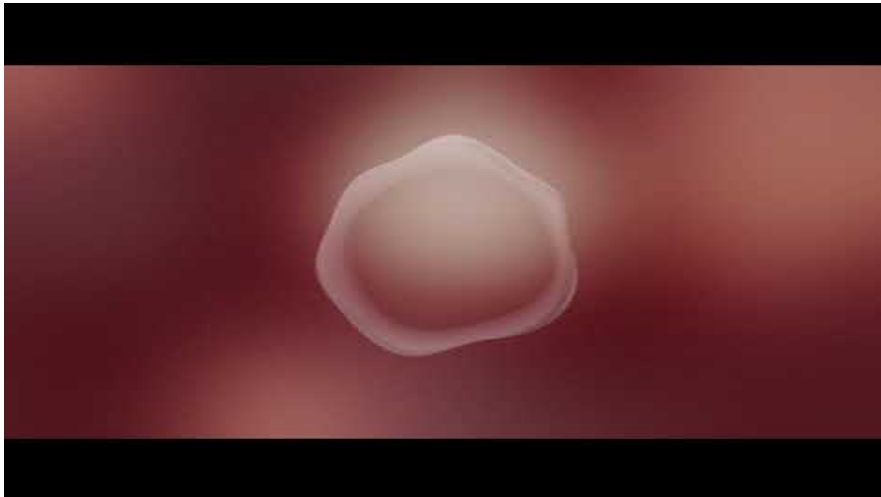

Q IS THE WORLD'S FIRST GENDERLESS VOICE

By Livvy Houghton and Holly Friend

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Meet Q: The First Genderless Voice by Virtue

Watch this video at <https://www.lsnglobal.com/news/article/23782/q-is-the-world-s-first-genderless-voice>

Austin – Created by Vice Media’s creative agency Virtue, the genderless voice aims to combat sex bias in artificial intelligence.

According to Virtue, technology companies gender their voice products in order to fit harmful stereotypes. For example, a male voice is used in more authoritative roles, such as banking, and a female voice in service-orientated roles, such as Amazon’s Alexa. To counter this, the company built a genderless voice designed to be used in voice-assisted products such as Amazon Echo or Google Home, in addition to public place such as train stations.

To create Q, the voices of five people who identify as non-binary were recorded. This amalgamated voice was then tested through a Europe-wide survey, which asked participants to rate the voice on a scale of male to female, finally finding a gender-neutral balance.

In an age in which artificial intelligence permeates all aspects of our lives, it is imperative that we embed ethics into the foundations of AI.