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**JUNE 2026**  
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## Message from the President



Dear members and friends of EURO-CIU,

It is with great pleasure that I look back on our recent workshop and General Assembly in Bucharest. The event was a great success and once again demonstrated the strength and vitality of our community.

My sincere thanks go to our hosts, the Asculita Viata Asociatia, who made this gathering possible with remarkable dedication and warm hospitality. They created an excellent environment in which many people could come together, exchange ideas, and learn from one another. I was particularly pleased to see the presence of potential new members who joined us over the weekend and gained valuable insights into our work.

In addition to personal exchanges, we also engaged in important discussions about the future of EURO-CIU. These conversations were both meaningful and forward-looking, and we will continue them together in the months ahead.

There is always much to be done, but by working together and pulling in the same direction, we can achieve a great deal.

I wish you all an enjoyable read of this edition of the newsletter, and I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Brian for his excellent work.

With this in mind, I would like to thank all of you for your commitment and I look forward to the next steps we will take together.

Yours sincerely,

***Tobias Fischer***  
***President of EURO-CIU***

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[Reflections from Bucharest: Strengthening the EURO-CIU Community by Aylin Özgür, Vice President of EURO-CIU](#)



**Photos clockwise from the top: Anamaria Braşov, Tobias Fischer & Aylin Özgür; Aylin Özgür & Tobias Fischer; Filiz Aslan & Aylin Özgür**

I was very pleased to take part in the EURO-CIU Workshop and General Assembly held in Bucharest, Romania, under the theme “What Does the Future Sound Like?”

It was a valuable opportunity to meet again with EURO-CIU members, national associations, professionals, implant users and friends from different countries, and to share experiences on the future of cochlear implant users in Europe. Coming together again after the EURO-CIU 30th Anniversary Symposium held in Istanbul in 2025 was especially meaningful.

First of all, I would like to warmly thank the Romanian host association Ascută Viața for their kind hospitality and for all their efforts in organising the Workshop and General Assembly. Their welcome and support helped create a friendly, inclusive and productive atmosphere for everyone.

One of the most valuable parts of the Workshop was the opportunity for member associations to present their own organisations, projects and activities. These presentations helped members get to know one another more closely and also showed that many good ideas and projects can go beyond national borders and be adapted or further developed across a wider

geographical area. This exchange of experience once again demonstrated the importance of sharing, learning from each other and working together within the EURO-CIU community.

Throughout both the meetings and the social activities, members remained in close communication with one another, sharing ideas, experiences and hopes with a strong sense of common purpose. The atmosphere of friendship and cooperation showed that EURO-CIU is not only a platform for formal meetings, but also a community built on trust, solidarity and shared commitment.

As part of the Workshop, I delivered a speech on the sustainability of associations. As cochlear implant technology and surgery continue to develop, the needs of implant users and candidates are also increasing and changing. In response to these needs, user associations have been established in many countries, and EURO-CIU has played an important role in bringing these associations together and creating a common international voice.

In my speech, I also referred to the World Health Organization's future projections on hearing loss, which show that the needs in the field of hearing health will continue to increase in the coming years. This makes the role of user associations, national organisations and international communities such as EURO-CIU even more important.

Founded nearly 30 years ago in response to an important need, EURO-CIU has contributed not only to raising awareness and supporting research, but also to encouraging the sharing of knowledge and experience between countries. This has helped make the rights, needs and experiences of implant users more visible.

For this reason, it is of great importance to carry forward the knowledge, experience and culture of cooperation that EURO-CIU has built over the years. The sustainability of associations is not only about continuing today's activities; it is also about being better prepared, stronger and more inclusive in responding to the growing needs of the future.

On the second day, during the EURO-CIU General Assembly, I gave a presentation providing an overall review of the work carried out for CI DAY 2026.

The presentation looked back at the preparation process before CI DAY on 25 February 2026, the slogan "Hear Life With CI," which had been selected with the contribution of member associations, and the common communication work developed around this message. Examples were shared of how the posters, banners, graphics and social media materials used during CI DAY 2026 were taken up by member associations, and how the campaign gained visibility under the EURO-CIU umbrella.

As part of this review, I also highlighted how awareness activities carried out by member associations in their own countries were shared through EURO-CIU social media channels, helping them reach a wider audience and strengthening communication, information sharing and solidarity within the CI community.

Examples of awareness activities from different member associations were presented, and appreciation was expressed for their contributions. Special thanks were extended to AICE in Spain for sharing detailed information about their CI DAY 2026 activities.

The presentation also underlined that cooperation and information sharing among EURO-CIU members are strengthened through symposia, workshops and continuous communication. Sharing the initiatives and activities of member associations helps members stay informed about one another's work and contributes to stronger bonds within the CI community.

Following the review of CI DAY 2026, preparations for CI DAY 2027 were also discussed. In this context, "Hear. Live. Shine. With CI." was shared as the slogan for CI DAY 2027.

One of the important awareness ideas discussed for CI DAY 2027 was inspired by AICE's previous initiative of illuminating historic and iconic buildings. Building on this example, the idea was presented and welcomed to develop this approach into a wider awareness movement, with member countries considering the illumination of their own historic, iconic or culturally significant buildings in lilac/purple for CI DAY. This could create a common, visible and stronger awareness activity across Europe.

This idea was considered an inclusive and unifying step that could help member associations in different countries come together around a shared message on the same day. Such an initiative would not only increase the visibility of hearing implant users, but also strengthen solidarity, a common voice and a culture of working together among EURO-CIU members.

I was very happy to complete this meaningful and productive Workshop and General Assembly together with EURO-CIU board members, member associations and participants. In Bucharest, we once again saw that when experiences, projects and ideas from different countries come together around a shared purpose, they can create a much stronger impact.

For me, this meeting once again demonstrated the value of international friendship, shared experience and strong user-led associations. I look forward to continuing this cooperation under the EURO-CIU umbrella and to working together for a more accessible, visible and inclusive future for cochlear implant users.

Warm regards,

**Aylin Özgür**  
Vice President EURO-CIU

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[More photos from Bucharest](#)



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## Message from the Editor of the EURO-CIU Newsletter



Many thanks to those who have sent us articles - it's always good to hear what is happening in our member countries. Also thanks to the cochlear implant companies for keeping us up to date; and to those who have told us about forthcoming conferences.

Please feel free to forward this Newsletter to Members of Parliament, friends, colleagues and members of your own organisations. We are keen to increase the number of people who can read about the benefits of cochlear implantation. Let's get the message across, particularly as we develop our work, about which you can read in this newsletter.

The next edition of the EURO-CIU Newsletter will be due in September, so please let me have your articles and jpg photos by Monday 7 September 2026. Just e-mail them to me at [newsletter@eurociu.eu](mailto:newsletter@eurociu.eu)

With every good wish - and have a good summer!

***Brian Archbold (Editor)***

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[AUSTRIA: Official Recognition of CI Rehabilitation](#)



***Photo: Round Table discussion on CI rehabilitation at the EURO-CIU Symposium 2024: Renate Welter (CI user, support group ÖSB), Doz. Dr Daniel Holzinger (Head of Institute for Sensory and Speech Neurology, Linz), Prof. Dr. Michael Frass (CI user), and Prim. Dr. Paul Zwittag (Head of ENT Department at Kepler University Hospital Linz) ©CIA / Astrid Roithner***

**After years of advocacy by cochlear implant and hard-of-hearing organisations, Austria has established a legal framework for CI rehabilitation, a major milestone for Austrian CI users.**

When hosting the EURO-CIU Symposium and General Assembly in 2024, the Austrian CI user association CIA devoted a significant part of the programme to hearing rehabilitation for CI users, aiming to advance this important issue. At the end of 2025, finally “therapy following cochlear implantation” was officially included in the Austrian Social Insurance Rehabilitation Plan. This plan serves as a strategic framework for the Austrian social security system, defining which rehabilitation services should be available to the population.

Since 2023, a rehabilitation centre in Rohrbach in the North of Austria has been offering hearing rehabilitation for children. In addition, the rehabilitation clinic in Laßnitzhöhe, Styria, is prepared to provide hearing rehabilitation for adult CI users. With the introduction of the Rehabilitation Plan 2025 patients can now enrol in these programmes without delay.

