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'AssistiveTech in the UK' Ecosystem Overview and ATLAS Advocacy Launched in House of Lords

AssistiveTech poised for rapid growth in the UK, tackling key socio-economic challenges.

LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM, October 5, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- ATLAS (Assistive Technology, Longevity and Ageing Society), with the support of Aging Analytics Agency and Deep Knowledge Philanthropy, hosted an event at the House of Lords on Tuesday October 4th, to launch and reveal the findings of its latest "AssistiveTech in the UK" interactive report.
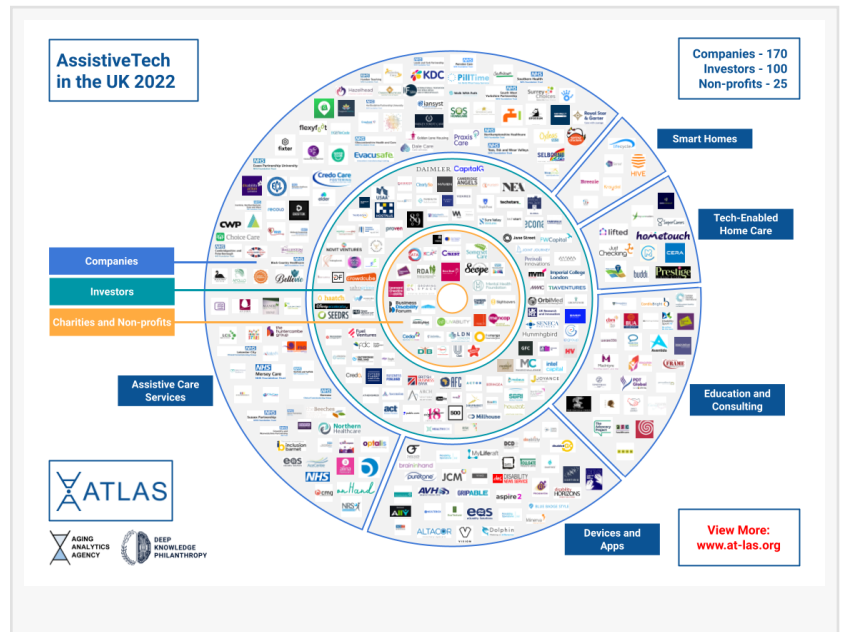
The event brought together key ecosystem participants, thought leaders, founders of AssistiveTech organisations across governance, policy, charity, academia and industry in a bid to harness the power of technology for social good.

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>
> *ATLAS*

The findings of the report are based on data collected on 170 companies, 100 investors, and 25 non-profit organisations engaged in the AssistiveTech ecosystem in the UK.

AssistiveTech refers to technologies aimed at improving and automating the delivery and use of products and services for people living with disabilities and accessibility limitations. The World Health Organisation estimates that by 2030, over two billion people will need at least one assistive product. However, only 1 in 10 people affected have access to assistive technology today.

Co-launched with the report was UK-based advocacy initiative, ATLAS, which seeks to help inform and guide the public and private sectors to embrace the UK's growing AssistiveTech, Longevity and Agetech industries and to operate with a level of awareness that no longer excludes the senior community and those living with disabilities. Stemming from the notion that technology is a major enabler of social inclusion, the initiative aims to leverage partnerships through convening tech founders, venture philanthropists and impact investors.

Developed by ATLAS in association with Aging Analytics Agency and Deep Knowledge Philanthropy, the report provides insights on numerous AssistiveTech ecosystem participants and stakeholders, major trends and obstacles, and highlights the government's role in this emerging ecosystem. It analyses five segments of companies within AssistiveTech in the UK: Assistive Care Services, Devices and Apps, Education and Consulting, Tech-Enabled Home Care, and Smart Homes technologies.

Award-winning disability inclusion Advocate Shani Dhanda and Board Co-President of Digital Assistive Technology Industry Association for Europe (DATEurope) Antony Ruck were among the speakers.

Shani Dhanda discussed her own first-hand experience of the lack of inclusivity, especially as a consumer of mainstream goods: "The spending power of disabled people is £274 billion a year, which rises 14% a year. We don't have enough data to understand disabled consumers. Less than 10% of organisations have a plan to access this 'purple pound'. In fact, on average, every month businesses lose £2 billion by ignoring the needs of disabled people, and by not considering us as consumers... and these figures are pre-covid, they are much worse now."

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Dominic Jennings, Head of Strategic Partnerships, Deep Knowledge Group: "The UK Tech ecosystem possesses all the required resources and critical mass of market-ready products and services to establish itself as a global leader in AssistiveTech, generating an immediate and long-term impact on some of our most pressing socio-economic issues."

Examples of AssistiveTech include mobility aids such as walkers, and wheelchairs. For example, robotic assistance can help with mobility and household tasks. These technologies can also support the rehabilitation of people recovering from illnesses.

"Technology is most impactful when it is people-focused. It has become a life-changing tool to

break down barriers and expand opportunities for people living with disabilities and those who need assistance in later life; it's a powerful ally that fosters inclusivity," Dominic concluded.

AssistiveTech transcends its previous interpretation as simply DisabilityTech, supporting those who require the assistive technology but are not identified as having a disability. This includes providing support to the ageing population.

London is home to the largest number of companies providing services and solutions in the UK's AssistiveTech sector. The rest of the companies are roughly evenly distributed across the nation. 137 local providers are situated in more than 105 cities around the UK, including Cambridge, Manchester, Oxford, and many others. There are also 3% and 4% companies based in Wales and Scotland, respectively.

During the panel which invited open discussion from the audience, the notion of technological responsibility arose, as did the unmet need for systems, resources and organisations capable of showcasing both the ways that UK tech companies are and are not supporting the further growth of the UK AssistiveTech Ecosystem and on-boarding the pervasive trends of increased accessibility and inclusivity.

In response to these points, ATLAS proposed to develop, via inclusive cross-sector dialogue with AssistiveTech ecosystem participants and stakeholders, a Technological Responsibility Index.

The index will seek to rank and benchmark, via neutral, data-driven metrics, the overall levels of support provided by UK tech companies of the further development of the nation's AssistiveTech Ecosystem, as well as their own levels of corporate and infrastructural inclusivity and accessibility.

Roxy Iqbal, Project Lead for ATLAS, commented further on the future plans of ATLAS: "This report brings a much needed spotlight to an ecosystem with the potential to transform the lives of millions of people in the UK. It is a call to venture philanthropists, policy makers, and 'big tech' to support our AssistiveTech companies and to incorporate their innovations and solutions into a broader and more inclusive range of products and services, to rightly provide equal access and experiences for all."

To access the report and learn more about ATLAS, visit www.at-las.org

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About ATLAS
Assistive Technology, Longevity and Ageing Society (ATLAS) is an advocacy initiative by Deep Knowledge Group for the prioritisation of frontier technologies in AssistiveTech and AgeTech to impact lives on a global scale. ATLAS believes that technology is a major enabler of social inclusion in the world, and so leverage partnerships via tech founders, venture philanthropy and

impact investment to deliver a future of technology for all.

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