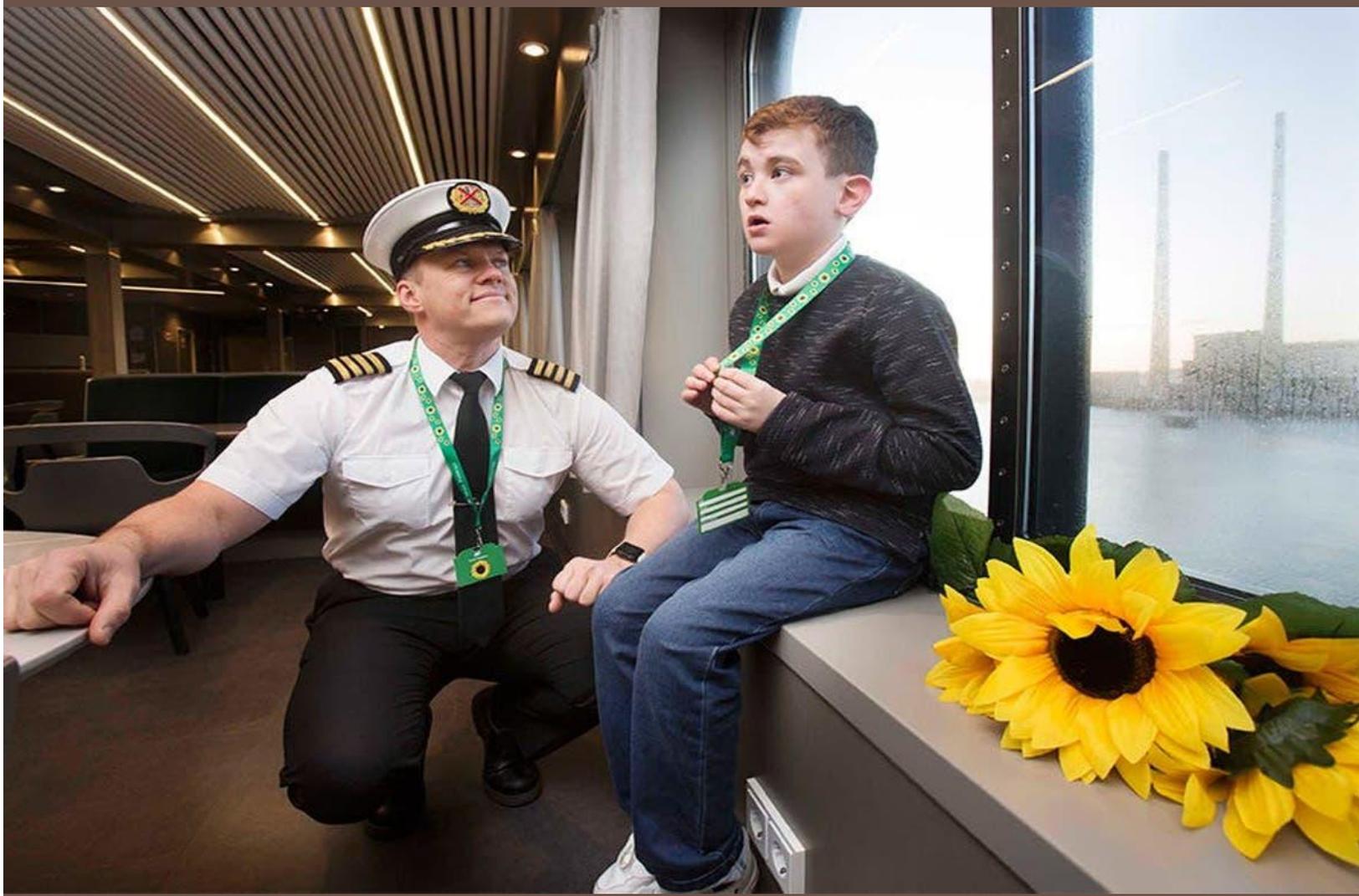


Design for All



Women Designer Year

"Travel in the times of a pandemic"

Guest Editor: Executive Director Jani Nayar, SATH

October 2020 Vol-15 No-10

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Jani Nayar , Executive director of the SATH (Society for Accessible Travel & Hospitality), a tireless advocate and effective educator on travel & disability.

Lessons from Covid 19 pandemic..good and bad.

Jani Nayar

Biocon Executive Chairperson Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw says *"ultimately, the greatest lesson that COVID-19 can teach humanity is that we are all in this together."*

Another point of view: *"Disabled people are not just vulnerable – we are valuable,"* says Caroline Casey, a leading authority on diversity and inclusion and the founder and creator of [The Valuable 500](#). *"Please do not allow with this pandemic for us to go back and switch on that horrible old narrative, which is about 'poor disabled people', 'poor weak people', 'poor sick people'. No, we may have a disability, but my God – we've got ability, potential, resources, brains, and valuable contributions to give."*

That brings another person to mind. Stella Young. She once said "I subscribe to what's called the social model of disability, which tells us that we are more disabled by the society that we live in than by our bodies and our diagnoses."She very aptly coined a term - Inspiration Porn. Inspiration porn is the portrayal of people with disabilities as inspirational solely or in part on the basis of their disability. Maria R. Palacios wrote a poem taking "her concept of normie feel-good pity and turn it into a poetic rant."Read it [here](#)

Coming back to the subject on hand, let us look at some statistics...I know, this is tiresome and you have heard enough about these numbers. But it is always good to be reminded that they are a large majority and not just a few handful people.

15% of the global population lives with a disability, and it is much more in developing countries and the poor countries. This

percentage translates to 1.3 billion people and they, together with their friends and family, this group has a spending power of \$8 trillion. Adding to this are the older people, those above 60. Those with disabilities are 46% in this category. If you take the boomer population of the US, according to a study by McKinsey & Company the baby-boomer generation holds almost 60% of net U.S. wealth and 40% of spending (Court et al., 2007).

A study published in The Journal of Sustainable Tourism - Beyond accessibility: Exploring the representation of people with disabilities in tourism promotional materials showed that out of 211 tourism brochures with approx. 9427 images there were only 12 which showed people with disabilities. Even in these 12, they were older tourists and not prominently placed which gives the impression that they are not serious travelers who have to be taken into account. (Stefanie Benjamin, Ethan Bottone and Miranda Lee 2020). Their value is overlooked even though more than 40% will be retiring and their impact on tourism spending will be 25%.

Most recently, a podcast from Skift, the travel resource center, shared that adults with disabilities in the U.S. spend \$17.3 billion a year on leisure and business travel, and 26 million adults with disabilities took 73 million trips in 2016 (Samson, 2017).

Bill Forrester (2016) of TravAbility has reminded us often: Accessible tourism is no longer about building ramps and accessible bathrooms. It's about building products and services for a larger and rapidly growing market. This is no longer a niche but rather a segment that is approaching 25% of total tourism spending.

Now let us move on to the present situation that tourism is facing.

Time has come for policy makers, travelers, activists, academics and stakeholders to sit up and take a very realistic look at tourism as a whole. Travel has very well contributed to this pandemic by letting people carry the virus across borders, refusal of some travelers to ignore 'stay at home' guidelines and thumbing their noses at social distancing.

Can this pandemic bring the necessary and essential changes in the tourism scenario? Borrowing the graffiti, even though it was meant for another situation, we can aptly say this "We can't return to normal, because the normal that we had was precisely the problem."

Tourism is one of the most directly affected sectors in this current crisis and this calls for immediate and long term responses. Estimate of jobs that will be lost just in tourism sector is about 50 million. Revised OECD estimates point to 60% decline in international tourism in 2020, rising to 80% if recovery is delayed until December.

The "Travel in the New Normal" guidance put forth by [US Travel Industry](#) is focused on six main areas where travel businesses should:

- *Adapt operations, modify employee practices and/or redesign public spaces to help protect employees and customers.***
- *Consider implementing touchless solutions, where practical, to limit the opportunity for virus transmission while also enabling a positive travel experience.***
- *Adopt and implement enhanced sanitation procedures specifically designed to combat the transmission of COVID-19.***

- ***Promote health screening measures for employees and isolate workers with possible symptoms and provide health resources to customers.***
- ***Establish a set of procedures aligned with official guidance should an employee test positive.***
- ***Follow best practices in food and beverage service to promote employee and customer health.***

Source: U.S. Travel Association Press Release, U.S. Travel Industry Releases Guidance for ["Travel in the New Normal"](#), 4 May 2020

The good that could come from this calamity is that previously overcrowded destinations may find a respite. People might move over to smaller rural destinations. And now will be the time to move away from the wrong notion that ADA compliant is 'good enough'.

As people have been confined to their homes, they have had the chance to experience what PWDs are forced to do due to the attitudinal and physical barriers of the society.

"Hopefully this pandemic has shown people that you can be trapped at home, by no fault of your own, and you can still contribute. In the same way that we're trying to plan our end of lockdown, can we also plan for the end of society being inaccessible?" are the words of Mik Scarlet, a broadcaster, journalist, actor and musician, and an expert in the field of access and inclusion for disabled people.

Many changes asked for, requested for by PWDs and ignored till now has, kind of, become the norm.

Twitter chief executive Jack Dorsey has authorized through a companywide email that his employees could work from home “forever”. Even break ,a social enterprise that ensures people with disabilities and employers who need their skills and talents find each other, has been advocating this since their inception in 2011. Now it is hopefully becoming a reality.

To quote Caroline Casey again “The business system that we were told for so long could not adapt is now embracing flexible and agile working [during the pandemic],” The difference [now] is an intention and a desire to change.” Having adapted the way we work so dramatically and quickly, she adds, “why not empower everyone”, including disabled people, to contribute in the world of work. “There are no more excuses.”

How many meetings and conferences and concerts were missed by PWDs for lack of inclusion! Now the world has come together to share over the Internet all that were out of reach for PWDS. According to the Singapore Tourism Board “Singapore’s meetings and events were put on pause earlier this year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. But event industry leaders, meeting planners, vendors, venues, and tech innovators across the country were able to quickly shift many of these events from physical to virtual, showcasing the country’s innovative and entrepreneurial spirit.”

That is inclusion in the right sense of the word. You are included even if you have a disability, lack of funds, lack of opportunity to travel and stay outside your home! Equality is being achieved.

Now from the safety of your home and with just an Internet connection you can travel the world irrespective of having any disability or not. Most museums, parks and other places are putting out videos so that you can go there virtually. This is a boon for PWDs and those who have are financially challenged. Never before could you enjoy the [Louvre](#) or the [museum of Iraq](#) with your morning coffee and an afternoon [stroll in Central Park](#) in New York City on the same day!

Touchless entry which is advised to avoid contamination will enable the PWDs to move in and out without much effort. Since there is the fear of touching infected door knobs, we will see more automatic doors which will help PWDs. The need for social distancing may bring wider aisles in shops and supermarkets and wider sidewalks!! Will this pandemic make people be kinder? British Red Cross did a survey and found that 43 million from across UK did something kind for another person such as share food, call up your acquaintances as well as friends, send handwritten notes etc. Will this last in the Post-Covid world and will we see a better, kinder and more inclusive world?

Will it be more peaceful? Security Council just adopted for the first time in history a resolution for a global ceasefire! António Manuel de Oliveira Guterres Secretary-General of the United Nations thinks "The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war". So he put forth a bold call for a global ceasefire so the world could unite to fight the virus. After several months it was unanimously adopted and the Security Council has passed the resolution. Let's hope for peace in this world! Hope dies last!

Another huge advance has been in the field of education. To quote Heather Simpson, chief program officer of global literacy organization Room to Read "Even before the pandemic hit, there were 258 million children in the world out of school. I do think some of these avenues of supporting distance learning potentially have the answer to reaching them." This is very true for children with disabilities, children in war zones where schools cannot function etc. Now they can receive an education if the govt. or any private organizations like hers take the initiative. They are already studying projects and programs, taking into account as to what parts should continue as schools begin to re-open, and to complement classroom-based learning.

Advances and plans which have been reported by The Global Accessibility News

The following information has been copied from [The Global Accessibility News](#). Thank you, GAN for these positive news during these tough times.

Ireland Dublin City University has launched a new survey to explore and develop cost-effective assistive technology solutions to help elderly people to remain independent and safe in their own homes. This will help those with disabilities too.

Many new projects and new plans have been implemented by various countries.

Greece: According to the Tourism Minister HarisTheoharis accessibility for people with disabilities in tourism has been made a priority issue. An accessible tourism committee will be put together

for the first time, where the goal is to map out all any problems relating to accessibility issues in tourist accommodation, cultural spaces, etc.

City Hall on Monday unveiled a 24-million-euro project to repair and maintain sidewalks across Athens with the aim of making the capital safer and more accessible for pedestrians

Canada Carleton will be established by the Research, Education, Accessibility, and Design (READ) as a Centre of Excellence in Accessibility after the New Coordinated Accessibility Strategy Guides University's Commitment on Campus. "Accessibility is one of Carleton's core values," says Boris Vukovic, director of Initiative.

British Columbia has started their third annual AccessAbility Week with \$500,000 in grants to not-for-profit organizations for local accessibility projects. Projects can include accessible education and learning, sports and recreation, arts, culture and tourism, community participation, emergency planning and response, and accessible employment.

Germany: German engineers from the University of Bayreuth have developed an ultrasonic haptic display that allows them to display Braille numbers non-contact.



The device can create several zones in the air at the same time, where the ultrasonic waves are focused and create a pressure that a person can distinguish. At the same time, visually impaired people on such a device can recognize characters from four points in 88% of cases, which will allow the future use of such technologies for contactless interaction.

The device consists of an array of ultrasonic emitters – 16 to 16 pieces. The system gives commands to each emitter at different times, but if you select the appropriate phase for each, then at a certain point they will signal at the same time. Moreover, if you modulate the signal with a certain strength, then the human skin can feel a certain pressure.

The authors used to modulate the frequency signal from 100 to 200 hertz, and for the best distinguishability of the points, they used their own frequency for each of them. The device also includes a Leap Motion sensor to track the position of the hand. It allows you to automatically adjust the focus points so that they are close to the palm of your hand – even if it moves.

Australia: National Disability Research Partnership has been announced and is welcomed by The National Carer Network and Carers, Australia

The approach, put forward by Ministers Roberts and Ruston, highlights a new approach that progresses a research agenda, research capability roadmap, and practical guides for disability-inclusive research to strengthen the disability research sector.

The European Parliament calls for an inclusive society in which the rights of people living with disabilities are protected and adapted to individual needs and where there is no discrimination.

The resolution calls on the European Commission for:

- ***A new strategy to be developed in close cooperation with people with disabilities, their families and organizations***
- ***A gender-based approach to address specific forms of discrimination against women and girls***
- ***The mainstreaming of the rights of all people living with disabilities into all policies and areas***
- ***Clear and measurable targets and regular monitoring***
- ***Recovery and mitigation measures to avoid people with disabilities getting disproportionately affected by health crises such as Covid-19***
- ***Equal access for people with disabilities to health care, employment, public transport, housing***
- ***The implementation and further development of the EU disability card pilot project, which allows for mutual recognition of disabilities in some EU countries***
- ***A common EU definition of disability***

People living with disabilities in Europe: facts and figures

- ***There are an estimated 100 million people with disabilities in the EU***
- ***The employment rate of persons with disabilities (aged 20-64) stands at 50.6%, compared to 74.8% for people without disabilities. (2017)***
- ***28.7% of persons with disabilities in the EU are at risk of poverty or social exclusion, compared to 19.2% of the general population. (2018)***
- ***800,000 people living with disabilities are denied the right to vote in the EU***

Singapore: The Institute of Chartered Shipbrokers Singapore Branch (ICS-SG) has announced a new training initiative to provide maritime education to persons with disabilities. The training initiative is supported by SG Enable, an agency dedicated to enabling persons with disabilities.

The course involves training the attendees on the basic understanding of shipping, and thereafter ICS will coordinate and assist in finding job placements for them in the maritime industry.

Nigeria: The National Human Rights Commission NHRC has expressed its readiness to partner with the Federal Ministry of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management and Social Development in the establishment of a National Commission for Persons with Disabilities. Executive Secretary of the NHRC, Tony Ojukwu mainstreaming human rights into governance yields better results.

Scotland: The Mobility and Access Committee for Scotland (MACS) has published guidance for transport operators to ensure that changes to public transport services during Covid-19 take into

account disabled people's needs. The guidance emphasises that the 2010 Equality Act continues to apply and so the impacts on disabled people of any changes must be considered as a result of transport transition plans.

Transport Transition Plans – guidance to operators on assisting passengers with disabilities:

1. The requirements of the 2010 Equality Act still apply at all times. You must consider the impacts on disabled people of any changes as a result of transport transition plans. 'Disabled people' includes people who have difficulty walking, wheelchair users, people with cognitive impairments like dementia, blind and Deaf people.

2. Communication strategies should be inclusive, so that all passengers understand what services are available and any changes that have been made, ideally in advance. For example, if possible, inform passengers if toilets are closed. Use plain English, audio (including speaking!) and visual announcements or displays.

3. It may be necessary and reasonable to give disabled people priority in certain circumstances, for example, having a fast track queue, priority parking or asking some passengers to wait for the next bus or train if space is limited.

4. Priority seats and wheelchair spaces for disabled people, older people or pregnant women should be available for those who need them.

5. New and replacement concessionary travel permits are not currently being issued; you should allow passengers who do not have an NEC card but claim entitlement to travel free without one.

6. Be aware that some people (for example if blind, or with a learning disability) may not understand any unfamiliar layouts or changes to facilitate physical distancing; please be prepared to explain them.

