



Faculty & Research Highlights

Spring 2026

A companion to the Spring 2026 newsletter, this brief gathers recent publications, recognitions, and public engagements from Design Lab faculty and affiliates across UC San Diego.

UC San Diego · June 2026 · Months included: 2026-03 · 2026-04 · 2026-05

Featured Research

This spring, Design Lab faculty earned four Honorable Mentions and one Best Paper Award at the premier human-computer interaction conference, alongside a Nature Health article demonstrating how LLMs can provide safe, transparent medical guidance. Their work spans educational AI, embodied scientific practice, interface reasoning, and clinical decision support.

BEST PAPER AWARD · CHI 2026

Best Paper at CHI 2026: CoBRA tames the cognitive biases hiding inside AI agents

Paper: CoBRA: Programming Cognitive Bias in Social Agents Using Classic Social Science Experiments

Xuan Liu, HaoYang Shang, Haojian Jin

CoBRA is a toolkit that measures an LLM agent's cognitive bias against validated classical social-science experiments and then regulates the agent's behavior toward a target bias, addressing the long-standing problem that natural-language descriptions of agent behavior produce inconsistent results across models.

[Read the paper →](#)

HONORABLE MENTION · CHI 2026

What does a chat thread share with a video timeline? Belidor finds the pattern, and earned a CHI Honorable Mention

Paper: Belidor: A Specification Language for Operationalizing Structural Analogies Between User Interfaces

Matthew T Beaudouin-Lafon, Devamardeep Hayatpur, Arvind Satyanarayan, Haijun Xia

Belidor is a text notation that captures the structures shared by interfaces that look nothing alike -- for example, the temporal order of messages in a chat is the same relational pattern as the timeline in a video editor -- demonstrated across messaging apps, screen readers, and hardware devices.

[Read the paper →](#)

JOURNAL ARTICLE · PLOS DIGITAL HEALTH

Your wristband is a fingerprint: one day of motion data re-identified people with 96% accuracy

Paper: Sharing digital health data responsibly: Balancing open science with participant privacy

Camille Nebeker, Shahin Samiei, Santosh Kumar

The piece argues that current open-science mandates were written before researchers understood that raw accelerometry from wearables can function as a biometric identifier -- the WristPrint study showed a single day of motion data was enough to re-identify a person with 96% accuracy -- and lays out concrete steps for sharing wearable data without compromising participant privacy.

[Read the paper →](#)

FULL PAPER · INTERNET INTERVENTIONS

In-person, telehealth, or an app? People with disabilities rely on all three

Paper: Exploring online and in-person mental healthcare access and app use in a cohort of people living with disability: results from the 2019 and 2020 California Health Interview Survey

William Bevens, Jeongmi Kim, Biblia Cha, Nicole A. Stadnick, Elizabeth Eikey, Margaret Schneider, Stephen M. Schueller, Dana B. Mukamel, Dara H. Sorkin

Analyzing data from the 2019 and 2020 California Health Interview Survey, the study finds that people with disabilities use a mix of in-person visits, telehealth, and mental health apps -- and that no single channel dominates -- pointing to the need for flexible, multi-modal care systems designed from the outset for accessibility.

[Read the paper →](#)

JOURNAL ARTICLE · NATURE HEALTH

99% accuracy across 37,200 cases: a Nature Health system triages patients using AMA flowcharts

Paper: A multi-agent framework combining large language models with medical flowcharts for self-triage

Yujia Liu, Sophia Yu, Hongyue Jin, Jessica Wen, Alexander Qian, Terrence Lee, Mattheus Ramsis, Gi Won Choi, Lianhui Qin, Xin Liu, Edward Jay Wang

The team grounded LLMs in 100 step-by-step flowcharts developed by the American Medical Association so the system can guide patients toward the right level of care while remaining transparent and auditable; across 37,200 simulated patient conversations the system navigated flowcharts with 99% accuracy.

[Read the paper →](#)

Awards & Recognitions

Spring 2026 brought a strong run of honors and appointments across Design Lab faculty, spanning conference awards, named commissions, and advisory roles in service-design leadership.

