ACADEMY of IMMERSIVE Arts & Sciences

# Field of View

The weekly briefing on AI + XR from the Academy of Immersive Arts & Sciences

ISSUE 2 · DRAFT
**WEEK OF OCT 5–12, 2026**

## Upcoming Academy Events




OCT 13 · METATR@VERSAL
**MetaTr@versal: Immersive Distribution Summit**




OCT 22 · METATR@VERSAL
**MetaTr@versal: Immersive Media Summit**

NOV 10 · THE POLYS
**Immersive X – Red Carpet 2026**

NOV 13 · READY PLAYER GOLF
**Ready Player Golf 7**

NOV 22 · MISSION RESPONSIBLE
**Mission Responsible 4**

DEC 30 · METATR@VERSAL
**MetaTr@versal: Portal Crawl VIII**

APR 18 · THE POLYS
**The Polys 7th Annual Immersive Awards**

Details and registration at academyimmersive.org/events

### ON THE INDUSTRY CALENDAR

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|---|---|
| **Oct 13–14, 2026** | **XR Days 2026** Vénissieux (Lyon), France<br>France's industrial XR show: AR/VR/MR plus AI use cases, demos and roundtables. |
| **Oct 13–15, 2026** | **Augmented Enterprise Summit 2026** Atlanta, GA<br>Longest-running enterprise XR event, now spanning AI and digital twins; 1,200+ attendees. |
| **Nov 13–22, 2026** | **IDFA DocLab 2026: Shared Realities** Amsterdam, Netherlands<br>20th edition of IDFA's immersive and interactive documentary showcase, with VR and installations. |
| **Nov 29–Dec 1, 2026** | **ACM SIGGRAPH VRCAI 2026** Hangzhou, China<br>21st Virtual Reality Continuum conference; theme "Reality Fusion" plus a Web3D/Immersive Web workshop. |
| **Dec 1–4, 2026** | **SIGGRAPH Asia 2026** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia<br>Asia's flagship graphics conference, first time in Malaysia; XR, Emerging Technologies, Real-Time Live. |
| **Dec 7–9, 2026** | **UnitedXR Europe 2026** Brussels, Belgium<br>AWE and Stereopsia's joint European XR conference and expo, with the European XR Awards. |

## This Week in Focus

**TOP LINE**

Smart glasses grew up and drew lines this week. XREAL priced Aura, the first Android XR glasses headed to buyers, from $1,279, while 35 Groningen clubs, museums and festivals banned AI glasses outright and Australia's privacy regulator opened an investigation into a budget-glasses app maker. On the creative side, MoMA opened Jakob Kudsk Steensen's game-engine swamp and the BFI London Film Festival put nine immersive works in front of audiences. Open tooling kept pace: a prompt-to-WebXR template from Meta and Vercel, and a native OpenUSD toolkit for Unity.

## Lead Stories

The two to know




AI & XR HARDWARE

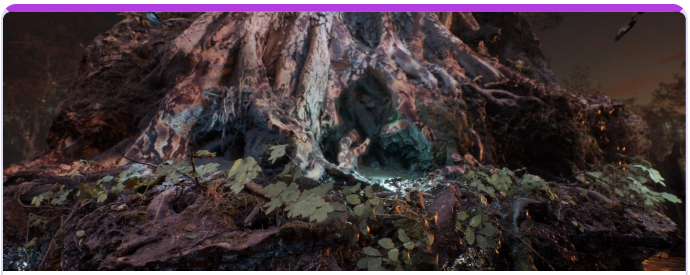
### Xreal Aura Android XR glasses priced from $1,279

Xreal priced its Aura glasses at $1,279 (12GB RAM/ 256GB) or $1,499 (16GB/512GB). Pre-orders opened October 7 for existing reservation holders only, with general orders "in the coming weeks." The sub-95-gram optical see-through glasses offer a 70-degree field of view, hand tracking and a tethered puck running Android XR with Gemini. Shipping starts in the US, Canada, Japan and South Korea.

**WHY IT MATTERS**

The first Android XR glasses to reach buyers set the price for open-platform AR, so creators building Android XR experiences now have a real device and audience to target.

XREAL via PR Newswire · Oct 7, 2026



CULTURE & CREATORS

### MoMA opens Jakob Kudsk Steensen's game-engine swamp, "Wetland"

MoMA's "Wetland" presents a single work, Berl-Berl, Jakob Kudsk Steensen's evolving simulated swamp first shown at Berlin's Berghain in 2021. It uses macro photogrammetry, game-engine software, wall-spanning screens and field recordings mixed with vocals including Arca. It runs October 12, 2026, to March 7, 2027.

