

**DISABILITY STUDIES**

in Nederland

VUmc 

Lorentz  
center 

# **INCLUDED IN TRAINING AND WORK: THE REPORT**

**DR MITZI WALTZ, DISABILITY STUDIES IN NEDERLAND / VU  
AMSTERDAM, 2017**

# WHY ARE WE HERE?

- Disabled people are the world's largest minority group, but face barriers in accessing work.
- Good education & training (VE, special or inclusive) is meant to solve this problem, but here too disabled people face barriers.
- Outcomes of education are significantly less positive for disabled people.
- The world of work is changing, and people with disabilities are falling further behind—especially in the developed world.
- ***We can do better!***



# WHO WERE WE, AND WHAT DID WE DO?

- 35 international researchers (including many with disabilities) took part in the project, and there was additional input from policymakers, service providers and experts by experience.
- Four themes (barriers and facilitators) were identified from a review of existing literature about disabled people and vocational education and work.
- We then began with a process of working collaboratively online, in small teams, to research these four main themes.
- Next, most of the people involved in the preliminary stage spent a full week together at the Lorentz Centre in Leiden.



**NIAS**  
**Lorentz center**

**Included in Training and Work**  
*Transforming Policies and Practices for Disabled People*

Workshop @Snellius 28 August - 1 September 2017, Leiden, the Netherlands

**Scientific Organizers**

- Geert Van Hove, UGent / VUmc Amsterdam
- Sofie Sergeant, DSiN
- Mitzi Waltz, DSiN

**Topics**

- Matching Individual Skills and Talents to Vocational Education and Work
- Working Collaboratively with Disabled People
- Universal Design for Learning
- Bullying and Resilience
- Inclusion and Discrimination
- Developing Policies and Practices for the Modern Employment Market

*'It makes a difference, doesn't it, whether we fence ourselves in, or whether we are fenced out by the barriers of others?' - E.M. Forster*

The Lorentz Center organizes international workshops for researchers in all scientific disciplines. Its aim is to create an atmosphere that fosters collaborative work, discussions and interactions. For registration see: [www.lorentzcenter.nl](http://www.lorentzcenter.nl)

This workshop is a part of the NIAS-Lorentz Program, to stimulate research bridging the natural sciences with the humanities and social sciences.

Poster design: SuperNova Studios, NL

Universiteit Leiden The Netherlands NWO Social Sciences and Humanities DISABILITY STUDIES NIAS Lorentz center

w w w . l o r e n t z c e n t e r . n l

# WHAT DID WE DO?

- We presented our initial results, debated and discussed, and identified additional themes.
- We then worked in teams to research these, present and discuss findings, and recommend research-based responses to the barriers identified.



# WHAT MAJOR BARRIERS DID WE IDENTIFY?

- Segregation in primary and secondary education has a direct impact on life outcomes.
- Exclusion and bullying in primary and secondary education have lasting psycho-social effects—and these all too often continue into adult life, including education and work.
- Design of educational materials, facilities and processes in education is typically not inclusive.
- Education (and especially ‘special’ education) is not always aligned with what employers want.
- Many employers are resistant to hiring people with disabilities—so people with disabilities may miss out on crucial on-the-job education.
- There are many serious individual and societal impacts, including negative impacts on quality of life for disabled people and lost potential.

# OUR RESEARCH THEMES

**The four themes identified from our initial literature review were:**

- Matching individual skills and talents to appropriate education and work opportunities by working collaboratively with disabled people.
- Applying Universal Design for Learning (UDL) principles to education and work placement.
- Dealing with the issue of bullying in the context of education and work.
- Work, “participation,” inclusion and preventing discrimination in education and work.

# OUR RESEARCH THEMES

## **Themes identified during further research were:**

- Stigma, disclosure and reasonable accommodations
- Supporting freelancers and flexworkers with disabilities
- Stress in training and work
- Mentoring and supportive feedback
- Belonging—Integration of people with disabilities into school or work groups

# OUR REPORT

- Our report has been deliberately written to be simple, clear and short.
- There is an introduction, a one- to two-page summary of our findings for each research theme, a conclusion, and a references section.
- Each summary has the same form: aims, barriers, facilitating and recommendations.
- We don't have enough time today to present everything, just the recommendations—but we encourage you to pick up or download the report from <https://disabilitystudies.nl/> , and to share it with colleagues, policymakers and service providers.
- It is our intention to produce a book-length version with greater detail on our findings, and case studies, in 2018.



