

WHAT
YOU
SHOULD
KNOW
ABOUT
US



Introducing:
SOZIALHELDEN!

Dear supporters,

Twelve years ago, my cousin Jan Mörsch and I founded the nonprofit organization Sozialhelden (Social Heroes). What started out as just a little idea of ours has continuously grown into a team of 17 people, passionately working on a variety of different projects today. Even in my wildest dreams I could not have imagined the impact of our activities.

We would like to take this opportunity to show you what we have accomplished so far.

Our most important realization has been that it not only takes motivated people to carry out successful projects, but also visionaries willing to financially support them. With this report we would like to give you an overview of our projects, hoping to convince you to become a supporter of our current and future projects.

With our mission statement “Make things happen” in mind: Won’t you become a supporter and join us in making the world a little bit better place?

Raúl Krauthausen

Raúl Aguayo-Krauthausen
Founder and Chairman of Sozialhelden e.V.



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THE SOZIALHELDEN: WHO WE ARE

“SUPERHEROES WITHSTAND THE TEMPTATION OF JUSTIFYING THEIR OWN INACTIVITY.”

Our name “Sozialhelden” means “Social Heroes” in English. Our super powers are problem solving and communicating effectively.

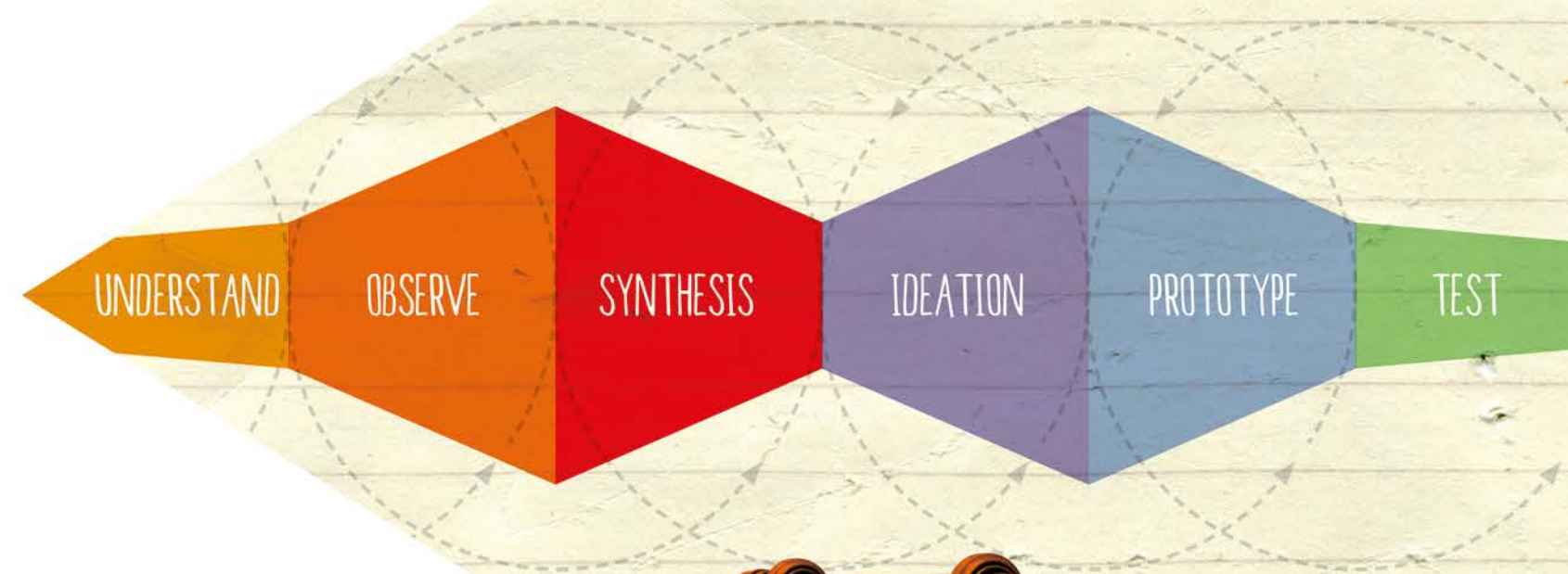
We develop our ideas and projects by seeing the world with open eyes, recognizing problems, and figuring out ways to solve them. On that road it is very important to us to carry out our work professionally, together with those for whom our projects are created and with our partners. We also find inspiration for our communication in the latest developments in advertising and marketing. Because new ideas must be seen and understood in order to have an impact.

