

Immediate Release

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MuseWeb Announces Winners of *Be Here: Baltimore* Cultural Storytelling Fund

Local Institutions and Storytellers are First Recipients of Innovative Mobile Storytelling Initiative

July 18, 2016 (Baltimore, MD) —On Sunday, the MuseWeb Foundation announced the winners of the first *Be Here: Baltimore* mobile storytelling grants, an initiative that aims to make Baltimore's culture and heritage more visible and accessible to local and global audiences through digital storytelling.

The *Be Here* fund was established to build upon the rich storytelling culture in Baltimore by encouraging local creators and institutions to publish their location-based stories on a range of free and open digital platforms so the stories can be discovered by smartphone users as they explore the city. The 20 projects funded will result in more than 250 stories that will cover Baltimore in a web of connections among museums, local businesses, attractions, street art, and neighborhoods, and include such topics as history, current events, nature, community, civic engagement, music, and art. Funded projects will be available to mobile users by August 15, 2016.

"I'm inspired by the creativity and diversity of mobile experiences that have been proposed for the *Be Here: Baltimore* project," said MuseWeb Foundation Executive Director, Nancy Proctor. "We're excited to work with the city's innovative storytellers to enable a broader range of narratives and voices to be heard from and about Baltimore."

The *Be Here: Baltimore* cultural storytelling fund was made possible by support from izi.TRAVEL, the mobile storytelling platform.

Projects awarded a \$1,000 grant include:

A Grandmother's Pilgrimage

Proposed by **Edna Lawrence**

Grandmother Edna has for more than 20 years produced, recorded, interviewed and created street theater throughout our communities. Our stories are a diverse

cultural explosion to support a greater understanding of active theater engagement. This Be Here: Baltimore project will include: The National Great Blacks In Wax Museum, Baltimore Museum of Art, Reginald F. Lewis Museum, Fredrick Douglass Museum, The National Aquarium, B & O Museum, Walters Art Museum, and The Maryland Women's Heritage Center and Museum.

Baltimore Bookstores, Then and Now

Proposed by **Jean Lee Cole, Loyola University Maryland**

This tour, on the izi.TRAVEL platform, will show booklovers, whether they are Baltimore residents or visitors to the city, where they can find independent bookstores now, and where they once stood. By including historic bookstores as well as going concerns, the tour shows how Baltimore gained a reputation as "The City that Reads." Many of the historic bookstore sites are in Mount Vernon and can be traversed on foot. Others will require a car or public transportation.

Bromo Arts District: Culture Connects Community Here

Proposed by **Jess Solomon, Bromo Arts & Entertainment District**

Bromo Arts District is a cultural linchpin in Downtown Baltimore, a bridge between the legacy of a vibrant arts scene and a future informed by significant cultural assets – visual and performing arts venues, local artist-run spaces, merchants, and the historical Lexington Market. How might we experience Bromo Arts District via themed guided tours inspired by the notable and unexpected cultural gems in the neighborhood?

Eubie Blake's Ragtime

Proposed by **Shellée Haynesworth**

The "Eubie Blake's Ragtime" digital, cultural and musical walking tour will become a highly charged point of origin for countless genres of music, cultural expressions for today's and future music artists within Baltimore's African American community. Once constructed, this location-based platform will enhance the cultural identity for the local, African American Baltimore community by offering a virtual, music making and learning environment for the study and celebration of "Ragtime", a 100-year old cultural tradition.

Ghetto Artsy Kids On The Rise

Proposed by **Mia Smith (p/k/a Loving)**

The "Ghetto Artsy Kids on the Rise: Storytelling Series" will be a photo-audio experience showcasing at least 10 stories of "quirky" creative and community leaders from inner city communities in Baltimore. They will be showcased through

Invisible Majority's online platforms as well experienced during "ghetto artsy kid" lead pop up discussions in Baltimore's developing arts districts. The photos will show them in places that are special to them, as well as places with historical cultural significance.

