

Disability Innovation Strategy 2021–2024

Global Disability
Innovation Hub



Global
Disability
Innovation
Hub





Photo credit: Angus Stewart

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Us, in a nutshell

GDI Hub is a research and practice centre driving disability innovation for a fairer world.

Operational in over 35 countries, we work with more than 70 partners, delivering projects across a portfolio of £50m. GDI Hub has reached 12 million people since its launch in 2016 by developing bold approaches, building innovative partnerships, and creating ecosystems to accelerate change.



Our team has the necessary combination of world-class expertise and an outcome-focused mindset advancing our agenda across 5 thematic areas: Assistive and Accessible Technology (AT), Inclusive Design, Inclusive Education Technology, Inclusive Climate and Crisis Resilience and Cultural Participation.

We believe disability innovation is more than a product, service or a policy. It is a way of thinking to shift the agendas of mainstream delivery partners towards fairer future societies and communities. We push the boundaries towards maximal inclusion.

Disability innovation is part of a bigger movement for disability justice, which must disrupt current ideas and practice to create new possibilities. We believe a fairer world is one without barriers to participation within an inclusive and environmentally sustainable society.

Founded by top academic institutions and the team responsible for the London 2012 Paralympic Legacy programme, GDI Hub brings a unique multidisciplinary perspective to the rapidly evolving field of Disability Innovation.

Attracting and growing T-shaped talent (people who have a depth of expertise and the breadth of experience to apply it). Our MSc Disability Design & Innovation attracts people with a depth of knowledge, and equips them with a broad innovation skill-set.



We are unique in the teams we grow, our ways of working, and our structure. GDI Hub is made up of the UCL-led, Academic Research Centre (ARC) and the associate non-profit Community Interest Company (CIC). Both are guided by an Advisory Board made up of disabled people with representatives from three continents; we drive new thinking together.

Transformative outcomes can be achieved by doing things differently. We bring together the coalitions that others haven't, to lead new thinking which can overcome intractable barriers to participation.

Disability Innovation – why is it important?

Exclusion results from a lack of inclusive thinking. When our cities, products and services are designed inclusively, fewer people face barriers to access and can simply live their lives and everyone benefits. Yet disabled people frequently face barriers to accessing education and health; or participation in cultural, social and community activities; and life can be made more difficult due to physical, digital and attitudinal barriers.

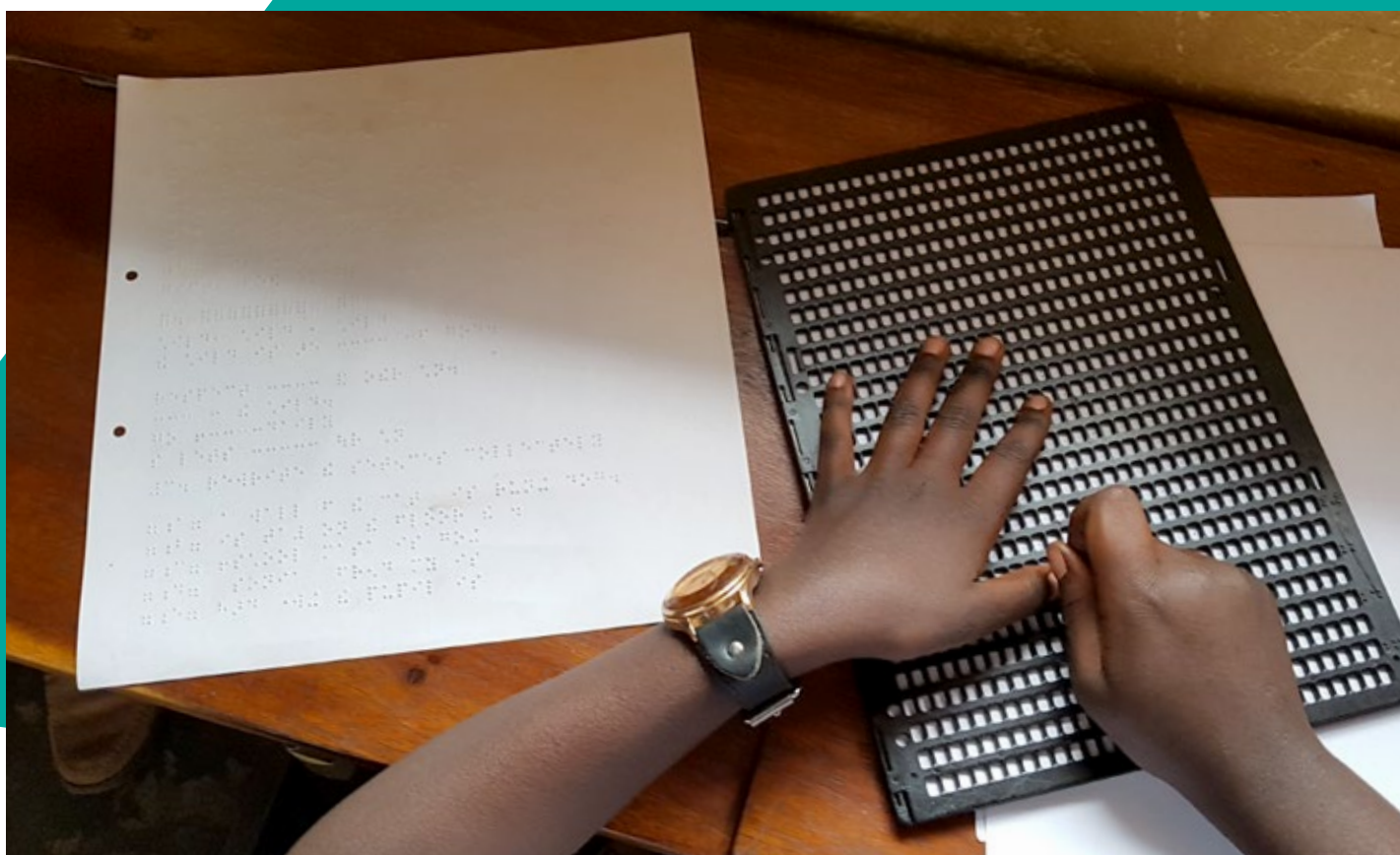
► **The focus on the problem of exclusion rather than the value of inclusion is an ongoing and problematic framing of disability.**

The World Report on Disability, 2011, estimated that these barriers affect over one billion people. Globally there is a clear link between disability and poverty with the majority of disabled people – 80% – living in the Global South. Such barriers also affect most of us as we age, or when we face temporary impairments. It's time to change how we do things. Many of these issues have been around for a long time, but there are solutions; new technology; improved systems of support; and co-designed interventions can help. It is precisely these challenges that GDI Hub sets out to address.

