



Assistance Dogs International

Who we are, what we do and why we do it

Who we are

Assistance Dogs International (ADI) is the world's leading standards setter and accreditation body for training assistance dogs. Founded in 1986 from a group of seven small programmes, we have grown to become a global community of 143 non-profit organisations in 25 countries across five continents*.

Assistance dogs are both life-changing and life-saving. They support countless thousands of people around the world by helping with practical tasks, enhancing independence, and boosting wellbeing, dignity and confidence.

We exist to ensure that people with disabilities, who every day trust their lives and safety to their dogs, can be confident their dog has been trained to the highest standards.

ADI itself does not provide or train assistance dogs - that's done by our member organisations, who are also responsible for partnering the dog and its user (together, they are known as a 'team') and providing guidance and support.

What we do

Our members train and place four distinct categories of assistance dogs:

- **guide dogs** for individuals who are blind or visually impaired
- **hearing dogs** for people who are deaf or hard of hearing
- **service dogs** for those living with disability, mobility challenges, autism, dementia, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), epilepsy, diabetes and other medical conditions
- **facility dogs** which work with a trained handler in a residential home or clinic

What we don't do

We understand that self-trained emotional support dogs and therapy dogs are incredibly important for many people and that they play a valuable role in helping to boost wellbeing and reduce stress.

However ADI does not certify these types of dogs, as we believe the interests of people with disabilities and other conditions are best met using assistance dogs trained and certified to the highest possible standards.

Leaving no-one behind

Every day, assistance dog users face discrimination and exclusion. We advocate for fair and equal access to health and social care, employment, education, transport, hospitality and public spaces. ADI and its members lobby at international, regional and national level for inclusive laws and policies, and we have scored some notable successes - for example, in getting airlines to allow ADI certified assistance dogs to travel with their users in aircraft cabins.



ADI and its members are helping to achieve the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) through programmes which underpin the concept of leaving no-one behind. In particular, assistance dogs have a critical role to play in achieving SDG 4 (Inclusive and equitable quality education for all); SDG 8 (Full and productive employment and decent work for all); SDG 10 (Reduce inequality within and among countries); SDG 11 (Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities) and SDG 17 (Partnerships).



For further information please visit www.assistedogsinternational.org

* data correct as of December 2022

July 2023

Standards

ADI standards are benchmarks for excellence in the assistance dog sector, including training, client service, and dog health, safety and wellbeing.

Our standards ensure:

- exceptional service from an accredited member programme
- a professionally trained assistance dog to help people manage their disability
- comprehensive training on living and working with an assistance dog
- users have a thorough understanding of assistance dogs and public access
- the dog's health and welfare is always a priority

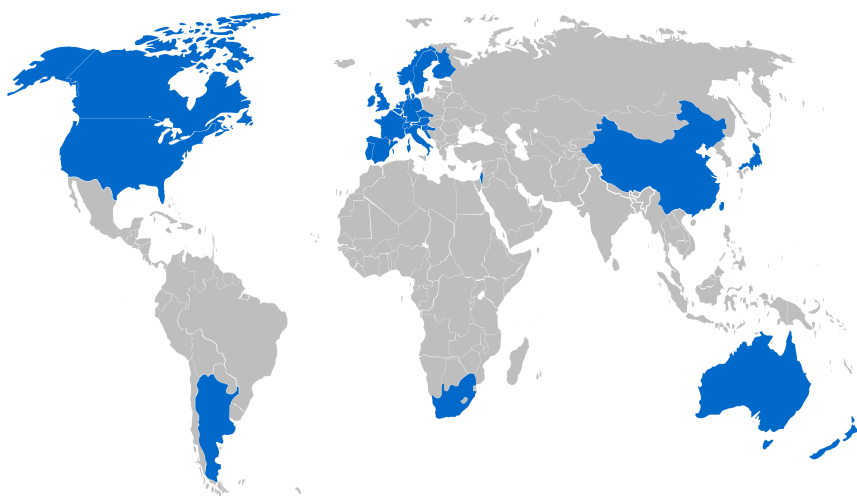
ADI in numbers*

-  206 members in 25 countries
-  52 candidate programmes
-  3 regional chapters
-  28,300+ active teams worldwide
-  6,400+ people employed by members
-  43,400+ volunteers
-  11,000 dogs in training
-  4,400 + dogs placed each year

Accreditation

All ADI members are non-profit organisations which have been through a rigorous accreditation process lasting at least two years (during which they are known as 'candidate programmes') - and they must re-apply for accreditation every five years. Individuals and for-profit organisations may not become ADI members.

The accreditation process ensures that members uphold our standards, including ethical treatment and training of dogs, ethical treatment of clients, solid assistance dog training and follow-up care.



45% guide dogs

43% service dogs

8% hearing dogs

