



POWERED BY OUR COMMUNITIES.

OUR IMPACT REPORT FOR 2023



Snapshots from our Dialogue partners in 2023.

Welcome!

We made it again: **in 2023 we reached 32% more visitors compared to 2022!** A big thank you to our **Dialogue partners, teams and visitors** globally.

It's our time of the year to recharge and savor what we collectively harvested in 2023. Today is the time to thank you and celebrate together. Working towards inclusion in a fast-paced and inflamed world is not an easy task, yet we've collected wonderful **contributions of our Dialogue teams** and the **trust of our visitors around the world.**

Thanks to you all!

As we did last year, we've kept our report precise and focused on the core of what we've accomplished as a community in 2023. It showcases the **essence of our achievements** and the **progress we've made together.**

All of us at Dialogue



CHANGE, POWERED BY OUR COMMUNITIES.

Stories are an excellent mean of conveying and illustrating impact. Beyond numbers, stories tell real-life examples, describe emotions and demonstrate change. Below you'll find a selection of amazing Dialogue stories that are making an impact around the world:



FROM DARKNESS TO MOVIE SCREENS IN FRANKFURT

Dialogue in the Dark.

We partnered with LUCAS, Frankfurt's renowned international children's film festival, and introduced the topic inclusion for the first time at its 47th edition. We conducted audio description workshops with school classes and our guides, culminating in student presentations at the festival. During the Family Festival Sunday at the German Film Museum, our team hosted engaging activities on Braille, visual disability, and navigation. One highlight was a family quiz that taught audio description skills in a playful way. Collaborating with the German Film Museum, we developed a game based on film stills, challenging families to identify descriptions. Moderated by Florian Schneider, a professional audio describer, the quiz provided an exciting and educational experience for both guides and visitors.

A UNIQUE COMMUNICATION & MARKETING LESSON IN SINGAPORE

Dialogue in the Dark.

At DiD Singapore, we welcome interns every six months to collaborate with our guides to promote inclusion. Samantha Hu, one of our interns, shared her experience on LinkedIn. She reported on her newfound awareness of communication barriers and learnt about inclusive practices such as audio description. "I understood how my visually impaired colleagues felt when they were excluded from communication, such as popular programmes in Singapore. I would hardly have learnt this in a communications or marketing company. I also learnt empathy. Not only towards my colleagues with disabilities, but towards all people around me. I realised that I need to acknowledge the needs of others and take a moment to support them."





THE BEGINNING OF THE INCLUSION JOURNEY IN VIENNA

Dialogue in the Dark.

A teacher approached us regarding a blind student who was being excluded by her classmates. Despite their request for a three-hour programme, we were able to manage expectations and emphasize that changing mindsets takes time. The visit went smoothly, which was initially challenging for the blind student fearing undue attention. Our reversal of roles in the dark boosted her confidence, showing her capabilities. Our guide facilitated discussions, marking the first step on their inclusion journey. The teacher promised to return for further planning, recognizing the impact of our programme on fostering empathy and understanding amongst the students.

EXPLORING THE CROSSROADS OF DISABILITY AND AGEING IN HONG KONG

Dialogue in the Dark.

At the HSBC Community Festival, our DiD Empower team conducted the "Always in Mind" carnival, spotlighting elderly care needs and honoring their contributions. This event emphasized three key messages: visit nursing home residents, recognize their lifelong efforts, and encourage elders to embrace life. Through talent showcases and experiential booths like packing in the dark and silent dining, attendees fostered joyful interactions and appreciation. Fifteen members with disabilities of the Empower team contributed to activities such as assisting booths and coordinating. Over 300 visitors, including families of elderly residents, embraced the message. This event exemplifies Dialogue in the Dark's commitment to edutainment and impactainment.





