

European philanthropy at the nexus of disability and the SDGs



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FOREWORD

Working on the binomial “Disability and Sustainability”

By **Alberto Durán López**,
Executive Vice-president, Fundación ONCE

According to data from the World Health Organization (WHO), more than 1 billion people in the world have a disability, about 15% of the population. In the context of the European Union, some 80 million people in the EU are living with disabilities, and this number is projected to grow.



People with disabilities constitute a heterogeneous group, within which women, children and the elderly face additional difficulties and multiple forms of discrimination. Numerous studies at European level corroborate that people with disabilities face additional costs, have lower incomes and have higher unemployment rates than people without disabilities. But labour discrimination is not an isolated problem: Education, vocational training, housing, and lack of access to transport are other issues that need to be addressed when speaking about this collective.

The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) imposes on the EU the obligation to fight against discrimination based on disability in the definition and execution of its policies and actions, and also gives it the power to adopt legislative provisions to combat this type of discrimination. Besides, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union explicitly prohibits discrimination based on disability and provides for participation in society, on equal terms with others, of persons with disabilities.

But undoubtedly the most significant step was taken by the EU's ratification of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, whose principles opened the way to the full enjoyment of rights by all persons with disabilities and their families in an inclusive society. This crucial international treaty, in force in the EU since 2011, has brought important consequences for people with disabilities, among which are the “visibility” of this citizen group within the United Nations human rights protection system; the irreversible assumption of the phenomenon



of disability as a matter of human rights; and the provision of a binding legal tool when enforcing the rights of these people.

At the time of writing these lines, it will be almost two years since the European Pillar of Social Rights was proclaimed by the European Parliament, the Council and the European Commission. Through a score of principles, the Pillar seeks to guide and unite the Member States in improving the daily life, employment and well-being of all people by promoting equal opportunities, inclusion and social protection.

On the other hand, the European Union and the Member States have committed to implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) within the Union, but also in cooperation with other countries through their foreign policies. Both the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs explicitly recognise people with disabilities.

The UN Convention on Disability, together with the SDGs and the European Pillar as tools to boost its application, mark the way towards achieving a true social Europe, in which no one is left behind. We have a unique opportunity ahead of us that we cannot miss.

In March 2019 the project Disability Hub Europe for Sustainable Growth and Social Innovation was launched. Disability Hub Europe (DHub), a European initiative led by Fundación ONCE and co-funded by the European Social Fund, is aimed at building a reference space to work on the binomial Disability and Sustainability.

Conceived as a singular collaborative and multi-stakeholder European thematic platform, DHub provides involved organisations an innovative, valuable and differentiating opportunity to stand out and reinforce their sustainability leadership and action linked to people with disabilities. The ultimate aim of DHub, aligned with the SDG 17 "Partnerships for the Goals", as well as with SDGs 8 and 10 related to decent work and reduced inequalities, is to foster social and labour inclusion of people with disabilities in Europe while promoting inclusive and sustainable businesses.

The publication in your hands, generated in the framework of DHub, aims to make visible the role and contribution of foundations in Europe to the social and labour inclusion of people with disabilities from the perspective of the SDGs.

FOREWORD

Disabilities and the SDGs - A milestone for human rights

By **Michael Fembek**, EFC Disability Thematic Network Chair; and Director of the Zero Project, ESSL Foundation

In September 2015 the world's governments adopted the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It is a great achievement and a major step in the development of human rights that persons with disabilities have been explicitly included in a global agreement, with 5 of the 17 Goals specifically mentioning disability.

The Goals and related targets designed to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure global prosperity for all by 2030¹ were adopted as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, an ambitious global vision. In addition to the 5 Goals that explicitly mention disability,² a number of the others, along with several targets and indicators, clearly imply that persons with disabilities should be visible.

The motto of the 2030 Agenda is to "leave no one behind": It is unequivocal that there is no Goal achieved if a part of the population is consistently omitted. In Europe, 80 million people have some kind of disability, and the number is growing.³ How could we consider a Goal achieved if it is not true for such a large part of the population?

Intrinsic in the achievements of any of the Goals is the inclusion of disabled people worldwide. Therefore, the 2030 Agenda and accompanying SDGs represent an important opportunity for philanthropic organisations to build synergies and unite across Europe and the world around a common equity and inclusion agenda. As stated in the EFC study "Institutional philanthropy - A focus on disability",⁴ "disability is clearly a cross-cutting issue that can be addressed within any foundation programme supporting inclusion, diversity, education, employment, arts and culture, health care or any other aspect of life."

¹ <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

² Chapter 3 "The inclusion of persons with disabilities in the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs" http://edf-feph.org/sites/default/files/edf_-_sdgs_human_rights_report_final_accessible_0.pdf

³ EC progress report on the implementation of the EU 2010-2020 Disability Strategy (2017).

⁴ <http://efc.issuelab.org/resource/institutional-philanthropy-a-focus-on-disability.html>



The organisations that work for the equal rights and inclusion of people with disabilities are not different nor isolated from those targeting any other segment of the population. Quite the contrary: All need to synergise and share their knowledge and best practices so that they can be tested in other contexts and potentially enlarge their impact to other groups at risk of being left behind. Arguably, accessibility and inclusion are such cross-cutting societal issues that the biggest impact is achieved if they can be mainstreamed and implemented in programmes such as youth, gender, education, employment, and public and private service, thus safeguarding the “no one is left behind” principle.

Hence, the global dimension of the SDGs shouldn't be considered only in terms of geographic reach but certainly also in the sense that the Goals involve us all in our unique characteristics and that our specific challenges are interconnected. The achievements for people with disabilities are achievements for all: The organisations and people involved in this work bring innovative methods and knowledge and can inspire change everywhere and in any other context. This is true in a humanistic sense, but also in daily life issues: Everyone gains when children with disabilities are included in mainstream education or employees with disabilities are brought into the open labour market.

The SDGs framework can be a useful instrument to map out our work and reach, and help us spot unseen areas and question whether we are really achieving a Goal or only a part of it, or for only a part of the planet. It is fundamental both for those organisations that work directly with and for people with disabilities to consider intersectionality and see the connection of their work with all other Goals, and for those that do not work directly with people with disabilities, to question whether they are missing something or someone in the picture. Finally, the need for data that can be disaggregated will point the way towards often neglected areas of double discrimination, like those of girls with disabilities, refugees with disabilities or other hidden forms of discrimination that are currently difficult to detect.