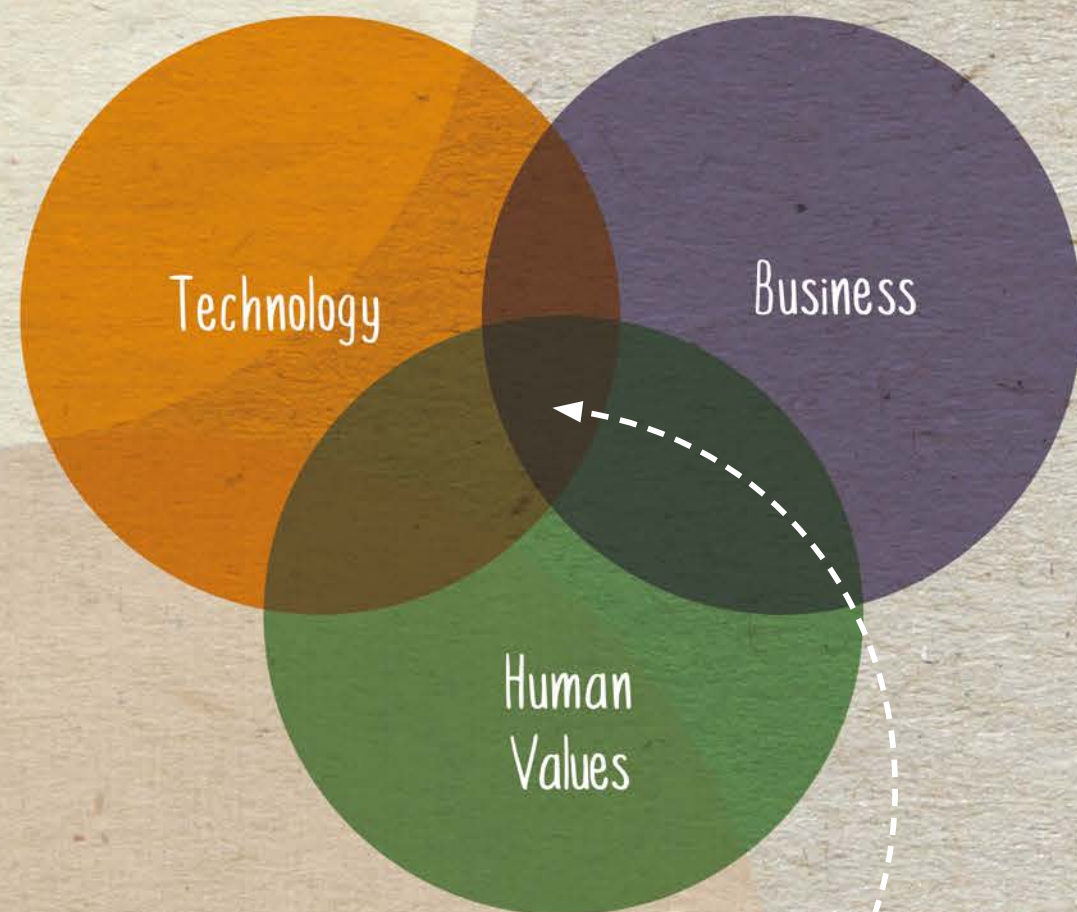
We have been doing what we do with passion and fun for over a decade now - but most importantly: we have not been doing it alone! We have been motivating people since 2004 to recognize their strengths and to find ways of

overcoming obstacles they might face. We are convinced that everybody has what it takes to be a Social Hero or Social Heroine.

“Make things happen” is our motto. Practical experience is what drives us, advances our projects, and opens our eyes to existing problems. That is how ideas for new and sometimes unexpected solutions evolve. Whenever we run into a wall, we find the right people to tear them down with. People who are ready to try new thing and put them in action, rather than spend a lot of time in discussions. We are grateful for such people.

We do not only come up with a plan, but we execute it, too. Otherwise wheelchair users still would not know where there are accessible cafés and media people could not inform themselves about reporting on disabled people without using stereotypes.





