



Powering Inclusion: AI and Assistive Technology.

Call for evidence.



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As part of the AT2030 Programme, UNESCO's International Research Centre on Artificial Intelligence (IRCAI), UCL's Global Disability Innovation Hub (GDI Hub), the European Disability Forum (EDF), and the Jožef Stefan Institute (JSI) are seeking ideas to help build a research agenda on Artificial Intelligence (AI) for Assistive Technology (AT).

We are launching a [survey](#) to find out more about how AI is already being used to enhance assistive technologies.

AT (such as hearing aids, wheelchairs, communication aids, spectacles, prostheses and memory aids) can help people to live healthy, productive, independent, and dignified lives, and to participate fully in society. Yet according to the WHO, only 1 in 10 people in need have access to assistive products.

Advances in AI offer the potential to develop new types of AT as well as the possibility of gaining new insights into the scale and nature of need for ATs around the world.

We want to understand how AI is already being used to improve or create new ATs as well as ways that AI is helping to improve information about the need for ATs. From this, we hope to work together with experts and practitioners working in both AI and AT to build a set of Grand Challenges that, if addressed, will help to increase access to assistive products.

How you can contribute

We want to hear from anyone who has experience and expertise in this area - whether as an AT user, practitioner, technology developer, policymaker or advocate - to understand how AI is already being used in the sector.

We would like you to tell us about any applications you have used or developed in the following four categories:

1. **Communication.** Examples might include sign language recognition or captioning for deaf people or text-to-speech options for people with cognitive disabilities.
2. **Mobility.** Examples might include projects like Microsoft's SeeingAI project, which uses intelligent cameras to provide assistance for blind and partially sighted people.
3. **Improving information.** Surprisingly little is known about the scale and nature of need for ATs, examples in this category might include applications that use novel AI approaches to identify people that might be in need, or services to enhance the awareness, distribution and policies relating to AT different products.
4. **Other new and emerging technologies.** Any applications that do not fall under the above three categories.

We will be using the ideas collected to inform a roundtable event in November where we aim to establish a list of 'grand challenges' to drive forward innovation in this sector. The challenges will be published to mark the launch of IRCAl at the end of November.

We would like to invite proposers of some of the most striking ideas to attend the workshop in November. Please let us know if you would like to be considered for this.

You can access the survey at:

https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=_oivH5ipW0yTySEKEdmlwqmE-PyEfXVMuctSNGiOuyFUNkI4R0RKUFZiWFq0RTFYVTvJNTUwR1BOSy4u

The deadline for submissions is: 23:59 GMT on Thursday 8th October 2020

AT2030

The AT2030 programme tests 'what works' to improve access to life-changing Assistive Technology (AT) for all; investing £20m over 5 years to support solutions to scale. Led by Global Disability Innovation Hub and funded by UK aid, AT2030 will reach 9 million directly and 6 million more indirectly, driving a lifetime of potential. AT2030 is operational in 15 countries across Africa and Asia.

How we will use the information collected

We will use the information collected in this survey to:

- Produce a report, including a summary of the ideas submitted, which will be published and made publicly available.
- Inform investments on AT by the AT Impact Fund under the AT2030 Programme.
- Inform IRCAL's work programme after its official launch in November 2020.
- We would like to invite a small number of respondents to attend an online roundtable event in November. Please let us know if you would like to be considered for this and provide your contact details.
- We would like to share the findings of this survey with all those who have contributed ideas. If you would like to receive notification of the report when it is published, please provide your contact details at the end of the survey

The full privacy notice is available at: <https://www.at2030.org/research-agenda-on-ai-for-at.-privacy-note./>