Applying a disability lens to foundations' work means - even more in the context of achieving the SDGs - both expanding their aperture and deepening their views, thus increasing the possibility of bringing about change in a holistic and systemic way.

Disability Hub Europe

Disability Hub Europe for Sustainable Growth and Social Innovation (DHub) is a European, multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at building a reference space and platform (“hub”) to work on the binomial Disability and Sustainability, focusing on the social dimension.



Aligned with the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs – specifically with Goals 8 “Decent work and economic growth”, 10 “Reduced inequalities”, and 17 “Partnerships for the Goals” – the core aim of DHub is to foster social

and labour inclusion of people with disabilities in Europe while promoting inclusive and sustainable businesses.

DHub is led by Fundación ONCE and co-funded by the European Social Fund (ESF). The project, which builds upon the successful experience of the previous **CSR+ D European Network** also co-funded by the ESF, is carried out within the framework of the “Spanish Operational Programme on Social Inclusion and Social Economy 2014-2020” as a Transnational Cooperation action.

In order to achieve its goal, DHub’s broad objectives include: fostering best practice exchange and mutual learning; generating and sharing knowledge, instruments, analysis, and methodologies; improving the disability dimension in relevant sustainability, CSR, diversity, human rights and related political and business agendas; and enhancing the disability perspective in the social entrepreneurship ecosystem and in social innovation.

As stated in the 2030 Agenda, through SDG 17 “Partnerships for the Goals”:

“ A successful sustainable development agenda requires partnerships between governments, the private sector and civil society. These inclusive partnerships built upon principles and values, a shared vision, and shared goals that place people and the planet at the centre, are needed at the global, regional, national and local level.

DHub’s multi-stakeholder nature is an example of a foundation, in this case Fundación ONCE, materialising SDG 17. DHub **is built collectively based on key alliances and partnerships** with different organisations from the business sector; CSR and sustainability-related platforms; civil society entities; and other organisations committed in one way or another to sustainability and disability. It also serves as a good reminder that inclusion is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs, and therefore that sustainability is not only a matter of environmental issues (or the “green” side of sustainability), but it is also about inclusiveness and leaving no one behind.

Relevant organisations of different kinds and from various European countries are involved in DHub. DHub's main partners are the multinationals L'Oréal and Dow; CSR Europe; the Global Reporting Initiative; the European Disability Forum; and the ILO Global Business and Disability Network; in addition to Fundación ONCE as the leading entity. The EFC is also one of the main collaborating entities of the project.

DHub is developed under the **"Disability**



360° approach", understanding that from a broad perspective people with disabilities are a relevant stakeholder group for organisations: they can be employees, consumers, beneficiaries, suppliers, employers, investors and of course, part of the community in which an organisation operates, including their representative organisations.

Some of the key topics of work within DHub are:

- ▶ Employment of people with disabilities, and inclusive workplaces

- ▶ Innovation and accessibility of products, services and environments

- ▶ Procurement and supply chain including the disability and accessibility aspects

- ▶ Non-financial reporting, taking into account the issue of disability

- ▶ Sustainable finance, considering disability

- ▶ Stakeholder engagement, involving people with disabilities

- ▶ Social entrepreneurship, social innovation and disability

DHub plays the role of a singular European thematic platform, giving those organisations involved a valuable chance to differentiate themselves in an innovative way, and to stand out and reinforce their sustainability leadership in relation to people with disabilities – more than 80 million Europeans, and more than 1 billion people worldwide. All this, based on the potential of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

Some key actions achieved by DHub so far:

- ▶ DHub launching event at the European Parliament co-organised with CSR Europe, on 21 March 2019 with more than 100 participants including representatives from the EU institutions, business and civil society.

- ▶ The updated guide "Disability in Sustainability Reporting", developed by Fundación ONCE and the Global Reporting Initiative.

- ▶ The pioneering publication "Making the future of work truly inclusive for persons with disabilities", produced with the ILO Global Business and Disability Network presented at the ILO in Geneva in 2019.

Collaboration with the EFC and the EFC Disability Thematic Network (DTN) has also brought the opportunity to enhance the connection between the work of foundations and the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs with actions such as this publication, and others, including:

- ▶ Session on the SDGs and Disability at the EFC-DTN annual meeting in 2018 and at the 2019 Annual Disability Funders' Forum.

- ▶ Joint webinar "Leveraging the disability-related SDGs in your grantmaking" in 2019.

<http://disabilityhub.eu>
@Dhubeurope

European philanthropy, disability and the SDGs

Understanding European philanthropy and how its work relates to the Sustainable Development Goals is essential when it comes to finding ways of leveraging existing and potential areas of synergy. Many philanthropic organisations are working toward the SDGs, whether they explicitly say so or not.

Indeed, without necessarily adopting the official language and framework, institutional philanthropic organisations in Europe work in all areas addressed by the SDGs with certain dimensions resonating

particularly well with philanthropy, such as “leave no one behind” and fight inequality.

The SDGs can represent a framework for philanthropic organisations to position and measure the impact of their work against this first-ever global agreement for a more equitable and sustainable future, a set of opportunities to push the boundaries of how we work to tackle complex and interconnected challenges towards more systemic and longer-term global change.



How disability is included in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



- 4 -

Guaranteeing equal and accessible education by building inclusive learning environments and providing the needed assistance for persons with disabilities



- 8 -

Promoting inclusive economic growth, full and productive employment allowing persons with disabilities to fully access the job market



- 10 -

Emphasizing the social, economic and political inclusion of persons with disabilities



- 11 -

Creating accessible cities and water resources, affordable, accessible and sustainable transport systems, providing universal access to safe, inclusive, accessible and green public spaces



- 17 -

Underlining the importance of data collection and monitoring of the SDGs, emphasis on disability disaggregated data

11x

"Persons with disabilities" or "disability" are specifically mentioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

6x

"Persons in vulnerable situations" are specifically mentioned in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development



* This graphic has been adapted from the UN Disability inclusive SDGs infographic. The original version is available at www.un.org/disabilities/documents/sdgs/disability_inclusive_sdgs.pdf

