

【Report】 The 2024 Paris Paralympic Games: A Catalyst for the Greater Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities

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In August 2024 I had the opportunity to attend my 8th Paralympic Games, this time as a guest of Dr. Robert Steadward, the founding President of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and my Doctoral supervisor at the University of Alberta. While we were in Paris, we had the opportunity through a variety of events and conversations to ruminate, observe, and consider how the Paralympic Games have impacted global issues such as accessibility, inclusion, and integration, and whether the Games in today's world could enable positive change in these realms for persons with disabilities?

Our understanding of this potential impact recognized that the Paralympic movement is still relatively young having had its genesis during and following World War Two. Returning war veterans from Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom who were wounded during war action utilized sport and recreation as a means of rehabilitation. The competitions held at hospitals and rehab centres led to the creation of local clubs, and over time a global movement was formed with the first major International Stoke Mandeville Games for the Physically Disabled taking place in 1960 in the Olympic city of Rome. Since then, the Games have grown immensely in number of countries, athletes, and the nature of disabilities with the modern Paralympic Games beginning in 1988 when Seoul, South Korea hosted both the Olympic and Paralympic Games.

Although much has changed from the first earliest rehabilitation programs and the modern Paralympic Games, one constant has been the hope that the Paralympic Games and sport for persons with disabilities would lead to great inclusion. The purpose of this article then is to consider this goal and to focus on the 2024 Paris

Summer Paralympic Games and whether it could make a meaningful and significant impact in this way.

To begin the story, I will reflect on a conference symposium held during the Games and hosted by the European Association of Sport Management (EASM) (Horbel, Langbein, Schwarz, Legg, Strittmatter, von Selzam, Vollbracht, & Heinecke, 2024). The symposium hosted by me and several colleagues was titled 'Social Inclusion in and Through Major Sports Events – Moving Forward' and our task was to reflect on the history of how multi-sport events could be leveraged to increase inclusion. To begin the symposium Dr. Steadward and I presented a review of the history of the Paralympic Games, which, as many already know, had its genesis through rehabilitation programs starting around the globe following and during WWII. At this time there was certainly an element of hope that the activities during rehabilitation would result in high performance sport but mostly the goal was to enable inclusion into society. Following the review of Paralympic history Dr. Steadward and I then presented a list of where we thought a Paralympic Games such as the one taking place in Paris could provide a catalyst to help improve the inclusion of persons with disability. I will leave this list until the end of this article and will now return to the start of the Paris Games and how we saw these Games potentially being a pivotal catalyst for greater inclusion (Horbel, Langbein, Schwarz, Legg, Strittmatter, von Selzam, Vollbracht, & Heinecke, 2024).

To begin, it's important to understand that the IPC's Vision is 'an inclusive world through Para Sport' and the IPC see's their ability to achieve this by using Para sport as a vehicle or spark to enable this process. This was discussed in depth at the co-hosted IPC UNESCO International Disability Inclusion Conference held in Paris, just before the opening ceremonies. Here world experts on disability inclusion discussed how Para sport could be a catalyst to advance the rights and opportunities of persons with disabilities, with the first day being a multi-stakeholder Partners Forum that focused on five key themes :

- Fostering more inclusive societies through Para sport and physical activity
- Accessible infrastructure and equipment
- Persons with disabilities : Holders of cultural rights at the forefront of inclusivity and cultural diversity
- Inclusive quality physical education and play

