ACADEMY of IMMERSIVE Arts & Sciences

Field of View

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

ISSUE 4 · DRAFT
WEEK OF OCT 19–25, 2026

Upcoming Academy Events



NEXT UP

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

Oct 26–Nov 1, 2026	**DOK Leipzig 2026** Leipzig, Germany 69th edition of the documentary and animation festival: 217 films and XR works, plus DOK Exchange XR.
Nov 4–13, 2026	**IMMENSIVA Festival 2026** Barcelona, Spain Seventh edition: 13 international XR projects on heritage and memory; free expo Nov 4-9, talks Nov 10-13.
Nov 10–12, 2026	**IMMERSIVE X 2026** Online, in VR Free global XR festival held in virtual reality, theme Reclaim the Future, with 100+ presenters.
Nov 12–22, 2026	**IDFA 2026 and DocLab** Amsterdam, Netherlands 253 titles from 80 countries, with DocLab's 10-title competition for immersive non-fiction.
Nov 18–19, 2026	**nextReality.festival 2026** Hamburg, Germany XR conference, free exhibition and the nextReality.Contest awards, with speakers from Snap, Meta and WDR.

This Week in Focus

TOP LINE

Schools became the front line for smart glasses this week. Victoria announced that every school in the state will bar them from 2027, Pakistan's Punjab banned camera-enabled glasses for 30 days, and South Korea's science minister promised rules from a pan-ministerial level. On the culture side, the Computer History Museum and Meta turned a new XR exhibition into an AI-guided glasses tour, Mexico City sold out an augmented reality theater piece, and Kaohsiung named its XR winners. Khronos published OpenXR spatial containers, and W3C proposed a new Immersive Web charter.

Lead Stories

The two to know



POLICY, PRIVACY & SAFETY

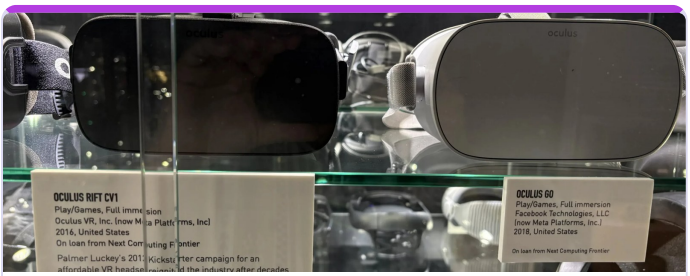
Victoria extends its school phone ban to smart glasses

Victoria's government announced on October 21 that smart glasses must be switched off and stored during school hours and activities in all government, Catholic and independent schools from the start of the 2027 school year. In government schools the ban also covers teachers, parents and volunteers, including on camps and excursions. Exemptions apply only as a reasonable adjustment for disability.

INSIGHT

Schools are becoming rule-makers for wearables. Educators using glasses for accessibility or XR learning will need documented exemptions, and creators should expect venue-level bans.

Premier of Victoria · Oct 21, 2026



CULTURE & CREATORS

Computer History Museum pairs its XR exhibit with an AI-guided glasses tour

Meta said on October 21 it is a founding sponsor, with Google and Applied Materials, of the Computer History Museum's Extended Reality: Visions of the Future, open through March 28, 2027. On demo days, visitors 13 and older borrow Meta Glasses for an audio-first museum mode that recognizes placards and plays curator narration, with camera capture disabled.

INSIGHT

A model for cultural institutions: curator-written stories, a distinct AI voice for follow-up questions, and no screens to read, which helps blind and low-vision visitors explore on their own.

Meta · Oct 21, 2026

> “Smart glasses have no place in our classrooms or on school grounds.
>
> Gabrielle Williams, Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Victoria, Australia

AI & XR by Category

POLICY, PRIVACY & SAFETY

Pakistan's Punjab bans camera-enabled smart glasses for 30 days

Punjab's home department issued an order on October 20 banning the wearing, operating and sale of camera-enabled smart glasses with hidden recording ability, and miniature cameras disguised as everyday objects, for 30 days. It cites Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure and excludes laptops, tablets, mobile phones and PTA-approved terminal equipment.

Insight: Emergency bans can arrive fast and sweep widely, catching retailers and event crews. Creators filming with wearables on location should check local rules before they travel.

Dawn · Oct 21

South Korea promises pan-ministerial rules for smart glasses

Science Minister Bae Kyung-hoon told a parliamentary audit on October 23 that his ministry will speed up guidelines already in preparation and come up with response measures "from a pan-ministerial level." He said President Lee Jae Myung raised the issue at a recent Cabinet meeting. A lawmaker's data show three illegal-filming cases involving smart glasses this year.

Insight: Exam cheating and covert filming are driving policy. Expect guidance that reaches schools and public venues, not only device makers, and plan content capture accordingly.

Yonhap News Agency · Oct 23

CULTURE & CREATORS

Augmented reality theater piece Noire sells out in Mexico City

Mexico's culture ministry and INBAL present Noire, an immersive installation by French studio Novaya about Claudette Colvin, from October 22 to 28 as part of the Cervantino circuit. Groups of ten wear HoloLens 2 glasses and bone-conduction headphones across 300 square meters. All sessions are sold out.

Insight: Small-group AR theater can fill a public cultural program, and HoloLens 2 hardware still serves arts work. Useful for festivals weighing guided, high-touch immersive formats.

INBAL (Mexico) · Oct 21

Kaohsiung Film Festival names its 2026 XR winners

Kaohsiung announced its XR International Competition winners on October 19, chosen from 29 works from 33 countries. Atsushi Wada's 37-minute interactive VR piece IF YOU SEE A CAT won the XR Golden Fireball Award. First Virtual Suit took the XR Immersive Award, Honeyboys the VR360 Award, and Sweet Dreams a Special Mention.

