

ncat strategy
2023 – 2025

Designing an accessible world for all

Shaping the future of
accessible transport

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What is ncat?

A pioneering initiative to shape the future of accessible transport in the UK, inspired and funded by the Motability Foundation.

Launched in 2023, the National Centre for Accessible Transport (ncat) was set up to provide robust evidence to support its aim to make transport accessible for all.

In creating the evidence base, everything we do will start and finish with the views and experiences of disabled people. In taking this approach we will shape policy and practice to remove the barriers to safe and accessible transport.

Our first strategy is called ‘Designing an accessible world for all’ in which we offer our vision on how we will work to make transport accessible for all.

This document represents a bridge between the original concept of an evidence centre and how ncat will deliver change. While our priorities and ways of working will evolve over time, they will always be grounded in removing barriers to access and meeting the needs of disabled people through inclusive design co-created with disabled people.

ncat is delivered by a partnership comprising Coventry University, Connected Places Catapult, Designability, Policy Connect, Research Institute for Disabled Consumers, and WSP UK.

We are grateful to the Motability Foundation for funding this initiative, and to the ncat Board, partners and stakeholders for their guidance and help.

ncat follows the social model of disability and embraces equality, diversity and inclusivity, with the aim that all its operations and activities are undertaken in an open, inclusive and equal environment.

ncat in a nutshell

ncat will provide high quality, human-centred evidence, insights, and tried and tested solutions. These will inform policy and strategy, and influence investment decisions by government, transport operators, and providers of mobility services.

Covering all modes of transport, and working across the UK with public, private and third sector stakeholders, ncat will help uncover new evidence, draw on insights and test solutions focussed on improving the transport experience for disabled people.

ncat's work will be fully rooted in the realities of the lived experiences of disabled people and stakeholders who will inform and help prioritise our work.

ncat will define its research priorities and then commission projects in conjunction with external organisations to address the barriers to transport faced by disabled people.

When door-to-door journeys are made easier and more accessible for disabled people, and the transport accessibility gap is being narrowed, then we will know we're succeeding.

Why is ncat needed?

Disabled people make 38% fewer journeys than non-disabled people¹

Disabled people make significantly fewer trips than non-disabled people, a deficit that persists across all transport modes (i.e road, rail sea and air). The reality is that disabled people face more limited transport options; have a greater likelihood of being injured during a trip and endure longer end to end journey times.

Disabled people are disadvantaged by poor journey planning information, leaving them feeling unsafe as well as experiencing negative attitudes from fellow passengers, all against a backdrop of general low public awareness of the issues disabled people face.

When we first thought about what ncat could do, we asked a cohort of disabled people via a panel what barriers and issues they faced when trying to use transport.

Their top five issues in order of priority were:²

- 1 Addressing street barriers
(high kerbs, bollards, among others)
- 2 The need for new travel solutions for a range of access needs/lived experiences
- 3 The need to be able to plan a journey in a way that suits individual needs.
- 4 Improving public transport generally
- 5 Improving access to wheelchairs/powering wheelchairs

The voice and experience of disabled people is not prioritised. This is compounded by a lack of a strategic and joined-up approach to listening to disabled people across the transport system, and the absence of a clear over-arching view of what the existing evidence is telling us.

Accessibility is still often considered as a ‘nice to have’ and sometimes undertaken too late in the design process. Disabled people are inappropriately categorised as one whole group, and there are too few senior decision-makers with a lived experience of disability.

In the transport sector long-running difficulties in applying “system-level thinking” exists between network actors such as transport operators. More needs to be done with transport planners and designers to facilitate seamless travel for disabled people.

Closing the transport accessibility gap affords significant socio-economic benefits derived from improved access to health, education, work and well-being for disabled people. This motivates us to act to improve access for all.³

¹ The Transport Accessibility Gap report, March 2022

² Source: RiDC research with 1,000+ disabled people for bid

³ Accessible Transport Policy Commission launch September 2023

Vision, mission and values

ncat will be the first centre to consider the transport system as a whole, to create an evidence base that inspires others to develop solutions for accessible travel that works for everyone.

Our Vision

A more inclusive society through accessible transport.

Our Mission

ncat will work with disabled people to influence the transport sector and shape the future to ensure that all transport systems are accessible for disabled people.

Our Core Values

- Our work starts and ends with disabled people, and we amplify the voices of disabled people in all decision-making
- We are a collective and we play to the evidence strengths
- We work collaboratively, with shared leadership, respectful of all opinions and positions
- We place a premium on research and evidence, not assumptions, to demonstrate good practice and deliver impact to influence policy
- We are agile, innovative, and ready to lead change

Strategic objectives

Identifying, understanding and applying the realities of the lived experience of disabled people as evidence is vital.

1 Generate

Create and validate insights and evidence through human-centred research.

Outcome

Disabled people have a voice, generate evidence and solutions.

2 Translate

Translate new and existing evidence into accessible policy and practice.