7. Please be aware that Deaf people who lip read will not be able to communicate with staff if a face covering is being worn. Likewise most hearing aids only have a range of 1 meter.

8. Many people have hidden disabilities and/or may already be anxious due to the changes in their routines and travel plans. Please be considerate and be prepared to offer assistance if it may be needed.

9. When providing personal assistance (for example with ramps or guiding visually impaired people), listen to your passengers about any help they need – they are the expert in their own personal needs! Some passengers may have a 'Thistle Card' or similar which describes any help they need.

Spain: The Extremadura Regional Government has signed a new agreement with the CB Foundation, the Caja de Extremadura Foundation, the Extremadura Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (Fempex) and the Association for the Care and Social Integration of People with Physical Disabilities in Extremadura (Apamex), with the aim of promoting universal accessibility in cultural spaces.

This agreement aims to continue with the installation of magnetic loops in theaters, houses and cultural centers or auditoriums, in a clear commitment to equal opportunities and universal accessibility through the elimination of communication barriers.

South Africa tests access features in rough terrain Prototype bus would enhance mobility for school children, others with special needs Even prior to the current pandemic, more than half a million children with disabilities were estimated to be out of school in South Africa.

The South African Social Security Agency (Sassa) has brought forward the payment of social grants for the elderly and persons with disabilities for the month of April in an effort to lower the risk of Covid-19 infection by reducing congestion at retailers and banks
Afghanistan A Disability Survey is done and it Afghanistan's First in 15 Years . The Asia Foundation moved to fill this empirical void with the Model Disability Survey of Afghanistan. Implemented with technical support from the World Health Organization, the MDSA is the first such survey in Afghanistan in 15 years, and the first ever to collect representative data both on the prevalence and distribution of disabilities across the country and on the broader context of underlying health conditions, supportive environments, and other determinants of health and well-being of Afghanistan's disabled population.

Brussels People with a disability are exempt from the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in Brussels

Namibia Leaving buildings, offices, schools, shops and infrastructure inaccessible to them because of lack of wheelchair access for example. This is why in the spirit of Leave No One Behind (LNOB) a Disability Accessibility Standard for all Public Buildings and Infrastructure has been created in Namibia. This Standard was launched during a workshop for stakeholders in March of this year, in Windhoek.

The key mandate of the National Disability Council of Namibia (NDCN) is to Improve the lives of People with Disabilities, and to create a Barrier Free Society for the 100,000 people in Namibia with disabilities.

It is vital that the principle of 'Leave No One Behind' includes people that have disabilities. That is why the NDCN has taken the steps, to develop a Disability Standards for Public Buildings and Facilities. This standard provides guidelines and specifications for auditing and inspecting facilities.

India Wheelchair taxi service company EzyMov has started a transportation service for people with mobility impairments in need of dialysis treatment. This is available in select parts of Mumbai until 30 April.

For physically disabled people in regular need of dialysis treatment, the corona virus or COVID-19 lockdown is especially stressful. EzyMov Solutions Pvt. Ltd, the accessible taxi service, has responded to their needs. It has successfully piloted cluster wise transport for mobility impaired dialysis patients in partnership with the Amar Gandhi Foundation. The foundation supports people with kidney disease-related issues.



United Kingdom: The UK's Minister of State for Transport Chris Heaton-Harris has asked the rail industry to ensure the accessibility of services during the corona virus (Covid-19) pandemic so that essential workers can travel.



He stated that rail services should be accessible for everyone and will ensure that disabled people are able to travel during the pandemic.

The government has aided the industry in increasing its accessibility with the £20m in funding to provide accessibility improvements in the country's 124 stations and the It's Everyone's Journey programme for people with non-visible disabilities.

The Rail Delivery Group (RDG) has renewed the guidance for railway operator guidance to ensure that rail workers are safe without hindering the travel for disabled essential workers.

Israel: For the hearing impaired, this is no easy task, as it adds an extra layer of difficulty to their ability to communicate, often times with various service providers such as doctors and nurses. As face

masks have become an inseparable part of the lives of millions of Israelis there are those who may have more trouble with the new law requiring to wear them. A solution to the problem was made by the Israeli "Keter" (Crown) company, which specializes in manufacturing clear protective screens in accordance with the needs of medical teams. During these times they have additionally developed new clear screened face masks, allowing for the ability to lip read.

Uganda +Their umbrella organisation, the National Union of Disabled Persons of Uganda (NUDIPU), is concerned and has come out to rally the government and other stakeholders to consider them in ongoing efforts to stem the spread of COVID-19.

Queenslanders with Disability Network has been working with the University of Sydney and the Queensland Government on these practical tools and information to help you think through how to make a plan for your own individual needs and situation during COVID-19. We are calling this tool the 'PCEP COVID-19 Planning Tool'. PCEP is short for Person-Centred Emergency Preparedness (PCEP).

The guide will help people with disability to get the facts about Coronavirus (COVID-19) and to make a plan for how they will manage the impact of this situation.

This individual COVID-19 planning tool will assist you to plan for two situations that you might have to face during this COVID-19 pandemic. They might be:

1. staying at home for a long period of time

2. getting help if you or someone who supports you gets COVID-19 symptoms

New Accessible Online Platform to Accommodate Distance Recruitment for All

Americas, ICT, News, April 6 2020

Originally built only for people with disabilities, ABILITY Job Fair launches new accessible online platform to accommodate distance recruitment for all.

The first face to face video-based platform, accessible for people with deafness, hard of hearing, blindness and more, now expands to a virtual career fair recruitment tool to fill the need for person to person talent search, when travel is no longer an option and social distancing is the new necessity.

UK: Euan's Guide, the charity focused on making it easier for disabled people to get out and about, has now turned its attention to keeping everyone amused whilst they stay indoors.

The team behind Euan's Guide, the website where people leave reviews rating the disabled access at the places they visit, has now launched a new online forum, EuansGuide.com/forum, to help 'boost spirits and share ideas.'

Last but not least, please log on to [this link](#) for a copy of the pdf of [VSO International: Toolkit messages for persons with disabilities during Covid19 response](#)

A last thought to ponder. Since only 90% of businesses in Europe prioritize diversity and since only 4% actually work on being

accessible and inclusive, will they take this opportunity to bring in more accessibility to their work places? Or will they allege that since they lost so much money, they cannot afford to make any more accommodations?

Here comes Mik Scarlet again which a very worrisome query. She asks "Before the pandemic, one of the big excuses was that there wasn't the time to close in order to do a refit. Now they are all shut for a while, why doesn't the government give them a support fund so that they can make it through this period, but part of the tie-in is that they have to make changes around accessibility? "I worry what will happen instead is that lots of the regulations will be softened after the pandemic, because businesses will say, we couldn't afford to be more accessible before – and we definitely can't afford it now because we lost so much money during the lockdown."

Hope she is wrong!



Web: <http://travability.travel>

<http://travabilityimages.com.au>

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/travability/>

Twitter: @travability

Instagram @travability

Bill Forrester is the founder of Travability. He has more than 35 years of experience in both the private and public sectors in senior management roles. During that career, he specialised in strategic leadership, financial management, cost reduction and improved efficiency. Bill is an acknowledged thought leader in the growing economics of accessible tourism, universal design and social inclusion, especially the impact the retiring Baby Boomers will have on the tourism sector. He has given keynote addresses internationally on the economics of inclusive tourism.



Accessible Tourism – A critical part of a staged tourism restart.

Bill Forrester

As the COVID-19 pandemic sweeps across the globe we have seen the world's tourism and hospitality industries decimated. Efforts to control the virus have seen worldwide lockdowns, international and domestic border restrictions, and the virtual shutdown of world aviation routes.

COVID-19 is a highly infectious disease without an effective cure or vaccine. The industry is faced with the fact that neither are likely to be developed in the near term.

As a result, tourism restarts are likely to be slow and staged with social distancing becoming a normal part of doing business. International borders, with the exception of "airbridges" or inter-country "bubbles", will be the last to open so for the tourism industry domestic and local tourism will be the lifeblood of the industry for the foreseeable future. We must also recognize that the restart process will be fluid. Relaxation of restrictions is likely to be followed up with the reimposition of lockdowns or reduced numbers in response to second and third waves of infections.

Why is the Accessible Tourism sector important to the tourism recovery?

Since 2014 several pieces of research around the world have placed the value of the market at between 14% and 20% of the total

tourism spend. The growth rate is tracking at three times the rate of tourism as a whole. It is being fuelled by the aging and retiring baby boomer generation. Most western countries have a very similar age distribution. Research by McKinsey & Company in the US found that the Baby Boomer generation controls 60% of total wealth and 40% of total expenditure and in areas such as hospitality and leisure the spend was 50%. When looking at that population segment, at age 65 40% of the group has an age-related disability and by age 75 that climbs to 60%. Extrapolating the spending power and the disability statistics the market is worth 25% of the total tourism spend. The retiree market has also changed with the Baby Boomer generation. This generation is very different from the generations that came before it. It was born into optimism and was also adventurous. It was the Baby Boomers who first backpacked their way around the world, first invented adventure tourism and trekking, and lived by their Lonely Planet guides. The sheer size of the generation meant that they always had the market power to demand products that suited their needs, after all, it was this generation that caused Levis Strauss to alter the cut of their jeans to cater for a middle-aged spread when they turned 40. As retirees, that adventurous spirit remains as does the expectation that the tourism industry will develop a range of inspiring products and experiences that suit their expectations and their aging needs.

Over the last ten years, we have also seen major developments in adaptive equipment. Everything from off-road wheelchairs, sit skis, advanced hearing augmentation, visual way finding, etc that are opening up new opportunities for people with a disability.

Tourism Product is changing

Tourism is evolving as world attitudes change. The mass coach tour and set itineraries are giving way to more individualized itineraries and small group touring. The world is far more environmentally and culturally aware and expects tourism to embrace cultural diversity, environmental sensitivity, and be responsible. The old adage of take only photographs and leave only footprints has now developed into a total responsibility approach that preserves and nurtures both local environments and cultures. The tourism industry is adept at change and adept at providing small group, highly interactive experiences.

In addition to the changing nature of the expectation to create unique experiences, the industry has the benefit of over 30 years of disability discrimination legislation around the world and accessible building codes and construction. Facilities exist all over the world that can be packaged into accessible tourism experiences. While there is still work to be done, the opportunity is to develop information systems that can tell prospective travelers with a disability what is available on a destination wide basis and to develop accessible tourism experiences and itineraries.



How does Accessible Tourism aid with the tourism restart.

As stated earlier, the tourism industry will restart slowly with reduced numbers and in many cases with a reduced catchment area. To be profitable, operators will need to concentrate on high-value small group tourism that provides quality and meaningful experiences. Tailorisation gives operators a real chance to look at their offerings and the opportunities to incorporate accessibility as part of their core products and services. Regions have a chance to cooperate and build accessible itineraries to maximize the time spent in a region by a smaller number of people. Social distancing requirements will make it easier to plan accessible routes and create the spaces needed to cater to a wide range of disability groups including those of the autism spectrum. One of the greatest barriers to accessible tourism has always been air travel. In the recovery phase, most tourism is going to be local or domestic making the accessible tourism market a key opportunity. Travelers with a disability tend to stay longer and spend more than the general traveling population which is a key incentive for tourism operators to actively market their accessibility.



For many tourism operators, catering to the accessible tourism market is extremely costly. Many will already have the physical assets to cater for the market, the missing link is often the detailed information required to allow a potential visitor to make their own informed decisions as to whether a facility or experience is suitable for their needs. The downtime period many operators are facing at the moment is the perfect chance to evaluate what facilities they have and what disability groups they can cater for. It should be remembered that of the total disability market only 8% are full-time wheelchair users. Those with hearing impairments, reduced vision, and autism all require different facilities. It isn't all about ramps and accessible toilets. Tourism operators cater for a variety of needs currently and some specialize in certain interest groups. There is no reason why an operator can't develop specialized products catering for any one particular disability group. Nature, in particular, has major opportunities for the blind or vision impaired with the sensory experiences it offers. Co-designing experiences for travelers with a disability is no different from designing cultural experiences with indigenous groups.

Adding information to an individual operator or destination website is not a difficult or costly thing to do, especially in the current environment where websites need to be continually updated with COVID-19 information and social distancing requirements.

The market for Accessible Tourism is significant. It is potentially 25% of the total tourism spend, especially for local and domestic tourism. The market is extremely loyal and will return on a regular basis if it is comfortable with the experiences. The social network of

Accessible Tourism is extremely strong. Great experiences will lead to great referrals. The strength of the offering, like all tourism, depends greatly on co-operation to create a range of experiences within a destination region. One great motel with an accessible bedroom doesn't create a good holiday experience.

The key steps to making Accessible Tourism part of your COVID-19 restart process.

- 1. Use the downtime to review the current facilities on offer that are accessible, both at individual operator and destination wide. That includes accommodation, dining, parks and gardens, attractions, and tour operators.***
- 2. Prepared detailed accessibility guides both at operator and destination wide levels and publish them on both operator and destination websites. Don't fall into the trap of saying something is fully accessible. Every person with a disability has a different set of needs and capabilities. What is not accessible for some may be an adventure for others. Say what is actually there and provide good photographs and let a potential visitor make up their own mind. The important thing is if people don't know what is there they won't come.***
- 3. Co-design experiences with local disability groups. Often operators and destination managers forget adventure activities and limit the opportunities that travelers with a disability may want to experience even if they don't appear to be "accessible"***
- 4. Look closely at community infrastructure, things like beach matting or beach wheelchairs can open a market for the whole region.***

- 5. Look at marketing opportunities and include people with a disability in mainstream marketing material.**
- 6. Most importantly don't be scared to play in the accessible tourism market, co-design, and seek and learn from feedback. As with all tourism activities the greatest joy comes from seeing visitors enjoying their experiences and leaving changed in some way.**



Roberto Vitali, from Ferrara (Ferrara - northern Italy), born in 1960, with wife and two children. He is a member of journalists from Emilia Romagna. A car accident in January 1976, when he was 15, made him paraplegic. Since then, Roberto Vitali has undertaken a long series of activities and projects. He is currently CEO and co-founder of Village for all - V4A® (www.villageforall.net | www.projectforall.net), a company specialized in "accessible hospitality" that assists companies, public and private bodies or associations in all activities ranging from concept development to the creation and products of specific products related to this particular comparison.

He is co-inventor of V4AInside, an Italian patent and high technological innovation for the collection of data relating to the accessibility of tourist structures and the tourist supply chain.

Since 2010 he has been a member and spokesperson of the Committee for the promotion of accessible tourism at the Ministry of Tourism in Italy and has been part of the publication of:

- He has collaborated in the publication of the Touring Club "TurismoSenzaBarriere" (2003)***
- Agrigento Manifesto - principles for creating a tourism for all system for all (2003)***

- **Map of hospitable cities, created under the CARE project ,Cittàaccessibilidelleregionieuropee 2005 (Accessible cities of European regions 2005)**
- **SoprattuttoCamperista, vademecum of the traveler with disabilities in a camper (2011 PleinAir) co-author**
- **Manifesto of accessibility of bathing establishments and beaches - (2008)**
- **Manifesto of accessible tourism (2010)**
- **Manual on the reception and hospitality of tourists at campsites, produced with the EBNT - Bilateral National Tourist Board and FAITA - Federcamping (2010)**
- **White Book on Accessible Tourism (presented on the occasion of BIT - Fiera Milano, 2013) Italian Ministry of Tourism**
- **International communication campaign for accessible tourism (2013) promoted by the Ministry of Accessible Tourism with the video Italia PaeseOspitale.**
- **Reception for All (2017) a free ebook with guidelines for accessible hospitality co-author**
- **Guidelines for the realization of events and manifestations included (2016) free e-book co-author**
- **Croatia Special (2017) – A free ebook guide on accessible hospitality co-author**
- **Global report on the transformative power of tourism, a paradigm shift towards a more responsible traveler (2016) published by UNWTO**
- **Design for all - The project for all - (2014) ed. Maggs**
- **Free ebook for accessible hospitality, Guide to hospitality (ed. 2017-2018-2019-2020) co-author**
- **Free ebook co-author of San Marino Destination for All (2018)**

- **Free ebook by Comacchio Destination for All (2018) co-author**
- **Manual for operating "Bathing establishments, beaches and swimming pools for all" (2018-2019) free e-book co-author**
- **a Manuel on "Accessible Hospitality" (2018-2018) a free eBook co-author**
- **Tourism training course for everyone online (2019)**

Since 1993 he has developed a long curriculum as a speaker at seminars and conferences on marketing and communication and on issues related to disability: breaking down architectural barriers and planning for all, legislation, assistive aid, health, sport and disability, home automation, accessibility of natural environments, thematic themes, development of accessible public services, transport, sports, pet therapy and support dogs for people with disabilities, development of accessible tourism and diffusion of hospitality concepts.

Accessible and Transparent Accessibility.

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Accessible Hospitality - A concept to be carefully defended!

Roberto Vitali

Like all moments of crisis and profound reorganization of the social lifestyle, there are opportunities to be seized, for example to improve the accessibility of accommodation facilities, but there is also the equally concrete risk of regression, due to carelessness or underestimation of the impact in the creation of procedures or practices related to new hygiene and sanitation needs.

We are well aware of how complex the issue of accessibility and usability by people with motor, sensory (sight and hearing) and cognitive behavioral disabilities is, therefore, in light of the need to guarantee new sanitation and hygiene procedures in tourist accommodation facilities, we want draw attention to the logistical aspects, equipment and organization of services in order to prevent these from becoming new barriers to the creation of Accessible Hospitality.