- Breaking down barriers through data-driven sport policies and programmes

The second day of the symposium, which both Dr. Steadward and I had the pleasure of attending hosted a line-up of speakers featuring multiple government ministers from around the world including Paralympian Carla Qualtrough, Canada's Minister of Sport and Physical Activity and the IPC President Mr. Andrew Parsons. In his presentation, Parsons focused on several examples where the Paralympic Games has and could lead to positive change related to inclusion and accessibility. One example was the Il de France, one of the administrative regions of France, centered around the capital city Paris, improving the accessibility of the metro system. Parsons was quoted as saying "The announcement by Il-de-France region is a clear example of how change starts with sport, and how hosting the Paralympic Games triggers significant changes that will benefit millions of people for generations to come." In a press release from the IPC, it was then noted that "the Ile-de-France region would be upgraded to ensure access for people with disabilities, would cost between EUR 15 and 20 billion and be delivered over two decades" (International Paralympic Committee, 2024a). In the press release Parsons further noted that this was a clear example of how the Paralympic Movement can act as a powerful catalyst for change. "An accessible metro system for Paris would be the greatest Paralympic Games legacy that Paris could deliver to their own people, and people across the world that love to visit this iconic city" (International Paralympic Committee, 2024a). This example was the second step in upgrading the public transport system in Paris, following investment by the City of Paris to make all overground transport accessible with a fully accessible bus system. Other examples not noted by Parsons in his presentation but that he could have included were Paris aiming by 2025 to have 95% of its municipal buildings accessible, a dramatic increase from just 45% in 2022 (International Paralympic Committee, 2024c). Other projects he could have referenced include the installation of 10,400 sound modules at road junctions to help the visually impaired, and a plan to ensure that at least one accessible school is within walking distance of every location by 2030 (InsidetheGames, 2024a). As another example of how the Games was a catalyst for potential inclusion, it was recognized that the Host Organizing Committee for the Paris Games worked with six disability associations to help provide the best possible experience for disabled spectators.

Those six associations included :

- CRAIF - Autism Resource Center Île-de-France
- Unanimes - Union of national associations for deaf and impaired hearing inclusion
- Association Valentin Haüy - Helping blind and partially sighted people
- APF France Handicap
- Action handicap France - Disability training and awareness
- Special Olympics France - Enabling people with intellectual disabilities to play sports (Paris, 2024).

At the conference, Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO, also stressed that the importance that the Paralympic Games was potentially through improving the representation of persons with disabilities, especially in sport and in the media. “We can take advantage of these Paralympic Games, the most high-profile ever to shine a spotlight on this issue. And if there is one thing that we must overcome at this Paralympic Games, it is not disability. It is the way disability is perceived. “If we change that, it will not only be for the benefit of people with disabilities. It will be for the benefit of society as a whole” (International Paralympic Committee, 2024b).

The connection between the Games, inclusion and the media were also in the spotlight outside of the conference due to an unrelated campaign led by the National Union of Journalists, based in the United Kingdom. They were promoting a campaign targeting sporting bodies, venues and broadcasters to provide more and better opportunities for disabled journalists to cover international events and draw attention the lack of access and inclusion in everyday life. “With the Paralympics, we experience a wild swing away from narratives that frame disabled people as a burden or ‘workshy’ scroungers to ones of superheroes worthy of celebration. The achievements of Paralympians are incredible and deserve to be celebrated, especially against the backdrop of systemic ableism created by inaccessible transport, housing, education, employment and a lack of sporting opportunities,” NUJ president Natasha Hirst said (InsidetheGames, 2024a). It was suggested that “Paralympics media coverage is usually feel-good stories about overachievers, but the fact is that many obstacles still remain regarding disabled athletes, spectators or plain citizens when it comes to overcoming their daily challenges, whether physical or mental ; and on both sides of the aisle : despite opening up access through remote accreditation during the

pandemic, disabled journalists have experienced increased difficulties securing access to cover more recent global sporting events” (InsidetheGames, 2024a). It was then noted that the Paris Games could provide a further step in an evolution of change but with caveats as to whether that change could be sustained. “With each Paralympics, we hope that the positive interest in disabled people will be sustained, but it quickly returns to discourse that undermines our rights and independence. Journalists can make a difference by scrutinizing the impact of policies on disabled people and exposing the injustices we experience in our lives” (InsidetheGames, 2024a).

One area that the NUJ Disabled Members’ Council focused on related to inclusion was accessibility. Poor access to press areas at many sports venues was noted as preventing disabled journalists from interviewing athletes or attending press conferences (InsidetheGames, 2024a). It was also suggested by the NUJ Disabled Member’s Council that “sports bodies should put pressure on venues to increase access to the built environment for journalists and advocate for remote accreditation options” (InsidetheGames, 2024a). Finally, the statement concluded that “many disabled sports journalists are or have been accomplished athletes who know their sport extremely well. They have the expertise to report on disabled and non-disabled sports but experience unnecessary barriers to doing their job. Audiences and athletes are missing out on the excellent journalism that they deserve” (InsidetheGames, 2024a). While not a positive reality the Games provided the opportunity and platform for this conversation to take place

Linked to this was an online conversation that took place because of a tweet about non-disabled spectators blocking the path of a spectator with a disability at the opening ceremonies. The spectator took to social media (<https://twitter.com/annalandre/status/1828858403776795016?>) to denounce the behavior with the post at the time of writing surpassing 1.4 million views. The author also concluded, however, that “the Paralympics have always been a catalyst for change. I am hopeful that perhaps Paris will carry these lessons into the future” (InsidetheGames, 2024b). Thus, while the Games were attempting to showcase accessibility that could lead to inclusion, it was sometimes the challenges faced in ensuring this that brought the issues to light and into the public discourse.