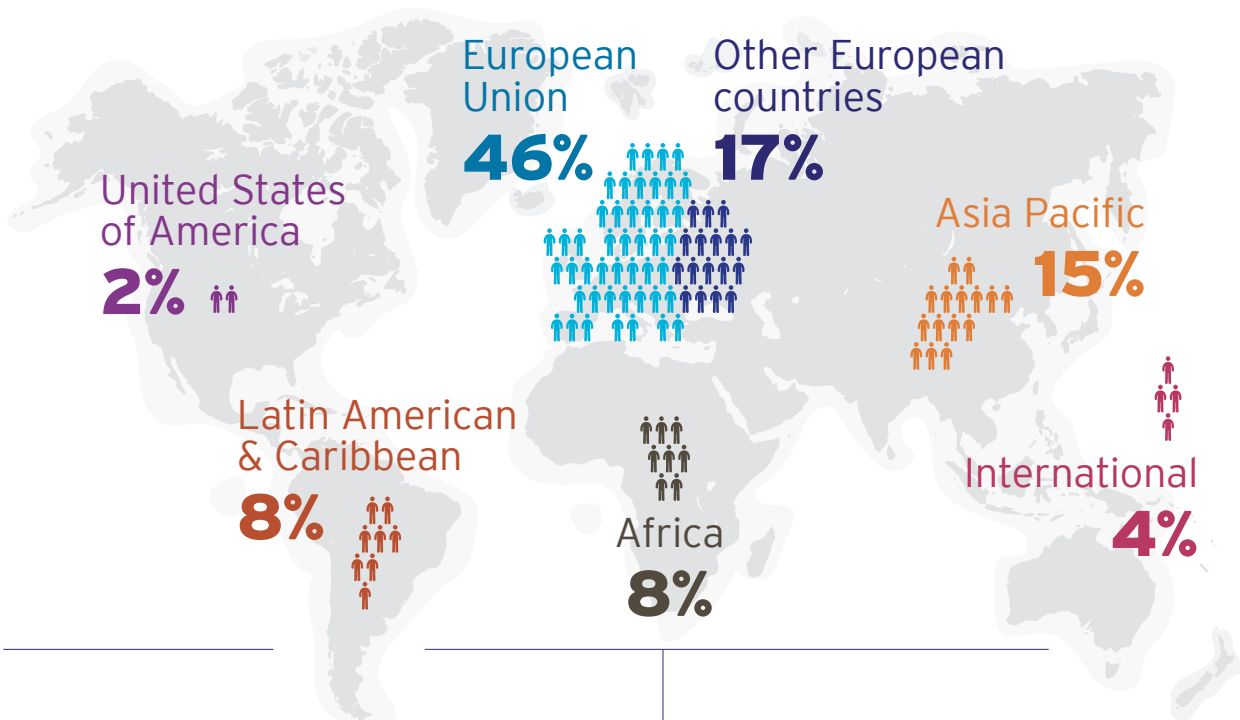
EFC mapping of disability funders – A snapshot



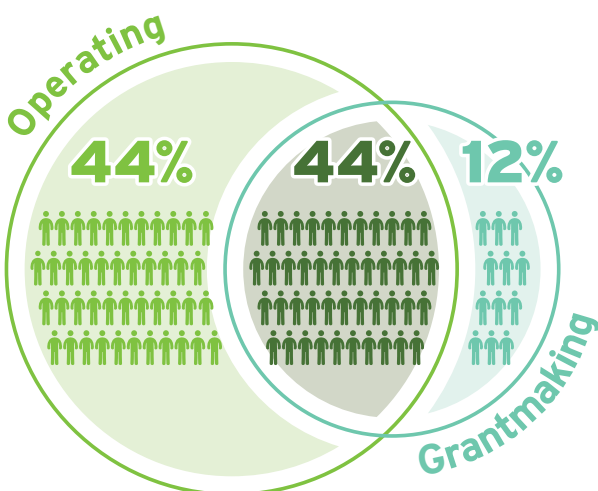
34 foundations
€155 million*
disability
expenditure

*Based on the EFC mapping, "Institutional philanthropy – A focus on disability" (2017)

Where they fund



How they work



Type of support in the field of disability



CASE STUDIES

“People with Disabilities” Programme and the SDGs

Contributed by Fondation de France, France

The 17 SDGs set out by the United Nations have been at the heart of the mission of Fondation de France for 50 years. To have a more accurate view of its contribution to the Goals, Fondation de France made the significant decision in 2019 that, from that point forward, some 10,000 projects of general interest supported each year by the foundation and its sheltered foundations will be evaluated in terms of their contribution to one or more of the SDGs.

The SDGs represent an additional tool to guide the commitment of Fondation de France in achieving its goals and to bring together all project partners in this virtuous dynamic. Indeed, as the primary private support for local associations, Fondation de France believes that it has a duty of setting the example and guiding its project partners.

The foundation has therefore included the SDGs in its 2018-2022 strategic plan. The objective is to have a first overview of the foundation's contribution to the SDGs from spring 2020 and to continue progressing with these indicators within the framework of the 2030 Agenda. It is particularly interesting to observe that, in this context, local projects that often have a limited budget will be part of global objectives and participate in this momentum for a sustainable, peaceful and more just world.

Specifically, in each one of its programmes, Fondation de France is now requesting to all applicants of its calls for proposals to clearly spell out to which SDGs their initiative aims to contribute.

Fondation de France's programme “People with Disabilities” includes a call for proposals entitled “Social life and citizenship of people with disabilities”. Through this call, the foundation supports projects that are conceived together with people with disabilities and that are innovative and inclusive, regardless of the specific domain of life they focus on. The call for projects revolves around two axes: (1) Access for all to everything and (2) Affective life, sexuality and parenthood. The projects that have already been funded under this call are all contributing to one or more SDGs, directly or indirectly.

Since 2019, all applicants are invited to identify and connect with pertinent SDGs from the design phase of their project in order to demonstrate at the time of submission of their dossier how their project contributes to the SDGs. This was already done in the past implicitly but it was not shown and expressed explicitly until recently. This new explicit criterion is examined through a double filter:

- ▶ Directly during the first examination of the dossiers, where SDGs initially indicated in the grant request by the applicant are confirmed or completed.
- ▶ Indirectly in a second phase, during the evaluation of the dossier by the committee of experts of the programme “People with Disabilities”, which is in charge of selecting the initiatives that will be financed. Some of the criteria set by the call for projects indeed echo the SDGs (e.g. the criterion of direct participation of people with disabilities in a logic of co-construction and self-determination).⁵

In general, the initiatives selected under the call for projects mainly contribute to SDG 10 “Reduced inequalities” for axis 1 (targets 10.2 “Empowerment and integration” and 10.3 “Equal opportunities”); and to SDG 3 “Good health and well-being” for axis 2 (target 3.7 “Ensure universal access to sexual and reproductive health-care services”). Some projects contribute to other Goals such as SDG 16 “Peace, justice and strong institutions” (target 16.7 “Inclusive decision-making”); SDG 1 “No poverty” (target 1.5 “Vulnerability”); SDG 8 “Decent work and economic growth” (target 8.5 “Full employment and decent work”); and/or SDG 4 “Quality education” (target 4.5 “Equal opportunities” and 4.a “Accessibility schools”).