History & Community in the BROMO Arts District: A Place Based Perspective

Proposed by the **Baltimore Sound Society**

We, the Baltimore Sound Society, propose creating a geo-located walking tour of the Bromo Arts and Entertainment District, which was established in 2012 in the westside of downtown Baltimore. Our tour will include images and brief text, but the focus will be on audio pieces that feature voices from those who live and work in the arts district. The starting point will be the historic Lexington Market. Other points will include the H&H building, the Everyman Theatre, the Hippodrome, and Le Mondo.

Jewish Baltimore: Living History from Port to Pikesville

Proposed by **Sheri Allen, Robert Half**

The Living Jewish History tour will be a fun, surprising, and inspiring look at how Jewish Baltimore has flowered into one of the most influential Jewish communities in the U.S., from its immigrant beginnings and its unique anti-slavery role before the Civil War, to its "native son" filmmaker Barry Levinson's yarn-spinning, and, finally, its unexpected evolution as a center for Orthodox Jewish life in America. There will be something for everyone interested in Baltimore's Jewish past & present.

Living City: How today's makers connect to Baltimore's cultural and industrial past

Proposed by **Sarah Cubbage, Freelance**

Baltimore has a strong heritage in the garment industry with the Pool and Hunt factories in Woodberry. This city also has a strong history in the entertainment industry with the Arch Social Club, for example, in West Baltimore. I want to interview the decedents of both of these businesses in Baltimore and draw connections between the two, exploring how small businesses and makers shed light on Baltimore's rich past, and display its unique charm.

Merchants of Early Baltimore

Proposed by **Abby Schreiber**

Residents and visitors of Baltimore will learn the city's early history through the lens of the merchants who built and shaped the port from 1790-1830. The experience

will prompt users to consider why Baltimore appears now as it does, and what the roots of its early development were. Users will have a blended experience of walking and driving, as the sites connect areas of Fells Point, the Inner Harbor, Federal Hill, Hampden and Clifton Park.

NoisePlaque Podcast

Proposed by **Ryan Patterson, Baltimore Office of Promotion & The Arts**

NoisePlaque is a podcast exploring unexpected stories and human experience behind single works of public art. Short episodes are clustered into tours formed around specific places and themes. Our project hopes to engender dynamic, entertaining and educational mobile tours and provide audio placards for our shared cultural landmarks found throughout Baltimore's civic landscape. Each episode will be geolocated individually as well as widely distributed on all podcast-streaming platforms available.

North Baltimore's Evolving York Road Corridor – A Cultural and Educational Tour

Proposed by **Michael Puma, Loyola University**

The York Road Educational and Cultural Tour brings to life the work that Loyola's York Road Initiative has engaged in since 2008 with community partners to enhance area education and youth development, build civic capacity and strengthen the York Road commercial corridor. On foot or by car, this 30 to 90 minute tour represents the past, present and future of York Road through the words and experiences of those who live, learn and work in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Sandtown: Exploring community building through the arts at Ground Zero

Proposed by **E. R. Shipp, Morgan State University**

Taking our cues from what we have heard residents of Sandtown say, we would like to obliterate the prevailing narrative of this sector as a dysfunctional den of hopelessness, a drain on the rest of the metropolis. In this project, students from the School of Global Journalism and Communication at Morgan State University, will work with people in the Sandtown area to develop a 30-minute to 60-minute tour that highlights the arts and an integral part of living and of community building.

Station North Arts and Entertainment District Proposal

Proposed by **Ryan Lucas**

Station North Arts & Entertainment, Inc. (SNAE) will create a mile-long mobile tour featuring 10-15 key sites in Station North Arts & Entertainment District (SNAED), bringing together historical and contemporary material—photographs, documents,

and videos—to illuminate the places and people of its community. The tour will help visitors envision the area's historical past; understand why it is the place it is today; and imagine what it might become.

The Dignity of Work: The History of Industry in Baltimore

Proposed by **Claire Mullins**

Museum educators from the Baltimore Museum of Industry will share the stories of the innovators, entrepreneurs, and workers who propelled this port city into the industrial age and beyond through short online video recordings accessible from anywhere. Garment making, airplane manufacturing, food canning, video game design, and other industries will come alive as viewers discover how Baltimore's pioneering spirit built the region's manufacturing might and continues to shape Maryland today.