Outcome

Amplify the voice of disabled people to co-create solutions.

3 Adopt

Promote, support and inspire the adoption of evidence-based practices and policies.

Outcome

Influence transport stakeholders to adopt changes.

ncat has three strategic objectives:

Strategic Objective 1 – Generate

This relates to the planning, collecting and reporting of real-world accessible transport-based evidence. We will meet this objective by embedding human-centred approaches and ensure transport issues faced by disabled people are heard.

Strategic Objective 2 – Translate

This relates to translating evidence into results, products and service applications that directly benefit disabled people. We will meet this objective through a human-centred design focus and collaborative working/co-creating to deliver new transport solutions.

Strategic Objective 3 – Adopt

This relates to the adoption of evidence, innovative practices and solutions and policy to influence change for disabled people and stakeholders. We will meet this objective with the consistent take-up of evidence-based practices, solutions and policy amongst disabled people and transport operators, policy makers and stakeholders.

As ncat develops we will gather more evidence and insights which will directly inform its strategic priorities.

Where do we start?

How do you turn a concept into a consortium that will try and provide evidence to deal with a problem that hasn't improved in the last decade?

By listening to and working with disabled people to build that evidence base whilst creating the foundations for delivering ncat's vision.

There are three phases in these initial years to ncat's development and delivery.

1 Create

Creating ncat

2 Define

Defining ncat research priorities.

3 Deliver

Delivering the ncat research and commissioning programme.

Phase 1 – creating ncat

This includes establishing and launching ncat, developing its brand, recruiting Board members and setting up the cross-party parliamentary Accessible Transport Policy Commission, and creating the Community of Accessible Transport Panel to provide evidence and validate research. This initial phase includes working on projects that will create the foundations for ncat that will allow us to deliver research and commissioning priorities. It also includes discrete projects that have been informed by our initial research with disabled people.

You can read about all of these projects on www.ncat.uk

Phase 2 – defining ncat’s research priorities

This includes setting up the Expert Panel (comprising disabled people’s organisations, charities and access and inclusion specialists working in the transport fields), planning and delivering the first Accessible Transport Summit and Industry Forums to confirm research and commissioning priorities and disseminate findings and results.

Phase 3 – delivering the research and commissioning programme

This will see the first public call-out for applications for a series of ncat funded transport solutions and innovations, to advance accessible transport.

How will we know we are making a difference?

When our monitoring and evaluation framework gives us the evidence that door-to-door journeys improve and are more accessible for disabled people and the transport accessibility gap is being narrowed; then we will know we're succeeding.

Our priorities and the measures by which we will judge our success are:

Set up ncat

An evidence centre is established to improve transport accessibility.

Raise awareness

ncat raises awareness of accessible transport.

Develop evidence

Disabled people generate evidence through ncat.

Amplify the experiences of disabled people

People understand the need for accessible transport.

Changes are made

Disabled people have informed improved transport legislation, policy and services.

Improve transport accessibility

Transport is more accessible for disabled people.

Impact people's lives

Disabled people have a better quality of life due to accessible transport.

How ncat will be run?

The strength of ncat is its diverse partners working together to achieve the required step change.

ncat Board

The Board comprises 12 members, six are independent external experts in transport accessibility, each bringing a lived experience of disability, and six are senior members from the partner organisations. Led by an independent chair, the Board meets on a quarterly basis to provide strategic oversight and direction of ncat's work.

ncat Leadership Team Panel

The Leadership Team comprises the six consortium representatives who represent their organisations at a senior level on the ncat Board.

ncat Operations Delivery Group

The ODG comprises members of the six partners. The partners have considerable expertise in accessible transport as well as extensive project and programme management backgrounds.

Collectively, the group represents a whole-systems approach to making transport more accessible.

ncat Expert Panel

The Expert Panel will comprise leading disabled people's organisations, charities and access and inclusion specialists who each focus specifically in the area of transport. The panel will bring insights, map the landscape and use their knowledge and specialisms to inform ncat's work.

Motability Foundation

We are grateful to the Motability Foundation who have provided significant long-term funding to set up and support ncat.

Partnership for change

ncat will work with transport industry organisations and professionals as well as national and local policymakers to ensure uptake and impact from the research and learning is achieved, with a UK-wide remit.

What are the ways to get involved?

Community of Accessible Transport Panel (CAT Panel)

To participate in our research, you can join the CAT Panel which will allow you to get involved in shaping the future of transport for disabled people.

You'll share ideas, learn from others, find solutions that work, with incentives for taking part in the research.

Join our CAT panel by signing up via our website here [Community of Accessible Transport \(ncat.uk\)](https://www.ncat.uk)

Visit the website

[Home - National Centre for Accessible Transport \(ncat.uk\)](https://www.ncat.uk)

Email us

info@ncat.uk

Follow us on LinkedIn

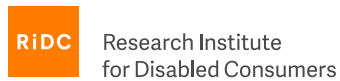
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Consortium partners

our consortium partners



our funder

