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# Nature + Love: Augmented Reality Trail Brief

## Summary

We are tendering for a supplier or suppliers who can help create a fun and playful Augmented Reality experience for mobile devices, connecting our Museum and Gardens, encouraging exploration of the natural world through our collections and venue.

The aim is to encourage an appreciation and exploration of nature, through our current and future values – to be fun, open, and welcoming.

The project is core to our mission: to connect us to new, wider audiences and returning visitors through an appreciation of global cultures and the natural environment, encouraging us to shape a positive future for the world we all share.

### 1.1 Context

The Horniman Museum and Gardens is planning a major redevelopment of parts of its Gardens and its Natural History Gallery. The former will be opened in mid 2025, and the latter to be completed by summer 2026.

The re-invigorated and re-interpreted outdoor and indoor spaces and associated collections will enable us to celebrate our love and need for the natural world and encourage an inclusive and positive movement for environmental change amongst our audiences. The redevelopment will span one gallery in the Museum and three Garden spaces.

### 1.2 About Nature + Love

In 2019, the Horniman declared a Climate Emergency and in 2020 published a climate and ecology manifesto outlining the steps we will take to mitigate against the climate and ecological emergency, and to help shape a positive future for generations to come including the intention to be greenhouse gas neutral by 2040. The Horniman’s first pledge is to deliver:

* ‘an ambitious Nature + Love project to redisplay the natural history and living collections, to highlight climate and ecological issues to a wider audience’.

Nature + Love has been set as the priority project in the context of our Reset Agenda. The project improves access and use of key outdoor spaces, and will modernise the 60-year-old interpretation in the 1901 Natural History Gallery to form a key part of our strategy to engage people in mitigating the climate and ecological crisis. It focuses on mobilising our love and concern for future generations to spur action on current climate and ecological challenges.

Central to the project is widening audiences, as a core part of our Reset Agenda

We will redevelop several areas of the Horniman’s estate and heritage assets, making new connections between outdoor green spaces and interior gallery displays using accessible interpretation and digital technology.

We will create:

* a Nature Explorers Adventure Zone, opening access to our historic Nature Trail and introducing a **nature-themed play area** and children’s café, encouraging learning and wellbeing through exploration and play
* an outdoor Sustainable Gardening Zone with new plant nursery and sustainable planting displays encouraging improved health and wellbeing, and a programme to encourage adult skills development
* a redisplayed **Natural History Gallery** and Nature Explorers Action Zone, exploring human understanding of and impact upon the planet, and supporting people to make changes on a local and personal level
* a range of nature-focused partnerships and activities to diversify our audiences.

Embedded throughout the project will be an impactful activity programme including an informal learning offer, co-produced schools workshops and resources and range of digital content, aimed at encouraging a wider to connect to nature and wildlife and leading to change in individual ideas and actions.

### 1.3 About Horniman Museum and Gardens

In 1901, Frederick Horniman gave the Horniman Museum and Gardens as a gift to the people for their education, recreation and enjoyment, and this vision remains central to the Horniman today. A blend of high-quality collections spanning the natural, multi-cultural and musical worlds; 16 acres of well managed urban open space; community based educational and leisure programmes and a wide range of performance, events and activities provide an opportunity to encounter and understand the world we all share.

Today, the Horniman is **London’s only museum where environment, ecology and human cultures can be seen side by side at a global scale**. This means that we are in a perfect position to place the interlinked issues of climate, biodiversity and social inclusion at the centre of what we do.

Over the past few years and since recovering from the pandemic, this focus has been captured in a ‘Reset Agenda’ which outlined a co-ordinated programme of activity engaging with these issues across seven strands of interconnected work. For this plan period, the direction set out in our Reset Agenda has evolved into the following four organisational priorities, rooted in the collections, and that are also reflected in the above behaviours:

* **Diversity:** engaging diverse audiences, staff, volunteers and partners
* **Environmental and social impact:** making a positive difference to people and the planet through our day-to-day activity and projects such as Nature + Love
* **Digital transformation:** investing in staff’s digital training, development and literacy alongside digital infrastructure to enable greater ambition, efficiency and security
* **Income generation:** building creative and profitable activities to enable greater relevance and business resilience.

## Requirements

We would like to develop an:

1. AR environment

and

1. AR content

to create Trails and treasure hunt type experience for the Nature + Love project, which we can continue to use to create new AR trails/markers with, in the future.

This is aimed at family visitors, who will collect these AR creatures by proximity, and be able to create media (photos/video) for sharing with them.

The initial Trail and experience we wish to launch with will:

* connect two spaces – the play area in the Nature Explorers Adventure Zone in the Gardens with the Natural History Gallery in the Museum.
* create additional points in the Gallery and Gardens away from the Trail also featuring AR creatures, as additional opportunities to collect as more of a treasure hunt.

