

**Launch of the EASPD INNOVATION AWARDS
Call for applications are now open!**



Over the past 25 years, EASPD has built a network that currently represents, through its direct members, over 17.000 support services for persons with disabilities and their families all over Europe. Our members are committed to implementing the UN CRPD in transforming their services, and in doing so, striving to bring about innovation and new approaches in developing high-quality services that promote the full participation and inclusion in society of all persons with disabilities. The services represented in the EASPD network cover the entire life cycle of the individual and include early intervention, education, employment, housing, leisure, culture, day-care, elderly, and residential support services.

The EASPD 25th anniversary which we celebrate this year is the excellent occasion to spotlight the achievements of our members as leaders of innovation paving the way to inclusion in implementing the UN CRPD in their services. Their continuous efforts and commitment to deliver high-quality services despite financial, political, and societal constraints have facilitated the enjoyment of human rights of millions of persons with disabilities across Europe.

To celebrate the work of our members, **we launch the EASPD innovation awards and open the call for applications through which we will select 25 innovative practices in support services.** The selected 25 practices will showcase the successful implementation of the UN CRPD at local/regional/national level through direct services or facilitating ecosystems which contributed to the delivery of high-quality community-based services for persons with disabilities in the 8 areas of focus of the EASPD member fora.

What are the areas of focus?

The innovative practices should be related to the thematic areas of the EASPD member fora, i.e:

1. Arts and culture

Topics here can include innovative practices referring to the implementation of Article 30 of the UN CPRD which support access to arts (addressing barriers such as the lack of accessible formats that inhibit persons with disabilities to access artistic and cultural activities, materials and places for performances and services such as theaters, museums, cinemas) and supporting artistic careers (artistic education and training for persons with disabilities), awareness-raising practices on building inclusive communities through the use of arts, and other relevant topics.

2. Early intervention

Topics here can include innovative practices in the field of early intervention supporting young children (and their families) in reaching their full potential, including professional training, the use of innovative therapies, practices supporting desinstitutionalisation, and other relevant topics.

3. Education

Topics here can include innovative practices referring to the different aspects of Article 24 of the UN CRPD – inclusive education in pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education; building inclusive learning environments, successful partnerships supporting inclusive education, use of innovative learning methods and technology to implement teaching methods with a Universal Design, and other relevant topics.

4. Employment

Topics here can include innovative practices referring to the implementation of Article 27 of the UN CRPD, such as, inclusive employment strategies of employers, supported employment services, social entrepreneurship, vocational training and adult education supporting job placement, inclusion consultancy services/trainings focusing on employers, and other relevant topics.

5. Inclusive living

Topics here can include innovative practices related to the implementation of Article 19: deinstitutionalisation, supported decision making, housing, participation in election, self-representation, co-production, independence in public spaces, development of inclusive communities, integration with mainstream services, strengthening access to legal and human rights, and other relevant topics.

6. Person-centred technology

Topics here can include innovative practices related to use of assistive technology (AT) or person centred technology (PCT) to improve service provision to end users in education, health, employment, care, housing, inclusive living, leisure, and other relevant areas; digitalization of social services to address the needs of persons with disabilities during the COVID-19 pandemic, and other relevant topics.

7. Policy impact

Topics here can include innovative practices in the areas of successful advocacy/lobbying practices that lead to new/improved policy/legal/financial frameworks for implementing the UN CRPD at national level, including the development of support services; innovative new or use of funding instruments for support services: either new

funding programmes or interesting use of financing instruments/models. e.g. state aid, public procurement, reserved markets, personal budgets and other relevant topics.

8. Workforce development & human resources

Topics here can include innovative practices in the areas of staff training, recruitment and retention strategies, working conditions, change management and leadership, and other relevant topics.

Who can apply?

The call is open for all EASPD members & observers and their affiliated associations and networks, including members of EASPD Umbrella organisations.

How can you apply?

If you believe that your support service fits in one or multiple categories listed above, you have a chance of featuring in the EASPD's innovation awards.

To be eligible for the Award, your **practice** needs to:

- Be provided by a EASPD member organisation (including observers) or affiliated associations, such as members of EASPD Umbrella organisations
- Demonstrate that it has contributed directly (through direct service provision) or indirectly (through facilitating ecosystems) to providing or improving access to high-quality services for persons with disabilities in line with UN CRPD
- Demonstrate why it is innovative in your local/regional/national context
- Be an active and on-going practice
- Have positive prospects for future activity, sustainability and scaling-up

If your programme/method/practice meets these conditions, you can apply by filling the following [on-line form](#) before 30th July 2021 AOB. You may fill in the form in your own language if you prefer.

Selection and award process

Once applications have been closed, 25 nominees will be selected as EASPD innovative practices by a specialized jury.

- **3 practices will be shortlisted for each of the 8 areas** (the jury will shortlist 4 practices either from the areas of Workforce development & human resources or Policy Impact)
- **Each of the 8 categories will feature a winner which will be awarded with the EASPD innovation award during the 25th anniversary celebrations.**

These selected 25 promising practices will be:

- Published in the EASPD 25th innovative practices booklet
- Featured on the EASPD website and Knowledge Hub
- Disseminated across the EASPD network
- Considered for selection as the winners of the EASPD innovation award

The 8 winners:

- Will have their costs covered to attend the EASPD anniversary conference in Brussels on 13-15 October 2021: 2 representative per winning organization (attendance fee, travel, and accommodation costs of maximum of 800 EUR based on real costs per person)
- Will receive an award during the 25th anniversary celebrations
- Will be promoted on all EASPD's communication channels