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## Product Design and Enable Ireland, Assistive Technology and Design for All.

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students learning with communities



Students Learning with Communities

# Product Design & Enable Ireland Assistive Technology & Design for All



## What is Assistive Technology (AT):

The ultimate objective of AT is to contribute to the effective enhancement of the lives of people with disabilities and elderly people, helping to overcome the barriers they experience in society, increasing their experience of independence, and positively contributing to their social inclusion.

## What's the Problem:

Assistive Technology has:

- High user abandonment rates,
- High user dissatisfaction.
- High Cost

## We get to experience the Problem:

Students of DT001 Product Design have linked with Enable Ireland's Assistive Technology Training Service. During visits to Enable Ireland students get to:

- Meet with Users of AT
- Meet with technical AT staff
- Use AT Devices
- Listen to User feedback of AT devices.

During reflective feedback sessions students discuss the issues with AT, which are mainly due to each person's experience of disability being unique, and more often requiring designs individually tailored for their needs.

## "Design for All"

&

## "Universal Design"

"Universal design seeks to encourage attractive, marketable products that are more usable by everyone. It is design for the built environment and consumer products for a very broad definition of user."  
- Ron Mace (1941 - 1998)

## A more Inclusive Society:

Is achieved by the bringing together of various sections of our society. DT001 Product Design students and people with disability discuss a common theme,

## "Remember "us" when you are designing in the future"

Through the concepts of "Design for All" & "Universal Design" students create design concepts based on improving AT devices or developing new devices to increase the independence of people with disabilities in society.





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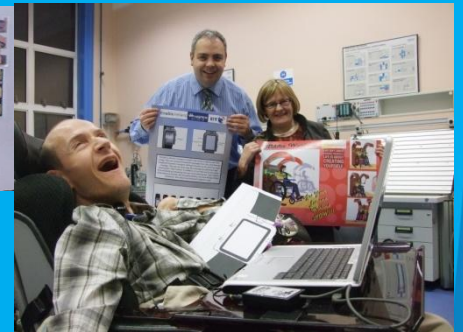


Students Learning with Communities

# Product Design & Enable Ireland Assistive Technology & Design for All



Exhibition in Microsoft



## What does Enable Ireland THINK!

"Students Learning With Communities has yielded huge dividends across Enable Ireland. Assistive Technology users have worked with DIT Product Design students to find new technology solutions to meet their needs and increase their independence."

"Many AT users were astounded that gaps they identified in the AT market might be filled by students. The immediacy of the students' response was what excited the AT users so much."

"Enable Ireland has benefited greatly from its collaboration with SLWC and with DIT's Product Designers."

"We've learned so much about design and about product design and assistive technology through our links with students."

"Their enthusiasm and fresh thinking have given us a shot in the arm, and have invigorated our own thinking in ways which we never anticipated before we began working together. Good design works, and can make a real impact on people's lives."

## How have Students benefited in the last 3 years?

- Students were asked to grade their experience on a scale from 0 to 100. Class average for these grades is
  - Important Experience, an average of **84%**
  - By how much has their perception of design changed, an average of **79%**
- IRCSET funding (government funding) (67k)
- BT Ireland funding
- Microsoft Presentations and offer of partnership for research
- Journal papers x 2
- Conferences papers x3
- Exhibition in **Enable Ireland** and across their Ireland Network
- 90 undergraduate concepts
- TV and Newspaper coverage

### Graduates of assistive technology training course showcase talents



## Our Common Goal:

**"Heavily utilized life changing product for people with disabilities in our society"**

