



FORM 1: PROPOSAL FOR A NEW FIELD OF TECHNICAL ACTIVITY

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| Proposer NEN | ISO/TS/P 295 |

A proposal for a new field of technical activity shall be submitted to the ISO Central Secretariat, which will assign it a reference number and process the proposal in accordance with the [ISO/IEC Directives Part 1, Clause 1.5](#). The proposer may be a member body of ISO, a technical committee, subcommittee or project committee, the Technical Management Board or a General Assembly committee, the Secretary-General, a body responsible for managing a certification system operating under the auspices of ISO, or another international organization with national body membership. Guidelines for proposing and justifying a new field of technical activity are given in the [ISO/IEC Directives Part 1, Annex C](#).

Proposal (to be completed by the proposer)

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| Title of the proposed new committee (<i>The title shall indicate clearly yet concisely the new field of technical activity which the proposal is intended to cover.</i>) Assistance dogs |
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Scope statement of the proposed new committee (*The scope shall precisely define the limits of the field of activity. Scopes shall not repeat general aims and principles governing the work of the organization but shall indicate the specific area concerned*).

Standardization in the field of assistance dogs focused on, but not limited to;

- terminology,
- health and welfare,
- breeding and puppy development,
- training,
- client services,
- assistance dog professionals,
- conformity assessment, and
- accessibility.

Assistance dogs are specifically trained to perform tasks to increase independence and to mitigate limitations of a person with a disability.

Excluded are:

- dogs that offer only emotional support and/or comfort (i.e. emotional support dogs);
- dog assisted interventions such as facility dogs or dog assisted therapy;
- other kinds of working dogs such as herding dogs, police dogs, search & rescue dogs.

Background information:

An assistance dog is permanently paired with a person with a disability to perform on a one-to-one basis tasks to mitigate the limitations of this person.

Please note that 'assistance dog' is the umbrella term. Examples of assistance dogs (in alphabetical order) are autism assistance dogs, developmental disorder assistance dogs, diabetes assistance dogs, guide dogs, hearing dogs, medical alert/response assistance dogs, mobility assistance dogs, PTSD assistance dogs, seizure assistance dogs.

In some countries, an assistance dog is referred to as a service dog.

- The proposer has checked whether the proposed scope of the new committee overlaps with the scope of any existing ISO committee**
- If an overlap or the potential for overlap is identified, the affected committee has been informed and consultation has taken place between proposer and committee on**
 - i. modification/restriction of the scope of the proposal to eliminate the overlap,**
 - ii. potential modification/restriction of the scope of the existing committee to eliminate the overlap.**
- If agreement with the existing committee has not been reached, arguments are presented in this proposal (under question 7) as to why it should be approved.**

Proposed initial programme of work. *(The proposed programme of work shall correspond to and clearly reflect the aims of the standardization activities and shall, therefore, show the relationship between the subject proposed. Each item on the programme of work shall be defined by both the subject aspect(s) to be standardized (for products, for example, the items would be the types of products, characteristics, other requirements, data to be supplied, test methods, etc.). Supplementary justification may be combined with particular items in the programme of work. The proposed programme of work shall also suggest priorities and target dates.)*

The proposed programme of work consists of the following main topics that are closely related to each other and should preferably be developed in the same timeframe.

Work Item 1 ‘Terminology’ will specify the common terms and definitions in the field of assistance dogs, health and welfare, breeding and puppy development, training, client services, assistance dog professionals, conformity assessment, and accessibility.

Work Item 2 ‘Health and welfare’ will specify the high-level principles to ensure the lifetime welfare and well-being of the (assistance) dog, including physical, psychological and emotional health. These requirements will be integrated into the work items below and cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- define the principles of welfare and its application in relation to the assistance dog;
- veterinary services – prophylactic treatments, routine veterinary examinations and essential diagnostic tests;
- maintaining physical health, e.g. diet, grooming, exercise, weight management;
- ensuring welfare and meeting the physical, behavioural and emotional needs of the dog (throughout the whole lifetime);
- kennel facilities, specifications, hygiene and enrichment.

Work Item 3 ‘Breeding and puppy development’ will specify requirements aimed at supporting the breeding programme of and the puppy development programme for assistance dogs. These requirements cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- selection of breeding dogs (incl. behavioural, veterinary and genetic tests);
- care of breeding dogs;
- breeding processes;
- puppy rearing, early habituation and socialization;
- puppy development programme and education;
- recording health and performance data of working assistance dogs to inform the future breeding programme.