DID AS SPRINGBOARD IN CAIRO

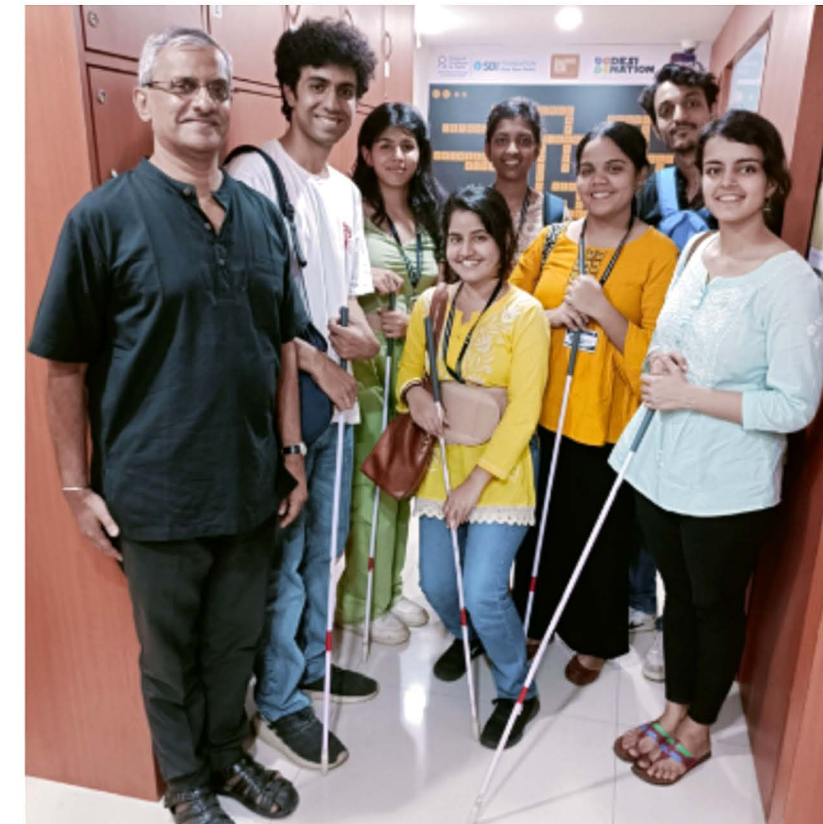
Dialogue in the Dark.

Manal, guide at DiD Egypt, was trying for years to be accepted in exchange programs representing disability cause, finally succeeded in her application. She went to USA for 2 weeks to participate in conferences, programs and workshops related to accessibility and inclusion challenges for disability. Her cumulative experiences in DiD and various contexts she is participating in as a trainer and facilitator for awareness, were the corner stone that led her to be accepted for this exchange program.

VISITORS TURNING INTO SUPPORTERS IN MUMBAI

Dialogue in the Dark.

Larry Pereira, a teacher from St. Xavier's Boys' Academy in Mumbai, was deeply touched by his visit to DiD Mumbai and has since made it a priority for his students. He has facilitated over 200 student visits to DiD. His feedback reflects the profound impact: "The experience was unique and immersive, not just something heard and forgotten. It allowed us to step into the world of the blind, dispelling fears and enriching our understanding. It's comforting to know that blindness wouldn't halt life but propel it forward. The experience, guided by empathetic individuals, was both enriching and joyful. It provided comfort and left a lasting pleasant impression.





RECONNECTING IN THE DARK IN HOLON

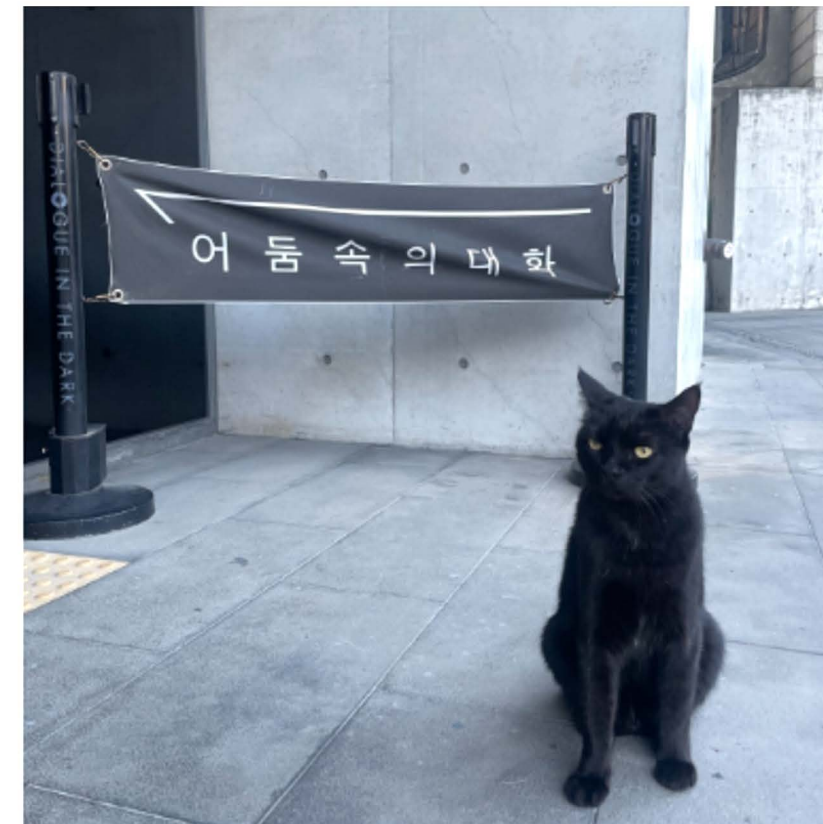
Dialogue in the Dark.

