*The Power of Storytelling*

**Gamifying museum experiences to break down barriers**

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***The Power of Storytelling: Gamifying museum experiences to break down barriers***

**1. Introduction**

Colchester + Ipswich Museums (CIMS) is an innovative local authority museum partnership between Colchester Borough Council and Ipswich Borough Council and brings together six venues: Colchester Castle, Natural History Museum and Hollytrees Museum in Colchester and Ipswich Museum, Christchurch Mansion and Ipswich Art Gallery. We are a leading regional museum service with a significant track record of achievement and we play a high-profile role in the East of England.

Our mission is to inspire creativity and learning through the innovative use of venues and collections that appeal to and connect audiences locally, regionally and nationally. Our aim is for visitors to have an enjoyable, educational and memorable experience which makes them want to visit again and encourage others to visit. We work hard to identify and attract new and diverse audiences, ensuring that we have something to offer everyone and that local people feel a sense of ownership and pride in their Museums.

We are offering an opportunity for an individual or small team of Computer Studies/Games Design students to apply their skills in a heritage context and to work with us to design and present a concept for a gallery interactive which helps interpret museum objects and the information we hold about them in creative and engaging ways.

**2.** **Background**

Our upcoming catalytic exhibition, *The Power of Storytelling* will invite visitors to think about how the stories we are told have an impact on how we view and treat each other. We aim to provoke discussion about what ‘culture’ means and how stories can be used for positive and negative purposes. We will display 3 costumes from *Marvel Studios’ Black Panther* as objects which will link modern day storytelling with museum collections which relate to three key themes:

* storytelling as a way of keeping heritage alive
* storytelling as a tool for influencing thoughts and behaviour
* stories which are not told, and the impact of not storytelling

*The Power of Storytelling* will run from 4th July 2020 until 31st January 2021 in Christchurch Mansion.

The exhibition is targeted at young people (14-25yrs) and families, but we know it will also be popular with adult Marvel fans too. The final object list is still to be finalised but will include objects from our world cultures, local social history, archaeology, natural history and fine/decorative arts collections. For the purposes of this brief, please base your concept on the museum collections, not on the Marvel Studios’ items. We will provide a provisional list of objects which will be in the exhibition.

We hope the exhibition will provoke conversations between visitors and cause people to think a little bit more about the stories we are told throughout our lives and in society. Some of the objects will have obvious links to the themes (for instance, shadow puppets and children's books), but we will also achieve this objective through our interpretation (labels, interactive opportunities, events, etc.). As part of *The Power of Storytelling* we are keen to explore how games and gameplaying can be used to help create more interactive – and therefore memorable - experiences for visitors.

**3. Project Overview**

The aim of this project is to explore how games can enrich a museum experience.

You are invited to work as individuals or groups to produce a concept idea that:

* Increase enjoyment of the collections
* Encourages group learning and fun activities
* Increases engagement with the objects and themes of the exhibition
* Increases understanding of the collections
* Increases the amount of time people spend in the exhibition
* Reduces the amount of text panels on the wall in the displays

You will work closely with the Collections & Learning and Exhibitions Teams at the museum on this project, who will offer support in helping you develop your ideas. We are interested in good quality concepts rather than quantity – we would rather you developed one sound concept rather than several weaker ones.

**4. Outcomes and deliverables**

1. Concept(s) that

* Is based upon one or more of the bullet points above
* Can be explained in three sentences to museum visitors
* Is quick and simple to build/set up within the timeline

1. A rough list of costs and suppliers for any peripheral technology or materials needed to execute the concept.
2. A short presentation for your tutors and museum staff about your concept.

**5. Timeline**

Autumn 2019 Concept submission

Autumn/Winter 2019 Concept presentations

May 2020 Exhibition installation begins

04 July 2020 Exhibition opens to the public.