Innovation

OUR FOCUS: DISABILITY MAINSTREAMING

A BROADER PERSPECTIVE ON DISABILITY CREATES BENEFITS FOR EVERYONE

We make people, institutions, and businesses aware of the importance of concerning themselves with the topics of disability and inclusion and to not see them just as charity topics. The goal is to make it possible for people with disabilities to optimally use a wide variety of products and services and to have them be taken seriously as a target group.

Because people are usually disabled more by barriers and obstacles than by their wheelchair or their lack of vision. The elimination of barriers makes equal participation possible,

which is a human right anchored in the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which not only benefits people with disabilities.

With our experience we help businesses to identify problems, gain new perspectives, and develop solutions. There is an enormous potential for innovation. All it takes is a little courage and an entrepreneurial spirit for companies to generate added value, not only for themselves but also for our diverse society. That is Disability Mainstreaming.



WHEELMAP.ORG

The online map for wheelchair accessible places

“Why do we always meet at the same cafe?”, a good friend once complained to Raúl Aguayo-Krauthausen. Good ideas often come about in everyday life. That is also true of our Wheelmap, the digital map for wheelchair accessible places that is based on OpenStreetMap. “Why?” was the question that ignited the project and Café BilderBuch the map’s first entry. Our work has paid off.

Since 2010, everybody can find wheelchair accessible places, add them to the map, and rate them on their accessibility using a traffic light system – clear and easy.

Wheelchair users all over the world use the website Wheelmap.org as a tool for planning their day. It also works on iPhone and Android smartphones. Everyday engagement has thereby become very easy and possible everywhere: More than 900,000 places such as restaurants, cafes, supermarkets, and libraries worldwide are already on the map.

Supported by:

SCOUT 24





WHEELMAP.ORG ACTIVITIES

Working together for more accessibility in our neighborhoods

“If there are 1.6 million wheelchair users in Germany, then there must be 1.6 million people who know where there are wheelchair accessible places!”

Since Wheelmap came into being we knew that it would only be possible to increase the number of entries on the online map with the local knowledge and help of many people. Crowdsourcing is the word and events that encourage participation are the key to success.

The traffic light rating system makes rating places very easy for wheelchair users and non-wheelchair users alike. And it is the visible results that motivate people to participate: businesses, administrations, organizations, volunteers, pupils, students, and other interest groups organize their own mapping events locally. Whether as a ›MapMyDay‹ which can generate a lot of publicity, a pragmatic accessibility data initiative, or an inclusive education program – moving about is a good way to get things moving.



TRAVELABLE.INFO

Accessible travel information for cities and regions

Traveling has become easier than ever before. A wide variety of travel services are also available for people with disabilities. However it is often difficult or even impossible to find information in advance as to which destinations are suitable for the specific needs of travelers with disabilities.

Travelable.info provides people with disabilities with information about accessible travel opportunities that is collected by local experts and edited by us. This not only includes information about accommodations, but also many important details ranging from traveling to and at the destination, tips for sightseeing, restaurants, cultural activities, and getting help in the case of an emergency.