### **How Hearing Rehabilitation Developed Over Time**

In Austria, CI users typically receive hearing training from speech therapists in private practice, while children may also benefit from early intervention programmes. However, many CI users have lacked access to specialised inpatient rehabilitation. Some were able to attend rehabilitation clinics in Germany, but for others, travelling long distances abroad posed a significant barrier.

With the introduction of the Rehabilitation Plan 2025, “acquiring communication competence”

has now been formally defined as the primary goal of rehabilitation following cochlear implantation. This type of rehabilitation is classified as neurological rehabilitation and is intended for both children and adults. A four-week inpatient rehabilitation programme is planned.

The official inclusion of CI rehabilitation in the national rehabilitation plan significantly improves patients' and physicians' ability to access and claim these services. At the same time, it provides legal certainty for Austrian rehabilitation centres seeking to establish specialised CI rehabilitation programmes. However, such rehabilitation services are not yet available for hearing aid users in Austria.

**Eva Kohl**

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## SPAIN – AICE – International Noise Awareness Day



As part of International Noise Awareness Day, Federación AICE highlighted the importance of protecting hearing health and raising awareness about the effects of excessive and prolonged noise exposure. Noise pollution, present in urban, occupational, and leisure environments, is one of the main preventable risk factors for hearing loss, with a direct impact on people's quality of life.

In this context, Federación AICE has collaborated with the organization Juristas contra el Ruido (Lawyers Against Noise), an initiative dedicated to defending the right to a healthy acoustic environment and ensuring compliance with noise pollution regulations. Through these efforts, they have contributed to promoting restrictions and measures that have led to the suspension or limitation of large-scale music events in venues such as Santiago Bernabéu Stadium, helping to spark public debate about the balance between leisure and health. In cities such as Barcelona, awareness about noise pollution has also increased, leading to public awareness campaigns across the city aimed at warning citizens about the harmful effects of noise in everyday life.

AICE continues to emphasize that prevention is essential: promoting safe listening habits, reducing exposure to high volumes, and fostering healthier environments are key measures to protect hearing. Early education on hearing health and timely detection of hearing loss is also crucial to improving inclusion and quality of life for people with hearing impairments.

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SPAIN – AICE – 12 Years of Inclusion: Camp for Children and Teens with Cochlear Implants



**¡Reserva ya tu plaza!**

**CampAICE**  
para **Implantad@s Cocleares**  
Campamento el Molinillo  
Arenas del Rey. Granada.

**5-12**  
**JULIO 2026**

De 11 a 17  
AÑOS  
ambos inclusive

Plazas limitadas

FEDERACIÓN  
**AICE**  
Asociaciones de Implantados  
Cocleares de España

f @ x d y

Precios especiales para socios (se considera socio inscrito mínimo hace 1 año)

[www.implantecoclear.org/campamentos](http://www.implantecoclear.org/campamentos)  
[campamentos@implantecoclear.org](mailto:campamentos@implantecoclear.org)

GOBIERNO DE ESPAÑA  
MINISTERIO DE EDUCACIÓN, CULTURA Y DEPORTE  
POR SOLIDARIDAD  
OTROS FINES DE INTERÉS SOCIAL

We are excited about our upcoming camp for children and teenagers with cochlear implants. This year marks the 12th edition of the event, which has become one of the most important dates in our calendar. In the next newsletter, we will share more information about this wonderful camp. If you would like to see the experience from previous years, you can do so at the following link:

<https://www.implantecoclear.org/campamentos/>

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## TÜRKİYE – BİYONİK KULAKLI ÇOCUKLAR DERNEĞİ – Niğde Archaeological Exploration Trip



On May 1, 2026, the Bionic Eared Children's Association (BiyonikDer) organized an Archaeological Exploration Trip in Niğde, Türkiye. We welcomed our member families arriving from various provinces across the country at the historic Kemerhisar Aqueducts.

The guided cultural programme included visits to the Tyana Ancient City, the Ancient Roman Pool, and the Gümüşler Monastery. Additionally, the children participated in an interactive and educational mock-excavation workshop led by Archaeologist Mustafa Eryaman.

### Future Action Plans & Upcoming Activities

1. Spring Picnic: Organizing a community-building spring picnic for our member families to strengthen peer support networks.
2. "Don't Leave Hearing Aids in the Drawer" Campaign: Launching a nationwide awareness and redistribution campaign to ensure unused or passive cochlear implant processors and hearing aids reach children in need.
3. Muğla Archaeological Event: Planning the next installment of our accessible cultural heritage and archaeology workshops for children in Muğla.

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## TÜRKİYE – CID Türkiye Shared Its Work and Projects at the EURO-CIU Workshop



**Photos clockwise from top: Aydın Özgür, Hüseyin Onur İpek, Filiz Aslan, Tobias Fischer, Aylin Özgür, Melis Durmaz Yıldırım, Nehir Özdemir, Efe Özgür, Hüseyin Özdemir & Müge Özdemir; presentation of football shirt to Efe; Aylin Özgür & Betül Mutluç**

During the EURO-CIU Workshop held in Bucharest, CID Türkiye was pleased to share its

work, projects and experience from Türkiye.

For CID Türkiye, this meeting was not only an opportunity to present our current activities, but also an important occasion to show how association work can develop over time through continuity, international cooperation and the active involvement of younger generations.

One of the key messages we wished to share was that sustainability in associations is strengthened not only through institutional structures, but also through people who gain experience over time, remain connected to the process and take on responsibility.

At CID Türkiye, we see valuable examples of this continuity. The journey of our Vice President, Betül Mutluç, in association work began with a summer camp held in the United Kingdom in 2012. Following this experience, she remained connected to association work, continued to contribute to different activities over the years, and gradually took on greater responsibility within CID Türkiye. Today, as a sociologist, she actively contributes to our association as Vice President.

Similarly, Onur İpek has been involved in association activities and international programmes over the years, continuing to bring the knowledge, perspective and experience he gained through these processes into our work. As a specialist biologist and biology teacher who also continues his academic studies, Onur now actively contributes to CID Türkiye as Secretary General.

For us, these examples show that sustainability in associations is strengthened through a culture of long-term commitment, trust, experience-sharing and responsibility. International meetings, youth programmes and association activities can open important doors; when these processes turn into long-term contribution, they strengthen both the institutional memory of associations and the human resources they carry into the future.

Following this message, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Filiz Aslan, Board Member and Advisor of CID Türkiye, delivered a presentation on auditory implantation services in Türkiye. Her presentation provided an overview of newborn hearing screening, school-age hearing screening programmes, healthcare services, rehabilitation rights, legal rights, educational support, and the current challenges faced by cochlear implant users in daily life, education and employment.

She also introduced CID Türkiye's continuous and accessible digital safety approach for hearing health in disaster and emergency situations. This approach aims to support cochlear implant and auditory brainstem implant users through better access to critical information, emergency alerts and coordinated data systems. It also reflects the importance of considering the needs of hearing implant users within broader emergency and disaster planning.

Later, Melis Durmaz Yıldırım, International Communications Coordinator of CID Türkiye, language specialist and cochlear implant user, delivered her presentation titled "Two Ideas, One Goal: Inclusion in Action in Türkiye."

In her presentation, she introduced two important initiatives from CID Türkiye. The first was the Personal Hearing Implant Loan, developed in cooperation with Halkbank. This initiative aims to support cochlear implant, auditory brainstem implant and other hearing implant users in accessing new devices, device replacements and related needs.

What makes this model particularly important is that it is designed around a real health need. Users can apply with a medical board report and a proforma invoice, making the process directly connected to their hearing health requirements. In this respect, the model offers a practical and accessible financing pathway for hearing implant users and provides a strong

example of how social banking, health access and user advocacy can come together.

Melis also emphasised that this project is not only a financial tool, but also an awareness and social inclusion initiative. Through joint communication materials prepared by CID Türkiye and Halkbank, the message reached bank branches and social media, helping to make hearing implants more visible beyond the implant community. The project carried a clear message: hearing implant users matter, access to technology matters, and inclusive solutions can be developed when institutions work together.

The second initiative focused on sport and awareness. This idea was born from the vision of Efe Özgür, an ABI user, who believed that football could carry a message of hearing awareness and inclusion to a wider audience.