Work Item 4 ‘Training and assessment’ will specify the requirements relating to the training and assessment for different types of assistance dogs. These requirements cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- essential canine temperament and behaviour for all dogs entering formal training;
- essential health requirements for all dogs entering formal training;
- dog training methodology (e.g. application of learning theory, ethically appropriate training practices, and behaviour modification);
- task training and social behaviour performance expectations;
- final assessment of dog performance (pre-allocation to a client).

Work Item 5 'Client services' will specify requirements aimed at pairing and training the assistance dog and the client/user* to be a competent team, maintaining team competence and dog welfare over the years (under the condition of a transparent contract between the assistance dog service provider and client with clear responsibilities to one another). These requirements cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- safeguarding and respecting the dignity and individuality of clients/handlers;
- the rights and responsibilities of an assistance dog handler (public etiquette and maintenance of dog's standard of health and behaviour);
- accessibility of documented information for the client;
- grievance procedures (incl. appeal process), rights of the client, responsibilities of assistance dog service providers;
- application process and assessment;
- matching and handler training;
- assessment of standards and welfare of the assistance dog team;
- aftercare services;
- procedure for withdrawing services, e.g. removing a dog from a client or service;
- dog retirement criteria and procedure for replacement.

*NOTE: In completing this form, cultural and geographical differences were encountered: an example is the term 'client' or 'user'. After the establishment of the ISO/TC, the experts responsible for Work Item 1 and the ISO/TC members should consider this in a more elaborate way.

Work Item 6 'Competencies for assistance dog professionals' will specify requirements aimed at breeding, raising, caring for and training assistance dogs provided by assistance dog service providers with professionally skilled staff. Skills, requirements and competencies for assistance dog professionals and service provider staff cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- education (e.g. person-centred practice, establishing human-canine relationships and disability knowledge to inform specific assistance dog practice);
- assessment;
- skills maintenance and professional development;
- education and assessment for mentoring and training the volunteers.

Work Item 7 'Conformity assessment' will specify requirements aimed at the conformity assessment process for the assistance dog service providers and the process for the owner-trained assistance dog teams. These processes include the registration and identification of an assistance dog team. These requirements will cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- conformity assessment process for assistance dog service providers (e.g. certification);
- conformity assessment process for owner-trained assistance dog teams (e.g. certification);
- registration and identification of certified assistance dog teams (e.g. universal access card/passport).

Work Item 8 'Accessibility' will specify requirements aimed at supporting the ease of access and moving within all public spaces for assistance dog teams and ensuring their rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UN CRPD), so that they have the same opportunities as all citizens and can participate independently in all areas of life. These requirements will cover, as a minimum, the following topics:

- transportation and free movement;
- legislation considerations;
- recognized prohibited areas for assistance dogs;
- procedures for limiting access.

Topics for future consideration for the programme of work are related to administration (incl. HR policies), risk management (incl. financial accountability) and governance of assistance dog service providers.

Indication(s) of the preferred type or types of deliverable(s) to be produced under the proposal *(This may be combined with the "Proposed initial programme of work" if more convenient).*

The primary deliverables of this proposal will be International Standards (ISO), but also other deliverables may be possible. More information is given under "proposed initial programme of work".

A listing of relevant existing documents at the international, regional and national levels. *(Any known relevant document (such as standards and regulations) shall be listed, regardless of their source and should be accompanied by an indication of their significance.)*

At least the following documents should be considered (in alphabetical order):

- Assistance Dogs International (ADI) Standards
- CEN/TC 452 'Assistance dogs': six Preliminary Work Items for European Standards in a series (i.e. six parts)
- International Guide Dog Federation (IGDF) Standards
- National, state, and/or regional dog regulations (e.g. welfare, breed specific)
- National, state, and/or regional accessibility regulations
- National standards for assistance and/or guide dogs

A statement from the proposer as to how the proposed work may relate to or impact on existing work, especially existing ISO and IEC deliverables. *(The proposer should explain how the work differs from apparently similar work, or explain how duplication and conflict will be minimized. If seemingly similar or related work is already in the scope of other committees of the organization or in other organizations, the proposed scope shall distinguish between the proposed work and the other work. The proposer shall indicate whether his or her proposal could be dealt with by widening the scope of an existing committee or by establishing a new committee.)*