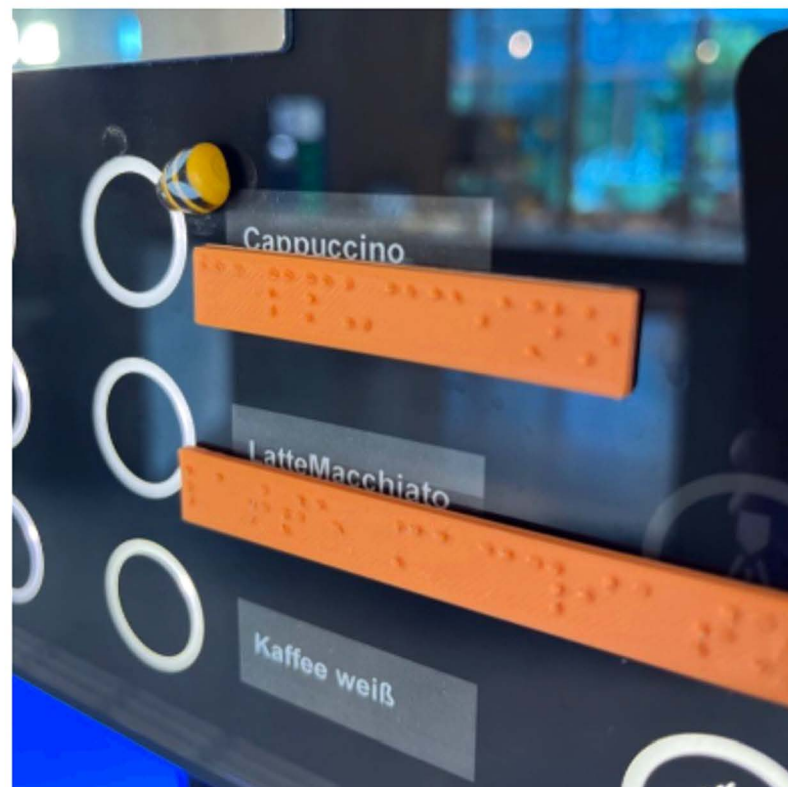
During summer, DiD sees many tourists. A notable incident involved two visitors, one from London and the other from the US, who coincidentally met at the exhibition. Despite a past dispute and years without contact, they recognized each other. When one hesitated before the tour due to fear, the other encouraged her to stay. Hand in hand, they navigated the darkness, supporting each other. Emerging into the light, they tearfully embraced, reigniting their friendship. The guide, intrigued, learned they had grown up together in London but drifted apart. This chance meeting in darkness rekindled their bond after nearly a decade of silence.

UNEXPECTED VISITORS IN SEOUL

Dialogue in the Dark.

At DiD Seoul, a black cat brought daily joy to staff and visitors. It awaited the exhibition's opening each morning, entertaining guests with its antics and occasionally dozing on a chair, and sometimes watching people come and go at the entrance. The unique and special combination of this cat with the exhibition titled "Dialogue in the Dark" was enough to capture the attention of visitors. Consequently, photos of the exhibition in Seoul featuring the black cat went viral on various South Korean social media platforms, which we believe greatly aided our marketing efforts. We hope that this story brings a smile of happiness to all our global readers.





INCLUSIVE COFFEE IN INGELHEIM

INNOKLUSIO.

