



The jury from left to right:

Peter Zec (G)
Annette Krath Poulsen (DK)
Fransesc Aragall (ES)
Ima Placencia (ES)
Jan Thie (NL)

> This text is from the dfa-at-awards press release

Design is omnipresent in the lives of everyone. It determines how people react to their immediate environment, the clothes they wear, the tools they use, the work they can undertake, the furniture they can use, the buildings they can enter and the forms of transport they can avail of. Deficiencies in the built environment and in product design affect everyone in different ways. Design concepts need to be developed with Design for All becoming a tool to support socially sustainable development and economic growth. Design for all is understood in a broad sense as the design of mainstream products and services to be accessible by as broad a range of users as possible.

The approach to achieve this consists of three principal strategies:

- design of products, services and applications, which are demonstrably suitable for most of the potential users without modifications
- design of products which are easily adaptable to different users (e.g. by incorporating adaptable or customisable user interfaces
- design of products, which have standardised interfaces, capable of being seamlessly connected by assistive devices

“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 design 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.”

(Extract from the EIDD Stockholm Declaration©)

Design for All - The winners

Designing goods and services to be accessible for as many users as possible is a challenge but the winners of the Design for All section of the Awards prove that taking the needs of everyone into account makes good business sense.

Indes Medical Design from the Netherlands took top prize in the Daily Living category with the Cairlift®. This ingenious product consists of a mattress with four inflatable layers and a remote control that allows the user to adjust height and position with ease.

In the Communication and Information category, German company, DFG Deutsche Fernsprecher GmbH took top honors with their home emergency telephone - Hausnotruf-Telefon. The device is suitable for use by everyone but is especially helpful for those with visual impairments, hearing defects and tactual problems due to features such as larger buttons and a user-friendly volume control. In case of emergency, a relay for help can be activated via the phone or via a portable transmitter, which can be worn around the neck.

The RedDot Web Compliance Manager by Fraunhofer-Institut für Angewandte Informationstechnik (FIT) in Germany is a tool to verify and validate Internet content against agreed international standards such as those of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). It won in the Employment and Social Affairs category.

The Sport sled from Tojo in Finland is the winner in the Culture, Leisure and Sport category. The sled can be used by both able-bodied and disabled users during winter.

Also, certain attachments can be added to the sled making it perfect for fitness training, balancing exercises and even roller-skating.

In the Mobility and Transportation category, another German company, PFAU-Tec GmbH came out on top with their bicycle reconstruction set - Umbausatz Profondo. One can easily convert a tricycle into a fully functioning bicycle with Profondo making it ideal for those who are temporarily injured and only need the use of a tricycle for a limited period of time.

With 70% of accidents in Finland occurring at home, the Easy Reach Shelves by Tech Design Oy look set to reduce this percentage significantly. The shelves fold down easily with a single movement of the hand making life easier not only for wheelchair users and the elderly but for everyone. The Easy Reach Shelves are victorious in the Jury's new Territory Award for professionals.

Carin Larsson from Umeå Institute of Design in Sweden won the Jury's New Territory Award for Students with her highly advanced and user-friendly MP3 Player - Audible. It makes music more accessible to the masses by the great attention to detail that has been given to its features enabling users to get the maximum out of their music experience.