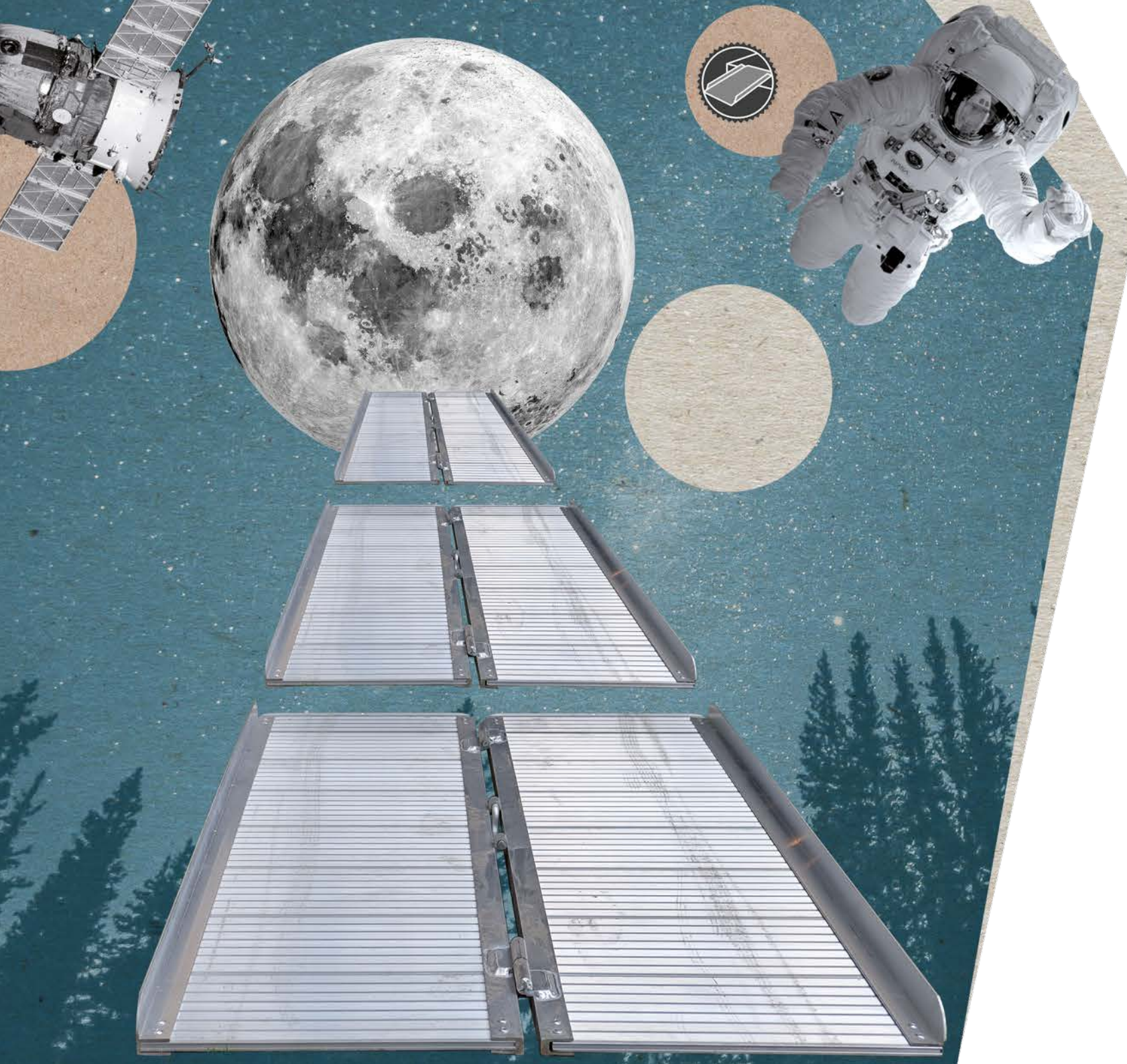
The goal is to give disabled people reliable information about their chosen vacation destination and its facilities.

Suggestions for wheelchair accessible day trips are another cornerstone of the project. The day trips are compiled by disabled locals who want to introduce their hometowns and favorite places.

Travelable.info started out as a project supported by the Aktion Mensch foundation in 2015. In the meantime almost a dozen day trips and a great number of websites with information on accessibility in German cities have been published on the website. Our plan for the future is to become a central hub for all disabled travelers, not only in Germany, but internationally.

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TAUSENDUNDEINE RAMPE

Accessibility made simple with a mobile ramp

We started the project “Tausendundeine Rampe für Deutschland” (One thousand and one ramps for Germany) in 2012. The idea: for every 100 Euros donated we would buy a mobile ramp that shops, restaurants, and bars could then apply for. Since the project started, we have received more than 50,000 Euros in donations and distributed 500 ramps throughout Germany. Donations for ramps are still coming in and local groups and “ramp ambassadors” continue to hand out the mobile slopes.

Since many businesses asked for an alternative to the donated ramps, we created the online shop www.Wheelramp.de for our entrepreneurial company, the Sozialhelden UG. The nonprofit Sozialhelden e.V. benefits from the profits of the ramps sold by the company.

Businesses regularly offer sponsorships through which they partly or fully finance large numbers of Wheelramps. This has resulted in the sale of more than 700 additional ramps already. And this is how one of our main goals is being reached, namely to improve the accessibility of the places marked as “not accessible” on Wheelmap.

The project easily make cafes, restaurants and many other places more wheelchair accessible. It is a hands-on project, easy to carry out, and a direct occasion for communication – the foldable ramp makes for an interesting story for local media.

Through donations and sales we have reached our initial goal of distributing 1,001 ramps, but we are happy to continue!