Returning then to the story of our time at the Games, a day after the symposium I had the pleasure and privilege of attending the Opening ceremonies with Dr. Steadward. Here IPC President Andrew Parsons implored to the 65,000 in attendance in the Place de La Concorde a call for an inclusion revolution. "We know the Paralympic Games are an exciting sports event, but at the same time, we want the Games to drive change in the world, to drive this inclusion revolution' (Soriano, 2024). The speech was dramatic, expressive and well received. Paris's host organizing committee also reiterated this call for an inclusion revolution. In his speech, Tony Estanguet was quick to caution, unlike the revolution that the Place de la Concorde witnessed two centuries ago when Louis XVI was executed on the same square, that the Paralympic one would be positive. "Welcome to the country of love, and the country of revolution. Don't worry, tonight, there will be no storming of the Bastille, no guillotine. Since tonight is the start of the most beautiful of all revolutions : the Paralympic revolution." Estanguet concluded with "Tonight, the revolutionaries are you, the athletes," and "like our ancestors with their phrygien caps, you have panache and audacity. Like all the revolutionaries around the world, you have courage and determination. Like them, you are fighting for a cause that is bigger than you" (Smirnova, 2024).

Overall, and as reported by the International Olympic Committee, the Opening Ceremony 'highlighted the paradoxes in modern society where people with disabilities are celebrated on the sports field but face numerous obstacles in the everyday landscape that is not adapted to them, admired but also pitied, stared at but also invisible' (Smirnova, 2024). The Paralympic Opening Ceremony thus asked difficult questions and called for action in society at the same time as celebrating sport and the achievements of Paralympians. The various musical and theatrical performances put "a spotlight on the paradox that exists in society, which claims to be inclusive but does not truly adapt to the needs of people with disabilities" (Smirnova, 2024).

The day after the Opening Ceremony, Dr. Steadward and I then had the opportunity to attend several sporting events including athletics, swimming, taekwondo, wheelchair rugby and wheelchair tennis. As we did this, and in reading reports about the Games while we were there, we reflected on how the Games could in fact be a catalyst for this inclusion revolution.

One way in which we considered this was with the training of persons with

disabilities as volunteers along with ensuring that volunteers who are able bodied were appropriately trained on being inclusive (Paris, 2024). We learned too that retailers received support and assistance to help them become more inclusive. As one example during Paris Disability Month in June, a Paris Volunteers mission was carried out to mobilize shopkeepers to make their establishments accessible, and to better reference places that are already accessible (Paris, 2024).

Another way in which the Games enhanced inclusion, and this was perhaps an example of how it could translate globally, was through IPC development programs that operated between the Games. At the Paris Games there were 155 athletes who benefited from IPC Programs, with over 50% of them being women (International Paralympic Committee, 2024d). Kristina Molloy, the IPC's Chief Membership and Impact Officer, who we had an opportunity to chat with in Paris noted that 'Para sport changes lives, communities, and is advancing disability inclusion on a global scale. Change of this scale doesn't happen overnight, just like an athlete doesn't become a Paralympian without a vision of success and a community of support' (International Paralympic Committee, 2024d). She further suggested that "the IPC believes engagement in Para sport can empower the 1.3 billion persons with disabilities across the world, improve their health and well-being, and create role models, community leaders and changemakers. Access to Para sport initiates a tidal wave of change, it is our launchpad for societal change to make for an inclusive world" (International Paralympic Committee, 2024d)

Examples during the start of the Games also abounded of athletes noting how sport and the Paralympic Games specifically led to greater inclusion. Before the UNESCO event described earlier, five torchbearers, including Para swimming star Husnah Kukundakwe, carried the torch in front of the Symbolic Globe monument, which was surrounded by flags of many nations. Speaking later at the conference, Kukundakwe shared her story about how swimming changed her life and how she previously hid her disability. "Sport really did raise my confidence. I am happy with who I am. "I would say my story is the true definition of 'Change Starts with Sport', not just for myself but even the perception of disability in Uganda... The perception has changed because I am no longer seen as the disabled girl, but as a Paralympian – the girl that was seen on TV swimming really, really fast." (International Paralympic Committee, 2024d).