Voting Faculty

- **Belidor earns Honorable Mention at CHI 2026**
Haijun Xia, Assistant Professor of Cognitive Science, and collaborators received an Honorable Mention at the 2026 CHI Conference for Belidor: A Specification Language for Operationalizing Structural Analogies Between User Interfaces.
- **Don Norman Design Award receives ISSIP recognition for service innovation excellence**
Founded by Don Norman, Professor Emeritus of Cognitive Science and Psychology, the Don Norman Design Award was recognized by ISSIP (the International Society of Service Innovation Professionals) for excellence in service innovation, highlighting the award's role in surfacing design work that advances service systems.
- **Michael Meyer appointed to Advisory Board for the Don Norman Design Award 2026**
Michael Meyer, Assistant Teaching Professor at the Rady School of Management, was appointed to the Advisory Board for the 2026 Don Norman Design Award, contributing to the selection of work that exemplifies people-centered design.

- **At the U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty Summit, Keolu Fox delivers plenary on data protection frameworks**

Keolu Fox, Assistant Professor of Anthropology, was selected to deliver a plenary presentation at the U.S. Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Governance Summit in Tucson, April 2026, addressing data protection frameworks for indigenous communities.

Affiliated Faculty

- **CoBRA receives Best Paper Award at CHI 2026**

Haojian Jin, Assistant Professor of Data Science, and collaborators received the Best Paper Award at the 2026 CHI Conference for CoBRA: Programming Cognitive Bias in Social Agents Using Classic Social Science Experiments, recognized for advancing how social agents can model cognitive bias for research and education.

In the News

Design Lab faculty continue to shape public discourse on technology, design, and society through media appearances, expert commentary, and thought leadership across national and international platforms.

- **Design Lab housing center recognized for San Diego's policy leadership**
The UC San Diego Design Lab's Center for Housing Policy and Design was recognized by urban development expert Bruce Katz as a model for how San Diego has become a beacon of housing policy innovation, citing the center's contributions to density and transit-oriented development.
- **Design Lab contributes 15 papers to CHI 2026 in Barcelona**
The UC San Diego Design Lab contributed 15 publications to the CHI 2026 conference, including the Best Paper Award-winning CoBRA paper by Haojian Jin and colleagues, demonstrating the lab's breadth across HCI, AI, and health.
- **Design Lab hosts design competition on organ donation system innovation**
The Design Lab hosted a design-a-thon focused on organ donation and transplantation, bringing together students and mentors to prototype solutions to critical gaps in donor registration, coordination, and patient communication.
- **Spring 2026 Design@Large series opens with a focus on human-centered AI**
The Design Lab's Spring 2026 Design@Large seminar series, titled "Designing AI: Shaping Human-Centered Futures" and directed by Nadir Weibel, kicked off with a seven-session program spanning generative AI, accountability, creativity, and the design of AI futures.

Voting Faculty

Steven Dow

Professor of Cognitive Science

- **Steven Dow brings Design Lab perspectives to Northwestern's symposium on AI and creative agency**
Professor Steven Dow was invited to contribute to Northwestern University's Symposium on Creative Agency in the Age of AI, bringing Design Lab perspectives on how human creativity and agency can be centered as AI systems become more capable.

- **An invited talk at KAIST features Steven Dow on design and human-AI collaboration**

Professor Steven Dow delivered a talk at the KAIST School of Computing in Daejeon, South Korea on May 18, 2026, hosted by Juho Kim and the Kixlab research group, sharing research on design and human-AI collaboration.

Keolu Fox

Assistant Professor of Anthropology

- **Keolu Fox launches EarthFrame, a Public Benefit Corporation for indigenous data stewardship**

Assistant Professor Keolu Fox launched EarthFrame, a Public Benefit Corporation designed to bring transparency and sustainability to the data economy and provide tools for stewarding scientific, linguistic, and indigenous data.

