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DISENEX

DISability ENTrepreneurship EXpert

BOOKLET



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SE
PRIDEM.SI

Aljoša Skaper

It all started in 2013 when Aljoša broke his spinal cord and has been in a wheelchair ever since. A few months after the accident, he talked to his wife about the accessibility of restaurants for the disabled, and the idea evolved into the development of a portal that would contain this information. He then developed the idea further, with over 1700 accessible locations on the portal, which summarizes practical aspects of accessibility for the disabled. He loved traveling before the injury and wanted to pursue this passion despite having in mind different communities who could also benefit from such information.





No support was available. He mainly received support from his personal environment and just brief information about the business's regulative environment.

He mainly perceives the impact through never giving up and having a purpose to help others, and connect with the community. The accessibility of space is one of the most important features in order to be able to enjoy traveling and broadening horizons.

Aljoša is also known as a successful wheelchair handball-player.



www.pridem.si



SE
**FOUNDER OF A PERSONAL
ASSISTANCE
INSTITUTION**

Jure Srebrović



Jure is visually impaired. However, he could pass different levels of formal education, including theology, and vocational rehabilitation. He was also working in a nursing home and helping in carpentry owned by his father. As a blind person, he could hardly find an ordinary job. Despite it, he did not give up and kept fighting to fulfil his dream of being financially independent.

The logo for NOVA MOC features the word "NOVA" in large, multi-colored letters (N: red, O: yellow, V: green, A: blue) and "MOC" in blue. Below "NOVA" is the word "osebna" in orange and "asistenca" in blue. To the right of "MOC" is a small red butterfly and a green caterpillar.

www.nova-moc.si

He received much support from the Maribor and Koper associations in dealing with bureaucracy while establishing his company. The idea of providing home care assistance was supported by his family, friends, and the rest of the community as well. Followingly, the home care institution, “Zavod Nova Moč”, has emerged. He has received additional training in the first year at the Slovenian Ministry of Labour, Family, and Social Affairs.

Despite his disability, he can help others by offering them personal assistance. This fact provides him with the most inspiration. He believes that his positive impact on society is that people realise that even though one may be blind, there are endless possibilities.



SE
**OWNER OF A COMPANY
THAT SPECIALIZES IN
PRINTING, GRAPHIC AND
DESIGN SERVICES FOR
ADVERTISING PURPOSES**

Bogdan Babšek

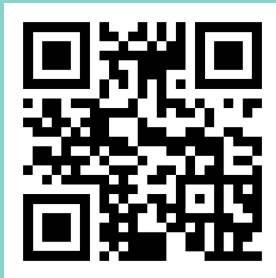
Bogdan is the owner of the “BATIS PLUS - tiskarstvo, ekonomska propaganda d.o.o.”

Bogdan is physically impaired and relies on a wheelchair. After finishing high school in Kamnik, he came back home and started servicing old radios and TVs, in the hope to become a representative of several renowned brands. Unfortunately, due to stiff requirements, those hopes were gone.





tiskamo u barvak
www.batisplus.com
REKLAMNI ATELJE - *Batis*



www.batisplus.com

Back then, in the mid-1990s, there were fewer computers than today, so he started helping people make postcards and other printed materials. Finally, he came up with the idea of starting his own business.

At first, he had no support. Then he cooperated with another company as an independent business unit, which later became a separate company.

Despite many sleepless nights and stress, he managed to change his own life as well as the life of his loved ones. Earned income allows him to feel safe financially and to be able to afford vacations, therapies, and personal development.

He also feels responsible for others by assisting many local organizations (societies and clubs). Taking part in many humanitarian projects in which his employees are also involved, he firmly believes that he can change the life of other people for the better.

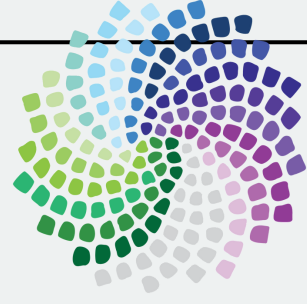


SE
**FOUNDER OF A
COMPANY FOR
PERSONAL
CONSULTATIONS**

**İlknur
Peder**



In 2003, İlknur founded the “Bridge” (“Köprü”) Consultancy and Personal Development Company. Her company provides consultancy services for PWDs and offers psychological support to PWDs and other disadvantaged persons. İlknur pleads for fundamental rights of persons with a disability.



www.ilknurpeder.com.tr

Ilknur has a physical disability herself. At the same time, she chairs the Izmir Branch of the Turkish Association of People with disabilities. She is also in charge of the Health Board of the Izmir Chamber of Commerce.

