



Hello! We are the [FIRST Project](#). As you probably know, we're developing *Open Book* – a new tool to convert text and documents into a form that is more accessible for people with autism. Welcome to our third newsletter and we hope you find some interesting and useful new information about technology and autism herein.

Sincerely,

The FIRST Project Team

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OUR PROGRESS

Open Book will be completed in **late 2014**. Here's how close we are to finishing:



Testing *Open Book* with people who have autism has begun

As development of *Open Book* is nearing completion, the tool is now undergoing testing with adults who have autism. The tool will be tested by 300 research participants who have autism. Research participants will include adults (100 in the United Kingdom), and young people aged 12 and above (100 in Spain, 100 in Bulgaria).

NEW TECHNOLOGIES FOR AUTISM

Results of international survey on parent attitudes to, and use of, technology with children with autism

This survey (which was previously promoted in this newsletter) was created to gain a better understanding of how technologies are being used by people with autism. It has now closed with 233 responses to the English language version and 256 Spanish language responses.

The following results are now available for the English language responses (Spanish language responses are still being processed):

- iPads were the most commonly reported form of technology regularly used by children with autism, with 51% of the sample reporting that their child played for 20 minutes or more per day. This was followed by desktop or laptop computers, used by 43% of respondents;
- Favourite activities across all hardware platforms were games, closely followed by watching YouTube or other online video sites;
- Use of social media, email, Skype or FaceTime was less common (each <10%) but these data have not yet been broken down by age - younger children would not be expected to be using these applications;
- Only 2.7% (n=5) of respondents reported that their child used a dedicated augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) device (e.g. a Dynavox or Liberator). However, a further 3.8% (n=9) of respondents report that their child uses an AAC program to communicate using another device, such as an iPad or other tablet.

The analysis of the survey data continues and will be shared at the upcoming IMFAR 2014 conference.

EVENTS

Conference – International Meeting for Autism Research (IMFAR), Atlanta, Georgia, United States, May 14 - 17, 2014

The next annual conference of the International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, from May 14 to 17, 2014.

This international conference provides autism researchers from around the world with a focused opportunity to share their research in the rapidly moving scientific investigation of autism.

IMFAR 2014 will once again feature a lot of autism and technology content. The special interest group on Autism and Technology has been invited back for IMFAR 2014 and will be held on Friday 16th May.

[More information](#)

Conference – Interaction Design and Children, Aarhus, Denmark, June 17, 2014

This conference will feature a one day workshop titled '*Interaction Design with Children with Disabilities*'. The workshop aims to bring together researchers, designers and practitioners who create technology for and with children with disabilities to share experiences, identify best practices, develop new techniques and reflect on the values and philosophical stances which shape their work.

Abstract submissions for this conference should be submitted by April 20, 2014.

More information on the [conference](#) and [workshop](#).

Conference – Second autism and technology conference in Europe, Paris, October 3 - 4, 2014

The second Innovative Technologies for Autism Spectrum Disorders (ITASD) Conference will be held in Paris from October 3 to 4, 2014.

The second conference follows the success of the first one which was held in Valencia, Spain in July 2012.

The conference will feature the latest research in the field of autism and technology. The conference will also provide an opportunity for parents and people with autism to come together with researchers and software developers and network, give feedback and participate in a forum to discuss the future of technology for autism.

Abstract submissions for this conference should be submitted by April 30, 2014.

[More information](#) (English & French)

OTHER NEWS

New online training initiative to promote better understanding of people with autism

'Ask Autism' is a new online training initiative from the National Autistic Society which has been developed by people with autism. The training modules, launched in November, 2013, offer an 'insider' perspective on autism, with the aim to educate others about how people with autism would like to be understood and supported.

The Ask Autism online training modules include:

- Understanding autism
- Autism and communication
- Autism and sensory experiences
- Autism, stress and anxiety
- Supporting families of people with autism

[More information](#) (English only)

OUR SISTER PROJECTS



MASELTOV – technology to support new immigrants to integrate into Europe

The MASELTOV project researches and develops novel ICT instruments with the key objective to facilitate and foster local community building, raising consciousness and knowledge for the bridging of cultural differences.

[More information](#)

The FIRST Project is '[clustered](#)' together with the ASC-Inclusion project because this project is also creating an innovative new technology for social inclusion of people who have autism (and also funded by the European Union).

Like what we're doing? Then 'like' Autism-Europe on Facebook to receive updates and don't be shy about sharing with your friends! www.facebook.com/autismeurope.AE

Want to know more? Go to www.first-asd.eu or contact us [contact\(at\)first-asd.eu](mailto:contact(at)first-asd.eu)

Got something to tell us? If there's something you think people who are interested in autism and technology should know, please tell us by emailing: nikki.sullings@autismeurope.org

Don't want to hear from us anymore? Aw, that's a shame ☹ Well, just send us an email with **unsubscribe FIRST** in the subject line and we'll take you off the mailing list: nikki.sullings@autismeurope.org



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