As a concrete example, the project “Paths of Crossing” (“Les Chemins de Traverse”) illustrates well how a simple, local project can contribute to one or more SDGs. The grantee was a school for inclusive theatre, engaging students with and without disabilities. The school also includes people with disabilities in its governance bodies. The project consisted of the development, organisation and implementation of monthly inclusive evenings bringing together participants with and without disabilities in order to promote their encounters and to enable concrete opportunities for all to access an emotional life “like all young people have”. The project also worked towards changing mind-sets to open up leisure centres to all.

⁵ All the criteria of the call for projects can be viewed here: www.fondationdefrance.org/fr/vie-sociale-et-citoyennete-des-personnes-handicapees

CASE STUDIES

“Job Stations” and “More Than Dis”

Contributed by Fondazione Italiana Accenture, Italy

The primary mission of Fondazione Italiana Accenture is to accelerate the digital transformation of non-profit organisations, introducing technologies, processes and skills that increase their effectiveness and impact. In particular, the foundation is committed to directly supporting sustainable social projects that are replicable and capable of generating employment, with a special focus on the issue of the labour inclusion of people with disabilities.

Job Stations

It is in this context that in 2012 the foundation started to fund the project “Job Stations”, and has since continued to support it. The project proposed a model that surfaces the unexpressed potential of people with mental health conditions. The Job Stations are smart working centres where people with a history of mental health conditions can work in peace, followed by tutors who are experts in the field of psychology.

This model aims at fighting the stigma and social exclusion suffered by people with mental health conditions, providing them with a concrete professional opportunity that can represent the first step towards their reintegration in society and in the labour world. Job Stations is a win-win model that creates value for both the professionals (the Job Stationers) and for the companies that adopt the model since it brings them in line with the Italian law 68/99. There are currently 5 active Job Stations in Italy, with over 75 people employed in 20 companies, including Accenture which welcomes more than 20 employees, with an average duration of more than 36 months. The foundation continues to actively support Job Stations in various ways, in order to spread an inclusive corporate culture. It participates in the ongoing process of expanding the network of partners and companies that adhere to the project, and takes care of its digital image.

Currently, the Job Stations model is being studied to be adapted for people with mid-level autism spectrum disorders.

More Than DIS

Over the years, the commitment of Fondazione Italiana Accenture for the inclusion of people with disabilities into employment has been more and more aligned with the SDGs set out in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. The SDGs that were already central for the foundation in the competition "Youth in Action for Sustainable Development Goals" (now in its fourth edition), were once again at the heart of a new initiative by the foundation in 2019. The initiative "More Than DIS" is particularly connected with Goal 10 and more specifically with the 10.2 target, which indicates the need to "Strengthen and promote by 2030 the social, economic and political inclusion of all, regardless of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion, economic status or other."

In practical terms, the new competition "More Than DIS" was born with the aim of promoting the employability and quality of working life of people with disabilities. It awards social impact projects with a strong innovative and scalability component. Particular importance is given to projects that have a strong technological aspect. The initiative saw the participation of a large range of partners: Among them Jobmetoo and Make a Cube3 were particularly important for their expertise, respectively in the field of labour inclusion of people with disabilities and coaching paths for social start-ups.

Out of more than 250 ideas, 65 were accepted for the first selection phase. More Than DIS represents an excellent example of the surprising results that can arise from the convergence of the world of social inclusion and the entrepreneurial world, where high-impact objectives are placed side by side with those of business. The initiative ended in November 2019 with the awarding of the three best projects, each of which received a cash prize of € 20,000, a 3-month incubation course, and personalised advice from Accenture SpA. Fondazione Italiana Accenture will continue to work on issues related to work and disability, closely following the evolution of the More Than DIS winning projects and new initiatives already on the radar.

CASE STUDIES

“Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights”

Contributed by Trust for London, United Kingdom

Nearly half (48.3%) of the 14.2 million people in poverty in the UK - a total of 6.8 million people - are disabled or live in a household with a disabled person.⁶ Almost one in every five disabled persons (18.4%) experiences food insecurity.⁷ The proportion of disabled adults with no qualifications is three times that of non-disabled people.⁸ Just over half (52.6%) of all disabled people aged 16 to 64 are in employment compared to 81.5% of the non-disabled population. Nearly 40% of disabled adults don't get enough social services support to meet basic needs and lead independent lives in the community.⁹

A review of progress on the UK's commitments to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in 2017 describes the impact of government policies since 2010 as “grave and systematic violations of disabled people's rights”. The UK Government has neither accepted nor addressed the UN Convention's recommendations. Further, the government has consistently refused to provide a cumulative analysis of the impact of austerity policies on disabled people.

It is difficult to reconcile this state of affairs with the image that the UK promotes overseas: a disability rights leader, a proactive supporter of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and one which proudly co-hosted 1,200 people from 67 countries at the first Glob-

al Disability Summit in London in 2018. The UK is the sixth wealthiest country in the world, yet inequality is growing, not shrinking, and the expectation that progress towards equality for disabled people will continue to advance over time no longer rings true. Reporting on progress in equality and human rights in the three years to 2017, the UK's Equality and Human Rights Commission warns that “inequality is at risk of becoming entrenched for generations to come.” All this within the decade that saw the success of the 2012 London Paralympics, and the outstanding achievements of the UK's Paralympians and the reflected glow cast on the government of the day.

Along with cuts to social protection and support services, a decade of austerity cuts has significantly reduced the number and capacity of disabled people's organisations (DPOs). In response to disability rights activists urging us to support DPOs to counter the impacts of austerity, Trust for London launched a special initiative, with an agenda developed by DPOs, entitled “Strengthening Voices, Realising Rights (SVRR)” in 2018. Besides bolstering DPOs' capacity to mobilise for rights and inclusion, the initiative is investing in skills and learning, and in promoting more inclusive philanthropic practices. In line with the “nothing about us without us” principle, all aspects of the initiative and

⁶ Social Metrics Commission; A New Measure of Poverty in the UK, September 2018.

