

EMOTIVE Experience Design Workshop – How do museum professionals design new digital experiences for their visitors?

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A staff post from the University of Glasgow EMOTIVE team.

If you happened to wander into the Hunterian museum at the University of Glasgow on a snowy Thursday afternoon in late February, you would have been witness to the first EMOTIVE user prototype workshop in action.



You would have encountered 30 adults wrestling with bits of paper, sticky post-it notes, markers and video cameras. As fun as it looked, what was actually happening was the careful elucidation of new and experimental designs for emotive engagement with the Antonine Wall display. This group of people were a specially chosen interdisciplinary mix of cultural heritage professionals, interpretation specialists, archaeologists, exhibition designers, game developers, student volunteers and computing scientists from all over Europe and the USA. What they were doing was put together a lot of creative ideas for designing digital experiences to interpret The Hunterian Antonine Wall collections for both onsite and online visitors.



EMOTIVE is a European Commission ([Horizon 2020](#)) funded digital heritage project that aims to use emotional storytelling to dramatically change how we experience heritage sites. Funded by the EU until 2019, the project team is drawn from across Europe with partners in France, Greece, Italy, Ireland and the UK (see the [project website](#) for more details) and is working with two cultural partners. The first of these is the UNESCO world heritage site of Çatalhöyük, Turkey, a Neolithic settlement in central Turkey which dates back 9000 years. The second focuses on The Hunterian's outstanding collection of objects from Rome's most northerly frontier, the Antonine Wall, which was built AD 142 and ran coast to coast across Scotland from the Clyde to the Firth of Forth.

EMOTIVE has two goals. Firstly, to design and develop a software platform for heritage professionals that will enable them to produce interactive, personalised, emotionally-resonant digital experiences. And secondly, to allow visitors to access these experiences, both at home and at museums or cultural sites, on their smartphones or tablets.



In order to start testing what type of stories visitors to both sites might like to see, the first experience design prototype workshop which took place at the University of Glasgow and The Hunterian on 22 and 23 February 2017, was structured across two days to allow participants to experiment with content developed by the team for both sites on each day. On day one, and in groups, participants worked with a pack of design cards, which led them in a playful way through the design process. Design Cards are a common tool in Human-Computer Interaction and are used for different purposes, in different design phases, and



with different “play” rules. The scholarship on these cards stresses several advantages of using such a tangible, playful approach to design. Alongside this tool, two other set of cards were used: one with with archaeological details of the site and objects; and one with the description of representative users or “personas”. From this exercise the groups developed ideas for new ways to explore Çatalhöyük.

On day two we physically relocated and mentally refocused our attention to The Hunterian and the Antonine Wall display. As an alternative approach to the design cards the research team wanted to experiment with the idea of “bodystorming” and dramatizing ideas (a technique often used in interaction design and creative development) for stories based on the Antonine Wall objects that were emotionally resonant. The idea was for the participants to imagine what it would be like if the product they designed existed, and act as though they were using it within the Antonine Wall display.



The University of Glasgow EMOTIVE team is coordinated by Dr Maria Economou (who has a joint post at The Hunterian & HATII) and includes Dr Hilary Young, Research Assistant and Dr Laia Pujol Tost, Research Associate.

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