BROKENLIFTS.ORG

Check online which elevators are working - in Berlin and Brandenburg

Probably everybody knows that “Is-this-really-necessary-now-feeling” when having to get to an important appointment and getting stuck in traffic instead. What an annoyance! For people using public transportation with a wheelchair, wheeled walker or stroller, broken elevators regularly cause problems during a commute.

Knowing in advance if an elevator is out of service is as helpful as traffic radio and saves both time and energy.

The idea for BrokenLifts.org emerged during a hackathon in 2012. Since then we have professionalized the project by cooperating with the transit authorities of Berlin (BVG)

and Brandenburg (VBB). With the help of the agency HENKELHIEDL we developed a tool which provides information about the operational status of over 400 elevators on BrokenLifts.org. The result is an easy and useful service for everyone – one that will also be available beyond Berlin soon.

The project was awarded with the ›Deutscher Mobilitätspreis‹ in 2016.

Our goal is to make BrokenLifts.org available in many other cities and regions, too.



ELEVATE

Barrier free routing for people with limited mobility

With our project ELEVATE we are researching the requirements for a nationwide service, that can provide real time information about elevators in local, regional, and national public transportation. The goal is to give transit authorities and other participants the opportunity to use this data with the demands of travelers with limited mobility in mind and to make it easier for them to plan their travel routes.

An example amongst many of how this information could be used is a »subscription« on notifications about certain elevators that a person knows they will need to take on their way to work. In case any of the elevators is not working, the person could be woken up earlier that morning in order to still get to work on time.

In order to make a nationwide information service possible, existing data from various public transportation providers has already been integrated into our database. Additionally, more owners - nationally and internationally - of elevator data need to be encouraged to contribute their data. We are working on a uniform data format on the basis of which information can be made available through an interface (API).

Supported by:



Bundesministerium
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ACCESSIBILITY.CLOUD

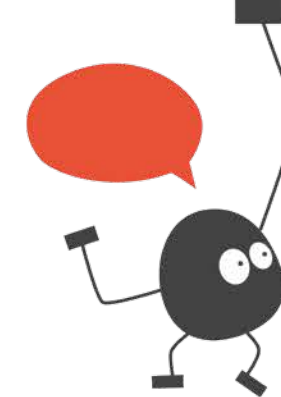
Connecting databases that highlight accessible places

Already during the development of the Wheelmap, our long-term vision was to harmonize the existing data chaos on the accessibility of places and to make the availability of this information the norm and not an exception – especially in popular mainstream products that people use every day.

Information about accessibility should be as readily available as opening hours or phone numbers. The Accessibility Cloud is a big step in that direction. Many other organizations like ours, both within and outside of Germany, had similar ideas and have built databases containing valuable accessibility information, many providing much more information than merely wheelchair accessibility.

For example, the activists at Jaccede in France have described countless hotels in great detail and the city of San Francisco has published the locations of all parking spots for the disabled. By developing the Accessibility Cloud we have created a tool which bundles all of the different information and ratings about a place in one overarching “cloud” of data. We connect this data to Wheelmap and show it as additional entries in the online map. Similarly, Wheelmap entries can appear in all the other participating apps, thereby generating substantial added value for different user groups around the globe.

Initially supported by: 



