

The EIDD Stockholm Declaration©

“Good design enables, bad design disables”

Introduction

Soon after its establishment in 1993, the European Institute for Design and Disability (EIDD) developed the mission statement: “Enhancing the quality of life through Design for All”.

After ten years as the European platform on Design for All, involving the development of external relations and an internal structure – national member organisations, corporate members and individual members now in sixteen European countries – EIDD believes that the time has come to issue a Design for All Declaration.

Design for All has roots both in Scandinavian functionalism in the 1950s and in ergonomic design from the 1960s. There is also a socio-political background in Scandinavian welfare policies, which in Sweden in the late 1960s gave birth to the concept of “A society for all” referring primarily to accessibility. This ideological thinking was streamlined into the United Nations Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, adopted by the UN General Assembly in December 1993. The focus of the UN Standard Rules on accessibility in a clear equality context has inspired the development of the Design for All philosophy, which became a generally accepted concept in EIDD at its Annual General Meeting in Barcelona in 1995.

Comparable concepts have developed in parallel in other parts of the world. The Americans with Disabilities Act contributed to the evolution of Universal Design, while Inclusive Design has gained ground in the UK.

Today, Planning and Design for All are being recognised increasingly as necessary elements in pro-active strategies for sustainable development.

The European Institute for Design and Disability, on the occasion of its Annual General Meeting in Stockholm on 9 May 2004, therefore adopts the following Declaration:

Across Europe, human diversity in age, culture and ability is greater than ever. We now survive illness and injury and live with disability as never before. Although today’s world is a complex place, it is one of our own making, one in which we therefore have the possibility – and the responsibility – to base our designs on the principle of inclusion.

Design for All is design for human diversity, social inclusion and equality. This holistic and innovative approach constitutes a creative and ethical challenge for all planners, designers, entrepreneurs, administrators and political leaders.

Design for All aims to enable all people to have equal opportunities to participate in every aspect of society. To achieve this, the built environment, everyday objects, services, culture and information – in short, everything that is designed and made by people to be used by people – must be accessible, convenient for everyone in society to use and responsive to evolving human diversity.

The practice of Design for All makes conscious use of the analysis of human needs and aspirations and requires the involvement of end users at every stage in the design process.

The European Institute for Design and Disability therefore calls on the European institutions, national, regional and local governments and professionals, businesses and social actors to take all appropriate measures to implement Design for All in their policies and actions.

Adopted on 9 May 2004, at the Annual General Meeting of the European Institute for Design and Disability in Stockholm.