**WHY IT MATTERS**

A flagship museum treating game-engine art as permanent-collection-grade practice; a model for artists pairing natural-history research with real-time tools.

Smithsonian Magazine · Oct 9, 2026

> "The Australian community has expressed its concern about the proliferation of smart glasses and other surveillance wearables. Given the particular risks the OAIC has identified with the HeyCyan app, I would urge responsible retailers to consider whether it is appropriate to continue making these devices available.
>
> Carly Kind, Privacy Commissioner, Office of the Australian Information Commissioner

# AI & XR by Category

## POLICY, PRIVACY & SAFETY

### 35 Groningen cultural venues jointly ban AI smart glasses

Thirty-five clubs, museums, events and festivals in Groningen, Netherlands, have added a ban on AI smart glasses to their house rules. "Let's not normalize this technology," their joint statement says, arguing camera-equipped glasses can film and analyze people without their knowledge. They urged the Dutch government to regulate and called on other sectors to follow.

**Why it matters:** Museums and venues are setting wearable-camera rules themselves. Cultural institutions elsewhere will face the same question, and so will creators who design experiences for glasses.

NL Times · Oct 9

### Australia's privacy regulator investigates HeyCyan smart glasses app maker

Australia's Information Commissioner opened an investigation into Shenzhen Qingcheng, maker of the HeyCyan app used by Kmart's Anko glasses and other low-cost models. Preliminary inquiries sent from 12 August to Meta, Kmart, Google and Shenzhen Qingcheng asked how the glasses record and store data. Shenzhen Qingcheng did not respond. The Commissioner also urged retailers to reconsider selling these devices.

**Why it matters:** Regulators are now looking at cheap camera glasses as well as Meta's. Educators and institutions that buy or allow budget wearables should check where their data goes.

OAIC · Oct 7

## CULTURE & CREATORS

### LFF Expanded brings nine XR, installation and games projects to London

The 70th BFI London Film Festival's LFF Expanded, now in its sixth year, features nine projects across installation, mixed reality, VR and games. Marshmallow Laser Feast's Water Body, made with Robert Macfarlane, takes over St Martin-in-the-Fields; Solwata, narrated by Mark Ruffalo, shows in the VR Lounge; five games fill a free Games Lounge.

**Why it matters:** Shows festivals, heritage venues and studios co-programming immersive work; useful precedent for institutions weighing site-specific XR in historic spaces.

Experience UK · Oct 5

### Northern Ballet pilots VR dance film for Leeds hospital children

Northern Ballet and Leeds Hospitals Charity will test a five-minute 360-degree VR dance film with patients aged eight to 16 at Leeds Children's Hospital this autumn. Choreographed by George Liang and filmed at Otley Chevin Forest Park, it is funded by the Linbury Trust; a public report is due spring 2027.

**Why it matters:** A performing-arts company building evidence for immersive work in care settings, a template for arts-health partnerships with academic evaluation built in.

Yorkshire Evening Post · Oct 11

### Northeastern wins $900,000 NSF grant for AI-powered VR patient simulator

A Northeastern team led by Eileen McGivney received a $900,000, three-year NSF RITEL grant to develop the Virtual AI Patient Simulator (VAPS), where health students converse with AI patients shaped by clinical case records. The grant funds an authoring tool so faculty without VR or AI experience can build their own patients.

**Why it matters:** Faculty-facing authoring tools are what let educators, not just developers, create immersive AI content; a design-led (arts college) team leading health pedagogy.

Northeastern Global News · Oct 7

## AI & XR HARDWARE

### Pimax Crystal Pro targets Steam Frame at $1,399

Pimax announced Crystal Pro, a $1,399 headset focused on wireless PC VR streaming that also runs OpenXR and Android apps natively on a Snapdragon XR2 Gen 1. Specs include 2,880 × 2,880 QLED panels per eye, a 110° horizontal field of view and 120Hz eye tracking. An optional $599 60G AirLink adds foveated streaming. It ships next year, with $1 reservations open now.

**Why it matters:** High-resolution PC VR at a lower price helps studios, museums and educators who show detailed immersive work and need visual quality more than portability.

