

TANGATA GROUP

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TANGATA GROUP IS GRANTED SPECIAL CONSULTATIVE STATUS RELATED TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES (CRPD) AT THE UNITED NATIONS



On September 25, 2020, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) of the United Nations announced through their Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) granted “special consultative status” to Tangata Group related to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). According to the ECOSOC, “Consultative status for an organization enables it to actively engage with ECOSOC and its subsidiary bodies, as well as with the United Nations Secretariat, programmes, funds and agencies in a number of ways.”

Consultative status enables the ECOSOC to now seek information or advice from Tangata Group. Tangata Group can now also designate official representatives at the UN Headquarters in New York City, as well as at UN offices in Geneva and Vienna, and participate in UN-related

events, conferences, and activities. In addition to the previously mentioned benefits and privileges, Tangata Group can now make oral presentations and submit written statements to the ECOSOC that, “may be circulated by the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the members of the Council.”

The leadership of Tangata Group commented on being given special consultative status:

Dr. Brent C. Elder, assistant professor of inclusive education at Rowan University and president and co-founder of Tangata Group said, “The CRPD is a landmark piece of international disability rights legislation that is helping shape a more inclusive world for people with disabilities. We could not be more proud to be able to work with disabled people around the world to find innovative and sustainable ways to implement the CRPD at the ground-level.”

The Honorable Judy Heumann, the former Special Advisor for International Disability Rights at the US Department of State and internationally recognized disability rights pioneer said, “I am proud that Tangata Group has obtained consultative status at the UN. This will enable us to participate in events where we can share and learn valuable information.”

“ECOSOC consultative status will enable the Tangata Group and our allies in the international disability rights community to amplify our presence at the United Nations,” said Professor Janet E. Lord, a key drafter of the CRPD and co-founder of Tangata Group. “We are particularly excited about the prospect of working to advance the CRPD through UN peace building processes in the light of Security Council Resolution 2475, which helps protect people with disabilities in conflict areas.”

Professor Michael A. Schwartz, associate professor of law at Syracuse University and secretary/treasurer and co-founder of Tangata Group added, “Tangata Group, which infuses its international human rights advocacy on behalf of people with disabilities around the world with the core concepts of Critical Disability Studies, greatly appreciates the golden opportunity to assist the United Nations in its critical mission of enforcing the CRPD. The CRPD is the most important international treaty protecting the rights of people with disabilities, and to be effective, it requires written and oral advocacy based on the idea that disabled lives matter. Tangata Group welcomes the challenge of providing such advocacy and looks forward to a bright future at the United Nations.”

About Tangata Group

Tangata Group is a non-governmental organization (NGO) dedicated to the proposition that disability rights are human rights. The organization was officially launched in October 2015 with Professors Brent C. Elder, Janet E. Lord, and Michael A. Schwartz as founding members, with

the Honorable Judith E. Heumann joining the board in 2017. The focus of the organization is the CRPD, an international treaty establishing disability as a critical category of human rights. With 177 nations having ratified the CRPD, Tangata Group provides technical assistance and guidance in the work to realize disabled people's human rights. Technical assistance from Tangata Group consists of support enacting qualitative research, community-based participatory research, and decolonizing and indigenous methodologies. Tangata Group's interdisciplinary collaborations focus on disability rights, international human rights law, inclusive education, and access to justice and health care.

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