INNOKLUSIO visited Boehringer Ingelheim. This company already removed numerous barriers within its own organization. Our guide Axel Eichstädt lives with 3 per cent vision since birth. In order to be able to drink his coffee every morning during the exhibition without constantly asking for help, Boehringer Ingelheim employee Renáta Bierbrauer had an idea. She encouraged her husband to turn on the 3D printer and print Braille signs for the coffee machine. Axel's conclusion: it works! Following the INNOKLUSIO visit, Boehringer Ingelheim contacted the manufacturer of the coffee machine and reported the lack of accessibility of its machines. The manufacturer now considers equipping all its machines with Braille text in the future. Inclusion can start with a cup of coffee!

Read on, for more stories from our Dialogue partners 🗨️

“Since our closing during the pandemic, it had been a struggle for us to sustain. But the fruits of our past success contributed to our sustainability. Many of our team members managed to secure new jobs. One of our clients continued to support us during the difficult moments by sending their staff to our workshops even though we did not have a fix venue for the past 2 years. “

THE VALUE OF OUR WORK IN KUALA LUMPUR

Dialogue in the Dark

“Children from an orphanage, who had been abused by their parents, visited our museum. Before the experience, they competed for snacks and ate them greedily. After the experience, they changed to calmly sharing their snacks. One boy even put snacks in his pocket to share them later with his DID guide. Dialogue helps each other to grow. “

DARK TEACHES SHARING IN TOKYO

Dialogue in the Dark

“ Our guide Hans actively initiated and implemented digitalization projects at our venue. Having a keen interest in digitalization, Hans automated our processes. These included the automated generation of certificates given out to our interns, automating the process of keying in their monthly allowances, or auto-merging acceptance forms that are sent out to clients. “

MORE THAN GUIDING IN SINGAPORE

Dialogue in the Dark

“ Every day our guide Moses bumped into a bent tree obstructing his path to work. Moses seized his opportunity, as a group of municipal workers visited us. He led them through the exhibition to encounter a tree, just as he did every morning. The visitor who shouted the loudest, was responsible for all trees in the city. So, Moses told him his story. Two days later the tree had been moved to a new location. “

A POWERFUL ENCOUNTER WITH A TREE IN HOLON

Dialogue in the Dark

“ Among the most powerful encounters in the dark are those where guides with visual disabilities serve visitors with other disabilities. We welcomed a group of adults with learning disabilities. Their tour guide happened to be a pregnant lady. At the end of the tour, these visitors went to the market to buy a gift for her baby. “

DIALOGUE IMPACTS EVERYONE IN SAO PAULO

Dialogue in the Dark

OUR IMPACT IN 2023.

We make an impact by breaking down barriers and re-thinking social norms in order to drive sustainable change.

In practice, we empower people through transformative learning experiences at our museums and through our corporate training programs.

In 2023 we've strengthened our global footprint:



cities where Dialogue Partners were present in
2023:

25

locations (re)opening in 2023:

2

Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Vienna, Austria

Dialogue partners are local social entrepreneurs or organizations that operate Dialogue programs globally:

Australia - Melbourne - Dialogue Partner since 2019

Austria - Vienna - Dialogue Partner since 2009

Brazil - Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro - Dialogue Partner since 2015