These indications are certainly not exhaustive of all the difficulties that can be linked to people's needs, but are the result of the experiences gained by Village for all in 12 years of work in the accessible tourism sector. Years in which we have always sought continuous comparison to understand the real needs of people who live a direct experience of disability.

These are our tips to guarantee "everyone a holiday!"

People with emotional, relational and behavioral disabilities:

Respect family attitudes, never judge the attitudes and behaviors that may be unusual or unsuitable for the context, but always check with the family (or any companion) for what the motivation or reasons are being shown.

People who are blind and / or partially sighted: we must consider that they will find it difficult to guarantee respect for social distancing.

Guests who are deaf or hard of hearing: we maintain an adequate distance that allows the lip to be read, avoiding the use of masks that cover the mouth, and using transparent visors / screens is recommended.

At the entrance

Provide tactile paths with adequate color contrast, which lead people who are blind or partially sighted to the reception desk where trained staff can help them identify the aids, the paths, the methods of sanitization and maintain social distancing.

In the breakfast room / restaurant

The installation of anti-droplet protections for food could represent a strong limitation on the autonomy and options for people with disabilities.

Care should be taken in reserving space for people with disabilities, especially the distance from possible service points, such as dispensers of drinks, etc.

Services

Gel dispensers must be easily identifiable, reachable and usable even by people with motor, sensory (sight and hearing) disabilities, for this reason height, distance and location must be carefully checked.

The information signage (with instructions regarding the Covid-19, but also all other information for the Guests) must be in an appropriate format (50x70 is recommended), written with characters of a size not less than 16 DPI, using characters without too much fancy lettering and preferring the upper case letters;

It is also suggested to:

- *Integrate information with the use of icons***
- *Integrate information with the use of AAC (Alternative Augmentative Communication)***
- *Integrate information with sound messages (everything that is written is not perceptible by those who are blind and partially sighted)***
- *Integrate the information with a video in the LIS and ISL (Italian Sign Language and International Sign Language)***

Next to the tactile maps, if present, provide a dispenser with sanitizing gel.

We also suggest that you should:

Evaluate the possibility of enhancing information with the use of Beacons, Tags and Apps (N.B. any computer system must guarantee an inclusive "user experience" and can also be used by customers

who are blind / deaf / etc.). The correct use of these digital systems will allow fast and secure information to be given to any customer. Provide courtesy kits for sanitizing, both for people and for aids, which can also be provided for a fee (masks, visors, sanitizing gel, etc. ...)

Check that the masks and gloves are made of hypoallergenic material (beware of latex gloves which can create problems for those who are allergic).

Caution

Do not install faucets and pedal waste bins.

There are many difficulties in the use and operation of these devices by people with mobility problems, for people who are visually impaired and blind, people of short stature and children.

These are obviously generic indications that must, then be contextualized in each individual structure in order to guarantee maximum effectiveness.

Training of personnel and staff who manage safety and operate in the facility must be implemented.



Adriane Speaks to the Travel Needs of the Boomer and Mature

Adriane Berg is an Emmy-winning broadcaster, world-wide presenter, and consultant to leading companies seeking the boomer and mature TRAVEL markets. Adriane consults with spas and wellness destinations to implement the latest trends in hospitality and health. She is a popular travel writer and hospitality industry speaker.

Adriane speaks directly to that demographic as a popular travel writer and as the host of the podcast [Generation Bold: The Fountain of Truth](#),

As a speaker in the travel and hospitality industry:

Adriane gives your audience actionable, exciting takeaways that change their attitude toward aging

Adriane gives your business the tools to reach and engage America's largest and most affluent consumer

Adriane gives you the most pleasant and resultful consulting and business building experience

Her blog, [Aging for Beginners](#), is published by Bottom Line Personal. Adriane is a New York Times Age Boom Fellow and author of 14 books, including *How Not to Go Broke at 102: Finding Everlasting Wealth* and *The Totally Awesome Money Book for Kids and their Family*.

Her many awards include an Emmy for her TV work, Best Radio Show Mature Market Winner, several National Librarian's Awards, a 5-year Facilitator Acknowledgement for her work with children at Good Grief.

Careful Travel: Will Accessible Tourism Set the Post COVID-19 Standard?

Adriane Berg

Undoubtedly, the threat of contracting COVID-19 during travels requires new protocols from travelers and travel providers. This opens an opportunity for the accessible traveler to take leadership in the post-pandemic "New Normal".

Let me explain.

According to the report of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) released in March (the statistics may be worse today):

"An expected fall of between 20-30% could translate into a decline in international tourism receipts (exports) of between US\$300-450 billion, almost one-third of the US\$ 1.5 trillion generated in 2019. Considering past market trends, this would mean that between five- and seven years' worth of growth will be lost to COVID-19."

Now what?

The travel industry is in desperate need of two things. First, that governments allow travel again. Second, that people are willing to travel. For the first, the travel industry will have to roll with the punches of government regulation. Fortunately, openings are coming, although slowly.

Still, people are wary of travel safety, and millions are waiting to take that vacation, see the family or even stay overnight in a hotel—this issue of safety cuts across the silos of assessable, mature travel, and all other travelers.

Here is where accessible travel can take a leadership role.

At its core, accessible travel is *careful travel* in two senses of the word.

First, in the sense that the travel providers must make sure no one, regardless of ability, gets hurt and is happy with their experience. Often the approach of friendly accessible travel staff is both in caregiver mode and hospitality mode. A significant conscious effort is made to be sure all travelers are safe...sound familiar?

Second, in the sense that travelers themselves are accustomed to taking extra precautions, depending on what they envision, they may need to stay safe. The accessible traveler may require caregivers or companions, lots of equipment, different types of supplies. In short, the inconvenience of travel is second nature to the accessible traveler... a mask, hand sanitizer, or distancing is not much of a stretch or extra annoyance.

And speaking of masks...

Traveler behavior will be a critical component of safe travel. We are all responsible for each other. Here is where accessible travelers can be a shining model of behavior, outstanding travel citizens that set the standards for all.

This will not be easy.

No one wants to be a vigilante or into a stranger's business. But what do we do when we see folks failing to wear masks in close quarters or congregating against pool rules at the hot tub? Will we

stick up for ourselves and ask them to stop, heighten their awareness in a new normal standard of intervention for safety?

Accessible travelers have had to forge better conditions in which to travel over the last many years. Sometimes this required pressure on airlines and big industry. Can such a traveler be a catalyst to better behavior for post COVID travel? I believe so.

Here's how:

Set an example of careful travel. Speak up if you see a problem. Use social media to describe issues of irresponsible behavior. Use only travel companies that adhere to the strictest rules and go beyond to make sure all are safe.

Tell your individual stories about what went right and what went wrong in your safe travels before COVID. There are parallels in staying aware of your surroundings and the people in it.

The watchwords of post COVID travel is "safe" and "aware." Things about which the accessible traveler knows. Post-COVID-19, neither the industry nor the traveler can take anything for granted, from the cleanliness of the airplane tray to the closeness of your bar stools at a restaurant. We all have a heightened sense of safety and care. Travel staff cannot become unfocused for a minute from the protocols for safety and yet must balance that precautionary attitude with gracious hospitality and fun. If all travel becomes merely a way to risk your life to COVID, we might as well use our luggage to store masks. The accessible travel industry is not a stranger to that balance. This skill in combining

health considerations and a great experience is a mentoring opportunity.

As travel reopens, expect push back from those with fewer safety concerns. And there are many.

BraunAbility, a site for accessible products, did a Facebook and Twitter survey of wheelchair users, caregivers, and disability allies asking: "How do you feel about the coronavirus (COVID-19)?"

48.4% said they were concerned

51.6% said they weren't worried

This, I suspect, is similar to the response of the general population. We are split between the worriers and the copasetics.

My take is that you can be putting someone else at risk, so regardless of your attitude, you should take utmost care. We are a nation of "rights." Those with disabilities have learned to assert those rights. Now we must also be a nation of obligations. COVID-19's primary source of spread is person to person by droplets expelled by a cough or sneeze...it is highly contagious and can live on surfaces. So, wash your hands, clean your equipment, keep your distance, make sure your companion or caregiver does the same if you do not travel alone.

BraunAbility reminds you:

"To protect others, it's important to clean and disinfect surfaces daily. This could be anything from doorknobs and drawer pulls

to keyboards and light switches. It's a good idea to increase the frequency with which you wash your pillowcase as well. Don't also forget to disinfect your mobility aids. Canes, walkers, wheelchairs – even your accessible vehicle key fob and steering wheel. You will want to ensure your environment is as clean as possible to protect others from encountering the virus."

Unfortunately, safety in travel will be primarily up to you.

When I was first asked to write this article, it had a different title and a much more optimistic bent. I planned to call it:

"Don't Let COVID Stop Your Travels: The World is Open for Savvy Explorers."

I wrote to many travel purveyors and asked them what new precautions they planned to take for accessible travel post-COVID. I did not use that title. This one unedited answer I got from a group promoting our national parks is why:

Question:"Is there anything particularly important in the way you receive disabled travelers or older adults after COVID that I could mention in the article?"

Answer: "Thanks for the note. There is nothing I can think of off the top of my head. Good luck with the story."

Good luck with your new leadership role. Stay safe.



Rodrigo Rosso

Brazilian, 51 years old, entrepreneur in the publishing and communications industry, journalist / publicist, owner of RevistaReação, TV Reação, SistemaReação and the Mobility & Show event. He founded REATECH and is president of ABRIDEF - Assoc. Brasileira da Indústria, Comércio e Serviços de Tecnologia Assistiva (Association of Brazilian Industry, Commerce and Assistive Technology Services). Has been working in the segment of people with disabilities for 25 years.

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With or without barriers, travel is essential.

But how?

Rodrigo Rosso

How nice to know new places, new cultures, different gastronomy, good wines, languages, accents, customs, people.

For people with disabilities, this experience becomes even more pleasurable with each discovery, each challenge, even though sometimes having to overcome obstacles of all kinds, from boarding an aircraft at some airports around the world, to moving through cities and streets without accessibility, accommodation in hotels without accessible layout and the lack of proper training of the service personnel.

Some countries in the northern hemisphere - Europe, Canada, the USA, Japan - are better prepared to meet the needs of tourists with disabilities, whether in terms of physical or even behavioral accessibility. But when we talk about the southern hemisphere, everything gets more complicated. This may attribute to the fact that they are mostly young countries or even because they are poorer, not only financially, but also in terms of culture with respect to people with disabilities. I am sure that one of the points that is important for this great cultural difference in regards to people with disabilities is that, in the case of Brazil and other countries in Latin America, for example, we do not go through wars like the Europeans, the Japanese and the Americans. We have not learnt to see the wounded veterans as heroes of war, and we provide them with assistance seeing them just as disabled, or as people who need

help and compassion. This assistance system hinders, inhibits, does not value their potential and causes talents to be lost along the way. The practice of tourism is very important in the life of any citizen of the world - whether with or without disabilities - and is fundamental to the cultural evolution of each person.

This year of 2020 is being quite peculiar in several aspects due to the consequences of the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) in all parts of the planet. This caused people to suspend their travel - be it for business or pleasure - out of fear or due to restrictions imposed by different countries. The world has stopped!

The airports are empty, cruises have been suspended and even those quick weekend trips -to the beach, countryside or mountain - have been canceled due to fear of contamination and social distancing. Hotels and inns in many places are closed; just like the parks and tourist attractions.

Coronavirus has brought everyone to the same level - people with disabilities or abled bodies - by depriving us of our right to come and go. Covid-19 has become the great barrier - neither physical nor attitudinal - but a sanitary barrier that has made it impossible and is making it impossible for millions of people around the world to make plans, enjoy holidays, get to know other cultures, make their dreams come true.

We are all trapped, confined, with no prospect of tomorrow. Many are asking: when will we be able to plan our trips again? When will

we have the opportunity to leave our countries in search of new cultures and customs again?

These questions gain even more weight when it comes to a tourist with any kind of disability. People with disabilities are one of the Covid-19's highest risk groups. Just like the elderly, for example.

But this phase of the disease will pass. Will it? When? how? Who is giving any guarantee? What to do tomorrow?

Could it be that even when all this is over, will the fear not be present in one's subconscious and also the fear of starting to travel? We are being so conditioned to be afraid of crowds and so massified by social isolation that many of us will be afraid to get back on a crowded plane, on a cruise ship or on a tourist bus. Many of us will be afraid to visit countries like China, Italy, France, Spain and others in Europe and Asia where the virus had spread greatly. Others will put on hold the children's dreams for later and may no longer visit Disney World in Florida or postpone as long as they can and even give up on visiting New York or any region of the USA.

Even tourism in Brazil is already down and will be even more affected, even when this pandemic is over. Brazil was the most affected country in the southern hemisphere. Argentina, Africa and even Oceania will also feel the post-pandemic effects. The world will no longer be the same in every way and tourism will be no different. From now on, more than accessibility, the fear of Covid-19 will be the major factor impeding traveling for millions and millions of people with disabilities around the world.

Until we have an effectively proven vaccine and assurance and trust return to everyone's heart, we will experience a great period of emptiness and decline in world tourism.

Traveling is essential; it is pleasant, necessary, invigorating, it opens minds and hearts. But how do you do it now? But how are we going to travel tomorrow? How and when will the world return to its normalcy if we will ever have it back? We are going through a period of transition and relearning. We have to take all of this, experiences and values, making use of the opportunity to become better human beings for tomorrow.



Pieter Ghijssels obtained a master's degree in Communication Science at the University of Leuven, Belgium. He works in the field of accessible tourism since 1999, first for the disability organization KVG, later as an accessible tourism product manager and policy advisor for Visit Flanders, the tourism administration for Flanders-Brussels.

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A VIP welcome for all at Flanders’ “Stay-at-home museums”

Pieter Ghijssels

What do you do when you want to share something beautiful with people who can’t be with you in the moment? You’ll probably take some pictures or maybe make a video, if that captures the atmosphere better. You might add a few words to remind you of the circumstances, perhaps a salient detail that shouldn’t be missed.

Confronted with a global pandemic that has made travel and even local visits impossible, VisitFlanders (the tourism administration of Flanders, Belgium) decided not to sit on their cultural treasures, but to share them with the world. The northern region of Belgium has been the home of famous artists like Rubens, Van Eyck, Bruegel, and Ensor. Every year, their masterpieces bring thousands of art lovers from all over the world to Flemish museums and exhibitions. Since the Covid-19 outbreak, VisitFlanders has brought these masterpieces to their audience.

VIP tours

Of course, the museums in Flanders were not alone in their decision to go digital. Worldwide, many great attractions, events, and sights have offered an online alternative during quarantine. And rightly so, as research confirms our collective desire to keep participating. Online culture is a popular way to relax and discover new things. In ‘normal’ circumstances, too, it helps to solve practical issues, like finding a babysitter for young families, or the hassle that physical

transport can bring for people with health problems or disabilities.
(Source (in Dutch):

<https://www.publiq.be/nl/nieuws/onderzoekresultaten-cultuurparticipatie-in-en-na-coronatijden>)

Keen to offer an outstanding experience, Visit Flanders opted for a VIP approach. When mere mortals like you and me visit an exhibition, we're happy to read the texts that we find on display or in a catalogue, or we use an audio guide. We might even join a guided tour. A VIP, however, is usually offered a much more intense experience: a private tour, in the company of a renowned expert.



And it was this 'value-added' service that online visitors to Flanders' museums experienced in a series of five video sessions. Four episodes were dedicated to the Flemish Masters. The last episode (for now; a new series is in preparation) was filmed in 't Hof van Busleyden (Mechelen), a 16th-century city palace where the greatest humanist thinkers of the time used to meet. Today, it is a highly accessible family-friendly museum in a remarkable historic setting.

To enhance the VIP experience, every episode was launched with a 'live' Q&A session on Facebook.

To give a wider range of art lovers a chance to enjoy this VIP experience the videos are subtitled in English and Dutch, interpreted into sign language (International Sign and Flemish Sign Language, VGT) and enriched with audio description (English and Dutch). All versions of the video sessions can be accessed for free on the Visit Flanders website

(<https://www.visitflanders.com/en/accessibility/stories/stay-at-home-museum.jsp>) and YouTube. The message is clear: Flanders is determined to go the extra mile to share its passion for art and heritage with anyone who is interested.

Investing in inclusivity

This action is not an isolated gesture. In the 20 years since Visit Flanders embarked on developing the region as an attractive travel destination for able-bodied and disabled visitors alike, its ambition has only grown. Today, the tourism administration considers an inclusive approach to be the basis for delivering an inclusive high-quality service across the board. Consequently, every investment and grant is connected to ambitious accessibility criteria. VisitFlanders also invests in awareness raising and training for the sector, and in providing reliable and diverse visitor information. While there is still much to be done, by tackling these fields simultaneously VisitFlanders has made significant progress in accessible and inclusive tourism (<https://www.visitflanders.com/en/accessibility/>).



Sai Padma is a polio survivor with a regained voice after receiving treatment with 52 electric shocks. Sai Padma struggled with multiple disabilities, yet successfully completed graduation in Law, Commerce, Chartered Accountancy (Inter) and a Diploma in Carnatic Classical (Vocal). She operates from a wheelchair.

She founded Global AID-Ability In Disability in 2007 to make a contribution in four areas Mobility, Accessibility, Employability, Sustainability of persons with physical, social, emotional disabilities.

Global AID continues to support Health, Education, Agriculture and Livelihood of Tribal and Rural communities living persons in remotest and inaccessible locations needing care and support. She is a singer, writer, wheelchair para air rifle shooter and motivational speaker. She is a strategist, fundraiser and thought leader.