The importance of diversity in our society, and the value this gives to our culture, our ways of thinking and working, and the ability to drive new ideas and build back fairer must be better understood. Never has it been more important to

ensure the growing population of disabled people are fully able to participate, both in the global North and the global South.





Inclusion of disabled people in all aspects of society is a human right, enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities for more than a decade. However widespread discrimination, underfunding and lack of understanding leave many disabled people facing disadvantages across numerous aspects of life leading to financial injustice too. To meet our commitments in the Sustainable Development Goals we need to do better – and we can!

► **A more inclusive world is a more sustainable world. And it is possible.**

The numbers of people living with impairments increase during crisis, and disabled people are more likely to suffer the effects - as demonstrated during the recent COVID-19 pandemic. As the climate warms, the number and frequency of humanitarian disasters will escalate, increasing the number of people with impairments whilst simultaneously making the environment more difficult to navigate. Through listening and co-designing with the people most affected by these issues, we can forge the best solutions, for everyone. We believe a more inclusive world is a more sustainable world. And it is possible.

Our mission and vision for the future

Our Mission

GDI Hub is driving disability innovation for a fairer world

Our Vision

Our vision is for disability justice; we want a world without barriers to participation and with opportunity for all. We address intractable challenges by co-designing innovative solutions that are inclusive, accessible and better than before.

What we do

We have big IDEAS

We are world leading experts who develop and test new knowledge, providing the evidence that enables change.

We deliver IMPACT

We know and show how to make the world more disability inclusive by delivering real impact, demonstrating innovation in action and changing global conversations.

We build PARTNERSHIPS

Grounded in our founding partnership in East London, we lead disruptive collaborations at the global and local level which benefit the sector overall.

How we do it



Research:
creating knowledge and solutions



Innovation:
growing inclusive ecosystems



Programmes:
testing what works



Teaching:
learning and sharing knowledge



Advocacy:
evidence based outreach



► **Our vision is for disability justice; we want a world without barriers to participation and with opportunity for all.**



Our Big Ambitions by 2024

- 1** From our home in UCL East we will **grow the WHO's most impactful Collaborating Centre (on AT)**, becoming the 'go to' partner for disability innovation expertise around the world.
- 2** We will **Research-Teach-Translate**, solving complex, real world disability innovation problems with practice-ready evidence. Using the 'rinse, and repeat' cycle we'll help ourselves and others to get really good at this, making the translation of academic knowledge into practice easier and more commonplace.
- 3** We will build **inclusive innovation eco-systems** which provide access to new products and embed sustainability; our model will be renowned for its success and used by others.
- 4** We will design **100+ new homegrown technologies and tools** to support our mission and vision.
- 5** We will reach **30 million people** through our programmes to test what works, across at least 40 countries and all major continents.
- 6** We will **influence the policy and practice** of 100 governments and stakeholders.
- 7** We will reach **tens of millions** with our messages and partnerships through inclusive digital engagement and building a call to action of our movement so everyone has a way to get involved.
- 8** We will make hundreds of **interventions which will support companies** or organisations to make their practice more disability inclusive.
- 9** We will grow **our movement with a membership model** to support individuals and organisations across the globe to create new knowledge and transform lives; ensuring our regular Disability Innovation Summits, and Disability Innovation Day on the 3rd September (our birthday) continue to grow and reach millions.
- 10** We will **increase political will and commitment** to disability innovation as evidenced by growth in sector investment.

What we offer

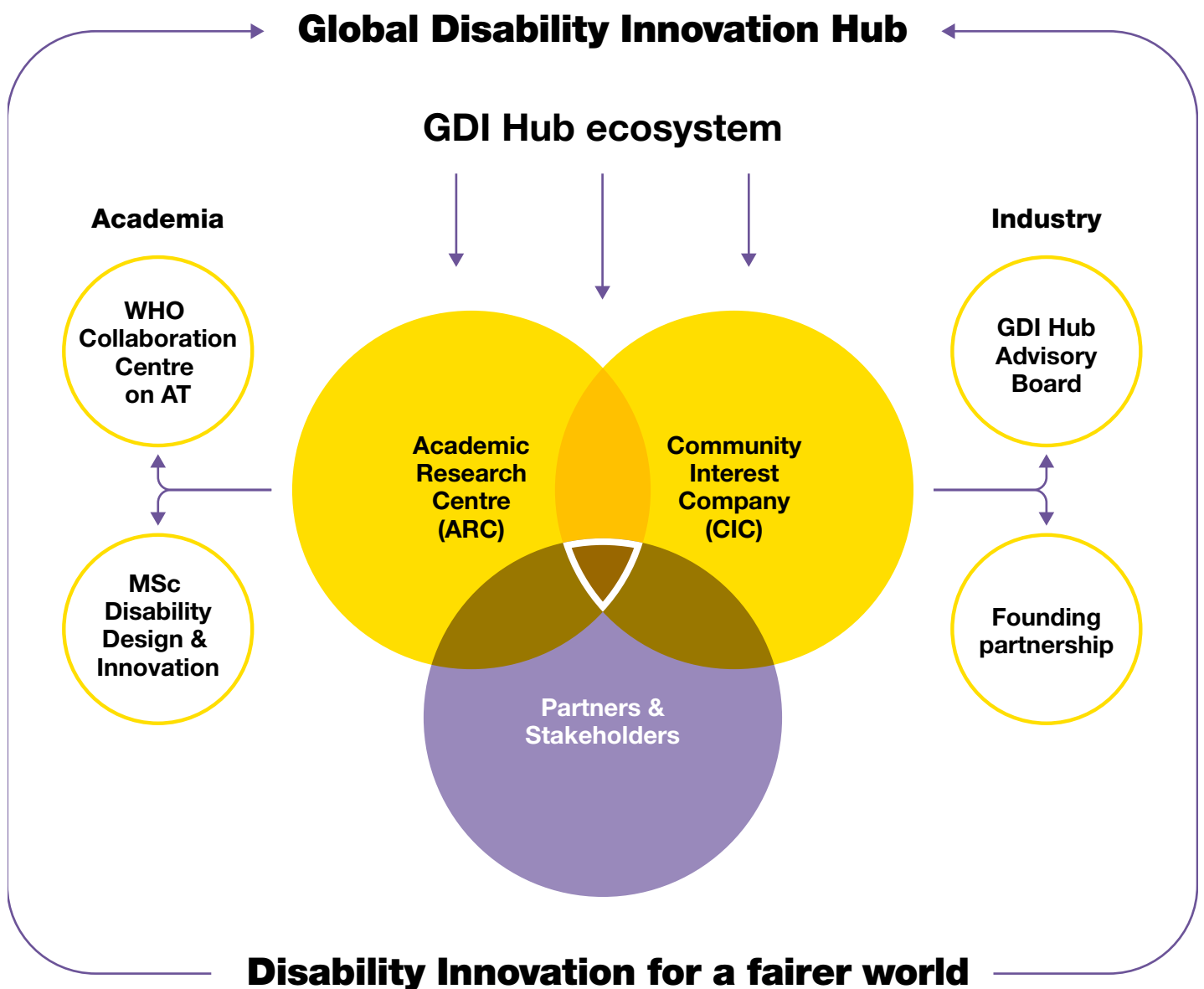
We offer the following services:

