



New initiative in Africa on intellectual disabilities

There is wide recognition that vast and growing inequalities exist in health, wealth and well-being between the African region and other parts of the world. We in IASSID, an organisation interested in people with disabilities, welcome all initiatives designed to reduce this inequality.

What is IASSID?

The International Association for the Scientific Study of Intellectual Disabilities (IASSID) is an international and interdisciplinary scientific non-governmental organization, with official relations with the World Health Organization. It promotes worldwide research and exchange of information on intellectual disabilities. The association, founded in 1964, is the first and only world-wide group dedicated to the scientific study of intellectual disability. IASSID is registered as a charity in the USA and IASSID-Europe is registered as a charity in the EU. As its executive officers change, it does not have a permanent address but further information can be found at www.iassid.org.

The IASSID World Congresses

IASSID has sponsored twelve international world congresses, now held once every four years. These international meetings provide an exciting opportunity to present recent findings about major advances in the biological, behavioural, and social sciences related to intellectual disabilities, as well as progress in the provision of services and supports for persons with intellectual disabilities.

The 12th World Congress was held in Montpellier, France, in June 2004. The World Congress normally attracts over 1500 participants from all over the world.

The next World Congress, IASSID's 13th, will be held in Cape Town, South Africa, in August 2008.

Africa

The IASSID executive voted to take the next World Congress to Africa in 2008, in the full knowledge that some of the continent suffers from major health problems and poverty, such that intellectual disabilities often do not have a high profile there.

IASSID wants to make a difference

The IASSID executive is very aware that little is known about intellectual disabilities in the African region. There has been little research there. IASSID has decided to raise research funds for research projects to be undertaken in Africa by African scholars, before the World Congress. The results of the projects will be presented at the World Congress in Cape Town in September 2008. IASSID has started the fund by putting in \$30,000. All projects will be conducted by universities, often in partnership with other bodies. The projects must be of benefit to people with intellectual disabilities in Africa. They may have a health or social or psychological focus.

Would you like to sponsor a project?

If your organisation would like to contribute funds or to sponsor a particular project, contact any one of the IASSID executive members listed here:

Professor Glynis Murphy (UK), President-Elect of IASSID who will be organising the 2008 World Congress in Cape Town at g.h.murphy@kent.ac.uk

Professor David Felce (UK), current President of IASSID at felce@cardiff.ac.uk

Dr Matt Janicki (USA), Treasurer of IASSID at IASSIDoffice@aol.com

Dr Vianne Timmons (Canada), Secretary of IASSID at vtimmons@upei.ca

Dr Neil Ross (France), Past President of IASSID at njross@compuserve.com