She has traveled widely on issues working on Not for profit policy, rehabilitation, disability rights centric conferences in Australia, USA, Singapore, Macau and Taiwan. Her views on aviation, banking, non-profit policy is well received and published in India and world-wide.

She has 25 years of non-profit and civil society management experience and taught supply chain management strategies in nonprofit management to MBA students in University of Wisconsin Whitewater, USA.

She has been chosen as one of the 100 Most Influential women by BBC under their #100 Women challenge for the year 2017 for her relentless work in the field of education, NGO management and disability rights in the community based in nonprofit sector.

She is married to Sri Pragnanand, food, yoga, alternative therapist, innovator and development professional. The couple lives in Visakhapatnam

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Pandemic Priorities –Not a Reason to Exclude Persons with Disabilities

Sai Padma Murthy, Advocate, Social Activist, Polio Survivor

What is supposed to be a normal to exiting year 2020 has drowned with such force in pandemic stress. The novel coronavirus which is spreading fast globally, started its invasion from March second week in India where India announced its first ever volunteer Janata Curfew in March 22nd and eventually lockdown from March 24th. 100 days have been passed by, as I write this article. An unforgettable 100+ days. From the nooks and corners of the country to heartland of suburban and urbane India, corona equalized all. Disease is a great equalizer after all, whereas disability not... I often muse..!!

Pandemic awareness, social distancing norms, stay home stay safe as motto of living, has hit me like a splash of cold water. It's not that I can't maintain social distance with people, it's that I am socially, physically and totally dependent on people on various counts. For that matter every person with disability in India have become more disabled during this pandemic.

There is a sea of difference between "Disaster and Epidemic" by invoking redundant and inadequate laws and which regressive and ancient in nature, Indian government totally and conveniently forgot about inclusion in managing the pandemic. The result being total distrust and complete halt in already snail paced development and inclusion programs focusing persons with disabilities.

Inclusive society is the need of the hour and long overdue promise of India as early signatory of UNCRPD. If pandemic taught normal people to slow down and introspect and care for their priorities, it pushed disabled population from citizens to beneficiaries/charity seekers which is not a right attitude of inclusive development agenda of a country. For ex. We don't want to face a situation where medical equipment is prioritized based on younger populations being cared for at the cost of the elderly and the people with disability, as happened in countries like Spain and Italy where there was a limited number of ventilators and beds, which could not cope with the avalanche of cases that needed critical care. A country's development is measured by its social support and inclusive policies. COVID-19 has put a break of disability movement in India. It's a real eye-opener for me to understand how vulnerable we really are and how little help is available for all of us either from government or from civil society etc. Strangely, this pandemic also shown a mirror that given the situation how society stands up for the emergency situations within very short span of time. Examples of such great service are the way NGOs and some governments worked for migrant labor who left the big cities by food to reach their respective villages and also COVID testing and COVID relief activities by civil society.

My wonder doubled when most of these didn't reach persons with disabilities and to know the reasons and mechanism behind it, I, randomly selected some persons with disabilities and nearly approached 100 people with disabilities, who does not belong to any rights group or not a well-known disability activists. There are students, players, NGO leaders, business persons, and caregivers,

parents, from physical and mental disabilities as well. I have selected 15 best responses for the 15 questions I posed to them.

Let's have a look at their answers one by one, which will give the readers a reality that's not published from a typical perspective of rights mechanism. They are simple people with goals of a blissful and healthy life that is every citizen's right.

Pandemic Questionnaire:

1. What's your biggest learning and takeaway in this pandemic?



Chaya Devi, a Bilateral Amputee Due To a Freak Train Accident—*life is precious and the world we live in is our great responsibility.*

2. Did you travel within the country or abroad during this time?

All the respondents said, they couldn't even think of travel, where basically travel is not hassle free in normal times itself.

3.If yes, what are your experiences?

No one travelled during the pandemic time.

4. Are you a disabled/ caregiver/ parent of disabled child/ adult?

All the respondents are belonging to either of the above group

5. If yes, what are the troubles you faced as belongs to any one of above group



Padma Govindugari, Polio Survivor, Lives with Aged Mother: *Life became more challenging due to pandemic as we need to reduce dependency on maids /helpers... sanitization of not only hands but wheel chair too is big issue every day. Added to it, i have to even watch and teach my mother always to wash hands every time she touches surfaces outside home.*

6. What is your understanding of pandemic, with the background of disability you have?



SweetyBagga, Severe Spinal Cord Injured and President I am Possable Foundation: *As all SCIs travel so less, we are already under quarantine. Now it's impossible to go out even for a breath of fresh air. If you are fortunate to have big house, you can breathe a bit. But mostly, being dependent on caregiver all the time, it's so difficult to manage. I got bed sore due to spasticity and my regular help became irregular during pandemic.*

7. What is your worst fear in this time as person with disability?



Ruth James, Parent of a Cerebral Palsy Young Man Bryan:*God forbid if my son is affected, then it would be disastrous as he will have to face it alone without the parent beside him. As my son is totally dependent on me, that's my worst fear.*

8. Would you consider traveling once pandemic situation is over?

Most of the responses ranged from nil to doubtful. Out of 100, 3-4 people answered they would love to travel. They are having minor disabilities.

9. If yes, where and what precautions you will take?



Vinayak Savarkar, Unilateral Amputee in a Road Accident, Civil Engineering Student: *I would love to travel to Himalayas. it was my childhood dream and I wanted to go with my friends they will take care of me. I still feel outside and system is not so accessible and helping for disabled.*

10. If NO, why and explain your concern



Tarini Chukurthi, Unilateral Amputee due to Car Accident and Engineering Student: *The biggest burden according to me is that I'm not completely independent yet, and sometimes it takes a toll on my mental health. I require some help while walking on uneven surfaces, sometimes stairs.*

11. Did you notice any behavioral change in your family members, towards you or your disabled child, please explain?

NireekshanR, Severe Muscular Skeletal Arthritis Leading to Skin Patches/Rashes/Wounds (*do not wish to have his picture published*): *as soon as the lockdown announced, my brother and sister shifted my bed near to common bathroom in backyard. I am currently living in tin roof shed adjacent to the bathroom and lavatory. Due to summer, its extreme pain and rashes to me, being close to bathrooms, I am more exposed to infections. I have no say as live on meagre pension by state government. I have no support to get medicines and any stuff, other than an aged mother who can only feed me to the extent she can. I fear I am not important and if the situation becomes graver, my family will abandon me. My mother is very old to help me in anyway. I wish government helps me and people like me, for testing and support with medicines and treatment during pandemic time.*

12. What kind of help you require as person with disability or caregiver of disability



Avanthi Mokireddi, Healthcare/Nursing Professional and Mother of a Down Syndrome Child: *I am looking for a good therapy center which would help in my child development both mentally and physically at an affordable cost. This pandemic has both down the economic status where we are not able to support the child with the therapies.*

13. What is your biggest burden of disability? Especially in this COVID situation



Madhuri Paturi, Spinal Cord Injured Due To Bus Accident, Stay-At-Home Entrepreneur: *Financial loss (business being slowed down, hence hitting the day to day expenses and there by the burden of repayment increases)*

14. What do you suggest make the dealing of situation better for you and others?



Sreedhar Yerram setty , Polio Survivor, Wheelchair User, Wholesale Businessman: *ease of purchase in medicines and groceries from online if we don't have anyone for support, even if we have someone for help it is better to have sufficient groceries and medicines for at least for one month. As the possibility of infection It is much difficult for us than normal people, because many of us has to be in close contact with our care givers or people who help us.*

15. Any other input you may wish to add as person with disability, caregiver for disability?



Pragnanand, Food Therapist and Caregiver for disabled wife: A robust communication and transport technology to tackle the situation in efficient, effective and safe manner. A VISION PLAN in place and resource preparedness necessary to overcome the crisis. Public preparedness should be developed like periodic mock drill to face disasters.

Hmm...

When we look at the responses of the respondents with disabilities and their caregivers, the issues that stands out for sure is what they are asking is INCLUSION from CONFUSION AND INACCESSIBILITY& BASIC AMENETIES LIKE FOOD, WATER ETC. In a recent camp that's been put up for migrant workers in Hyderabad, there was a huge poster saying that... Food and Water is not charity, it's the right of every citizen. Yes... we agree...then what about around 2.6% of India's persons with disabilities who are a majority invisible who are struggling for basic human rights let alone special rights and facilities endowed on them by rights of persons with disabilities act 2016.

I really wonder how difficult it is to provide basic needs for persons with disabilities who very much have their identity cards, aadhar cards and part of citizenry and remembered in time of general elections whether they are able to conduct accessible elections or not...?

The sudden unplanned lockdown has hit everyone but with persons with disabilities it has become huge and taking dangerous turns with the following convenient and selective negligence..!

Snapshot of scenario as of now goes on like this...

- In the country of 21 million disabled (single largest minority if we don't take into account religious minorities.) there is not even one single workable helpline which addresses issues of disability.***

- ***Even the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act' 2016 which has passed after much debate and not taking into cognizance of many disability rights groups objections, still needs a lot of fine tuning regarding the implementation.***
- ***Though linked to aadhar cards, there is neither geotagging nor authentic location based services for persons with disabilities.***
- ***Many employers fired their disabled employees without assigning much reason once the pandemic situation started. The disabled in hospitality, tourism, health care industries have seen immediate layoffs and in some cases without adequate or legal compensation of any financial settlement.***
- ***Despite central government notification that, there should be no discrimination in jobs and housing and rent issues for these three months. Most of the society, behaved as if persons with disabilities are not at all are important either in education, dissemination of communication nor rescue and relief operations.***
- ***NGOs and DPOs worked hard in their areas amidst lockdown restrictions and limited resources available to them.***
- ***Life of women with disabilities who account for nearly 50% of disabled population, has turned horrible due to domestic abuse, negligence and absolutely nil support. Many hostels were closed and made the beneficiaries homeless. The central government Pandemic Support be it cash or groceries didn't reach many woman with disabilities due to lack of coordination.***

- ***Post lockdown and during the relaxation of lockdown, many aged persons with disabilities were abandoned and not looked after, they were not welcomed to their own homes.***
- ***PwD living alone suffered hell as their caregivers could not report to duties, permissions were not given to them. It's a no win-win to both employers with severe disabilities and their paid caregivers.***
- ***There is serious ambiguity regarding whether COVID-19 constitute an emergency or disaster which is governed by two Acts having separate provisions. Similarly, the benefits applied to different target communities changed according to provisions of the ACT. Further, there is no uniformity or coordination in different departments regarding relief material supply, welfare activities of Persons with Disabilities.***
- ***Many persons with disabilities are living amongst active COVID cases/communities with no help at all to get them tested first let alone possible treatment afterwards.***
- ***Despite hue and cry and many publications before and during lockdown due to coronavirus, there seems to be no combined efforts or seamless coordination amongst various ministries in handling the most vulnerable and discriminated community i.e... Persons with Disabilities.***
- ***There were no immediate efforts made to make food and medicine available at least. When the whole world struck in their homes depending heavily on information given by media/TV/social media... many hearing/speech impaired were totally left out in dissemination of accessible information. Their morale became low and they are considering themselves a low***

priority and unwanted by the very community/society they live in.

- ***As regards prioritization of rights based protection which is crux of UNCRPD which is again reiterated in Disability Inclusive Guidelines (November 2019) in India, in fact this prioritization is also recognised by National Disaster Risk Management Authority. But, the implementation, political will and seriousness of execution is something which makes all the difference in any law or Act.***

Well...in fact, I wished to end my article with a profound paragraph written by Ms. Varsha R Iyengar on her article "COVID-19 and Rights of Persons with Disabilities in India "

Covid-19 response presents striking pictures of inequality in both public and private sectors. For decades, persons with disabilities have struggled, with snail-paced success, to justify even marginal workplace accommodation. In contrast, within a month of Covid-19, public and private sectors have recognized mobility restrictions of its non-disabled employees; drastically altered work policies; and invested in expensive technologies – all to offer non-disabled employees the very accommodations that are historically denied to persons with disabilities. Covid-19 thus displays years of inertia in recognition and implementation of disability rights. It is time to take a long hard look.(ohrh.law.ox.ac.uk/covid-19-and-rights-of-persons-with-disabilities-in-india)

But, there's another attack on Rights of Persons with Disabilities in India...

Last Nail in the Rights Coffin??

As I write this article, whole Disability community in India is in uproar justifiably over Ministry of Social Justice & Empowerment, who issued a notification proposing an amendment to the Right of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, to decriminalise 'minor offences for improving business sentiment and unclogging court processes'. The move has spurred protests by the community of people with disabilities, disability rights activist and organisations. Amidst this Pandemic, the rights of Persons with Disabilities towards dignified living is changed with the following amendments (source: <https://feminisinindia.com/2020/07/06/why-we-must-oppose-the-proposed-amendment-to-the-disability-act-2016/>)

F//

What amendments have been suggested?

In late June, The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment issued a notification proposing an amendment to the Right of Persons with Disabilities (RPwD) Act, 2016, to decriminalise "minor offences for improving business sentiment and unclogging court processes".

The move has spurred protests by the community of people with disabilities, disability rights activist and organisations.

One of the sections under review of the Act has a provision for imprisonment for 'intentionally insulting or intimidating a person with disability with intent to humiliate in public view'. Under the new proposal, this provision is to be taken out.

While Ministry officials say that the Act is being amended to make laws that are equivalent to the offence, the community argues that people with disabilities face multiple layers of discrimination, and that the provisions proposed are to deter punitive action for offences against people with disabilities.

Source: Indian Express



Conclusion:

Disability comes with a disappointment, though we all have accepted our limitations and proud of being the community of diversity which has a valuable contribution to whole humankind. But this Pandemic and subsequent developments of conscious or unconscious discrimination and insensitivity has turned our suffering into disillusionment too. If only, we care for might and powerful, conveniently forgetting the valuable lessons of diversity, we really have not learned anything from a powerful global pandemic called Novel Corona Virus... Period..!!



Cristina Caluianu is the founder and CEO of Sano Touring.

International Business alumna, she has 30+ years of professional experience, out of which 25+ in general management, 18+ years in management consulting and 15+ years in tourism at management level.

In 2004, Mrs. Cristina Caluianu started a management consulting company (SME) that provides Project Cycle Management for (mainly investment) projects under European Funds. As Project Manager of consultancy missions, she managed over 120 mil. Euro in grants received by SMEs, local authorities, NGOs and religious organizations. As a trainer, she designed and sustained EU Project Cycle Management training programmes for the consulting companies members of the National Association of EU Projects Consultants.

Since 2010 she is involved in the NGO sector, as founding member and appointed president of CED Romania Association, whose purpose is to support and lobby for a wider universal access in Romania.

In 2014 Mrs. Cristina Caluianu established Sano Touring, the only tour-operator focusing mainly on accessible tourism (senior, special needs individuals and medical) inbound to Romania.



Accessible Romania by Sano Touring in times of couch travelling

Cristina Caluianu

Who would have thought that the entire planet will enter this new era? What were the chances that tourism will be so much affected in such a short time? Probably none. But this lockdown had its good parts and for sure everyone learned something good from this, either personal or professional.

We are [Sano Touring](#), a small tour operator opened in December 2014 specialized in accessible tourism in Romania, member of ENAT, and we are happy to share with you what we are doing to survive and which are our plans in these new times under new circumstances.

You may know already that Romania is a country located in central-eastern Europe, with a population of almost 20 million people. What you may not know yet is that Mother Nature gave us some of her best for tourism: we have mountains (1/3 of the country), hills (another 1/3) and plain fields, a generous opening at the Black Sea Coast, a spectacular Delta on the Danube River and lots of mineral/thermal waters (1/3 of the European resources), the last virgin forests and brown bears who grow freely. We have also vestiges of the Great Roman Empire, traces of the early Christianity, fortresses and churches part of UNESCO World heritage.

We are the only travel operator specialized in accessible tourism in Romania, and our focus, interest and passion met the dedication to accessibility of CED Romania Association, NGO, non-profit. We have

therefore jointly developed [Accessible Romania](#) project, where you will find interesting facts about travelling with a disability in Romania and also nice blog articles about what's new in the accessible tourism in our country.

The COVID-19 lockdown in the beginning of March brought cancellations for all our groups or individuals bookings for 2020, so we needed to readapt and adjust to this unexpected reality. And we can say we did. At the end of March, we invited all our Facebook followers to be [couch travellers](#) in Romania together with our partner [Destination Everywhere](#) and it worked! We received good feedback! It is true that travelling on the couch does not offer you the same feeling, but it is worth a try!



As the museums or other attractions were closed, most of the accessible tourist attractions in Romania offered virtual tours, online workshops, or other interesting activities. For example, The Open Air Museum Astra from Sibiu, one of the accessible sights in Romania and a must see museum, offers to the public a virtual tour that you can check [here](#) or you can admire the beautiful traditional collection at [The National Museum of Romanian Peasant](#), from Bucharest. As the experience of travelling online is not the same with the feeling of discovering, tasting, exploring the country in person, these

proposals of virtual tours were more about enriching our general culture and, why not, maybe adding Romania on your “must visit” in 2021.



Also, during this time, we did more administrative work consisting in redesigning our website, finding new accessible activities, enriching our offers with lots of interesting things to do while in Romania such as outdoor activities, foodie tours or cultural ones. We were also in permanent contact with our partners, trying to find new opportunities and ways to work together for promoting accessible tourism and accessibility of tourist venues of all kinds.