There will be no direct overlap of the proposed scope between this proposal and other Technical or Subcommittees within ISO and IEC. There exist, however, other ISO/TCs that do have some elements that might be of relevance for the proposed ISO Technical Committee. In particular, these are:

- ISO/CASCO 'Committee on conformity assessment' ([link](#))
- ISO/TC 168 'Prosthetics and orthotics' ([link](#))
- ISO/TC 173 'Assistive products' ([link](#))
- ISO/TC 210 'Quality management and corresponding general aspects for medical devices' ([link](#))
- ISO/TC 232 'Education and learning services' ([link](#))
- ISO/PC 311 'Vulnerable consumers' ([link](#))
- ISO/TC 312 'Excellence in service' ([link](#))
- ISO/TC 314 'Ageing societies' ([link](#))

For CEN, there is one relevant Technical Committee ([CEN/TC 452 'Assistance dogs'](#)). The objective is to develop the International Standards (ISO) in close cooperation with CEN/TC 452 under the [Vienna Agreement](#).

A listing of relevant countries where the subject of the proposal is important to their national commercial interests.

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| - Australia | - Japan |
| - Austria | - Korea (Republic of) |
| - Belgium | - Lithuania |
| - Brazil | - Luxembourg |
| - Bulgaria | - Netherlands |
| - Canada | - New Zealand |
| - Chile | - Norway |
| - China | - Poland |
| - Croatia | - Portugal |
| - Czech Republic | - Romania |
| - Denmark | - Russia |
| - Estonia | - Slovak Republic |
| - Finland | - Slovenia |
| - France | - South Africa |
| - Germany | - Spain |
| - Greece | - Sweden |
| - Hong Kong | - Switzerland |
| - Hungary | - Taiwan |
| - Ireland | - Turkey |
| - Israel | - United Kingdom |
| - Italy | - United States |

A listing of relevant external international organizations or internal parties (other ISO and/or IEC committees) to be engaged as liaisons in the development of the deliverable(s). *(In order to avoid conflict with, or duplication of efforts of, other bodies, it is important to indicate all points of possible conflict or overlap. The result of any communication with other interested bodies shall also be included.)*

Relevant external international organizations (in alphabetical order), such as:

- Assistance Dogs International ([ADI](#))
- European Guide Dog Federation ([EGDF](#))
- International Air Transport Association ([IATA](#))
- International Guide Dog Federation ([IGDF](#))
- International Working Dog Breeding Association ([link](#))
- Lions International ([link](#))
- United Nations ([UN](#))
- World Blind Union ([link](#))
- World Health Organization ([WHO](#))
- World Small Animal Veterinary Association ([WSAVA](#))
- World Organization for Animal Health ([OIE](#))

For CEN, there is one relevant Technical Committee ([CEN/TC 452 'Assistance dogs'](#)). The objective is to develop the International Standards (ISO) in close cooperation with CEN/TC 452 under the [Vienna Agreement](#).

A simple and concise statement identifying and describing relevant affected stakeholder categories (including small and medium sized enterprises) and how they will each benefit from or be impacted by the proposed deliverable(s).

Potentially relevant stakeholder groups are:

- Providers of assistance dogs* (e.g. individual service providers, service provider federations or coalitions)
- Clients or users (e.g. user groups, clients councils or associations)
- Industry and commerce* (e.g. restaurants, supermarkets, hotels, taxis, airlines, airports, insurance companies, dog food manufacturers)
- Government (e.g. public authorities [regional, national and local], public transportation, regulators)
- Academic and research bodies (e.g. universities)
- Non-governmental organizations (e.g. veterinary associations, animal welfare organizations, disability advocacy groups)
- Other (e.g. certification bodies, funders, general interest, volunteers)

**Small and medium sized enterprises are part of these stakeholder groups.*

Benefits of the proposed deliverable(s):

All stakeholder groups will benefit by having internationally-accepted standards and definitions for 'assistance dogs'. Clear definitions and standards offer all stakeholders clarity regarding the identification of assistance dogs, facilitate improved legal access to public spaces for persons who are partnered with assistance dogs and thus enable persons with disabilities to participate more fully in society across the globe.

