HT: Affordable XR goes Mainstream

PART I — FORESIGHT SNAPSHOT | HT: Affordable XR Goes Mainstream | Fixed Time-Stamped Synthesis

2026 HT: Affordable XR Goes Mainstream

Card Type	Historical Technology Shift
Series	Immersive Futures Guild — Vision 2035
Layer	1 — Atomic Foresight Object
Status	Active
Confidence	Medium
Workshop	Circle of Scholars — January 2026
Facilitator	Circle of Scholars Workshop Team
Tags	affordable-XR | historical | equity | layer1 | ht
Tally.so Form	https://tally.so/r/ilrn-if-ht-affordxr-2026

The release of standalone headsets at consumer price points — most significantly Meta Quest devices — constituted a meaningful threshold crossing for XR accessibility. While significant affordability barriers remain in low-income and Global South contexts, the price-performance trajectory of standalone XR hardware has shifted the equity conversation from 'whether' affordable XR is achievable to 'when and for whom' it is achievable.

Key Drivers / Contributing Conditions:

- Meta Quest 2/3 price point and standalone capability
- Competitive market pressure reducing headset costs
- Educational bulk-purchasing programs expanding institutional access

Tensions Carried Forward to Part II:

- Does affordable XR in wealthy country markets constitute progress on global equity, or does it primarily widen the gap?

Linked Scenarios / Strands: SC: Equity | SC: Global Inequality

Ways of Knowing: Tree · Garden · Lantern

PART II — COMMUNITY EVIDENCE & DIALOGUE TRACK | HT: Affordable XR Goes Mainstream | H2 2026 — Living

T	COMMUNITY CONTRIBUTION FORM — HT: Affordable XR Goes Mainstream Submit case examples, methodological challenges, cultural perspectives, and proposed evidence criteria via: https://tally.so/r/ilrn-if-ht-affordxr-2026

Part II — Scope and Instructions
This section collects community responses, case examples, and challenges to the Part I foresight snapshot above.
It opens July 1, 2026 and undergoes synthesis review in September 2026, November 2026, and January 2027.
Contributions are submitted via the Tally.so form above and appear in the registers below after editorial review.
The Part I text is not modified in response to Part II contributions; it is versioned at the Annual Handoff review.
Contribution categories: Case Example | Methodological Challenge | Cultural/Community Perspective | Proposed Evidence Criterion
Ways of Knowing accepted: Tree (evidence) | Garden (practice) | Lantern (futures)

Tensions Open for Community Response:

- Does affordable XR in wealthy country markets constitute progress on global equity, or does it primarily widen the gap?

Contributor / Date	Category	Way of Knowing	Contribution Summary
[Awaiting contributions — form opens July 1, 2026]			

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