

Face the Future on November 13: A Worldwide Online Game Allows Players to Imagine the Future of Empathy

Facing History and Ourselves Teams Up with Institute for the Future to Launch an Online Game for Social Change

October 31, 2016 (Brookline, Massachusetts) -- Facing History and Ourselves and the Institute for the Future, with support from The Allstate Foundation, are partnering to host an online game for social change, [Face the Future: A Game About the Future of Empathy](#). Face the Future will virtually gather secondary school students, educators, and community members from around the world to think about what empathy might look like in the year 2026—and how that future will impact the choices we make today. The game will take place November 13–14, 2016.

Working with world-renowned game designer, Jane McGonigal, Director of Game Research + Development for the Institute for the Future, Facing History hopes to challenge others to radically reimagine the future of empathy and civic participation. By taking people outside the bounds of daily modes of thinking, this experience will encourage collaboration to build shared visions and meaningful conversation about what the future might provide for us all.

“Face the Future is an entirely new kind of conversation,” Roger Brooks, Facing History’s President and CEO. “It challenges us to think about how new technology can change how we relate to each other and impact our choices. Facing History and Ourselves has always been about empowering our youth to make ethical choices, now and tomorrow.”

The game will take place on an online platform known as Foresight Engine™, developed by Institute for the Future, to engage large numbers of people in fast-paced sharing of ideas about the future. Players will gather worldwide over the course of 30 hours starting at 6p.m. EST November 13 through 11:59p.m. EST on November 14. They will watch four short scenario videos designed to spark conversation about what could happen in a futuristic world where people can feel what others are feeling. They can then play “cards” that build upon those scenarios by sharing their ideas about what great things can happen, or, what could go wrong.

“By thinking about that future now, we give ourselves more time to consider our response, said McGonigal. “This gives us more time to figure out how to become upstanders when change is happening fast. In other words, thinking about the future today prepares us to make history, tomorrow.”

McGonigal will launch the start of the game as the keynote speaker at Facing History and Ourselves' Community Conversation event in Boston, sponsored by the Allstate Foundation.

For more information about the game, please contact, Valerie Linson, Editorial Director, at valerie_linson@facinghistory.org or 617-735-1698.

About Facing History and Ourselves

Facing History and Ourselves reaches over 4.8 million students worldwide every year. We are creating future generations of engaged, informed, and responsible decision makers who when faced with injustice, misinformation, and bigotry, will pave the way to justice, truth, and equality. Educators work closely with students to examine complex themes like identity, discrimination, and belonging. Using the lessons of pivotal moments in history – and history in the making – Facing History equips teachers to encourage students to confront antisemitism and racism, empowering them to become adults who change the world for the better. Facing History has been doing this work for forty years and it's never been more important. Visit facinghistory.org for more information.

About Institute for the Future

The Institute for the Future is an independent, nonprofit strategic research group with nearly 50 years of forecasting experience. The core of our work is identifying emerging trends and discontinuities that will transform global society and the global marketplace. We provide our members with insights into business strategy, design process, innovation, and social dilemmas. Our research spans a broad territory of deeply transformative trends, from health and well-being to technology, the workplace, and human identity. The Institute for the Future is located in Palo Alto, California. Learn more at iff.org.

The Allstate Foundation

Established in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent, charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, The Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation, and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on teen safe driving and building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, The Allstate Foundation also promotes safe and vital communities; tolerance, inclusion, and diversity; and economic empowerment. For more information, visit www.allstatefoundation.org

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FACE THE FUTURE: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Q | WHAT IS THE FACE THE FUTURE GAME?

Face the Future is a 30-hour massively open online game and conversation that will invite hundreds of educators, secondary school students, and Facing History community members to consider the future of empathy, in the year 2026. The game will be taking place November 13–14, on an online gaming platform, found at [FaceTheFuture.org](https://www.FaceTheFuture.org). Both individuals and classrooms will be invited to participate and interact with each other on the gaming platform by watching a video scenario and then submitting Twitter-length micro-contributions or “cards” considering both the positive and shadow sides of the scenario, and interacting with other players. Face the Future is a new kind of conversation that aims to engage the Facing History community in new and meaningful ways.

Q | WHY PLAY A GAME TO ENVISION THE FUTURE OF EMPATHY?

As innovators, we want to use a new and exciting approach to maximizing inclusion and idea generation. This gamified approach is designed specifically to gather many diverse ideas to be shared across a large number of people. Games take people outside the bounds of daily modes of thinking. When we want to think about the future, it’s important to loosen these bounds so that we can anticipate the plausible, but not yet realized. Games also encourage both competition and collaboration—both can be very useful in building shared visions of the future. Finally, games are fun and through play, we can generate meaningful conversations about the future. For more information, check out iff.org/foresightengine.