- ▶ **World leading research and development.** We offer world-class research, developing novel technologies, policies, products and service design. We can collect new, or reinvestigate existing data to inform innovative ways to meet needs.
- ▶ **Deep AT knowledge from our WHO Global Collaborating Centre on AT** – testing new ways of getting assistive technology to the 900 million people who need it around the world.
- ▶ **Delivery of major projects,** from mission-setting to coalition-building for big global challenges we work with institutional donors, academic partners, the private sector and NGOs to deliver impact and change
- ▶ **Technical Assistance;** to mainstream disability innovation, helping to make and deliver global commitments, and train and support staff.
- ▶ **MSc in Disability, Design and Innovation.** Driving a new generation of pioneers by teaching expertise in the first course of its kind; available in new and bespoke formats for organisations too.
- ▶ **Best in class inclusive design advice,** based on evidence, for products and cities.
- ▶ **Bespoke training and advice** across our core areas of expertise; Assistive Technology, Inclusive Design, Inclusive Education, Climate Resilience and Cultural Participation.
- ▶ **An Assistive Tech Impact Fund,** where new donors can invest in emerging markets and build the inclusive innovation ecosystem.
- ▶ **Inclusive innovation resources.** Providing open-source tools for start-ups and businesses.
- ▶ Investable approach to harnessing **AI for Disability Innovation.**
- ▶ Creative input to design and deliver **participatory projects.**
- ▶ **Access to our growing networks,** leading the movement for change.
- ▶ **Speakers and media contributions.** Sharing our expertise in disability innovation and it's potential for global change.

What makes up GDI Hub

GDI Hub is made of two core components, an Academic Research Centre based at UCL, and a Community Interest Company.

We work with more than 70 global partners and are now the first official Collaborating Centre for the WHO on AT. We firmly believe the magic is in the middle



Founding Partnership

The founding members of GDI Hub are;

- ▶ University College London (UCL);
- ▶ The Mayor of London (through the London Legacy Development Corporation, LLDC);
- ▶ London College of Fashion, University of the Arts London (LCF);
- ▶ Loughborough University London (LUL);
- ▶ V&A Museum;
- ▶ Sadler's Wells Theatre;
- ▶ Leonard Cheshire (LC);
- ▶ The Helen Hamlyn Centre for Design (HHCD) at the Royal College of Art
- ▶ and the local communities and businesses who helped to make the 2012 Paralympics a success by creating new models of disability innovation.



Advisory Board

GDI Hub has been led by an Advisory Board (selected from open application in 2016, plus stakeholders) since its inception. The board is made up of a majority of disabled people from three continents. The founding Chair was Lord Chris Holmes of Richmond, who is also a co-founder of GDI Hub CIC.

Academic Leadership/ Academic Board

GDI Hub engages with its founding academic partners through an Academic Board led by UCL. The Academic Board is chaired by the Academic Director of GDI Hub and each academic institute is represented by an Academic Associate Director. The Board has oversight of the MSc Disability Design and Innovation, and actively seeks the growth of the ARC, and broader ecosystem, through facilitating funding opportunities for research between partners.

CIC Directors

The CIC is governed by its Articles and is registered with Companies House UK as a social business since 2017. Its assets are locked to the pursuit of its purpose and the CIC is governed and managed by its Directors: Vicki Austin, Iain Mckinnon and Cathy Holloway, with the support of its members: Dr Paul Brickell, Steve Hailes and Ben Cole. Maria Kett and Lord Chris Holmes were also co-founders of GDI Hub. Annual accounts are audited and the Company is now VAT registered. Delegated authority for decisions is ultimately to a two thirds majority of Directors.