⁷ Equality and Human Rights Commission; Being Disabled in Britain, A Journey Less Equal, 2016.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Scope, Disabled People's Experiences of Social Care, 2015.



Trust for London

Tackling poverty and inequality

all stages in the grantmaking processes are being led, executed, and co-produced with disabled people.

Although the Trust is investing a significant proportion of its budget in this initiative, we can only contribute in a tiny way to work addressing the continuing erosion of the rights of disabled Londoners. Therefore, our contribution to progressing the SDGs, and in particular those most closely linked to our mission of tackling poverty and inequality is very small. But, how best can we contribute? Should philanthropic institutions like ours mobilise our resources to redress the impacts of political choices? In line with our charitable objects and missions but independent from the political colours of respective governments of the day, should we support civil society to challenge these very choices instead?

The UK demonstrated international leadership during the development of the SDGs, including as champions of the “leave no one behind” commitment. However, four years on, the first, belated, and hardly discussed national voluntary review on the UK’s performance on the SDGs in 2019 was very disappointing. It revealed an absence of cross-departmental coordination and of stakeholder consultation, and a lack of credibility, relying on cherry-picked data and case studies that skirted discussion on the increased poverty, hunger and inequality inflicted on the people who are furthest behind, have the least opportunities, and are most excluded.

The SDGs are a global commitment, and leadership and responsibility for coordinated country responses lie with their governments. At Trust for London we think that philanthropy should not be used as a substitute for what is the legitimate role and responsibility of the state. However, we believe that we have a role resourcing those most affected by social injustice to hold government to account for promoting and enforcing non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development.

The first phase of the SVRR initiative has been funding DPOs to support individuals in asserting their rights and entitlements. The second phase will be launched in 2020 and will focus on policy advocacy, campaigning and work to influence decisions, policies and practices, and to hold decision-makers to account for protecting, promoting and fulfilling disabled people’s rights. We require a significant change of course and leadership at the top to reduce inequality and become a fair society that does not leave anyone behind.

CASE STUDIES

“Museums with Unlimited Opportunities”

Contributed by Europe Foundation, Georgia

Philanthropic organisations active in the field of disability are well-placed to support innovative and scalable ideas that reduce poverty and inequalities and contribute to achieving inclusive and well-governed societies. The work of philanthropic organisations can contribute to strengthened cross-sectoral, regional, and national co-operation and networking among stakeholders for improved sharing of expertise to achieve the SDGs.

Europe Foundation’s work is relevant to most of the SDGs, as we empower people to effect change for social justice and economic prosperity through hands-on programmes, helping them to improve their communities and their own lives. The SDGs, together with the EU association agenda, serve as a roadmap for Europe Foundation’s grantmaking and operational programming:

- ▶ Through the Engage and Monitor for Change programme, we support participatory civic monitoring and advocacy efforts of civil society organisations (CSOs) and disabled people’s organisations (DPOs) for (1) better protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms (2) needs-based and transparent fiscal policy making (3) improved inclusion of marginalised groups in public life, and (4) more effective, accountable, and inclusive national and local institutions.

- ▶ Our Youth Integration programme enables young people to participate as active citizens in the development of their communities, by building capacity among young people, providing leadership opportunities, and supporting youth initiative groups to engage in community development activities. The programme also contributes to confidence-building across conflict divides. Europe Foundation also supports social entrepreneurship to contribute to increased civic engagement and inclusive growth.

- ▶ Just as important, Europe Foundation’s Open Door Grantmaking programme encourages CSOs and DPOs to be proactive in identifying and addressing local needs, and developing fresh solutions for existing challenges. Through Open Door Grantmaking, Europe Foundation ensures that CSOs provide timely responses to the issues that are identified by their constituencies and not by donors.

Europe Foundation addresses the SDGs through its own institutional development as well: We equip our employees with the competencies they need to succeed in their jobs, while at the same time providing opportunities for growth and advancement. We value diversity and are committed to promoting equal opportunities for all.



An exemplary project by the foundation in this context is “Museums with Unlimited Opportunities”. The project, which was awarded a grant of more than €15,000 between 2017 and 2019, aims at improving the integration of persons with disabilities (PWDs) in Georgia’s social and cultural life through inclusive educational programmes. Toward this end, the grantee plans to work with 21 state-funded museums and galleries in Tbilisi and the regions of the country, to establish inclusive education programmes for children and youth with learning disabilities. In partnership with CSOs working on PWD issues, the grantee will work with the targeted institutions through staff capacity-building and curriculum development, so that the inclusive educational programming is incorporated in the museums’ annual plans.

After the museum curators, the grantee staff, and educators from partner CSOs complete the planned methodological trainings, the grantee will organise museum tours and art exhibitions for around 1,000 disabled children, which should allow the museum administrations and local authorities to see the value that inclusive programming brings to children and youth with disabilities, their families, and the society at large.

To ensure a high degree of institutionalisation of accessible and inclusive educational programmes in the museums of Georgia, the grantee will also establish clubs of parents of children with disabilities and CSOs working on PWD issues in each target region. It is through these clubs that the grantee will wage local advocacy campaigns, so that the museums and municipalities make all the efforts to incorporate inclusive programmes into the museums’ regular curricula and adapt at least one public space of each museum for physical access. The clubs will also monitor post-project developments and support the grantee’s future efforts directed towards increased integration of disabled children and youth in the country’s social and cultural life. For enhanced sustainability of project outcomes, the grantee will develop and publish a “Guidebook on Development of Inclusive Museum Programs for Visitors with Different Types of Disabilities”, which will be disseminated among all museums and other stakeholders. The project contributes to the grantee’s strategic direction and will help with building its institutional capacity as a constituency-based civil society organisation.

Q&A with the EFC Disability Thematic Network

To give the perspective of the EFC Disability Thematic Network on the topic of working at the nexus of disability and the SDGs, the network's members answered some key questions on how they frame their disability work within the SDGs, what other philanthropic organisations can do, and what some of the challenges are.

In which ways is your organisation addressing the SDGs through its work?