Q | WHY FOCUS ON THE FUTURE? ISN’T THIS FACING HISTORY AND OURSELVES?

When we imagine the future together, what we’re really doing is participating in the process of anticipatory history. We imagine what we might do in a world of new possibilities, so we can prepare to act ethically and responsibly. We think about the difficult decisions that we’ll have to make in the future, and how those decisions will affect others. By thinking about that future now, we give ourselves more time to consider our response.

The game is designed to stimulate thoughtful interaction around some of Facing History's core themes: identity, "we versus they," ethical decision-making, and examining our universe of obligation. We believe that empowering our youth to make ethical choices – now and tomorrow

– will allow them to become upstanders, rather than bystanders. They will change the world for the better.

Q | HOW IS THIS A GAME? IT DOESN'T LOOK LIKE ANY GAME I'VE EVER SEEN BEFORE.

Face the Future is a game of ideas. It comes from a genre called “serious games”—games that aren’t designed solely for entertainment purposes but rather, have a larger goal they are trying to accomplish. The Foresight Engine platform is, in essence, a massive gamified conversation. It incentivises certain behaviors by awarding players points. The gamification elements in the Foresight Engine are designed to promote conversation and collaboration. A player doesn’t win any points for posting an idea. What they do get points for, however, is when other players respond to and build on their ideas.

Q | WHY ONLY 30 HOURS?

One of the most exciting elements of Foresight Engine games is how many people are on the platform and in conversation at the same time. This real-time engagement with hundreds of other people who you have never met before creates an atmosphere of excitement, possibility, and anticipation. One of the best ways to get so many people on at the same time? Limiting gameplay to only a small window of opportunity. This drives up enthusiasm and momentum and allows for the maximum amount of fun and engagement.

At the end of the 30 hours, the website will stop accepting new ideas. However, the website and game archive will remain live. You will still be able to browse the conversations and search for players, ideas, and inspiration.

Q | WHAT ARE THE TECHNICAL REQUIREMENTS TO PLAY FACE THE FUTURE?

The game can be played on a computer, tablet, or smartphone—all you need is a reasonably recent version of a web browser and an Internet connection. Players can also contribute idea cards to the game via Twitter.

Face the Future is being presented by Facing History and Ourselves, Institute for the Future, and The Allstate Foundation.

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JANE MCGONIGAL - BIO

Jane McGonigal, PhD is a world-renowned designer of alternate reality games — or, games that are designed to improve real lives and solve real problems.

She believes game designers are on a humanitarian mission — and her #1 goal in life is to see a game developer win a Nobel Peace Prize.

She is the **Director of Games Research & Development at the Institute for the Future**, a non-profit research group in Palo Alto, California. Institute for the Future teamed up with Facing History to pioneer **the online game for social change, “Face the Future,” which will convene students, educators, and community members from around the world to imagine what a better future might look like in 2026.**

Jane’s **research** focuses on how games are transforming the way we lead our real lives, and how they can be used to increase our resilience and well-being. She is the **New York Times bestselling author of *Reality is Broken: Why Games Make Us Better and How They Can Change the World*** (Penguin Press, 2011) — and is the inventor and co-founder of **SuperBetter**, a game that has helped nearly half a million players tackle real-life health challenges such as depression, anxiety, chronic pain, and traumatic brain injury. She is also the **founder of Gameful**, “a secret headquarters for worldchanging game developers.”

She has created and deployed award-winning **games, sports and secret missions** in **more than 30 countries on six continents**, for partners such as the American Heart Association, the International Olympics Committee, the World Bank Institute, and the New York Public Library. She specializes in games that challenge players to tackle real-world problems, such as poverty, hunger and climate change, through planetary-scale collaboration. Her best-known work includes EVOKE, Superstruct, World Without Oil, Cruel 2 B Kind, Find the Future, and The Lost Ring. These games have been featured in *The New York Times*, *Wired*, and *The Economist*, and on *MTV*, *CNN*, and *NPR*.

She has a **PhD from the University of California at Berkeley** in performance studies, and has consulted and developed internal game workshops for more than a dozen Fortune 500 and Global 500 Companies, including Intel, Nike, Disney, McDonalds, Accenture, Microsoft, and Nintendo. Before joining IFTF, she **taught game design and game theory** at UC Berkeley and the San Francisco Art Institute.