Another example from an African context was the 'Beyond this Land' digital campaign that was launched during the Paris Games and aimed to challenge the narrative that Para sports have no relevance in Africa. This was led by the Malawi Paralympic Committee, and Loughborough University (UK), the University of Malawi and AUSEC Region 5, supported by the Global Disability Innovation Hub (GDI). The goal of this initiative was to "attract a new and diverse audience to Para sports while increasing viewership among existing enthusiasts in Africa" (Loughborough University, 2024). The campaign was a follow up to one started during the Tokyo Games where 30 African territories were provided free to air broadcast coverage. Feedback from this suggested, however, that Para sport was seen as a purview of the Global north with little relevance in Africa. The 2024 'Beyond this Land' campaign thus explored whether alternative representations of people with disabilities could inspire greater engagement and "within 24 hours of its launch, the visuals saw significant engagement with over 14k views and 100+ reshares and the hope is to learn from this and develop a robust digital strategy for Para sports coverage that can be tested, enhanced, and scaled up in the lead-up to LA 2028" (Loughborough University, 2024).

Examples such as this clearly show how in a digital era, the sharing of images and ideas online can be impactful. Pop culture and media is still not reflecting the true diversity of the population but during the Paris Games there were 2,000 journalists on site and a record number of broadcasters (more than 225 media Rights Holders) and while I realize that this doesn't necessarily guarantee that the media will portray persons with disabilities in ways that enhance or encourage inclusion, it also doesn't happen at all without them being there. The Beyond this Land campaign and whether it would have a long term impact on perceptions of disability in an African context then got me wondering about the legacy of the Tokyo Paralympic Games and a similar campaign that started there which was #WeThe15 and was reviewed in a prior article published in this journal (Ng, Haslett, Legg, Noske-Turner, & Pullen, 2024).

On August 19, 2021, on the first day of the 2020 Tokyo Paralympic Games, twenty global disability organizations including the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) officially launched the #WeThe15 campaign which was self-described as sport's biggest ever human rights movement to end discrimination against the 15% of the

global population or 1.2 billion people living with disabilities (International Paralympic Committee, 2021). The objectives of the campaign were aligned with the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and this included “the desire to unite the world’s 1.2 billion persons with disabilities behind a movement for change, with simple and powerful messages for inclusion and putting persons with disabilities and their representative organizations at the heart of the diversity and inclusion agenda” (International Paralympic Committee, 2021). Three other objectives included breaking down societal and systemic barriers that prevented persons with disabilities being included and active members of society, ensuring greater awareness, visibility, and positive representation of persons with disabilities and delivering campaigns and rallying the power and media outreach of sports and culture to amplify the voice of persons with disabilities towards governments, businesses and the public to deliver change (International Paralympic Committee, 2021). As mentioned earlier, the kick-off was launched to coincide with the opening of the Tokyo Paralympic Games and involved lighting up over 225 landmarks around the world in purple on the launch date (Ng, Haslett, Legg, Noske-Turner, & Pullen, 2024).

Howe and Silva (2021) penned an opinion editorial during the Tokyo Paralympic Games that noted the connection between the #Wethe15 campaign, and the Paralympic Games being ineffective and then also noted a caution as it related to the discussion of the Paris Games and the link to greater inclusion. “The Games are an elite sporting event and thus by definition an exclusive domain” (Dutia & Tweedy, 2021). This reflected earlier criticism of using Paralympic sport to promote inclusion by Peers (2018) and other publications by Howe and Silva (2018) suggesting that Paralympic sport did not appropriately represent “the everyday disabled person”. The overall concern appeared to be that the public could get the impression that all persons with disabilities are like Paralympians which can then lead to a “warped understanding of most disabled people’s lived experience” (Braye, Gibbons & Dixon, 2013, 2016 ; Legg, 2022 ; Ng, Haslett, Legg, Noske-Turner, & Pullen, 2024). Would the Paris Games be any different?

