



IFHOH and DSB Conference Statement

October 7, 2017

Accessibility for Hard of Hearing Persons in Large Venues

Initiated by the International Federation of Hard of Hearing People and hosted by Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund e.V., the 4th International Accessibility Conference on Hearing Loops and Hearing Technology, "Future Loops", is taking place on October 6-7, in Berlin, Germany. This conference is about hearing technologies for hard of hearing persons with a special focus on hearing accessibility in large venues.

There are more than 360 million hard-of-hearing persons in the world with disabling hearing-loss, according to the World Health Organization. Many hard-of-hearing persons use hearing-aids or cochlear-implants. Almost all of them have difficulties hearing in large venues.

Many hearing-aids and cochlear-implants include the proven telecoil technology that works with hearing loops in large venues. Therefore, hearing loops are recommended in any large venue to provide accessibility for hard of hearing persons. As well, the Telecoil has to be included and activated in every hearing aid and to work in parallel to any new technology.

The "Future Loops", as we call this conference, is also about the development of improved accessibility systems in large venues. Important characteristics for these systems are: Several audio stereo channels, high sound quality, high immunity to interferences, low audio latency and several text channels for captions.

Manufacturers of hearing-aids, cochlear-implants, smartphones, telephones and all kind of wireless assistive-listening-devices, together with communications standards institutions, and organizations of hard of hearing people, need to come up with a standard for this improved accessibility systems for hard of hearing persons in large venues.

IFHOH is an international, non-governmental organization, registered in Germany with over 40 national member organizations from most regions of the world. IFHOH and the European Federation of Hard of Hearing People (EFHOH) work to promote greater understanding of hearing loss issues and to improve access for hard of hearing people. IFHOH has special consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), affiliation with the World Health Organization, and membership in the International Disability Alliance. For more information go to IFHOH's website: www.ifhoh.org

The association Deutscher Schwerhörigenbund (DSB) is one of the oldest German disabled rights organization in Germany, founded in the year 1901 by Margarethe von Witzleben in Berlin, the first hearing impairment association worldwide. The association's focus is on representing the interests of hearing impaired and profoundly deaf people with the aim to obtain equal participation in social life, and on helping people to help themselves. Find out more at www.schwerhoerigen-netz.de

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