

## WORLD DOWN SYNDROME DAY 2018 CAMPAIGN

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### What I bring to my community

ما أحضر إلى مجتمعي

我带给我的社区

Ce que j'apporte à ma communauté

Что я приношу в сообщество

Lo que traigo a mi comunidad

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**Enabling all persons with Down syndrome to contribute and live valued lives, fully included in the community**

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### CONCEPT NOTE

#### Organisers

Down Syndrome International (DSi) is a UK based international charity in Special Consultative Status with the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations (ECOSOC Status), a member of International Disability Alliance (IDA) and a global network of Down syndrome advocacy organisations in 136 countries.

#### World Down Syndrome Day (WDSD)

WDSD is a global awareness day recognised since 2012 by the UN, which takes place on 21 March every year. 21 March, or 21:3, signifies the triplication of chromosome 21, unique to persons with Down syndrome. On 19 December 2011, the United Nations General Assembly declared 21 March as World Down Syndrome Day ([A/RES/66/149](#)). Global activities and events around WDSD each year, organised by persons with Down syndrome, their families, friends and advocates, work to raise awareness of what Down syndrome is, what it means to have Down syndrome, and how persons with Down syndrome play a vital role in our lives and communities.

#### Purpose and method of campaign

To provide all persons with Down syndrome with opportunities to contribute to the community and live valued lives, included on a full and equal basis with others in all aspects of society, by 2030, the target date for implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

Working with Down syndrome advocacy organisations in our global network, the campaign will:

- Explain how persons with Down syndrome **can and do make meaningful contributions** throughout their lives, whether in schools, workplaces, living in the community, public and political life, culture, media, recreation, leisure and sport.
- Explain how negative attitudes and a lack of knowledge about their potential as individuals **prevent persons with Down syndrome from having opportunities** to make contributions.
- **Empower persons with Down syndrome** (and those supporting them) to **advocate for their rights and opportunities** to make meaningful contributions.
- **Reach out to key stakeholders** including educators, employers, public authorities, media and the wider community to **ensure they see the benefits** of enabling persons with Down syndrome to make meaningful contributions and **encourage these stakeholders to bring about change** and **disseminate this message**.

## **Background**

Persons with Down syndrome must be included and enabled to participate and contribute, on a full and equal basis with others, in all aspects of society. The reality for many is that prevailing negative attitudes result in low expectations, discrimination and exclusion, creating communities where persons with Down syndrome cannot participate successfully or make meaningful contributions.

When persons with Down syndrome and other disabilities are given opportunities, they can and do make meaningful contributions. They participate and achieve success in schools, workplaces, daily life, recreation and public activities. Moreover, when persons with Down syndrome and disabilities are fully included, everyone benefits from a shared environment of acceptance and respect and high expectations and morale are created, which leads to progress and success throughout society.

Persons with Down syndrome and their advocates must be empowered to advocate for their rights and opportunities to make meaningful contributions. They may need additional support in specific areas of their lives to ensure full and equal participation. With this support, they can reach out to key stakeholders including educators, employers, public authorities, media and the wider community to ensure that they see the benefits of enabling persons with Down syndrome to make meaningful contributions. These stakeholders can then bring about change and disseminate this message.

## **United Nations CRPD and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

This campaign draws from the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) in a wide sense, capturing the essence of the general principles of Article 3 - full and effective participation and inclusion in society and equality of opportunity. More specifically, the rights promoted and protected by Articles 24 (Education), 27 (Work and employment), 19 (Living independently and being included in the community), 29 (Participation in political and public life) and 30 (Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport) ensure persons with Down syndrome and disabilities have opportunities to participate and make meaningful contributions.

The campaign also draws from the 2030 Agenda Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's); Goal 10, (Reducing inequalities within and among countries). Goal 10.2 aims by 2030 to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all, irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status. All SDG's which ensure the opportunity of persons with Down syndrome to participate and contribute fully in society by 2030, such as Goal 4 (Quality education) and Goal 8 (Decent work and economic growth), are relevant to this campaign.

## **About the campaign**

Led by DSI, with the support of our global network of Down syndrome advocacy organisations and conference sponsors, "What I bring to my community" will consist of:

1. A call to action (including a social media package) to all Down syndrome advocacy organisations in our global network, on the WDSD [www.worlddownsyndromeday.org](http://www.worlddownsyndromeday.org) and DSI [www.ds-int.org](http://www.ds-int.org) websites and on WDSD and DSI social media outlets, encouraging persons with Down syndrome to say "What I bring to my community".
2. A tool kit made available to our global network and online, which will consist of a number of accessible resources which will explain the key elements of the campaign, provide examples of participation and

meaningful contribution and show how to empower persons with Down syndrome and advocates to reach out to key stakeholders.