Although Efe is a devoted Galatasaray supporter, the initiative was warmly welcomed and hosted by the Çorlu Fenerbahçeliler Association. During the event, Efe was gifted a Fenerbahçe jersey, which he wore proudly. This meaningful moment showed that when it comes to awareness, inclusion and solidarity, even strong sporting rivalries can step aside.

As part of this initiative, community-based hearing screenings and information activities were carried out for both children and adults in a kindergarten and a local municipality building. Families received information about hearing loss, implant technologies and rehabilitation, while CI and ABI users shared their own lived experiences in open panels.

The aim was to show that hearing health should be part of public conversation and social awareness. Sport can reach communities that health communication alone may not always reach, and it can become a powerful starting point for awareness, understanding and inclusion.

Through these presentations, CID Türkiye was pleased to share how association continuity, young leadership, medical access, financial inclusion, disaster preparedness, sport, public awareness and user experience can come together under one shared goal: making hearing health more visible, accessible and inclusive in society.

The opportunity to present these examples within the EURO-CIU Workshop programme and to exchange ideas with other member associations was very valuable for us. We believe that the projects and experiences shared by national associations can inspire new partnerships and, over time, be adapted in different countries according to local needs.

CID Türkiye values continuing its contribution to the EURO-CIU community and working together for a more accessible, visible and inclusive future for cochlear implant and auditory brainstem implant users.

Warm regards,

***Aylin Özgür***

***President of the Cochlear Implant Association (CID Türkiye)***

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[LEHNHARDT FOUNDATION – Cochlear Implant Project in Kyrgyzstan](#)



*Photo approved by Munar Beishenova, Bishkek, April 17, 2026*

Since 2019 the Lehnhardt Foundation has been involved in four projects in Kyrgyzstan. In December 2020, already under strict COVID-19 restrictions, the first ten children underwent cochlear implantation in Bishkek at the National Centre of Maternity and Childhood Care (NCMCC) under the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic. The International Association of Hearing Rehabilitation Specialists (IAHRS) was founded in Bishkek as early as 2020.

Since 2020, with a break in 2022 and 2023, Prof. Tino Just from KMG Klinikum Güstrow (Germany) has been leading 1–2 annual trips to Bishkek to teach middle ear and cochlear implant surgery at the NCMCC. In April 2026, in addition to cochlear implantations in young children, 32 surgeries of reconstructive ear surgeries were performed at the NCMCC for one week. Given the large number of children requiring treatment for deafness and chronic otitis media with cholesteatoma, there is an urgent need to establish an ear surgery program at the NCMCC. This program is now scheduled to be established in 2027.

In an initial project by the Lehnhardt Foundation and the National Centre of Maternity and Childhood Care neonatal hearing screening was introduced for all newborns at four maternity hospitals during the period from February 1, 2021, to January 31, 2023 (funded by the German Association for International Cooperation, Clinic Partnership/ GIZ). A memorandum of understanding between the Lehnhardt foundation and the NCMCC was signed in order to introduce a 'Universal Newborn Hearing Program'. As a start from 2021 to early 2023, approximately 6% (29,000 out of 480,000 newborns) in sixteen maternity clinics were screened. In 2024, neonatal hearing screening was made mandatory by the Ministry of Health (Order of the Ministry of Health of the Kyrgyz Republic Programme. No. 468, dated July 5, 2024). The cooperation between the Ministry of Health and UNICEF-Kyrgyzstan further improved the existing infrastructure for the NHS project.

In a follow-up project (led by Dipl. Ing. Peter Zoth – Lehnhardt Foundation, funded also by GIZ) Neonatal Hearing Screening will be expanded and include an additional 19–22 maternity hospitals as well as two additional centres for confirmation diagnostic. This will facilitate

travel for parents. A parent hotline will be established to support parents when they receive the information that their child is severely hearing impaired or deaf. Timeline for this project is 2027.

Another project (again funded by GIZ, led by Liubov Wolowik)) focused on the rehabilitation of hearing-impaired children with the aim of inclusion for children with CI. This started in April 2024 and lasted until end of March 2026.

Cochlear implantation has become a routine surgical procedure worldwide for treating severe bilateral hearing loss in people who do not benefit from well-fitted hearing aids in both ears. While CI began in Europe as early as the 1980s, the first CIs in Kyrgyzstan were performed about ten years ago by colleagues from Russia, Ukraine and Germany. Since there was no CI program in Kyrgyzstan until recently, some parents sent their children abroad for surgery, many of them to Turkey.

Since 2018 several initiatives and local programs have been launched to give hearing-impaired children access to cochlear implants. In addition to a nationwide newborn hearing screening program, a local CI program for children has been established.

However, it has now been determined that there are quality deficiencies in CI care, as lifelong follow-up care for children with CIs must be ensured.

Furthermore, the current care system continues to show gaps in ear surgery training for Kyrgyz physicians, as well as a significant lack of defined standards. There is also a shortage of equipment for audiological diagnostics, certain ear instruments and, above all, standardized follow-up care.

In summary, it can be stated that there is still no uniform, standardized cochlear implant care in Kyrgyzstan. Since most CI surgeries – approximately 300 so far – were performed primarily by foreign physicians at the National Centre of Maternity and Childhood Care in Bishkek, government authorities and hospital management have expressed a desire to initiate a certification process for CI care for children.

With the proposed project we aim to establish personnel, equipment, and structural requirements for participation in the cochlear implant program in Kyrgyzstan, define the minimum requirements for implanting clinics, and develop Kyrgyz guidelines for CI care in collaboration with Kyrgyz physicians at the government hospital, which will then be submitted to the Ministry of Health and implemented as a binding standard.

With an estimated 140,000 to 160,000 newborns per year in Kyrgyzstan, there is a projected need for 50 to 150 CIs for deaf children annually. A large number of older children remain still untreated. In addition, there are many adults who have become deaf after acquiring language, a large proportion of these could be fitted with a CI as well.

There is still a lot to be achieved!!

***Prof Dr Tino Just***

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[A new CIICA Conversation: Are you prepared for an emergency?](#)



***Photos: Aylin Özgür, Filiz Aslan, Nic Russel and Sari V Hirvonen-Skarbo***

**JUNE 26th 08:00 UK | 09:00 CEST | 17:00 AEST | 19:00 NZ**

For people with cochlear implants and hearing devices, emergencies can bring additional communication and access challenges, from understanding announcements to staying connected when technology, power or support systems are disrupted. As a CI user, whatever your age, are you prepared for an emergency? If you have to go into hospital, if your travels are interrupted, if there are floods, fires, earthquakes, or threat of war, are you prepared to be able to stay in communication?

That's why CIICA is bringing together global voices for an important conversation on emergency preparedness, inclusion and practical strategies that can make a real difference. Some people are thinking about emergency packs to be prepared.

This conversation shares some ideas, and may help you to think ahead, or help others to do to.

Join us for: "CIICA Conversation: Are You Prepared for an Emergency?"

**Register and learn more here: [LINK TO PAGE](#)**

Led by Aylin Özgür & Filiz Aslan, CID, Türkiye, Nic Russel, Pindrop, NZ and Sari V Hirvonen-Skarbo, Finland.

**#CIICA #CochlearImplants #HearingHealth #DisabilityInclusion #EmergencyPreparedness #Accessibility #GlobalCommunity #HearingLoss #InclusionMatters**

***EURO-CIU is a founding member of CIICA***

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[CIICA'S Resource of the Month](#)

# CIICA'S RESOURCE OF THE MONTH



## ADULT HEARING SCREENING: WHY WAIT?



### ADULT HEARING SCREENING: WHY WAIT?

CIICA has a wealth of resources for you – and they are popular with about 3,500 downloads per year! One of the latest addresses is the seemingly everlasting discussion on Adult Hearing Screening and is our RESOURCE OF THE MONTH.

#### REPORT NOW AVAILABLE HERE!

Our report; “Adult Hearing Screening: Why Wait?” reviews recent evidence, international guidelines, and policy changes, highlighting the consensus on the value of adult hearing screening and the urgent need for health systems to integrate screening into public health strategies.

