

## Selection of target group and accessibility

In the course of the participatory ethics process, let's discuss who we aim to reach with our products or services. Who are our users? What are our assumptions about their background, motivations and abilities? And which groups do we potentially exclude by these choices and assumptions?

While it is generally an ethical imperative to make our services accessible to as many people as possible, the choice of target group depends on multiple factors, including the expected relevance of our service to specific audiences. Any resource prioritization has to be made consciously, discussed ethically and documented transparently. The Centre for Excellence in Universal Design of the National Disability Authority in Ireland recommends "7 Principles for Universal Design" to include people of diverse abilities.<sup>1</sup> These principles are (1) Equitable Use, (2) Flexibility in Use, (3) Simple Use, (4) Perceptible Information, (5) Tolerance for Error, (6) Low Physical Effort, (7) Size and Space for Approach and Use.

**Accessibility** is giving **equitable access** to products and services for everyone in reference to their abilities and experiences. **Accessibility** means proactively designing what is necessary to create **inclusion as empowerment**. Accessibility refers not only to finished products or services but how we provide resources to this **design process**.

## Reflecting on who we are designing and developing for

Awareness of the target group is relevant in every high quality software design. Let's start by pinpointing who we aim to reach. Standard dimensions include the following criteria:

1. **Demographic:** Age, gender, residence, country of origin, language.
2. **Socioeconomic:** educational level (possibly including area of expertise), occupation, income level, computer literacy.
3. **Psychographic:** motivation, opinions, political affinities, desires, values, lifestyle concerning location information, privacy, usage of networked digital services.
4. **Behavioural:** "act as if I have nothing to hide", "worried but helpless", "privacy advocate", „resigned“, „technological innovation advocate“.
5. **Abilities:** Health status, manual skills, physical impairments, neurological abilities.

When do you envision the typical user(s) or addressee(s) that you want to reach with your services (app, website, product, etc.) as they are currently planned? Using the five dimensions above you can sketch out what your users might look like.

Demographic	Socioeconomic	Psychographic	Behavioural	Abilities

What efforts did you undertake to get to know your users and understand their needs and abilities? What efforts did/do/should we undertake to actively align our design to our target group?

What efforts do you undertake to actively align your design to your target group?

## Example Design: Interaction in consent forms

Consent forms are embedded in overarching usage flows and are an important way to ensure users understand functions and consequences. Some designers feel consent forms might distract from the interaction goal or slow down the path to it, and might conclude that not all users are interested in this step being further complicated by additional control options or explanations that take time to review and understand.

What kind of users do we expect to be empowered by improved consent forms?

What kind of users might actually be more confused by more complex consent forms?

How can we be more inclusive and reach both users who would be confused by more text or options and users who would like to receive more information ?

### Example design: Interaction design of a learning environment

The SIMPORT learning tool<sup>1</sup> is a distinct example of an interactive medium in that it strives to *educate* its users. It is non-trivial how a software interface can fulfill an educational task if this requires, for instance, to adapt to the addressees' needs, knowledge, motivation and learning habits.

In terms of the way the learning tool addresses the user (e.g., how explanations are phrased), and in terms of the graphical interaction design (design of dialog boxes, visual complexity, menu structure, explanatory texts, installation and setup process, required hardware) there are certain kind of user groups that are more easily reached.

---

1 <https://github.com/sitcomlab/simport-learning-app>