Essl Foundation, Austria
(Goals 1, 3, 4, 8, 10, 11, 17)



The Zero Project was initiated by the Essl Foundation in 2008 with the mission of supporting the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and working for a world without barriers. The Zero Project's primary focus is on researching and communicating innovations on behalf of persons with disabilities, specifically around four research topics that are at the core of the CRPD and central to the SDGs framework: employment, accessibility, independent living (and political participation), and education. In 2020, the Zero Project will focus on education, which is the very foundation on which personal independence is built, leading to other key elements of a full life.

Since the project's beginnings, the Zero Project team has developed a vast global network of more than 5,000 experts from 180 countries - both with and without disabilities - who have contributed to our work over the past five years. Working with this network, the team has developed the expertise to identify, select, and communicate Innovative Practices and Innovative Policies worldwide, working with all relevant stakeholder groups, including several

UN agencies. The Zero Project also includes a conference held annually at the UN Headquarters in Vienna, and bringing together some 800 participants from more than 90 countries. At the heart of the conference are presentations of the Innovative Practices and Policies, which also receive the Zero Project Awards, as well as presentations by international decision-makers and opinion leaders from all sectors of society and the Zero Project network and partners. In addition, the Essl Foundation and Ashoka have joined forces to launch the first Impact Transfer programme, designed to support the internationalisation of innovative disability solutions for a barrier-free world. The Zero Project-Impact Transfer is a huge effort of the Zero Project to support those Innovative Practices that have the highest potential to grow or to be replicated, using Ashoka's expertise and capacity. We believe that it is the critical combination of partnerships, joint ventures, collaborations, and shared passions, visions, and activities that enables us to fight to change the world, to break down existing barriers, to innovate and to achieve the SDGs.

Fondazione Banca del Monte di Lucca,
Italy (Goals 11, 17)



For many years Fondazione Banca del Monte di Lucca has been working towards improving accessibility and social inclusion for persons with disabilities and their associations. Through its work, the foundation started and encouraged

a real change in the city of Lucca, a unique historical centre, by creating accessible paths and trying to collect all data on an accessible website together with local authorities. Numerous collaborations were forged to improve accessibility during exhibitions and events, and to support other associations with the same goal. The foundation strongly believes that creating a community that is engaged every day in changing society is a challenge, a difficult objective that can't be reached alone. It is for this reason that it will continue with its work, exchanging knowledge and experience with its local networks and European peers.

Fundación ONCE, Spain (Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 17)



One of the main objectives of the 2030 Agenda is to empower and improve the well-being of people in vulnerable situations, including people with disabilities within these groups at risk of exclusion.

Fundación ONCE's mission and activities directly relate to various SDGs such as 4, 5, 8, 10, and 11; and complement other SDGs such as 1, 9, 12 and 16. In addition, as one of its main purposes, Fundación ONCE develops specific initiatives that include establishing the connection between Disability and the SDGs. Disability Hub Europe is one of them, but others to be highlighted include the following:

The **Bequal Label** - an initiative promoted by Fundación ONCE, CERMI (Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities), and FEACEM (Spanish Business Federation of Associations of Special Employment Centers) - distinguishes companies that are socially responsible when it comes to people with disabilities, and offers organisations a tool to integrate disability policies in all areas of their operations. It promotes continuous improvement and the visibility of good practices by helping to identify companies to stakeholders as socially-committed entities. The companies recognised by the Bequal Label are committed to a better world for all people and specifically for people with disabilities.

The Bequal model connects with several SDGs

directly, and indirectly (such as 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 11, 13, 16, 17), and this link has been integrated into Bequal's indicators. Therefore, all the companies distinguished by this label are companies that are working to contribute to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs.

On the other hand, as accessibility is one of the axes of Fundación ONCE's activity, another example is our **project on Accessibility and SDGs Indicators**, a research project framed within an agreement signed between the Royal Board of Disability and Fundación ONCE. This project, which started in 2016, linked the existence of indicators on universal accessibility with the United Nations Development Agenda. The project included the following activities:

- ▶ Indicators of the SDGs related to accessibility and disability were identified, and policy areas such as education (the adaptation of infrastructures and learning materials), transport and "city for all people" were discussed.

- ▶ Due to the lack of technical criteria related to accessibility in the SDG indicators, and taking as a reference national and international regulations, an accessibility measurement system covering the common areas of public buildings was created. After that, several modules that contemplate the uniqueness of spaces in the educational, sports and cultural fields were developed to have metrics that can be applied to schools, museums and sports facilities. To analyse its viability and to allow its improvement, a test was carried out in nine Spanish public universities.

- ▶ Throughout 2019, research into the feasibility of data collection around accessibility indicators was carried out.

- ▶ Alliances with private companies and administrations have been established to include accessibility indicators within city management strategies.

What role can philanthropic organisations active in the field of disability play in supporting the implementation of the SDGs?

Genio, Ireland
(Goals 10, 17)



A major challenge for philanthropic organisations, including those active in the field of disability, is to scale social innovation that could be helpful in addressing the SDGs. This is often because innovations are created outside the public sector frequently without the direct engagement of governments, and this despite the fact that governments are best placed to sustain and scale social services. To help address this challenge, the European Social Catalyst Fund (ESCF) (www.euscf.eu) has been established and co-funded by the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme, Genio, the Robert Bosch Stiftung and the King Baudouin Foundation. The fund will provide financial and capacity-building support to develop plans to scale proven social innovations. It is anticipated that these plans will provide details of how public and private resources (philanthropic and/or social investment) can be brought together in a range of collaborations to help re-focus public spending in a more effective direction in the interest of European citizens within the umbrella of the SDGs.

Karuna Foundation, Netherlands
(Goals 3, 10)



Each organisation can define the outcomes and impact - the distillates - they expect to achieve with the implementation of a programme in a specific country and relate these to the objectives set by the SDGs. For example, to contribute to Goal 3 "Good health and well-being" (specifically targets 1 and 2), for the country of Nepal, the Karu-

na Foundation aims to reach a reduction in mortality of newborn babies from 21 to 14 for every 1000 newborns; a 40% reduction in maternal mortality; and a 38% reduction in child mortality. Moreover, by working to build a more inclusive society for disabled people in Nepal, it also aims to achieve Goal 10 "Reduced inequalities", as well as the common principle of "leaving no one behind". Indeed the Karuna Foundation, with its theme of "saving children from disability one by one", has been striving to prevent disability with primary, secondary and tertiary prevention approaches since its establishment. In doing so, the Karuna Foundation has put families and children with disabilities at the core of its intervention in Nepal.