The hidden paths of Roland Park

Proposed by **Sara Blumberg, Roland Park Place**

The purpose of this project is to highlight the hidden walking trails of Roland Park. We want to highlight the historical significance of these paths, while encouraging visitors to learn about a new part of the city.

The Murals of Baltimore: A Walking Tour

Proposed by **Heidi Gerber-Salins**

I propose to develop a multiple-stop geo-located walking tour of some of Baltimore's most significant murals. Murals provide rich cultural stories of the city and of its citizens. The user would hear recorded stories about the murals, possibly spoken by the mural artists, or hear stories/commentary from neighborhood citizens. I propose to develop a geo-location tour of at least ten (10) murals to establish the project, and to possibly partner with BOPA.

The Stoop Storytelling Series presents Baltimore Voices

Proposed by **Laura Wexler, Stoop Storytelling**

I will select 10 stories from The Stoop Storytelling Series archive that are "set" at locations throughout the city, and edit them to create true, personal narratives that can be experienced as audio tour "stops" under the name "Baltimore Voices." My hope is that through each of the stories — intimate, surprising, weird, wonderful -- listeners will connect with a person AND a place, and remember both long after the tale has been told.

THIS IS BALTIMORE TOO!

Proposed by **Linda Goss, National Association of Black Storytellers**

This experience will include a selection of culturally and racially diverse places known for uniqueness, compelling design, historical locations: artifacts and objects that cause conversations; soulful and tasty dining. These 17 locations will appeal to all ages. Some may create a sanctuary like atmosphere. Others may seem upbeat and jumping. I feel these places wake up the imagination and arouse curiosity. Hopefully people will see, hear, feel, taste and touch a lasting positive sense of Baltimore, the center of the universe.

Walking Together in Baltimore: Building a Collaborative, Neighborhood App

Proposed by **Samuel Collins, Towson University**

We propose to work with a community partner, Wide Angle Youth Media, in order to organize an archive of collaborative, ethnographic film, photograph, text and audio recordings into an 1-hour app experience that allows users to interact with one of Baltimore's oldest African American neighborhoods—Sharp Leadenhall in South Baltimore. App users will encounter historic buildings and churches, urban development decisions, and contemporary challenges that demand their own insights and feedback.

Washington Rochambeau National Historic Trail

Proposed by **Robert Reyes, Baltimore Civil War Museum**

The 1781-82 Yorktown Campaign gave rise to National Historic Trail Sites around Baltimore, where the French & American Armies camped in the City and surrounding area. There are multiple sites and lessons to be learned about the campaign that won America's Freedom, including: Fells Point Waterfront Visitor Center & Robert Long House; Fells Point; London Coffee House; 1781 Asquith Friends Meeting House; Mount Clare Mansion; Maryland Historical Society; and numerous camp sites in the city.

The list of winners are posted on the MuseWeb Foundation site:

<http://www.museweb.us/proposals/>.

The Be Here: Baltimore Review Committee

Proposals were reviewed by a diverse group of cultural sector professionals from around the world:

1. Doreen Bolger, former director of the Baltimore Museum of Art
2. Halsey Burgund, Sound Artist
3. Bunjo Butler, Enoch Pratt Free Library
4. Susan Chun, Chief Content Officer, Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

5. Silvia Filippini Fantoni, Director of Interpretation, Media and Evaluation, Indianapolis Museum of Art
6. Gamenne Guillotte, Director of Interpretation and Public Engagement, Baltimore Museum of Art
7. Aaron Henkin, WYPR
8. Jennifer Kingsley, Faculty, Program in Museums and Society, Johns Hopkins University
9. Dean Krimmel, Principal, Creative Museum Services/Qm2
10. Adriel Luis, Curator, Digital and Emerging Media, Smithsonian Asian Pacific American Center
11. Harriet Moss, former President, Antenna Audio
12. Eli Pousson, Baltimore Heritage
13. Ernesto Sanchez, artist and former member of Snake Theater
14. Peter Vega, Business Development, izi.TRAVEL
15. Eva Wesemann, Director of Creative Strategy, EMEA Antenna International

The list of review committee members is posted on the MuseWeb Foundation site: <http://www.museweb.us/committee/>.

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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