



Rick Hansen Foundation & Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES) Partner to Advocate for Accessibility Globally

Vancouver (24, October, 2018) – The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) and The Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES) have announced a new partnership that will break down barriers for people with disabilities by advocating for a more accessible world.

The RHF, an organization that raises awareness, changes attitudes, and removes barriers for people with disabilities, and GAATES, an international organization dedicated to the implementation and promotion of accessibility are committed to raising awareness and advocating together for accessibility and inclusion around the world.

Last year, RHF announced the launch of the Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification™ (RHFAC) program which works to help improve accessibility of the built environment in Canada – the places where we live, work, learn and play. To date, over one thousand buildings across Canada have registered to be rated and improve their level of meaningful accessibility.

“I have great respect and admiration for the GAATES team and the great work they do. GAATES’ International Certification of Accessibility Consultants program and RHF’s Accessibility Certification, represent our shared mission to build an accessible and inclusive world, while following the guiding principles of Universal Design.” said Brad McCannell, VP of Access and Inclusion at the Rick Hansen Foundation.

“Having worked on this mandate for 26 years one thing I’ve learned is that we can’t get there alone. This key partnership means together we can get there faster. By removing barriers for people with disabilities, all Canadians can be free to fully engage in their local and global communities.”

Betty Dion, founder of the Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES), who has known Brad and Rick Hansen for 25 years, welcomes this collaboration. “It makes sense, GAATES certifies accessibility

consultants and the RHFAC program also trains accessibility professionals and rates and certifies accessible buildings. Together we can foster a more professional accessibility framework in Canada and around the world”.

Advocating for accessibility beyond borders, this partnership will cross promote and leverage the strengths of each organization. The partnership will support professional accessibility expertise and will provide greater confidence to governments, building owners, developers and persons with disabilities across Canada.

For more information on this partnership, please contact:

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About the Rick Hansen Foundation

The Rick Hansen Foundation (RHF) was established in 1988, following the completion of Rick Hansen’s Man In Motion World Tour. For nearly 30 years, RHF has worked to raise awareness, change attitudes, and remove barriers for people with disabilities.

Visit [www.rickhansen.com\RHFAC](http://www.rickhansen.com/RHFAC) to learn more.

About GAATES (The Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments)

The Global Alliance on Accessible Technologies and Environments (GAATES) is the leading international organization dedicated to the implementation and promotion of accessibility within the guiding principles of the United Nations’ Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), and the New Urban Agenda. Visit <http://gaates.org/certification> to learn more.