Banned from school because of her disability, Ilknur could not get basic education. She learned to read and write with her feet on her own. She read many books in different disciplines and improved herself. She has been dreaming of becoming a psychologist, whom she saw in a movie. To fulfill it, she completed primary school and a high school with external exams. Then she passed the university exam and studied at the Psychology Department of Ege University. She finally graduated from the University and was one of three best students in her class, though her family was against her education. After her education was completed, she founded a company to change the environment and fight the discrimination she has been facing throughout her life.

Before establishing her workplace, Ilknur attended many vocational and clinical training courses provided by universities and counseling centers. She says that the most important effect on her life from running a company is a feeling of social acceptance.



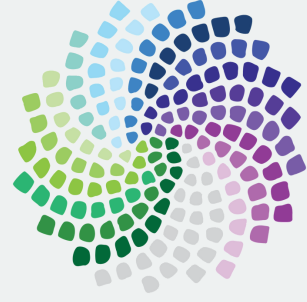
SE
**FOUNDER OF A
COMPANY HIRING
PEOPLE WITH
DISABILITIES**

Ferhan Turhan



Ferhan founded the “GEKO - Disabled Entrepreneurs Cooperative” in 2015. The company’s activity focuses on the production of bioorganic vermicompost. They also manufacture seedlings and sell organic agricultural products. Like many of his employees, Ferhan has a physical disability. Today, there are ten of them, who work for the company.

He established a business to ensure the full and effective participation of people with disabilities in social life.



<https://www.facebook.com/girisimciengelliler/>

At the beginning, Ferhan received the İŞKUR-Entrepreneurship grant. For the next three years, İŞKUR supported the company. It helped to ensure its development and expand the product range as well. Ferhan likes working with people with disabilities and sees himself as a colleague rather than a boss. The possibility to contribute to the preservation of the environment by making bioorganic products gives him satisfaction.



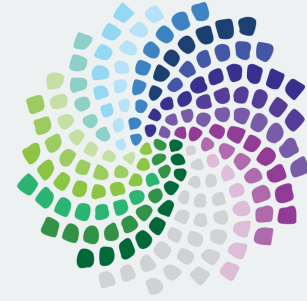
SE
**FOUNDER OF A
TECHNOLOGICAL
COMPANY FOR
FACILITATION OF PWDS'
DAILY LIFE**

Burhan Burak Oral

“I am happy because I’m in the right place.”

Burhan Burak is the founder of “Virtual Nous Company” which develops technologies to facilitate PwDs’ daily lives. He had been dreaming of being an entrepreneur for years. Because of this desire, he preferred to work in start-ups instead of working in companies since his college years. Burhan Burak is physically impaired.





VIRTUAL NOUS

Yazılım Araştırma ve Geliştirme San. Tic. Ltd. Şti.



<https://www.linkedin.com/in/bburakoral/>

From his own experience, he knows how difficult the life of people with disabilities in Turkey is. At college, he was active as a member of the Disabled Student Unit and could make friends with many people with disabilities. Then he realized that artificial intelligence and image processing technologies would make their lives easier. After receiving a grant from the TÜBİTAK (Scientific and Technological Research Institution of Turkey) Entrepreneurship Support Program, he was able to establish a company. TÜBİTAK Program provides support for companies that develop high-tech products and services by evaluating the technology and innovation-oriented business ideas of other entrepreneurs. Besides TÜBİTAK, he received both office and mentoring support from the Minerva Incubation Center of Yaşar University.

Despite the unpredictable outcome, Burhan Burak did not give up and kept trying. He believes that too high expectations always bring disappointment, and this can prevent one from reaching one's true potential. The idea to change the lives of others for good gives him the inspiration to keep working even harder than before.



SE
**FOUNDER OF A COMPANY
THAT MAKES EQUIPMENT
FOR VISUALLY IMPAIRED
PEOPLE**

Ayhan Öztürk

Ayhan is the founder of a company that manufactures white canes. Having graduated from a vocational high school, Ayhan worked as a technician at Sabancı Holding before the injury that made him blind. Despite his good economic and social environment, he was depressed after losing the ability to see. He attended "Emirgan Rehabilitation Center for the Visually Impaired" where he learned how to cope with with blindness. He was in training to use a white cane and computer during rehabilitation.





