REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS: (RE)NEWPORT

Background: The following RFP is from *Catalyzing Newport. Catalyzing Newport* is a three-year exploratory initiative supported by the Rhode Island Council for the Humanities and the van Beuren Charitable Foundation. *Catalyzing Newport* utilizes a **visiting scholars model** that draws on extensive experience, national and international networks, and the creative excellence of established experts (known as **"catalysts"**) to engage local communities in meaningful exchanges. These intentional exchanges will generate new ideas to translate into bold and imaginative solutions for pressing issues facing Newport's cultural sector and its community-at-large.

In June 2015, *Catalyzing Newport* hosted its first catalyst-in-residence, Tom Scheinfeldt, PhD, associate professor and director of digital humanities in the Digital Media Center at University of Connecticut. Tom is also known for his work to develop the open source web-publishing platform, Omeka, and for the NEH-funded "digital humanities barn raising event" One Week, One Tool. The theme for Tom's Newport residency was "Collaboration First" –which he investigated with *Catalyzing Newport's* steering committee, members of a local action team (specifically selected to work with Tom based upon their collective expertise), and the general public on ideas for enhancing collaboration among the cultural sector in order to increase scholarly and public access to Newport's renowned and sometimes hidden historical assets and collections. Tom's goal was to generate a request for proposals that can guide scholarly engagement with Newport across a variety of themes and challenges. The resulting RFP connects the collections of our steering committee, while also leveraging Newport's unique natural and built environments.

A sense of fun, possibility and adventure should guide you in responding to our RFP called *(re)Newport*. The title reflects our goal to "renew" Newport as a historic working port city. We seek to reinvigorate Newport's identity by bridging some of its fractured histories, its diverse local and seasonal audiences, and its many geographies.

(re)Newport is the inaugural **pilot project** of the *Catalyzing Newport* initiative. As such, we are looking for a team of three entrepreneurial scholars, artists and techies to help us develop a proof-of-concept that we can then scale out with more dedicated resources. You may apply as a team; however, we are happy to create the team from among the applicant pool. A good model for this work is "One week, One tool" – where expansive thinkers come together for a concentrated time to solve a challenge. Intrigued? Great! Keep reading below to learn more about the creators' hopes for this project and the RFP's parameters.

(re)Newport* Overview*:   This RFP is a call for an immersive, participatory, location-based "adventure" (for you to define!). **(re)Newport's** goal is to expose Newport's cultural treasures, its buildings and landscape, and its histories and myths in an effort to build community, invigorate connections between and beyond the cultural sector, and spark curiosity and wonder.

***(re)Newport* Scope:** Successful projects will create a tool and/or a prototype to:
• Creatively engage the collections and networks of <u>all</u> of the *Catalyzing Newport* institutions
• Incorporate diverse locations across Newport including a mix of public, private and semi-public places, indoor and outdoor spaces and the waterfront
• Engage Newport's diverse communities, classes, races and subcultures to promote civic engagement
• Allow participants to shape their own experiences through physical and digital interactions
• Acknowledge real or perceived loss and/or contested spaces or narratives
• Produce tangible traces or artifacts that outlive the experience

* Please keep in mind that this RFP is seeking a **proof-of-concept** that has the potential to be scaled up into a larger project.

Eligibility: This pilot project is intended to encourage bold proposals. We seek creative and entrepreneurial scholars, artists, and techies from diverse disciplines, sectors and career fields who will join a team to devise and implement the pilot vision. Suggested skills, traits and approaches include 1) problem solving 2) empathy 3) ability to work without hierarchy 4) collaboration 5) flexibility and 6) sense of humor.

Proposal Submission and Review Process: Submissions will be reviewed by a *Catalyzing Newport* committee (comprised of selected steering committee members, project team and advisors, and past catalysts). The committee will award three individuals with stipends, plus room and board, to come to Newport, RI, for four days to create a **(re)Newport** prototype.
• Interested individuals are encouraged to submit 1) up to a 2-page CV or resume, 2) a short bio, and, 3) bulleted list of relevant collaborative work/project/work samples.
• All proposals should be submitted with a *Letter of Intent* that outlines 1) how your past work and future plans address the aims of the project, 2) your experience working on collaborative projects, and 3) your idea for what the "adventure" could be – or some model projects that would inspire your adventure idea.

Project Timeframe: Catalyzing Newport's Review Committee will notify three individuals they were selected and connect them via virtual tools. The three individuals will convene as a team in Newport to produce a prototype of a collaborative project. Organizations will be available for consultation.
Individual Proposal Deadline: October 31, 2015
Individual Award Notification: November 20, 2015
(re)Newport Onsite Workshop: January 2016

Funding: $1,000 per individual, plus room and board. This stipend supports participation in a four-day, three-night stay in Newport to produce the prototype. Full implementation will be funded via another vehicle.

Proposal Due Dates: *Individual Proposal Deadline:* October 31, 2015

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