China - Hong Kong - Dialogue Partner since 2010

China - Shanghai, Chengdu, Shenzhen - Dialogue Partner since 2010

Egypt - Cairo - Dialogue Partner since 2019

Germany - Frankfurt - Dialogue Partner since 2005

Germany - Hamburg - Dialogue Partner since 2000

India - Mumbai - Dialogue Partner since 2022

Israel - Holon - Dialogue Partner since 2004

Italy - Milan - Dialogue Partner since 2005

Japan - Tokyo Minato-ku, Tokyo Shinjuku - Dialogue Partner since 2010

Lithuania - Vilnius - Dialogue Partner since 2016

Malaysia - Kuala Lumpur - Dialogue Partner since 2013

Mexico - Monterrey - Dialogue Partner since 2014

Russia - Moscow - Dialogue Partner since 2020

Singapore - Dialogue Partner since 2009

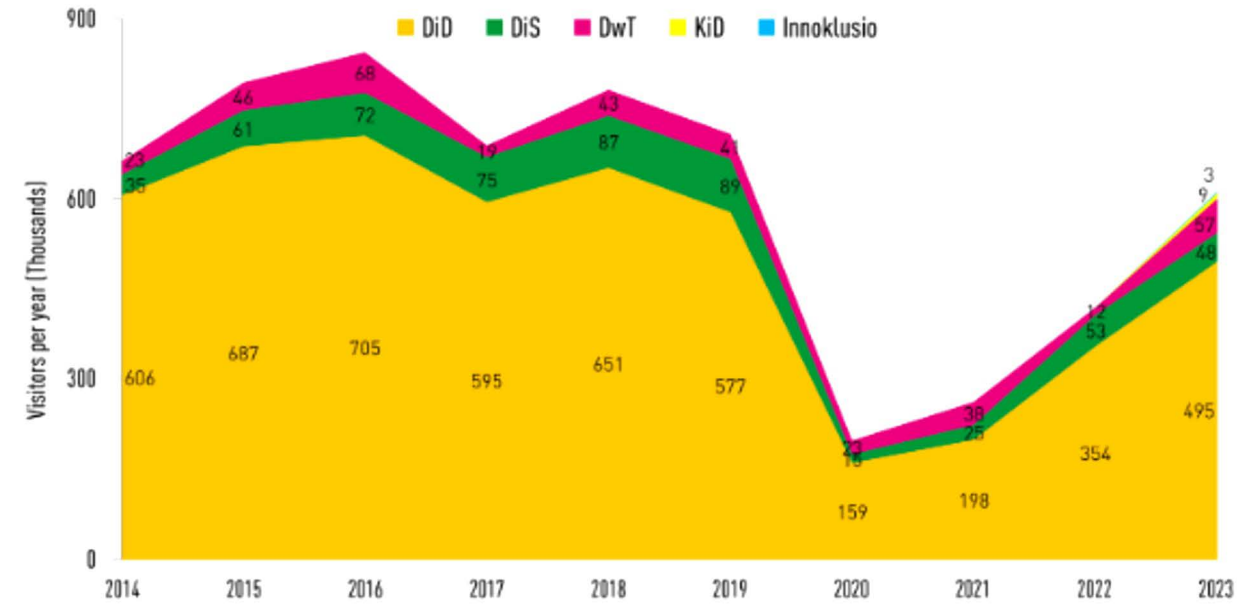
Singapore (Dialogue with Time) - Dialogue Partner since 2017

South Korea - Seoul, Dontang - Dialogue Partner since 2010

Taiwan - Taipei - Dialogue Partner since 2011

Turkey - Istanbul - Dialogue Partner since 2013

In 2023, there has been an amazing increase of public attendance:



people reached in 2023:

612 551

x3 compared to 2020 🧑🏿🧑🏻

+ 32% compared to 2022 🎉

This year, more job opportunities at Dialogue for people with and without disabilities:

employees in 2023:

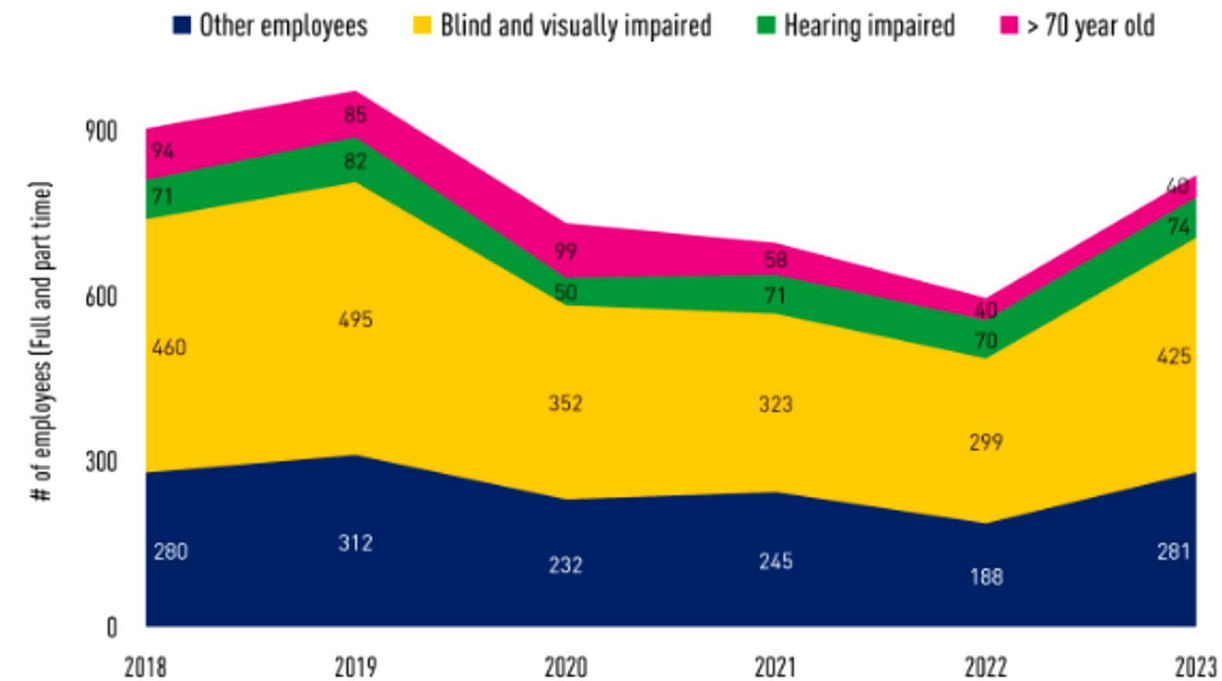
820

% employees with a disability:

66%

employees with disabilities transferred
to the open job market:

24



WHO WE ARE.

We're a mission-driven organization that has its roots in the creation of Dialogue in the Dark in 1988. We inspire dialogue that involves everyone and we create a world where inclusion is the driving force for a more equitable society. Every day we work to empower people through transformative learning experiences. We break down barriers and re-think social norms in order to drive sustainable change.

For social entrepreneurs, museums, universities or foundations, we're a social franchiser. We deliver consulting services to help them operate programs of the Dialogue portfolio in their local context. They, the Dialogue Partners, make the magic happen.

For organizations and businesses, we deliver experiential engagement and training programs that help them roll out successful Diversity and Inclusion strategies and build a new generation of inclusive leaders.

OUR IMPACT MODEL

THE OUPUT

Platforms for encounters and transformative learning.

Employment opportunities for blind, visually impaired, deaf, hearing impaired and elderly people.

THE OUTCOME

A transformative experience for the audience (visitors in the exhibition & participants in the workshops).

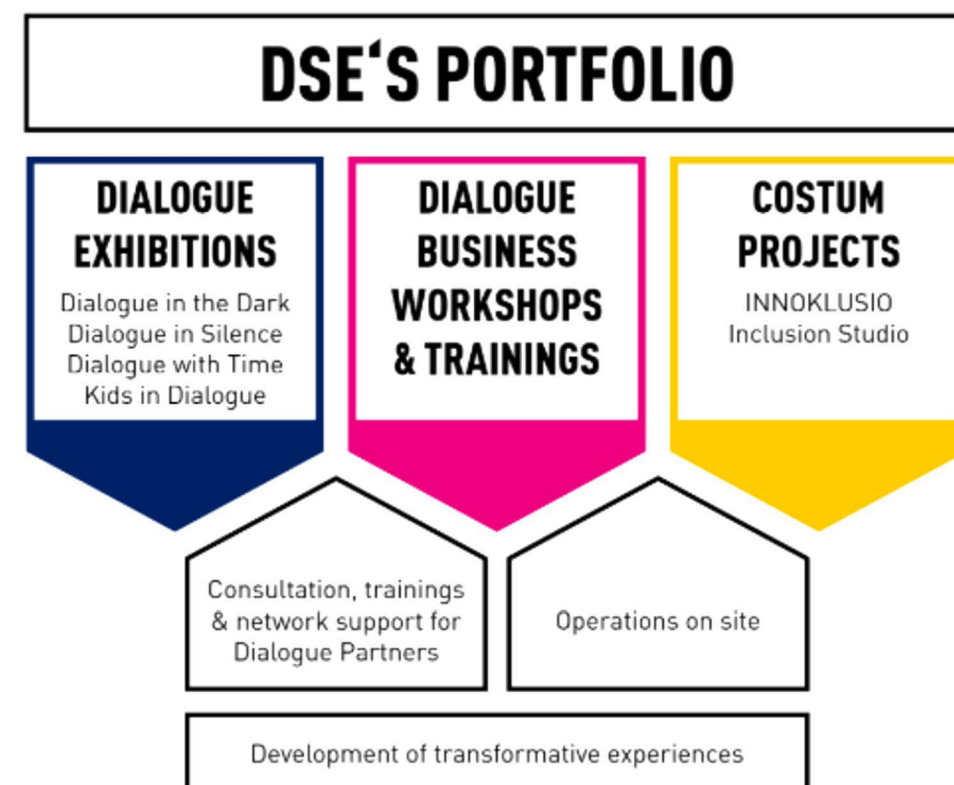
A professional context to empower co-workers.