3. The WDSI Global Video Event. We will ask national Down syndrome advocacy organisations to work with 1 or more persons with Down syndrome and make a short film answering the question “What I bring to my community”. DSI will edit all the national video entries and publish them, along with a promotional preview video on DSI’s YouTube channel <https://www.youtube.com/user/DSIWDSI>.
4. The following event on 21 March 2018:

**World Down Syndrome Day Conference**  
**21 March 2018, 10am-6pm, United Nations Headquarters, New York, USA**

- Title  
**“What I bring to the workplace” - Enabling all persons with Down syndrome to contribute and live valued working lives, to be fully included in the community**
- Sponsors  
TBC  
2017 Sponsors – Permanent Missions to the United Nations of Australia, Brazil, Canada, India, Israel, Japan, Republic of Korea, Luxembourg, Mongolia, Poland, Qatar, Singapore and United Kingdom, UNICEF, International Disability Alliance and Inclusion International.
- Venue  
Conference Room TBC, United Nations Headquarters, New York
- Date/Time  
Wednesday 21 March, 10am-1pm; 3pm-6pm  
1pm-3pm, possible side events TBC
- Aim/Format

The overall aim of the event will be to reach out to key stakeholders in work and employment to ensure they see the benefits of enabling persons with Down syndrome and disabilities to make meaningful contributions and encourage these stakeholders to bring about change and disseminate this message.

Participants will comprise a mix of persons with Down syndrome, supporters and advocates, senior persons representing corporations and other types of employers, government and UN officials, NGO representatives with professional experience and acknowledged experts in the fields. Efforts will be made to invite participants from a diverse range of countries and world regions.

The event will focus on:

- The benefits of employing persons with Down syndrome and disabilities, both for employees and employers;
- Consideration of these benefits from the individual person right up to the strategic (macro) level;
- Innovative programmes which provide support both to potential employees and employers;
- How to disseminate the message that persons with Down syndrome and disabilities add real value to the workplace with the right support.

The format will comprise a mix of panel discussion, case studies and testimonies and interactive Q&A with participants to encourage maximum learning and arrive at tangible follow up actions.

5. The following event on 20-21 March 2018:

**World Down Syndrome Day Geneva  
20-21 March 2018, United Nations Geneva, Switzerland**

- Title  
**“What I bring to my community” - Enabling all persons with Down syndrome to contribute and live valued working lives, fully included in the community**
- Sponsors  
TBC  
2017 Sponsors – Permanent Missions of Brazil, Israel, Poland and United Kingdom to the United Nations Geneva, International Disability Alliance and Inclusion International.
- Venue  
TBC
- Date/Time  
Tuesday 20 March - Wednesday 21 March  
Time TBC
- Aim/Format

The overall aim of the event will be for persons with Down syndrome to reach out to members of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and government and UN officials to ensure they see how persons with Down syndrome can and do make meaningful contributions to the community throughout their lives. In doing so, we hope to encourage these key stakeholders to disseminate this message through their work to bring about change and ensure persons with Down syndrome have opportunities to contribute.

Participants will comprise a mix of persons with Down syndrome, supporters and advocates, members of the UN CRPD Committee and government and UN officials and NGO representatives with professional experience and expertise. Efforts will be made to invite participants from a diverse range of countries and world regions.

The format will comprise a preparatory workshop for persons with Down syndrome and advocates, followed by an “open format” discussion to encourage maximum learning and arrive at tangible follow up actions.

#### **Outcome of campaign**

This campaign will work to enable persons with Down syndrome to contribute and live valued lives, fully included in the community. It will achieve this by explaining how persons with Down syndrome can and do make contributions; why they are often prevented from doing so; empowering them to advocate for their rights and opportunities to do so and reaching out to key stakeholders to ensure they see the benefits so that they can bring about change and disseminate the message.

By exploring the issues, we hope all those who participate in or see the campaign will not only understand more about how persons with Down syndrome can make a telling positive contribution to society, but will also have their questions answered about how to go about enabling them to do so.

This campaign forms part of a multi-year effort by DSi, alongside our national partners and expert advisors to evaluate, investigate, and establish guidance in key areas which affect the lives of persons with Down syndrome, to ensure full and equal participation of persons with Down syndrome in all aspects of society.