MABLE Advances into Phase 2 of the NSF Convergence Accelerator to Enhance Experience for People with Disabilities

MABLE Advances into Phase 2 of the NSF Convergence Accelerator to Enhance the Quality of Life for People with Disabilities

BETHLEHEM, PENNSYLVANIA, USA, January 23, 2024 /EINPresswire.com/ -- MABLE (Mapping for Accessible Build Environment), led by Dr. Vinod Namboodiri at Lehigh University, is one of the six teams selected to advance from Phase 1 to Phase 2 of the National Science Foundation (NSF) Convergence Accelerator Track H: Enhancing Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities. NSF Convergence Accelerator invests $30M to advance six teams to the program's Phase 2: prototyping and sustainability planning program.

MABLE Selected to Advance into Phase 2 of NSF's Convergence Accelerator

MABLE envisions making large indoor environments accessible for people with disabilities to enable participation in large events, conferences, and educational programs. By utilizing crowdsourcing, artificial intelligence (AI), and robotics, MABLE can populate and create a real-time responsive map that users can use to navigate indoor environments. In Phase 1, MABLE confirmed the urgency and significance of creating a responsive map that could provide turn-by-turn instructions for users to help them navigate indoor environments successfully.

> " MABLE is the solution I and so many people with disabilities have needed for a long time. We look forward to working with diverse partners more closely in the next few years as we enter Phase 2."
>
> *Dr. Vinod Namboodiri*

The U.S. National Science Foundation is invested in research solutions to address challenges faced by persons with disabilities, including the development of assistive and rehabilitative technologies to enhance their quality of life and provide greater opportunities for gainful employment. The NSF

Convergence Accelerator's Track H started in December 2022 with sixteen teams. They were selected to build a diverse team and an innovative proof of concept for their solutions to enhance opportunities for persons with disabilities. With an estimated 1.3 billion or 1 in 6 people globally experiencing significant disability, the goal of track H is to develop innovative solutions to enhance the quality of life and employment access for people with disabilities.

The success of MABLE is grounded in the commitment of its diverse interdisciplinary experts to enhance the quality of life and workplace experiences for persons with disabilities. The core team members include Dr. Vinod Namboodiri (Lehigh University), Dr. Nils Hakansson (Wichita State University), Dr. Ted Conway (Florida Atlantic University), Dr. Patricio A. Vela (Georgia Tech University), Dr. Siny Joseph (Kansas State University), Monica H. Kang (Founder & CEO of InnovatorsBox®), and Nionila Ivanova (Founder & CEO of IT Creative Labs). MABLE is also possible thanks to its strategic partners in corporations, museums, nonprofits, and community leaders dedicated to fulfilling an equitable workplace experience together.

MABLE Lead Investigator Dr. Namboodiri shares his excitement, "I'm grateful for NSF's recognition of our work and the partners and team I work with to make this vision come true. MABLE is the solution I and so many people with disabilities have needed for a long time. We look forward to working with diverse partners more closely in the next few years as we enter Phase 2 to build an accessible, innovative solution for all to navigate indoors more effectively and easily."

MABLE will initiate community events again to engage with more partners and stakeholders to continue community outreach and learning and build a solution based on community research.

To connect with MABLE and inquire about partnership or participation, contact hello@mablemaps.com.

About MABLE:

Led by Lehigh University, Mapping for Accessibility in Environments (MABLE) empowers individuals with disabilities to experience large events, conferences, and educational programs independently. Utilizing crowdsensing, AI, and robotics, MABLE provides a responsive map and turn-by-turn instructions through a digital app, facilitating seamless navigation in indoor environments.

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