



Citizen Engagement in Deafblindness Research: Possibilities in Changing Realities

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Summary

Around 1.5 million people live with some form of concurrent hearing and vision impairment (referred to as deafblindness or dual sensory impairment) globally. However, the level of research in this field is limited and best practices to engage the individuals with deafblindness in research and practice are still evolving. There has been a large volume of work on citizen engagement, yet it has not fully translated into the field of deafblindness. Recognizing the changing realities that exist due to COVID-19, this webinar aims to present the knowledge on citizen engagement with respect to individuals with deafblindness and how research needs to be more inclusive and engaging to improve outcomes in practice settings, research priority settings and policy settings, even in pandemic situations. Drawing from the international work on citizen engagement, the purpose of the webinar is to discuss possible approaches and strategies to engage citizens in its research processes, including participating in decision-making and informing strategic priorities. Through this webinar, we will also discuss how to promote the involvement of individuals with deafblindness as active participants, co-researchers, and lead researchers. To capture the research priorities of the individuals with deafblindness during and post COVID-19, the quality of citizen engagement is a crucial component. In addition, the webinar aims to initiate dialogue within the DBI Network to join hands to develop citizen-engagement training modules for researchers and other stakeholders in the field of deafblindness. The modules could be later used as a resource for knowledge dissemination for future researchers and policymakers.

After completion of this webinar, the audience will learn:

1. What is citizen engagement, how it is defined, and what are its key principles?
2. Why is citizen engagement important in deafblindness research, especially in the current COVID-19 context?
3. What are the challenges in citizen engagement in deafblindness research and how to engage individuals with deafblindness effectively?