Adult hearing loss is one of the most prevalent and under-recognised health challenges worldwide, with significant impacts on communication, mental health, and long-term issues such as cognitive decline and dementia. Despite strong evidence for the effectiveness of the early fitting of today’s hearing technologies, adult hearing screening is not available in most health systems. At the same time, rapid technological and regulatory developments – including over-the-counter (OTC) devices, self-fitting hearing aids, and app-based hearing tests – are disrupting traditional models of hearing care and making direct patient access to hearing technologies possible.

The report gives you the latest evidence to support your advocacy activities to argue for adult hearing screening – as does WHO [Hearing screening: considerations for implementation](#)

WHO have just launched their new screening tool for use in community and primary health care settings with those over the age of five.... Go to: <https://www.who.int/teams/noncommunicable-diseases/sensory-functions-disability-and-rehabilitation/ear-and-hearing-care/whoears>

*“If this was picked up sooner, there would be such an improvement to people’s quality of life. I know of so many people who clearly have got hearing loss but won’t ask their GP for a referral to ENT services. If screening was available many of these people would attend, as it would be seen as something that everyone is offered. Hearing loss at any level causes such upset and depression in people and their families. Once diagnosed it gives a person a chance to come to terms with wearing aids and meeting others in a similar situation. I found it takes a long time to admit deafness and be open about it.”*

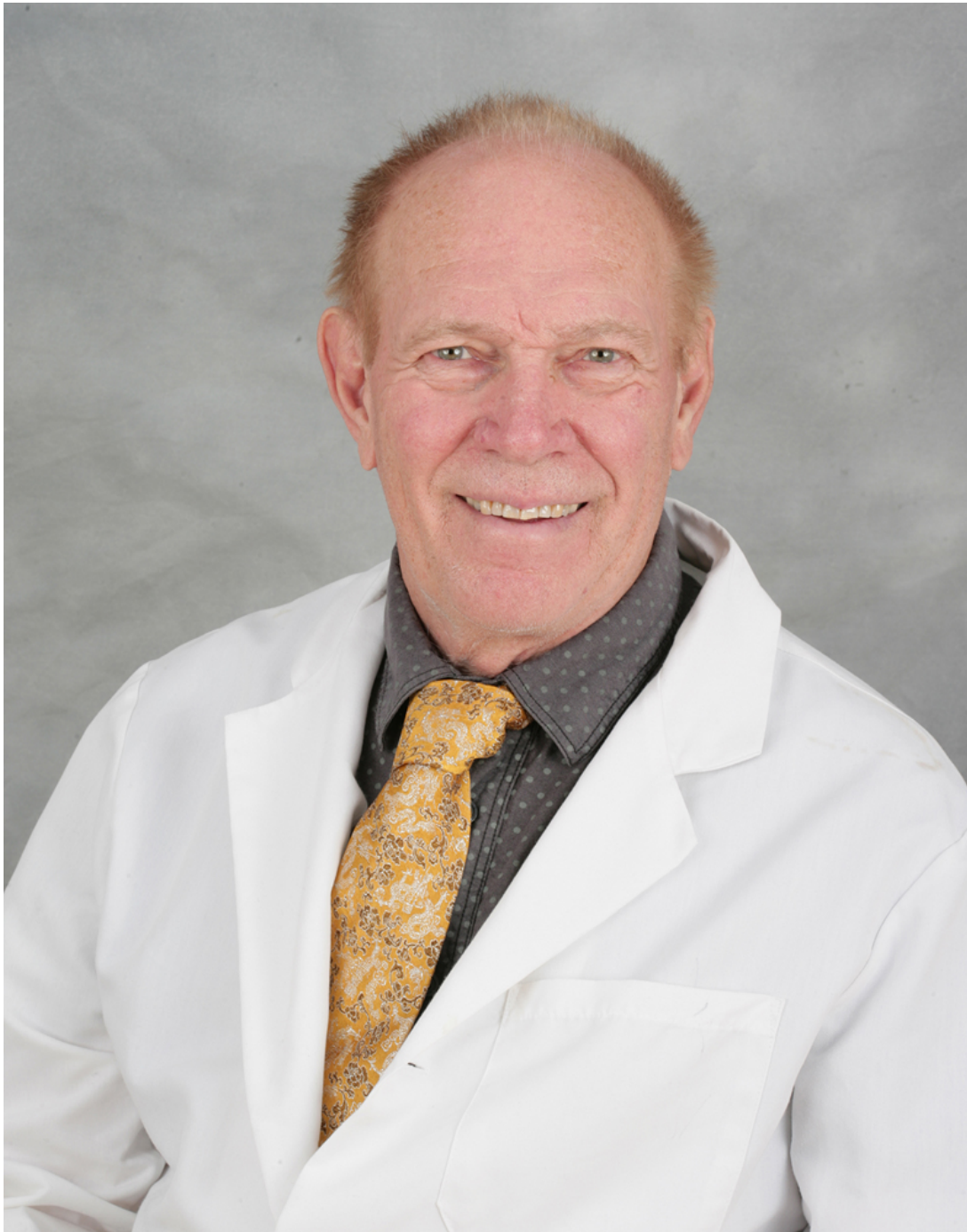
An adult with hearing loss quoted in Lamb & Archbold 2016

With thanks to AICE Fundacion, Spain and Advanced Bionics.

***EURO-CIU is a founding member of CIICA.***

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[RELATED CONGRESS – Management of the Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Patient - 13 & 14 August 2026](#)



***Photo: Rich Tyler***

**This course will be in-person and virtual**

The course will be TENTATIVELY held in the Oto Clinic Alumni Conference room (elevator L; 2nd Floor) (21271 PFP) at the university hospital campus, 200 Hawkins Dr. Iowa City, IA. Parking ramps 2 & 4 are the closest to the venue.

The option to attend virtually is on the registration page. The price is the same to attend in-person or virtually. An email with a link to attend virtually will be sent the week of the conference.

### **Sponsors**

- The University of Iowa Department of Otolaryngology — Head and Neck Surgery
- The University of Iowa Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

### **Intended Audience and Purpose**

This is the 33rd Annual International Conference on the MANAGEMENT OF THE TINNITUS AND HYPERACUSIS PATIENT. Invited presenters are from around the world, and focus on understanding the mechanisms, and understanding the problems of hearing, sleep, concentration, and thoughts/emotions. Updates on in-person and remote counselling are reviewed from different perspectives. Companies explain and demonstrate their latest approaches for wearables. New approaches and research needs are discussed.

The conference is important because it brings together researchers, clinicians and people suffering. They each learn from the others perspective. Researchers better understand the needs. Clinicians are exposed to other novel helping approaches. People suffering learn about others experiencing similar issues and view the variety of approaches and how different clinicians and researchers with different backgrounds interact in an attempt to move the field forward.

### **Registration Fees**

- Physician: \$595
- Other healthcare professionals: \$395
- Tinnitus patients and students: \$99

Click here for website to register: [Management of the Tinnitus and Hyperacusis Patient | Department of Otolaryngology - Carver College of Medicine | The University of Iowa](#)

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[RELATED CONGRESS – Our Third CIICA Conference – CI Advocacy in Action 2026: 22 & 23 October 2026, Brussels](#)

CIICA'S 3RD GLOBAL CONFERENCE

# CI ADVOCACY IN ACTION 2026

WHERE SCIENCE MEETS EXPERIENCE

OCTOBER 22 & 23 | BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

REGISTER HERE




LEARN MORE AT [WWW.CIICANET.ORG/EVENTS](http://WWW.CIICANET.ORG/EVENTS)





**Photos (left to right): Rob Beenders & Andrej Kral**

**Where Science Meets Experience | Advocating for Sustainable, Lifelong CI services globally.**

**Come and join us to add your voice to the network and help us to move CI Advocacy forward across the globe!**

***“Very unique and inspirational, thank you for making it happen” Delegate***

Building on the impact of our first two global conferences in Brussels, our third inspiring conference ‘CI Advocacy in Action 2026’ will bring together the network of CI users, families, professionals, academics, industry and policy makers and funders from across the globe together to share our advocacy goals. [See the excitement of 2025's conference here!](#)

***“The topics so well created, the speakers who were so well chosen, each of them***

***spoke from their heart and the lived experience and vast knowledge***" CI user Delegate

As Astrid Van Wieringen, President of the International Society of Audiology says ***"CIICA: Where Science Meets Experience! Progress is made where scientific knowledge and lived experience work side by side."***

***"Attending the CIICA conference in 2025 was a highlight of my year. The two days were filled with inspirational talks and ideas, fascinating conversations in the breaks and a clear focus on CI users and their families. CI users and family members lectured alongside health professionals and industry, all sharing brilliant ideas and experiences from different countries across this network. I can't wait for the next CIICA conference in October in Belgium: see you there! Prof Cathy Birman, Australia."***

***"Without awareness, there is no information, no demand, no services."*** (Carolina Der, WHO, speaker).

Tobias Fischer, CI user and President EURO-CIU: ***"The CIICA Conference will deliver valuable outcomes that strengthen our collaboration and shared advocacy."***

### **THIS YEAR!**

With increasing global funding and resource challenges for Ear and Hearing Care, in 2026 we will be exploring:

- How do we ensure that those who could benefit from CI can gain access, and those who have CI have the lifelong sustainable services required?
- How do we influence the key stakeholders?
- Could services be delivered differently? What role can remote care and AI play?
- How can service providers and users and families work together to ensure the services are effective and efficient?
- What about equity for those in low- and middle-income countries?
- How are services delivered to those who are older?
- How can we stay up to date in this fastmoving area?