Road to VR · Oct 6

PLATFORMS & BROADCAST

### Meta and ESPN stream immersive college football on Quest

Meta is partnering with ESPN to stream select live college football games in 180 degrees through Quest's TV app, starting October 10 with Texas vs. Oklahoma. Streams are 8K with Dolby Atmos, and replays stay available for a week. Meta also plans 100+ live sporting events in 2027 with MLB, NBC Sports, TNT Sports and UFC.

**Why it matters:** Live 180-degree broadcasting at scale is a model for public media and cultural programmers thinking about immersive coverage of events and performances.

Road to VR · Oct 9

AI MODELS & AGENTS

### Google releases EmbeddingGemma 2 for on-device multimodal search

Google DeepMind launched EmbeddingGemma 2, an open Apache 2.0 model with 740 million parameters, built on Gemma 4. It maps text, code, images, video and audio into one embedding space. On a Pixel 11 Pro it needs about 191MB RAM for text-only use and about 567MB for full multimodal. Its 8K context covers up to 5.5 minutes of audio.

**Why it matters:** Archives, museums and broadcasters could search their own audio and video collections privately on local devices, which also matters for future glasses-based guides.

Google Blog · Oct 6

### Sesame previews voice-first agent assistant for its upcoming glasses

Sesame released a preview of its glasses assistant, powered by a new voice model, in its iOS and Android app. It calls the assistants the "operating system" for its glasses. Its characters Maya, Miles, Charlie and Simone can use tools, connect to Google apps and custom MCPs, and manage other agents. Its frames will be made in Japan.

**Why it matters:** Character-driven voice agents built with writers and actors point to new storytelling roles for creators in wearable AI, beyond plain utility assistants.

Sesame · Oct 6

## Commons Watch

Open standards & interoperability

### Meta and Vercel launch prompt-to-WebXR template built on Immersive Web SDK

Meta published an Immersive Web SDK template for Vercel's v0: describe an experience in natural language, deploy to a live HTTPS URL, and open it in the Quest browser. It is a TypeScript project on Three.js and Vite, includes Meta VR Glasses gaze and hand input, and can be packaged as a PWA.

**Why it matters:** Lowers the WebXR entry barrier for artists and classrooms using open web standards and editable code, though output still targets Meta's input model and store.

Meta for Developers · Oct 8

### Unity releases experimental OpenUSD toolkit with NVIDIA Isaac Sim round-tripping

Unity and NVIDIA announced an OpenUSD collaboration and released the Unity USD Toolkit, wrapping Pixar's OpenUSD 26.05 libraries to read and write .usd, .usda, .usdc and .usdz in the Editor and built players. It requires Unity 6.4+, includes a USD Live Sync prototype with Isaac Sim 6.0.1, and is experimental.

**Why it matters:** Another major engine adopting current OpenUSD natively strengthens USD as a cross-tool interchange format for studios, archives and digital-heritage pipelines.

Unity (GitHub) · Oct 6

### Google's XR Blocks 0.22 adds WebGPU and on-device AI samples

Google tagged XR Blocks v0.22.0, its first release in over six weeks. It adds initial WebGPU support in the desktop simulator, though spatial UI is not yet supported on that renderer. It also adds on-device samples: a Gemma 4 assistant with scene context, offline spatial captions and translation, and photo-to-3D reconstruction. No performance figures were published.

**Why it matters:** This open, browser-based toolkit lets educators and small studios prototype AI-powered WebXR without game engines, though the samples still need testing on real hardware.

VR.org · Oct 12

## Watch Next

1. Whether XREAL opens Aura orders beyond reservation holders and holds holiday delivery in the US, Canada, Japan and South Korea.
2. Whether other Dutch cities and cultural sectors follow Groningen, and whether The Hague answers the call to regulate AI glasses.
3. Android XR SDK 1.0.0-rc02 shipped Oct 7 with eight fixes; watch for a stable 1.0 date and Compose for XR leaving beta.
4. Lens Studio 5.25 is the last release for Intel Macs; teaching labs should plan Apple silicon before 5.26.
5. Which leagues and partners fill Meta's 100+ live immersive sporting events planned for 2027, and whether cultural events join them.

## Board of Directors

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**About the Academy.** The Academy of Immersive Arts & Sciences works to educate, inspire, and recognize, building a global Immersive Public Commons. Programs include The Polys Immersive Awards, the WebXR Summit Series, MetaTr@versal, Mission Responsible, and Ready Player Golf.

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