



Story:Web Research – Information for Participants

You are invited to take part in research on interactive media systems for museums and social media that could be used to think about climate change and other environmental issues. Before you decide whether to take part it is important that you understand what the research is, and what it will involve. Please take time to read the information below carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask one of the research team if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information.

This study is being led by Simon Bowen from Newcastle University's Open Lab.

About Story:Web

'Story:Web' was a winning entry for the 'Reimagining Museums for Climate Action' design competition, which asked what it would take for museums to become catalysts for radical climate action. The idea was developed by a team from the Great North Museum: Hancock and Open Lab at Newcastle University together with Sarah Mander at the University of Manchester and sound artist David de la Haye. Our Story:Web idea suggests how people might make sense of climate action using museum objects, images and sounds shared online, and their own experiences. An interactive demonstration of how Story:Web could work was on display at the Glasgow Science Centre as part of COP26, the UN Climate Conference.

With your help, we are now going to build a working prototype system – inspired by Story:Web – including a way of using museum objects, images and sounds on social media and in an interactive exhibit in the Great North Museum: Hancock, powered by technology like artificial intelligence.

About the research

The project will also investigate how museums can become more interesting and relevant to people aged 16-25, and how people can use the prototype system to discuss and think about environmental issues on social media and in museums.

Is the project just about climate action?

No. Climate action was the topic of the 'Reimagining Museums for Climate Action' design competition. However, there are other environmental issues like biodiversity loss, food security and energy sustainability that the collections of the Great North Museum: Hancock relate to. We will begin with climate action then explore other issues according to the interests and ideas of those taking part.

What will happen if I take part?

We will design the working Story:Web system together in a series of four workshops plus some short tasks in between workshops.

If you take part in workshops, we will also ask you to complete a questionnaire at the start and end of the project to ask about your social media use and expectations for the project. We may also ask you to do a short interview at the end of the project to talk about what it was like taking part. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions, they simply help us understand what has changed.

When and where will the workshops be?

There will be four workshops during the project, which will take place approximately every month from the end of January 2022.

Workshops will last around one hour and take place online using Zoom or Teams. Later workshops may happen at the Great North Museum: Hancock or at Newcastle University, in central Newcastle, if COVID restrictions permit. You will be able to attend all workshops online if you prefer.

What will happen in the workshops?

Workshops will include group activities with us and the other participants to:

- Share how you currently use social media and make sense of environmental issues;
- Explore objects in the Great North Museum: Hancock's collection that relate to these issues;
- Explore how images and sounds shared online can help communicate these issues;
- Demonstrate and experiment with technologies like artificial intelligence that make finding and connecting collection objects, images and sounds easier;
- Develop the Story:Web idea into something people aged 16-25 (and others) would like to use in a museum and on social media, which the research team will then build;
- Evaluate the Story:Web system as it develops and the process of developing it.

What will happen in the online activities?

We will share the issues and ideas discussed in the design workshops online so that other people can discuss them and add their own contributions. We will ask your permission before posting any of your issues or ideas.

What are the benefits of taking part?

You will help shape an interactive media system that helps people make sense of environmental issues and work out what and how to take action on them. This could mean more people understand what they can do in relation to, for example, climate change or biodiversity loss.

Through taking part you can understand more about topics like climate action, and how museum collections relate to them. You can also understand more about digital technology such as artificial intelligence and the software behind social media.

We also hope that you will benefit through 'co-designing' the Story:Web system itself with us, and build your confidence and experience as a result.

We hope to benefit as researchers in working with you in learning how you make sense of and discuss environmental issues on social media. We also hope to benefit in understanding how you can discover and use museum collection objects, and the stories behind them, in your social media conversations.

What are the disadvantages of taking part?

Participating in the workshops should not cause you any disadvantages or discomfort. The potential physical and/or psychological harm or distress will be the same as any experienced in everyday life. During workshops we ask that you contribute to honest and respectful discussions, and also ask that you also respect other people's confidentiality during the sessions.

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Please be aware that some of the online activities may require a good internet connection and/or use data allowance.

What information will you collect?

We will audio record interviews and video record workshop activities, and collect questionnaire responses and notes, drawings and other materials created in workshops.

What will happen with this information?

Audio recordings will be transcribed with your name and any other personally identifiable information removed. We will photograph, video record, screen-capture or scan workshop notes, drawings, and other materials with any personally identifiable information removed. Names and other personally identifiable information in social media conversation excerpts will also be removed.

This anonymised information will then be analysed by the research team, and stored on Newcastle University secure servers (computers).

What will happen to the results of the research?

We will build a working Story:Web system during the project, including a way of using museum collection objects on social media and an interactive exhibit for the Great North Museum: Hancock.

The results of the research will be shared with other museums and researchers to help them understand how something like Story:Web can change public understanding of global issues like climate action, and help people work out what they can do in response. We will write papers and presentations for professional and academic conferences and publications. We will not include your name or any other personally identifiable information in these papers and presentations. We will also share any software we create using Open Source licences so that other museums and organisations can re-use and adapt it themselves.

Who is the sponsor and data controller for this research?

Newcastle University is the sponsor for this research based in the United Kingdom. Newcastle University will be using information you have shared in order to undertake this research and will act as the data controller. This means that Newcastle University is responsible for looking after your information and using it properly.

The lawful basis for carrying out this study under GDPR is Task in the Public Interest, (Article 6,1e) as research is cited as part of the University's duties. Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as Newcastle University need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. If you withdraw from the study, Newcastle University will keep the information about you that has already been obtained. To safeguard your rights, the minimum personally-identifiable information will be used.

You can find out more about how Newcastle University uses your information at <https://www.ncl.ac.uk/data.protection/dataprotectionpolicy/privacynotice/> and/or by contacting their Data Protection Officer (Maureen Wilkinson, rec-man@ncl.ac.uk). If you are not satisfied with their response you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO): <https://ico.org.uk/>

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Has this research received ethical approval?

Yes. It has been designed and will be conducted to follow the principles of Newcastle University's ethics policy and best practice for research with human participants.

What happens if I no longer want to take part?

You can stop taking part in the research at any point, without giving reasons, by contacting the research team. We respect your decision and you will not be questioned on why you no longer want to take part.

For further information about the project, please contact:

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