We will encourage the visitors to access the experience on repeat visits by having:

* additional points to discover around the Museum and Gardens – initially, key points in the Natural History Gallery and most photographed points in the Gardens.

### 2.1 Platform Requirements

* We are interested in a **web-based AR platform** via visitors own devices to lower the barrier to entry for the visitor.
* Create a **CMS** for the experience (and future trails/treasure hunts) that Horniman staff can input content into, and **update in-house**.
* The **UX and design** for the platform should comply with best practice for AR, be designed with user input and consultation, and have an eye to future direction of the technology.
* In experience **AR gamification**, like daily leaderboard and achievement badges for AR found on exit
* Analytics to see how visitors engage with the experience and its elements
* **Shareable content** created through visitor interaction with AR, as photos or video that can be shared via social media channels and saved to camera roll.
* Pick up points will be found on visual codes in the Museum and Gardens that will appeal to the family audiences described. The chosen supplier(s) will aid in the consultation around development of these visual codes, and design inline with audience comments.
* Gain mobile device permissions (camera, microphone) seamlessly following scanning of activation code.
* Align with our Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) strategy – we don’t have the resources to offer and maintain digital experience devices for visitors, and rely on the increased accessibility and ease of visitors using their own devices/headphones.
* Allow for linking directly to different trails within the environment, via different codes or from content apps/websites.
* Be created in a digital environment that the Horniman can continue to use to develop new AR content within in the future.
* Allow for Horniman staff to add in new creatures and 360 models in future as any point in the Horniman Museum and Gardens site.

### 2.2 Content Requirements

* **3D AR asset design and development**, based on Horniman collections. These will be created for species that we are unable to scan and that we may not have in their entirety (for example, a realistic gorilla next to our gorilla skeleton). Some creatures will also be sized up or down, and animated to create some natural movement (for example, jellyfish from the Aquarium).
* There should be a consistent look and feel that will be easy to emulate in future asset development, in sympathy to the rest of the wider Nature + Love project.
* The creatures should be designed with user input and audience testing. The supplier(s) will run user testing, with support from the Horniman in providing the audience.
* 360 models – these will be true to size captures of the existing collections. Some of these will be animated, to help engagement.
* There should be an option to include an indication of the specific Trail (and future Trails) within the environment (ie, through arrows, text etc). The 5-6 creatures in the gallery will be accompanied by low impact guidance to taking the Trail.
* Assets should be developed with a view to their use in other platforms and spaces now and in the future, as technology develops.

### 2.3 Training Requirements

* offer training in how to create new AR trails within this environment, both in uploading new content and placing it within the virtual environment.
* advise on the best 360 capture kit for creating new models for the chosen/created environment.

### 2.4 Future Requirements

* The environment should be a white label solution, which has investment enough for the expectation that the environment will be in existence for 10+ years.
* The environment should not rely on payments for future upgrades to the system and ongoing costly licenses, so a roadmap to the environments future plans should be supplied.

**While we have done some scoping out of this project, we are also interested in hearing your creative ideas that can reach the audiences, achieving the same project aim and objectives.**

## Audiences

Nature + Love has audiences at its heart and has been developed specifically with and for new and diverse audiences. The audience objectives in the NLHF Stage 1 bid are defined as:

* 24% visits per annum by people with ethnic minority heritage (16% in 2022/23)
* 24% visits per annum classified from a disadvantaged/low socio-economic background/NS-SEC 5-8 (6% in 2022/23)
* 10% visitors per annum with a disability (9% in 2022/23)
* 40% first time visitors in the first year (43% in 2022/23)

The Horniman conducted audience segmentation work in 2020 to better understand our non visitors, to try to reach a wider, more diverse audience.

The main audience segments we would be trying to reach with this activity are related to families - Active Achievers:

* Family groups living for exciting experiences out in the world but less confident in conventional cultural spaces, motivated by a day out experience and sense of achievement.
* As a group they are interested in the overall Horniman offer, and are target audiences for the Nature + Love project’s Sustainable Gardening Zone, Adventure Zone and Children’s Cafe, and the Nature Explorers Action Zone.
* This group is under-represented at the Horniman, with 26% of family visitors in the segment against 34% in the wider London population in 2021/22. With 47% of Active Achievers in the population from ethnically diverse groups, this is also a target segment for attracting a new and diverse audience.

## Research and background

In May 2022, the Horniman commissioned research to examine digital interpretation options for Nature + Love. This research took place with our existing audiences at the Horniman and at Bromley Glades Shopping Centre, and made recommendations to best meet the project’s audience aims, in particular, widening audiences.

