

Inclusion Award

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Aural Diversity Toolkit

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★ Winner: Arup, *Aural Diversity Toolkit*

In partnership with the Aural Diversity Network, a toolkit has been developed to aid designers in creating acoustically inclusive environments.

The toolkit captures lived experiences of real people, presented as anonymised, aurally divergent 'personas', to illustrate considerations for inclusive design of the built environment. The personas are used in conjunction with current acoustic and inclusive design standards and guidance, and previous research and project experience, to provide recommendations for designing acoustically inclusive environments.

The recommendations are primarily focused on the design of the built environment. They also include some operational considerations where relevant. The toolkit is organised into topics on acoustics, wayfinding, multi-sensory environments, choice of environments, prior information, sound systems and assistive devices. The toolkit is publicly available on the aural diversity network website (auraldiversity.org)

It highlights the importance of considering aural diversity, offers real world insight into day-to-day

challenges, and provides practical and effective solutions to help design a built environment which is accessible and inclusive for everyone.

The judges considered this is unique, innovative work which focuses on inclusivity. It bridges a gap between existing acoustic and inclusive design standards for architects and designers and shows close working with partners at two universities as well as involving those with hearing loss. It provides information on the impacts of different kinds of inclusion for the built environment. It has already been adopted and promoted extensively and this award recognises it as an example of how the work of acousticians contributes to improving the wider community.

In the words of a member of the Aural Diversity Network: "This is a very important and necessary work that will make a big positive impact in many people's lives. And that is what good design should be about."

ACOUSTIC AWARDS 2024

These awards demonstrate the unique skills of UK based acoustic consultants in addressing challenges, championing innovation and originality and showcasing the significance of a profession which blends art and science to transformational effect.