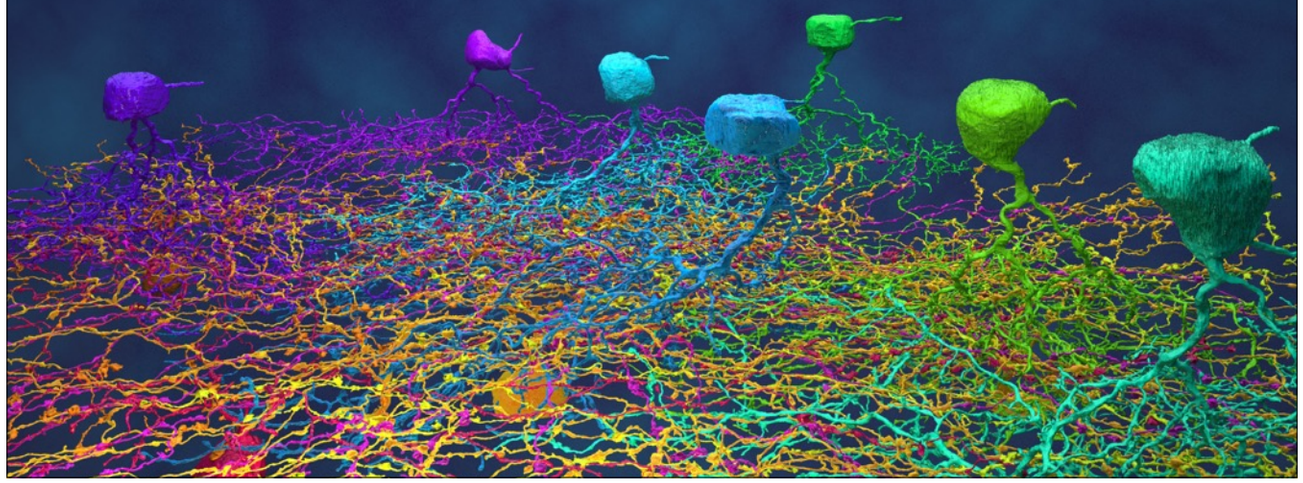
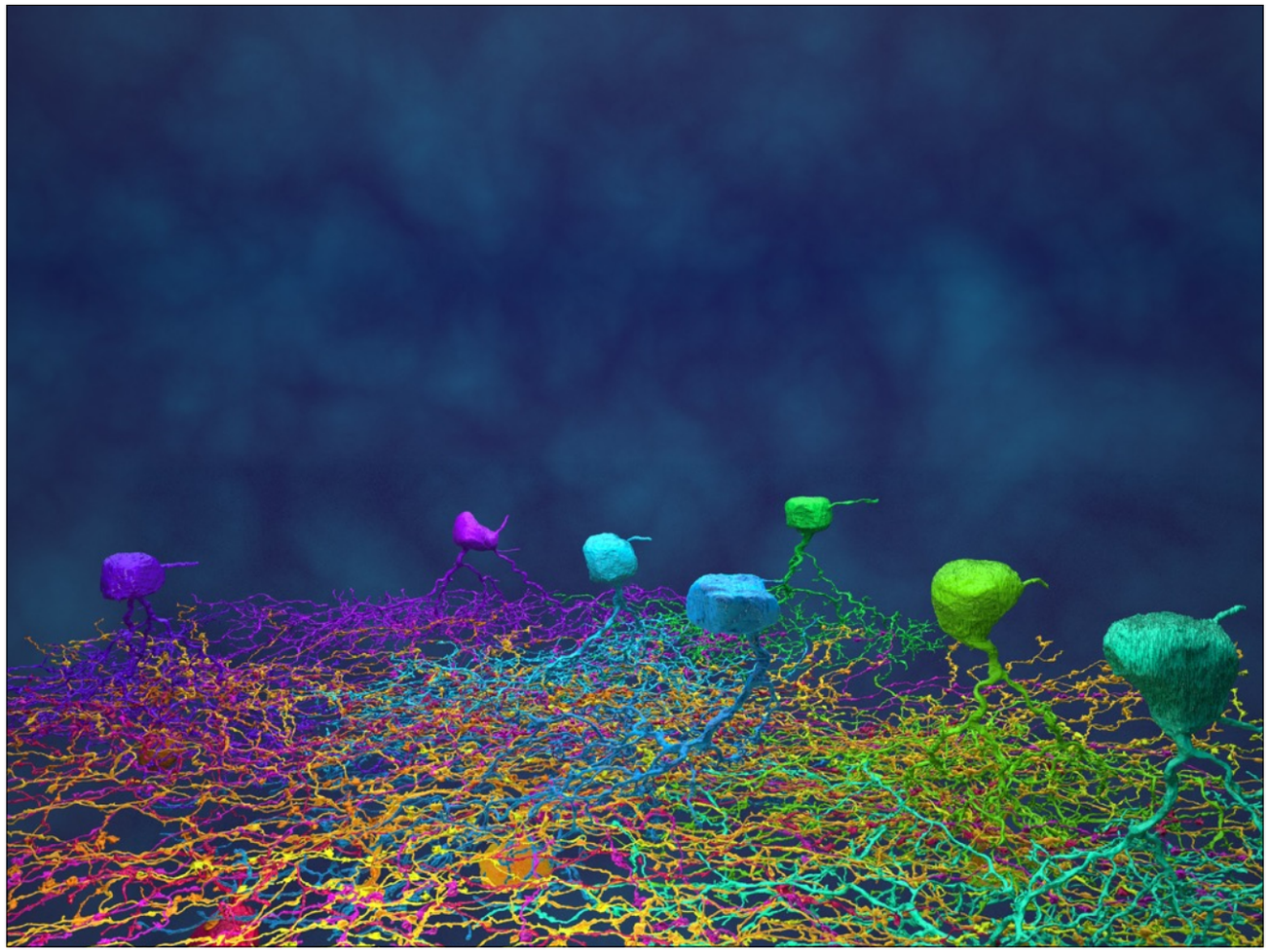
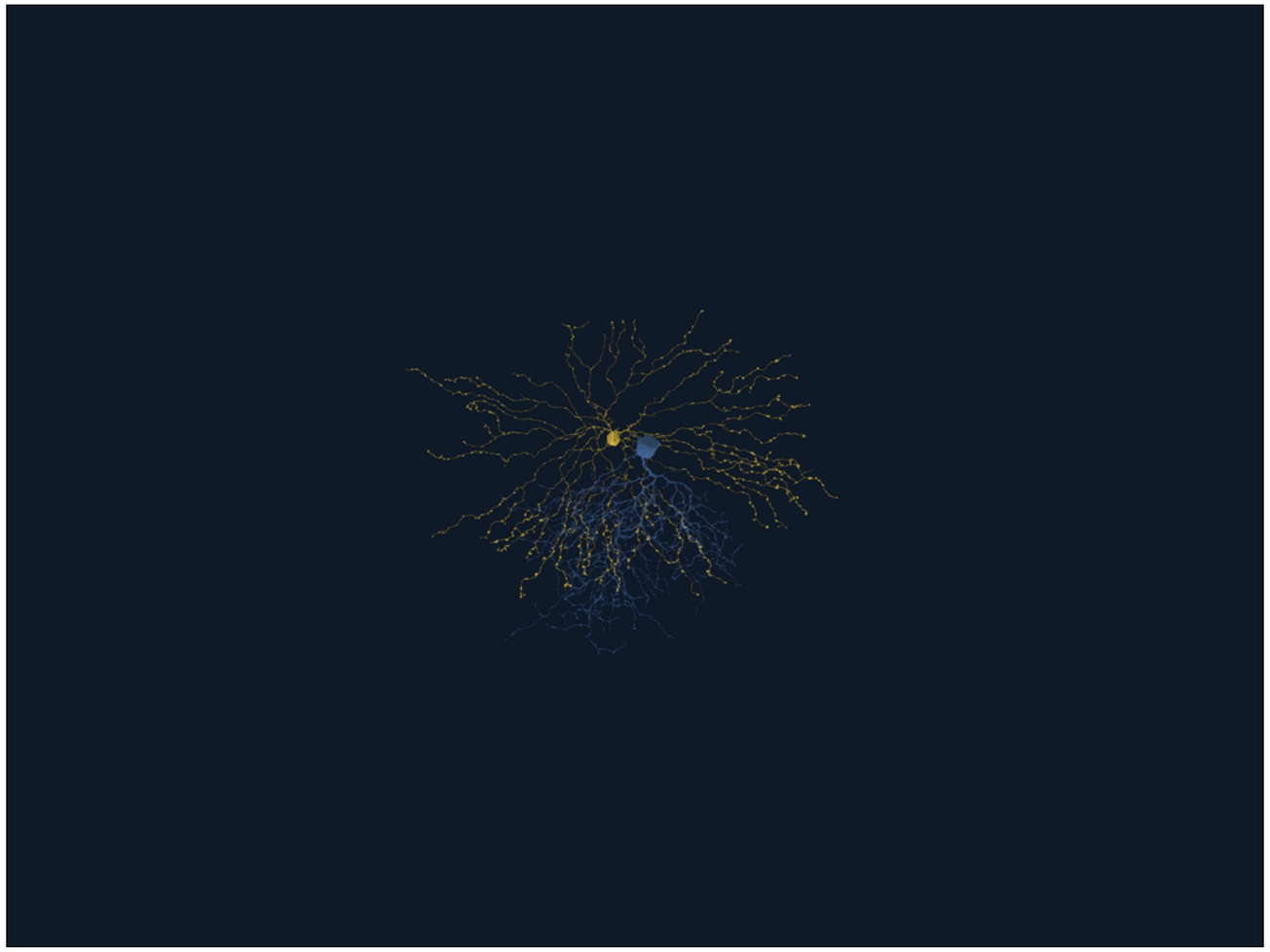
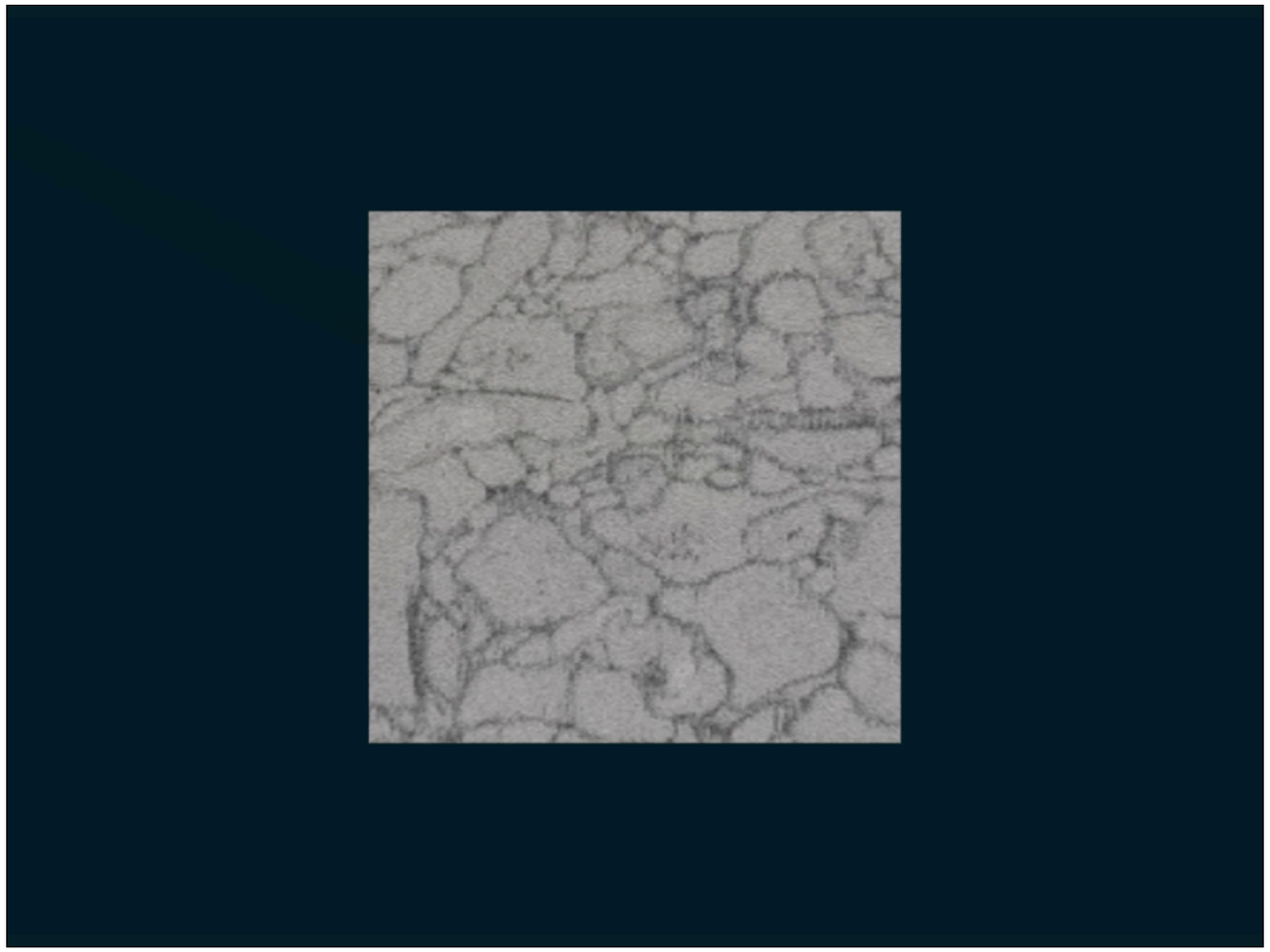
Amy Robinson

