

DATEurope

Call for proposals

A funding map for digital AT in Europe

DATEurope

DATEurope is the recently founded European Industry Association for Digital Assistive Technology. Our vision is to enable access to digital assistive technology for all. The association represents the DAT industry with its developers, manufacturers, distributors, and service providers throughout Europe in the broadest geographical sense. Our mission is to unite this specialised industry to influence legislation, raise awareness, and achieve sustainability, growth, and commerce. The specific challenges within Europe, such as different languages, funding systems, cultures, and legislation has helped to grow our membership to more than 70 companies, from sole proprietors to large corporate organisations. Our membership continues to grow in both number and diversity.

DATEurope works together with all of the stakeholders of digital assistive technology in Europe and around the globe. This strong network helps our members to achieve the vision of delivering outstanding technology and services to increase the quality of life of persons with disabilities.

DATEurope members have created and follow a Code of Conduct to ensure ethical growth and the sustainability of our industry.

Digital AT

Digital assistive technologies are those technologies that provide access to information, communication and control using digital or electronic platforms. They will include both technologies designed specifically for people with a disability and consumer or educational technologies that are designed to include people with a disability.

Many digital technologies are closely integrated with devices such as mobile phones and tablets which can include more and more accessibility features that can complement and for many use cases replace specialised AT such as screen-readers, screen loops, speech-to-text programmes, alternative augmented communication (AAC) etc.

Digital assistive and accessible technologies may take the form of :-

Mainstream Consumer Technology. These technologies, such as digital television, are designed for use by the broadest population and may include no specific features to facilitate their ease of use by a person with a disability. For example, a television may not enable access

to captions for hearing loss or audio descriptions for the blind. Still, the large screen and control may work well for some people with some forms of disability. Feature phones may be examples of such technology with relevance to our discussion.

Accessible Technologies. Accessible technology includes products, equipment, and systems that can be customized and provide persons with disabilities access to all services and content. Some examples might include smartphones with integrated speech-to-text that can be used for dictation or creating captions. Such devices are widely used, and the features may benefit any user of the equipment and are designed to be used with minimal effort to meet the needs of a broad population.

Assistive Technologies. "Assistive Technology" refers to products, equipment, and systems that enhance learning, working, and daily living specifically to address the needs of persons with disabilities. Many assistive technologies are unlikely to be required for most people in the population. Such technologies can include screen readers, braille output, connections to hearing aids, and alternative access technologies for those with a physical disability, including pointing devices or switch access. The World Health Organization's 2016 priority list of assistive products includes devices such as braille notetakers. Much of the functionality of what is described as assistive technology can now be delivered through the integrated features, or additional apps, on a smartphone or similar device.

Examples of funding models suggested as being in place in different states with the UK and EU might include but not be limited to:-

- Domain-Specific Funding
- Direct payments
- Public and Private Health Insurance schemes
- Not-for-profit and charitable funding
- Private funding
- Refurbished and reused models

Aim

DATEurope wish to issue a white paper detailing how Digital Assistive Technologies are funded within the EU and UK by country with an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of each finding model.

This research will identify the major sources of funding and provision of AT in each member state and the UK and categorise the models to assist in understand the extent to which each model is utilised.

The research will be used as the basis of informing members and to lobby and encourage a more coherent funding mechanism across member states.

Deliverables:

- Country by country analysis of funding mechanisms for assistive and accessible technologies
- Framework by which funding models can be categorised
- Overview of relevant national criteria for products to be included for funding
- Analysis of strengths and weaknesses of each category or model of funding

Project proposal

Please provide a description of your proposed methodology and the expected timeframe as well as an outline of which countries you will investigate.

Please also include details of the skills and experience of researchers and examples of relevant research carried out previously and a minimum of two relevant referees.

The project proposal should include full details of the proposed budget and timetable for completion

Please submit your proposal to tenders@dateurope.com

Questions related to this call for proposals should be directed to David Banes via d.banes@dateurope.com by September 14

The deadline for the submission of a project proposal is October 1

Awards will be made by Oct 21, 2022