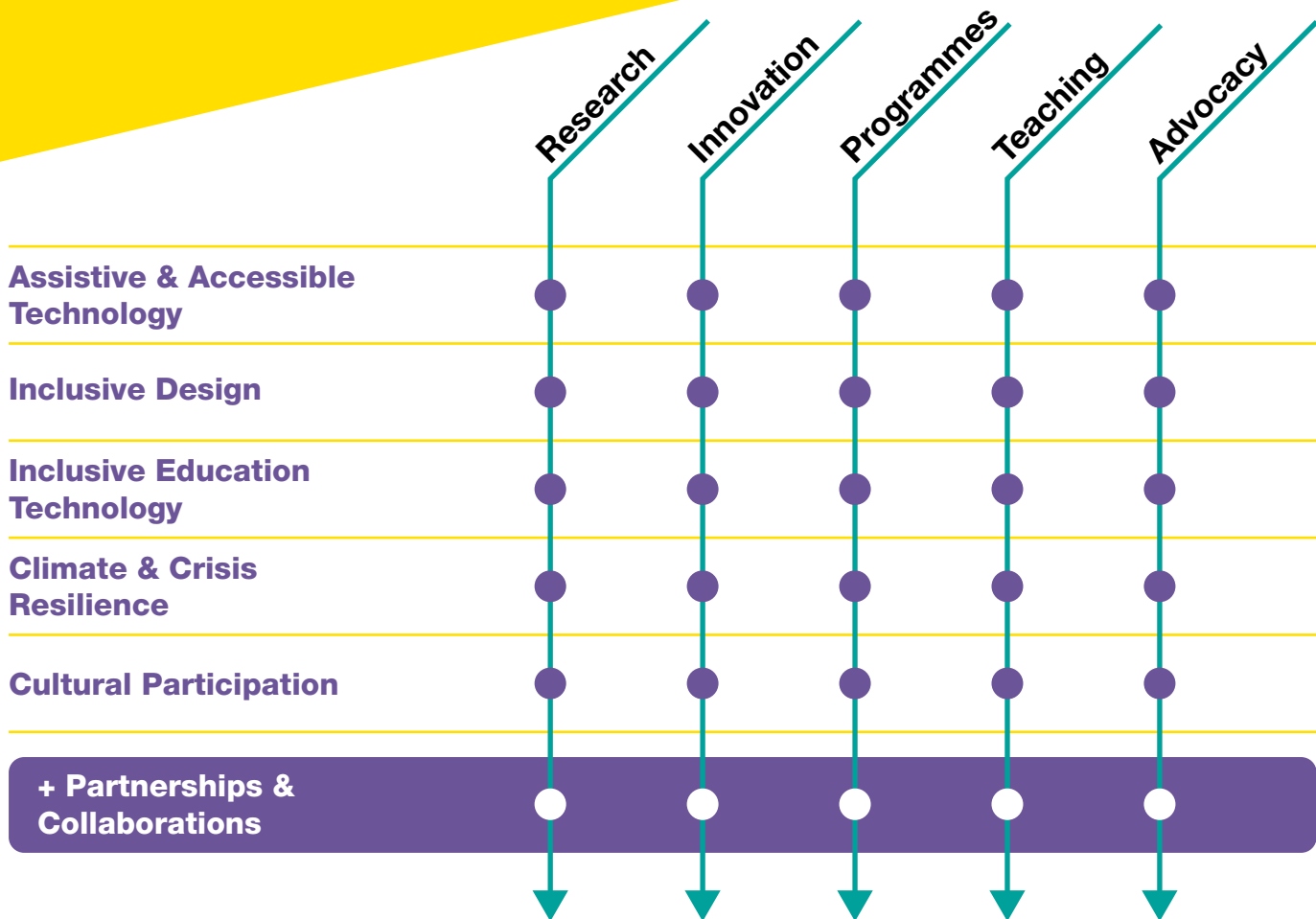
Programme leadership & process

GDI Hub implements a range of project types across the CIC and ARC, each supported by oversight from at least one Director, or supervisor, profiled as part of the 'GDI Hub Portfolio'. GDI projects are delivered under a range of different mechanisms, including institutional grants, commercial service agreements, consultancy, research grants, PhD funding and etc. New projects may be generated in a variety of ways but always enter GDI Hub's pipeline to be aligned to our strategic priorities; resources; to be reviewed by the appropriate lead; and be allocated operational oversight responsibility. Once projects are live, each is managed in accordance with the requirements of its delivery, selectively with dedicated project management support against the operating procedures of GDI Hub.

Our researchers and managers work together helping us learn how to best Research-Teach-Translate across our programmes.

How We Work

GDI Hub uniquely harnesses the creativity and dynamism of community-led solutions to shape mainstream programming; bringing the power of global actors behind impact-led interventions. We do this across our five domains of activity and five themes of intervention.



Disability Innovation for a fairer world

Disability innovation: refers to the process of addressing entrenched disability challenges by co-designing solutions with communities, and sharing knowledge to actively promote social justice.

Disability Innovations: are the solutions – policy, practice, services or technology – that result from this process. To be successful they must be useful and used, and better than before

Driving Inclusive Innovation from our home in east London

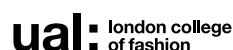
GDI Hub is 'East London' through and through. Formed on Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park and rooted in our founding partnerships with local communities and stakeholders, as we open our new Lab in the Future Living Institute at UCL East we will continue to seek creative ways to open up access to our work and learning through local participation.

Collaborating with our vibrant partnership, GDI hub will fan the sparks of innovation that keep the legacy of 2012 burning. We know that East London is the destination of choice to test disability innovation in practice, and we will make this a priority.



Working alongside our partners on the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park (CEPO) – including LLDC, Loughborough University London, UCL, Plexal, Disability Rights UK, Scope, Barclays Eagle Labs, British Council, Ford Mobility, London College of Fashion and Here East – GDI Hub will focus on growing the local disability innovation ecosystem as a testbed of new ideas for inclusive products, diverse designers and accessible technology.

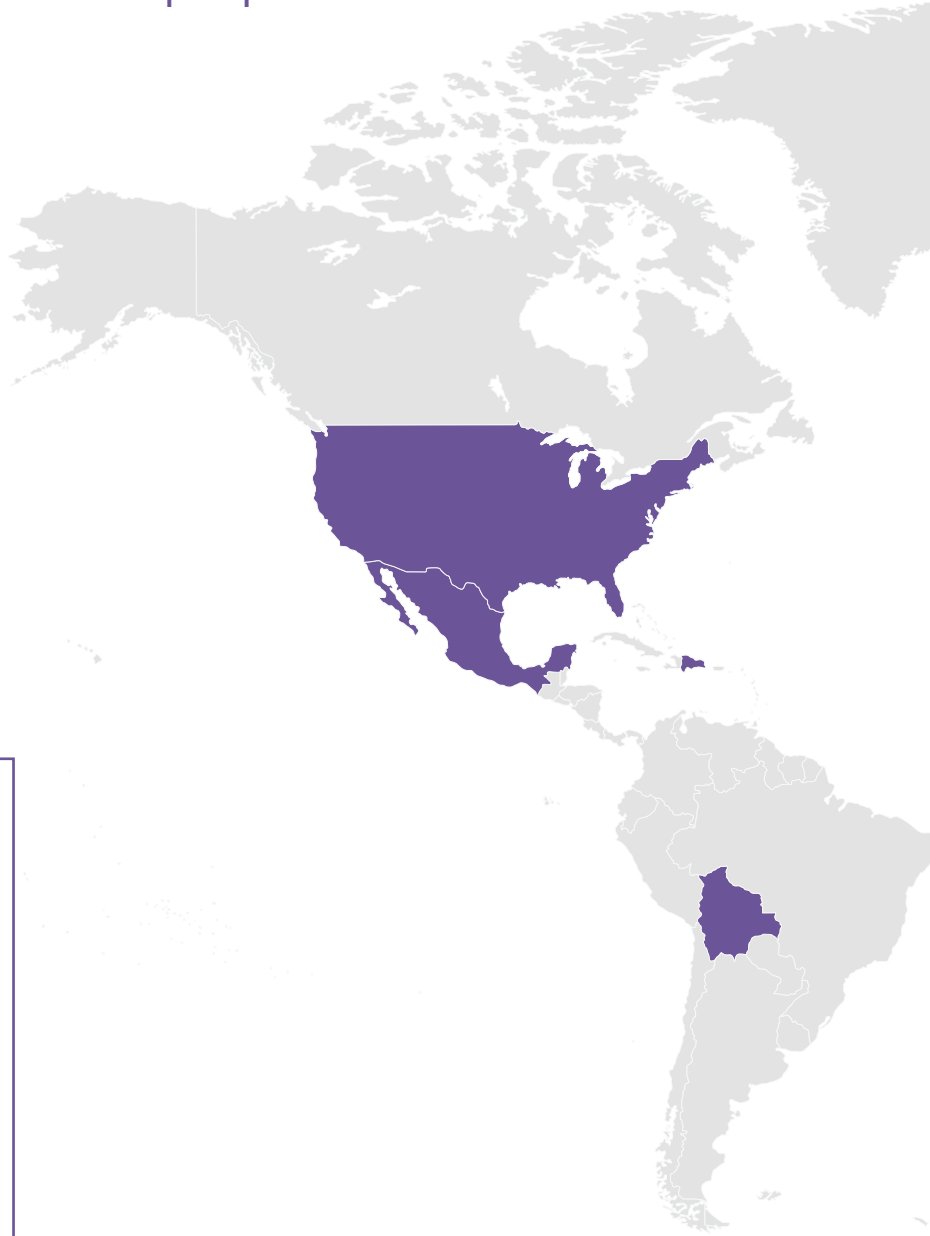
Partnering with the QEOP Good Growth Hub, we will help to co-design programmes which attract talented disabled people and support employers to make their workplaces more inclusive and welcoming for disabled employees. We are particularly keen to explore how we can encourage more employers in the creative and tech sectors to understand the clear business benefits of embracing diversity, and to build a programme which helps them to draw upon the huge pool of untapped talent disabled people represent.