These and other issues will be addressed in a lively and vibrant two days, in this unique inclusive conference learning from each other and building collaboration across the globe. Many collaborations have been established at our first two conferences – already making a difference across the globe.

We are delighted to welcome back **Rob Beenders, Minister of Consumer Affairs, Social Fraud & Equal Opportunities in Belgium**, himself a CI user, to open this year's CI Advocacy In Action Conference in Brussels, to ensure that we make our voices heard. As he reminds us: ***"Access to CI shouldn't depend on your age or how well you navigate the system. Get CI advocacy on the agenda – politicians aren't waiting for you."***

We are also delighted to welcome **Andrej Kral** as a guest speaker at CI Advocacy in Action 2026: his title will be ***"Time is Running..."***

To be able to advocate we need to be up to date with the science and no body better than Andrej to share with us the latest research on how hearing is crucial early in life. He is delighted to be joining us this year in Brussels and join our discussions and collaborations.

*Andrej is Chair & Professor of Auditory Neuroscience, Hanover Medical School, Professor of Systems Neuroscience, School of Medicine and Health Sciences, Macquarie University, Sydney.*

**REGISTRATION IS OPEN! [CLICK HERE TO GET EARLY BIRD DISCOUNT](#)**

***EURO-CIU is a founding member of CIICA.***

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[RELATED CONGRESS – EURO-CIU Symposium and General Assembly – 9 & 10 April 2027](#)



*Save the date*

**9<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2027**

**Hearing, Implants and Rehabilitation**

**16<sup>th</sup> International Symposium EURO-CIU**

**25<sup>th</sup> anniversary ONICI**

*General Assembly EURO-CIU - 10th April 2027*

Welcome to  
**Ghent, Belgium**

**EUROCIU**  
EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION OF COCHLEAR IMPLANT USERS o.s.b.l.

**artevelde**  
academy

**ONICI**

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[RELATED CONGRESS – ESPO 2027 – Prague – 17-20 April 2027](#)



**ESPO 2027**

**PRAGUE**

**The countdown to  
ESPO 2027 Prague is on!**

Abstract submission is now open!

We invite you to submit abstracts for inclusion in the  
ESPO 2027 Congress Programme!

Please submit your abstract before the deadline of  
30th November 2026.

Submission details and further information are available  
on the [congress website](#)

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[RELATED CONGRESS – CI2027 San Diego – 12-15 May 2027](#)



AMERICAN  
COCHLEAR  
IMPLANT  
ALLIANCE



**CI2027**  
**SAN DIEGO**



Abstracts Open in July 2026

Save the Date!

Join us for CI2027 San Diego: Conference on Cochlear Implants, taking place May 12–15, 2027, in beautiful San Diego!

Abstract submissions open in July — start planning now to share your research, innovations, and clinical insights with the cochlear implant community.

We look forward to seeing you in San Diego for another exciting conference filled with collaboration, education, and connection! [CI2027 San Diego - American Cochlear Implant Alliance](#)

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[RELATED CONGRESS – 18th European Symposium on Pediatric Cochlear Implantation – 26-29 May 2027](#)



**ESPCI 2027 | 26-29 MAY**  
**DUBROVNIK, CROATIA**

EUROPEAN SYMPOSIUM ON PEDIATRIC  
COCHLEAR IMPLANTATION

  
Wednesday May 26 –  
Saturday May 29, 2027

  
Valamar Meeting & Events  
Dubrovnik, Croatia

save the date

[www.ESPCI2027.org](http://www.ESPCI2027.org)

On behalf of the Croatian Society for Cochlear Implantation, it is a pleasure and great honour to host the **18th European Symposium on Pediatric Cochlear Implantation 2027 in Dubrovnik, Croatia**.

ESPCI 2027 celebrates the **35th anniversary** of the first ESPCI in Nottingham, England, organized by Sue Archbold and Gerard O'Donoghue in 1992. Since then, a symposium has been held in Europe every other year with increasing interest and size; in Montpellier, Hannover, 'S-Hertogenbosch, Antwerp, Las Palmas de Gran Canaria, Geneva, Venice, Warsaw, Athens, Istanbul, Toulouse, Lisbon, Bucharest, Budapest, Rotterdam and Hannover again. **ESPCI became one of the largest international events focusing on paediatric cochlear implantation** that has gained reputation as a leading meeting in the field of auditory implants in children. It represents a good occasion to bring together **scientists, clinicians,**

**engineers, speech therapists and technicians** to share their valuable knowledge and experience.

Dubrovnik, as the host of the ESPCI 2027, as well as a **UNESCO city**, will offer the delegates an inspiring meeting, with renewing keynote lectures, sponsored symposia, oral and poster presentations and a networking evening on Friday, May 28, 2027.

**Abstract submission** will open in the second half of 2026, as will congress registration.

On behalf of the Local Organizing and Scientific Committee Members, we are convinced that we will be able to provide an **outstanding international meeting** with many participants from all countries across Europe as well as other continents. Welcome!

***Prof. Dr. Robert Trotic and Prof. Dr. Andro Kosec***  
***ESPCI 2027 Presidents***

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[WORLD NEWS – BELGIUM – NEW INTERNATIONAL POSTGRADUATE PROGRAM: Hearing, Implants & Rehabilitation](#)



Starting in September 2026, the Audiology department of Artevelde University of Applied Sciences & ONICI are proud to launch a new, international postgraduate program: **Hearing, Implants & Rehabilitation**.

This English-taught program bridges the gap between high-tech hearing solutions (such as cochlear implants) and the essential, person-centered rehabilitation and counseling that CI users and their families rely on every day.

### **Who is this for?**

The program is designed for a wide variety of professionals working with individuals with hearing loss, including:

- Speech and Language Therapists
- Audiologists
- Teachers of the Deaf

Every professional who works with people with hearing loss is welcome.

### **Program Modules**

The curriculum provides a comprehensive approach to hearing care.

An overview of the different modules:

- Introduction to Hearing Loss and Auditory Development
- Fundamentals of Hearing Loss & Technology
- Person-Centered Care, Rehabilitation & Counseling
- Education, Employment, Advocacy & Collaborative Care
- Special Populations & Complex Needs

### **Practical Details**

- **Flexible Format:** The program is primarily online (webinars and self-study), making it highly compatible with a full-time job.
- **Hands-on Practice:** Students will gather for an intensive week on campus in Ghent, Belgium, in the Spring of 2027.
- **Limited Availability:** To ensure a highly interactive and personalized learning experience, we are offering a maximum of 25 places. There are still a few spots available.

### **Want to know more?**

Help us elevate the standard of care for CI users across Europe. Discover the full program details on our website.

### **Program Webpage & Registration:**

<https://www.arteveldehogeschool.be/en/programmes/postgraduate/hearing-implants-and-rehabilitation>

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[WORLD NEWS – GERMANY – ACIR Honorary Award 2026 Presented to Dr. Dr. h. c. Monika Lehnhardt-Gorjany](#)





**Photo: Monika Lehnhardt-Gorjany and Kelly Mattstedt**

On May 28, 2026, Dr. Dr. h. c. Monika Lehnhardt-Gorjany was presented with the ACIR Honorary Award during the 31st Friedberg Symposium in Bad Nauheim, Germany. With this award, the Association for Cochlear Implant Rehabilitation (ACIR) honours her outstanding and long-standing commitment to rehabilitation following cochlear implantation.

