

**See Empathy - TEDxLivermore Speaker Uses Virtual Reality to Teach Empathy**

**Alexandra Ivanovitch, Simorga CEO, XPRIZE Visioneer, to Speak at TEDxLivermore 2016**

LIVERMORE, Calif. (June 16, 2016) – Alexandra Ivanovitch, Ph.D., CEO of Simorga, will be speaking and demonstrating Simorga’s virtual reality (VR) technology as part of TEDxLivermore 2016 on June 25<sup>th</sup> at Las Positas College in Livermore.

Dr. Ivanovitch’s development of VR technology for teaching empathy placed her and her team among the winning circle of the XPRIZE Visioneers. The XPRIZE Visioneers challenge invites competitors to identify a Grand Challenge facing the world, then collaborate with other competing Visioneers to design a prize. Dr. Ivanovitch will know if her challenge wins in October of 2016.

“My company, Simorga, is a social impact startup leveraging the potential of VR to enhance human development. I believe the absence of empathy in places with empathy fatigue, like hospitals, or empathy challenges, like prisons, is at the core of many problems humanity faces,” states Dr. Ivanovitch. “Virtual reality helps us see the world through the eyes of other individuals to widen our scope of analysis, building our empathy as if a muscle,” observes Dr. Ivanovitch.

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**A participant in an empathy building exercise organized by Dr. Ivanovitch using VR technology.  
A high resolution image is available upon request.**

TEDxLivermore has been created by civic-minded volunteers in the Livermore area. It is supported by ReImagine Science, the Livermore Chamber of Commerce, Innovation Tri-Valley, Common SciSense (Livermore), and i-GATE Innovation Hub.

TEDxLivermore is open to the public and will be held on June 25<sup>th</sup> at the Mertes Center for the Arts, Las Positas College. Tickets are available at \$85 per attendee and includes Saturday's daylong discussions and lunch. The event runs from 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Attend TEDxLivermore 2016 and you can hear about Dr. Ivanovitch's inspiring social innovation work, along with the stories of many others working at the interface of innovation, humanity, and social change work.

If you wish to be a supporter of TEDxLivermore through your tax-deductible donation, please contact Kennan Salinero at (925)584-8788.

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### **About TEDx, x = independently organized event**

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized. (Subject to certain rules and regulations.)

### **About TED**

TED is a nonprofit organization devoted to Ideas Worth Spreading, usually in the form of short, powerful talks (18 minutes or fewer) delivered by today's leading thinkers and doers. Many of these talks are given at TED's annual conference in Vancouver, British Columbia, and made available, free, on [TED.com](http://TED.com). TED speakers have included Bill Gates, Jane Goodall, Elizabeth Gilbert, Sir Richard Branson, Nandan Nilekani, Philippe Starck, Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala, Sal Khan and Daniel Kahneman.

TED's open and free initiatives for spreading ideas include [TED.com](http://TED.com), where new TED Talk videos are posted daily; the [Open Translation Project](#), which provides subtitles and interactive transcripts as well as translations from thousands of volunteers worldwide; the educational initiative [TED-Ed](#); the annual million-dollar [TED Prize](#), which funds exceptional individuals with a "wish," or idea, to create change in the world; [TEDx](#), which provides licenses to thousands of individuals and groups who host local, self-organized TED-style events around the world; and the [TED Fellows](#) program, which selects innovators from around the globe to amplify the impact of their remarkable projects and activities.

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