Insight: Mental health, identity and avatar culture dominate the winners, a signal for programmers and funders about the stories juries reward in XR.

ZeusXR News · Oct 20

Washington VA hospital runs an immersive demo day for veterans

The Washington, D.C., VA Medical Center hosted Immersive Demo Day, where veterans tried VR, AR and mixed reality tools alongside service members, community members and VA staff. VA reported on October 19 that the tools are being explored for mental health, pain management and physical rehabilitation. One veteran with PTSD said, "waterfalls really help me."

Insight: Health systems need calming and rehab content. Demo days are a route for artists and educators to put experiences in front of patients.

VA News · Oct 19

AI & XR HARDWARE

Lucyd Aero smart glasses go camera-free and weigh about an ounce

Innovative Eyewear announced Lucyd Aero on October 20. The frames weigh 1 to 1.2 ounces, are camera-free, and have no visible buttons, switches or exterior lights, relying on invisible touchpads. The app offers hands-free ChatGPT, Claude and Gemini plus translation and custom newscasts. Preorders are open, with shipping expected to begin in late October.

Insight: Camera-free glasses separate AI assistance from recording, one answer to bystander worries for classrooms, galleries and venues weighing bans.

Vision Monday · Oct 20

Synaptics launches xMCU chips for AI wearables with Google's Coral NPU

Synaptics introduced the Astra SR200 series on October 20, microcontrollers that run multimodal AI on-device for wearables and other battery-powered devices. Three lines offer 200, 300 and 400 GOPS, with up to 8MB of SRAM plus extensible custom DRAM. The Torq engine integrates Google Research's Coral NPU and an open-source MLIR/IREE compiler.

Insight: Low-power chips with open tooling could widen who builds wearables, including small studios and educational device makers, without proprietary toolchains.

Synaptics · Oct 20

VRChat adds native face tracking for avatar creators in open beta

VRChat's Open Beta client and Avatars SDK 3.10.6-beta.1 and higher now support SDK-level face tracking, set up in a new Avatar Descriptor section. The system maps expressions to blendshapes and animator parameters, supports the Unified Expressions standard, and syncs over the network without using the avatar's synced parameter budget.

Insight: Avatar artists get expressive faces without add-on setup, and performers and educators in social VR can convey emotion more naturally.

UploadVR · Oct 23

PLATFORMS & DEVELOPER TOOLS

Owlchemy's Hyper Visor arrives as a $1.99 launch title for XREAL Aura

Google's Owlchemy Labs revealed Hyper Visor on October 22, an eight-level arcade blaster that turns the player's room into the playfield, priced at $1.99 on Google Play. Job Simulator and Vacation Simulator are also promised at launch. XREAL Aura costs $1,279 or $1,499 and is in pre-order with no shipping date.

Insight: Android XR glasses are getting a first-party content pipeline. A $1.99 price point sets expectations that small creators pricing room-scale AR games will have to meet.

Road to VR · Oct 22

AI MODELS & AGENTS

Meta releases InteractiveWorld, a simulator for testing glasses assistants

Meta FAIR's InteractiveWorld repository went public on October 24. It simulates an assistant seeing through a wearer's eyes while an animated human acts in 44 BEHAVIOR-1K homes and venues. InteractiveBench adds 120 frozen multi-turn tasks, with goals checked against world state. It needs Linux, an NVIDIA GPU and about 100 GB of disk, under a CC BY-NC 4.0 license.

Insight: A public yardstick for how well wearable AI actually helps people could shape product claims. The non-commercial license limits studios, though researchers and educators can use it.

GitHub (Meta FAIR) · Oct 24

Commons Watch

Open standards & interoperability

OpenXR spatial containers give XR apps a cross-vendor windowing API

Khronos published OpenXR spatial containers on October 19: two ratified extensions, XR_EXT_spatial_container and XR_EXT_spatial_container_self_rendering, that let apps switch between a bounded multitasking mode and full immersive mode. Google says it will bring them to Android XR, and implementations are expected throughout 2026.

Insight: Apps that coexist in a shared space matter for galleries and classrooms that need an artwork beside other tools, with one codebase across vendors.

Khronos Group · Oct 19

W3C proposes a new Immersive Web Working Group charter

W3C opened Advisory Committee review of a new Immersive Web Working Group charter on October 23, with public comments invited until November 20. The 2024 charter ended September 25 and is extended to December 25, 2026. The draft keeps WebXR at the core, will explore non head-worn displays such as Looking Glass and zSpace, and covers declarative 3D models.

Insight: Open web charters decide what browser-based XR can do for artists and museums without app stores. Anyone can send comments until November 20.

W3C · Oct 23

Keep Your Eye On

1. W3C's TPAC 2026 in Dublin, October 26 to 30, where the Immersive Web groups meet and a breakout on October 28 covers evolving the browser for spatial computing.
2. Victoria's election on November 28: the government says a re-elected Labor government would legislate to extend the adult smart glasses ban to non-government schools.
3. Snap's SPECS shipping date: after naming Robert Downey Jr. honorary customer experience officer on October 20, Snap still promises shipping later this fall in the US, UK and France, per VR.org, with no day given.
4. Supernatural's history transfer deadline of 11:59 PM Pacific on December 3, after which VR.org reports older workout data cannot be brought into the relaunched app.
5. The ACT government's plan, reported October 19, to ban smart glasses from public schools and swimming pools, drawn up after the opposition gave notice of a parliamentary debate.

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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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