Dr. Lehnhardt-Gorjany is regarded as one of the pioneers of cochlear implant care and, in particular, cochlear implant rehabilitation in Germany. Together with her former husband, Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. mult. Ernst Lehnhardt, she laid important foundations for what has become today's established CI rehabilitation system and interval rehabilitation model. A major milestone was the establishment of the first Cochlear Implant Rehabilitation Centre in Hanover in 1990. In this way, Dr. Lehnhardt-Gorjany continues to accompany the CI centres in their daily work to this day. Early on, Dr. Lehnhardt-Gorjany recognized the crucial role of rehabilitation in achieving successful long-term outcomes following cochlear implantation. In addition, she and Prof. Lehnhardt actively promoted newborn hearing screening, contributing significantly to its development and implementation in Germany. Beyond Germany, Dr. Lehnhardt-Gorjany remains actively involved in supporting hearing rehabilitation initiatives in numerous countries around the world. In particular, she has dedicated herself to assisting professionals, families, and institutions in regions where healthcare systems are less developed, helping to establish sustainable structures for hearing care and rehabilitation.

With remarkable dedication, energy, and compassion, she continues to support children and their families who require assistance in gaining access to hearing and communication. She is internationally recognized as a leading expert in the field of hearing rehabilitation. Countless professionals have benefited from her knowledge and experience, while many families whose children she has supported remain in close contact with her to this day.

By presenting the ACIR Honorary Award, the Association for Cochlear Implant Rehabilitation (ACIR) expresses its sincere gratitude for Dr. Lehnhardt-Gorjany's exceptional contributions to cochlear implant rehabilitation and to improving the quality of life of countless individuals with hearing loss. ACIR wishes her continued health, strength, and fulfilment in her invaluable work for many years to come.

The ACIR was founded in Hanover in 1996 and currently consists of 20 German cochlear implant centres represented by their therapeutic directors. ACIR is committed to ensuring the highest possible standards of care and long-term support for cochlear implant recipients. Furthermore, it represents their interests in matters concerning healthcare, technology, policy, health insurance providers, and medical review services. The ACIR Honorary Award has been presented for several years to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to cochlear implant rehabilitation. Recipients are recognized for promoting rehabilitation as an essential component of cochlear implant care, supporting CI rehabilitation centres, and actively contributing to the advancement of rehabilitation services. The 2026 ACIR Honorary Award was presented by Kelly Mattstedt of the Cochlear Implant Centre Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania "Ernst Lehnhardt" in Güstrow, Germany. In her acceptance speech, Dr. Lehnhardt-Gorjany expressed her heartfelt gratitude for the honour and reflected on the development of cochlear implant rehabilitation, emphasizing the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration in achieving successful outcomes for CI recipients.

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## WORLD NEWS – UK / The Netherlands – Partnering to expand CI representation, deaf awareness and language-learning through children’s books



It started with the CIICA Global Summit back in 2024, where I was showcasing the AVID Language range of books for families with (and without) hearing loss. There I met Jarle Franceus, Lecturer in Speech Therapy & Audiology at Artevelde University of Applied Sciences. We immediately sensed an opportunity for collaboration because some of the AVID books were already available in Spanish and a few other languages, but we didn't yet have any Dutch versions.

Jarle and I initially worked together in a private capacity to translate my two little Ling Ling Bird (a.k.a Pip de Papagaai) books into Dutch, and very soon this led to bigger things: a new collaboration between AVID Language and the Speech and Language department at Artevelde University. Students working with Jarle chose two of our books, “C.I. Quest” (“Boer Bram en het CI-avontuur”) and “Mr Mellow Likes Yellow” (“Meneer Moreel is dol op geel”) to use as the anchors for their thesis projects, focusing on fostering communicative development of children with hearing loss through storybooks. The project involved translating the books into Dutch, while retaining the language development strategies which are woven into the stories, and creating a comprehensive set of speech and language activities to use alongside the books.

Congratulations to students Sienna Hendrickx, Annika Kuypers, Xan Delobel and Lara Vannieuwenhuysse for their thoughtful and sensitive translation work on these two AVID Language books, and for their comprehensive theses and learning activity packs. Here's wishing you all a memorable and well-deserved graduation later this month! Thank you also to Jarle, for making this project possible.

All four books in Dutch are now available via all the usual channels (see our website), and I will also be proudly showcasing them in person for the first time at the upcoming FCEI Conference in Bad Ischl, Austria. (P.S. Keep a lookout for our titles newly published in Portuguese and Italian too!)

**Tanya Saunders**  
AVID Language

[www.avidlanguage.com](http://www.avidlanguage.com)

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WORLD NEWS – UK – BCIG Conference and AGM 2026



**Photos: Conference opening; and BCIG Trustees**

### **Sound Futures: Innovation, Access and Collaboration.**

During a bright two days in April the British Cochlear Implant Group arrived in Glasgow for the annual conference. Hosted by the Scottish Cochlear Implant team the program created reflected the breadth, depth and ambition of cochlear implant services across the UK and beyond. Alongside the rigorous scientific program, access and service provision was under the spotlight.

Prof Sally Lewis set the scene, illustrating the challenges and opportunities for UK healthcare in delivering cochlear implants in an equitable way. BBC Scotland's own Pennie Taylor brought her tenacious journalistic and broadcasting style to the first Round Table challenging

current practise and bottle necks in access to cochlear implants. Pennie ensured everyone in the room left motivated to push boundaries and consider her challenge "...this is the world's most successful sensory prosthesis... surely we must do better".

Day two saw the Young Scottish Implant Network, young people aged 15-25, share their lived experience and passion for influencing policy, educating on cochlear implants and highlighting what matters most to them as they move into adulthood with a cochlear implant.

Alongside the main program were two collaborative events: the Cochlear Implant Champions Scheme, in collaboration with BAA, aims to ensure that all eligible adults and children are well informed about cochlear implants and are offered a timely referral. BCIG 2026 introduced the Rehab Champions program. This dedicated space, in collaboration with BATOD, allowed Champions to deepen their knowledge, refine tools for their local teams, and strengthen the network's collective capacity to deliver high quality, person centred rehabilitation for cochlear implant users.

Conference was also the venue for the BCIG AGM 2026 which saw the election of three new Ordinary Member Trustees: Roberta Buhagiar, Professor of Audiology, Clinical Services Manager, University of Southampton Auditory Implant Service; Sandra Driver, Rehabilitationist/ Speech and Language Therapist, Guys and St Thomas Hearing Implant Program and Fiona Kukiewicz, Clinical Researcher in Audiology, Guys and St Thomas Hearing Implant Program. Thanks were given to Catherine Totten who steps down as Secretary, a role which will be taken by Emma Stapleton, Consultant Otolaryngologist and Auditory Implant Surgeon.

Glasgow 2026 will be remembered for scientific excellence, real reflection on cochlear implant service provision, true collaborative working and a great ceilidh! BCIG 2027 is planned for 23rd and 24th March 2027 in Oxford, UK. Hope to see you there!

#### Useful links:

- [Moving into Adulthood | Scottish Cochlear Implant Programme](#)
- [Cochlear Implant Champion Scheme - British Academy of Audiology](#)
- [Rehab Champions event at the 2026 BCIG conference - BATOD](#)

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[WORLD NEWS – UK – BATOD – British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People](#)



## BATOD/BAEA new publication

In response to queries and advice about access to music in lessons and examinations, the British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (BATOD) and the British Association of Educational Audiologists (BAEA) in partnership with a range of deaf musicians, music teachers, and other professionals with experience in music and deaf education have co-created this document.

BATOD and BAEA appreciate access arrangements are intended to allow fair, without advantage access to assessments as long as they do not compromise the assessment objectives of the specification in question.

This [Considerations for music lessons and examinations document](#) is a practical guide for educators, audiologists, families, exam centres, and awarding bodies to create inclusive, accessible and fair music learning and assessment environments for deaf children and young people (CYP).