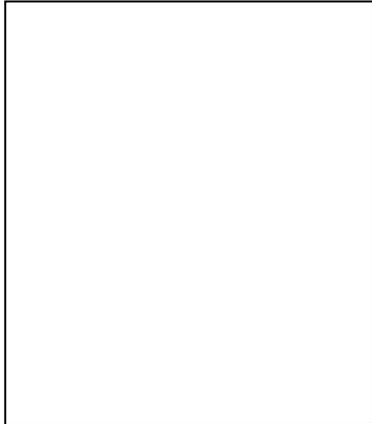
Even though all the hotels, attractions, restaurants were closed, we could stay in touch very well and worked with our partners from these locations to prepare the new way of travelling to be at a higher standard. When the first relaxation phase begun and the hotels could accommodate guests again, we checked that all the safety measures were taken for our clients to feel as comfortable as they could. Also, we check the updates about COVID 19 every day and we inform our guests about anything new that appears and may affect their holiday. We are looking for a good quality, safe, clean, open, and pleasant tourism for all our customers. Communication

and honesty are our main qualities in the relationships with both partners and clients and we think that this should be one of the purposes of travel especially in accessible tourism where the guest should be informed correctly and honestly about accommodation, attractions and transportation for creating (or not) expectations.



Let us hope that the future will bring us good news, hope that the virus will stop spreading so virulently and maybe travelling will begin to be a favorite activity again. For sure, it will not be the same as it was, and we are ready for this. We are aware of new challenges, new perspectives of tourism as we support sustainable and fully accessible tourism.

(Note: Author of the article writes with pen name and wishes to stay anonymous and does not wish for come in limelight .We respect his wish and does not compel for submission of photo)



Stephen Ashley is the author of Walt Disney World With Disabilities. He is also the main author on the website called Walt Disney World Made Easy for Everyone. You can visit that site here: <https://diz-abled.com>. This site is designed to support travel to Disney for those with special needs and disabilities. It's also designed to help make planning a trip to Disney World easier for anyone.

Accessibility at Disney World in the Midst of COVID

Stephen Ashley, Author of Walt Disney World With Disabilities



In the midst of the Covid-19 pandemic, Disney World has reopened after an extended closure. With the reopening, they've made many changes in order to protect their guests from the virus. Before Covid-19, Disney World was one of the most accessible travel destinations in the world. Now they continue to support their guests with special needs and disabilities.

I'll share some of the ways they're supporting these guests, along with some of the ways they're protecting all guests during the Covid pandemic.

In a way, some of these changes might make a visit to Disney World easier for those with accessibility issues. Crowds will be limited, and space between guests will be increased. This might make it much easier for guests in wheelchairs or scooters to get around.



Here are some things that those with health issues, special needs or disabilities might want to know.

The DAS is still available.

Perhaps one of the most important ways that Disney supports guests with special needs is through the use of the DAS (Disability Access Service). Disney is continuing this service.

The DAS is designed for guests who have a hard time waiting in the ride or attraction queues. Though it doesn't shorten wait times, the guest can wait elsewhere in the park. Rather than going into the standard queue with the other guests, they're given a return time. The return time is equivalent to the amount of time they would have waited in the standard queue. The guest can come back to the attraction during their return time period. At this point they're allowed to enter the FASTPASS+ queue line. This is usually a very short wait compared to the standard queue wait time.

There was some concern among the special needs Disney World community because Disney has temporarily stopped the FASTPASS+ system. Regardless, Disney is still using the FASTPASS+ queues for those with a DAS.

For extensive information on the DAS and how it works, visit our [Disney World DAS](#) article here.

Handicapped Parking and Disability Overflow Parking are still available.

Disney World continues to provide handicapped parking to those with official handicapped parking plaques. Though the Overflow Parking was closed temporarily during the preview reopening, it's available again. This area was sometimes used for those without official handicapped parking plaques who have temporary accessibility issues. For example, someone with a broken foot might need this type of parking until their foot heals.

Guests must wear masks at all times except when eating or swimming, or when visiting a Mask Rest Area.

To protect guests from transmission of Covid-19, this applies to all guests age 2 and up. Even while on rides. While there might be some special needs guests who have difficulty with wearing masks, at this time Disney is not making exceptions. In my Facebook group called [Walt Disney World Made Easy for Everyone](#), we've seen several people who will be unable to participate because of this. My guess is that given time, if there are enough complaints, Disney may find a way to make some type of accommodation for these guests. This will only happen if they're able to maintain safety levels for all guests. Given that, it's not a sure thing that this will change any time soon. You can visit here for other [rules pertaining to mask requirements at Disney World](#).

Disney continues to provide handicapped transportation.

Even with the social distancing requirements, Disney is continuing to provide accessible travel options.

Other things Disney is doing during the reopening.

Social distancing is being maintained in all ride queues.

Though the queues have been remodeled to some extent in order to help guests maintain social distancing, the accessibility has not changed. The queues now have markings on the ground to show guests where to stand. There are also some new clear dividers to keep guests apart. On rides, guests are seated farther apart with some seats left empty. The list goes on, but Disney has gone all out to see that social distancing is maintained.

This also pertains to character meet & greets. The characters are no longer physically interacting with the guests. Even the Cast Members are social distancing from one another.

There is so much more that Disney is doing to be able to open and run safely. For details check out Disney's website at Disneyworld.com.

So is Disney World supporting guests with special needs and accessibility issues?

They are. As usual, Disney World appears to be working hard to support all their guests.



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Member of SATH (Society for Accessible Travel and Hospitality), ENAT (European Network for Accessible Tourism), Red Iberoamericana de Turismo Accesible, Brazilian Association of Accessible Tourism and the Autonomy Project, along with Mylena Rodrigues. He received awards and honors as an entrepreneur and his work focused on accessibility and tourism, results of successful projects such as the implementation of accessibility at ParqueBetoCarrero World, Oktoberfest São Paulo and Bonito, a Brazilian adventure destination. One of the pioneers to create content about accessibility in digital media.

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Hospitality in Accessible Tourism: Service beyond physical structure

Ricardo Shimosakai and Mylena Rodrigues

At first, even before going into details related to accessible tourism and the importance of adequate service, it is necessary to put forth some concepts that will help to understand the need to think about fundamental aspects of a trip. So, I place forward the concept of people with specific needs, because here, I need to think about people with disabilities and also other general public who, for different reasons, may have specific needs, such as pregnant women, obese and elderly people.

When it comes to accessibility and inclusion, it does not refer only to people with disabilities, as many people think. This has to suit all people. So, accessibility can be more present in our lives than you may think.¹

Specific needs mean understanding that people have their individualities, and this means that the service provided to them has also its variation and adaptations. The ideal is that all this, may bring more autonomy and independence in their travels. Here I am presenting another concept that is fundamental in a trip, or, in general, in the lives of people with specific needs, which is functional accessibility. Functional accessibility is to provide beyond existing rules and laws the functionality of what is being applied to

¹ SHIMOSAKAI, Ricardo. Presentation. *Curso Básico de Acessibilidade e Inclusão*. (Basic course in Accessibility and Inclusion) Online Course, June, 2020. Available at: <https://hotmart.com/product/curso-basico-de-acessibilidade-e-inclusao> Access on: 18 June, 2020.

people, which in turn, is to think of accessibility from the experience of those who need it, and to open a dialogue directly with those who want to organize a travel itinerary and need specific services.

Sometimes people, without adequate knowledge, try to do and it ends up coming out wrong, and a lot because of the issue to be something very theoretical, and imaginative. What do I have to add into my courses and lectures are the practice, in fact it is what really works, even if, this is a concept that I have developed, of functional accessibility.²

It's impossible to talk about inclusion without talking about accessibility, so first I talked about functional accessibility and now I can put forth my objective when thinking about inclusion issues related to accessible tourism and service. Thus, inclusion is, in some existing definitions, "the move for equality between different individuals ", that is, it means that people with specific needs should have at least a few conditions as much as possible so that they are included in society, in spaces and in what they want to do, minimum of conditions so that they can exercise their right to come and go.

When planning a trip, people usually organize themselves, going through several stages and areas, which will serve them, from their first research on a certain destination, until their return home, passing through areas such as travel agencies, websites of various airlines or buses, hotels, among others. The trip to the destination also passes through several places that needs good information so that the service provided will be of quality and pleases the client,

² SHIMOSAKAI, Ricardo. . Presentation. Curso Básico de Acessibilidade e Inclusão.(Basic course in Accessibility and Inclusion) Online Course, June, 2020. Available at: <https://hotmart.com/product/curso-basico-de-acessibilidade-e-inclusao> Access on: 18 June, 2020.

such as transportation, accommodation, the tourist itinerary he plans to do at the chosen destination, restaurants and shops in general. When we think of trips or tourist itineraries for people with disabilities or other people who has specific assistance needed, we first need to think of them as consumers and all that needs to be done is investment, as it will increase your chances of profit, since most of the time they end up recommending your service to others, thus expanding the shared network. So providing good service is the first step to be accessible and inclusive.



Service provided by Emirates for people with special needs at Dubai Airport.

Online Travel Agencies

When you search for tourist destinations on the internet, for example, the person needs to find important information for him. Here we need to think about the website's own accessibility. An accessible website has to be conducive for screen readers that people with visual impairments can use, or even the possibility of enlarging the letter of that website or having a nice color contrast, considering people with low vision. And if you have presentation videos, it would be interesting to use subtitles so that people who are deaf can understand what is being said. Of course, I can

mention here other resources, such as video with audio description or sign language interpretation and image description, etc. Moreover, some hotel websites do not provide complete information, just mentioning that they have accessible rooms and even prices for those rooms, making the person to call the hotel directly, trying to find out if it is accessible, often they even have to ask for photos so that they can be sure if it suits their needs. Sale sites for various hotels (online travel agencies), for most part, lack information on the existence of accessible rooms in these hotels that are available for probable research and purchases.

Travel Agencies

Thinking of travel agencies (Brick and motor shops), good service becomes even more important, since they are sought precisely so that they can do the research for their customers. You have to think about the physical space of the agency, since many people prefer face-to-face service, the understanding of employees regarding the specific needs of people.



Wheel The World is an agency formed with people with disabilities, and hence is able to understand a lot about the needs of their clients.

When a travel agent provides assistance to the person with a specific need, one then needs to offer the best options according to what the person needs. It is interesting that tourism agencies have employees trained to serve these customers, offering someone who speaks sign language, for example, for deaf people, or who can describe images for people with visual impairments. Searching for hotels for these people also requires knowledge about the diversity of needs, since many people with physical disabilities, wheelchair users, need rooms with space, accessible bathrooms, a bath chair, also observing the issue of mobility on the premises the place the customer will be staying.

Offering tour packages at the chosen destination, also requires all this information and knowledge, since the tourist does not want to experience problems, especially with in regards to his autonomy during the days he will stay at the chosen destination.

Transport

When we speak about transportation, we have some options, such as air, road, own vehicles, car rental, trains and ships. Verifying the service in all these means of transport is important. Here, one must also be prepared and trained to welcome and help people. Car rental companies are often not concerned with having adapted vehicles, thus hampering the possibilities of a client who, on a trip, will need to choose on his won the way in which he will do his tours.

I want to highlight the service on three of the most used transports by tourists: aircraft, bus and taxi (Uber).

London Heathrow Airport, created the Sunflower lanyard, to identify people with invisible disabilities, and thus be able to identify these passengers who need a modified service.



Sunflower Lanyard was implemented by Heathrow Airport to serve people with invisible disabilities.

Most airlines receive training to receive passengers with specific needs; including when purchasing an airline ticket, you can already request this service, thus identifying whether you are a passenger using a wheelchair or a guide dog, or identifying other's needs, thus informing about your disabilities or even to the extent of being pregnant.

However, even with this training that the airline personnel receives, which allows its employees to serve passengers with special needs well, but what is seen is that there are still some complaints from people who use this mode of transportation. An example of this is the deaf person who, in some cases, did not understand important things like what will be served during the flight and what options he can choose from.

Over the road transportation, one of the main issues is related to

adapted buses. There are still many who are not prepared and those among employees are not well trained, starting with the use of the equipment of the bus itself. Since, in some cases, due to lack of maintenance, the equipment does not work, and sometimes people with physical disabilities need to be carried to their seats.



Accessible over-the-road bus used on a tour of Germany with 6 passengers using wheelchairs

Regarding taxi or uber, a common problem is that the driver refuses to accept a passenger with special needs. In some places, cases have been reported of drivers not accepting the guide dog of the visually impaired person; however, this goes beyond acceptance, as it is already a law, and it is mandatory to accept the guide dog anywhere or at space. Sometimes taxi or uber drivers also refuse to accept people who use wheelchairs, as they talk about space or even the person's final destination, which may not have a place to stop properly. There is still a lot to be done for good service in all these means of transport, because the people who provide service must understand the various existing needs, as well as, need to prepare themselves to receive their customers and tourists in general.

Accommodation

When arriving at the chosen hotel, the tourist will always want a good service. Today, for attending to people who are deaf, there is already a possibility, in some places, to connect to a central place that can provide sign language interpretation; however, what I observe in my research is that the person who is deaf prefers face-to-face attendance, because it is certainly more dynamic and pleasant to the guest.

Hotel employees who will escort a person with a disability to their room need to know the ways of accompanying the guest. That is, it is necessary not to impose a way on the person, the best choice is to discuss with them and know what their needs are. A person with a physical disability who uses a wheelchair may have his own preference, for e.g. being able to push his chair himself or asking the employee to push it. A person with visual impairment, on the other hand, must be guided in the correct way, who is always beside the person who guides him, and he takes his shoulder or elbow. It is not the right way for those who are guiding to go ahead. Another possibility is when the person guiding gives a description of the place for a visually impaired person. Good service is also in looking into the small details. An example of this is when cleaning the room of a visually impaired host. Little thought is given to this, however, as people with visual impairments move around according to the location of their movements and where they have put their things. Thus, when cleaning the room, it is ideal to keep everything in the same place, so that they do not lose their orientation.



Inclusive and accessible service at the reception of the Haus Rheinsberg Hotel Am See in Germany

Tour Guides

The tour guide has a fundamental role in the trip maneuvering into the best possible way, therefore, he has to be prepared to receive tourists with special conditions. He needs to know the places where they go with the tourist, and know if these places have accessibility and are prepared to receive the people, as, for example, if they have bathrooms that can be used. In addition, the tour guide himself needs to understand the needs. When you talk about a historic monument to a group of people, you usually use a narrative simply modified to the specific monument. But the people with visual impairments cannot visualize, to describe this monument for those to understand its details, such as size, format, colors and other details becomes extremely important, that makes the person visualize how it is. If a group of tourists have a person who is deaf and a guide does not know sign language, a person will be excluded from understanding the history of the historic place or monument, so a team needs to prepare itself for this, that is, train their guides .

Or perhaps, it would be interesting, to train sign language interpreters to be tour guides.

Local tourist guides, generally knows the attractions and their history. If you are well trained for accessible tourism, you can provide specific special attention, such as organizing bathroom stops, with the best access options, and use only when necessary.



Accessible tour guides on a tour of Chichen Itza in Mexico, one of the wonders of the modern world

Restaurants

Food is part of the basics of a trip; therefore, they should pay attention to the care of people with special needs. Offering a braille card with enlarged letters is a distinct difference that draws a lot of attention, as well as, for example, thinking about your physical space to receive people with physical disabilities.

In a Self-Service restaurant, the construction for self service, must allow people who use wheelchairs to approach the place, both to see the food and to serve with autonomy. Here we also mention that the place must have good lighting, since people with low vision can still use low visual ability that they have, and prefer to have autonomy when serving. Good lighting can help. In addition to meeting the

ideal form, in an understandable and hospitable way, it allows for the popularization of language signs.

With the help of booklets and waiters, even those who do not know sign language, are encouraged to order the chosen dish in this way.



Waiters at Restaurant Signs in Toronto, serving customers using sign language

Tourist attractions

Here I want to highlight some of the main tourist attractions, among them: museums, theaters and adventure activities. In museums, theaters or other attractions that have a ticket booth so that the people can buy their ticket, an important point is the designated queue, which must be well placed, taking into account the issue of mobility and also should be well signaled. The employee must know how to serve a person with a specific need, respecting their limits. Here I mention the care for elderly people, who mostly need more time, and that their care is given with patience. Other points should be noted, if there is a counter, it must be at an adequate height to better serve everyone, thinking of people who use a wheelchair or people of short stature. The assistance to the person

who is deaf also needs to be of quality, thus observing the proper communication with them. Another point that I observe in my research is the use of tactile flooring. It needs to be well placed to better guide the mobility of people with visual impairments. I have already seen cases of tactile flooring that did not lead to anywhere or that ended up in obstacles, such as walls, columns and others. One of the useful tips; I suggest the use of tactile maps, which help the person to understand the place and be able to walk in it with more autonomy.

In museums, in addition to the appropriate physical space, it is interesting to bring resources so that people with visual impairments or people who are deaf can also understand the exhibits on display. In some places there is already the possibility for visually impaired people to touch objects and exhibits in general, however, resources such as providing audio description and sign language interpreter, can already increase the audience that goes to this tourist attraction.

In theater, both audio description and sign language interpretation will also make the show much more accessible and inclusive. A good service, for sure will bring in more people to attend and patronize theaters. In many places in the world, there are already such possibilities, however, this needs to be expanded more and more.

Another failure of places like museums and theaters is the lack of publishing the information on accessibility. Many times the spaces have these resources, but they do not communicate that they do, thus making it impossible for more people to go to these spaces.

