

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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MuseWeb Launches \$25,000 *Be Here: Baltimore* Cultural Storytelling Fund

Foundation Partners with Local Institutions to Launch Innovative
Cultural Storytelling Initiative

June 14, 2016 (Baltimore, MD)— The *Be Here: Baltimore* initiative (formerly named *Connected Cities*) has launched with a call for cultural storytelling proposals. This initiative from the MuseWeb Foundation aims to make Baltimore's culture and heritage more visible, relevant, and accessible to local and global audiences. Following its success in Baltimore, the foundation plans to replicate the project in other cities around the country.

The MuseWeb Foundation is partnering with international mobile storytelling platform innovators izi.TRAVEL to provide cultural storytellers and institutions across the city with \$25,000 in funding to help them tell Baltimore's stories through open mobile platforms. Twenty projects will be granted \$1,000 each to create location-based digital content about Baltimore's cultural heritage and collections designed for mobile users. After the delivery of the projects on August 15, a further \$5,000 in matching grants will be divided among the most successful projects for creating additional content and expanding the mobile experiences.

MuseWeb will provide awardees support and training on successful mobile experience creation and digital publishing to the recommended open platforms in the form of workshops and online help materials. Two grant-writing workshops will also be held in June-July to help storytellers write the best project proposals possible. For more information on the project, visit <http://www.museweb.us/be-here-baltimore-call-for-proposals/> or e-mail info@museweb.us.

"The unique and varied landscape of cultures and histories in Baltimore, together with the city's powerful artistic communities, create a perfect environment for introducing and developing the *Be Here* project before expanding the network to other cities," said Nancy Proctor, Executive Director for MuseWeb. She added, "We know that Baltimore already has great stories and great cultural institutions. We want to help bring the city's cultural storytellers together to promote greater global as well as local awareness of the terrific work taking place here, and provide a platform where authentic Baltimore stories told from more perspectives are available to more people."

About MuseWeb

The MuseWeb Foundation is a new nonprofit offshoot of the international Museums and the Web Conference (MW), which began in 1997. In 2014, Museums and the Web brought more than 600 leaders in cultural innovation to Baltimore for its annual North American conference. For the past 20 years, MW has showcased and documented leading work in the cultural field in a free and open archive of more than 1,000 conference papers. The MuseWeb Foundation was conceived as an accelerator of cultural innovation to help develop and fund some of the most promising projects and initiatives from the conference and the cultural heritage field at large. *Be Here* is the flagship project of the foundation.

MuseWeb's Executive Director is [Nancy Proctor](#), who until recently was Deputy Director for Digital Experience and Communications at The Baltimore Museum of Art (BMA). While at the BMA, Nancy won

a [2014 Baltimore Innovation Award](#) for best Artist/Creative Group of the Year for her work with the Museums and the Web Conference and Baltimore Museum of Art. Prior to joining the BMA, Nancy was Head of Mobile Strategies and Initiatives for the Smithsonian Institution. She has a Ph.D. in Art History and more than 20 years of experience in developing new technologies, innovation strategies and digital publishing for both non-profit and commercial organizations.

About izi.TRAVEL

Izi.TRAVEL enables people to use their smartphones as personal guides through new places and cultures around the world. With two million downloads, izi.TRAVEL is the most popular storytelling platform for location-based audio and multimedia guides. The free app currently features over 2,000 city tours and 800 museum guides to 900 destinations all over the world. Travelers discover the world with multilingual tours that combine art and culture with local stories, while cities, museums and tourism authorities use izi's free and open platform to promote their local cultural heritage. The content of the app is constantly refreshed by tourism and cultural institutions, city authorities, and passionate storytellers who want to share their knowledge and inspire others.

Headquartered in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, izi.TRAVEL is represented by experts on four continents. izi.TRAVEL sponsors numerous story-creation initiatives around the world and helps cultural institutions and related businesses build consortiums for grant applications.

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