NETGOR
baston



www.netgor.com.tr

Then, he faced all the difficulties affecting the lives of visually impaired persons. At first, the imported products he was in need of were expensive. Inspired by the other people with the same disability, he decided to produce white canes to improve their lives. His technical knowledge also helped him to start a company.

The small business was launched with his own resources. Shortly after that, his company received a prize after winning a competition organized by a supermarket chain. He was through hard times both financially and emotionally. Nevertheless, his business is going well today.



SE
**FOUNDER OF A SOCIAL
AND CULTURAL
INITIATIVE FOR
WOMEN WITH
DISABILITIES**

Gamze Elibol

Gamze is the founder of "Türkiye Engelsiz Sanatçılar Merkezi-TEKSEM". Theatre and handicrafts divisions within TEKSEM exist on a voluntary basis. All incomes go to cover the medical equipment (such as wheelchairs, standings chairs and pushchairs) as well as the food, education, clothing expenses of 121 students and children with disabilities.





www.teksem.net

She lost the ability to walk due to an allergic reaction to a penicillin injection at the age of two. Since then, she has been in a wheelchair.

After graduating from high school, Gamze tried to become an actress and applied for a place at Mimar Sinan University.

Her application was declined even without an interview due to a discriminative law article that people with disabilities were not supposed to be accepted. Therefore, she established a special institution for those who want to try theatre but cannot do so, neglected by society. Thus, in 2002 the Türkiye Centre of Artists without Disabilities (TEKSEM) came to life.

This centre is a unique place now. It helps people with disabilities to develop themselves in art and fulfil their dreams. TEKSEM provides employment, helps impaired women to get financial freedom and supports their personal projects as well.



SE
**FOUNDER OF A
COMPANY THAT
PROVIDES
CONSULTATION
SERVICES FOR PWDS**

Ali Aydođmuş

“...There were times when I thought about giving up, but today I am glad I continued.”

Having graduated from the Faculty of Business Administration, Ali continued his education at the Department of Tourism and Travel Management. He had been working for the Ministry of Finance for 16 years, since 2001. Then he decided to start his own business and established the “Disabled Life Solutions Consultancy Company”, focused on life improvement for PWDS.





<http://www.eycdanismanligi.com/>

During his career in public service, he became a member of non-governmental organizations that gave him the opportunity to hear about problems faced by PWDs and to support their active participation in life. Ali is convinced that PWDs should be more visible in society. Thus, he supports them through his company. As a person with a disability himself, he knows the difficulties they usually face and can offer proper solutions.

He could launch a business, after receiving the KOSGEB entrepreneurship grant. To be in line with the application requirements, he had to attend a "Basic Entrepreneurship Course", which he successfully accomplished.

In the beginning, he had financial difficulties. His business has struggled against the prejudices of society. It was not easy to find customers at first. Most of them thought he was incapable of doing his work due to his visual impairment.

This discriminatory approach was hard to overcome. It took 2 years for Ali's company to get on its feet and generate revenue.



SE
**CENTRO STUDI AGORA
SOCIAL AND
EDUCATION CENTER**

Giovanni Bellante

Giovanni describes himself as a man who engages in the social field, rather than an entrepreneur. As a disabled person himself, he wanted to help others. So, in 1991 the “Centro studi Agorà” came to life. This is a political, social, and cultural center where different people come together to have access to various learning courses, social programs, and consultation services. Giovanni cooperates with many institutions: governmental bodies, municipal services, churches, and other religious communities so that as many as possible can receive the help they need.

His work seems to have a positive impact on the neighborhood. They have opened a government office for tax assistance and information. His team also helps people, for example, preparing them for public contests. Many skilled people work for the center today.



**Associazione
Centro Studi Agora**



www.centroagora.org



SE
“TOMPOMA”
MANUFACTURING OF
HIGH-QUALITY
CRUTCHES

Renato Brignone

Tompoma is a crutch with an unconventional patented design. That makes it an aesthetic item and a valuable aid as well.



The logo for Tompoma features a stylized, bold, italicized 'T' with a red square above its top left corner, followed by the word "Tompoma" in a bold, italicized, sans-serif font. A registered trademark symbol (®) is located to the right of the word.