- **In a Honolulu Civil Beat op-ed, Keolu Fox challenges AI data center expansion in Hawaii**

An op-ed co-authored by Keolu Fox and colleagues published in the Honolulu Civil Beat examines data ownership, resource control, and accountability for AI data centers proposed across Hawaii and the Pacific, calling for community-centered governance.

Philip Guo

Associate Professor of Cognitive Science

- **Philip Guo's coding education tool hits 25 million users as AI elevates code literacy**

A coding education tool developed at UC San Diego by Associate Professor Philip Guo has reached 25 million users, and Philip Guo argues its reach is even more significant as AI tools make understanding code — not just writing it — the critical skill.

Also covered: [San Diego Biotech News](#)

Eric Hekler

Associate Dean of the School of Public Health; Professor of Public Health & Human Longevity

- **A National Academy of Medicine paper co-authored by Eric Hekler calls for reorienting health systems**

Professor Eric Hekler co-authored a National Academy of Medicine discussion paper outlining a vision for reorienting health care, public health, and health sciences around what actually matters to individuals and communities, bridging disease identification with personal and community health goals.

Pinar Yoldas

Associate Professor of Visual Arts

- **UCSD Today profiles Pinar Yoldas on connecting art and science to address plastic pollution**

Associate Professor Pinar Yoldas was featured in UC San Diego Today discussing how her practice connects art and science to address planetary plastic pollution, examining how artistic inquiry can make environmental data visible and emotionally resonant.

- **Pinar Yoldas opens Gallery QI exhibition on microplastics and the unconscious**

Associate Professor Pinar Yoldas opens 'There Exist Microplastics in My Subconscious and They are Seeping into My Dreams' at Gallery QI, an exhibition exploring the evolutionary impacts of microplastics on the environment and the unconscious mind. The show continues Pinar Yoldas's long-running practice at the intersection of art, science, and ecology.

Affiliated Faculty

Caroline Collins

Assistant Professor of Communication

- **Caroline Collins and Maritime Museum of San Diego launch Black Pacific educational program**
UC San Diego curator Caroline Collins partnered with the Maritime Museum of San Diego to launch 'Take Me to the Water: Histories of the Black Pacific,' an educational program connecting museum exhibits to classroom learning about the African diaspora and the Pacific.

Bill Fulton

Professor of Practice of Urban Studies & Planning

- **Bill Fulton and Higgins call for reviving California's housing supply strategy in CalMatters**
In a CalMatters op-ed, CHPD director Bill Fulton and CALCOG's Bill Higgins argue that California should revive an older, underutilized strategy to jumpstart housing production, arguing current zoning-reform approaches alone are insufficient to close the supply gap.
- **At California's Planning Commissioners Conference, Bill Fulton examines developer-led growth across the state**
At the California Planning Commissioners Conference, Professor Bill Fulton examined how developers are consolidating parcels and setting the agenda for growth across the state, often outpacing the capacity of local planning departments to respond.
- **National Housing Crisis Task Force gathering features Bill Fulton on San Diego's housing models**
Professor Bill Fulton joined San Diego Mayor Todd Gloria at a National Housing Crisis Task Force gathering hosted by Accelerator for America, presenting San Diego's housing initiatives as models that other cities and states could adapt.

Haojian Jin

Assistant Professor of Data Science

- **CMU CyLab hosts Haojian Jin for seminar on facial recognition risks and privacy alternatives**
Assistant Professor Haojian Jin delivered a seminar at Carnegie Mellon University's CyLab security and privacy institute on March 16, 2026, presenting research on facial recognition technology, its deployment risks, and privacy-preserving alternatives.

K. Wayne Yang

Provost of Muir College; Professor of Ethnic Studies

- **On KPBS, Professor K. Wayne Yang explores alternative institutional models for higher education**
Professor K. Wayne Yang, Provost of Muir College, participated in a KPBS public media event discussing his work on 'A Third University Is Possible,' exploring institutional models that center equity and community relationship over traditional academic hierarchies.

Ben Bergen

Professor of Cognitive Science

- Why swearing reveals so much about the mind: Ben Bergen explains the science of profanity**
 Professor Ben Bergen, a cognitive scientist who studies language and meaning, was featured in an interview discussing the linguistic and psychological dimensions of profanity — why certain words carry emotional charge, how that charge varies across cultures, and what swearing reveals about the mind.