# MATCHING INDIVIDUAL SKILLS AND TALENTS TO EDUCATION AND WORK

## Recommendations:

- Provide active support for choice-making when needed.
- Create an accepting and non-controlling environment for choice-making
- Choices offered need to satisfy the person's need for autonomy, competence, and relatedness
- Respect choice-making



# APPLYING UD AND UDL PRINCIPLES TO EDUCATION AND WORK PLACEMENT

## Recommendations:

- Create a “culture of accessibility”
- Enforce laws and regulations effectively
- Provide better information on environments and their accessibility
- Make education more flexible (modular programmes, for example)
- Change policies and laws that block access to education for disabled people and older adults
- Provide personal support when needed



# BULLYING IN THE CONTEXT OF EDUCATION AND WORK

## Recommendations at societal level:

- Stigma reduction campaigns
- Governments: Legal protection, advice and support for best practices and improvements. Sweden's 1993 code is a strong model for a national anti-bullying policy for the workplace.
- General or model codes of conduct, best practices documents (e.g. from unions, employer federations)

## Recommendations at education facility/workplace level:

- General safety measures (eliminate “danger spots” for bullying)
- Clear codes of conduct
- Improve reporting systems – encourage reporting
- Be observant, and act on reports / observations
- Skill-building for teachers, supervisors, co-workers with and without disabilities
- Mentoring



# WORK, “PARTICIPATION,” INCLUSION AND PREVENTING DISCRIMINATION

- The “train first” approach is more likely to work in the context of today’s difficult employment market.
- Targeted, individualised approaches are needed, especially for those with psychiatric or intellectual disabilities.
- Promote on-the-job training and (paid) internships.
- Look for and use creative solutions.
- Watch for the results of ‘job-shaving’ initiatives—will they lead to sustainable, paid work?
- Consider lessons from the two-track development model, which typically focuses on microfinance and support for small businesses/self-employment.



# STIGMA, DISCLOSURE AND REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

## Recommendations:

- Support individuals to improve their self-esteem and resilience in the face of stigma.
- Education, including anti-stigma campaigns (for example, Samen Sterk Zonder Stigma in the Netherlands) and targeting public attitudes formed via the media or other sources.
- Replacing stigmatising cultural stereotypes with more realistic views: music and video are good tools here.
- Consider ways of facilitating disability disclosure and accommodation that are not stigmatising.



# SUPPORTING FREELANCERS AND FLEXWORKERS WITH DISABILITIES

## Recommendations:

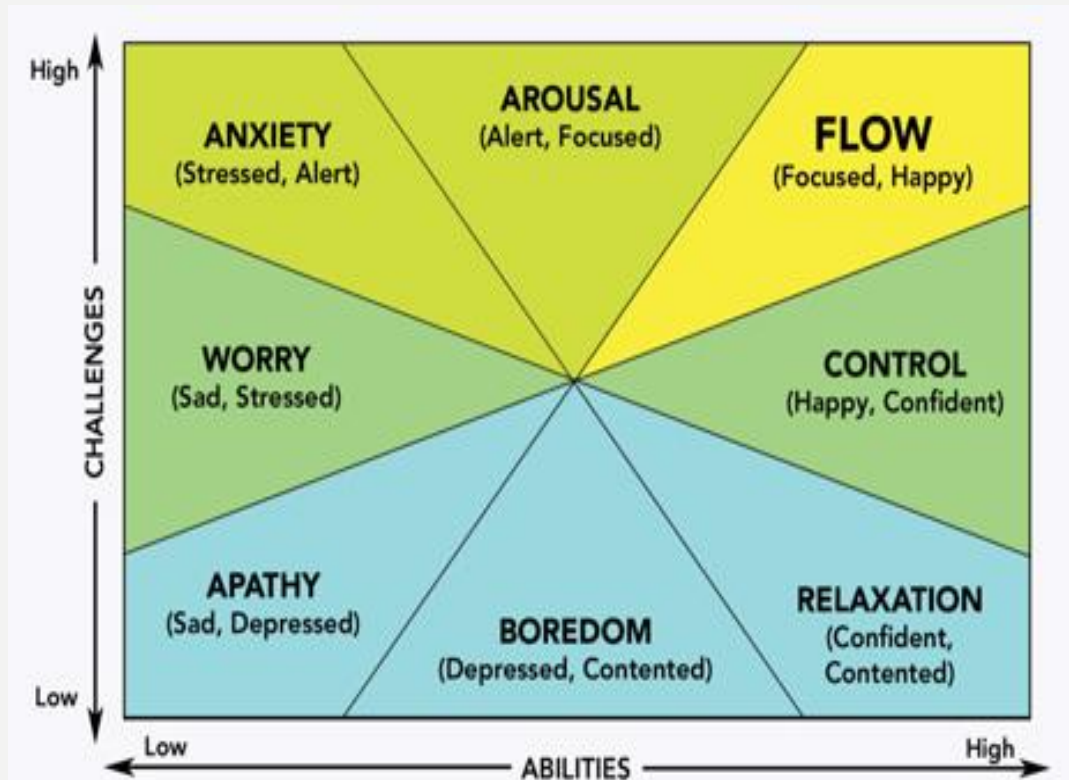
- Companies and the law should extend the same disability protections to disabled freelancers and flexworkers as to regular employees
- Provide training and coaching to disabled people who want to be self-employed
- Provide training and coaching to disabled flexworkers (contract negotiation etc.)
- Make it easier to combine flexwork and self-employment with benefits