THE IMPACT

Broken-down barriers and updated social norms towards diversity and inclusion.

OUR PORTFOLIO

Our portfolio offers different programs:



DIALOGUE IN THE DARK takes the audience out of their familiar environment and places them in the hands of a blind guide. Visitors experience these environments and daily routines in new and unfamiliar ways. The exhibition creates a reversal of roles with people who are blind providing visitors with a sense of security and helping them orient in a world without images.

DIALOGUE IN SILENCE follows the same principles. The setting is a sound-proof room where visitors wear sound-cancelling headsets. Before entering the exhibition visitors are instructed not to speak but to use only non-verbal communication with the deaf guide. They learn to listen with their eyes and express themselves with gestures.

DIALOGUE WITH TIME aims to foster an inter-generational dialogue and to overcome prejudices and stereotypes regarding old age. Guides are age 70 and older, and they lead visitors through the exhibition acting as facilitators with their expertise in aging.

KIDS IN DIALOGUE is an interactive exhibition for children aged 3 - 7 that raises awareness of inclusion and empathy. 15 exhibits invite you on a joint discovery tour in which the social and emotional intelligence of the children is strengthened. The exhibits and the simply written instructions invite young and older guests to engage in a dialog and provide opportunities for discussion.

DIALOGUE ONLINE is a series of online experiential learning sessions designed to help organizations and teams build inclusive work cultures that are more creative, resilient and productive. Sessions are built around the same transformative learning principles as our exhibitions and are mediated by a team of experts with lived experiences of disabilities.

INNOKLUSIO is a three-year model project of Dialogue Social Enterprise, funded by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs. INNOKLUSIO strengthens inclusion competence in the 14 participating companies of the project. To achieve this a mobile exhibition travelled from company to company, a leadership seminar provided training in inclusive leadership and an in-service education program promoted inclusion managers in the pilot companies.

INCLUSION STUDIO is a portable traveling exhibition about inclusion with different interactive stations where visitors can experientially explore topics such as inclusive language, external barriers, disability and more. It is designed to welcome numerous visitors during a few days stay at the hosting company. It also features a DiD Blackbox where visitors participate in a dark workshop on inclusion.

IMPACT, SMALL AND BIG.

Our CEO Svenja, our founder Andreas, and our colleague Pepe, share their thoughts on our impact:

SVENJA WEBER

CEO

We're thrilled to share the 2023 Impact Report, highlighting our achievements as a global community. It showcases the dedication, hard work, and creativity of each individual and our group as a whole.

In recent years, despite facing emotional and entrepreneurial challenges, we've witnessed growth and passion, expanding partnerships across 25 cities in 18 countries. Dialogue in 2023, increased its number of visitors and involved more employees with and without disabilities. These are not mere statistics; they depict the significance and demand for our work. The diverse approaches, from our well-known exhibitions and workshops, to online platforms, cafes, podcasts, outdoor activities fostering inclusion, demonstrate our commitment to use the power of dialogue and contribute to a more equitable society. The impact is not depending on the format, but on the people and drivers using the heart of our methodology and core values with creativity and passion. As we navigate post-pandemic challenges, including global issues like terrorism, we're adapting to new opportunities, leveraging technology for positive change.

This year's report emphasizes our commitment to create a fairer world through education and inclusion. The innovative projects and dedication of our global community have been crucial in driving this change.

Reflecting on our achievements, we're reminded of our collective strength. We, DSE team, want to thank our partners for the unwavering support and hard work. Let's continue this journey together, fuelled by hope and new ideas.





ANDREAS HEINECKE

Founder

We've been tracking the impact of the Dialogue exhibitions for years. I've hardly ever been more touched with the results than I am now.

2023 was an extremely challenging year. Firstly, it was year 1 after the pandemic and secondly, global political events also had an impact on Dialogue. On October 7th, war broke out in Israel and Gaza. Since then, Tel Aviv has been subjected to almost daily rocket attacks. Cultural life came to a standstill and Dialogue in Holon had to be closed.