## BATOD publications

BATOD has created and revised a range of documents, including the BATOD Acoustics statement 2026. The revised BATOD Acoustics position statement has been developed through a national consultation of QToDs, educational audiologists, acousticians, specialist practitioners, and other professionals working directly with deaf babies, children and young people. The recommendations reflect professional experience, real life evidence, observed outcomes in practice, and widely shared professional judgement about effective acoustic environments in educational contexts.

Click here to access the 2026 [BATOD Acoustics position statement](#).

<https://www.batod.org.uk/information-category/deaf-education/batod-papers-policies-statements/>

***Teresa Quail***

***National Executive Officer***

***British Association of Teachers of Deaf Children and Young People (BATOD)***

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[WORLD NEWS – USA - AMERICAN COCHLEAR IMPLANT ALLIANCE –  
Special Interest Groups](#)



AMERICAN COCHLEAR IMPLANT ALLIANCE

*Research. Advocacy. Awareness.*



The American Cochlear Implant (ACI) Alliance has grown its Special Interest Groups (SIGs) tremendously in the past two years. We as an organization are committed to collaboration, professional development, and advocacy within the cochlear implant community. These SIGs are member-driven groups designed to connect professionals, researchers, educators, advocates, and individuals with hearing loss who share common interests and goals related to cochlear implant care and accessibility. The SIG initiative reflects our broader mission to improve access to cochlear implantation through research, awareness, education, and community engagement.

Currently, ACI Alliance supports six active SIGs, several of which meet virtually throughout the year in addition to gatherings during the annual CI conference. The SIGs create opportunities for participants to collaborate on research, discuss challenges in clinical practice and education, share resources, and develop solutions that improve outcomes for individuals with hearing loss. One example highlighted on the page is the Adult Aural Rehabilitation SIG, whose members collaborated on research related to adult rehabilitation services for cochlear implant recipients. Their work has contributed to discussions about best practices and the importance of ongoing rehabilitation after implantation.

The Members with Hearing Loss SIG provides a supportive community for professionals in the cochlear implant field who themselves have hearing loss. Participants discuss accessibility, workplace challenges, mentorship opportunities, and professional growth. The group aims to create a safe and collaborative environment where members can support one another and advocate for improved accessibility within professional settings.

Additional SIGs focus on specialized populations and professional development. The Professionals Working with Spanish-Speaking Patients and Their Families SIG seeks to improve services and access to care for Spanish-speaking individuals through culturally responsive clinical practices and collaboration. The newly established Cochlear Implant Care within Governmental Services SIG brings together providers serving veterans, military personnel, and their families to improve continuity of care and hearing health services within VA and Department of Defence systems. The Mentorship-focused SIG supports students, fellows, and early-career professionals by providing networking, career guidance, and mentorship opportunities with experienced leaders in the field.

Overall, the SIG program demonstrates our emphasis on collaboration and community engagement as essential components of advancing cochlear implant care. By creating spaces for ongoing dialogue, research, mentorship, and advocacy, the organization helps professionals and advocates work together to address barriers, improve services, and strengthen support systems for individuals with hearing loss and cochlear implants. Learn more here: [Special Interest Groups - American Cochlear Implant Alliance](#)

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[ADVANCED BIONICS – Summer is the Season for Adventure. Cochlear Implants can Help Make it Possible.](#)



With summer just around the corner, many people are beginning to plan holidays, road trips, family visits, and new adventures. Travel brings excitement, spontaneity, and meaningful moments, but it can also come with unfamiliar environments, busy conversations, and unexpected challenges.

In our latest AB Connections story, **Traveling After Bilateral Hearing Loss Treatment**, we meet Knud Erik, a bilateral cochlear implant recipient from Denmark, and his wife, Lisbeth, whose shared love of adventure has taken them across the world on vintage motorcycles,

including an incredible journey from Denmark to New Zealand.

Knud Erik's story is a powerful reminder that cochlear implants can open the door to greater confidence, independence, and connection, wherever life takes you. Whether navigating conversations in unfamiliar places, taking in the sounds of a bustling city, or simply sharing unforgettable moments with loved ones, hearing well can make travel richer and more accessible.

For many cochlear implant recipients, the ability to stay connected while exploring the world is life changing. Knud Erik's journey shows that hearing loss does not have to define what's possible. With determination, support, and the right technology, adventure can still be part of the plan.

As summer approaches, this inspiring story is a reminder of the freedom that connection can bring and the many ways cochlear implants can help people continue doing what they love. Wherever your next adventure leads, Knud Erik's story may inspire you to dream a little bigger.

Read Knud Erik's full blog post on Advanced Bionics' blog, [CONNECTIONS](#).

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[ADVANCED BIONICS – Innovation and Community. Silence in the Room. Music all Around.](#)



At a landmark concert in London, cochlear implant wearers heard every note while the rest of the room heard nothing at all.

Imagine arriving at a concert knowing the music was made for you. Not adapted. Not added as an accommodation. Designed entirely around the way you hear. That became reality at the **Sound Free Concert** at King's Place in London, a world first conceptualized by OutcomePath with support from Advanced Bionics and Phonak.

There were no speakers. No amplifiers. No sound waves filling the room. Instead, the music was streamed directly to cochlear implant processors, creating an experience only CI wearers could hear.

Using Advanced Bionics cochlear implant technology and Phonak's Roger wireless platform,

attendees experienced live AI-generated music created in real time for that moment alone, never to be repeated.

The music never played aloud. Even the composer with typical hearing never heard the final composition. As the performance unfolded, attendees could shape the experience in real time, requesting stronger vocals, deeper bass, or more cymbals. The music adapted instantly, creating something deeply personal and entirely new.

The emotional impact was powerful: *“For years I’ve sat in rooms where music happened all around me, yet I felt outside. There was joy in sharing a space, an identity, and a lived experience with other cochlear implant wearers.”*

-Charlotte Young, CI wearer

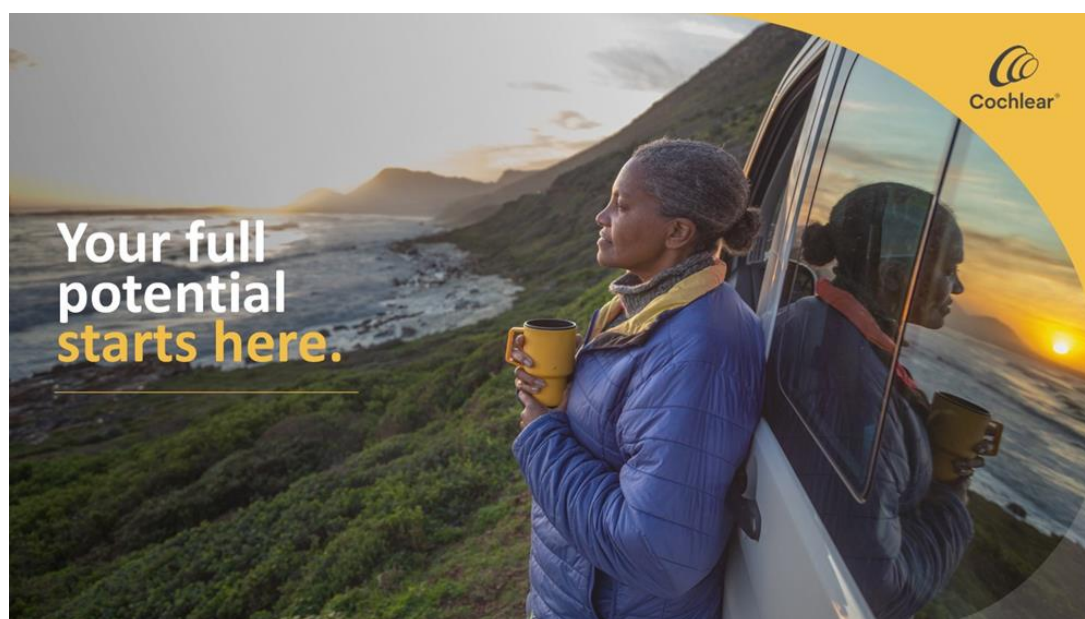
The Sound Free Concert reimagined accessibility. Rather than asking cochlear implant wearers to adapt to spaces built for others, it created an experience centred around them: the technology already exists. Cochlear implant processors. Wireless streaming. Adaptive sound experiences. What’s needed now is broader awareness and adoption.