<https://tompoma.it/en/>



Disabled from birth, Renato designed the first crutch to fulfill his own needs. It should have been durable, comfortable, and good-looking. Along with a practical purpose, Renato wanted his crutches to make people change their attitude toward that equipment commonly understood as bulky, uncomfortable, and annoying. Starting up, he himself had to invest a lot into his enterprise. Finally, he got funding from another private company.



SE
VIRGILIO FITNESS

Virgilio Coluzzi

For a person who has cystic fibrosis, sport is mandatory. Virgilio had to engage in physical activity since childhood, so it became his passion. Back then, there was no trainer who could help him. That inspired him to create his own training method. Thanks to his family, he gained attention and interest in the media, which then led to his story being shared.





VIRGILIO COLUZZI
PERSONAL TRAINER



<https://www.virgiliofitness.it/>

The illness affected his lungs. In 2017, Virgilio had to undergo a lung transplantation. This surgery saved his life but he had been recovering for almost a year.

Now, Virgilio is a personal trainer. He does virtual coaching and specializes in creating custom training programs for people with cystic fibrosis.



SE
**CAMBRATECH –
GOODS FOR
VISUALLY IMPAIRED
PEOPLE**

Raul Pietrobon

Raul had a permanent job but was not satisfied. Once he met an orientation and mobility specialist who showed him a white cane made in Canada. Raul found out that there are few such goods in Italy. So, the idea of importing it from abroad came up. Raul started engaging in this activity, with the primary intention to better his financial situation.





[https://www.facebook.com/cambratech.it/
events/?ref=page_internal](https://www.facebook.com/cambratech.it/events/?ref=page_internal)

Raul worked for the Italian Union of the Blind and Partially Sighted (Unione Italiana dei Ciechi e degli Ipovedenti) in the “Libro parlato” service and the “Dialogo nel buio” project.

Due to a lack of support from the state, he is trying to gather a group of people with sensory disabilities to apply for support from the government. Rauls says that he has to face the complicated Italian bureaucracy and inefficiencies of the local social services. His enterprise has to compete with e-commerce giants like Amazon. Despite all this, Raul is inspired and motivated since he can provide new goods and thus does not give up.

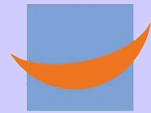


SE
HOTEL
"ALBERGO ETICO"

Antonio Pelosi

After a motorcycle incident in 2007 and a comatose state for 3 weeks, Antonio had to experience a long rehabilitation period. That time made him review his personal attitude to the needs of people with disabilities. He continued with working in hotels but engaging people with disabilities to ensure their better inclusion in society. In 2018, he founded a hotel in Rome, which promotes the values of inclusivity and labor ethics. In the first place, he sees his goal in the change of behavior. The idea is to demonstrate the value and abilities of people with disabilities in the work field.





ALBERGO
ETICO
THE FIRST IN ROME



<https://www.albergoeticoroma.it/>

The "Ethical Hotel", the first social enterprise model to offer work and redemption opportunities to children with Down syndrome and other forms of intellectual disability, through a concrete training course alongside hotel professionals.

Antonio is getting support from the local community and different entities. His business is supported by Unicredit and the Social Impact Banking program. Today, his business supports a dozen young people with physical, intellectual or sensory disabilities - Down syndrome, Fragile X and post-comatosis - who thus have the opportunity to learn in the field to work in a hotel and run it in all its aspects, to prepare in the future to face the job market.



SE
**CLINICAL
PSYCHOLOGIST**

Mauro Mottinelli

Mauro has a bachelor's degree in Clinical psychology, specializing in Psychotherapy with a Master's in Psychopathology Forensics. Since he was 23, he wanted to open a private practice for deaf patients, since he is deaf too.

Today, Mauro is one of the very few deaf psychologists in Italy. Mauro also teaches the Italian Sign Language to hearing students. He has an interest in communication science. As he says, effective communication is the key to any stable, healthy and mature relationship.

Since 2003, he has worked in a private studio. At first, he opened one in Rome and then moved to Brescia. For his activities, Mauro has never received any financial support.





SE
**FOUNDER & MANAGER,
NURSERY SCHOOL
“VOGLIO ASILO”**

Giorgia Scaduto

Giorgia is from Palermo. She decided to become an entrepreneur because of her family. Growing up she was surrounded by people with a nursing and medical background.

