

The Program for the Future Global Design Challenge

Participant Handbook

***Digital technology
could help make
this a better
world.***

***But we've also got
to change our
way of thinking.***



The Program for the Future Design Challenge is inspired by the vision of **Douglas C.**

Engelbart, who fifty years ago saw that the big problems mankind faced were growing faster than our ability to solve them. In response, Dr. Engelbart began his life-long quest to improve our collective intelligence. It is in that spirit that The Tech Museum of Innovation and the MIT Museum are sponsoring a design challenge to inspire innovators around the world to build the next generation of tools to augment our ability to think and work collectively.

The Program for the Future is an annual design challenge to find new ideas – even simple ideas – that help people work better and smarter together in some important area. Your goal is to develop a practical method, tool or technology that connects people so that they collectively act more intelligently. The challenge embraces all areas of human endeavor – not just technical domains like computing or engineering but also the arts, business, economics, education, government, health, law, philanthropy, science and other spheres. Winning entries will be displayed in the participating museums.

The Program for the Future Design Challenge is organized by the Tech Museum of Innovation in collaboration with the MIT Museum, under the supervision of a distinguished Board of Advisors.

Why Participate

By participating in the design challenge, you will:

- Interact and collaborate with some of the best minds in this field
- Test your ideas, and receive expert comments and guidance.
- Receive an online space with construction tools for your team.
- Meet other participants from around the world.

If you are a winner, you may also:

- Receive cash, internships and travel awards from sponsoring organizations.
- See your demo displayed at the Tech Museum of Innovation in San José, California; the MIT Museum in Cambridge, Massachusetts, and possibly other science and technology museums.
- See your project added to the [Handbook of Collective Intelligence](#) at MIT's [Center for Collective Intelligence](#).
- Be connected with venture capital and angel investment firms interested in your innovation.
- Get global public exposure for your demo as the winner of an international competition.

Design Challenge Rules

The challenge is free, and open to anyone over the age of twelve who successfully completes all the application steps. Contestants work as a team and must collaborate (this *is* a design challenge about collective intelligence, after all). You must propose a new method, tool or technology that improves the way we work together in an important arena of human endeavor, and provide an interactive demo. All the information in your submission is under a Creative Commons license.

Detailed steps for entrants:

- 1) join the on-line community at <http://thetechvirtual.org>
- 2) create a new project at <http://thetechvirtual.org/projects/program-for-the-future/program-for-the-future-challenge/> and look for team members, or ask to join the team working on an existing one. Each project team must have at least two members.
- 3) briefly state your project's Big Idea, and describe it in enough detail that others can understand it.
- 4) collaboratively work out the project details, demo and plan for impact (or business plan) together with your other team members
- 5) Once you have completed steps 1-5, create your demo. You may choose to realize your demo physically, in software or on the Web, but before judging it must be modeled at The Tech Virtual area in Second Life. Prototyping in Second Life is especially helpful to work out the user interaction. The Tech Virtual website (<http://www.thetechvirtual.org>) and The Tech's Second Life location (<http://tinyurl.com/TheTech2>) provide all the necessary tools and resources for developing your entry description and prototyping an interactive demo that explains it. Members of The Tech Virtual community are available to help with building and scripting in the virtual world.

Specific guidelines for the interactive demo

1. The demo should illustrate your concept, in a way that makes it meaningful and accessible to a lay person.
2. Your demo should be inspiring. It should make visitors realize that the tools to make a better world are not out of reach, but all around us. The demo must be interactive, and it should not rely on extensive written documentation for visitors to understand it.
3. It should be educational. It should convey an understanding of
 - a) how your innovation actually works,
 - b) what problems it addresses, and
 - c) how it provides a solution to that problem.
4. If there is a human interest story linking your idea to a local community (involves local companies, solves a local problem, local uses for the technology, local individuals involved, etc.), that is a plus.
5. It must be feasible to build your demo in a science and technology center.

6. Your exhibit concept must be licensed under Creative Commons (you agreed to this when creating the entry).

Program for the Future 2009-10 Timeline

2009 Design Challenge Launch	Dec. 8, 2008
Collective Intelligence Week	Sept. 2009
Entry Deadline	Feb. 8, 2010
Winners Announced	Mar. 3, 2010
2010 Design Challenge Launch	Mar. 3, 2010
Tentative Exhibition Opening	Dec., 2010

Design Challenge Judging

Advisory Board

The challenge is guided by a Board of Advisors. Advisors include Hiroshi Ishii (MIT Media Lab), Thomas Malone (MIT Center for Collective Intelligence), John Seely Brown (author of The Social Life of Information, etc.), Paul Saffo (futurist), Jane McGonigal (Superstruct game designer) and Joichi Ito (CEO of Creative Commons). The Board will set the ground rules and judging criteria for the challenge, as well as oversee the program's fiscal operation. Doug Engelbart would be an advisor to the Board and participate in the award ceremony, but not be directly involved in the judging process.