Haslett and Smith (2021) also reflected on the potential conflict of messaging. Paralympic athletes during the Tokyo Games, for instance, were banned from highlighting discrimination based on race in Paralympic venues (Section 2.2 of the

IPC Handbook) but the #WeThe15 campaign, which was endorsed by the IPC, highlighted issues of discrimination but based only on disability. Concern was also expressed about the short-term impact of #WeThe15. In Canada, for instance, at the start of the Tokyo Paralympic Games the CN Tower and Niagara Falls were bathed in purple light (Weese, 2021), but the media spotlight quickly moved on to other issues and many have likely even forgotten the event or why the colour purple was used (Legg, 2022). In July, during Disability Pride month and within two months of the Opening Ceremonies for the 2024 Paris Paralympic Games, the campaign launched a nine-part podcast but has otherwise not (see <https://www.wethe15.org/news>) (Ng, Haslett, Legg, Noske-Turner, & Pullen, 2024). Similar concerns were also shared about the impact of the Paris Games on greater inclusion of persons with disability. Would the impact be felt long after the Games had ended?

Elizabeth Wright, an Australian swimmer who competed in the 1996 Atlanta and 2000 Sydney Paralympic Games, thought, however, that the Tokyo Paralympic Games were a very appropriate place to launch the campaign.

With the rising profile of the Paralympics, I can say that it is about time and so important that we use this movement to tackle the wider disability injustices and inequalities, we need to shift the view of disability from that as inspiration porn or a tragedy trope. The Games are a good start, but they're far from the endgame (Charlton-Daily, 2021).

Wright also stated that the movement needs to "amplify the nuance of disability" beyond the lens of sport and "shift the narrative to be more inclusive of that wider lived experience." (Charlton-Daily, 2021 ; Legg, 2022 ; Ng, Haslett, Legg, Noske-Turner, & Pullen, 2024).

Whether this campaign has 'moved the needle' on people with disabilities being included is yet to be seen but it is likely difficult to fully appreciate how a campaign like this or the Games themselves has influenced social change. In my opinion, the Games has had an impact but perhaps in an incremental way that is hard to fully understand or appreciate. I would argue that each Games builds on the previous one and has an impact connected to a multitude of other factors and events, but the reality is that slowly the Games is helping with greater and more appropriate inclusion of persons with disability.

As an example, from a personal level my friend and US Olympian Steve Mesler

posted a blog about his 7-year-old daughter's experience watching the Paralympic Games. He noted that as a standing rule, mornings are a no-TV zone in their house, but the Olympics and Paralympics were exceptions. As they watched the para-athletes, Steve's daughter started asking questions. 'Why are some people in wheelchairs? Why is that person so small (dwarfism)? How do you play basketball without legs?' These questions led to conversations that were more than just about sports. Steve suggested that they became conversations about choices such as how do people choose to see and treat people who might be different, and how do those choices reflect who we are inside. These conversations then turned to discussions on an even more personal level. Things like who she plays with at school and the words she uses with her friends (Mesler, 2024). This is just one example but, in my mind, the Paralympic Games played a small role in enhancing and encouraging an inclusive mindset in this 7-year-old and this will never be noted as a direct cause and effect impact and legacy of the Games. But these interactions likely happen a lot, and may have significant and meaningful impact when looked at in their totality.

Dr. Laura Misener (2024) in an article titled 'Paris 2024 and the Agenda of Accessibility and Inclusion' also reflected on this potential and noted that accessibility went beyond the field of play. In the article she listed a number of examples of how the Games had attempted to address issues of inclusion for spectators, and athletes many of which would be difficult to measure in so far as long term impact. Many of these were also noted earlier and include accessible trains, ramps for access, special venue sections for spectators, and support personnel onsite to help with access, audio description and tactile vision pads at some venues, and low vision helmets at certain venues to support visually impaired experiences. Volunteer training in supporting individuals with invisible disabilities, mobility cards to support priority transfers from airports, and an accommodation partner that offered accessible places to stay were others that she referenced. Dr. Misener (2024) also then noted that the sport management literature is quite clear about the inspiration effect, where only short-term increases in participation are felt by a host city and then returns to baseline – unless sport participation is leveraged in the post-Game euphoria (Misener, 2024). To address this, she acknowledged that Paris worked with local clubs to ensure that there were para-sport activities for people with disabilities post games. As one example the city worked in three complementary areas to develop parasport and