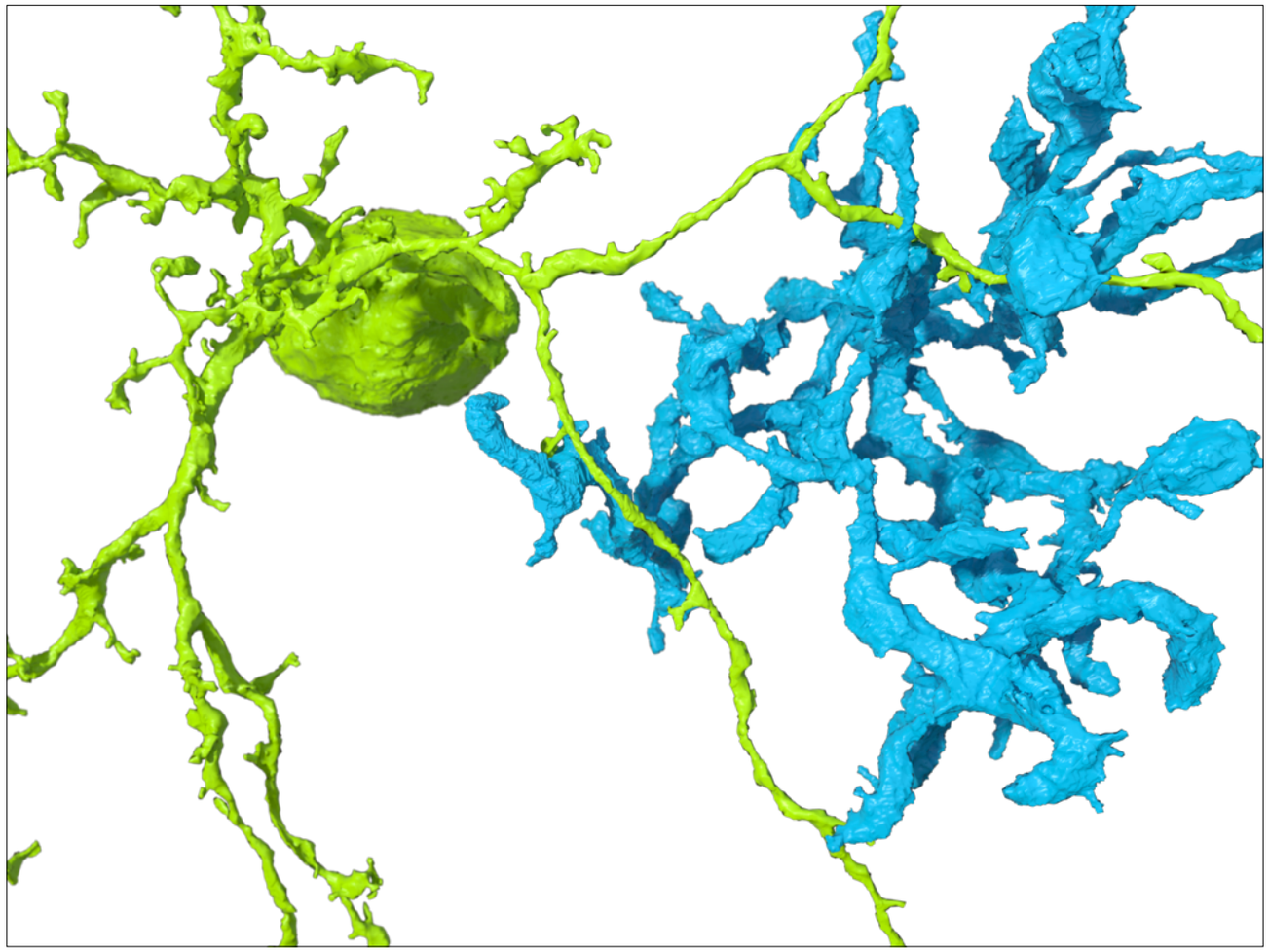
Executive Director, EyeWire
@amyleerobinson