Many venues still overlook opportunities to create inclusive experiences for Deaf and Hard of Hearing communities. This event offers a compelling example of what becomes possible when accessibility is built into the experience from the beginning, not added later.

This was more than a concert. It was proof that accessibility can be innovative, emotional, and unforgettable. The future of inclusive live music is not theoretical. It has already begun.

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[COCHLEAR – Hearing for today and tomorrow: what ‘smart’ can mean for you, with Cochlear by your side](#)



Living with hearing loss is about more than sound. It is about staying connected to people, to conversations, and to the moments that matter most.

Many people in the cochlear implant community share similar thoughts:

I want to hear clearly now, but I also want to feel confident about my future.

This is where “smart” technology can make a difference: helping you start **strong, keep**

## **advancing, and hear your full potential, today and always.**

### **Start strong**

When thinking about a cochlear implant, one of the first questions is often:  
Will this really help me in my everyday life?

For many people, the goal is simple: to understand conversations more easily, to feel included again, and to connect without effort. A strong start means gaining that clarity and confidence early on, so you can focus on the people and experiences around you.

It is not about technology; it is about what hearing allows you to do.

### **Keep advancing**

Hearing journeys do not stand still. Life evolves, with new environments, new challenges, new opportunities.

Many people express a wish for their hearing solution to keep up:  
I don't want to make a decision today that feels outdated in a few years.

The Cochlear™ Nucleus® Nexa™ System is designed with this in mind. It is built so that improvements can be introduced over time, helping you continue to benefit as technology develops.

In practice, this means your hearing solution isn't fixed at your first fitting; it is designed to evolve with you, supporting you as your life changes.

### **Today and always**

Confidence comes from knowing that support is there for the long term.

People often describe wanting reassurance:  
I want something I can rely on; not just now, but for years to come.

Hearing well is part of everyday life, family conversations, social moments, work, and personal milestones. Having a system that continues to support you over time can make a real difference in staying connected and independent.

### **What “smart” really means**

Within the cochlear implant community, “smart” is not about complexity. It is about what it enables:

- Being able to follow conversations again
- Feeling part of the moment
- Having confidence in my choice
- Knowing my hearing can keep improving

It is about supporting your hearing as part of your everyday life

### **A shared journey**

Every experience with hearing loss is unique. But across our community, there is a shared goal: to live fully and stay connected.

At Cochlear, the focus is on supporting this journey, listening to people's needs and continuing to improve solutions over time.

Because wherever life takes you, hearing connects you to what matters most.

**Start strong. Keep advancing. Hear your full potential, today and always.**

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## [COCHLEAR – Hearing the moments I didn't realise I was missing](#)



This article is based on Linda's own experience, shared in [her testimonial](#).

"I didn't realise what I was missing."

Linda's words are simple, but they say a lot.

For many people, hearing loss does not happen all at once. It changes gradually. Sounds fade, conversations take more effort, and over time, it becomes something you learn to live with.

That was Linda's experience. For around 30 years, she used hearing aids and adapted her daily life as best she could. Like many others, she found ways to cope, often without fully realising how much had changed along the way.

It was only later, after receiving a cochlear implant at the age of 63, that things began to shift.

Linda describes how everyday moments started to feel different again. Conversations became easier to follow. Being with others felt more natural. There was less need to concentrate on every word, and more space to simply be present.

These were not dramatic changes all at once, but small, meaningful moments: hearing laughter more clearly, joining in conversations more easily, and feeling included again.

Over time, hearing loss had also affected Linda's confidence. Like many people, she had found herself stepping back from certain situations. Social moments could feel more demanding, and participation sometimes required extra effort.

With improved hearing, she describes regaining that confidence. Feeling more at ease. More able to engage. More like herself again.

Another important part of Linda's story is how she now looks to the future.

There is a quiet reassurance in knowing that her hearing solution is designed to support her over time. With systems such as the Cochlear™ Nucleus® Nexa™ System, this support is intended to continue as life evolves, offering confidence not only for today, but for the years ahead.

What stands out most in Linda's experience is not the technology itself, but what it has allowed her to rediscover:

- A sense of connection,
- a sense of independence,
- and the simple, meaningful experience of being part of life again.

Linda's story is a reminder that change can happen gradually, and so can improvement. For those living with hearing loss, it is not only about hearing more, but about feeling connected again. Her experience shows that it is possible to regain confidence in everyday moments, and to move forward with a greater sense of ease and participation.

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[MED-EL – IDEASforEARS Winners have a blast at MED-EL Headquarters](#)



Ten young inventors from around the world gathered in Innsbruck for an unforgettable IDEASforEARS winners' event at MED-EL headquarters in early June. The children, most of them CI users themselves, shared their creative ideas, connected with peers, and experienced first-hand how innovation can improve life with hearing loss. Microsoft Surface tablets helped the 6–12-year-olds from five continents communicate easily with each other by translating speech into multiple languages.

The programme began with a special meeting with MED-EL CEO and co-founder Ingeborg Hochmair. Geoffrey Ball, inventor of the VIBRANT SOUNDBRIDGE, handed them their winner certificates in an entertaining ceremony.

A highlight was seeing the winning ideas brought to life: The IDEASforEARS team visualised how the children's inventions, such as vibrating sleep masks, speech-to-text swimming goggles, and innovative charging solutions could become real products.

The group also toured MED-EL's CI manufacturing facilities, met the people who made their implants, tested their talent as CI surgeons in the Training Lab, and explored the Audioversum Science Center, where they learned more about the science of hearing.

IDEASforEARS was full of new friendships, shared experiences from the global CI community and inspiring ideas that might shape the future of hearing innovation.

Do you have an idea that improves life for people with hearing loss? Watch out for the next edition of IDEASforEARS in November 2026!

More info on the IDEASforEARS Children's Contest [Homepage - IDEASforEARS](#)

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## [MED-EL – Honorary Doctorate: Inspiring Cochlear Implant Pioneer Ingeborg Hochmair Addresses Thousands at University of Michigan](#)



As part of the University of Michigan's Spring Commencement celebrations in May, MED-EL's co-founder and CEO Ingeborg Hochmair delivered the Keynote Address at the Rackham Graduate Exercises. Addressing around 2,000 master's and doctoral graduates and their families, Ingeborg Hochmair shared her perspective on innovation, responsibility, and the power of technology to create meaningful societal impact.

### **Raising awareness of cochlear implants among 100,000 people**

A day later, the University of Michigan awarded Ingeborg Hochmair an Honorary Doctor of Engineering, recognizing her extraordinary contributions to engineering innovation, medical technology, and global accessibility in hearing healthcare. In one of the world's largest stadiums, the Michigan Stadium, a prerecorded video address by Ingeborg Hochmair was shown to an audience of around 100,000 people, comprising graduates along with their families and friends.

For many in the cochlear implant community, this recognition highlights how research, engineering, and patient needs create lasting societal impact and improve quality of life on a global scale.

***A recording of Ingeborg Hochmair's inspiring keynote address is available on [YouTube](#), starting at approximately minute 50:30.***

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## MED-EL – Milo Makes Microtia and Atresia Easier to Understand



Understanding hearing loss can be challenging, especially for children. To support families, MED EL has created a new illustrated storybook called “Milo, the Little Pirate with BONEBRIDGE.”

The booklet follows Milo, a young elephant born with microtia and atresia in one ear, which causes conductive hearing loss. Through everyday situations, Milo begins to understand why he hears differently and what solutions may help. The story reflects challenges many children know well, such as difficulty locating sounds or following conversations. With the help of his sister and a sense of adventure, Milo learns that hearing differently is just one part of who he is.

### **Complexity made Simple**

What makes this story special is how it turns complex medical information into simple, child-friendly explanations. It also introduces bone conduction implants such as MED EL’s BONEBRIDGE as one possible hearing solution.

By combining storytelling with clear explanations, the booklet aims to help children and their families talk openly about hearing differences, reduce uncertainty, and build confidence.

**“Milo, the Little Pirate with BONEBRIDGE”** is available free of charge as a **PDF in English** and several other languages. Please contact **your local MED-EL team** for a copy in your language.

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