Judges

An international panel of judges – drawn from the Board of Advisors, staff of participating museums, and elsewhere – will award one or more prizes on the basis of innovation, potential impact, and suitability as a museum exhibit. Under the Creative Commons license any museum is free to implement any of the exhibit ideas. The judges will evaluate the relative merits and possibilities of each proposal as a museum exhibit, but the decision about which exhibit a particular museum would build will probably be reserved for the senior staff of that museum.

Judging Criteria

Contest entries will be evaluated according to the following criteria.

Your Method, Tool or Technology

- Can your innovation be a stepping stone towards enabling people to solve an important problem?
- Does your innovation promote communication and collaboration?
- Will your innovation enable changes in the way people work together that will lead to better decisions or outcomes?
- Does your innovation scale, continuing to support better outcomes even as more people use it?
- Does your innovation have the potential to change social and cultural practices for the better?

Your Demo

- Is your demo hands-on and interactive? Is the museum visitor's experience an improvement over Web access?
- Does your demo adequately explain how and why your method, tool or technology works?
- Will your demo inspire others?

Your Plan for Impact

- Is your plan likely to lead to successful adoption and widespread dissemination?
- Would winning a prize make a significant difference to your innovation's potential impact?
- Does your plan favor community contribution and global connection?

Design Challenge Vision

I dreamed that we began to form cooperative alliances of organizations to develop and apply new collective knowledge. I call these alliances NICs or Networked Improvement Communities. New technologies enable more effective collaboration...

- Douglas Engelbart at Google, 8/22/07

Since the design challenge covers such a broad range (improving collective intelligence) it needs a "strong attractor" to keep the submissions focused and on track. This is provided by Engelbart's vision of using technology to improve our collective intelligence for the betterment of humanity. The goals of the conference, design challenge and exhibition are to:

- identify new tools that can improve collective intelligence, and thereby to
- improve the quality of important decisions
- solve pressing global problems
- inspire others to do the same.

Program for the Future is a search for the Engelbarts of the 21st century.

Design challenge FAQ

Why does our entry have to include a museum demo exhibit?

The demo is essential because:

- Education and exposure are essential for any new technology to have an impact, and museums play a strategic role in this through their visitors and their school outreach programs. Winners will get a valuable direct channel to hundreds of thousands or millions of visitors per year.
- Reaching out to a broad museum audience focuses you on how your technology benefits humanity.
- The exercise of developing a successful museum exhibit will strengthen your marketing in other areas as well. Many technology startups have difficulty explaining their product. An exhibit of your demo is like an "elevator speech" with props: you have three seconds to attract the attention of an indifferent visitor and 30 seconds to get them interested. If you can develop an inspiring, effective demo you will have little difficulty marketing your product elsewhere.
- If it worked for Doug Engelbart and his team, it can work for you.

What is a collective intelligence tool?

Intelligence: the capability to create an accurate picture of a situation or problem in order to find an effective solution. It thus includes abilities to: gather information, create a mental model, and draw inferences from it.

Collective Intelligence: the whole group arrives at a more intelligent outcome than any part could.

Collective Intelligence Tool: a tool (in the broadest sense: hardware, software, process, methods or system) to augment collective intelligence; leading to solving important problems, making better decisions and planning more effectively.

Does our project have to be open source?

All project materials on the challenge Website as well as your virtual demo are under a Creative Commons license (you agree to this when joining The Tech Virtual Website), meaning they can be used freely for museum or educational purposes. This does not limit the underlying technologies which may be – and in many cases will be – proprietary. Nevertheless, since the challenge is about knowledge dissemination, business models should be optimized for global impact, not individual enrichment.

Examples of Collective Intelligence Tools

What sort of projects might result from the design challenge? Existing projects can provide an idea:

Groupspace.org: An asynchronous environment for civic groups to meet, discuss, and come to decisions.
<http://www.groupspace.org>

MIT Deliberatorium: A forum for structured argumentation where amateurs and experts can pose questions or contribute and rate ideas.
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k2w2WBCn7ug>
<http://18.36.1.44:8000/ci/login>

Institute for the Future: Superstuct: An interactive, multiplayer, future scenario-building game.
<http://www.iftf.org/node/2098>
<http://www.superstructgame.org>

Innocentive: A market for solutions that matches problems with problem solvers.
<http://www.innocentive.com/>

Condorcet Voting Method: a strategy for choosing the most satisfactory candidate in instant-runoff voting (proposed 225 years too soon for this design challenge).
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Condorcet_method