

This is for everyone. With this Twitter message, British computer scientist Tim Berners-Lee, inventor of the World Wide Web, lit up the stadium at the 2012 London Summer Olympics opening ceremony. His buoyant tweet highlighted the way that the Internet—perhaps the most radical social design experiment of the last quarter century—has created seemingly limitless possibilities for discovering, sharing, and expanding knowledge and information.

Like the Internet, design should be for everyone. Whether utilitarian and straightforward or entirely experimental, it should tend towards the betterment of society, and MoMA's design collection has been built with this premise in mind. In a perfect world—in both the digital and the physical dimensions—new technologies, scientific discoveries, and designers' pioneering ideas would combine to build a better life for us all.

As we revel in this wishful pledge, we sometimes forget that even the most informed and innovative design is not inherently democratic—and indeed, only forty percent of the global population has access to the Internet. Is design today, so often simply assumed to be for the greater good, truly for everyone? The objects in this gallery allow us to critically examine the ideal of “design for all,” as well as the myriad ways in which design intersects with the ambiguous and evolving idea of the common good. From initial explorations to finished, market-ready products, and from hybrid digital-analog investigations to universally accessible objects, *This Is for Everyone* highlights works from MoMA's collection that celebrate the complex—and sometimes ambivalent—promise of contemporary design.

The exhibition is organized by Paola Antonelli, Senior Curator, and Michelle Millar Fisher, Curatorial Assistant, Department of Architecture and Design.

DESIGN EXPERIMENTS

Before design objects—whether physical or digital—debut in the world, they undergo intensive prototyping. Even when they are conceptual and not immediately viable, most design experiments are created to prompt dialogue and to anticipate concrete needs, problems, or conditions—in other words, to actively support some greater good.

Esoteric or specialized perhaps, but universally remarkable in their balance of form, function, and vision, investigations like the Wyss Institute's Human Organs-on-Chips and Neri Oxman's Imaginary Beings demonstrate some of the speculative paths design has taken in the past twenty-five years. Synthetic biology and pioneering 3D and 4D printing processes, for instance, as well as the theoretical design scenarios offered by critical designers, advance provocative interpretations of our possible future.

ACCESS TO DESIGN

Tim Berners-Lee's 2012 Twitter message—*This is for everyone*—was one of hope, suggesting that his 1989 design of the World Wide Web would be accessible to all. Many educational, economic, political, and social opportunities are today available online; however, they require access to and proficiency with current technologies, advantages unavailable to many. As always when it comes to epochal changes and adaptations, design can help. From Ushahidi's BRCK—a robust mobile Internet hub intended for areas without traditional, cable-based communication infrastructure—to the Arduino—an open-source, programmable microcontroller at the core of contemporary maker culture—design is helping an ever-increasing number of people encounter new forms of knowledge and experience across many areas of human activity and around the world.

DESIGN INTERACTION

Interaction designers build the digital dimension of our lives, choreographing everything from the way we tap on the screens of our mobile devices to our exchanges with ATM machines. The video games featured here are landmarks in this highly innovative and increasingly ubiquitous field. The quality of the interaction translates to the digital world what the synthesis of form and function represents in the physical one. The criteria by which each game was selected consider many aspects of interaction design, including visual quality, the architecture of the digital space, the types of behavior that the game elicits, and even the elegance of the code that makes it work.