In regards to adventure tourism, what I try to address is the fact that the good service always is having full respect for the limits of the abilities of the tourist who intends to take tours like this. Generally, when we talk about adventure tourism, we think of trails, waterfalls, mountains and other activities done in nature. It is very difficult to change the natural structure and put ramps and elevators, so the tourist with special needs who seeks this type of tourist attraction, should already know that he will find challenges, and still want these challenges, and these are different experiences that they seek. What can be done is to bring the appropriate security for such activities, such as a trail chair. Most importantly, tour guides are prepared to respect and also provide the necessary support to these people.



Ricardo Shimosakai training for tour guides in Bonito, Brazil

Conclusion

In this text I have put few points out of many that need attention in order to provide a quality service. Finally, I want to highlight an important point. If a person with a disability or other special needs

is being accompanied by another, never stop asking him directly what his wants or needs are, he can answer you in more detail, after all, he has autonomy and independence to make his choices.

In short, for providing good service in accessible tourism, it is necessary to have inclusion, because without inclusion there is no adequate and quality hospitality. That is, a person who goes on a sightseeing tour and cannot participate in it, is excluded. Accessibility and inclusion need to go together; there is no point in being accessible without being inclusive. About this I can cite examples, because an accessible bus is good, but if the tourist guides who are there know how to meet the tourist with special needs, the guide needs to be inclusive.

Library Reference

SHIMOSAKAI, Ricardo. Presentation. Curso Básico de Acessibilidade e Inclusão.(Basic course in Accessibility and Inclusion) Online Course, June, 2020. Available at:

<https://hotmart.com/product/curso-basico-de-acessibilidade-e-inclusao> Access on: 18 June de 2020.

Notes:

¹SHIMOSAKAI, Ricardo. Module 2: People with Special Needs. Basic Accessibility and Inclusion Course. Online Course, June, 2020. Available at: <https://hotmart.com/product/curso-basico-de-acessibilidade-e-inclusao> Access on: 18 June 2020.

² SHIMOSAKAI, Ricardo. Presentation. Curso Básico de Acessibilidade e Inclusão.(Basic course in Accessibility and Inclusion) Online Course, June, 2020. Available at: <https://hotmart.com/product/curso-basico-de-acessibilidade-e-inclusao> Access on: 18 June 2020.



Smart Move Training & Development Inc.

Catherine Smart is the founder of Smart Move Inc. providing expertise in the areas of project management, accessibility solutions and leadership coaching. Cathy is a partner, mother, a sailor, lover of the outdoors, explorer and an innovator, artist, facilitator, organizer, mediator and creator. She has traveled and lived in many parts of the world. As a Coaches Training Institute graduate, her greatest satisfaction is assisting individuals achieve breakthroughs. Her core strengths include team building; fundraising; standards setting and thinking outside of the box!

Traveling with a Disability in a Developing Country

Catherine Smart, Smart Move Training & Development Inc.

Much of my work over the years has involved creating opportunities for persons living with a disability to explore and experience travelling the world. When working at Ontario March of Dimes – I lead several groups of travellers living with and w/o a disability including Nepal, Holland, the Grand Canyon and the Kananaskis country in Alberta. The common denominator with each trip was that everyone was seeking an adventure, wanted to meet new people and learn about a different part of the world. Accessibility (and lack thereof) was a constant consideration. The “one step”; lack of ramps; lack of appropriate and consistent signage were just a few of the challenges that travellers experienced. However, with a little creativity most obstacles were overcome.

Last year, my husband and I were invited to lead an exciting project rejuvenating the ancient national trail in Bhutan. One of the many considerations while working on the Trans Bhutan Trail project is to (where possible) design and promote universal access along the trail. Given Bhutan’s terrain and weather conditions many challenges have been and will continue to present themselves.

Touring Bhutan is a challenge for a traveller with physical disabilities, but you'll have a guide, driver and vehicle at your disposal, so this is possible with some planning. The Bhutanese are eager to help, and agencies should be able to arrange a strong companion to assist with moving about and getting in and out of vehicles.

Mobility impaired travellers will find that roads are rough and pavements, where they exist, often have holes and sometimes steps. Hotels and public buildings rarely have wheelchair access or lifts, and only a few hotels at the top end have bathrooms designed to accommodate wheelchairs. (Source: Lonely Planet)

What I have found over the years – it not so much about a person’s disability; as it is a person’s attitude. If a person is really interested in travelling to a certain part of the world that is not particularly accessible – there are many considerations that can be put in place in order to ensure a positive experience. The following check list is a useful guide – especially when thinking about travelling to a developing country.

- 1. Do your research well in advance. Find out what accommodations are available (including hotel, restaurants, food, accessible attractions) based on your needs. Lots of very good, up to date information is available online.***
- 2. Do not assume anything. Often times – staff who work in hotels, restaurants and attractions are not fully aware and or have not been trained to appreciate what accommodations are available. Being really clear when describing your needs; as well as sending photos can make a significant difference to your overall experience.***
- 3. Plan to bring any assistive devices, medical supplies, etc. with you. These kinds of services can be limited depending on the country you choose to travel to.***
- 4. It is always important to have Plan B in place. Again – depending on where you plan to travel and how remote you are***

- will dictate what medical and potentially evacuation services are available to you should the need arise.

In the current world of Covid19, non-essential travel is not recommended. Having said that – travel has and will continue. The current Covid protocols have heightened sanitation and cleanliness standards. Many of these protocols will continue once a vaccine is in place ensuring that travellers are protected from attracting unnecessary illnesses. I believe this is very good news for persons living with a disability. Many of the protocols can increase a person’s confidence which makes a big difference in a traveller’s overall experience – especially when it comes to maintaining one’s health.

As accessibility standards continue to develop and the developing countries become more receptive to providing increased accommodation, traveling to more remote parts of the world will become more and more of a viable option.

To learn more about the Trans Bhutan Trail log onto <https://bhutancanada.org/trans-bhutan-trail-blogs/>

To learn more about tourism in Bhutan log onto <https://www.tourism.gov.bt>



Letter from the Chairman's Desk By Sunil Bhatia PhD

'BIOLOGICAL DISTANCING' IS NEW TREND OF 2020 FOR CHALLENGES OF 'COVID 19'

One day I was watching a television program and there was a short commercial break where a young girl was changing the punctured wheel of the jack car in the dark night on a deserted road and mother was assisting with handing over required tools from the kit. As she finished the job of changing the wheel a confident smile surfaced on the face of her mother and suddenly there was a display of energy drink. In reality it is not energy drink but role of designer who designed the products where interface and process of changing wheel of using jack, opening of nut bolts does not require strength and any normal female can operate with little effort and no need of man's physical strength . Introduction of tubeless wheel has almost eliminated the problem of puncture so change of wheel and it is one step forward in the direction of 'neutral gender' design.

I immediately realized that it is the modern designers who designed the product for commercial gain and taken the approach of gender neutral for including the female perspective customer along with male customer. Earlier every product was designed keeping in mind the male perspective customers who has better physical strength

compared to females , are money earners in the family so all the minor and major decisions rest on them. As female came out in search of earning for making her life better, independent then designer also design the products for drawing their attention for marketing and use the decision power of purchase and gradually in attempt of attracting both gender the evaporates thin line of gender and a new concept of neutral gender emerged.

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I remembered in the twentieth century of sixty decades where the steering wheel of the car demands great physical strength for manoeuvring and it was male centric but the introduction of power steering changed the face of a vehicle and any female driver can manage the car with ease. Gender neutral products were gaining momentum for better commercial gain. I have witnessed that the stand of the two wheeler was designed where physical strength was required for pulling back of a heavy vehicle for allowing stand on stand but introduction of side stand has allowed the female stand the vehicle with little effort . I have also seen that vehicles start with a crank rod for rotating the engine for starting the vehicle but it is replaced with an ignition key supported with a battery that helps the female driver to start with little effort that supports the neutral design .

Design of water tap that has replaced the lifting of water from well with the help of rope or hand pump and it is gender neutral design. Bicycles were heavy in the early stage of design and the triangular frame was the biggest hurdle for females for seat peddling. As bicycles got light and frame design changed without compromising strength by removing the third horizontal arm that helped the

female not to move leg backward for seating on seats that protect the respect of her body rather by twisting the little leg forward for seating has changed the face of the female liberty.

Wherever the physical strength was required for operation of products and designer introduce the technology and design the products for handling need little effort by introducing proper interface that area witnessed female domination in our time what it used to be male bastion. Typewriter or computer has given more liberty for females because it does not require physical strength.

Gender neutral design next natural forward step was 'region neutral' and it is visible in design of bread maker machines where people do not have proper imperfection and the process appears cumbersome for making bread by introducing the standard procedure in rice preferred region and similarly in design of rice cooker for bread eater region. These are the steps for harmonizing the region and the only way is to introduce the neutral design.

Closing and opening of the cave entrance with large heavy stone for living in safe life required great physical strength for movement and it was male design but design of door with hinges is neutral design and any age of gender can operate with equal ease.

Holding with hand to clenching fist is natural process for hitting hard but design of javelin for throwing by holding in one arm for killing for prey is extension of power of fist . Throwing of javelin was designed for killing the prey for food was male dominated but the design of bow and arrow or catapult is neutral gender design. Pistol

or revolver is a neutral design where a machine gun or cannon ball gun is male oriented design.

Female design for cooking is based on quality only limited to family members but large gatherings require quantity of food where male power is required. Introduction of automation for cooking is neutral gender design.

Concept of party is known to our cavemen and it is a ritual that is carried forward by our past generation till today where men and women are assembled and lines of gender vanish and the concept of neutral gender surfaced. Solidarity is the word that further helped in removing the thin line of gender and each gender is at par with one another and a great philosophy of neutral gender emerged. Sorrow is gender based and each gender receives consoles in different intensity but celebration is the way where gender ideas vanish into thin sky and unknowingly proceeds for neutral gender. It is my feeling that if any product loses scope of improvised except material changes is possible and reaches the destination of neutral gender as we witness in design of needle, comb, mirror or even in design of cart. Centuries old designs are still the same and no scope of design improvement but except material changes .When a modern woman throws her bra in an attempt for equality with male in fact, attempting to prove a neutral gender and expression of bra less is breaking the shackles of social norms of wearing bra.

I am surprised that design of all musical instruments in any part of the world are neutral design where male and female can play with ease. In modern time transmission of sound is designed with

telephone where role of gender is nowhere and barrier of language is finish Ancient time distance was the reason for calling the person at long distance with lung power and female voice was thin and could not travel at long distance compared to male voice.

Questioning is feminine design and debate is design for equality but argument is an attempt of proving superior. Argument is the foundation of differences with one another and has elements of male chromosome. Shouting with anger is an attempt of dominance and verbal abuse is proving your own existence that is denied by your opponent. Physical assault is an attempt to deny others' existence but murder is the ultimate crime any one can do for eliminating opponent existence and after that no crime is possible and it is neutral design .

I am highly obliged by Executive Director Jani Nayar of SATH for inviting authors of her choice for covering the impact of COVID-19 in the area of hospitality , tour and travel and people of differently abled its challenges and possible solutions in prevailing resources and environment .

Lambert Academic publication for celebration of 150th special issue by publishing a book by compiling editorials "Design For All, Drivers of Design" translated in eight different languages from ENGLISH into French, German, Italian, Russian, Dutch and Portuguese. Kindly click the following link for book. "Morebooks", one of the largest online bookstores. Here's the link to it: <https://www.morebooks.de/store/gb/book/design-for-all/isbn/978-613-9-83306-1>

With Regards

Dr. Sunil Bhatia

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Forthcoming Issues

WOMEN DESIGNER YEAR 2020 November 2020 Vol-15 No-11

Hua Dong is Professor in Design at Loughborough University, UK. Her research interests relate to inclusive design and she has published more than 200 papers in design and engineering journals, conferences and books. She was the guest editor for the 'Alldesign' special issue on inclusive design in China (2011) and the Design for All Newsletter in India (2010), and has edited six books, including "Design for Inclusivity" (2007) and "Inclusive Design: Chinese Archive" (2019). Hua has been an organiser and editor of the Cambridge Workshop on Universal Access and Assistive Technology (CWUAAT) since 2014. She is the convenor of the Inclusive design research special interest group (InclusiveSIG) of the Design Research Society (DRS), and was elected DRS Fellow in 2019. Hua has collaborated with researchers and industries in the UK, China, Japan, Italy, Finland, Belgium, the Netherlands and Turkey. She has helped Ant Financial, part of the Chinese Alibaba Group to launch the China's first inclusive design guidance.



Co Editor

Abdus selam Selami Cifter, Ph.D., Associate Professor in the Department of Industrial Design in Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul, Turkey



Abdus selam Selami Cifter received his bachelor's degree in Industrial Design from Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University, Istanbul/Turkiye in 2005. In 2008, he received a Postgraduate Study Abroad Grant from the Turkish Board of Higher Education, and joined Brunel University's (London/UK) Human-Centered Design Institute as a Ph.D. researcher. His Ph.D. research investigated both lay users' characteristics and designers' perspectives regarding home-use medical devices, and aimed to assist designers in developing home use medical devices by providing information and suggestions regarding lay users and how to address their needs and expectations.

After his Ph.D., Abdus selam returned to the Department of Industrial Design of the Faculty of Architecture of Mimar Sinan Fine Arts University and currently working as an Associate Professor in the same department. He was also positioned as a Deputy Dean of the Faculty of Architecture between 2015-2020. Abdus selam has been involved in several research/design projects in the areas of medical devices, inclusive design, the collaboration of university and civil society organisations, and design education. His research interests are focused on home-use medical devices, the design process of medical devices, inclusive design, and human centred design.

December 2020 Vol-15 No-12

Isabella Tiziana Steffanis an Italian architect and Certified Professional Ergonomist by CREE-Centre for Registration European Ergonomists, with experience in environmental quality, accessibility and Design for All.



She is active in the fields of: planning, research, on the subject of mobility of weak users and environmental usability, audit on usability of products, places, services, urban pathways and furniture, both for public and private customers.

She has been Vice President of the Italian Society of Ergonomics and Human factors, and of the Organising Committee of the XX International Congress IEA2018 "Creativity in practice". She is President of National board for the Certification of the European Ergonomists, and member of the Scientific Committee of the IEA2021 Congress.

She has been teaching for different Institutions (Università degli Studi di Firenze, Università degli Studi di Milano Bicocca (Department of Psychology, Sociology, ICT), and regularly teaches at Politecnico di Milano (Department of Architecture).

She has been member of juries for idea competitions, among which the UIA Award "Friendly Spaces Accessible to All" editions, and the jury student design contest "U Design for real people".

She is active in standardisation at the national, European and international levels. She is a selected expert (2016) within the European Community Mandate 420, currently developing a new standard "PrEN 17210- Accessibility and usability of the built

environment – Functional requirements”. She is also working on the revision of ISO 21542:2011 “Building construction – Accessibility and usability of the built environment”.

info@studiosteffan.it

Africa Origin Designer year 2021

February 2021 Vol-16 No-2

Samuel M Maina PhD

Motto: Ignore Design that Ignore People
Designer with a passion for creating tomorrow for all. Dr Maina believes in eco-ethical design while delivering solutions to everyday problems. My approach is empathy with the low income earners desiring “beyond reach



solutions” meant for the affluent with the aim to avail them to the masses.

I am also the editor of the Africa Design Review Journal of the school of the Arts & Design, University of Nairobi and the Creativity and Innovation Journal of the University of Transylvania, Brasov, Austria. Author of Qualitative & Quantitative Research Methods Simplified, How to Write a Good Proposal, Communication Skills- Edition for University and College Students among others.

March 2021 Vol-16 No-3

MICHAEL MUNENE, PhD

Lecturer, School of The Arts and Design
College of Architecture and Engineering,
[PhD, UoN | M.A., UoN | B.A., UoN | PGD,
KIM]. **DR.MICHAEL MUNENE, Ph.D.**

Researcher, Educator and Designer with great passion for universal design, integrating and mainstreaming people with disabilities. Ardent about design for social change and an activist for social justice and equity.



April 2020 Vol-16 No-4

Saki Mafundikwa

I have been a graphic designer, author, and educator for over thirty years. As a globally recognized expert on African writing systems, I have lectured, exhibited, and given workshops all over the world, including:

Workshop with Sadie Red Wing, Art Center, Los Angeles, CA, 2019

Keynote speaker, 1st Pan African Design Institute Congress, Ghana, 2019

Keynote speaker, SAVVY Spinning Triangles, Kinshasa, Congo, 2019

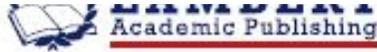
In addition to starting Zimbabwe's first graphic design and new media college, I wrote and published a comprehensive review of African writing systems (*Afrikan Alphabets*, 2004). I'm currently working on an updated edition that should be out early next year, 2021.

While in New York, I taught design at Cooper Union for three years, creating a course, "Writing Systems from Non-Western Societies," inspired by my MFA thesis on writing systems in Africa – this was the birth of my *Afrikan Alphabets* book. I had realized during the research for my thesis that there was no group of people anywhere on the planet who did not devise some form of writing or record keeping, yet relatively few of these are covered in contemporary graphic design courses. The Cooper Union course was wildly popular, sitting very well with their diverse student body. In the final year of my work there, the course morphed into "Experimental Typography," which is still being offered at Cooper Union today.



