



PRESS RELEASE

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NMC Announces Services for Virtual Worlds

Today, the New Media Consortium announced the launch of [NMC Virtual Worlds](#), a services unit under the NMC umbrella that will provide a full palette of support to educational institutions wishing to explore, build, or establish a presence in a range of virtual worlds. The program offers all of its services to educational institutions and museums on a simple cost-recovery basis, resulting in deeply discounted pricing for qualified institutions.

The mission of *NMC Virtual Worlds* is to help learning-focused organizations to explore the potential of virtual spaces in a manner that builds on community knowledge, is cost-effective, and ensures high quality. *NMC Virtual Worlds* will provide a comprehensive set of premium development services for education and training, as well as conduct an ongoing series of events, conferences, and programs. A suite of pro bono services and fellowships are a central aspect of the planning, and reflect the deep commitment to learning and access central to the vision behind the new unit.

Dr. Larry Johnson, CEO of the consortium, commented, “The NMC has more than 15 years of experience working with educators and learning-focused institutions to help them learn and implement emerging technologies. *NMC Virtual Worlds* is a major new program of this leading educational consortium and brings the same commitments to excellence and quality for which the NMC is renowned.

“The [NMC Virtual Worlds team](#) includes knowledgeable educators who have worked a collective 60 years on college and university campuses,” Johnson observed, “in roles from faculty to administration, instructional design to technical support, and CIO to president. Linkages to professionals at NMC member campuses and museums extend that expertise into any subject domain. What makes this new effort so exciting is that we’ve added to that real world expertise the virtual world expertise of some of Second Life’s most accomplished designers, builders, architects, scripters, and artists.

“For those reasons and many more,” he added, “we believe *NMC Virtual Worlds* can help any learning-focused organization realize its virtual vision, no matter the size of the project or budget.”

While the mandate for *NMC Virtual Worlds* is for the unit to provide support for all leading virtual world platforms, especially open-source platforms like *Croquet*, *Uni-*

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Verse.org, and others that may emerge, the initial focus of the unit will be on the virtual world built by Linden Labs, *Second Life*.

NMC has an extensive presence in *Second Life* currently, and has just expanded its land area to some 30 islands. Several of these islands have been designated as educational lands for the use of faculty and others. Educational lands will be leased to qualified educators interested in being part of a learning-focused community for as little as \$100 per year. A program of fellowships is planned to allow educators whose vision may exceed their budgets to experiment with virtual spaces on these islands.

The home of *NMC Virtual Worlds* is the [NMC Campus](#), considered one of the premiere educational destinations in *Second Life*. The sims comprising the *NMC Campus* estate are the home for a wide range of educational tools, services, and meeting spaces, as well as a functioning museum and library, a planetarium, and much more — all provided to educators at no cost.

Included in the plans for the expanded *NMC Campus* is a special orientation island just for educators. *NMC Virtual Worlds* is working with Linden Labs to make the sign-on experience for educators a seamless experience. An important part of this plan is to create a mentoring program for new educational residents in *Second Life* that is tied to the new orientation island.

Also on the near-term horizon are a number of expanded collaborations with other leading learning-focused organizations including the *Info Isles*, home of the *Second Life Librarians*, and *Sci-Lands*, a group of science-focused sims. The vision for *Sci-Lands* includes *Spaceport Alpha*, home of the highly regarded *International Space Museum*. Among the topics currently under discussion are collocating this group of more than 40 sims to become the center of a new educational region planned for the *Second Life* grid. Each of these locations would have special teleporters on the orientation island so new visitors could move easily right to their islands.

To learn more about *NMC Virtual Worlds*, see the unit's new website at:
<http://virtualworlds.nmc.org>

Download the press packet at:
http://www.nmc.org/downloads/press_packet-NMC_Virtual_Worlds.zip

To learn more about the NMC's work on behalf of higher education and its member institutions in *Second Life*, see the *NMC Campus Observer* blog at:
<http://www.nmc.org/sl>.

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For additional information, contact:

Dr. Larry Johnson, Chief Executive Officer, NMC

johnson@nmc.org
512.445.4200

About the NMC

The New Media Consortium (NMC) is an international 501(c)3 not-for-profit consortium of more than 200 leading colleges, universities, research centers, and museums dedicated to the exploration and use of new media and new technologies. The consortium serves as a catalyst for the development of new applications of technology to support learning and creative expression, and sponsors programs and activities designed to stimulate innovation, encourage collaboration, and stimulate dialog and understanding through the exploration of promising ideas, technologies, and applications. For more information on the NMC, see its web site at www.nmc.org.

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