Our global approach

We currently work directly with 70 global partners – from the community to the global level – and have a track record of reaching 12 million people across 35 countries.

Never has there been a more important time to address the needs of disabled and older people globally as we look to build back fairer from the COVID-19 pandemic and address the economic and social crisis that has resulted. GDI Hub will continue to build transformative partnerships and networks – using collaborative delivery and thinking to maximise outputs, share learnings and find new ways to overcome barriers.

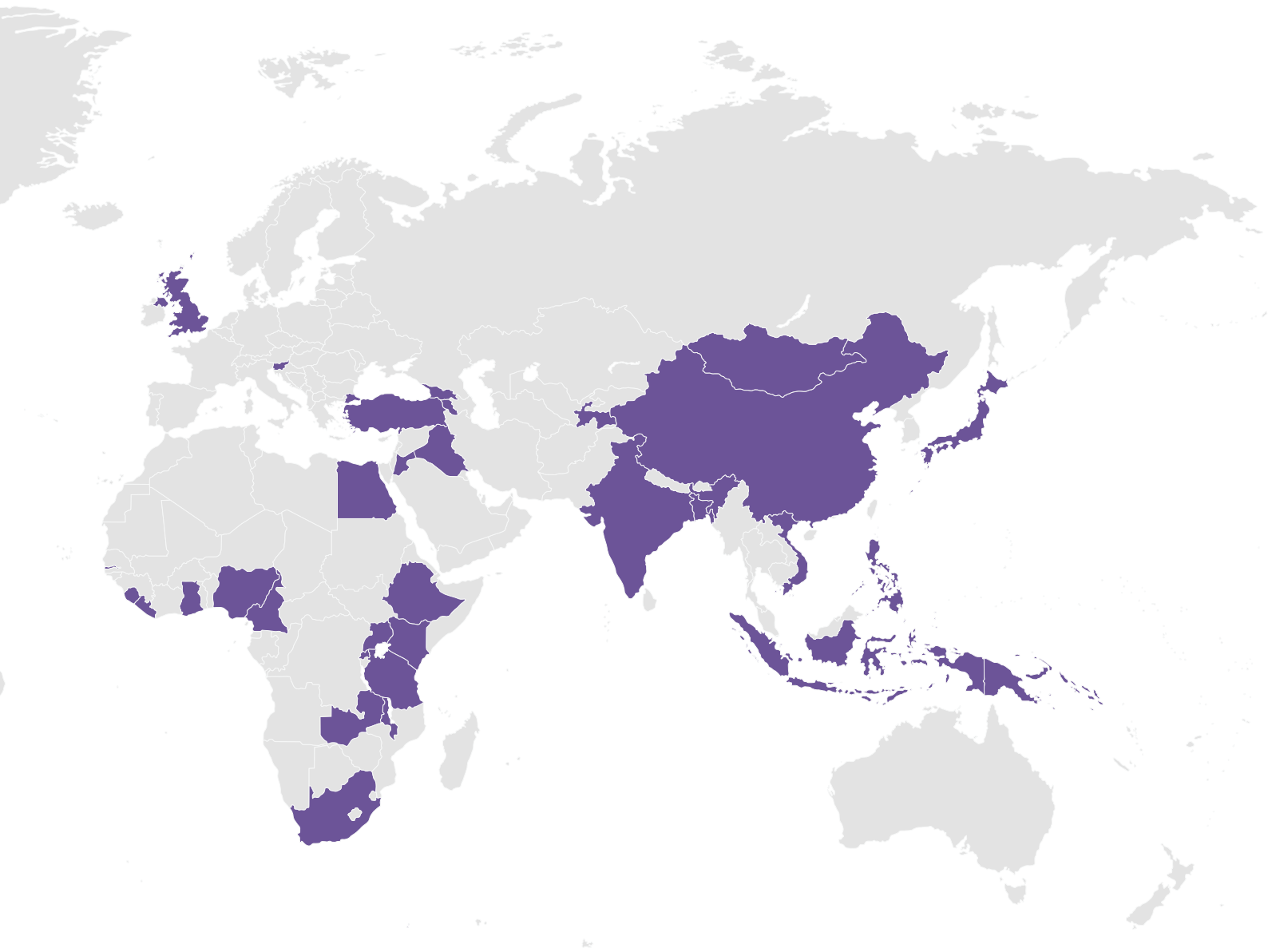


In March 2021, GDI Hub at UCL became the WHO's first Official Global Collaboration Centre Assistive Technology. Through this partnership we will support the work of the WHO through improving access to assistive products and services, driving advances in digital technology and artificial intelligence, and further developing and implementing a one-stop shop model of assistive products service provision.



Countries we currently work in

Armenia	Egypt
Bangladesh	Ethiopia
Bolivia	The Gambia
Cameroon	Georgia
China	Ghana
Dominican Republic	India



Indonesia

Iraq

Japan

Jordan

Kenya

Liberia

Malawi

Mexico

Mongolia

Nigeria

Papua New Guinea

Philippines

Rwanda

Sierra Leone

Slovenia

South Africa

Tajikistan

Tanzania

Turkey

Uganda

United Kingdom

USA

Vietnam

Zambia

What's coming down the line?