Sabancı Foundation, Turkey
(Goals 4, 8, 10, 17)



Disability is included in various parts of the SDGs, and there are different ways philanthropic organisations can support the implementation of the Goals. For instance, taking Goal 4 "Quality education", philanthropic organisations can contribute to making physical and virtual learning environments accessible; provide training to teachers and other education specialists to gain knowledge and experience in inclusive education for persons with disabilities; and organise workshops with students that help them to embrace differences. Regarding Goal 8 "Decent work and economic growth", a job coaching model can be introduced to the representatives of the private sector, and philanthropic institutions can support the employment of persons with disabilities using this model. For persons with disabilities to be included in social, economic, and political spheres as emphasised in Goal 10 "Reduced inequalities", philanthropic institutions can support self-advocacy training models, and support the creation of environments that give all groups an equal voice.

The SDGs have the potential to be truly transformative for persons with disabilities.

However, to ensure systematic and effective follow-up, disaggregated data on disability is essential. Philanthropic institutions can advocate for collection and publishing of empowerment, education, health, and political participation data by disability status for better assessment of the situation of persons with disabilities. This leads to better implementation of the right policies and programmes for all. Philanthropic institutions can also encourage monitoring of the projects implemented through their funds. The monitoring process, as with the whole project cycle, should engage persons with disabilities in the process. Philanthropic institutions can also guide their grantees in realising trainings and events in a more accessible format.

What are the constraints faced by the philanthropic sector in engaging and contributing to SDG implementation? What type of incentive would be needed to scale up this support?

Light for the World, Austria
(Goals 4, 5, 8, 10, 11, 17)



The problems that need to be tackled in order to reach the SDGs are global, but the available tools are still national. For example, the philanthropic sector, especially in the EU, is not geared towards transnational work: Important resources are lost due to unnecessary doubling of structures and administrative burdens. Intensified advocacy is needed in order to reach a single market for philanthropy in Europe.

Light for the World addresses 6 of the 17 SDGs: Goal 4 “Quality education”; Goal 5 “Gender equality”; Goal 8 “Decent work and economic growth”; Goal 10 “Reduced inequalities”; Goal 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”; and Goal 17 “Partnerships for the Goals”. Together with the international advocacy movement for persons

with disabilities, Light for the World has been lobbying for the implementation of the rights to inclusion and for accessible working environments within the 2030 Agenda.

In 2016 at the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) - the central global platform for reviewing and following up on the SDGs - persons with disabilities were actively involved in ensuring they were not left behind. Indeed, with the leadership of the International Disability Alliance, and in partnership with the International Disability and Development Consortium, including Light for the World, as well as other representatives of the disability movement, persons with disabilities have been consistently engaging with and contributing to the HLPF. Now they are recognised as the “Stakeholder Group of Persons with Disabilities”, which was officially represented in 2016 by Yetnebersh Nigussie, Senior Inclusion Advisor of Light for the World, and Colin Allen, Chair of the International Disability Alliance and President of the World Federation of the Deaf.

According to Nigussie, the global engagement as a Stakeholder Group is just the tip of the iceberg. Light for the World is strongly convinced that “additionally, the ground work of implementing and monitoring the SDGs has to be done at the grass-roots level in each country - especially in the developing countries where 80% of all persons with disabilities live.” Still many disabled persons’ organisations (DPOs) around the world face barriers while they are looking for opportunities to work with their governments. Many are being turned away and are excluded from public consultations or wider civil society meetings. “We have to ensure that concrete lessons are learned from the international level and that these lessons are shared widely with DPOs and disability rights groups around the world,” highlighted Nigussie.

CONCLUSION

Typing the future - Looking forward to achieving the Goals together and for all

As shown by the sample of organisations contributing to this publication, philanthropic organisations in Europe are well-positioned to adopt the SDGs as a useful guiding tool to think differently about their impact and strategy.

While many philanthropic organisations explicitly link their work to the SDGs, many do not, even though their work does in reality fit well within the Goals. In fact, the work of European institutional philanthropic organisations touches on all focus areas of the SDGs. Moreover, the global vision of the 2030 Agenda - “leave no one behind” - meshes particularly well with philanthropy, as does the objective to “fight inequality”. One key characteristic of the philanthropic sector in Europe - of which this publication gives a taste - is certainly its diversity:

- ▶ Philanthropic organisations range in size from small family foundations to large philanthropic institutions with billions of euros in assets.
- ▶ They are engaged in every field - from migration to research, environment to health, education to arts and culture, disability to sustainability.
- ▶ They engage in many forms of philanthropy, from traditional grantmaking to running their own programmes to venture philanthropy and other new forms of social investment.

This diversity is both a strength and a complicating factor. It is indeed difficult to categorise the activities of individual philanthropic organisations in terms of the SDGs. However, there are many synergies and interconnections, parallels and commonalities that can be identified and leveraged to increase the role and impact of philanthropy around the SDGs.

Therefore, taking into consideration that the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs have become a top issue in the global agenda, efforts by the philanthropic sector to link both internally and externally their activities to the SDGs can be a potent way to enhance foundations’ visibility and reinforce the value of their already significant social contribution.

Different levels of interconnections

The SDGs can serve as a guide - no matter the area of work one specific organisation is covering - to make interlinkages more evident and ensure that the broader picture is visible while organisations are pursuing their particular philanthropic goals. The interconnections happen at different levels:

- ▶ At an issue level: The progress of each Goal has some prerequisites in and at the same time adds to the progress of other Goals. Accessibility and inclusion are a clear example of this positive and necessary interdependence and mutual influence.
- ▶ At a geographical level: Local initiatives can be magnificent laboratories to test solutions that can serve globally. Foundations certainly have a big role to play in these interlinkages, in funding and testing innovative ideas at a local level that can be scaled up globally.
- ▶ A third level relates to the different stakeholders that are necessary to achieve the Goals, and that are well articulated in Goal 17 "Partnerships for the Goals".

Partnerships for the Goals

The SDGs framework can function also as an important reminder that there is no Goal reached by one single actor alone. Indeed, the interconnections lie also in the diverse roles that different organisations and individuals can play from their capacity and defined contexts. This complementarity of functions is essential, and it is certainly one area where foundations can act to bring the ecosystem together. Disability Hub Europe for Sustainable Growth and Social Innovation (DHub), a project led by Fundación ONCE with co-funding of the European Social Fund, is a great example of this catalytic ability of the philanthropic sector.

A Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) agenda for philanthropy

Together with its interconnected nature, the SDGs framework also underlines well the universality of the Goals. It is this aspect in particular that allows organisations specialised in working towards a more diverse, inclusive and equal world to share expertise and knowledge and spark inspiration.

The issue of Diversity, Equality and Inclusion (DEI) is more and more at the centre of the philanthropic sector's agenda in Europe. For example, the members of the EFC Gender Equality Network have initiated a process called "Learning Journeys" to reflect on and share their experiences in integrating the gender dimension structurally into their organisational policies, practices and culture in the pursuit of greater equality.¹⁰ The process emphasises intersectionality and lived experience, two essential elements in addressing DEI matters. In this sense, adopting a "Disability 360° approach" (developed within the DHub initiative) shouldn't be confined only to those organisations that are experts in the field, but should rather be an intrinsic consideration in any organisation that is aiming to achieve the SDGs.

The need for disaggregated data

Essential to ensuring that the phrase "no one is left behind" doesn't turn into just a motto but instead translates into reality, is the use of disaggregated data. If regularly and accurately collected, data can be interrogated to surface criticalities and advancements in the achievement of the Goals, and can reveal neglected areas of discrimination to be redressed.

¹⁰ EFC Gender Equality Network: Initial Gender Mainstreaming Assessment (EFC 2019). <http://efc.issuelab.org/resource/efc-gender-equality-network-initial-gender-mainstreaming-assessment.html>

Innovation for change - Tapping the unexpressed potential

A last point that can be made specifically regarding the role of DPOs and individuals with disabilities in the context of the SDGs pertains to their unrealised potential. Some of the technological transformations that have had major impacts on societies all over the world were originally invented only to solve a specific practical problem or need. Examples include the typewriter, dropped curbs for sidewalks and audio-books, among many others.¹¹ These examples show how inventions in the context of disabilities can bring innovation and life improvement to all individuals.

At the same time, innovation happens when approaching a problem from a new perspective, and testing creative solutions. There is a complementarity in our diversities that is required to bring to life new ideas, and there is an incredible potential that people with disabilities can bring collectively to find innovative solutions for social and sustainable change.

Institutional philanthropy has a unique role to play by investing its financial and non-financial resources in innovation and creativity to transform societies and achieve the SDGs with and for all.

¹¹ Killeen, Tom. "These 5 everyday products have a hidden history of accessible design" (2017). <https://hackernoon.com/these-5-everyday-products-have-a-hidden-history-of-accessible-design-774d2adbcde8>

About the EFC Disability Thematic Network

Since the mid-1990s, EFC member Fundación ONCE has worked with the EFC on an array of projects and programmes revolving around the area of disabilities. The Disability Thematic Network (DTN) emerged from this engagement and has become more and more active over the years, especially after the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities entered into force on 3 May 2008. In 2009 the European Consortium of Foundations on Human Rights and Disabilities was created under the DTN to encourage ratification of the Convention. The work of the Consortium has now been merged into the overall activities of the DTN. The network's members have also increased their engagement on a European level with their input into the Disability Policy Agenda - collaborating with an array of stakeholders - and the DTN has focused more on incubating philanthropic organisations' pilot projects that can be scaled up or replicated.

Currently, the DTN facilitates learning from experience and sharing knowledge between peers; acts to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities by adopting a mainstreaming approach; and disseminates results to multiply impact at local, national and European level. Focus areas are building inclusive communities; enabling social equality and justice; and empowering through access to leisure and culture.

Members of the Disability Thematic Network 2019

- ▶ [Essl Foundation, Chair](#)
- ▶ [Fondazione Banca del Monte di Lucca](#)
- ▶ [Fundación ONCE](#)
- ▶ [Genio](#)
- ▶ [Karuna Foundation](#)
- ▶ [Light for the World International](#)
- ▶ [Sabanci Foundation](#)

About Fundación ONCE

The main goal of Fundación ONCE for the Co-operation and Social Inclusion of People with Disabilities (Fundación ONCE) is to promote the quality of life of people with disabilities and their families, particularly focusing on the areas of training, employment and universal accessibility of environments, products and services.

Based in Spain, and founded by ONCE (the National Organization of the Spanish Blind), Fundación ONCE's board of trustees includes, besides ONCE, the main organisations representing people with disabilities in Spain as well as the Spanish Committee of Representatives of Persons with Disabilities (CERMI). Fundación ONCE is part of the ONCE Social Group, together with ONCE and ILUNION, the socially responsible business branch of the Group. In total, ONCE Social Group employs more than 73,000 workers, being 58% people with disabilities.

Fundación ONCE collaborates at national, European and international level with private companies, public authorities, academia, organisations from civil society and others, for the visibility of the disability and accessibility dimensions, seeking to contribute to a more sustainable and inclusive society that leaves no one behind. Fundación ONCE runs the Spanish Operational Programme "Social Inclusion and Social Economy" 2014-2020, co-funded by the European Social Fund, which allows it to develop several key activities, including the transnational initiative "Disability Hub Europe for sustainable growth and social innovation", which serves as the framework for this publication.

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The responsibility for the opinions expressed in this work is exclusively of their authors.



About the EFC

As a leading platform for philanthropy in Europe, the EFC works to strengthen the sector and make the case for institutional philanthropy as a formidable means of effecting change.

We believe institutional philanthropy has a unique, crucial and timely role to play in meeting the critical challenges societies face. More people and causes benefit from institutional philanthropy than ever before, from eradicating deadly diseases and making the world's populations healthier to combating climate change and fighting for global human rights and equality.

Working closely with our members, a dynamic network of strategically-minded philanthropic organisations from more than 30 countries, we:

- **Foster peer-learning** by surfacing the expertise and experience embedded in the sector
- **Enhance collaboration** by connecting people for inspiration and joint action
- **Represent philanthropy** for favourable policy and regulatory environments
- **Build a solid evidence base** through knowledge and intelligence
- **Raise the visibility** of philanthropy's value and impact


Visit the EFC website to read more about the EFC Strategic Framework 2016-2022, developed by the EFC membership.

www.efc.be



European Foundation Centre, Fundación ONCE 2019

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