



Visionaries from the Chopra Foundation, Discord, Marvel, ustwo games, SYBO, Xbox, and others to Headline the 2025 Games for Change Festival

The 22nd Annual Festival will Explore “Designing for Tomorrow,” June 26-27 in New York

NEW YORK, April 16, 2025—Today, [Games for Change](#) (G4C) unveiled the initial lineup of speakers for the 22nd annual Games for Change Festival, the premier event for social impact gaming and immersive media taking place June 26 - 27 at Parsons School of Design at The New School in New York City. The first wave of speakers includes a collection of global, cross-sector leaders reimagining how we can use games and immersive media as tools for real-world change.

Headlining the festival will be **Deepak Chopra and Poonacha Machaiah, CEO of the Chopra Foundation**, who will deliver a keynote fireside chat exploring the intersection of gaming and mental health, their collaboration on an upcoming sandbox game, and the Global Mental Health Task Force.

“These first speakers for the 2025 Festival showcase the incredible breadth of innovation happening at the intersection of games, immersive media, and social impact,” said G4C President Susanna Pollack. “From industry pioneers to boundary-pushing creators, these initial voices just begin to touch on the diverse perspectives coming together for the Festival - all contributing to collaborative exploration essential to designing solutions for tomorrow.”

Featured Speakers Include:

- Maria Sayans (CEO, ustwo games)
- Leo Olebe (VP of Global Partnerships, Xbox | Microsoft)
- Mathias Norvig (CEO, SYBO)
- Eric Monacelli (Executive Producer, Marvel Games)
- Deborah Mensah-Bonsu (Social Impact Partner, Supercell)
- Nicole Smith (Senior Manager, Tech Initiatives & Partnerships, USA for UNHCR)
- Patricia Noel (Mental Health Policy Manager, Discord)
- Rachel Kowert (Visiting Researcher, University of Cambridge)

- Harold Goldberg (President, New York Videogame Critics Circle)
- Phil Stuart (Executive Creative Director / Founder, PRELOADED)
- Stanley Pierre-Louis (President & CEO of the Entertainment Software Association)
- Nicole Twohig (Director, Marketing and Communications Campaigns, Vibrant Emotional Health/988 Lifeline)

Initial sessions touch on important and timely topics, including mental health and online communities, creating thoughtful gaming spaces, the potential of emerging technologies, and sustainable gaming practices from environmental and industry perspectives.

The 2025 Festival program will feature sessions across three tracks: Games & Learning, Civics & Social Issues, and Health & Wellbeing. Discussions will span topics like game development, mental health research, emerging technologies, storytelling, and purpose-driven design, all inspired by play. Additional speakers, program details, Topic Tables, and Masterclass sessions will be announced soon.

Tickets for the Festival are now available until June 9th at festival.gamesforchange.org

About Games for Change

Since 2004, Games for Change (G4C) has empowered game creators and innovators to drive real-world change, using games and immersive media that help people learn, improve their communities, and contribute to making the world a better place. G4C partners with technology and gaming companies, nonprofits, foundations, and government agencies to run world-class events, public arcades, design challenges, and youth programs. G4C supports a global community of game developers using games to tackle real-world challenges, from humanitarian conflicts to climate change and education.

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Games for Change Press Kit:

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