Innovation means finding ways of doing things that are better than before. To innovate effectively is to try something new, measure that impact, and to communicate findings openly. It's perfectly alright to fail, and we believe in sharing that learning, regardless of outcome. It's the pivoting and validating models that work always in pursuit of problem solving which gets us to solutions that can have a real impact. The technology revolution provides opportunities for scalability and access like never before. We need to harness this for good.

GDI Hub is developing novel solutions to problems faced by disabled people. New materials, sensors and interaction methods are being designed into new products and services. We are commercialising this homegrown technology whilst developing investment vehicles to ensure all disability innovations can scale to improve lives. We use our knowledge to shape global policy; corporate practice; investment strategies; cultural norms and individual behaviour. We are actively monitoring how our investments affect life outcomes whilst scoping the disability landscape. It's about more than tangible products; we believe that disability innovation can change lives by forging new methods of participation, developing new policy approaches, and working with the poorest communities to harness the value of innovation.

At GDI Hub we know that when a city or country adopts a disability-inclusive approach it is better for everyone and we are building evidence to support this.

Artificial Intelligence could be the future of AT

Artificial Intelligence (AI) has much to offer and is enabling many AT products to start evolving, with speech-to-text software (dictation) being a fitting example. AI has the potential to fill service gaps - such as the chronic lack of sign language interpreters in low-income countries - and has the potential to help people with speech impairments be more easily understood. We are developing the next generation of AI-powered assistive and accessible technologies to help accelerate disability innovation; building and deploying new AI solutions to address AT, as well as the use of mainstream digital technologies. GDI Hub is also developing use cases for AI to enhance the lives of disabled people to showcase its wider impacts for all. We have partnered with the UNESCO Centre for AI to co-develop AT Watch, a web-platform where people will be able to monitor trends in AT media and research. In this collaboration, we are also concerned with fairness and ethics in AI to make it less biased and in turn, contribute to inclusive disability innovation.

A global approach to Inclusive Design can help Build Back Fairer

When London hosted the most successful Paralympics ever in 2012, with more athletes from more countries than ever before; more TV coverage; and sold out venues, Paralympians became global heroes for the first time. But London also hosted the most accessible Olympic Games ever, in a part of the city (East London) which was co-designed to world leading Inclusive Design Standards including homes, parklands, new buildings and public realm. These standards were then adopted city, then nation-wide.

GDI Hub is now applying its expertise to complex global projects, building local capacity as we do. In six initial cities - from Mongolia to India – we are sharing our learning with multilateral agencies and local partners who are investing in regions which are developing fast. As we ‘build back fairer’ from Covid, we also want to drive more inclusive development that doesn’t have to cost the earth. Literally. Inclusive cities can be sustainable too.



Climate Justice and Disability Justice are interlinked

COVID-19 demonstrated the interlinked issues of sustainability and disability inclusion. Disabled people were disproportionately disadvantaged during the pandemic and prevalence of impairment also increases during times of humanitarian disaster. Distributed manufacturing is key to ensuring products and services are available all over the globe (for instance PPE); it can build local economies and makes products more contextually acceptable.

The world has also been forced to take notice of the environmental impact of inadequate product life cycles - which is a burden AT users know very well. Locally based, quality production approaches are being built now, and we think this is a real opportunity. Community based solutions are emerging, but these solutions are not often scaled, and are often not inclusive of disabled peoples’ needs. We are working on local production ecosystems that can change that.

It is time for technology to support inclusive education for all

Funded by the Snowdon Trust, GDI Hub CIC delivers an International Masters Scholarship programme providing exceptional disabled students with up to £30,000 towards their studies. The programme is targeted towards the next generation of disabled leaders and includes the development of a Disabled Leaders' Digital and Engagement Network.

Beyond our own teaching, GDI Hub is creating a suite of technologies, including low-cost coding toolkits and devices to explore and create data and visualisations. Accessible technology is now increasingly low cost and mainstream, and digital access is a human right. With the need revealed by COVID, now is the time to really focus on Educational Technology (Ed Tech) for disability inclusion.

Para Sport against Stigma can change the world, again

Tokyo games will not only be a huge celebration of Paralympic sport, and a global outpouring of emotion, but it will also launch an unprecedented campaign for disability justice for the 15% that have been left behind. GDI Hub is one of ten global organisations leading this work which, will seek to harness commitment for disability inclusion and innovation with a profile never before seen to drive change through to Paris 2024. We know what a difference sport can make and through our work with Loughborough University and International Paralympic Committee (IPC) we will be testing and amplifying the impact of para sport against stigma over the coming years.

Justice, is the thing

To us, disability justice means equal participation for all, and in all aspects of society: work; learning; politics; frivolous activity and play; community organising; and family life. These freedoms are rights for all, and should be practical realities. Often we get caught in the loop of making the economic case for inclusion – this can be helpful, but it isn't our view of the end game. Parity of participation, justice as we understand it, means everyone has the right to live the lives they value; to be seen and respected for who they are, to be represented by people that understand them, and to receive their fair share of the resources needed to live a good life. That's why we focus on building active communities and participation by those whose voice is often the last to be heard.

Strengthening systems, and building active communities, is where we can make a difference

We think that change results from a mixture of active communities demanding it, and systems shifting to accommodate it. Our work is increasingly recognising this need to support systemic change; building capacity, providing tools and assistance, and raising political will. The work we are doing on AT2030 is just the start and is guided by our GDI Hub model of disability mainstreaming.



Defining our themes of investigation

Assistive and Accessible Technology

Assistive Technology is broadly defined as any equipment, software or hardware (often their combination) which enhances the ability of people with disabilities to perform daily tasks and to take part in a wide range of activities. Another similar term is Accessible Technology which aims to offer personalised experiences to meet the different needs of disabled people.

Globally, almost 900 million people lack access to the technology they need, due to high costs and/or a lack of awareness, availability, personnel, and policy. Without assistive and accessible technology, disabled people are often excluded from employment and their communities; there is a pressing need for change if we are to meet our Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) commitments. Disability Interactions is our challenge-based approach to the creation of new emerging technology-driven solutions (e.g. artificial intelligence) to enhance the ability to earn livelihoods, and to participate in all aspects of society.

Inclusive Design

Inclusive design can help all human beings experience the world around them in a fair and equal way; putting them at the heart of the design process. It considers the widest possible range of end users including; disabled people, older people and people from diverse backgrounds. It anticipates different needs and wants. It is not reactionary, it does not need to be. It is not an add-on or an overlay or a 'special' provision. It is integrated and often invisible, good design. The methodology, approach and processes we created and used successfully to deliver inclusive infrastructure developments in east London we now share through teaching and our work on development projects around the world.