After her bachelor's degree, she proceeded to study clinical psychology in parallel with a business. Before joining the family enterprise, she was working as an educator in different facilities for years, including foster homes for minors.

She has also been involved in European projects related to the social field. Today, in cooperation with education professionals, she is still engaged in various activities and research work.





www.voglioasilo.it

Giorgia's family has been involved in caretaking and nursing activities for decades. She joined the family business five years ago. First, her mother and aunt have been running it together. After finishing an Erasmus Program in France, Giorgia wanted to live life on her own, but finally, came to the idea of joining the family business and making her contribution to its well-being. When it comes to bureaucratic and administrative-related tasks, their enterprise also receives support from the Federazione Italiana Scuole Materne (FISM). Giorgia is happy to be part of the family business, though she had to get over hard times, especially in the beginning. Gradually, she had more satisfaction and gained the trust of the team. Learning from the mistakes and experiences of her older teammates, Giorgia gained confidence and motivation, and could get her professional skills grown. A positive attitude of the parents and children they work with allows her to move forward and to feel she is in the right place.

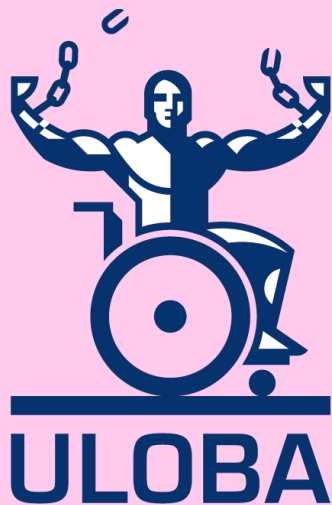


SE
ULOBA

Vibeke Marøy Melstrøm

Uloba - Independent living Norge SA works to improve the equality of persons with a disability. They are part of the worldwide “Independent Living movement” which is run by disabled persons too. That movement is meant to increase social equality and to secure human rights for the PWDs.

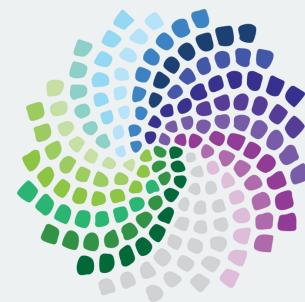




INDEPENDENT LIVING | NORGE



<https://www.uloba.no/>



Uloba has established and developed citizen-led personal assistance as an equality tool.

As one of five founders, her motivation, like the others, was to develop an assistance scheme that could make it possible to have control and management over one's own everyday life and one's own life, in addition to participating in society on an equal basis with everyone else.

Uloba has not received any financial support from authorities or others, but with their own efforts they established a model, which gradually provided financial opportunities to operate their company.

The Personal Assistance Services scheme is of decisive importance in her own life, as it is today for nearly 4,000 people with special needs who seek assistance.



DISability ENTrepreneurship EXpert

SE
**ENTREPRENEUR, COACH,
HEALTH CONSULTANT**



Anna Fryxelius

Anna was 19, when she was diagnosed with autoimmune rheumatoid arthritis. Two years later, she got in a bus accident. All of it had a tragic impact on her health. Doctors couldn't find a remedy for her chronic pains. So she decided to evolve a self-help system to overcome the pain and come back to a healthy and active life. In 2006, she finally got out of the wheelchair and completed an 800 km pilgrimage walk to Santiago de Compostela in Spain.



Frogner Park, Kirkeveien, 0268 Oslo, Norway



Based on that experience, she wrote a book and started working for a patient organization to change the way persons with a disability are treated in Norway. For the next 10 years, she's been building a career and taking care of her family.

Finally, she made up her experiences in course to help other people fighting chronic pain and illness. Invested all her savings to found an enterprise - Anna Fryxelius AS, she offers online consultation services and health mastery programs. This work gives her a purpose. She looks at her own health problems in the past as a resource that is worth more than money, because using it she can help others.



www.annafryxelius.com



SE
SUPERVISUELL
GENERAL MANAGER

Finn Arild Thordarson



“Supervisuell” was originally a media company founded and run by deaf people, specializing in sign language productions, but delivers everything in media, a great part is B2B – to other film companies, also print, layout etc.

Since 2015 Supervisuell has grown to become a small conglomerate consisting of, in total, five companies, including “Supervisuell”. The other four are NTS Bygg (construction), NTS Rørservice (plumbing), NTS Kompetanse (consultancy, education and projects within the social innovation field) and Tegn.TV (sign language channel).

