



## Concept Note

### Aims and Scope

The ZDS Journal of Disability Studies (Zeitschrift für Disability Studies, ZDS) is the first scientific open access journal in the field of Disability Studies in German-speaking countries (Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Luxembourg). Guided by the principles of Disability Studies, the journal regards the expertise of scholars and activists with disabilities as the foundation of research in this field. The journal's overall aim is to cultivate a democratic environment in which content is more important than formal status. The knowledge generated and published in the journal is intended to support the equality and participation of disabled people in society.<sup>1</sup>

The journal represents a range of topics, perspectives, methods and theories of (critical) disability studies and research. The contributions can be academic, artistic, or activist, and are all based on an emancipatory understanding of disability. Combining academia, activism, and art, the ZDS promotes inter- and transdisciplinary research and theory building that aim at social change and emancipation for all people.

The ZDS Journal of Disability Studies thus fills a gap in scholarly understanding of disability in the German-speaking world: until now, existing journals on disability were mostly located in the fields of medicine, rehabilitation sciences or special education. The analyses of care, therapy, and the integration of persons with disabilities into mainstream society in these journals provide little analysis or discussion of the conditions in which disability is socially constructed.

### Topics

With its inter- and transdisciplinary scope, the journal provides room for critical empirical and theoretical discussions on the following topics:

- History and theories of disability,
- Methods, methodology, theory and philosophy of disability and its research,
- Human rights, anti-discrimination, disability rights movements,
- Disability arts and culture, work, education, housing, violence, law, participation, activism, politics and policy,
- Intersectional entanglements of disability/ableism with sexism, racism, and other relations of domination, e.g. the consequences of colonialism,

- Allied fields and variations of Disability Studies such as Mad Studies, Deaf Studies, Blindness Studies, Studies in Ableism, Disability History, Feminist Disability Studies, Disability Studies in Education, Black Disability Studies, Critical Autism Studies, Postcolonial Disability Studies.

## **Audience**

The ZDS addresses a diverse readership, similar to the existing journals "Disability Studies Quarterly" (USA) and "Disability & Society" (UK).

The academic target group includes Disability Studies colleagues as well as researchers, students and teachers from social sciences // educational sciences // cultural studies // law // literature // gender studies // history // political science // psychology // philosophy // social work // architecture and others.

The non-academic target groups include self-advocates, activists, disability arts and culture professionals, as well as practitioners and other experts in the field of disability, e.g. members of equality units and monitoring committees; disability officers at universities and colleges; disability liaison officers in ministries and trade unions; professional groups such as social workers, psychologists, lawyers and journalists.

The journal cooperates with the transnational German-language Network for Disability Studies, which has over 120 members and provides a networking and information platform for Disability Studies scholars and activists.

## **Submissions**

The journal publishes papers of Disability Studies researchers in German-speaking countries or who critically examine German-language Disability Studies and activism. Activists and artists affiliated to Disability Studies and/or the disability movements in German-speaking areas are also warmly invited to submit contributions. The ZDS particularly encourages contributions from authors with disabilities, PhD students and post-doctoral researchers and seeks to provide a platform for disabled activists and artists.

The journal publishes papers in three sections:

- Theoretical and empirical papers (ZDS Beiträge): 7000 words, double blind peer review; in addition, German translations of key works in international Disability Studies,
- Reflections at the intersection of research and activism (ZDS Debatten): 3500 words, open peer review,
- Comments on current issues (ZDS Zwischenrufe): 1750 words, editor review.

In general, most ZDS contributions are in German, but papers in English are welcome.

The ZDS is an open access online journal and is published biannually at [www.zds-online.org](http://www.zds-online.org).

The ZDS aims to implement EU Directive 2016/2102 on accessible websites and mobile applications. Accordingly, the website's typeface, color scheme, font size and type should be flexibly adaptable, PDF documents accessible, and, if possible, videos in sign language and audio descriptions provided. No other German-language scientific journal currently complies with the applicable EU standards on accessibility and the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.1.).

## **Organization**

The ZDS consists of two bodies: the Executive Editors and the Advisory Board.

The Executive Editors are responsible for the journal. Their tasks include:

- Editorial work, including communication with authors and reviewers, processing of manuscripts, overseeing the editing, recruiting peer reviewers, organizing advisory board meetings,
- Communications, including preparation and distribution of calls for papers, announcement of contributions via a newsletter, maintenance of the homepage,
- Financial responsibility, including preparation of a financial plan, acquisition of funding, account management, accounting.

In line with the principles of Disability Studies, at least half of the Executive Editors should be people who experience disability.

The editorial work is being completed by colleagues who came together at the Berlin Conference for Disability Studies 2018 (in alphabetical order): Julia Biermann, University of Innsbruck; Dr. Mai-Anh Boger, University of Bielefeld; David Brehme, Humboldt University of Berlin; Prof. Dr. Swantje Köbsell, University of Bremen; Rebecca Maskos, University of Bremen; Prof. Dr. Lisa Pfahl, University of Innsbruck.

The Executive Editors agree to regularly participate in editorial meetings, to make supporting activities visible and to actively liaise with the Advisory Board.

The members of the Advisory Board are recognized experts in the field of Disability Studies in German-speaking countries and represent different disciplines, topics and approaches. The members of the Advisory Board volunteer their time and commit themselves to active, reliable and constructive collaboration with the ZDS. The tasks of the Advisory Board include:

- Advising the Executive Editors, e.g., by discussing the content of the ZDS, suggesting topics, special issues, etc., at Advisory Board meetings.
- Supporting the Executive Editors, e.g. by recruiting high-quality contributions and suitable peer reviewers, providing expert opinions, supporting the journal's publicity and communications work.

In line with the principles of Disability Studies, at least half of the members of the Advisory Board should be people who experience disability. The Advisory Board presently consists of the following persons (in alphabetical order): Prof. Dr. Theresia Degener, Protestant University of Applied Sciences in Bochum; Dr. Eva Egermann, artist, Vienna; Dr. Brian McGowan, Zurich University of Applied Sciences; Prof. Dr. Justin Powell, University of Luxembourg; A.o.Univ-Prof.i.R. Dr. Volker Schönwiese, University of Innsbruck; Prof. Dr. Anne Waldschmidt, University of Cologne. The number of members in the Advisory Board can be increased.

The members of both boards meet once per calendar year in an Advisory Board meeting, which is usually held online. The annual report of the editors and the annual planning process take place in the context of this meeting. Also, new editors and advisory board members will be introduced at this meeting.

## **Affiliation**

The ZDS is institutionally affiliated to the University of Innsbruck (Austria) through its cooperation with Innsbruck University Press, which supports the creation of DOI numbers and the archiving of the journal in the repository of the University of Innsbruck. The Faculty of Education supports the journal financially with start-up funding for the development of an accessible website for the journal as well as for staff support to create accessible PDF documents.

The journal cooperates with disability studies networks in several German speaking countries such as the Network for Disability Studies, the working group for Disability Studies in Germany, Disability Studies Austria,

and the digital library Bidok (Behinderung – Inklusion – Dokumentation). Cooperation with relevant organizations in Switzerland and Luxembourg is currently being established.

### **Funding**

The financing model of the ZDS is continuously evolving. Above all, the editors contribute in-kind support through their working time. Funds for direct costs (e.g. software, hosting the website etc.) are initially being covered by financial support from the University of Innsbruck. Additional funding from the other participating institutions, as well as donations and sponsorships, are being explored.

### **Notes**

<sup>1</sup> In this text we alternately use the terms ‘disabled people’ and ‘people with disabilities’. This is to reflect the fact that both terms are used within disability studies.