

By Brenda Battat



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From the Executive Director's Desk

All Ideas Welcome Here

The Ida Institute was established in 2007 as a nonprofit educational institute located in Copenhagen, Denmark, to foster a better understanding of the human dynamics associated with hearing loss. Now with a grant from the Oticon Foundation they are challenging people worldwide to create ideas to raise public awareness about hearing loss, to put hearing loss on the public agenda and to encourage people with hearing loss to take action and live life to the fullest.

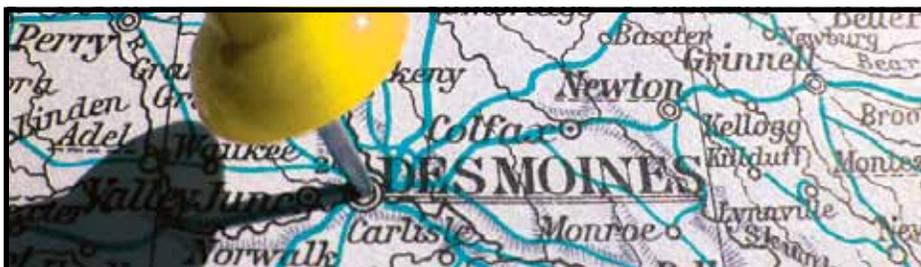
Does this sound familiar? This aligns beautifully with HLAA's goals and that is why we are promoting their effort. What is the Ida Institute's ideas? Speak up, share, vote, win. It's a global online competition to create ideas to inspire action and raise awareness for hearing loss. Everyone can participate and it's free to join. The idea competition is designed to involve hearing care professionals, students, patients, families and the general public in a joint effort to create ideas that can encourage action and raise awareness.

Join the Competition Online

From March to September 2012 participants share, debate, comment and vote for their ideas on www.awarenessforhearingloss.com. From October 2012 to February 2013 the top 10 ideas are further developed by professional consultants into implementation plans. Then in April 2013 three winning ideas will be presented at the American Academy of Audiology Conference in Anaheim, California.

Why is such a competition needed? More than 250 million people worldwide have hearing loss and 80 percent go untreated. Many attempts at raising awareness have been tried in the past and yet none have had any lasting impact. Now is the time to make a difference by coming up with ideas to get rid of the societal stigma that keeps people embarrassed and isolated. Remember how you wish someone had encouraged you to do something about your hearing loss sooner? So don't wait. Go to www.awarenessforhearingloss.com and post your ideas. You could make a big difference in someone's life. 

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There is more to hearing loss than a hearing aid or cochlear implant.

Visit an HLAA Chapter and meet others who also have hearing loss.

HLAA Chapters are supportive organizations where people with all degrees of hearing loss come together to share and learn—and where it's okay not to hear well. To find a chapter near you, go to www.hearingloss.org or call 301.657.2248. If you would like to start a chapter, contact Elizabeth LeBarron, national state and chapter coordinator, at elebarron@hearingloss.org.