Recent Publications

Design Lab faculty published 38 peer-reviewed articles, preprints, and conference papers this quarter across venues spanning human-computer interaction, AI, health informatics, cognitive science, sustainability, and education research — a comprehensive view of design research output at UC San Diego.

Faculty × Area overview

Faculty	HCI & Interaction	AI & Autonomy	Health & Wellbeing	Design & Creativity	Sustainability & Place
Voting Faculty					
Steven Dow	•	•		•	
Elizabeth Eikey	•		•		
Philip Guo	• • •			• • •	
Eric Hekler	•	•	•		
Jim Hollan	• •	• •			
David Kirsh	•			•	
Parinaz Naghizadeh		•			
Camille Nebeker	•		•		
Laurel Riek	•	•	•		
Edward Wang	• •	• •	• •		
Nadir Weibel	• •	• •	• •		
Haijun Xia	• • • +	• • • +		•	
Megan Ybarra				•	•
Affiliated Faculty					
Sarah Aarons					•
Alan Card			•		
Haojian Jin	• • • +	• • • +	•		
Sam Lau	• • • +	• • • +			
Kevin Patrick	•		•		
Mattheus Ramsis	• •	• •	• • •		
Kristen Vaccaro	•	•			

• = 1 publication, •• = 2, ••• = 3, •••+ = 4 or more. Darker shade reinforces the count. Multi-area publications count toward every area their authors' themes cover.

HCI & Interaction · 17 publications

• **Editors' Introduction to the Issue, March 2026**

*Thomas Ploetz, Lena Mamykina, Laura Barnes, Sarah Clinch, Franca Delmastro, Uichin Lee, Alanson Sample, Stephan Sigg, Edison Thomaz, Kristof Van Laerhoven, **Nadir Weibel**, Chenren Xu, Fusang Zhang*

Proceedings of the ACM on Interactive, Mobile, Wearable and Ubiquitous Technologies 2026 · March 2026 [Journal](#)

• **"Bespoke Bots": Diverse Instructor Needs for Customizing Generative AI Classroom Chatbots**

*Irene Hou, Zeyu Xiong, **Philip J. Guo**, April Yi Wang*

CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **Barriers that Programming Instructors Face While Performing Emergency Pedagogical Design to Shape Student-AI Interactions with Generative AI Tools**

***Sam Lau**, Kianoosh Boroojeni, Harry Keeling, Jenn Marroquin*

CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **The Campus Mental Health Problem Isn't Capacity - It's Access!**

*Manas Satish Bedmutha, Poorva Satish Bedmutha, Amparo Averbuj, Varun Pillai, Sahithi Karumudi, Nicole May, Heidi Rataj, **Nadir Weibel***

CHI EA '26: Extended Abstracts of the 2026 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **Belidor: A Specification Language for Operationalizing Structural Analogies Between User Interfaces**

*Matthew T Beaudouin-Lafon, Devamardeep Hayatpur, Arvind Satyanarayan, **Haijun Xia***

CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **What does Generative UI mean for HCI Practice?**

*Siân Lindley, Jack Williams, Yining Cao, **Haijun Xia**, Elizabeth F Churchill, Abigail Sellen, Jeffrey Nichols, David R Karger*

CHI EA '26: Extended Abstracts of the 2026 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **Orca: Browsing at Scale Through User-Driven and AI-Facilitated Orchestration Across Malleable Webpages**

*Peiling Jiang, **Haijun Xia***

CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **VizCrit: Exploring Strategies for Displaying Computational Feedback in a Visual Design Tool**

*Mingyi Li, Mengyi Chen, Sarah Luo, Yining Cao, **Haijun Xia**, Maitraye Das, Steven P. Dow, Jane L. E*

CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **Tidynote: Always-Clear Notebook Authoring**

*Ruanqianqian (Lisa) Huang, Brian Hempel, Yining Cao, **James D. Hollan**, **Haijun Xia**, Sorin Lerner*

CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 [Conference](#)

• **Making Abstraction Concrete: A Design Space and Interaction Model of Abstraction in Interactive Systems**

*Bryan Min, Sangho Suh, **Jim Hollan**, **Haijun Xia***

arXiv preprint · May 2026 [arXiv](#)

• **Designing and Implementing Skill Tests at Scale**

Sam Lau

lau.ucsd.edu · April 2026 [Other](#)

• **Beyond the Lab: Cognitive Neuroscience in Real-World Contexts**

*Stephan P. Kaufhold, Mia Borzello, Federico Rossano, **David Kirsh***

WIREs Cognitive Science · March 2026 [Journal](#)

• **Robot Characters: Co-Designing Dynamic Personalities for Cognitively Assistive Robots**

*Dagoberto Cruz-Sandoval, Alyssa Kubota, Connie Guan, Soyon Kim, **Laurel D. Riek***

ACM Transactions on Human-Robot Interaction 2026 · March 2026 [Conference](#)

- **TA Logistics in Large Computing Courses**
Philip Guo
pg.ucsd.edu · April 2026 Other
- **Beyond the Desk: Barriers and Future Opportunities for AI to Assist Scientists in Embodied Physical Tasks**
Irene Hou, Alexander Qin, Lauren Cheng, Philip Guo
CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 Conference
- **Barriers Programming Instructors Face in Emergency Pedagogical Design for Student-AI Interaction**
Sam Lau
lau.ucsd.edu · April 2026 Other
- **LLM-Generated Educational Content: Prototyping and Evaluation Study**
Sam Lau
lau.ucsd.edu · May 2026 Other

AI & Autonomy · 8 publications

- **OAuthHub: Mitigating OAuth Data Overaccess through a Local Data Hub**
Qiyu Li, Yuhe Tian, Haojian Jin
arXiv preprint · March 2026 arXiv
- **Understanding Parents' Desires in Moderating Children's Interactions with GenAI Chatbots through LLM-Generated Probes**
John Driscoll, Yulin Chen, Viki Shi, Izak Vucharatavintara, Yaxing Yao, Haojian Jin
arXiv preprint · March 2026 arXiv
- **Opinion Dynamics in Multilayer Social Networks Through Coordination Games**
Ruey-An Shiu, Parinaz Naghizadeh
arXiv preprint · March 2026 arXiv
- **PrivacyAkinator: Articulating Key Privacy Design Decisions by Answering LLM-Generated Multiple-choice Questions**
Qiyu Li, Yuen Sum Wong, Yuen Kei Wong, Longxuan Yu, Haojian Jin
CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 Conference
- **When Agent Markets Arrive**
Xuan Liu, Haoyang Shang, Haojian Jin
arXiv preprint · April 2026 arXiv
- **Deception at Scale: Deceptive Designs in 1K LLM-Generated E-Commerce Components**
Ziwei Chen, Jiawen Shen, Luna, Hanyu Zhang, Kristen Vaccaro
CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems · April 2026 Conference
- **Validated Behavioral Hypotheses for Evaluating Human-Likeness in LLM-Based Agents**
Xuan Liu, HaoYang Shang, Zizhang Liu, Yuanjun Feng, Guankai Zhai, Yunze Xiao, Yiwon Tu, Haojian Jin
arXiv preprint · May 2026 arXiv
- **CoBRA: Programming Cognitive Bias in Social Agents Using Classic Social Science Experiments**
Xuan Liu, HaoYang Shang, Haojian Jin
CHI 2026: CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems Conference