Supervisuell's first goal was to make real workplaces and possibilities for themselves (deaf people with education which is barred from getting positions in the hearing work places), and after a couple of years they were told that they were social entrepreneurs – and then they understood that what they did was something new - that they broke glass ceilings for deaf people.

They received no support in the early years, either with no connection with incubators or funding programs. Finally, they got in touch with the social entrepreneur environment in Sandefjord/Vestfold. They saw that Sandefjord had a very good environment for start-ups and the government here is well aware of social entrepreneurs, and today they have good connections. This year the Sandefjord community and IMDI also funds our service for Deaf immigrants to facilitate so they are included in work life.

For single projects, Finn Arild mentions Stiftelsen Dam. They have funded several projects, and in that way has been important in shaping Supervisuell and the other companies.

The people at Supervisuell have freedom and feel like equals or peers in working life. This is almost impossible for deaf people to experience in regular workplaces. They now also give opportunities for several deaf people that otherwise would not get a chance to use their education or talents.

The logo for Supervisuell, featuring the word "supervisuell" in a white, italicized, sans-serif font on a black rectangular background. A small rainbow-colored graphic is positioned above the letter 'i'.

supervisuell.no



SE
“BERG ÜBER KOPF”

Tim Herwig

Tim founded the company “Berg über Kopf” (“Mountain over Head”).

His team organizes mountain climbs, where people with and without disabilities can experience ascents of mountains together. Over time, the company has expanded and started coachings, helping people to deal with certain traumatic experiences.





www.bergueberkopf.de

Due to his experience after injury (coma), Tim wanted to bring together people with and without disabilities. He completed several studies in a field related to what the organisation does.

Tim also received financial support within the framework of the EXIST funding program of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action, and the European Social Fund.



Siegfried Bachmayer

Siegfried plans to found a company that will develop products for people with hearing impairment.

The company is dedicated to improving technical means of communication for/with people with hearing difficulties, as well as building the social capacity of communication with the target group (in the form of seminars and workshops). Currently, the company is in the start-up stage.

Siegfried is a sociologist who sees no opportunities for himself in the labour market anymore.

Therefore, he decided to start his own business in the field of communication with and for people who have hearing problems.



He is developing the technical means to communicate, but also to improve (if not to say build) social communication: the lack of understanding in society regarding communication with people who either do not hear or have difficulties with hearing - that is Mr Bachmayer's theme. He wants these people to be accepted and included, as well as to have better chances in the labour market and social life in general. The City of Vienna assured support in the form of networking, funding and contracts to him.

Mr Bachmayer is inspired by his initial contacts, the support of the City of Vienna and by the opportunity to realize his ideas. He makes new contacts and receives a lot of support. Siegfried also believes that even as a PwD, one should not stop trying to change society. He believes that people with hearing problems have a social potential that many do not realize because they simply do not try. He is glad that he wants to try. It gives him much self-confidence.



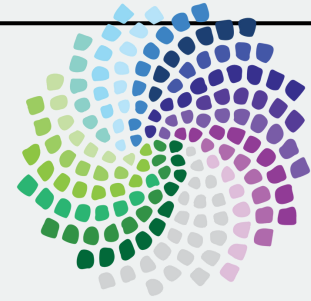
SE
BLICKWECHSEL

Kerstin Gaedicke



Kerstin founded the social enterprise “Blickwechsel” (“View change”) which focuses on the organization of seminars on how to treat blind and visually impaired people.

Kerstin reported that back when she was working in social service, the environment was not collegial. Often it lacked understanding for people with special needs, despite the fact that her colleagues worked with PwD all the time. Then she was unemployed for a while, applying unsuccessfully for funding.



Blickwechsel



www.blickwechsel.berlin

She managed to go through further training as a system and family coach. While trained, one of her colleagues invited her to speak at one of his seminars. She held a seminar about the ways that blind and visually impaired people can be treated professionally. Kerstin started reading brochures of the Blind Association and delivering the information from them. Ultimately, it resulted in her own concept for seminars. Kerstin received consultations from “Enterability” (a former integration service for self-employment in Berlin), as well as financial support from the Integration Office and a PC workstation suitable for blind people delivered by a social fund.

When she became self-employed, her family was no longer there, but her friends saw it very positively and supported her where they could.