LEIDMEDIEN.DE

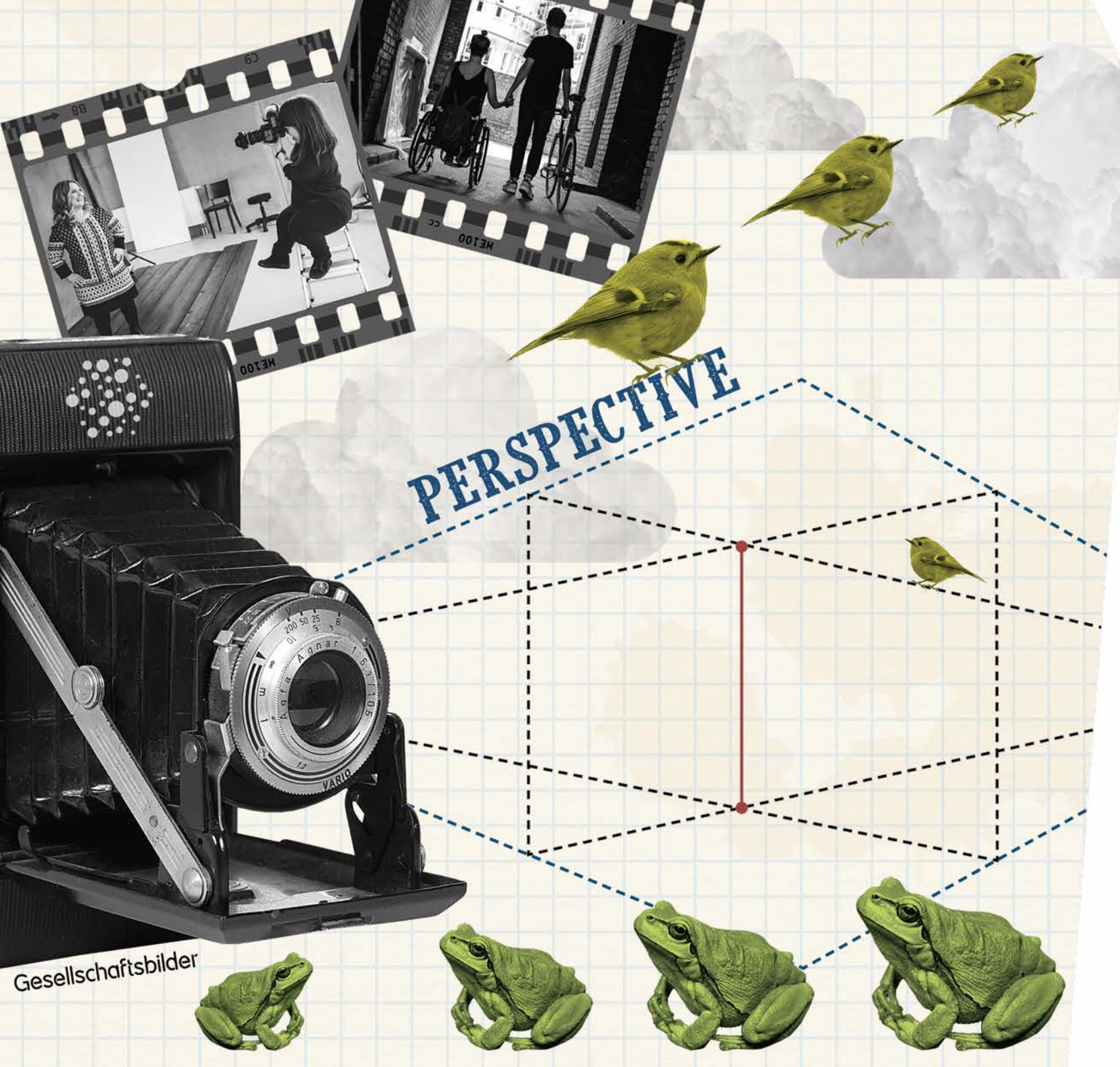
Media coverage about disabled people that does not use stereotypes

“Raúl Aguayo-Krauthausen suffers from brittle bone disease and is wheelchair-bound” – reports such as this one about the founder of the Sozialhelden spawned the idea for Leidmedien.de. The Website provides advice for journalists who strive to report about people with disabilities as equals. We have gathered useful advice both about the wording of texts dealing with disabilities and about interacting with disabled interview partners. On the website’s blog, authors write about current TV shows, movies, art exhibits and online discussions. We encourage an open, constructive debate – frequently also on our social media channels. This often leads to interested readers pointing out the use of stereotypical language and clichés to journalists.

We have been giving workshops for media people since 2013, with a focus on images and language and the accessibility of media. We give talks, host podium discussions, organize lectures and give advice on topics related to inclusion to the organizers of events. Our partners include the Deutscher Journalistenverband, the Neue Deutsche Medienmacher, and the Grimme-Akademie, just to name a few. Together with the makers of the German daily newspaper “Die Tageszeitung” we edited an entire issue of the newspaper.

In cooperation with:

Aktion
MENSCH



GESELLSCHAFTSBILDER.DE

A photo database for more diversity and new perspectives

In the summer of 2016 we introduced the photo database Gesellschaftsbilder.de (Societypix.org). It is aimed at newsrooms, media people, bloggers, and anyone interested in using photos that are free of stereotypes in their work. The photographers work closely with their models in order to produce authentic images.

