



Sara Brown, PR Manager

Sbrown@aph.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

APH Braille Laptop Featured in GitHub Hackathon to Advance Accessibility

Louisville, KY (May 14, 2026) – American Printing House for the Blind (APH) is partnering with GitHub to spotlight the future of accessible technology at the Open Source Assistive Technology Hackathon, May 21–22, at the GitHub headquarters in San Francisco. The event will highlight the APH Monarch, a first-of-its-kind braille laptop transforming how people who are blind or low vision access information.

Held in recognition of Global Accessibility Awareness Day on May 21, the hackathon will bring together developers, educators, and accessibility advocates to build applications for the Monarch, which integrates tactile graphics with braille on a 10-line by 32-cell refreshable display.

At the hackathon, participants will develop 16 assistive technology projects, with three specially designed for the Monarch. Featured concepts include Tempest Touch, a real-time tactile weather map; a DeafBlind TTY Application for accessible, two-way communication; and a Tactile Block Game exploring interactive, touch-based gameplay.

Participants will use the same software development kit (SDK) as APH engineers, with temporary access provided during the event and an option to continue development through a free license agreement.

“Being part of GitHub’s Open Source Assistive Technology Hackathon marks an exciting moment for the Monarch as we continue to push the boundaries of innovation and accessibility,” said Heather Kennedy-MacKenzie, APH’s Director of Global Technology Innovations. “Collaborating with forward-thinking creators and developers inspires us to imagine what’s possible and build technology that creates meaningful impact for everyone.”

Developed by APH and HumanWare, the Monarch enables users to download digital textbooks and access tactile graphics through APH’s Tactile Graphics Image Library (TGIL), reducing delays that have long limited timely access to braille materials. By combining

braille and tactile graphics in a single, interactive device, the Monarch helps students access critical learning content more efficiently while reducing the burden on Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVIs).

The free event is open to developers, educators, people with lived experience, and open-source contributors. A GitHub Learning Room will offer hands-on training in accessible development.

With 180 participants already registered and a growing waitlist, the event reflects rising momentum around accessible innovation, and the Monarch as a platform for change.

GitHub's headquarters is located at 88 Colin P Kelly Jr St, San Francisco, CA 94107.

About American Printing House

[American Printing House for the Blind](#) is a leader in designing innovative lifelong learning solutions for children and adults who are blind or low vision. We believe in the power and necessity of learning to open the doors to educational success, satisfying employment, and personal well-being. We level the learning playing field for students who are blind or low vision by providing specialized technology, materials, products, and services that are essential for education and life.

About GitHub

[GitHub](#) is the world's leading platform for agentic software development — powered by Copilot to build, scale, and deliver secure software. Over 180 million developers, including more than 90% of the Fortune 100 companies, use GitHub to collaborate, and more than 77,000 organizations have adopted GitHub Copilot.