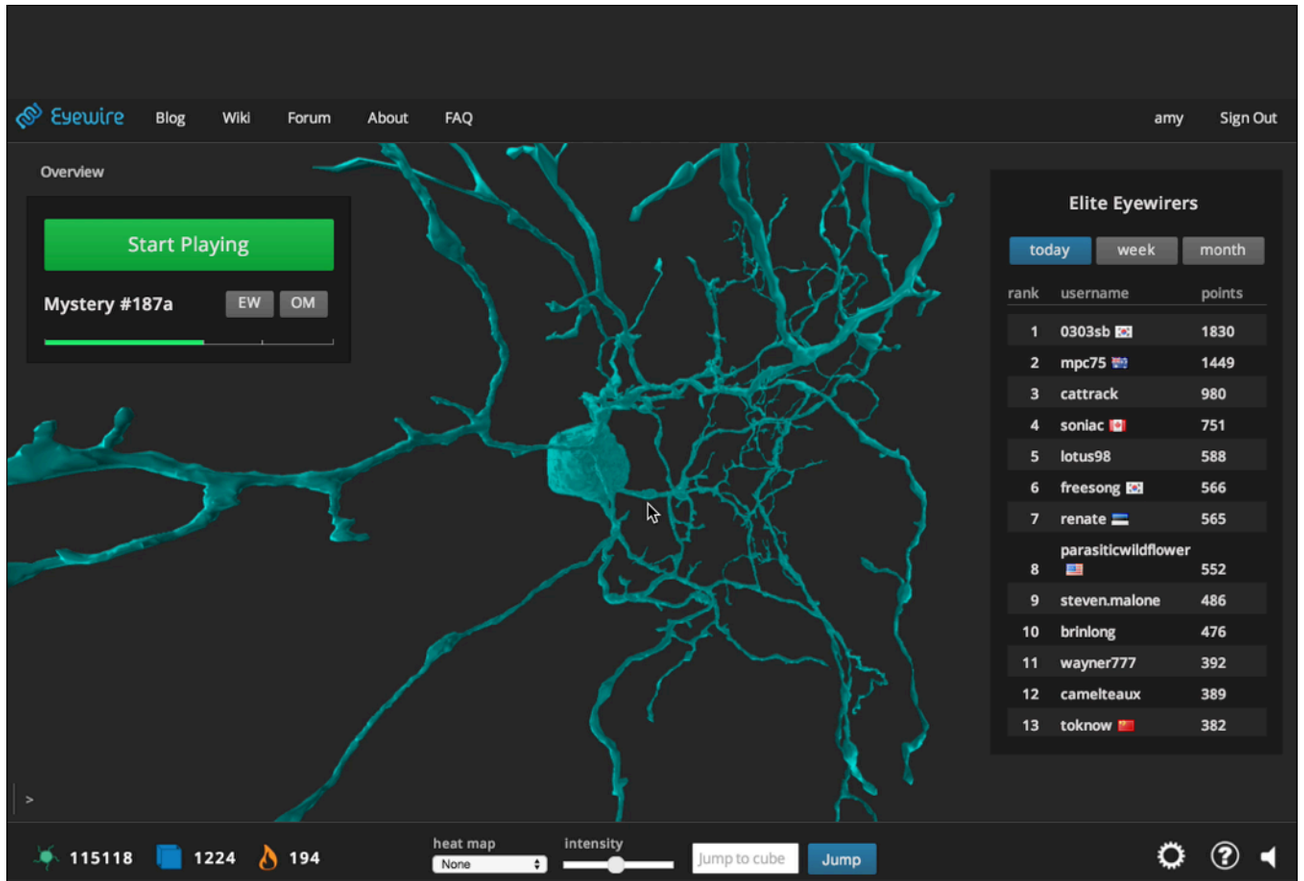






175K players

165 countries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4 soniac 751
5 lotus98 588
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8 parasiticwildflower 552
9 steven.malone 486
10 brinlong 476
11 wayner777 392
12 camelteaux 389
13 toknow 382
115118
1224
194
heat map
None
intensity
Jump to cube
Jump

Lessons from EyeWire

IDEA:

If we build it, they will play.

NOPE

REALITY:

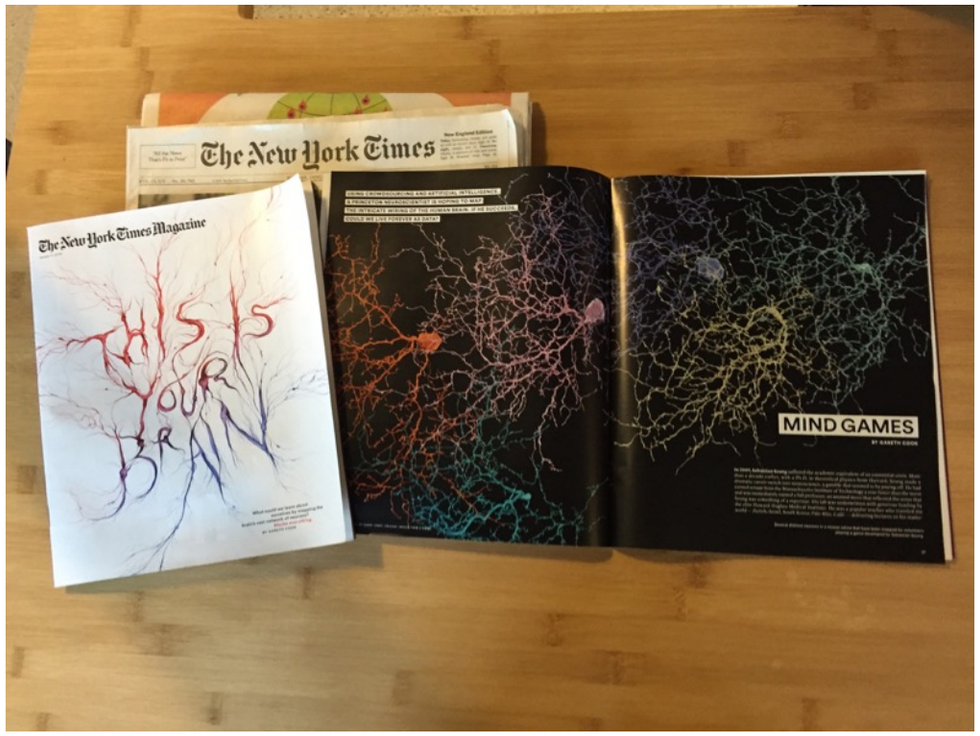
carefully crafted, slowly built community

no substitute for time spent interacting with participants. Talk about EyeWire chat

- in absence of (or even in addition to) metrics, interactions allow you to understand system flaws and strengths
- in our case, slowness and confusion. improve server speed, clarify tutorials, create helper videos.

MEDIA

crucial. 60% of eyewire signups come within 5 days of major media coverage.



most recently we were on the cover of the NYT. over the past two years over 300 news stories have covered us. We’re fortunate now that many media outlets come to us..but that wasn’t always the case.
we made it happen. aggressive outreach.

Established a presence on social media prior to outreach so when they look for us, there’s a history.
beyond media, allows participants to keep up with progress and connect with one another. We also share news and funny things.

