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You Can Help Make Technology More Accessible for People with Hearing Loss

BY LISE HAMLIN

People with hearing loss often have a love/hate relationship with technology. When it works, it is wonderful! But when it doesn't, it makes the world that much more inaccessible.

Developers of technology may or may not know how to build accessible technology. But even those who do may not fully understand the everyday problems, large and small, faced by people with hearing loss: the seminar you'd love to attend but doesn't provide a listening system or captions; the remote control for the television that does not have a button for closed captioning; the telehealth appointment that doesn't have captions, with your doctor who has a heavy accent you can't understand.

Enter the Industry-Consumer Alliance for Accessible Technology (ICAAT). ICAAT is the first of its kind, bringing together people with hearing loss and tech developers. ICAAT helps in answering the question: How can we make the world more accessible for people with hearing loss?

ICAAT's mission is to inspire more accessible, innovative and responsive products from the ground up that meet the needs of these consumers. It offers lots of opportunities for consumers and industry to share and engage with one another, including:

Tech Forum

An online community for consumers and industry to share resources and information, post events and have discussions with other members in groups organized by topic.

User Stories

Short narratives contributed by consumers that document their everyday experiences and can be used by industry to inform, inspire and jump-start creative solutions to the problems that consumers face.

Co-Design Connect

A marketplace where consumers can find product research opportunities, and industry can recruit consumers to participate in product testing, product reviews, market research and design research. Consultations with hearing loss experts may also be requested by industry.

Co-Design Essentials

A collection of practical information for consumers and industry collaborations:

- Understanding product design, development and testing, effective product reviews, privacy and data usage considerations for consumers.

- Understanding identity, communication preferences, personal hearing technology use and best practices for communication access for industry.

ICAAT is a convenient place to exchange ideas, share information and resources and talk to other consumers. You can provide direct feedback to technology developers and find out about new technology.

Joining ICAAT is an easy way to help change the world by making it more accessible to people with hearing loss. But that won't happen without your involvement. Join today!

JOIN TODAY



An online community of consumers and industry inspiring more accessible, innovative and responsive technologies that meet the needs of people with hearing loss.



For more information and to sign up, visit allianceforaccess.org

Lise Hamlin retired in February 2024 as HLAA's director of public policy, after serving on our national staff for 16 years. Our new director of public policy is Neil Snyder. He can be reached at nsnyder@hearingloss.org.

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By joining ICAAT, you have access to:

- A tech forum to share experiences, knowledge, and ideas
- Market research and product testing opportunities
- Stories about technology and hearing loss in the real world
- Practical information for consumers and industry working together



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Coming Soon! HLAA is busy designing a new website to better serve the increasing number of people turning to us for information and support. Stay tuned for our new site launch later in 2024!