

Beyond Inclusion: Why Neuro-Inclusive Standards Are the Next Frontier in Healthcare and Research

Introduction

Scientific understanding of neurodiversity has advanced significantly over the past two decades. Research has deepened our knowledge of autism, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, and other neurodevelopmental conditions, while advances in neuroimaging and neuroscience continue to reveal the remarkable diversity of human cognition. Yet one important question remains largely unanswered: How do we translate scientific knowledge into environments where neurodivergent individuals can genuinely thrive?

The next frontier is not simply understanding neurodiversity—it is embedding neuro-inclusive principles into the design of healthcare systems, research environments, workplaces, educational institutions, and public services. Scientific discovery has little societal value unless it informs how systems are designed and experienced by the people they serve.

Healthcare offers an important example. Many neurodivergent individuals experience sensory overload, communication barriers, or anxiety during clinical encounters. While these challenges are widely recognized, systematic approaches to addressing them remain inconsistent. Small changes in environmental design, communication methods, appointment processes, and staff training can substantially improve patient experiences while maintaining high standards of clinical care. Such improvements should become routine rather than exceptional.

The research community faces a similar opportunity. Clinical studies increasingly acknowledge the importance of diversity among participants, but diversity should also extend to researchers, reviewers, students, and professionals contributing to scientific discovery. Neurodivergent individuals often bring exceptional strengths in analytical reasoning, pattern recognition, sustained concentration, systems thinking, and creative problem-solving. Research environments that recognize and support these strengths are likely to benefit from greater innovation and broader perspectives.

Editorial

Dr. Sandip Dhurat*

¹Innovator, Author and Researcher at SPD Futurix LLP

***Correspondence:** Sandip Dhurat, Innovator, Author and Researcher at SPD Futurix LLP, Dadar East, Mumbai, India, E-mail: sdhurat@gmail.com

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Standards can play a transformative role in achieving this vision. International standards have historically improved quality, safety, accessibility, and interoperability across numerous disciplines. A comparable emphasis on neuro-inclusive practices could help organizations establish measurable expectations for accessibility, sensory considerations, communication practices, and inclusive design. Rather than treating neuro-inclusion as an optional initiative, standards can provide a structured pathway for continuous improvement and accountability. Emerging technologies further strengthen this opportunity. Artificial intelligence, digital health platforms, wearable devices, and advanced neuroimaging are reshaping modern healthcare. These innovations should be developed with neurodiverse users in mind from the earliest stages of design. Inclusive technology not only improves accessibility but also expands innovation by ensuring that solutions reflect the needs of a broader population.

As an inventor and researcher working across technology, innovation, and neuro-inclusion, I have come to appreciate that meaningful progress often occurs at the intersection of disciplines. Engineering, neuroscience, healthcare, human-centered design, and public policy are no longer independent domains; they increasingly converge to solve complex societal challenges. This interdisciplinary perspective reinforces the importance of

designing systems that recognize cognitive diversity as a source of strength rather than difference.

The future of neuroscience should therefore extend beyond understanding the brain to shaping the environments in which every brain can flourish. By integrating scientific evidence with thoughtful standards, inclusive design, and collaborative innovation, we can move from awareness to implementation. Neuro-inclusion should not remain an aspiration discussed in conferences and publications; it should become an integral characteristic of the healthcare, research, and innovation ecosystems we build for future generations.

Author Biography

Dr. Sandip P. Dhurat, D.Litt. (Hon.), is an inventor, researcher, author, and innovation strategist with over two decades of multidisciplinary experience spanning technology, sustainability, neuro-inclusion, standards development, and intellectual property. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Computer Engineering and an MBA, and has authored 32 books and is the inventor behind 29 patent applications across diverse fields.

His research focuses on translating innovative ideas into practical frameworks that address complex societal

challenges. In the field of neurodiversity, his work explores neuro-inclusive technologies, workplace innovation, and systems thinking to improve accessibility and participation for neurodivergent individuals. He is the creator of NeuroCodeFix, a framework promoting neuro-inclusive software development environments, and has proposed the International Neuro-Inclusion Accreditation (INIA), a standards-based framework for embedding neuro-inclusive principles into systems, products, services, and the built environment.

Beyond neuro-inclusion, Dr. Dhurat is internationally recognized for his contributions to green hydrogen technologies, circular economy solutions, wastewater-to-hydrogen systems, and sustainability standards. He has developed several innovative concepts and frameworks aimed at advancing clean energy, climate resilience, and responsible technological development.

Dr. Dhurat actively collaborates with academic institutions, standards organizations, industry, and policymakers to promote interdisciplinary research and innovation. His work reflects a commitment to creating practical, scalable solutions that bridge engineering, healthcare, environmental sustainability, and social inclusion, with the objective of delivering meaningful and lasting societal impact.

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