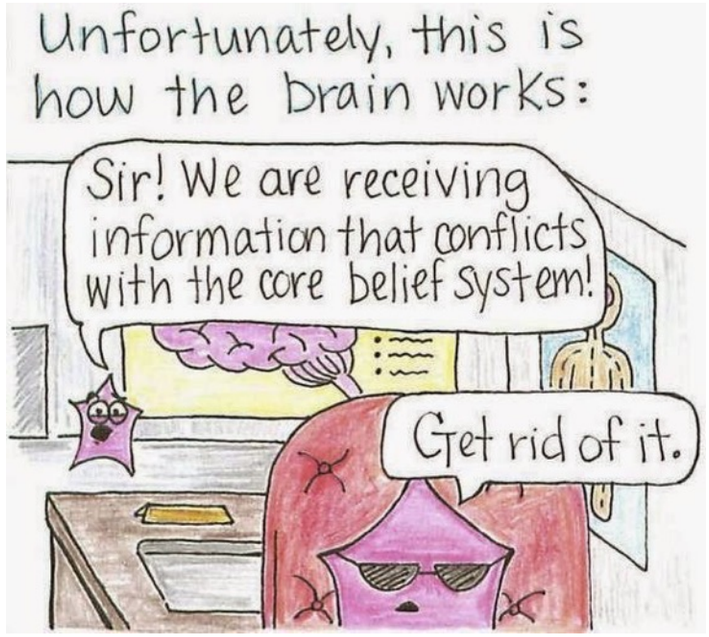
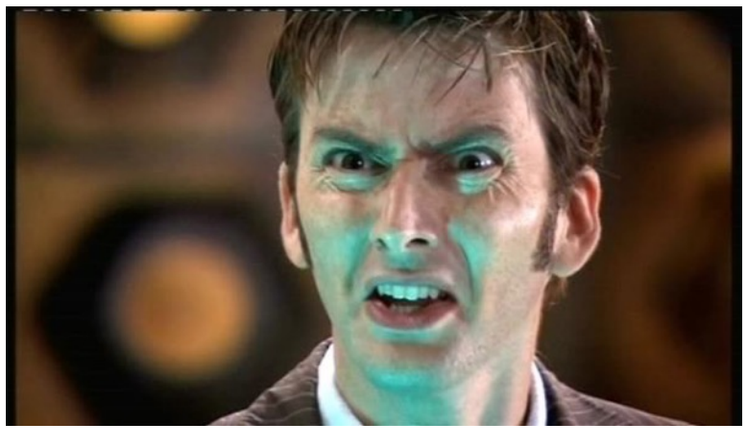


Image: Beatrice the Biologist

We also share news and funny things



don’t be afraid. you’ll be confused. we once got DONGed by vsauce. Yah. never know where your traffic flood will come from

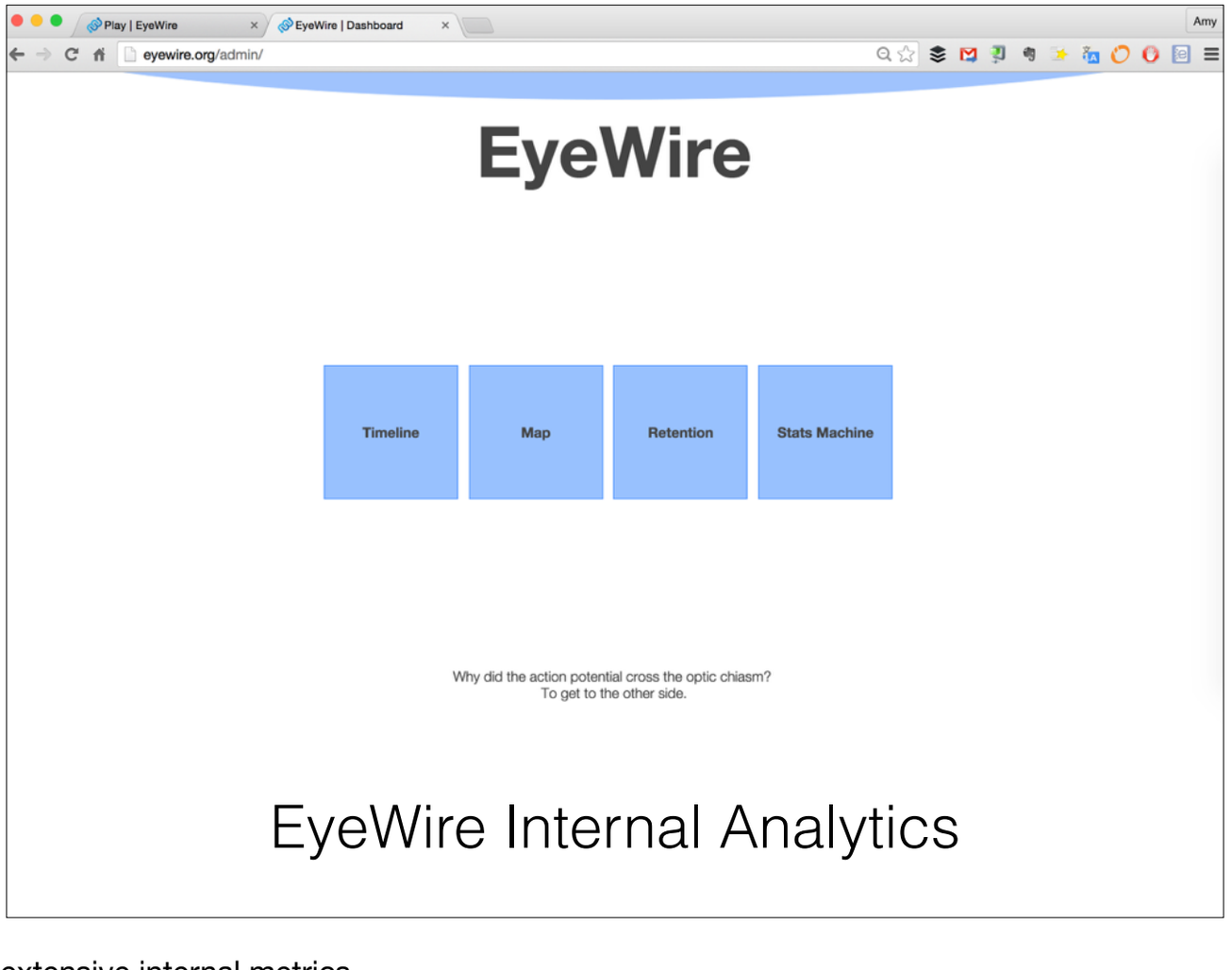
I F*ing Love Science

a lesson in new media. nouveau media, esp facebook pages and youtube channels, can send masses flooding to your site. IFLS sent 10x more traffic than the NYT. YouTube's Vsauce and Sourcefed nearly crashed our site. An obscure buzzfeed clone in Poland is still one of the top 30 referrals .