In the past decade I have turned some of my attention to documentary filmmaking. My first film, *Shungu: The Resilience of a People* (2009) which had its world premiere at IDFA (International Documentary Festival of Amsterdam) and has won awards, notably the Ousmane Sembene Prize at Zanzibar International Film Festival and Best Documentary at Kenya International Film Festival. It has screened all over the world, where it has been received very well by both critics and audiences, except in my own country where it remains banned. The film follows the brutal Zimbabwean presidential election of 2008, during the campaigns of Mugabe and Morgan Tsvangirai, the leader of the opposition party. *Shungu* also explores the everyday survival practices undertaken by the Zimbabwean people as they cope with political and economic strife. I took a two-year sabbatical to get a breath of fresh air and ended up teaching design and film at the Cornish College of the Arts in. This past year, I had the vision to collaborate with a young Indigenous designer, Sadie Red Wing because I felt we have a shared colonized background. The result was a resoundingly successful workshop at Art Center. We insisted that the workshop be open to the community and this made it even more interesting. We have agreed that this was the beginning of a long collaboration that will take us to campuses across the United States! Art Center sensing that this was an important and necessary collaboration, invited us to be interviewed for their series of podcasts called, "Change Lab Podcast". Ours is number 29.

New Books



ISBN 978-613-9-83306-1



Sunil Bhatia

Design for All

Drivers of Design

Expression of gratitude to unknown, unsung, unacknowledged, unpraised and selfless millions of heroes who have contributed immensely in making our society worth living, their design of comb, kite, fireworks, glass, mirror even thread concept have revolutionized the thought process of human minds and prepared blueprint of future. Modern people may take for granted but its beyond imagination the hardships and how these innovative ideas could strike their minds. Discovery of fire was possible because of its presence in nature but management of fire through manmade designs was a significant attempt of thinking beyond survival and no

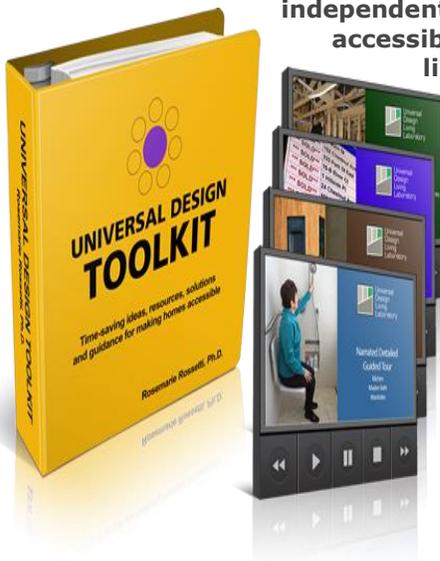
doubt this contributed in establishing our supremacy over other living beings. Somewhere in journey of progress we lost the legacy of ancestors in shaping minds of future generations and completely ignored their philosophy and established a society that was beyond their imagination. I picked up such drivers that have contributed in our progress and continue guiding but we failed to recognize its role and functions. Even tears, confusion in designing products was marvelous attempt and design of ladder and many more helped in sustainable, inclusive growth.

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it is available on www.morebooks.de one of the largest online bookstores. Here's the link to it: <https://www.morebooks.de/store/gb/book/design-for-all/isbn/978-613-9-83306-1>

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Rosemarie Rossetti, Ph.D., teamed with her husband Mark Leder in creating this unique Toolkit. They bring ten years of research, design and building expertise by serving as the general contractors for their home, the Universal Design Living Laboratory– which is the highest rated universal design home in North America.

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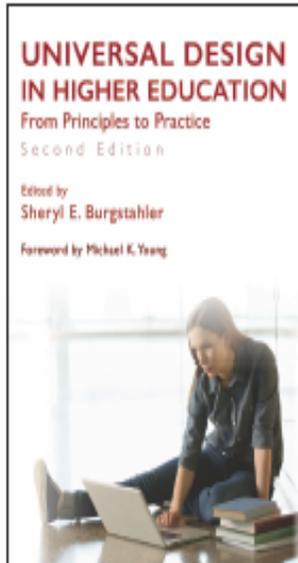
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—STEPHAN J. SMITH, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, ASSOCIATION ON HIGHER EDUCATION AND DISABILITY

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EDITED BY SHERYL E. BURGSTAHLER • FOREWORD BY MICHAEL K. YOUNG

This second edition of the classic *Universal Design in Higher Education* is a comprehensive, up-to-the-minute guide for creating fully accessible college and university programs. The second edition has been thoroughly revised and expanded, and it addresses major recent changes in universities and colleges, the law, and technology.

As larger numbers of people with disabilities attend postsecondary educational institutions, there have been increased efforts to make the full array of classes, services, and programs accessible to all students. This revised edition provides both a full survey of those measures and practical guidance for schools as they work to turn the goal of universal accessibility into a reality. As such, it makes an indispensable contribution to the growing body of literature on special education and universal design. This book will be of particular value to university and college administrators, and to special education researchers, teachers, and activists.

SHERYL E. BURGSTAHLER is an affiliate professor in the College of Education at the University of Washington in Seattle, and founder and director of the university's Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology (DO-IT) and Access Technology Centers.

"Sheryl Burgstahler has assembled a great set of chapters and authors on universal design in higher education. It's a must-have book for all universities, as it covers universal design of instruction, physical spaces, student services, technology, and provides examples of best practices."

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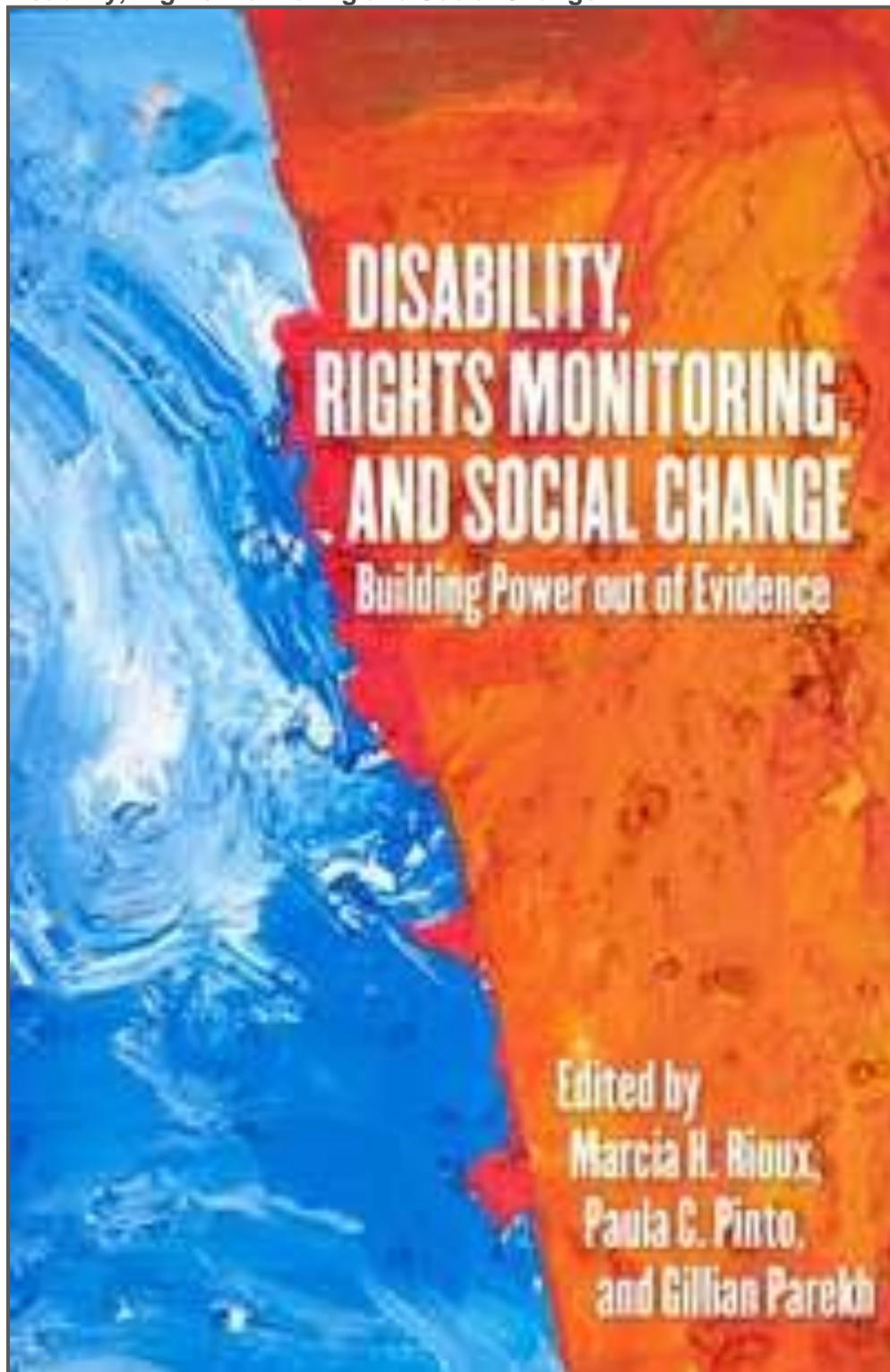
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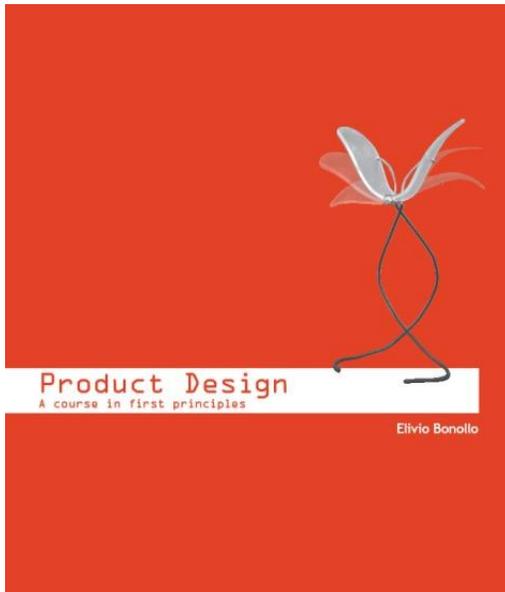
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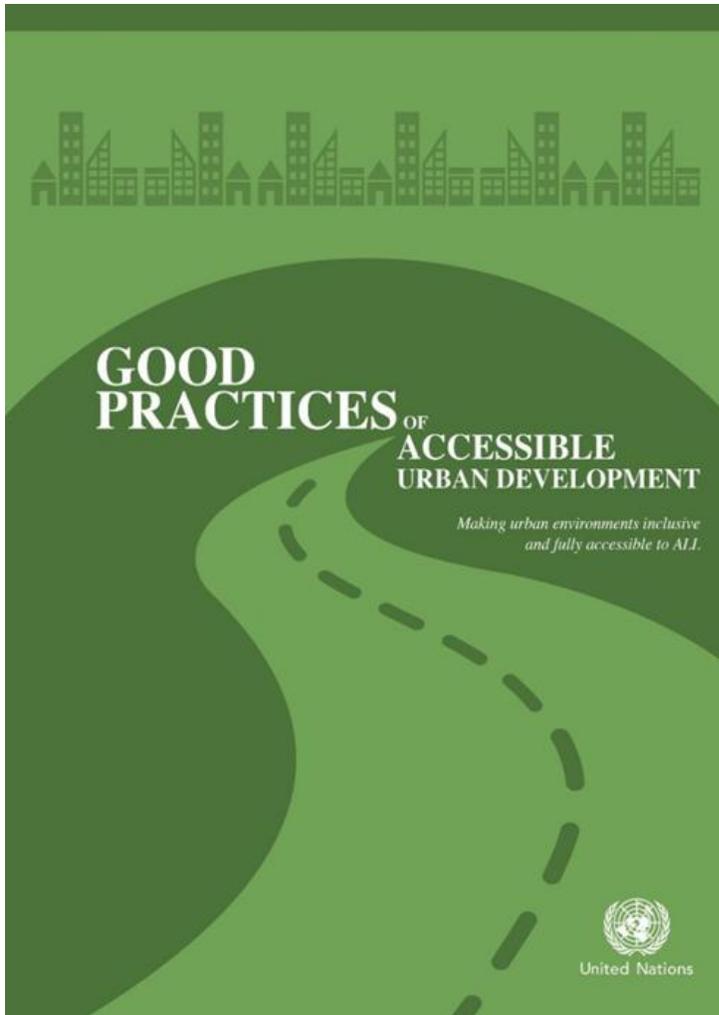
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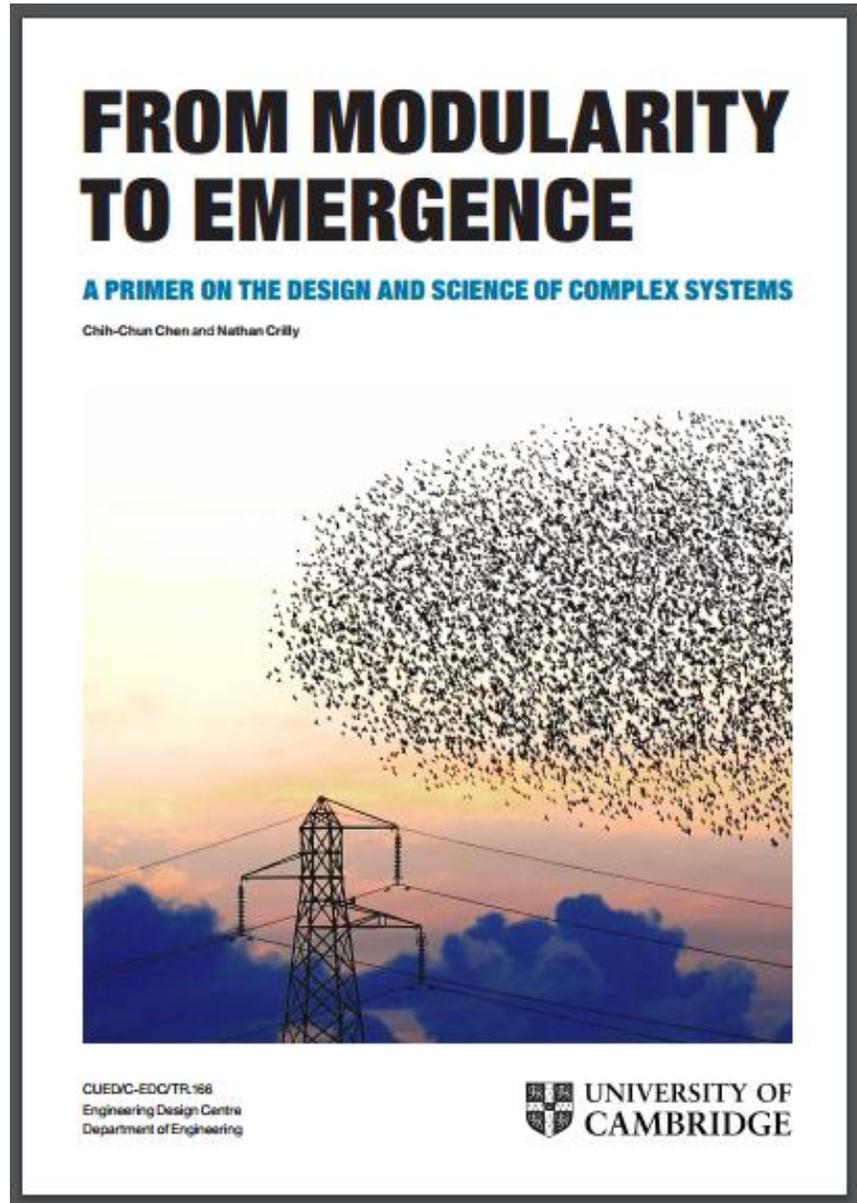
In light of the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (HABITAT III) and the imminent launch of the New Urban Agenda, DESA in collaboration with the Essl Foundation (Zero Project) and others have prepared a new publication entitled: "Good practices of accessible urban development".

The publication provides case studies of innovative practices and policies in housing and built environments, as well as transportation, public spaces and public services, including information and communication technology (ICT) based services.

The publication concludes with strategies and innovations for promoting accessible urban development.

The advance unedited text is available

at: http://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/desa/good_practices_urban_dev.pdf



Dr Chih-Chun Chen and Dr Nathan Crilly of the Cambridge University Engineering Design Centre Design Practice Group have released a free, downloadable book, *‘A Primer on the Design and Science of Complex Systems’*.

