# VR FOR CHANGE
## ALCOVE CHALLENGE

# Challenge Guidelines

**Games for Change** is excited to announce the **VR for Change Alcove Challenge** in collaboration with **AARP Innovation Labs**. Using the Alcove VR platform, an application created by AARP Innovation Labs, and the Alcove™ Playground powered by Rendever, the Challenge aims to inspire people to think about how games can enhance our collective quality of life, create new memories, and deepen intergenerational bonds with loved ones across the world.

Challenge participants are invited to submit developed modules to be considered for publication on the **Alcove VR** platform. Today, Alcove users can create new memories and deepen bonds with loved ones as they connect in the app. Current experiences include the ability to travel around the globe, relax with immersive mediation as well as engage in health and wellness activities and games.

Submissions can center around any subject, theme, or activity that promotes healthy aging and/or intergenerational connection within Alcove. All submissions will be considered for inclusion on the platform, and select finalists and winners will have the opportunity to win a $10,000 cash prize and present their work at the XR for Change Summit in New York City on July 14th, 2020.

## Registration Form (DEADLINE: MARCH 30): bit.ly/alcove_registration
*Register to access Alcove Playground Development Build; non-disclosure and usage agreements required.*

## Submissions Portal (DEADLINE: APRIL 13): bit.ly/alcove_submit
*Tell us about your winning idea and submit your final competition build.*

## Key Dates:

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| **January 7** | Registration Form and submission portals open |
| **April 13** | Submission deadline + portal closes |
| **June 15** | Finalists announced |
| **July 14** | Finalists present at XR for Change Summit in NYC |

**AARP®** Innovation Labs

**ALCOVE** Beta

GAMES FOR CHANGE

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

Social isolation is an epidemic impacting people of all ages. Among adults age 45 and older, 1 in 3 are lonely. Social isolation and loneliness could be a greater threat to public health than obesity. Due to its impact on stress hormones, loneliness has been shown to increase the risk of heart disease, arthritis, Type 2 diabetes, stroke, dementia and suicide attempts. In fact, studies have found that prolonged isolation can have equivalent effects to smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

The Alcove platform was developed in direct response to this issue, with a mission to help adults feel more socially connected, reduce depression, and increase overall well-being. With recent advancements in virtual reality technologies, the medium has become more accessible to consumers of all types, thereby increasing the potential to keep people engaged and connected in new and profound ways.

## THE CHALLENGE

Alcove was built from the ground up to contain scalable content, and includes experiences created and curated by AARP Innovation Labs that a wide set of developers and content creators can be a part of. AARP Innovation Labs looks to inspire the industry and be a catalyst of innovation and growth that connects modern technology to those outside traditionally targeted markets.

Through the VR for Change Alcove Challenge, developers will be tasked with creating a module for the Alcove platform. This includes games or experiences that can promote health and wellness for aging adults. If submitted modules have a specific proposed health outcome, it should ideally be supported by published research and medical knowledge.

## ELIGIBILITY & PARTICIPATION CRITERIA

The Alcove VR application was developed by AARP Innovation Labs for the Oculus Go platform and mobile headset. As such, in order to qualify for publication, any submitted modules must be compatible with that system. To ensure compatibility and facilitate module development, AARP Innovation Labs will provide Challenge participants with a 'development sandbox' version of the Alcove VR application. Accessing this development build will require every Challenge participant to sign non-disclosure agreements and usage agreements.

Developers interested in participating in the VR for Change Alcove Challenge will need to register their intent to participate in the Challenge through an initial registration form (http://bit.ly/alcove_registration). Challenge participants may register as individuals or as teams. Although the VR for Change Alcove Challenge is open to participants from around the world, the submitted module must be developed with English as the primary language option, as well as consider a primarily English speaking user-base.

Creative/Design Criteria:

- Games/experiences can center around any subject, theme, or activity relevant to healthy aging and/or intergenerational connection.
- Games/experiences promoting specific health and wellness outcomes are encouraged but not required.
- Modules should not be prohibitively time-consuming; players should be able to go through a 'complete' experience in reasonable time for a VR session.
- Modules should enable people across all ages to experience simple, beautiful, and impactful VR.
- The target audience is intergenerational, with a significant sub-target of English-speaking parents and grandparents.