EyeWire All-Time Top Referrers — Google Analytics

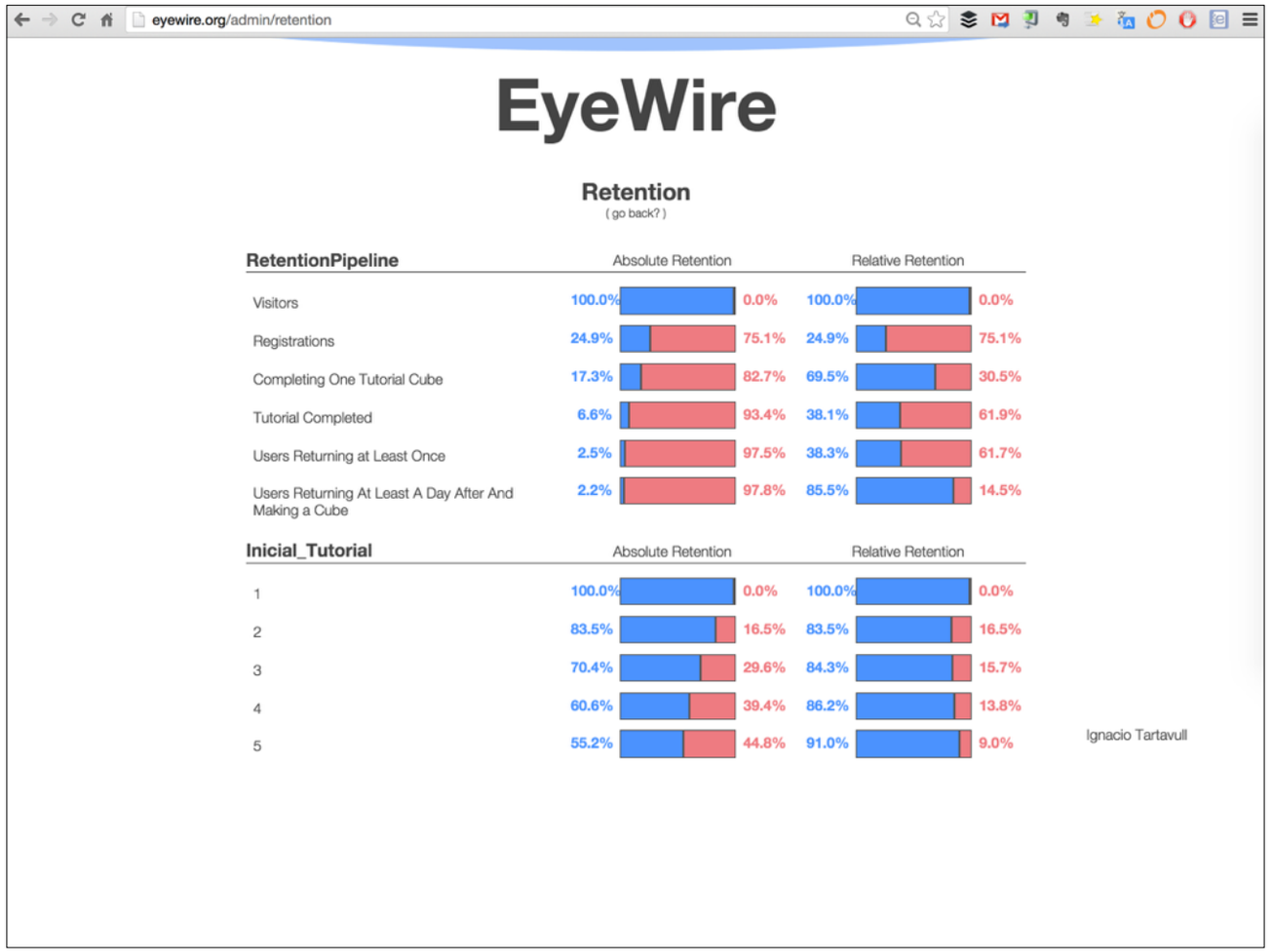
Source	Acquisition Sessions ↓
	667,081 % of Total: 46.84% (1,424,137)
1. eyewire.org	**190,511** (28.56%)
2. facebook.com	**72,736** (10.90%)
3. blog.eyewire.org	**41,362** (6.20%)
4. reddit.com	**38,652** (5.79%)
5. youtube.com	**35,697** (5.35%)
6. forum.eyewire.org	**21,075** (3.16%)
7. joemonster.org	**17,416** (2.61%)
8. npr.org	**15,613** (2.34%)
9. eyewire.olleh.com	**15,576** (2.33%)
10. iflscience.com	**12,542** (1.88%)

this should be all the evidence you need that SOCIAL MEDIA is how people will find you



EyeWire Internal Analytics

in addition to google analytics, we have extensive internal metrics



in addition to google analytics, we have extensive internal metrics

ENGAGEMENT

just because people sign up doesn’t mean they’ll stick around. For ex, we saw a huge dropoff a month after we launched - after a debate, we tried something. enter the eyewire games
but competitions have prizes…and we don’t have prizes besides points. And at the time we couldn’t even add bonus points in the game.

The EyeWire Games

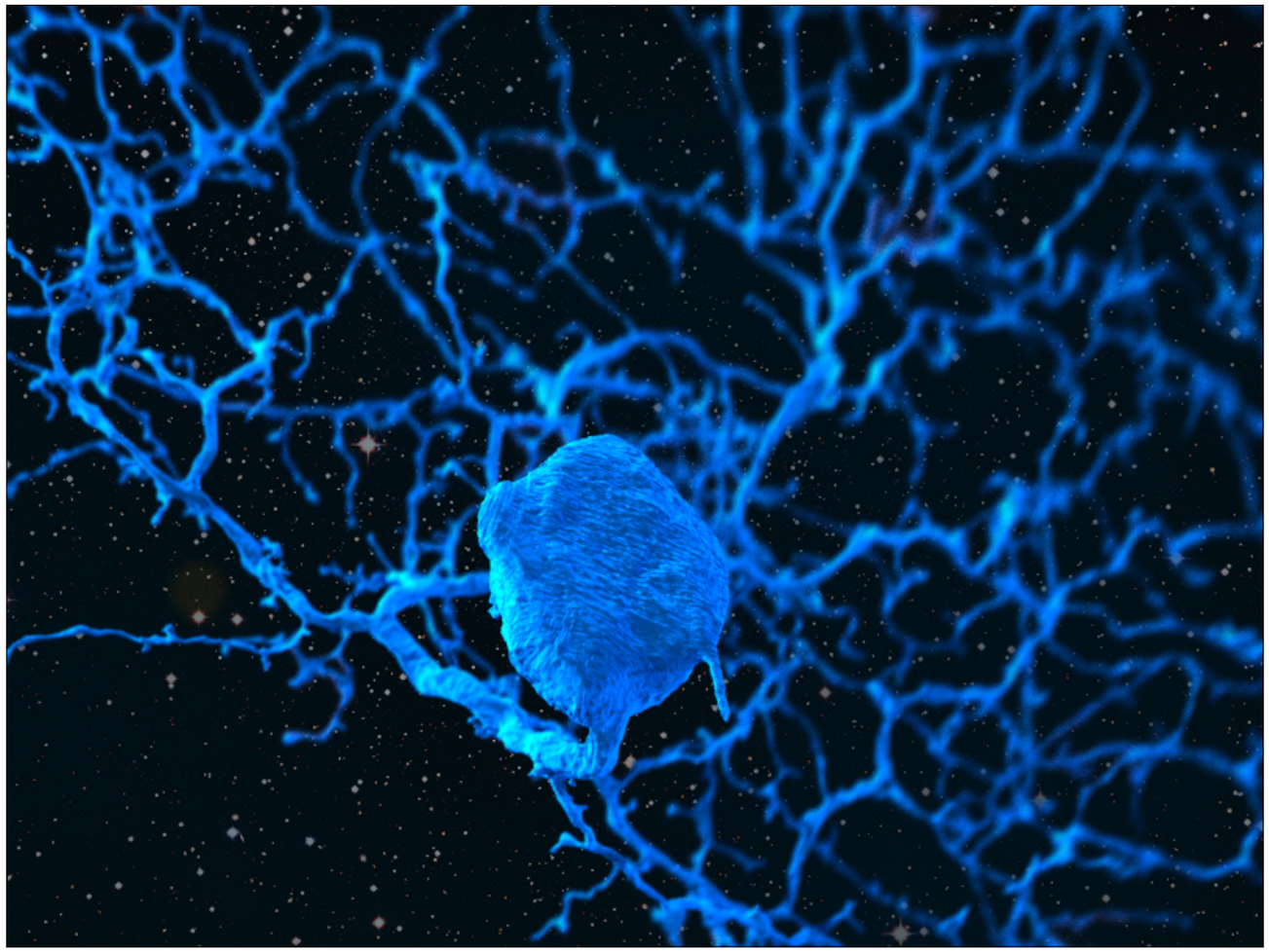
is naming a neuron a prize people care about?
social media showdown. doubles output

