

Small changes: big difference

**RiDC Strategy
2020-2025**

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RiDC

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RiDC

Research Institute
for Disabled Consumers

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RiDC Strategy 2020-2025

The strategy is called **Small changes, big difference** as that has been the recurring theme of our research, the views of our panel and the from those clients who have implemented our recommendations. It is the small, seemingly insignificant things that make the biggest difference for disabled and older people.

Vision: A society that is accessible and inclusive for all, regardless of age or ability

Mission: We will transform how private, public and voluntary sectors listen to, adapt and learn from the direct experiences and insights of disabled and older people.

Strategic Objective 1: RESEARCH

To provide high-quality research, informed by disabled and older people to improve goods and services delivered by public, voluntary and private sectors

Strategic Objective 2: KNOWLEDGE

To use the knowledge gained from our research with disabled and older people to influence and drive forward policy and practice

Strategic Objective 3: INFLUENCE

To increase RiDC's strategic relevance within sectors to improve accessibility and inclusion

The following table sets out the various outcomes we need to achieve to help us achieve the three strategic objectives. Under each of the outcomes will rest several action plans that will detail the specific activities with timelines, resource allocation and risks.

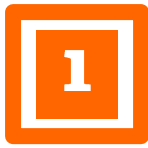
	Strategic Objective RESEARCH	Strategic Objective KNOWLEDGE	Strategic Objective INFLUENCE
Beneficiaries – what must we achieve for them	Inclusive design and accessibility are mainstreamed into products and services	Substantial and recognised contributor to thinking and the debate around inclusion and accessibility	Increased visibility and presence as a leading authority in line with research priorities
Capacities – what we need to be good at to deliver for our beneficiaries	Enhanced and responsive approaches that are tailored to the client	Improved partnerships and alliances with decision-makers	Enhanced marketing, demonstrating a solutions-based approach and track record
Learning and growth - where we need to invest in order to excel	Development of in-depth understanding of our research priorities	Development of methods and approaches to articulate our knowledge	Improved and scaled up marketing approaches aligned to research priorities
Resources - how do we ensure we are adequately resourced	Improved client management, research platforms and impact measurement	Improved methods and channels to transfer knowledge and insights	Development of a marketing strategy in line with research priorities

The assumption underpinning this approach is that to achieve the strategic objective the various outcomes starting from the bottom up need to be achieved. Some will have already happened and it is not an entirely linear approach but, for example, we cannot be seen as a substantial and leading thinker in the field without investing time and resources in improving how we collate, analyse and transfer our collective knowledge and understanding on a particular issue.

Where do we focus?

Listed below are three strategic priorities that RiDC should invest in working on over the lifetime of this strategy. These areas are proposed as they fulfil the three criteria outlined earlier in this paper, i.e there is a policy imperative to understand and improve the current situation, there are resources and there are evident and significant problems for disabled and older people in these areas.

It should be noted that by focusing on three priority areas it does not exclude emerging research or other opportunities That is not the purpose. We need to focus and direct our efforts on a smaller number of areas and excel in those whilst being aware and responsive to emerging issues and problems.



Moving forward: The future of inclusive transport and mobility

Transportation is critical to everyday life. More than simply getting from point A to point B, transportation is the key to independence, freedom and meaningful engagement for disabled and older people. RiDC has a long track record in providing solutions across several transport modes with respect to accessible travel.

We want to understand, improve, shape, through our research, inclusive modes of transport, personal transportation choices and future travel demand. It is a fast-changing environment but the accessibility needs are not being considered with respect to new technologies, and mobility alternatives. There is a gap in knowledge and RiDC with its track record and panel can help fill this evidence gap.



Actively ageing: The intersection between age and disability

As old age becomes an established part of life, disability is an increasingly common experience. Although the overall health profile of older people is improving, the high prevalence of chronic, disabling conditions means the numbers of older adults aging into disability is growing rather dramatically. This is due to the fact that more disabled people survive into old age and more older people become disabled (40% of people aged 60 years old report difficulties in performing Activities of Daily Living). There is little understanding of this intersection and how it changes people's decisions and the products and services they use (and don't).

In this respect, and although often overlooked, design is becoming increasingly important. Yet, designing for an aging population no longer means only thinking about safety and care in the home—older people also need design solutions that meet their expectations and needs? This is especially the case with respect to digital platforms which can act as a major barrier¹.

¹ ILC research has found that by 2040, older people could be spending 63p in every pound in the UK economy, and supporting older people overcome barriers to spending could add 2% to GDP every year. ILC's research also highlighted that digital exclusion is a major barrier to maximising this opportunity

RiDC will focus on how products and services are designed with older people, who may not think of themselves as disabled, in order to shape and influence the products and services that would assist in improving quality of life.



Opening windows: Exploring the interface between technology and the individual

More and more of our life is moving onto platforms that allow us to engage with new technologies and services, and which purport to enable a better life tomorrow. Unprecedented changes in technology (both in terms of functionality and adoption) call for innovative approaches to understand how individuals interact with that technology.

At RiDC we will explore this interface and how the experiences and views of disabled and older people could improve accessibility and usability for everyone. The focus will not only be on accessing essential services but also on wellbeing, safety and connectedness.

What will the organisation look like in the future?

If we implement this strategy, some of the operational changes that will result include:

- changing the model so that there is more agility and flexibility
 - multi-functional roles for a less siloed approach
 - associate model so that we can respond flexibly, without stranded costs
- develop our areas of focus:
 - increased research and insight function
 - focus on specific strategic priorities (specialisms)
- reconfiguration of our enabling functions around communications and marketing to provide a greater focus on positioning RiDC as a leader in research with disabled and older people.
- increased partnership working with other research agencies, trade bodies and disability charities.