

Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology



Hjälpmedelsinstitutet



” The Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology works to ensure that our knowledge on assistive technology and accessibility helps people with disabilities achieve a positive everyday life. We want to be part of building a society in which everyone can participate on equal terms, regardless of individual circumstances.

In our work, we encounter user and research organisations, government agencies, county councils, municipalities and companies on both a national and international basis. We want our aggregate knowledge to reach professionals working in health and medical care, as well as to influence decision-makers.

I hope this information provides insight into who we are and what we do, in addition to providing a greater understanding of assistive technology.

Jan Grönlund
Director

The Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology, SIAT, has a focus on assistive technology and accessibility in accordance with the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The owners are the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs and the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions.

A large part of our work concerns sharing knowledge with professionals who work in the field of assistive technology. We achieve this through pilot projects, courses and networks on both national and international levels. We assist companies and organisations in Sweden develop ideas for new assistive devices and help improve conditions for exporting Swedish technology and technology support.

Our work has contributed to the development and improvement of assistive devices. Examples include the easy-to-use Doro mobile phone, the award-winning Veloped wheeled walker and the Ippi, which is connected to TV sets to receive images, films, audio and text messages from mobile phones and computers.



Employees at the Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology have different backgrounds, and include, for example, physical and occupational therapists, architects, sociologists, behavioural scientists and engineers. Thanks to our varied competencies, our aggregate knowledge of assistive technology and accessibility is vast.

In our work, it is important to stay in contact with people who use assistive devices. We have a user council that serves as an advisory body to our Board. It is composed of people from organisations of people with disabilities and older people.

Our work



We disseminate knowledge

Through courses, conferences, seminars and exhibitions, we communicate the results of our development projects to politicians, managers and employees at municipalities, county councils, government agencies and private companies. We publish printed material and provide information on our website and in social media. SIAT also work on an international basis to exchange information and knowledge on assistive technology and accessibility.

We participate and influence

Over the past few years, we have worked on issues concerning the transition from school to working life. The aim is to give students with disabilities more access to assistive technology in school and to facilitate the transition between school and working life.

We also work with issues related to housing and cognition. As the population is getting older, increased demands are being placed to ensure that housing and residential areas are accessible. Thanks to new technology, more people have access to support in their everyday lives, which means entirely new opportunities in terms of living an active and independent life. Using a personal computer and the Internet, many people can take care of their bank business and social contacts, for example, without the assistance of a caregiver or relative.

Examples of our activities

International work

European Union: We participate in various research and development networks and projects within the EU. The aim is to develop and improve services and products for people with disabilities and for elderly people.

International standardisation: We participate in efforts to formulate requirements and testing methods for assistive devices all over the world. Sweden is responsible for the chairmanship and secretariat of the technical committees of assistive devices for the global and European standardisation.

World Health Organization: We participate in the WHO expert groups on issues related to assistive technology and the provision of assistive devices.

Other cooperation initiatives: We assist companies and organisations in Sweden develop ideas on new assistive devices and help improve conditions for exporting Swedish technology and technology support. We also serve as consultants for various development aid initiatives.





About assistive technology

Assistive devices are products designed for people with disabilities. Assistive technology can also refer to methods and new technology.

Assistive devices can:

- prevent future loss of function or ability
- improve or preserve function or ability
- compensate for deteriorated or lost function and ability to cope with everyday living.

Approximately every fifth Swede has a disability, and about half of these individuals use assistive devices. Assistive devices are funded by tax revenues. As a means of improving opportunities for individuals to choose their own assistive devices, pilot studies have been performed in a few county councils and municipalities whereby people with disabilities have been allowed to choose assistive devices to supplement their regular prescription.

Assistive technology in Sweden

The **Ministry of Health and Social Affairs** is responsible for policy issues related to disability and assistive technology. The Ministry's responsibility is regulated in the Health and Medical Service Act (HSL). The National Board of Health and Welfare, which responds to the Ministry, ensures that people with disabilities receive the assistance they require.

County councils and municipalities are responsible for the assistive devices used in homes, the local environment and schools to facilitate everyday living and/or care and treatment. Visual, hearing and orthopaedic assistive devices are prescribed at specialist units within the county councils.

Assistive technology centres offer advice, training and consultation to prescribers regarding assessment and special adaptation assistive devices for mobility and cognition. They also repair prescribed assistive devices.

The **Swedish Social Insurance Agency**, the **Swedish Public Employment Service** and **employers** are responsible for the assistive devices required by individuals at work.

User organisations of older people and people with disabilities follow and provide information on issues that impact their members in order to improve the living conditions of their members.



Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology

“The Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology aims at full participation and equality for people with disabilities by contributing to the development of safe and well-functioning assistive technology and an effective provision of assistive devices.

Through its work, the institute aims to contribute to increased accessibility in society for people with disabilities.”

From the Regulations for the Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology.
The Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology was established in 1968 under a different name.



Hjälpmedelsinstitutet

Swedish Institute of Assistive Technology – SIAT

P.O. Box 2047, SE-174 02 Sundbyberg, Sweden

Phone +46 8 620 17 00

Fax +46 8 739 21 52

Text phone +46 8 759 66 30

E-mail registrator@hi.se

Website www.hi.se

Order no

12304

