  - May 2023, presented at ESA’s “Accessibility in human spaceflight” webinar

### Space spinoffs
- **Motivation**
  - Raise awareness of the benefits of space spinoffs in addressing challenges of disabilities
  - Foster international and interdisciplinary collaborations on technological solutions to advance accessibility

- **Output**
  - (Work-in-progress) Outreach activity “From Space to Earth: Space spinoffs and innovations enabling accessibility on Earth”
Focus area 2: Inclusive practices for employment and empowerment

Targeted internship
- PwD are less likely to have internships compared to their abled peers => lower chance of employment after graduation
- Aim to support their professional development with a customized workplan and accessible work environment

Space+: Pathways for all abilities
- Understanding is key to identifying and removing barriers to inclusion
- Challenge societal biases, raise awareness of inadequacies in system
- Encourage and empower more PwD to enter and participate in the space sector, knowing that others with similar backgrounds have managed to navigate the field and that they will be accepted and welcomed just as they are

Roadmap to full participation
- Brings together key stakeholders in the space sector to share knowledge and experiences
- Identify challenges and opportunities for disability inclusion at all levels
- Provide guidance on future direction

Motivation
- 5 interns have benefitted since inception
- “Working with ADHD can be challenging in a standard workplace environment. UNOOSA’s approach to designing the internship has enabled me to apply myself to the best of my ability and given me the flexibility to work in a way that makes the best use of my skills.”

Output
- (Work-in-progress) Interview articles, story bank (data-driven approach)

(Work-in-progress) Calling for partners and experts
Conclusion

The Opportunity: Now
The Vision: Leaving No One Behind

10 Reduced Inequalities

17 Partnerships for the Goals

Partner with us

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