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Internationalising the DfA Quality Label – a working document

Established in 2009, the Design for All Quality Label registered by Design for All Italia was conceived by Daniela Gilardelli and developed together with Avril Accolla and Gino Bandini Buti, who presented it to the Cities for All Conference and EIDD GA in Helsinki in 2012.

This is not another design award, but a label that aims to create and maintain a high level of recognition of the design process identified in the theory and practice of Design for All.

After a first launch phase when its methods were perfected, the Label is now enjoying considerable success. Of particular importance is the decision of the multinational travel services company Autogrill to apply the precepts of Design for All in its important motorway service area at Villoreasi on the motorway from Milan to Como, which applied for and received the Quality Label from Design for All Italia.

Keeping this all confined within Italy's borders is no longer meaningful, when products and systems have global markets and the built environment is also used by a wide variety of people from all over the world, who bring their differentiated habits, needs, cultures and desires with them.

The experience we have built up in Italy since 2012 now enables us – and in future also other associations – to bestow the DfA Quality Label, strictly applying the Regulations that we have drawn up and tested on the labels granted to date. Henceforth, both when an application is received from abroad and when we the web or other information media enable us to identify products, places and systems designed and/or executed abroad, the Label team will contact EIDD member organisation(s) in the country in question to inform and potentially involve them, if necessary also asking for logistical support.

A new website will soon be online, in Italian and English, to illustrate the characteristics of the DfA Quality Label and encourage its internationalisation.

We hope that some EIDD member organisations will be interested in developing this Italian initiative in their own countries. They will be able to develop the Design for All Quality Label after first signing a memorandum of understanding with DfA Italia, in acknowledgement of the label's paternity and as a guarantee of complete compliance with the system's underlying precepts and methods. In a first phase, the best way to proceed to recognising products, places and systems in their countries will be by partnering closely with the certifying activities conducted in Italy.

We ask the EIDD GA to take due note of this proposal and disseminate it to EIDD members.