



PRESS RELEASE

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NMC Announces \$100,000 in Virtual Learning Prizes

The New Media Consortium (NMC) announced today the call for proposals for the 2008-09 NMC Virtual Learning Prize, a \$100,000 competitive program of awards intended to create a collection of innovative open-source learning experiences that make use of the unique attributes of a virtual learning environment. As many as 20 NMC Virtual Learning Prizes will be awarded in 2008.

Each of the US\$5,000 awards will provide a cash incentive paid to the awardee of \$500 as well as \$4,500 in expert development assistance from the NMC Virtual Worlds team to create the learning experience. The range of inworld services available to awardees to actualize the proposed ideas includes professional building, scripting, design, animation, avatar design, and/or related services.

The NMC, a 501(3)c not-for-profit, is committed to pushing the boundaries of how we collectively view teaching and learning in virtual space. The NMC Virtual Learning Prize is envisioned as a way to surface and realize creative ideas for how to make optimal use of a virtual setting, using a process that provides recognition, financial incentives, professional development services, and a return for education as a whole.

“Projects funded under the NMC Virtual Learning Prize program will be those that make learning fresh or novel, or that illustrate concepts that are usually very difficult to teach,” explains Dr. Larry Johnson, NMC’s CEO and director of NMC Virtual Worlds. “We are seeking immersive learning experiences in particular, as well as tools that support the craft of teaching. We hope to see a number of proposals with broad applicability across disciplines as that will allow us to maximize the reach of the shared resources that are to be developed under this program.”

As a requirement of funding, all materials and content produced as part of the program will be licensed for broad use under the Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 United States License. (For details please see <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/us/>.) Proposal authors will retain full copyright to finished products, and all funded materials will be made available to educators and educational institutions at no cost via either the NMC’s Educational Resource Center on Learning in Second Life or via the NMC’s website, as applicable.

For the 2008-9 award year, funded ideas will be limited to those that can be implemented in the virtual worlds of Second Life or Project Wonderland. In future years, the program may be expanded to other virtual world platforms.

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Review of proposals will begin on June 16, 2008, and proposals will continue to be accepted until all funds have been expended.

For further information, or to download a proposal submission form, please see the Virtual Learning Prize website at <http://www.nmc.org/virtual-learning-prize>. Questions related to the criteria or the submission of an application should be directed to virtual-learning@nmc.org.

About the NMC

The New Media Consortium (NMC) is an international 501(c)3 not-for-profit consortium of over 260 learning-focused organizations dedicated to the exploration and use of new media and new technologies. NMC Brochure preview NMC member institutions are found in almost every state in the United States, across Canada, and in Europe, Asia and Australia. Among the membership are an elite list of the most highly regarded colleges and universities in the world, as well as a growing list of innovative museums, research centers, foundations, and forward-thinking companies.

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 recognize excellence among its member institutions. Through its many projects, its comprehensive website, and its series of international conferences, the NMC stimulates 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
- For additional information on the NMC or its Virtual Learning Prize program, contact:

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- To learn more about the NMC Virtual Learning Prize, or to apply, visit <http://www.nmc.org/virtual-learning-prize>

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