The situation in Russia is also extremely difficult due to the war with Ukraine. Added to this is inflation with rising prices, which makes visiting exhibitions such as Dialogue in the Dark even more challenging. In short: even in its 35th year of existence, Dialogue in the Dark shows its importance and evidence, despite the major and threatening challenges outlined above. Last but not least, Dialogue in the Dark gets older in many places. Most of the Dialogue sites currently open around the globe, have been operating for more than 10 years, Hamburg and Holon for more than 20, and every leisure offer loses its attraction over time. Behaviour has also changed after the pandemic. People are more concerned with themselves, stay at home, save money and use inexpensive digital offers. But none of this can do much to Dialogue in the Dark. It has endured and underlines the importance of empathy and solidarity, especially in times of crisis. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this fantastic result.

PEPE MACIAS

Training & Content Development

The 3 Values of the Dialogue organization

In view of results in 2023 and the challenges we all face, the question is: how to create more impact? My suggestion is to put in action a 3-value formula: empathy, inclusion and social impact.

EMPATHY: When I became a guide, I had problems grasping the visitor experience, until I served as a spare guide, which allowed me to observe the tours from outside. Only then, I managed to empathize with visitors. Empathy is understanding what the other is thinking and feeling about a situation.

INCLUSION: Before DiD, I was working as a freelance translator, hidden behind my computer and without a need for a face-to-face meeting with the client. My objective was avoiding discrimination. Then I started as a DiD guide where inclusion happened. I was given a safe environment (the darkness), I had a clear role (guiding) and I could deploy my skills (the ability to manage groups, to speak in public, etc). Inclusion is creating the social, emotional and environmental conditions so that the people around us can express their full potential.

SOCIAL IMPACT: One night I was going home. A person approached me: "Do you need help getting anywhere?": I answered: "No, thanks. I already know the way." Then person responded: "Do you allow me to accompany you? I visited an experience called Dialogue in the Dark today. I know that walking without seeing these streets is not easy, and I would feel good if I could accompany you."

Impact is noticing and documenting the fruit of what we do. It ranges from cold numbers to a change of mindset and habits in visitors and guides.

WHAT'S NEXT

I propose two concrete actions. The first is to live each value deliberately in every encounter we have, both with visitors and guides. Make these values tangible in all processes, from the booking of a tour, the arrival at the venue, the wait, the tour and the experience afterwards. The second action is to document and demonstrate these values through manuals, videos, photographs, and other mediums, making them visible and tangible.



WHAT'S NEXT?

There is already amazing news and innovations for 2024 that will keep on making an impact.



INCLUSION STUDIO

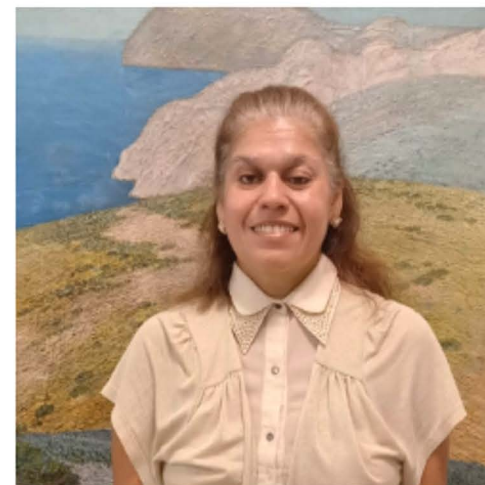
New format for business costumers

We plan to introduce a new format for the B-to-B business in 2024. The Inclusion Studio has an holistic approach and is more than just a workshop in the dark. Its interactive exhibit is portable and designed to be presented in a company for several days, attracting a large number of visitors. More news coming soon!

TIMESHIFT

Innovative dark experience at Dialoghaus Hamburg.

Our new concept combines darkness and technology with an escape room method. Inclusion plays an integral role in our future and this innovative encounter in the dark shows why. Tests already took place successfully at the Dialoghaus in Hamburg.



DID BUENOS AIRES

New DiD partner in Argentina.

Our network is growing again! After 3 years, we are back in Argentina! Our new partner, Arelis Pieve, former DiD workshop facilitator, opened a workshop center, which started operating in April 2024.