



BRESCIA
7 - 9 September

***Sixth International Conference
on Universal Design***
**Transforming our World
through Universal Design
for Human Development**



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Special Edition: UD2022 Conference

**Selected papers from the International Universal Design Conference
held 7-9 September 2022 in Brescia, Italy.**

'Frontrunners' Understanding of Universal Design in Architecture

Abstract

In Denmark, the building sector is in a state of transition towards Universal Design (UD). Thus, UD has not yet completely found its way into the practice of architects and their clients. Legislation about accessibility has dominated. This paper studies understandings of UD through a discourse analysis based on a survey among professionals with experience and interest in UD and professionals who were expected to keep their fingers on the pulse of the profession's development.

The findings illustrate the existence of five discourses: 1) Social sustainability, 2) Re-instatement of humans as a focal point, 3) It is not just about ramps, 4) Equality, and 5) Giving a voice. Across the discourses there exists a genuine attempt to legitimise and

mainstream UD into the architectural practice, focusing on multisensory and architectural quality in the design of spaces for human diversity in all scales.

[Making Research More Inclusive: Is Universal Design of Research the Answer?](#)

Abstract

Researchers typically declare in the methods section of scientific papers that the study included a representative sample. A closer look at the composition of participant groups, however, reveal that these samples are typically based on criteria such as age, educational background, and a binary gender division. Nothing is mentioned about other characteristics e.g., functional, or neurocognitive variations. Consequently, many “representative samples” do not really represent the whole population, but rather the majority.

In this perspective paper, we argue that there is a need for more inclusive research considering the broad diversity of people. We discuss whether Universal Design of Research (UDR) is a purposeful approach. We go through the proposed definition of UDR and apply three topics as examples, namely participant characteristics, communication, and study design. The overall conclusion is that UDR might be purposeful for many studies but is not ethical or purposeful in all types of research. There is, however, a need for a more precise and comprehensive definition of UDR to comply with ethical requirements and to be purposeful for researchers. We therefore conclude by suggesting a revised definition.

[Universal Design in Exhibit](#)

Abstract

Universal Design has become more prevalent in the general use of architectural design but has rarely been applied to exhibits. This paper features two manuals developed for exhibit accessibility that incorporate several principles of Universal Design.

Note: this paper is about Brookfield Zoo and exhibit planning. It's a short paper with photographs.

[Rethinking Play Environments for Social Inclusion in Our Communities](#)

Extract from Abstract

The paper presents the results of a study carried out in order to investigate the inclusiveness of outdoor playgrounds and introduces the need of new perspectives towards a new and innovative view of inclusive playgrounds.

The development process of the checklist for assessing the inclusiveness of outdoor playgrounds involved four steps. Step 1: Definition of the main concepts of investigation and generation of the items on the basis of the relevant literature and best practices. Step 2: Scaling and scoring. Step 3: Pilot test to verify the real applicability of the checklist. Step 4: Design of the final checklist.

The final checklist was applied to a sample of playgrounds belonging to an Italian urban area selected as a case study in order to make a picture of the state of the art of the playgrounds built in recent years.

The importance of inclusive playgrounds is recognized by everyone at a theoretical level, but in practice it is still necessary to promote, implement and verify the culture of accessibility and inclusive play. If we want inclusive cities, it is necessary to find skills and resources as well as effective operational tools to map the critical issues of existing playgrounds and to implement restyling interventions or new projects of successful and comprehensive inclusive play environments.

[Designing Hospitals Through the Lens of Universal Design. An Evaluation Tool to Enhance Inclusive Healthcare Facilities](#)

Abstract

Various studies highlight a gap on reliable methods to measure the quality of projects and environments in terms of Universal Design (UD) and Design for All (DfA). In particular, healthcare facilities need decision support systems to improve the well-being of as many users as possible through a systematic approach. The present research proposes an evaluation tool to support designers and decision makers in the adoption of UD to develop healthcare facilities suitable for a wide range of users. Several methodologies have been adopted: an in-depth literature review on the current state of knowledge on UD evaluation, workshops and focus groups with both users and experts, and the analysis of four hospital case studies.

The result was an evaluation framework built by using a Multi-criteria Analysis (MCA) methodology. The first version of the tool was applied to an American hospital and validated in an Italian pilot case study. The research outlines a tool called Design for All A.U.D.I.T., able to evaluate Physical, Sensory-cognitive, and Social qualities based on a hierarchical framework with criteria and indicators based on UD and DfA.

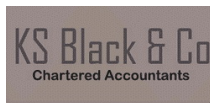
The framework evaluates the different areas of the hospital from outdoor to indoor spaces, allowing hospital administrators to act to improve the well-being of users

according to the critical aspects of UD identified by the tool. The analysis provides a report of the facility status and design strategies to support designers for new projects or buildings renovations.

The application shows that DfA A.U.D.I.T. can assess hospitals by examining both spatial qualities and DfA criteria. The tool could represent a decision support system in the national and international context, where many hospitals are not newly built. Further research will include application in different facilities and building typologies, aided by the flexible structure of the tool, which allows measurement of the environment's quality in terms of DfA and UD.



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