

Corporate social responsibility

At Sonova, our business targets are well aligned with our broader social goals: to help people hear the world while taking responsibility for our actions toward our employees, our business partners and our planet.

Creating sustainable value

We are committed to creating sustainable value for all our stakeholders – by providing access to hearing care for millions of people with hearing loss, by continuously innovating to offer the best solutions to our customers, by investing in the personal growth and development of our employees, and by applying environmentally friendly practices across all our business activities.

Our employees are key to our success. Sonova offers meaningful work in a challenging, flexible work environment, where employees can grow personally and develop professionally. For the last four consecutive years, Sonova's employee satisfaction rate has remained above 80%.

We work continuously to reduce our environmental footprint across all our business activities, with a particular focus on the life cycle of our products and the reduction of our group-wide carbon footprint. Compared with the previous year,

we were able to reduce the CO₂ emissions from our business flights by 10.2%.

A key element of our CSR activities continues to be the Hear the World Foundation, a Sonova Group initiative with special focus on projects that support children in need with hearing loss. In 2015/16 Sonova provided the Foundation with a total value of CHF 2.14 million in cash, in-kind-benefits and additional resources.

Transparent stakeholder dialog

At Sonova, we strive to engage in an open and transparent dialog with all our stakeholders. As an integral part of this commitment, we report in accordance with the G4 guidelines of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) on CSR issues.

The full CSR Report can be downloaded at: www.sonova.com/en/csreport



INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH ALLIANCES

Marcel Mandato concentrates hard as he looks through the microscope that reveals the minutest details of the stimulating electrode in a cochlear implant. Stefan Fredelake stands next to him, waiting for the result of the investigation. Both men work at the Advanced Bionics European Research Center (ERC) in Hanover. "Our research center collaborates with over 30 leading universities and clinics across Europe, including the Hanover Medical School, the University Clinics in the Dutch towns of Leiden and Maastricht, the Berlin Trauma Hospital (UKB) and the University Hospital Zurich. We work together to develop cutting-edge technologies that benefit cochlear implant recipients and audiologists alike," project manager Fredelake explains. He is an Advanced Bionics cochlear implant recipient himself, so he can also assess the design and the

results of the investigations from his perspective.

One of the ERC's many studies is in progress at the German Hearing Center in Hanover. This groundbreaking project on stimulation strategies focuses on the auditory perception of stereo music. The test subject hears with cochlear implants in both ears. He sits on an office chair and holds a tablet computer in his hand. The loudspeakers all around him play different types of music – rock alternates with heavy metal and classical pieces. Sometimes the sounds come from the left and sometimes from the right. On the tablet, he has to key in his answers to two questions: When does he hear in mono? When does he hear in stereo? "The first results are highly promising," Fredelake notes. "The study shows that recipients of Advanced Bionics cochlear implants with the Phonak ComPilot technology can hear stereo effects significantly better. And as a result, many of them can derive much more enjoyment from music."

This music study is one of the numerous research projects sponsored by Sonova

in close collaboration with many academic and scientific institutions around the globe. The development of innovative hearing solutions is being driven by this close, transparent dialog. All these projects share one common aim: to continue improving the quality of life for cochlear implant recipients. Andreas Büchner, Scientific Director at the German Hearing Center, comments: "This goal unites us all." He has been working with the Advanced Bionics team for the last twenty years: "Sonova is always willing to listen to ideas and to look ahead to the future. Rather than revolving around short-term product cycles, our joint projects aim to deliver results that are sustainable in the long term."

Deutsches HörZentrum




Advanced Bionics' European Research Center (ERC) collaborates with over 30 universities and clinics. In Hanover, Stefan Fredelake (ERC) and Andreas Büchner (German Hearing Center / ENT clinic at Hanover Medical School) work closely together under clinic director, Thomas Lenarz.