

**DIALOGUE IN THE DARK**  
**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

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## 1. DOES THE CONCEPT “DIALOGUE IN THE DARK” WORK ALL OVER THE WORLD?

Yes, our experience in more than 30 countries since 1988, with DiD showcased in over 160 sites, testifies that the concept works in Latin America as well as in Europe, Japan or Israel.

## 2. WHAT IS NEEDED TO START DID AS A TEMPORARY EXHIBITION?

- > a suitable location, accessible to wheelchairs and well connected to public transport
- > seed money - excellent fundraising skills
- > a licence to use the worldwide protected brand and concept
- > advisory skills from the experienced team of Dialogue Social Enterprise GmbH, delivered through its consulting services and assistance
- > contact to an open minded local blind union
- > social engagement
- > entrepreneurial spirit and management skills
- > endurance!

## 3. HOW DOES THE FRANCHISE MODEL WORK?

The idea of DiD was developed by Andreas Heinecke in 1988: in 1996 he founded his own company, Consens Dr. Andreas Heinecke, that holds the copyrights worldwide for “Dialogue in the Dark”. In 2008, Andreas Heinecke and four partners founded “Dialogue Social Enterprise GmbH” to accompany the development of Dialogue in the Dark and Dialogue in Silence (DiS).

The licence to use the brand and the concept is always needed to set up a new “Dialogue in the Dark” exhibition. The licence fee has to be paid throughout the time the exhibition is open.

There are two possible agreements with Dialogue Social Enterprise GmbH:

1. Licence + consulting contract
2. Licence + complete implementation contract, on request in several countries.

1. For most of the productions outside of Europe, instead of transferring our whole team, we offer advisory services which allow local professionals to set up the installation.

We train the staff and pass on the expertise needed to run the exhibition independently.

2. Regarding the complete implementation we differentiate between a contract which allows a local operating team to run the finished implementation and the entire production being developed and also run by Dialogue Social Enterprise GmbH.

The first point of action in any negotiation is to sign a “Non Disclosure Agreement” (NDA). Then, as soon as the “Letter of Intent” has been signed, we start charging our advisory costs.

#### 4. WHAT DOES DIALOGUE SOCIAL ENTERPRISE GMBH OFFER WITH THE LICENCE?

- > rights to use the brand and the concept
- > global references
- > monitoring/supervision services during the whole period
- > international DSE network - friends and social entrepreneurs
- > an annual international meeting platform to exchange experiences
- > a feature on the international “Dialogue in the Dark” website
- > information about all newly developed and evaluated products and tools (for example trainings to improve blind trainers for workshops)

#### 5. WHAT IS EXPECTED FROM A FRANCHISEE?

Due to our open source philosophy, we expect mutual respect, loyalty, integrity, and transparency. We are looking for long-term relationships with our partners.

##### a) Mindset

- > empathy with the aims of DiD
- > understanding & care for disabled people and relevant issues
- > the desire to contribute to the public benefit

##### b) Professional/Business skills

- > ability to run a business
- > HR skills and the ability to manage around 50 people
- > communication and marketing skills

##### c) Commitment

- Since we strive towards close partnerships, we expect the franchisees to
- > share their experiences & figures with us on a half yearly basis
  - > pay the blind guide fairly
  - > ensure that the exhibition, the guide-rooms, and the rest of the venue meet the hygienic standards
  - > ensure that there are no sources of danger inside the exhibition

## 6. WHO ARE THE ENTREPRENEURS THAT STARTED DiD IN OTHER CITIES?

There are 5 major groups of presenters worldwide:

- a) **Organisations for blind people:** they consider DiD a PR tool to increase public awareness (for example in Milan, the Institute for the Blind opened a long term exhibition in December 2005)
- b) **Museums:** they run DiD as a temporary exhibition (for example The Children's Museum of Holon in Israel, or Frida und Fred Museum for Children in Graz, Austria or Papalote Museum in Mexico City).  
In particular, science centres display great interest for the social services which Dialogue Social Enterprise GmbH provides (for example Heureka, The Finnish Science Centre near Helsinki or Le Vaisseau in Strasbourg).
- c) **Private initiatives:** people whose lives have been changed by the experience of DiD, including former successful managers (for example in Italy, Mexico and Brazil)
- d) **Professional companies & Exhibition:** Companies from the cultural field, fascinated by the concept and looking for a social programme to make up some of their activities during special corporate events (see Incult in Barcelona)
- e) **Professional companies & Workshops:** Companies from various fields, present DiD Business Workshops to offer special trainings (Leadership, Teamwork, etc.) for themselves and other companies (for example Allianz Munich)

## 7. WHAT LEAD TIME IS REQUIRED TO PLAN IT?

For a 400m<sup>2</sup> exhibition, where the venue is fixed and the budget is covered, anything between 6 months and a year is necessary to organize the exhibition and promote it. A lot depends on the type of organizer: e.g. for a museum it is certainly easier and faster.

Since every DiD installation is tailor-made for the specific venue, potential franchisees do not need to book the exhibition in advance, unlike with the travelling exhibitions.

## 8. WHAT AREA (SPACE) DOES IT REQUIRE?

For the installation in the dark, 100 - 500 indoor m<sup>2</sup> are needed with a minimum height of 3,50 m., depending on how many sets are planned. An average size path can be set in 400m<sup>2</sup>, with 4 different rooms in the dark.

Besides the space for the exhibition itself, all the facilities to welcome the public in the light are needed as well: foyer with cloakroom, ticket counter and info-point, toilets, a seminar room for activities with schools and companies, offices and a guide room plus some space to store the beverages for the bar in the dark.

A building which already has all of the facilities mentioned above, in a good location, which is easily accessible and within walking distance of public transport is preferred.

## 9. HOW COMPLEX IS THE LAY-OUT OF THE SPACE?

The installation can vary a great deal, according to the spatial conditions. Usually there are 4 different sets, realistically designed with objects, sounds, different textures and smells. These sets are used to simulate a natural and an urban environment, a boat or a market and finally a bar, the main room where visitors enter into deeper conversations with their guide: we always create a set-up which is strongly related to the local atmosphere and culture. And of course the exhibition has to be accessible to wheelchairs and totally safe.

## 10. IS THE PROGRAMME USUALLY RUN IN COOPERATION WITH THE LOCAL ORGANISATIONS FOR THE BLIND?

Yes, there is always a connection: usually the Organisations for the Blind participate in the recruitment, they produce Braille and audio information for the guides, and sometimes the