# STRESS IN TRAINING AND WORK

## Recommendations:

- Recognise that there is both 'good' and 'bad' stress.
- Effective responses include keeping workload low and upskilling learners/workers.
- Manage stress by ensuring sufficient job resources (such as social contacts, meaningfulness, autonomy, and skill discretion) are in place.



Mihály Csíkszentmihályi's model of flow as related to challenge and ability.

# MENTORING AND SUPPORTIVE FEEDBACK

## Recommendations:

- Mentoring has promise as a way to ensure disabled people receive supportive feedback and external motivation.
- People with psychiatric and intellectual disabilities need extra attention.
- People with disabilities can often be the best mentors for other people with disabilities.





# BELONGING—INTEGRATION OF DISABLED PEOPLE INTO SCHOOL OR WORK GROUPS

## Recommendations:

- Discourage segregated education and work facilities.
- Provide opportunities for personal growth and skill mastery.
- Show employers the benefits of increased workplace diversity—encourage them to include disabled workers in planning, discussions and decision-making.
- Find and highlight positive examples.



# CONCLUSION, AND A CALL FOR ACTION

Please join our rebel band of pirates: let's set sail from our comfortable ports, office chairs and ivory towers and into uncharted territory. How?

- **Speak up** when you know that existing services, programmes, and policies are not achieving good results for people with disabilities.
- **Make connections** between lack of full inclusion of disabled people when policies and plans are made regarding education and work, and poor results—and do something about it, at individual, programme and societal levels
- Start by **including a range of disabled people** at the very top of your own organisation's planning and policymaking procedures. Do not accept exclusion, tokenism, or rubber-stamp processes.
- Pursue **research** into under-examined areas like bullying, mentoring, workplace inclusion, and impact of unpaid and/or precarious work on disabled people.



What is to be  
DONE?

INSPIRATION  
↳ ACTION!

Book Proposal | Chapter Headings?

TITLE?  
INCLUDING IN TRAINING + WORK

He excluded

Stigma = onvermogen Sociaal  
Self disclosure = Risico  
Reasonable accomodations  
↳ = gevolgen / faciliteiten

Diagnostiek / beeldvorming  
≠ diagnose / label  
↳ Sterktes / zwaktes  
↳ altijd democratisch is do  
↳ altijd persoon zelf betrokken!

Stigma: instrumenteel?  
groep dynamiek

- Wat is nodig  
- politiek  
- literatuur

- "Straf" f  
↳ boetes

- Participatie

- Stigma u  
→  
→

- Zorg & o  
(fir  
exp  
+

# CONTACT US!

**DISABILITY STUDIES**

in Nederland

Stadsring 2 / Meet & Discover, 3811 HR Amersfoort

0619933345

*info@disabilitystudies.nl*



**3rd international  
disability studies  
CONFERENCE  
AMSTERDAM  
30.11-02.12 2017**