Image: The Oatmeal

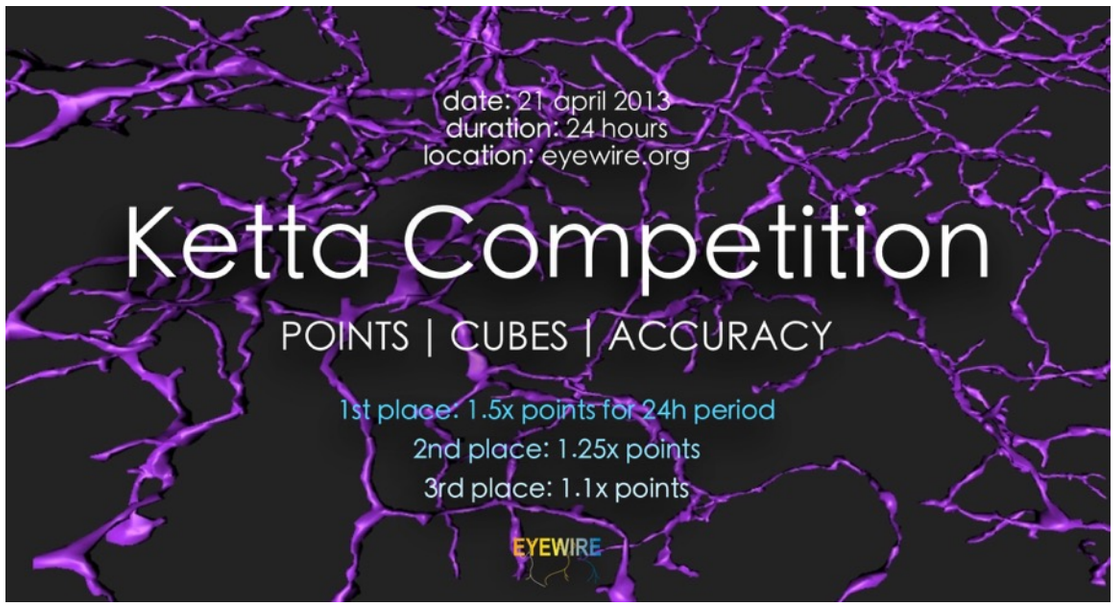
so much activity our servers crashed, which is another lesson for aspiring citizen science projects: be able to handle traffic surges. once the wave has passed, it won’t come again until a new article comes out.

LESSON:

prestige within a community FTW



in fact first neuron mapped in eyewire s named IFLS. I really want to get that in Nature
the first and not the last



while we built the team infrastucture, something amazing happened. players started challenging each other in the game. first with a 16 year old claiming he was the fastest neuron mapper in the world and that he could out-map any person on earth. so we backed up his claim with an “official” challenges coupled with points and glory. A 24 hour race ensued and yes he did literally stay up 24h to play. he’s since done it several times to beat all-time records. another note: Keep a record book!
His challenge inspired others.
this wouldn’t have been possible if we didn’t have relationships with our players

ACCURACY & EFFICIENCY

eyewire is completes 5x the work with the same effort now as compared to 2 years ago. this is thanks to

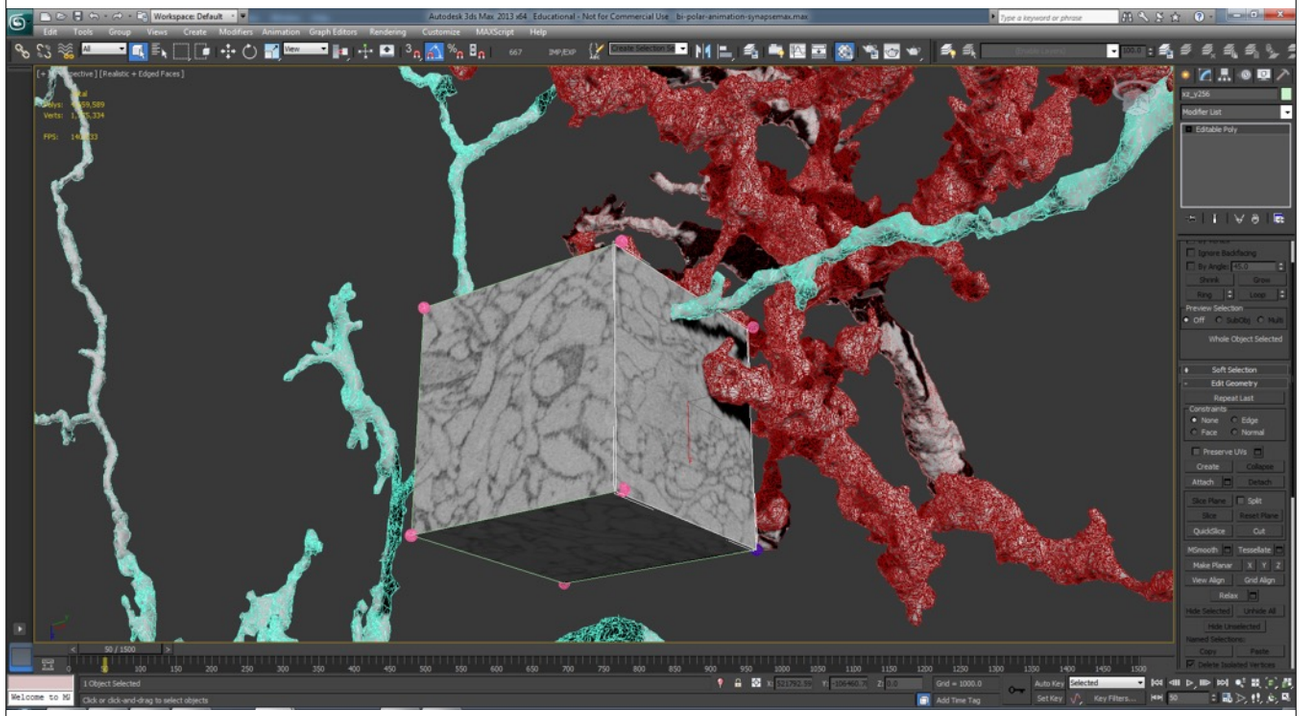
power players

in eyewire, and this is prob the case in your projects - a small fraction of players do almost all the work.

kevin slavin story of killing a game by making it super efficient
- talk briefly about accuracy checks
- top players leveling up to unlock skills that were formerly reserved for lab members

now i want to move on to a part of our project that has become so central that I think it helps define us and that is

