Our Story
Founded in 2013, the Ability Project is an interdisciplinary research space dedicated to the intersection between disability and technology. Through classes and research projects, we foster collaboration between individuals with disabilities and advocates, engineers, designers, educators, artists, and clinicians. We are committed to social impact in our research and teaching and regularly collaborate with community members.

Significant Projects and Activities
1. **Assistive Technology Development**: Our students and faculty have a long history developing novel assistive technologies through classes and research projects. These technologies are built in close collaboration with end-users, clinicians, and domain experts. Past projects include phone applications to teach daily living skills or memory, wheelchair umbrellas, and tactile graphics for computer science and electronics education.

   We are developing a multisensory room at the **NYU Dental School’s Center for Oral Health for People with Disabilities** for patients to relax before receiving treatment. We collaborated with **Rusk Rehabilitation** to develop 3D printed splints for children with cerebral palsy.

2. **Accessibility Assessment**: We collaborate with local industry, cultural centers, and non-profits to assess physical and digital accessibility. After an assessment, we propose both high and low-tech solutions to address any identified accessibility problems.

   We collaborated with the **Cooper-Hewitt Museum** to conduct a usability and accessibility evaluation of their website, and explore the feasibility of deploying navigation and AR/VR technology in the museum. We also worked with **Charter Communications** to identify accessibility challenges with home entertainment products.

3. **Hands-On Learning and Community Engagement**: Our faculty teach accessibility-focused courses. In these classes, students learn through theoretical and experiential learning with guest lectures, field trips to local organizations, and hands-on activities.

   Students work on group projects in collaboration with community mentors to design functional prototypes, uncover accessibility challenges, evaluate technologies, and tell community stories. Collaborators include **Adapt Community Network**, **Adaptive Design Associates**, **HeartShare Community Services**, and **Helen Keller Services for the Blind**.