We want to set a new standard for journalists looking for modern images depicting disabled people and inclusion. Since the database was launched the photos have been very well received and are being used by magazines, newspapers, and websites. Additionally, the photographers are regularly being booked by agencies working on assignments involving diversity.

The goal is to further develop the database in order to cover more topics (e.g. people with migration background or same sex couples in daily life), to broaden the network of photographers involved, and to get the attention of more media, organizations and agencies so that more of society's diversity will be shown.

Supported by: 



RAMP-UP.ME

Make events accessible and inclusive

Whether it is by using a new design, by inviting well-respected speakers or by booking extraordinary locations – events outdo themselves every year to attract more visitors. Unfortunately, these events are often not accessible for everybody because there are stairs at the entrance or no sign language interpreters booked. Raúl Krauthausen, too, has been invited to events where he could not get on to the stage with his wheelchair because there was no ramp available.

That is how the idea for the platform www.Ramp-Up.me emerged, where everybody planning an event can get advice on how to make conventions and congresses more accessible for more people. Furthermore it is our heartfelt wish to get more speakers on stage who reflect society in all its diversity, be they women, disabled people, people with a migration background or people with different sexual orientations.



DIE ANDERSMACHER

Disabled people opening up new perspectives for youngsters

Young people need role models who encourage them to make their dreams come true. Especially disabled children and teenagers often do not know any successful disabled people who could serve as their role models. Yet they need people who show them what is possible with a disability, to counteract an environment that far too often tells them what they cannot do.

With short video clips and diverse accompanying information the project introduces disabled people who have made their own way and have become successful and happy in doing so. Our current Andersmacher (those who do things differently) are a deaf martial artist, a blind attorney, an actress with Down syndrome, a carpenter and a cook in training, and a wheelchair skater. They have all chosen a path that society, and often even their family and friends, would not have expected. With this project we seek to reach young

people without disabilities, too, in order to challenge existing prejudices or to prevent them from developing at all. Parents, teachers, and employers are also meant to be encouraged to give young people a wide range of opportunities.

Furthermore, there is a list of independent career consultation agencies where disabled people can get information about employment opportunities and their personal budget.

In order to create more awareness for the Andersmacher among young people and to motivate them in their career choices, we would like to produce more videos and to introduce more professions and people with disabilities.



DIALOGBEREITER

Refugee shelters and their neighborhoods

Refugees go through different phases when coming to Germany: arriving, experiencing, learning and becoming independent. During that time the requirements for appropriately accommodating the newcomers and involving the local neighborhoods evolve.

A positive interaction between the new and old neighbors has a great influence on an individual's chances of a successful integration. Over the last few years engaged people all over Germany have gained a wealth of experience in this field.

Our team of six, consisting of refugees, volunteers, and former municipal employees gathered these impressions and experiences in a guidebook full of practical advice. It seeks to support those who are involved in and around new and existing refugee accommodations so that mistakes can be avoided and opportunities recognized sooner.

During workshops, group discussions and round tables, paid staff, volunteers and refugees benefitted from the advice and experiences that had been gathered around the country.

Gefördert durch:



Bundesministerium
des Innern, für Bau
und Heimat

aufgrund eines Beschlusses
des Deutschen Bundestages



” Google.org backs big ideas with the potential to change the world. We’re proud to support Wheelmap and the Sozialhelden team’s innovative efforts to address accessibility challenges through technology, and