make sport accessible to as many people as possible creating a comprehensive para-sport offering through a network of para-hosting clubs that builds on the existing sports system. From a report in 2022 Paris had 23 para-sport clubs and 1,700 members with twenty-eight new para-sport sections due to open at the start of the 2023 school year, with a target of 40 by the end of 2024 to double the number of para-sport members. The transmission of Paralympic culture and exchanges was also seen to take place in schools with the city hosting the first-ever Paralympic Day at the Place de la Bastille on October 8 (Paris, 2024). The challenge here is measuring participation. Fully robust assessments that show an accurate benchmark before and after Games are rare, although anecdotally after a visit to the Brazilian Paralympic Training Centre in Sao Paulo the impact of Brazil having hosted the 2016 Paralympic Games (albeit in Rio de Janeiro), was massive. The facility was full of athletes from several different sports and the following week was scheduled to host a very large student camp. But having a fulsome understanding of participation is difficult whether it is pre or post Games.

Misener (2024) further noted that another challenge was that accessibility projects were 'largely embedded in institutionalized ableism'. This is likely true and for host organizing committees moving forward this should be of paramount concern. 'Nothing about us without us' is an apt reminder and I too, as an able-bodied individual, need to acknowledge that my own interpretation of the positive impacts of Games is impacted by this reality.

As I mentioned at the start of this paper, Dr. Steadward and I following our time in Paris spoke at a Sport Management conference, and on the way to the airport to return to Canada, we put pen to paper and identified the ways in which we saw how multi-sport events like a Paralympic Games could be leveraged to increase inclusion. We identified six ways and recorded our thoughts at the airport which were then shared at the conference at the start of the symposium. These included :

- a) How increased media exposure / profile for persons with disability – locally and worldwide could be leveraged.
- b) How improved relationships with international sport federation taking on leadership roles could be parlayed to increased participation in other events.
- c) How an increase in professional coaching could be translated to improved quality of competition and performances in inclusive environments globally.

- d) How facilities could be made more accessible with barriers taken away locally.
- e) How connection with international leadership in politics, sport governance, and business could facilitate further discussions related to greater inclusion.
- f) And links to government, with examples like the UNESCO event mentioned earlier, and the resultant conversations about inclusion being included in a sport portfolio versus just a social justice one.

From all accounts the symposium was a success but it, like the Games, is really just another small step within the larger conversation of Paralympic sport and its role in driving greater inclusion.

Misener (2024) noted that “events such as Paris 2024 cannot be the answer to accessibility (and inclusion), but only one catalytic opportunity that puts the issues of access and inclusion in the minds of policy makers. How this catalyst propels the access and inclusion agenda forward in years to come will really be the marker of the impact.” I would concur and thus while inclusion may not happen automatically because of the Games or symposiums such as the one Dr. Steadward and I spoke at, I would argue that they help and cumulatively these add up to significant change. I would also suggest that the Games provide the greatest opportunity for this to occur, and I was reminded of this from a history exhibit that was held and led by Marcellini and Ferez (2024). This "Paralympic History" exhibition looked at those who, through their roles within the Paralympic movement, have shaped a history based on pride in difference and demands for a more inclusive society. One of the curators (Anne Marcellini) presented that the Paralympic movement is paving the way for the emancipation of people who are “differently able (d)”. Sport offers a certain social visibility and is an effective platform on which to transform the collective imagination (Marcellini & Ferez, 2024). I cannot think of a better event or platform than the Paralympic Games and movement to provide the spark for conversations and initiatives related to the inclusion for persons with disabilities.

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【報告】2024年パリパラリンピック大会 障害者のさらなるインクルージョンへの 起爆剤として

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筆者は2024年8月にパリ2024パラリンピック大会の視察をする機会を得た。8回目の視察となる今回は、国際パラリンピック委員会の初代会長であり、私のアルバータ大学博士課程における指導教授であったロバート・ステッドワード博士の招待によるものである。われわれはパリ滞在中に、ヨーロッパ・スポーツマネジメント学会での講演、パラリンピック大会直前に開催された UNESCO のイベント、開会式、そして複数の競技イベントに参加した。その間、ステッドワード博士と共に、この大会が障害者のインクルージョンに与える潜在的な影響、すなわち、インフラ整備やソーシャル・メディアキャンペーン、障害者のインクルージョン促進を目的として実施されたその他のプログラムなどについて考察した。本稿では、これらの取り組みが東京2020パラリンピック大会時に行われた類似のイニシアチブとどのように比較されるのかについても検討を行った。最後に、パラリンピック大会がさらなる障害者のインクルージョンを促進するためにどのように活用できるかについて総括を行った。