

Empathy at scale

Through technology, we can watch natural disasters unfold, witness social and political revolutions, and can observe injustices as they happen. However, most people may never actually 'feel the pain' of those who are having those first-hand experiences.

Jeremy Rifkin, the author of *The Empathic Civilization*, notes that “Empathy conjures up active engagement — the willingness of an observer to become part of another’s experience, to share the feeling of that experience.”

Empathy is a learned skill that enables our ability to understand another's worldview. At an individual level, empathy allows us to connect with people from other cultures, challenge our assumptions, and help resolve a conflict. At scale, empathy can trigger changes to global political agendas, drive international humanitarian action, end armed conflicts, and, ultimately, bring communities together to unlock solutions to many of society's most pressing problems.

Designing for empathy

Having empathy is critical to the design process. Understanding how that differs from sympathy is even more powerful.

In this challenge, we want you to design to enable/create empathy at scale. Some questions to consider:

- How can we leverage the natural triggers of empathy we have for friends & family and apply them to those who are far away?
- How do we extend empathy to those with different life experiences (e.g. race, country of origin, privilege, socioeconomic class)?
- How do we extend empathy to future generations?

Goal

Design a product, service, or solution that enables/creates empathy across a large and diverse demographic. Demonstrate a creation that is innovative, maps back to a clear need, and leverages current technologies (or those that are feasible in the near-term). Your creation may be near-term practical or blue sky, but it must have a realistic chance of adoption if instantiated. Of course, to deliver empathy at scale, much is implied - from security, privacy, and cross-group cooperation and coordination; your design should minimally show awareness of these barriers and/or explore solutions to them.