DESIGN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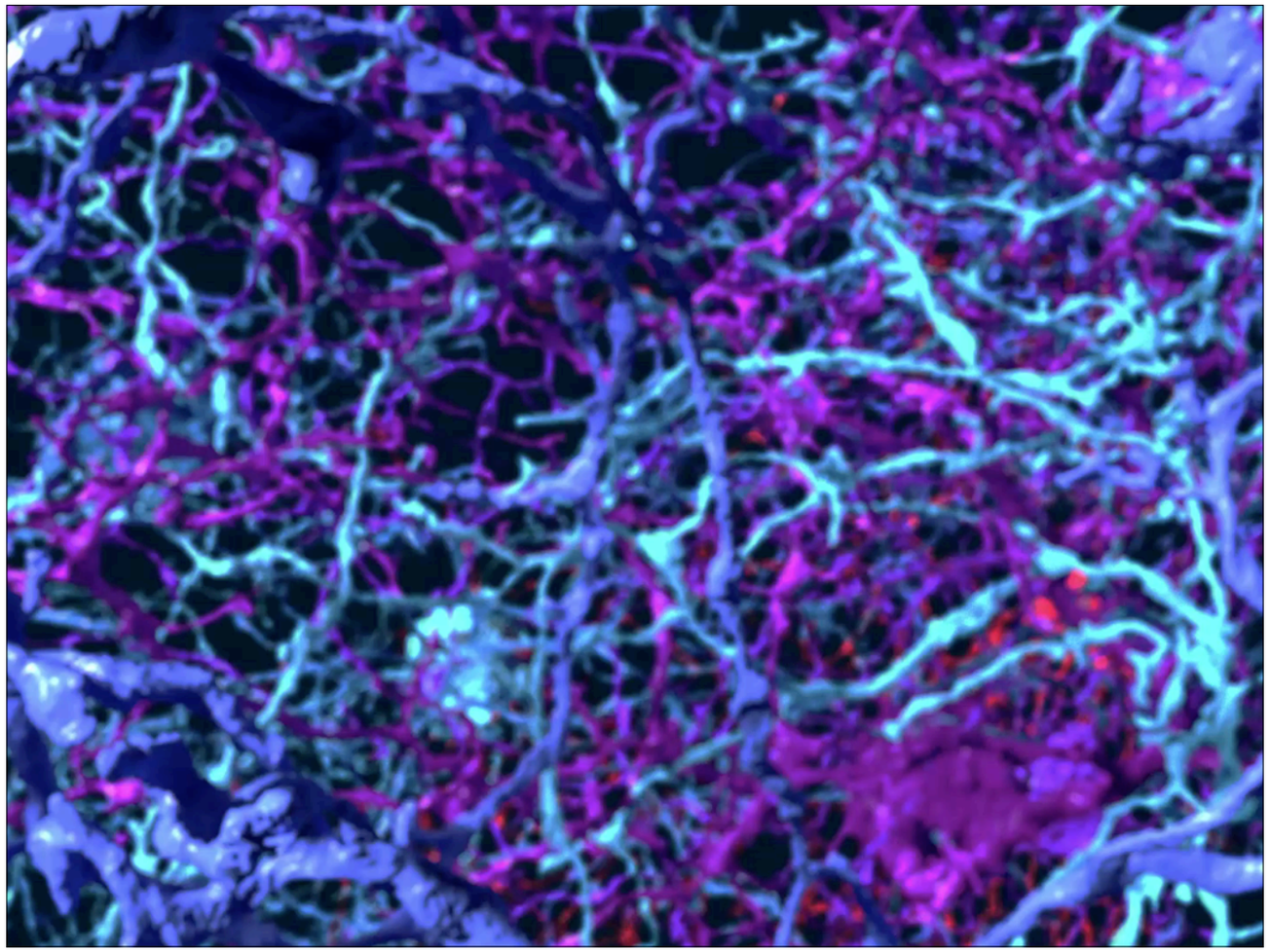
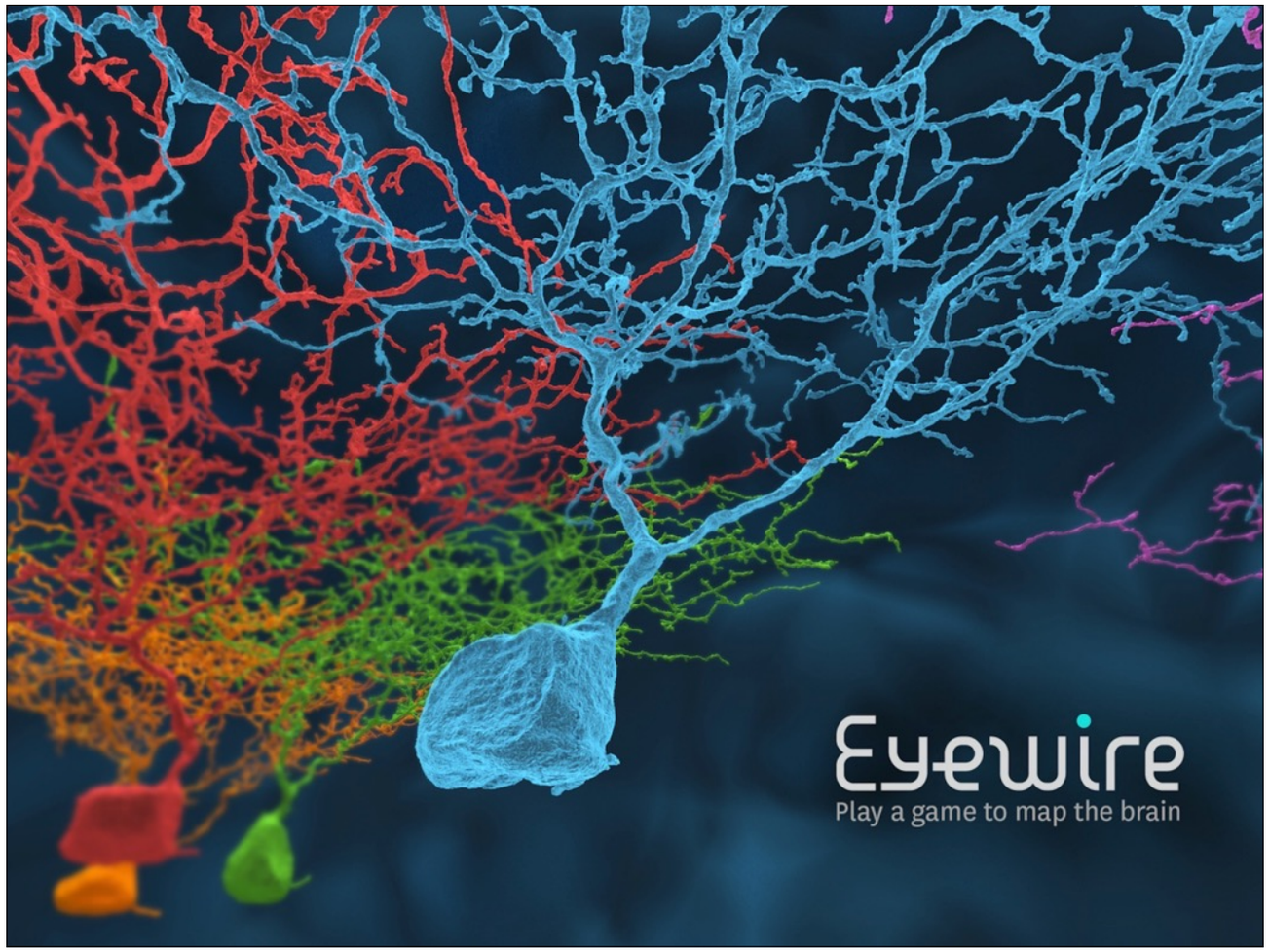
Click or click-and-drag to select objects

