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MuseWeb Selects Baltimore for $25,000 Connected Cities Fund
Foundation Partners with Local Institutions to Launch Innovative
Cultural Storytelling Initiative

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May 23, 2016 (Baltimore, MD)—*Connected Cities* is launching in Baltimore with a $25,000 fund to help connect storytellers and other stakeholders in the city's creative ecosystem and make the city's diverse voices more visible to local and global audiences. This new initiative from the MuseWeb Foundation aims to support urban transformation and sustainability for Baltimore's vibrant communities through open platforms and technologies that enable the digital recording and sharing of cultural stories. Following its success in Baltimore, the foundation plans to replicate the project in other cities around the country.

The *Connected Cities: Baltimore* project aims to engage not only the cultural community, but also government and commercial partners with the belief that a thriving cultural sector is indispensable for prosperous businesses and economies. The MuseWeb Foundation is partnering with international mobile storytelling platform innovators izi.TRAVEL to provide cultural storytellers and institutions across the city with seed funding as well as training and expertise in new digital publishing technologies. MuseWeb will be holding a meeting on Tuesday, May 24 with representatives of local cultural institutions, tourism professionals and business and community leaders to plan the administration of the grant. For more information on the foundation or the project, visit http://www.museweb.us/ 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 *Connected Cities* 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. *Connected Cities* is the flagship project of the foundation.

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To strengthen its work and community connections, the foundation has partnered with Open Works (http://www.openworksbmore.com), Baltimore's new creative incubator and maker space in Greenmount, to convene meetings and workshops with cultural innovators and creative professionals. MuseWeb is also providing paid internships for students from Johns Hopkins University and other educational institutions this summer.

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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