Technical Guidelines:

- Developers must have usage rights for all assets and code used in the submitted module.
- Modules must be tested for compatibility on Oculus Go hardware prior to submission.
- English language must be used as the primary language option.
- There are two different scenarios in which a 3rd party module can become a part of Alcove
  - » Experience within Alcove that will run within the Alcove environment. There are two locations for these experiences: On the table in the living room (board games) or in a separate room.
  - » Experiences that will be included in Alcove but are not run within the environment.
- For experiences that will run within Alcove (not a separate APK), AARP can provide a complete Unity Project that includes everything that you need to create an experience for users within Alcove such as the correct settings, key assets, scripts, and a mock-up of the relevant parts of the Alcove home.
  - » If you have a complete experience or have already made progress, you will be able to import your work into the Alcove Playground Project in order to proceed with integration.
  - » The Playground can accommodate experiences that fit within the Alcove environment such as board games or smaller scale wellness experiences that fit on a tabletop as well as larger scale experiences that do not come with their own complete environment and fit within a 20' x 30' room.
  - » The Playground can also accommodate independent experiences that may be too large for the Alcove home and which will be launched in a new scene, however you will need to be mindful of file size targets.
- Performance guidelines for applications in order to qualify to be incorporated into the Alcove environment:
  - » For a tabletop experience, the total number of triangles in your experience must be fewer than 50k and the total number of draw calls must be fewer than 50.
  - » For experiences in the open game room, the total number of triangles in your

experience must be fewer than 125k and the total number of draw calls must be fewer than 75.

» For experiences in their own scene, the total number of triangles in your experience and scene must be fewer than 150k and the total number of draw calls must be fewer than 100.

» Your complete experience must be less than 75mb when exported. This may require model optimization and/or a reduction in texture size. Please use ASTC texture compression.

» Alcove uses use Single Pass Stereo Rendering, and experiences developed for Alcove will also need to support Single Pass rendering. Some assets do not support Single Pass so please ensure that you test your builds with this setting enabled. Avoid using any screen space effects or post processing unless thoroughly tested. These effects tend to be too computationally/graphically expensive for mobile VR.

How to Access the Alcove Playground Development Build

1. Create a **Bitbucket** account.
2. Register to participate in the Challenge by submitting **this form**.
3. After favorable review of your registration, an email will be sent directing you to a website.
4. Sign the Non-Disclosure Agreements. Please note that applicants must be 18 or older to sign this document.
5. After signing the NDA, input your name, email, and Bitbucket username.
6. Check your email for a confirmation message containing links to documentation and next steps.

## JUDGING & AWARDS

Every module submitted to the VR for Change Alcove Challenge will be considered for inclusion in the Alcove VR app. All modules will be evaluated by a blue-ribbon jury of industry experts and developers hand-selected by Games for Change and AARP. Modules will be evaluated based on (1) how well they promote positive health and wellness in users, (2) applicability to the AARP audience, and (3) overall innovation in design. The jury will then select five modules as finalists, all of whom will have their experiences/games added to the Alcove VR app. Finalist creators will be invited to showcase their work during a panel session at the XR for Change Summit in New York City on July 14th, 2020. The session will culminate in the announcement of the Challenge winner, who will be awarded $10,000.

**How to Register & Submit:** To register, developers must complete the **VR for Good Alcove Challenge Registration Form** at **http://bit.ly/alcove_registration** by **March 30, 2019 @ 11:59 PM EST**.  All submissions must be submitted through the **Official Submissions Portal** at **http://bit.ly/alcove_submit** by **April 13, 2019 @ 11:59 PM EST**. *Late submissions will not be considered.*

**IP Rights:** Developers will retain full intellectual property rights for their submitted modules to AARP. All modules will be credited appropriately to the developer(s).  All modules that are selected for publication  onto the Alcove VR application will be included as free content on the already free application. AARP will retain a nonexclusive right to use the submitted module on any and all platforms, but will not have the right to monetize the module in any form.

**Rights of Use (Materials):** Challenge participants waive the right to seek legal action regarding this program's contents, process, and/or award. With written permission of all developers, Games for Change would like to document and archive the entire project as a case study, including: finalist submissions/proposals, playable games and any additional materials.

**Right of Rejection:** Games for Change and AARP reserve the right to accept or reject any or all module submissions.

## About AARP

**AARP** is the nation's largest nonprofit, nonpartisan organization dedicated to empowering people 50 and older to choose how they live as they age. With a nationwide presence and nearly 38 million members, AARP strengthens communities and advocates for what matters most to families: health security, financial stability and personal fulfillment..

At **AARP Innovation Labs** we develop cross-generational products with startups and our own internal teams, shaping new solutions that empower people to choose how they live as they age.



**Alcove** is a virtual reality platform that connects family members across generations by bringing them together in a world filled with immersive experiences. Built to help break down the barriers of social isolation, it helps to deepen bonds and create new memories with your loved ones as you journey to new places around the globe, share photo memories, relax with immersive mediation, engage in health and wellness activities, watch AARP shows or simply sit on your virtual couch and catch up – even when you're physically apart.

## About Games for Change



**Games for Change** (G4C) is a nonprofit organization that facilitates the creation and distribution of digital games that serve as powerful tools in humanitarian and educational efforts and leverages entertainment and engagement for social good. G4C convenes diverse stakeholders, highlights best practices, incubates games, and helps create and direct investment into new projects.