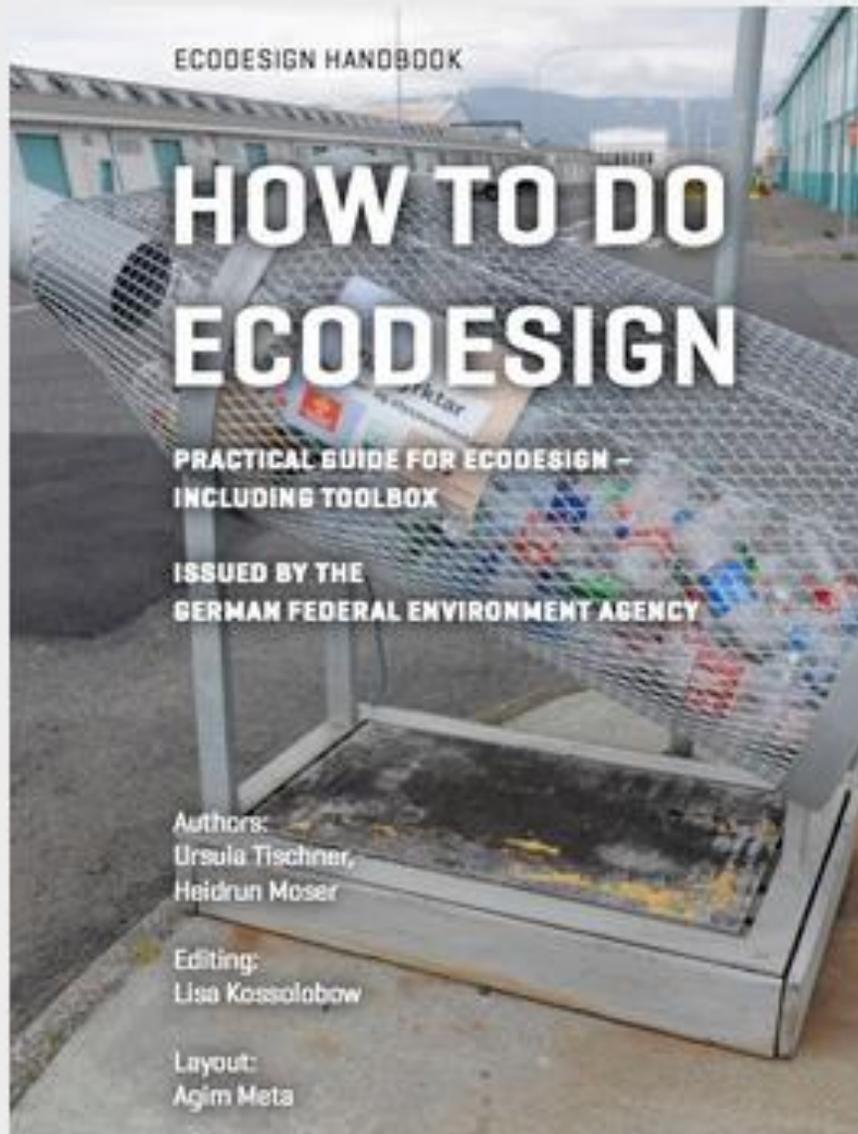
This project is funded by the UK Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EP/K008196/1).

The book is available at URL: <http://complexityprimer.eng.cam.ac.uk>

Changing Paradigms: Designing for a Sustainable Future



**New iBook / ebook:
HOW TO DO ECODESIGN**



Practical Guide for Ecodesign – Including a
Toolbox

Author: Ursula Tischner

TRANSFORMATIONS
7 Roles to Drive Change by Design Joyce Yee / Emma Jefferies / Kamil Michlewski

TRANSFORMATIONS

7 Roles to Drive Change by Design



Joyce Yee / Emma Jefferies / Kamil Michlewski

BIS

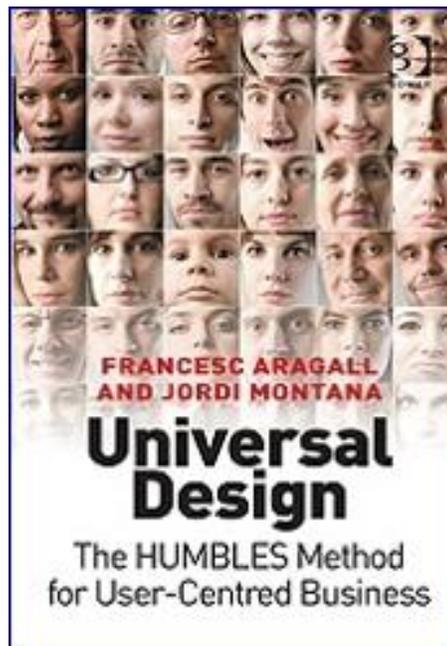
Amar Arnason and Sigurjón Baldur Hafsteinsson

DEATH AND GOVERNMENTALITY

Neo-liberalism, grief and the nation form



Universal Design: The HUMBLE Method for User-Centred Business



“Universal Design: The HUMBLE Method for User-Centred Business”, written by Francesc Aragall and Jordi Montaña and published by Gower, provides an innovative method to support businesses wishing to increase the number of satisfied users and clients and enhance their reputation by adapting their products and services to the diversity of their actual and potential customers, taking into account their needs, wishes and expectations.

The HUMBLE method (© Aragall) consists of a progressive, seven-phase approach for implementing Design for All within a business. By incorporating the user's point of view, it enables companies to evaluate their business strategies in order to improve provide an improved, more customer-oriented experience, and thereby gain a competitive advantage in the marketplace. As well as a comprehensive guide to the method, the book provides case studies of multinational business which have successfully incorporated Design for All into their working practices.

According to Sandro Rossell, President of FC Barcelona, who in company with other leading business professionals endorsed the publication, it is “required reading for those who wish to understand how universal design is the only way to connect a brand to the widest possible public, increasing client loyalty and enhancing company prestige”. To purchase the book, visit either the [Design for All Foundation website](#)

Appeal

IAUD Proposal-How to make a mask in 10 seconds

Our partner IAUD (international Association for Universal Design) would like to introduce this easy way to make a mask with your handkerchief or hand towel as one of our contribution to prevent from the spread of the infectious disease with COVID-19 new coronavirus.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe recommends wearing cloth masks, as it is reusable. They can be washed and use them many times, in other words, it is sustainable.

It has also been recognized that it has an effect on slowing the spread of COVID-19, although it does not have COVID-19-preventing effects, according to CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). It helps people who may have the virus and do not know it from transmitting it to others.

Link to tutorial: <https://www.iaud.net/global/activity/10032/>

Hoping that all together we can stop the spread of COVID-19 as soon as possible, warmest regards.

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News

1. Hybrid, Online Classes Bring Different Styles, Same Educational Experiences



Summer training workshops and collaborative sessions helped professors develop high-quality courses and materials for this fall, when 41% of class sections are being taught through hybrid modes, while 29% are totally online.

Rose-Hulman professors have earned national acclaim for their abilities to teach engineering, science, and management students how to identify and isolate the constraints within every problem in manufacturing, research, or business.

After all, finding those constraints is the first step in the problem-solving process.

So, it seems only natural that the institute's faculty would come up with appropriate solutions to teach their science, engineering, and mathematics courses in an academic environment filled with online and hybrid classes and lab sessions, classrooms with social distancing measures, and adhering to health and safety protocols behind face masks, face shields, and plexiglass.

"If a college full of professors who teach about problem-solving can't develop the appropriate solutions to teach in an era of constraints caused by a pandemic, then who else could?" asks Jameel Ahmed, head of the Department of Biology and Biomedical Engineering.

Kay C Dee, associate dean of learning and technology and professor of biology and biomedical engineering, adds, "As they say, 'Necessity is the Mother of Invention.' In many ways, that's what has happened here. We did this out of a strong desire as educators to teach and connect with our students in different and creative ways—much different than normal at Rose-Hulman."

Only 39% of course sections (225) are being taught this fall quarter in traditional face-to-face classroom situations. That's a major shift from a year ago when 99.5% of sections (642) were totally in-class. The Office of Academic Affairs reports that 41% of fall class sections (274) are now being taught through hybrid modes (part in-class, part online), with another 29% being totally online (133).

"The faculty and our students have done an amazing job of adapting to the new modes of delivery," said Rick Stamper, provost and vice president for academic affairs. His office worked with academic departments, faculty governance groups, and the Office of Facilities Operations to add course sections and modify classrooms arrangements for this fall. "The faculty have demonstrated that they can provide great student learning experiences in a variety of delivery modes. Now that we have been forced by the pandemic to become more proficient with these new tools, I look forward to seeing how faculty deploy them in the future," he says.

While there was an abrupt one-week about-face from in-class to entirely online instruction during the 2020 spring academic quarter, faculty took full advantage of an entire summer to modify classes for this fall. The Office of Learning & Technology's Creative Adaptable Courses workshops helped professors develop high-quality courses and materials for face-to-face, hybrid or online classes. A total of 128 faculty interacted in some way, and materials from these sessions were introduced to 15 new faculty for the 2020-21 academic year—accounting for just over 70% of the faculty. The resources remain online and available for all Rose-Hulman instructors, according to Dee.

Then, 52 professors teaching course sections and lab sections for first-year students this fall took additional time and care this summer to develop courses that met quality standards for accessibility, introduced Learning Management System technology and Universal Design for Learning concepts, and offered regular instructor-student and student-student interactions. These sessions were supported by a grant from Lilly Endowment Inc.'s Charting the Future for Indiana's Colleges and Universities initiative.

"The experience of seeing my colleagues learning from each other was humbling to watch," said Dee. "These talented and experienced instructors weren't afraid to step back and take time to learn new things. They wanted to get even better to help the learning process for their students."

Associate Professor of Chemistry Stephanie Poland adapted a section of this fall's Honors Chemistry course to be taught totally online for the first time, with students receiving instruction at an accelerated pace from off-campus as far away as Taiwan, China, and India. Lab experiments were adapted to include common household items and, on occasion, special arrangements for items that were available in foreign countries.

"While it may be a MacGyver-like approach to teaching, the students are getting the same hands-on skills and concepts they would in a campus lab," Poland said. "It has been really interesting to see how adjustable the students have been to try new things. Really, we're all learning together in this new educational environment. It has been a labor of love for me, and I'm sure that's true for my faculty

colleagues. I love teaching and helping students explore new areas.”

Ahmed, who is introducing first-year biomedical engineering students to basic design elements, adds, “We’re using technology, such as (Microsoft) Teams, to create interpersonal interactions that replicate the conventional classroom. In many ways, remote learning is better. This is a great opportunity for us to become even better teachers while taking a critical look at what we’re trying to accomplish in our courses.”

A product development studio for second-year engineering design students and a Lean Manufacturing course for upper-class mechanical engineering students have incorporated online tools to allow students to share ideas, work together and provide oral defenses for design projects—many times while being in the same classroom.

“Instead of spreading Post-It Notes across easels set up throughout class, students are sharing their laptop screens to exchange ideas and comments with classmates that are maybe six feet away or off-campus. We’re getting to the same educational environment, just through different and modern ways,” said Jay McCormack, associate professor of mechanical engineering.

His students are using in-class sessions, after-class readings, and online videos to learn valuable lessons about injection molding, machining, and best manufacturing practices, and applying those concepts to design a variety of products. In one case, student teams worked with professional machinists at Minnesota-based Protolabs to check if their project could be manufactured within cost requirements and technology capabilities.

McCormack marvels at how his classroom climate has remained collaborative and productive in the new hybrid/online models. He points out, “Our academic adaptability will serve students well into their future careers.”

Associate Professor of English Sarah Summers agrees. She is teaching 42 first-year students this fall in a Rhetoric and Composition course through four hybrid classes. Students come together twice each week to discuss assigned readings and have two other online sessions weekly. They can also meet online with Summers, if needed, to go over classroom assignments.

“The hybrid classes build on students’ existing digital skills, while also helping them develop new skills to succeed as students and team members in virtual environments. This is the world in which they are and will be living and working in the future,” she said.

(Courtesy: Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology)

2

How embracing universal design could make the world better after COVID-19



Elizabeth Ralston, the founder of the Seattle Cultural Accessibility Consortium, says she works with organizations on incorporating universal...

If there is one good thing that can come from this year, it might be that we have a chance to dramatically reset our way of doing things. One of the opportunities we have now as we look ahead to the future is in the realm of accessibility.

If you have never thought about accessibility before, you likely will in the future. Today, **26% of people have some kind of disability, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says, and that number is expected to increase with the aging of the baby boomer generation.**

As we look to reopen our institutions and businesses in the future, will we reopen them in a way that makes them more inclusive or go back to business as usual?

Elizabeth Ralston, the founder of the [Seattle Cultural Accessibility Consortium](#), an organization founded in 2018 to increase accessibility in the arts community, wants us to rebuild with inclusion in mind.

Her organization supports arts groups in becoming more accessible through professional development and training, workshops and a website with resources and technical assistance.

Accessibility is not just Ralston's professional mission, it's deeply personal as well.

A lifelong avid arts enthusiast and a person who is deaf, Ralston often found herself unable to fully participate in the arts she loved. Ralston reads lips and does not speak American Sign Language (ASL), so she needed captions for films and a script for plays to understand the dialogue. But captions were often not available and she would often be [scolded](#) by staff for using the pen light she needed to read scripts in the theater.

The pandemic posed additional challenges as a lip reader, Ralston said. "Out and about, it has been difficult [...] trying to communicate with people who have face coverings and having to explain why they need to remove their face covering (and doing social distancing at the same time)," she said.

One of the core principles of accessibility is that [universal design](#) is better for everyone. Universal design is the idea that making facilities, products and systems with a wide range of users in mind, helps not just people with disabilities, but all people. For example, curb cuts on sidewalks designed to help wheelchair users get around also benefit people with strollers and bike riders as well.

Instead of thinking of accessibility as something you do at the end of a planning process for an event or a facility, you should start with accessibility at the beginning.

One of Seattle Cultural Accessibility Consortium's most recent projects is the "[Opening Doors](#)" [podcast](#). The podcast, hosted by Ralston, addresses accessibility in the arts and beyond. Its first season focuses on the intersecting experiences of people of color with disabilities.

(Courtesy: Naomi Ishisaka *Seattle Times*)

Programme and Events



International conference on 'Designing for children' with focus on 'Play and Learn'



universal
design 12 - 13 May 2020
CONFERENCE Victoria Pavilion
Melbourne Showgrounds



CALL FOR PAPERS

The ASSETS conference is the premier forum for presenting research on the design, evaluation, use, and education related to computing for people with disabilities and older adults. We invite high-quality original submissions on topics relevant to computing and accessibility.

Submissions should present significant contributions to design, systems, tools, scientific understanding, methodology, or social issues. Relevant topics include (but are not limited to) new enabling technologies, studies of how technologies are used by people with disabilities, explorations of barriers to access, and evaluations of accessibility education methods. It is expected that, in most cases, a paper's research contributions will be validated through research activities conducted within the target user groups. Papers that include a technical contribution without being validated through research activities with representative users are unlikely to be accepted.



XXVII Compasso d'Oro: the visual project

The selection for the

ADI graphic project invites to present a graphic project proposal for the cycle of publications related to the XXIII Compasso d'Oro ADI: ADI Design Index 2020, ADI Design Index 2021, XXVII Compasso d'Oro.



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**The 17th International Conference
on Cooperative Design, Visualization and
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Oct. 25-28, 2020, Bangkok, Thailand

2020 GOOD DESIGN AWARDS OPEN FOR ENTRY

Good Design Australia is calling for Australian and international entries to the 2020 Good Design Awards. Through the annual Good Design Awards program, we recognise and celebrate excellence in cutting edge design and breakthrough innovation.

Design for Sustainable City

towards a harmonious relationship between human and the environment







The design of the Human City Design Award symbolizes and expresses the values required for future cities. To design a city as a venue of communication is to build an urban ecosystem in which humans and the environment coexist. To establish a platform that can create mutual prosperity, the design should incorporate the keywords, "Coexist", "Connect", "Sustainable", and "Platform". The shape of design of the Human City Design Award is the Mobius Strip, a line which is continuously connected and encloses empty spaces that could be filled with diversity. The shape of the strip, moving from left to right and from bottom to top, symbolizes the link between people and people, people and the society, people and the environment, people and nature. Furthermore, the Mobius Strip that creates one space while connecting separate fields symbolizes the city itself emphasizing the value of coexistence between humans. The square fields on the left and right sides are presented in the proportion of the Golden Ratio, symbolizing the role of design in establishing the sustainability of a city.

Call for entry for 2020 Human city award.



Let's reconcile with the future!

**Book Object / Book Object
International Biennial of the book of Artist and Design**

The call to participate in the new edition of [Object Book, the International Biennial of the Artist and Design Book is online](#) .

The competition is open to artists, designers, professionals and students.



The Spark Awards are “The One For All”
All Design–All Designers–Welcome!

Last date 31 November 2020



TWO WEEK COUNTDOWN TO FINAL DEADLINE

There are just two weeks left to get your entries in for the 2020 Good Design Awards. Give your team something to celebrate this year and get recognised for your best work!

START ENTRY



CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue on: Design contributions for the COVID-19 global emergency

With the patronage of:



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The 2019-20 coronavirus pandemic disease (COVID-19), appeared for the first time in Wuhan (Hubei Province, China) in late 2019 and rapidly spread in the rest of the world since the early months of 2020, has produced a significant and sadly dramatic impact in the life of all people. To date (April 22nd, 2020), over 2.550.000 people have shown symptoms and over 175.000 died for health and respiratory problems¹. While the entire humanity feels

¹ Source: Johns Hopkins University, Coronavirus Resource Center.
(<https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html>).

THE ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL BERKELEY UNDERGRADUATE PRIZE FOR ARCHITECTURAL DESIGN EXCELLENCE 2021

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Architects in Service
to the Community



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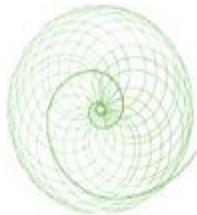
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Universal Design Summit 7

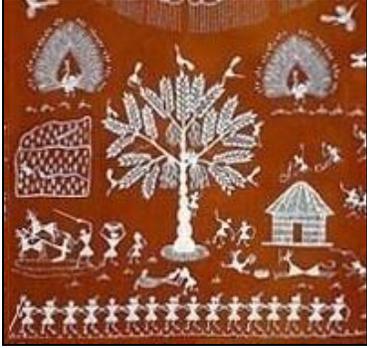
Universal Design Summit is a preeminent conference in North America, drawing experts in universal design from across the globe. UD Summit has traditionally focused on universal housing and inclusive communities. Event organizers are pleased to announce the expansion of UD Summit to include inclusive design in digital spaces. Our current plan is to offer simultaneous)



Universal Design Summit 7
Inclusion Fusion

May 12-14, 2021





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