Inclusive Technology for Education and Skills

Education is a resource which can transform lives, raise aspirations and build futures. We believe everyone has the right to learning that is inclusive, fair and life enhancing; and that technology has the potential to improve how children and adults interact with education throughout their lives. We will support this through our research into accessible education technology; our practice in East London and beyond; and through our teaching, including our own MSc.

As accessible EdTech becomes more disruptive so new outcomes are possible. Too many EdTech solutions focus on the product, or the individual learner, and forget that support for teachers, parents and Governments are essential too. So we will work hard to ensure it is affordable; acceptable to users; of high enough quality; and provided within the systems that make it work, in the classroom and at home. GDI Hub is developing a suite of new technologies to aid inclusive learning - these range from tactile tools to cultural exploration kits and working with partners to identify opportunities for leapfrog technologies to transform the learning experience.

Inclusive Climate and Crisis Resilience

COVID-19 has taught us that those who are most affected by crisis are those who are already struggling in a system stacked against them. Similarly, we know that disabled people – particularly those experiencing injustice in low resource settings – don't always have the luxury of seeing disability justice and climate justice as separate things. When floods hit, disabled people fare worst; when crops fail, the poorest struggle the most; when disasters strike, those least resilient are hit hardest, unable to migrate to avoid the impacts. Yet there has been little focus around disability in inclusive climate response and crisis resilience, and even less on the role technology could play. We believe that technology has the potential to support inclusive climate justice and community-based

resilience models that can help everyone, even those most marginalised in the community. As we 'build back fairer' we also have the chance to design the kind of world we want to see in the UK and beyond, we will work with partners to bring our disability innovation thinking to this space.

Cultural Participation

Culture is how humans make sense of the world around them; holding a mirror up to humanity and allowing us to see ourselves and others through a myriad of perspectives. Culture can both celebrate and comment; encourage empathy and action; provide entertainment and escapism; yet also provide meaningful connection and engagement. Culture has always been intrinsic to humanity, from cave paintings and fire ceremonies, to iPads and stadium events. Put simply, it is where we can shift both hearts and minds. Culture has a specific role to play in redefining of the role of disabled people in relation to participation, the reduction of stigma and the portrayal of realistic and complex narratives (rather than purely simplistic 'positive' ones). We believe that disabled people should be fully involved in all aspects of the creative sector and cultural processes, as artists, designers, developers and not purely as participants. Participation in cultural activity has proved beneficial for community building and social cohesion – from art to sport, it is at the heart of how change happens.

Our model for mainstreaming Disability Justice

London 2012 was a unique opportunity for disability inclusion, and a chance to drive forward tangible change with a clear goal and end point. It taught us many things about ‘what works’. GDI Hub has worked with London 2012 partners to retrospectively frame the

model used, and has begun to apply this model to our other work, building up our evidence base and course correcting as we go. One thing we know for sure, is that this model isn’t linear; its dynamic and messy. But we think these steps are a really good start for driving change.



Initial hypothesis for the Disability Justice Model, will be published in final form later in 2021.

Mission setting

One of the key things our research has taught us already, is to look deeply at who sets the mission. Initial assumptions were that this started with the 2012 bid, and the public sector – a commonly held assumption on mission-setting. But, further investigation shows that the communities of disabled people

and east Londoners influenced that mission setting so much, that really the mission was set by them. This tallies with the GDI Hub approach – the people most affected by something, know at least part of the answer. Always.

Values that inform our approach

GDI Hub's work and outputs are grounded in the following principles;

We are mission-driven

We are focused on creating a vision for disability innovation which others can strive to achieve alongside us.

We build collaboration

We work openly and globally (alongside organisations, innovators and practitioners) to amplify impact and create a disability innovation movement capable of changing lives.

We value inclusion

We believe in the value of diverse input, from our own teams, global partners, collaborators and networks.

We are solutions-focused

We source tangible outputs and approaches, finding solutions by exploring new perspectives and partnerships.

We are bold

We act as a catalyst, disrupting norms to accelerate change. We are proud to be different, prepared to take risks and trial new approaches.

We are agile

We are agile and evolving, frugal and lean.

We are evidence-led

We are experts but continue to learn every day.

We work with integrity

Led by our values we share our learning to benefit others.

GDI Hub supports the core values of the Paralympic movement – courage, determination, inspiration and equality – and seeks to design our activities in support of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our progress so far

2016

- Founding partnership hosts ‘pop up’ GDI Hub to test the model
- Building on London 2012 Paralympics Games Legacy, our founding partnership formed, accelerated with seed funding from the Mayor of London’s team at the London Legacy Development Corporation
- GDI Hub launched at Rio Paralympic Games
- Advisory Board and founding Chair appointed

- GDI Hub Community Interest Company (CIC) incorporated as a social business
- GDI Hub Academic Research Centre finds its home at UCL, within the Computer Science Department in the Faculty of Engineering

2018

- Launched the world’s first MSc in Disability Design and Innovation in collaboration with UCL, Loughborough University, and University of the Arts London, offering scholarships for disabled students
- Our team expanded across our University partners and our CIC
- Research grants start to come in: pilot of wheelchair sensor mapping of Delhi in India; EPSRC funding for prosthetics in Uganda and Jordan; H2020 funding for smart wheelchairs in Europe
- Scoping Report on Assistive Technology informs design of a major strategic programme, produced by GDI Hub alongside WHO GATE, Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI) and Motivation. Governments of UK and Kenya host first Global Disability Summit at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park, and launch our AT2030 programme as a major commitment

2017

- First Disability Innovation Summit held alongside the World Para Athletics Championships and National Paralympic Day Liberty (Disability Arts) Festival at Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park - successfully brings new stakeholders together and setting a new agenda for Disability Innovation
- Enable makeathon co-hosted with the International Committee of the Red Cross, supporting start-up businesses to get new ideas to market
- GDI Hub contributes to the GReAT summit in Geneva, and supports the consultation for the WHO Global Report on Assistive Technology

- AT2030 becomes GDI Hub's first £10m programme designed to find out 'what works' to get AT to the £900m+ people that need it around the world.
- We become a founding partner of ATscale, the global partnership on AT