Positive feedback from the participants of the seminars is the best proof that she moves in the right direction. The seminars also had a positive influence on Kerstin herself. She learned more about herself when people asked her why blind people behave in certain ways.



SE
SONNENSCHENZEIT

Katrin Putschbach and Daniela Thörner

They founded a social enterprise “Sonnenscheinzeit” (“sunshine time”) - a parental counseling “inclusive” and with the focus on diversity. The aim is to give parents support and a change of perspective in their communication with the child.

It’s been a challenge for them to do it on their own. But, it gives them the power to decide themselves what to do and improves their life-and-work balance significantly.

They received a one week pre-start-up coaching course, which included administrative support and online marketing training as well provided by “Enterability” (former integration service for self-employment in Berlin). Their social environment was very positive about their start-up, encouraging and reinforcing them all the way.



www.sonnenscheinzeit.de



SE
SENIORENASSISTENTIN

Ilka Roggmann Mäckel

Ilka is a Senior Citizen Assistant. She had been working as an employee for 30 years. Suffering enormous stress due to her borderline syndrome, she finds it very difficult to be in contact with many people at the same time. For the last 10 years, she has worked in a senior citizens' home, a job that has given her great personal satisfaction through contact with clients, although sometimes communication with colleagues posed a problem to her. Finally, she decided to work independently as she has always wanted to and just did not have the courage to try prior.





Seniorenassistentin
Ilka Roggmann
Ich bin für Sie da.



www.seniorenassistentin.berlin

While unemployed, Ms. Roggmann has been receiving support from “Enterability” (a former integration service for self-employment) - 900 Euros for the first few months, and 300 euros until April 2022. Her membership in the “Bundesvereinigung der Senioren-Assistenten Deutschland e.V.” also helped her not to feel alone and to participate in various workshops. Her son and husband have also been very supportive.

After becoming self-employed, Ms. Roggmann had the opportunity not to have to work with many people anymore. She reported that the feeling she gets from helping people is very satisfactory and increases her self-esteem as well.

Since then, she has developed more self-confidence. A few years ago, she would not have been able to talk openly about herself, her path and her disability. Now, she finds it extremely important to speak openly about it, so that society becomes more sensitive and accepting of people like her.



SE
VISORAPPS

Dr. Jan Blüher

Jan Blüher founded his company "VisorApp", and thus got into app development for smartphones for blind and visually impaired people.

After completing his doctorate in Bioinformatics at University, his project application was not approved and he did not get a contract. This happened in the year (2011) prior to when smartphones were available on the market. Jan sensed a great opportunity, as this technology offered many more options for blind and visually impaired people to make their lives easier.





visorApps
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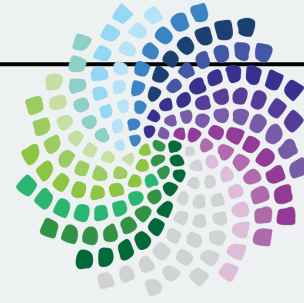
www.visorapps.com

Even though his plan failed due to financial obstacles, Jan hoped to find another project to work on, making use of the new qualifications he had acquired during this time.

Jan had to register his state of unemployment at the State Employment Agency and attended a training course on iPhone programming as a vocational integration measure. He received Start-up assistance and employment assistance (grant for support workers). He was constantly in contact with the responsible authorities since he encountered many issues with support workers and workplace accommodations.

Jan's wife supported him a lot and helped him all the way through. Fortunately, Dr Blüher already had certain financial assets, so that he was not reliant on income in the first years of the existence of his Start-up.

Initially, Jan Blüher was not fully content with his idea, but gradually he started to realise that this new path allowed him to be free in his decisions. "It is very satisfying to see that you develop and produce meaningful products. I get positive feedback - people say they find it useful, and this is great to know".



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Anja Winter

Since Anja found it difficult to get a job in the current market, she decided to try self-employment. Now, she has been running a social enterprise since 2015. It started by chance and was not her goal at the beginning.



Unfortunately, she still has no access to funding. All her applications had been rejected. However, she is receiving consultations from the local desk for integration and self-employment ("Integrationsfachdienst Selbstständigkeit"). Though it is challenging, her disability provides her more inspiration than it is an obstacle to her. Anja's family supported her from the very beginning. The opposite would be impossible to imagine.



www.tastkunst.de