72 % of the public across both the Glades and the Horniman research were excited about the prospect of the Horniman incorporating AR into the galleries, and this included feedback from families with much younger children:

“Tried AR recently with my toddler and it was a big hit.”

“AR for me is the best - I love the interactivity”

“It's great that they are bringing Horniman into the 21st century. My family did VR in Australia. It was brilliant!”

“We like the AR and Immersive experience ideas - things you can discover.”

This suggests a trail across the galleries and grounds revealing simple behaviour of creatures. Thematically fitting well with the gallery and play area messaging, this could help visitors understand topics, and deliver a fun and impactful experience and one which would help to widen audiences.

There are clear early insights from this research to indicate that current non-visitors will be attracted with a clearly promoted digital offer, including 68% of current non-visitors at the Glades (postcard survey) who would consider visiting if they knew this kind of experience was available. There are also suggestions that these experiences should focus, at least in part, on technologies that they are already used to adopting in wider society.

We will be running some further consultations with the chosen supplier(s) around audience reception to:

* Activation points (budgeted separately to this brief)
* User testing of the platform, AR assets and in game elements (to be included in budget)

## Timeline

The AR experience should be ready to go live when the new play area in the Gardens opens in Summer 2025 for the Garden elements and engagement points.

The Natural History Gallery engagement points will go live in late Spring 2026, however it is expected that Horniman staff will locate the Gallery specific creatures, following training in uploading assets and the CMS.

The estimated duration of this project contract would be from July 2024 – August 2025.

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| Tender Issue | 31 May |
| Clarifications deadline | 14 June |
| Tender Submission Deadline | 9am 24 June |
| Evaluation of Responses | 28 June |
| Site visit for shortlisted suppliers | 1-5 July |
| Interviews | 8-10 July |
| Internal Approval Period | 11-12 July |
| Appointment | 15 July |

## Budget

We are interested in a competitive budget, that offers good value for money. While the specific budget details are not disclosed at this stage, rest assured that we have allocated adequate resources to meet the requirements of the project.

## Tendering

We are looking a supplier(s) who can:

1. Create the environment and game elements for the AR experience, including the front end experience, back end CMS and statistics for visitor use and behaviour.
2. Create AR creatures which sit within the experience, make recommendation on 360 capture and provide training.

(Or both)

and

1. Conduct testing and research about the trail, activation and prompts with the audience segments on site, as well as alpha and beta testing.

Criteria we will be assessing responses on:

* Demonstrable experience of the successful delivery of projects of a similar nature and scale (preferably in a natural environment and/or with a creature-based theme) within the last eight years: **30%   
  (if applying to both 1 and 2 above, experience should include both areas)**
* Approach for the project and experience of the requirements, including some initial creative ideas: **30%**
* User testing and training experience: **10%**
* How the supplier(s) expect to staff the project throughout, and could continue to meet any future maintenance needs or new content creation work, as well as previous working with partners when coproducing projects: **5%**
* Approach to ensuring that Horniman values and sustainability considerations are embedded within the project throughout: **5%**
* The most economically advantageous and value for money tender: **20%**

If you would like to apply to this tender, please provide the following information:

* Your approach to the project and how you would meet the criteria, with any creative approaches you have.
* Provide up to three case studies and references, which align as close as possible with this project in terms of themes, scale and/or physical environment from the last eight years.
* Work experience summary for key staff that would be working on the project.
* Outline of costs and initial timeline for meeting the project, with breakdown.
* Details of how you align with Horniman values and sustainability within your work.
* Brief company history.
* Completed anti-fraud and anti-bribery statements.
* Acknowledgement that you have read our procurement terms and conditions.
* A point of contact for correspondence to the tender, with email address and phone number.

We would like the opportunity to show shortlisted potential suppliers the Museum and Gardens in person, as the landscape and layout of the site is integral to delivering the AR experience.

This would take place before interview after shortlisting.

## Contract award

Suppliers and those organisations looking to bid for public sector contracts should be aware that if they are awarded a new contract with a publicly funded body, the resulting contract will be published. In some circumstances, limited redactions will be made to some contracts before they are published in order to comply with existing law and for the protection of national security.

## Contact

If you are interested in tendering for this opportunity, please send the information required above to Connie Churcher, Head of Digital and Communications, ([cchurcher@horniman.ac.uk](mailto:cchurcher@horniman.ac.uk)) at the Horniman by **9am, 24 June, by email.**

Please be aware that our email system will not accept attachments that total in excess of 9MB. For any larger attachments, please send by wetransfer and confirm by email that they have been sent so that we can confirm receipt.

You can ask questions prior to submission by email.