These ISO standards will also play a role in the quality assurance of organizations that provide assistance dogs. The development of internationally-recognized standards for assistance dogs will positively impact assistance dog welfare, quality of breeding, puppy development, dog training and service provision. High ISO standards for assistance dogs will protect the safety of assistance dog users and the general public. Adopted ISO standards provide governments and other stakeholders with internationally-accepted requirements for assistance dogs.

Ultimately, persons with disabilities, and any funders of these services, will have the choice to work with assistance dog service providers who operate in accordance with ISO standards. The option also exists for persons with disabilities to choose to self-train their own assistance dog, achieve the same standard and therefore receive the same benefit of protection in relation to free movement and access to public spaces.

The future ISO standards for assistance dogs could contribute to these United Nations Sustainability Goals (UN SDGs):

- [Goal 3](#): Good health and well-being
- [Goal 8](#): Decent work and economic growth
- [Goal 10](#): Reduced inequalities

An expression of commitment from the proposer to provide the committee secretariat if the proposal succeeds.

If the proposal is accepted, NEN is willing to undertake the work of secretariat of the new ISO Technical Committee and is committed to provide all resources to successfully run the secretariat as Committee Manager.

Purpose and justification for the proposal. *(The purpose and justification for the creation of a new technical committee shall be made clear and the need for standardization in this field shall be justified. Clause C.4.13.3 of [Annex C](#) of the ISO/IEC Directives, Part 1 contains a menu of suggestions or ideas for possible documentation to support and purpose and justification of proposals. Proposers should consider these suggestions, but they are not limited to them, nor are they required to comply strictly with them. What is most important is that proposers develop and provide purpose and justification information that is most relevant to their proposals and that makes a substantial business case for the market relevance and the need for their proposals. Thorough, well-developed and robust purpose and justification documentation will lead to more informed consideration of proposals and ultimately their possible success in the ISO IEC system.)*

Many countries around the globe ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities of the United Nations (UN CRPD) over the last decade and are implementing it on a national level. The UN CRPD endeavours to elaborate in detail the rights of persons with disabilities and set out a code of implementation. On the fundamental issue of accessibility, the CRPD requires countries to identify and eliminate obstacles and barriers and ensure that persons with disabilities can access their environment, transportation, public facilities and services.

Assistance dogs (including guide dogs) are used by persons with disabilities to have unrestricted mobility and independence in their daily life. Certain governments consider providing access to persons with disabilities and their assistance dogs as an essential measure. However, assistance dogs and their users are still frequently denied access to public spaces, transportation (e.g. taxis, trains, airplanes) and private accommodations. International Standards (ISO) are a way to address global accessibility issues that users and their assistance dogs face on a daily basis. They will provide stakeholders with information about how to recognize an assistance dog, and the requirements an assistance dog team has to meet. This will have an incredibly positive impact for persons who rely on effectively trained assistance dogs to enhance their ability to live a life without limits.

Around two hundred and fifty guide and assistance dog service providers are a member of and/or accredited by one or both international associations IGDF and ADI, which developed standards for respectively guide and assistance dogs. Approximately, 50 000 working teams globally are supported by organizations who are members of IGDF and ADI. In both cases, the standards are developed, monitored and evaluated by the sector or industry themselves; it would be desirable to have independent measures as ISO standards for this purpose. Besides the guide and assistance dog service providers which are affiliated with one of these two international organizations, there are also service providers that are not a member of one of these international organizations. Most likely, these assistance dog service providers will have to comply in the future with the ISO standards and in general this will have a positive impact on the quality of the assistance dogs and provide a higher level of assurance for the users.

An increasing number of persons are choosing to source and sometimes train their own assistance dog, many times very successfully. There needs to be equity of standards and assessment for these teams so that they too can gain access to public spaces and transportation. Meanwhile, there is a growing number of persons who are presenting their pet dog as an 'assistance dog', on occasions simply to gain access to air travel or public spaces. The behaviour of poorly trained and/or cared for dogs could impact upon the access rights of persons with legitimate assistance dogs. Without clarity of what an assistance dog is, challenging these cases is difficult and is presenting a growing concern to stakeholders.

Considering the overall developments described above, these emphasize the need for independent ISO standards developed by the private and public sector which can jointly determine the definition of assistance dogs, what requirements should be met and how these dogs can easily be recognized across the globe.

Signature of the proposer

NEN

Further information to assist with understanding the requirements for the items above can be found in the [Directives, Part 1, Annex C](#).