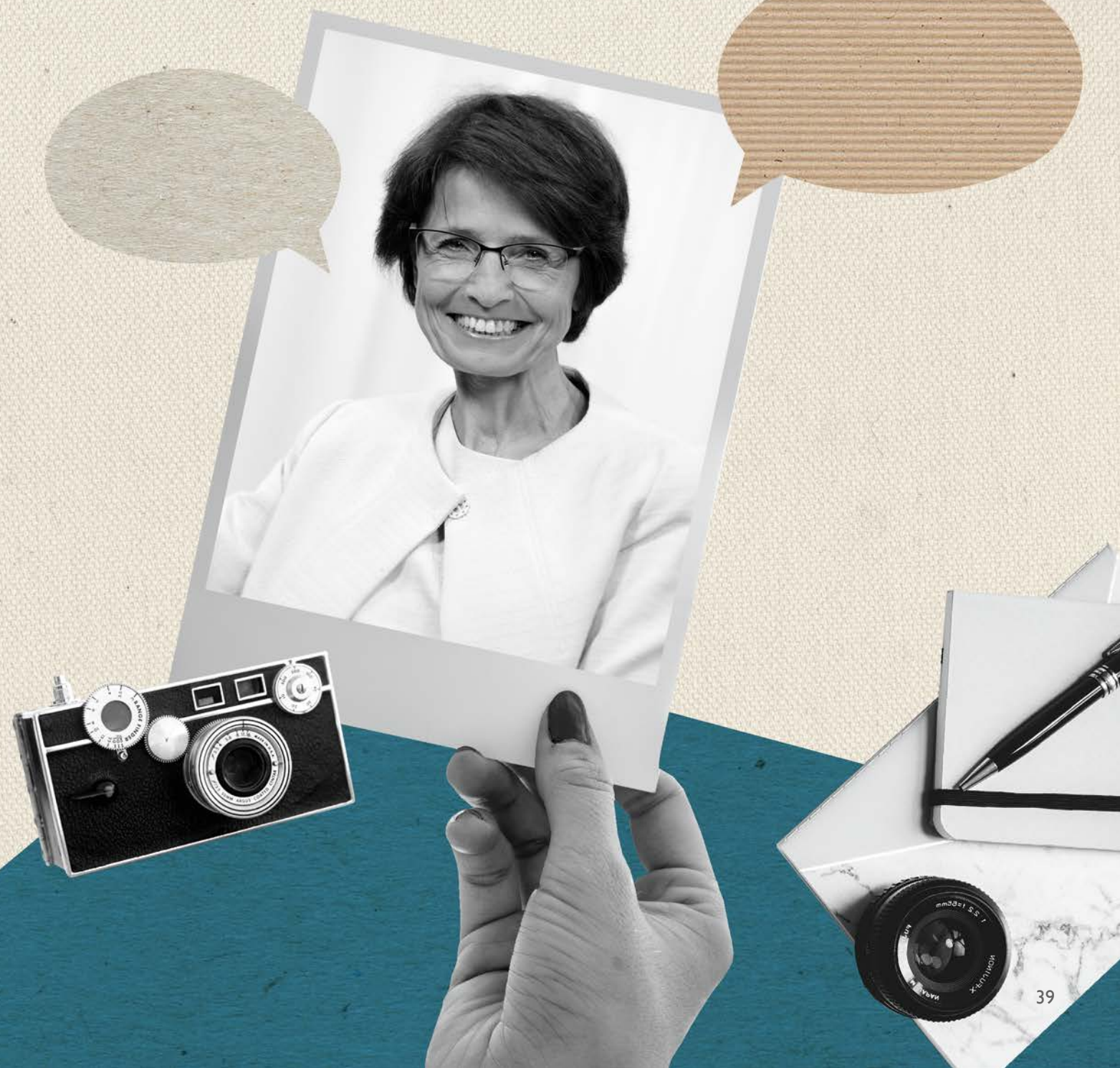
we see the the Accessibility Cloud project as an important step in helping to make the world more inclusive for millions of people with mobility restrictions.”

Jacqueline Fuller
VP Google & President Google.org

” Disabled persons face a much higher risk of social exclusion than the general population. Moreover, it is expected that in 2020, one European out of five will experience a degree of disability. This Commission has put inclusive growth and social fairness at the core of its agenda, and it is working hard to make sure that no one is left behind. That is why I have proposed the European Accessibility Act. It aims to offer people with disabilities in their daily lives a greater supply of accessible products and services – at better prices. It will help to improve the participation in society and the labour market of people with disabilities.

However, accessibility does not happen overnight: in order to break down barriers, we first need to be able to identify them, also the hidden ones. We then need smart solutions to overcome them. And we finally need a supportive regulatory environment and a shared commitment of all stakeholders to make these solutions a reality. That is why I warmly welcome the initiatives of Sozialhelden, which put EU financial support at the service of concrete improvements in the lives of many people with a disability in Germany and beyond. “

Marianne Thyssen
European Commissioner for Employment,
Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility



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You want to know more about
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Just send us an email to:
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HEROISM MADE EASY

You can find all the projects that you can support here:
www.sozialhelden.de





SOZIALHELDEN