

## **Shaping innovation for disability inclusion globally**

The Zero Project Conference 2024 reunites changemakers with and without disabilities from every corner of the world to discuss and replicate innovative solutions.

Vienna (Austria), February 19, 2023

From February 21-23, 2024, innovators, experts, and decision-makers from 100 countries will convene at the United Nations Office in Vienna, Austria, on the occasion of the Zero Project Conference 2024. This year, the annual conference focuses on the topics of Inclusive Education, and ICT, with sessions revolving around 77 innovative solutions from 43 countries that receive a Zero Project Award for their work in removing barriers for persons with disabilities.

### **Innovation, Impact, and Scalability**

The Zero Project is an initiative by the Austrian non-profit Essl Foundation. Every year, the Zero Project calls on its global network of 10,000 experts to nominate innovative and scalable solutions with proven impact. 523 nominations from 97 countries were received as part of the Zero Project Call for Nominations 2024 on Inclusive Education, and ICT.

A months' long thorough research process involved multiple rounds of fact-checking and peer-review by the Zero Project's research team and thematic experts with and without disabilities. This year's cohort of Zero Project Awardees 2024 emerged from this research process as the most promising innovations to advance the implementation of the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD).

### **Advancing the implementation of the UN CRPD**

The Zero Project Conference 2024 is a unique global meeting place where these outstanding innovative solutions for disability inclusion are showcased. With more than 1,000 participants, the conference attracts changemakers from every sector of society who seek collaboration for the implementation of the UN CRPD.

With the goal of replicating and advancing scalable solutions, innovators and experts delve into specific topics in more than 100 sessions. The topics range from leveraging gaming and social media for education, strategies during humanitarian crises, and innovative tech solutions to enhance sign language, to inclusive practices in higher education, and high-tech products or services expanding to global markets.

### **Global collaboration and targeted initiatives**

In targeted initiatives, the Zero Project advances innovation processes between local and global stakeholders through strategic partnerships. At the conference, the "Parliament Event" at the Austrian Parliament will see Members of Parliament pledge to support selected



Awardees in bringing their solutions to Austria. The Zero Project Technology Forum will feature pitches by more than 20 select innovations to a high-level audience of investors and multipliers, such as Microsoft, Google, UniCredit Bank Austria, The Seneca Trust, and the World Bank. The Zero Project Scaling Solutions Programme that is supported by Fundación Descúbreme, GIZ, and Atos, will present promising solutions that are ready to scale globally.

The Zero Project's strategic partners Fundación Descúbreme from Chile, the Indian organizations Youth4Jobs and EnableIndia, and SG Enable from Singapore will use the conference to build bridges between the global disability inclusion community and innovators from their respective world regions.

### **Live and accessible broadcast for all**

As an inclusive event, the Zero Project Conference sessions will be broadcast live and free-of-charge with English captioning and International Sign. The conference agenda and livestream links are available on [zerocon24.zeroproject.org](https://zerocon24.zeroproject.org).

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### **About the Zero Project**

The Zero Project's mission is working for a world with zero barriers. Worldwide, the Zero Project finds and shares solutions that improve the daily lives and legal rights of all persons with disabilities.

The Zero Project's approach is research-driven and aims to identify, curate, and share inclusive solutions, as intended and encouraged by Article 32 of the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). In order to achieve this objective, the Zero Project engages with a worldwide cross-sectoral network of innovators, decision-makers, and opinion leaders.

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