2019

- MSc Disability Design and Innovation is a success with students publishing research, applications doubling and scholarships continuing
- Academic excellence of our core team in human-computer interaction expands to include: Artificial Intelligence and Robotics; Prosthetics; Seating and Movement Disorders; Physiological Computing; Play, Creativity and Exploration and Future Technology in Low Resourced Settings. These are applied to create novel interfaces and technology for disabled people alongside theoretical advances
- Alongside Snowdon Trust we established a network of young disabled leaders in the UK
- Innovate Now, Africa's first Assistive Technology accelerator, is launched in Kenya
- Supported Motivation to test a new system for made-to-measure wheelchairs in Kenya exploring how 3D printing could augment current wheelchair service provision models
- Product Narratives are developed, setting out what we know about the state of the global market for individual AT products and how to address the barriers to access
- Technical expertise and academic inputs (as well as funding) are provided to key landscaping documents for the AT sector
- Disability Interactions Manifesto is launched setting a new standard in access
- AT2030 funding from UK Aid is doubled to £20m following 'excellent early progress'
- GDI Hub contributes several papers to the GReAT summit in Geneva, and gives presentations to the WHO assembled meeting.
- Formal partnerships are developed with Japanese, Indian and Kenyan collaborators
- East London Inclusive Enterprise Zone (ELIEZ) builds on the Paralympic Legacy by pioneering products and services to create a more inclusive and prosperous society in and around the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park
- Provided technical support to deliver the GSMA Mobile Disability Gap report
- Provided technical support to deliver the Product Narratives which set the global agenda for the provision of wheelchairs and hearing aids
- Our portfolio of Inclusive Design projects and partners around the world, begins to grow

2020

- Significant publication record and growth in the disability innovation discourse
- Led consortium on innovation Background Papers to World Report on Assistive Technology
- Academic excellence in humanitarianism and education is added to our research centre
- COVID-19 pivots allow for the launch of www.innovationaction.org, and work on local production and local manufacturing solutions, building on AT learnings
- Partnered with UNESCO World Centre for AI to lead a challenge on disability innovation
- MSc Disability Design and Innovation grows and receives “excellent” review from external examiners
- Launched the Assistive Tech Impact Fund alongside Brink to invest in AT businesses in Africa
- Launched Disability Innovation Live series
- Alongside WHO and CHAI, we develop the Country Capacity Assessment Tool, working with governments in 10 countries across Africa, Asia and South America to identify gaps in policy, procurement and provision and give an overarching view on AT landscapes
- Receive A+ status from FCDO Annual Review for our AT2030 programme for financial year 2019/20

- Provided technical support to deliver the Product Narratives which set the global agenda for the provision of eyeglasses, prosthetics, wheelchairs, hearing aids and digital assistive technology
- GDI Hub portfolio value now stands at £50m and we are operational in 35 countries

2021

- Begin working with significant international clients including the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, to mainstream disability innovation
- Announce our founding Assistive Tech Impact Fund investments and open our global call for applicants
- Our AT2030 programme supports WHO Assistive Products Specifications Guidebook, providing minimum quality requirements for manufacturing 26 prioritised assistive products
- GDI Hub becomes the world's first WHO Global Collaborating Centre on Assistive Technology
- Our reach is now 12 million since our launch in 2016



Our key activities for the next 3 years

Research

- ▶ Drive global impact through the WHO Collaborating Centre on AT
- ▶ Secure funding for and deliver world leading academic research projects related to the themes of Disability Innovation
- ▶ Build our research-test-teach model that turns new knowledge into evidence-based practice
- ▶ Grow our academic partnership and the disability innovation research community and discourse
- ▶ Drive and measure 'impact' from our research
- ▶ Build collaboration and capacity with academic centres in the Global South

Teach

- ▶ Grow a world leading Masters programme and new content in other programmes
- ▶ Develop innovative and creative accessible delivery mechanisms for our taught content, including some open and some contextually relevant content for different settings
- ▶ Build the student alumni community and disabled leaders network
- ▶ Secure scholarships and provide open access content to improve reach
- ▶ Share our learning with partnerships through offering our services as consultancy

- ▶ Deliver an outreach and engagement programme when our new lab space opens at UCL East in 2022

Innovate

- ▶ Invent and accelerate home-grown innovations - new tools, technologies and techniques - to achieve a fairer world
- ▶ Build inclusive ecosystems in the UK (East London), Africa and Asia
- ▶ Build our capacity in South America
- ▶ Grow the Assistive Tech Impact Fund beyond its pilot phase
- ▶ Build to and from the value added on non-disability related work (e.g. distributed manufacturing on COVID-19 solutions)
- ▶ Develop a play book of inclusive innovation tools and materials open to all

Programmes (and contracts) to test what works

- ▶ Be the partner of choice on disability innovation
- ▶ Seek funding for large donor-funded programmes to test 'what works'
- ▶ Build innovative coalitions to deliver and build capacity in the sector
- ▶ Provide best-in-class consultancy services to partners on disability innovation
- ▶ Diversify our portfolio of clients to build our sustainable future
- ▶ Robust impact measurement and delivery



Advocate

- ▶ Thought leadership - advocating for policy based on evidence
- ▶ Raising the profile of, and investment into, disability innovation
- ▶ Fundraising for our work
- ▶ Demonstrable impact on partners' delivery
- ▶ Build the global movement through events, social media and membership
- ▶ Build a global network of inclusive design practitioners, delivering world-class, globally relevant and locally adapted, inclusive design expertise and build capacity for more inclusive environments

Internal – Setting up for success

To make our commitments a reality we need strong organisational capacity. Having grown fast, we have now consolidated our approach to enable scale. Over the next three years we will:

- ▶ Refine our internal processes and systems, and governance for efficiency, effectiveness and ease
- ▶ Strengthen our organisational knowledge base and institutional memory
- ▶ Build our capacity to engage with 'associate' staff and academics in 'the GDI way'
- ▶ Grow a membership model and networks, supporting the priorities in this strategy
- ▶ Build funding sustainability and develop the business
- ▶ Strengthen our impact reporting; beyond AT2030
- ▶ Refresh Advisory Board membership

How this document is intended to be used

This is the overarching strategy for GDI Hub and sets the direction, scope and scale of ambition. What we can actually achieve will depend on the resources we are able to garner to support our efforts. Each organisation which is a part of GDI Hub will be asked to produce a short operational plan, with an annual progress statement toward the ambitions and activities in this document. This will include the CIC and ARC. Annually progress will be reported to our board and shared in an impact report.

Join us

We are building the disability innovation movement globally - bringing together experts, academics, entrepreneurs, business, DPO's, governments, charities, and individuals to build a fairer world.

Visit **www.disabilityinnovation.com** to get involved.



www.disabilityinnovation.com

Please contact us if you would like to receive this information in a different accessible format