

Novartis Announces Winners of the Innovation Prize for Assistive Tech

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In 2019, Novartis initiated the Novartis Innovation Prize: Assistive Tech for Multiple Sclerosis (MS), as part of a commitment to innovation in Neuroscience to identify and encourage technology ideas, with the aim to improve mobility, accessibility and daily life for people living with MS. Entries were received from all over the world, including Ireland. In 2020, the first prize has been awarded to a Canadian company, AccessNow, for a mobile app and web platform that provides information about the accessibility status for people with disabilities of locations around the world, allowing them to move around with more confidence and ease.



Maayan Ziv

Canada



AccessNow

www.accessnow.com

AccessNow is a mobile app and website that focuses on sharing information about the accessibility status of places around the world. Designed to empower people with disabilities, the platform crowdsources reviews on businesses with features like accessible parking and washrooms, elevators, ramps, scent-free and quiet spaces, and much more.

The start-up company Fly Parrots from the USA who developed Polly, a socially assistive robot with an inclusive user-friendly app so people with mobility and communication challenges can connect better with the world, was the runner-up. Novartis worked on this project with WIRED Brand Lab, along with other key collaborators such as Selma Blair, representatives from Sequoia, Airbnb, Whill, Shift.ms, the National Multiple Sclerosis Society and people living with MS.

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