

# Weimar Declaration

## from the **universal design** expert conference

### from November 12 to 14, 2009

#### Preamble

*universal design* involves the design and development of products and environments that can be used by all people – as far as possible – without requiring any adaptation or specialized customizations. There are many differences between the worlds of the young and old, the healthy and the ill, of people with and without disabilities. One topic in the field of design, however, forms the basis of what they all have in common: well-designed products, properly planned architecture and services designed to meet specific needs.

In this context, design takes on a position of great responsibility. After all, functionality, ergonomics, the right choice of materials, visualization of intended use and user interfaces are just as firmly anchored in this discipline as aesthetics. We are already confronted with the demographical effects and developments in their entire breadth today. In the future, these developments will require us to make significant changes and to exhibit a high degree of willingness to innovate.

The significance of the tasks described with the words *universal design* has not yet been sufficiently communicated for the general public to truly understand and see what it is all about. It has not yet touched many different areas of society. *universal design* is the N° 1 challenge to the field of design for the next decades! Germany has a long history of developing and evaluating products, architecture and services in the light of their demographic impact. There is much more that still needs to be done to transform this potential into future-proof, commercially viable and results-oriented strategies.

... » *universal design* « is the design of products, environments, programs and services that can be used by all people to the greatest possible extent, without requiring any adaptation or customized design.

Excerpt from the UN Charter on the Rights of the Disabled

The signatories of the Weimar Declaration hereby state that:

- universal design** places the main focus on people.
- universal design** is not only a design topic.
- universal design** is an interdisciplinary task.
- universal design** is open to all users.
- universal design** creates service systems.
- universal design** is a process, not a standard.
- universal design** promotes social inclusion.
- universal design** deals with questions concerning the future.
- universal design** is a mindset and a responsibility.
- universal design** must be firmly anchored in the education system, early and continually.
- universal design** undertakes to enlighten the worlds of politics and industry.
- universal design** secures and promotes economic growth.

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