Health & Wellbeing · 8 publications

- Causality by Other Means: Constructing the Settler Colonial Determination of Health**
Bram Wispelwey, Lana Ray, Dina Hamideh, Steven De La Torre, Nadine Bahour, Artair Rogers, David Mills, Eric Hekler
 March 2026 [Preprint](#)
- 26-A-10955-ACC USE OF CORONARY ARTERY CALCIUM SCORING IN INDIVIDUALS WITH ELEVATED LIPOPROTEIN(A): A MULTI-COHORT STUDY**
*Harpreet Bhatia, Yihang Fan, Gourisree Dharmavaram, Alexander C. Razavi, Michael Tsai, **Mattheus Ramsis**, Ehtisham Mahmud, Michael Wilkinson, Pam Taub, Khurram Nasir, Michael J. Blaha, Nathan D. Wong*
 JACC · March 2026 [Journal](#)
- The perceived impact of executive order 14183 on transgender and nonbinary U.S. Service members**
Kyle Okamuro, Andres R. Schneeberger, Hanna J. Barton, Cony Mardonez-Segovia, Victor Trasvina, Sweta Parija, Tara N. Cohen, Alan J. Card, Jennifer T. Anger
 International Journal of Transgender Health · April 2026 [Journal](#)
- Sharing digital health data responsibly: Balancing open science with participant privacy**
***Camille Nebeker**, Shahin Samiei, Santosh Kumar*
 PLOS Digital Health · April 2026 [Journal](#)
- A multi-agent framework combining large language models with medical flowcharts for self-triage**
*Yujia Liu, Sophia Yu, **Hongyue Jin**, Jessica Wen, Alexander Qian, Terrence Lee, **Mattheus Ramsis**, Gi Won Choi, Lianhui Qin, Xin Liu, **Edward Jay Wang***
 Nature Health · April 2026 [Journal](#)
- Marked underutilization of lipoprotein(a) testing in peripheral artery disease: a national analysis of 8.3 million patients**
*Mustafa Naguib, Ava J. Fascetti, Elsie G. Ross, **Edward J. Wang**, Michael Wilkinson, Ehtisham Mahmud, Pam Taub, Harpreet S. Bhatia, **Mattheus Ramsis***
 American Journal of Preventive Cardiology · April 2026 [Journal](#)
- Wireless Home Blood Pressure Monitoring for Hypertension Management at a Federally Qualified Health Center: A Pilot Randomized Controlled Trial (Preprint)**
*Ryan Moran, Anna Narezkina, Nathan Magalit, **Kevin Patrick**, Anthony DeMaria*
 May 2026 [Journal](#)
- Exploring online and in-person mental healthcare access and app use in a cohort of people living with disability: results from the 2019 and 2020 California Health Interview Survey**
*William Bevens, Jeongmi Kim, Biblia Cha, Nicole A. Stadnick, **Elizabeth Eikey**, Margaret Schneider, Stephen M. Schueller, Dana B. Mukamel, Dara H. Sorkin*
 Internet Interventions [Journal](#)

Design & Creativity · 1 publication

- Silicon Valley Imperialism: Techno Fantasies & Frictions in Postsocialist Times**
***Megan Ybarra**, Desiree Fields, Liviu Chelcea, Margaret Marietta Ramirez, Ananya Roy, Erin McElroy*
 The AAG Review of Books · April 2026 [Journal](#)

Sustainability & Place · 1 publication

- **Integrating Iron Isotope and Oxidation State Measurements with In Situ Vibrational Spectroscopy to Understand Iron Dissolution during Atmospheric Processing of Iron Oxides in Wildfire Smoke**

Jane A. Sedlak, Eric Siciliano Rego, **Sarah Aarons**, Vicki H. Grassian

Environmental Science & Technology · March 2026 [Journal](#)

Stay Connected

Follow the Design Lab for the latest news, events, and research updates.

Website: designlab.ucsd.edu

Instagram: [@designlabucsd](https://www.instagram.com/designlabucsd)

LinkedIn: [UC San Diego Design Lab](https://www.linkedin.com/company/uc-san-diego-design-lab)

Affiliates: designlab-affiliates@ucsd.edu

The Design Lab advances humanity-centered design across research, education, and community. Founded in 2014 by Don Norman and Chancellor Pradeep Khosla, the Lab brings together faculty, students, and partners from across UC San Diego and beyond.

UC San Diego | The Design Lab

9510 Innovation Lane | La Jolla, CA 92093-0938

Copyright 2026 Regents of the University of California. All rights reserved.