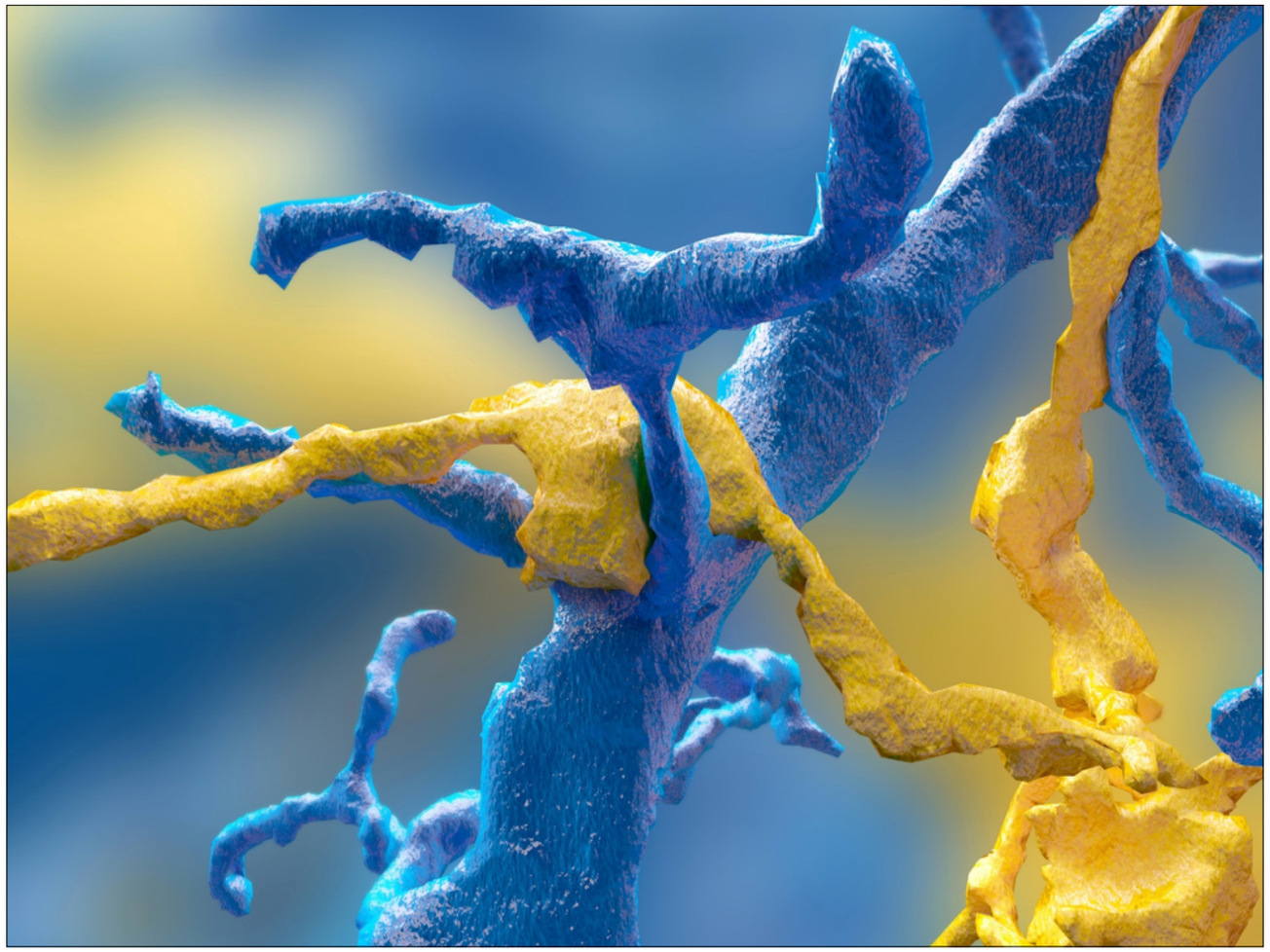
EYEWIRE

Eyewire
A GAME TO MAP THE BRAIN



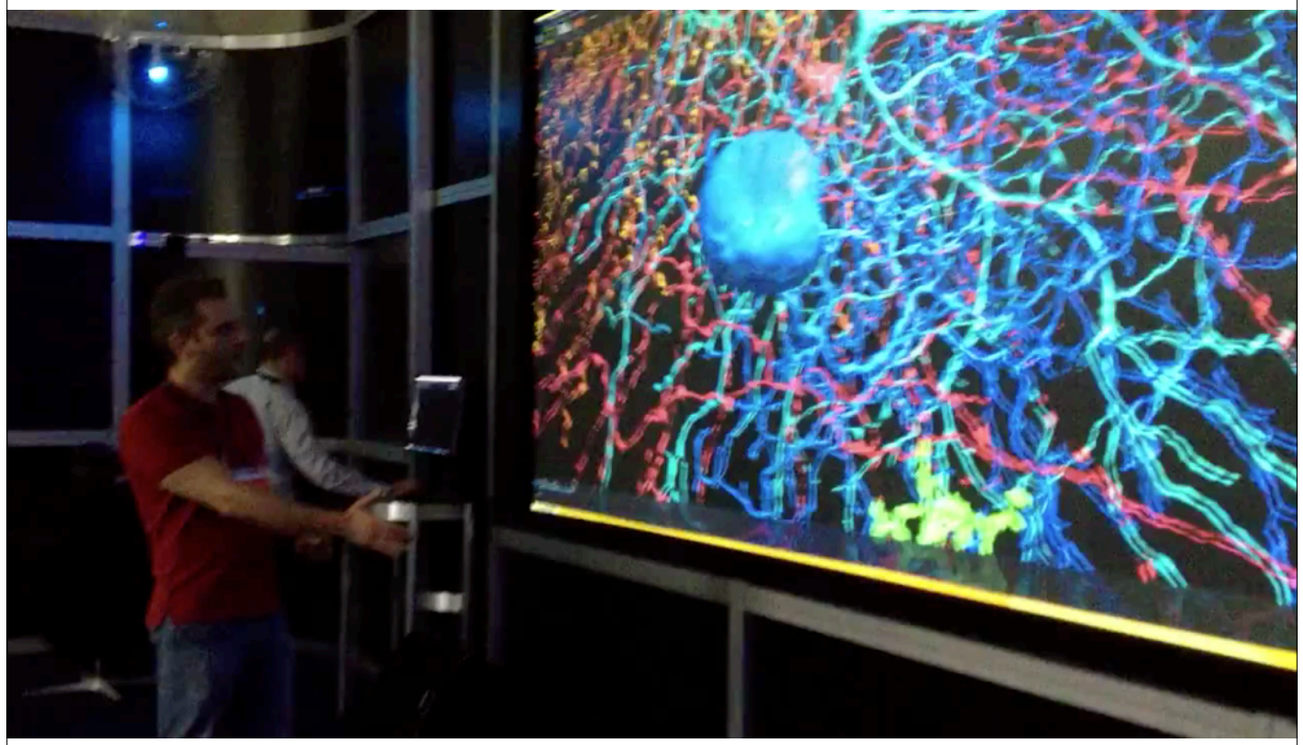
redesign and UX - doubles conversion

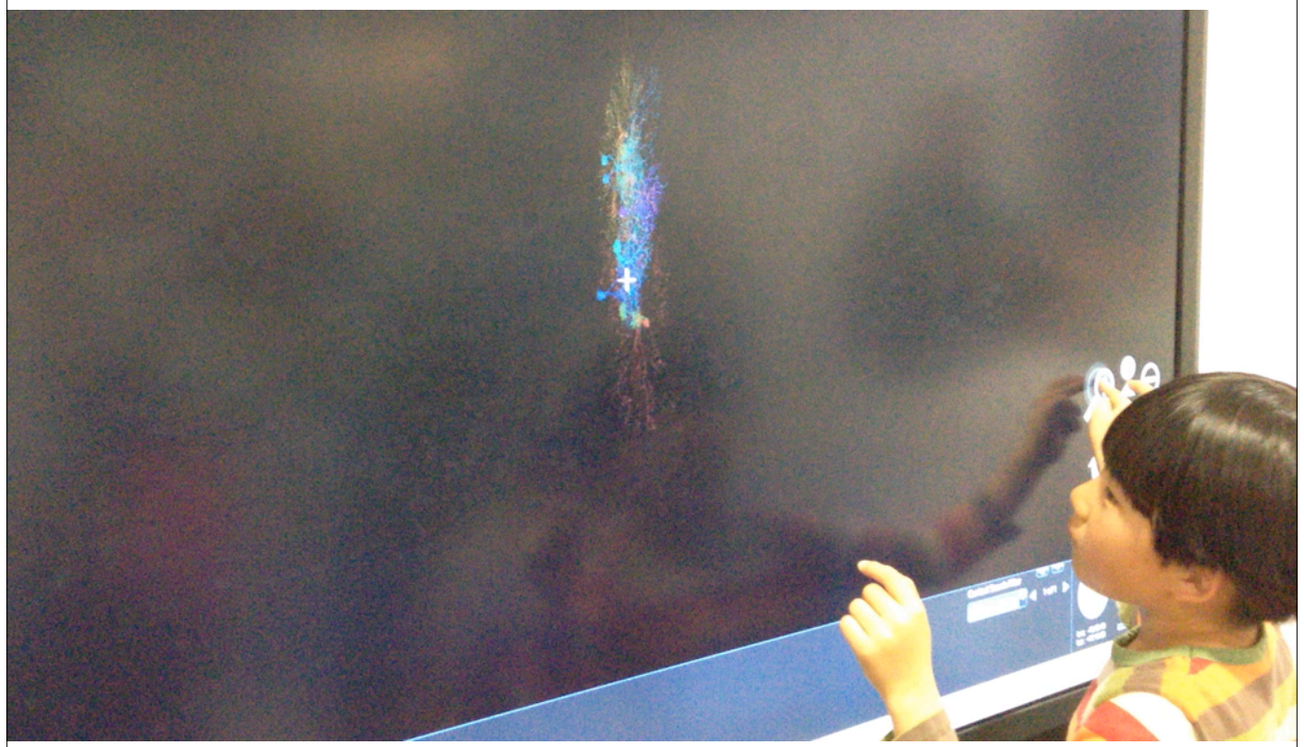

Eyewire
Play a game to map the brain



OUTREACH & COLLABORATION

citizen science is about bringing science to the masses.

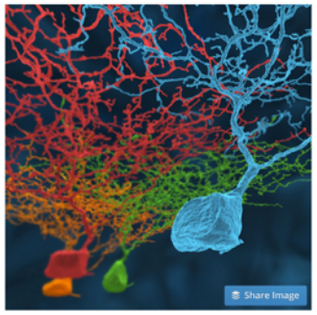




eyewire animations play in Times Square for an entire month

Brain Lab

We're also working with computational neuroscientist Sebastian Seung and his team to develop a Lab that will challenge users to map some of the millions of neural connections that are involved in such functions as vision and memory formation. Combined with NOVA videos, Seung's EyeWire game will help users learn about brain function while also contributing to real-world research.



Map neural connections and help scientists determine exactly how the brain's structure leads to functions like vision.

Image courtesy of EyeWire

science should be fun

Humanize ourselves

players made that - it’s one of many

RECAP

Science
Community
Media
Engagement
Design
Outreach
Collaboration
Risk
Fun

amy@eyewire.org

White House think tank and another White House gamejam; OSTP citizen science toolkit on how to build a citric game including: team members, roles, budget, how to citsci-ify your

for SCIENCE!
eyewire