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PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Border wall between Scotland and England brings
digital heritage experts together**

On 22 and 23 February, scholars and experts from around the world will gather in Glasgow to discuss the construction of a coast-to-coast barrier across Scotland, from Clyde to Forth.

But this is no modern, multi-billion dollar boundary such as US President Donald Trump has pledged to construct. In fact, this wall was built over 1,850 years ago.

The group will travel to the Hunterian Museum at the University of Glasgow, to discuss the Roman-built Antonine Wall. The two-day workshop is being held as part of a new project named Emotive funded under the European Commission’s H2020 programme.

EMOTIVE

Emotive aims to use emotional digital storytelling to dramatically change how we experience heritage sites. Funded by the European Union until 2019, the project has two goals:

- to design and develop a software platform for heritage professionals that will enable them to produce interactive, personalised, emotionally-resonant digital stories
- to allow visitors to access these stories, at museums or cultural sites, on their smartphones or tablets, or virtually, from their home.

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The Emotive team is made up of archaeologists and museum professionals, developers and designers, interpretive planners and writers. “We’re a diverse, multidisciplinary group, which is precisely what a project like this requires” says Dr Maria Economou, Hunterian Curator and Lecturer in Museum Studies at the University of Glasgow; “that’s our strength”.

“In Glasgow, we will be joined by 20 additional experts in interpretation, user design and gaming” she continues. “Over two days, this extended group will test some of the newly developed collaborative methods we have created for designing stories.”

WHY THE ANTONINE WALL?

“The Antonine Wall is the perfect site for a project on storytelling” Dr Economou says. “At one time there were 6,000-7,000 men stationed in forts along the Wall, many with their wives and children. Families, friends and rivals, all living in close quarters at the edge of the Roman world, imagine the personal stories!”

“At The Hunterian, we have hundreds of objects from the Wall including altars, gravestones, personal artefacts and even board games!” she continues. “As a starting point for creating emotional stories that connect with people’s lives today, it’s hard to beat.”

The Antonine Wall became a UNESCO World Heritage site in 2008. When it was constructed, nearly 2,000 years ago, it was the most northerly and complex frontier of the Roman Empire.

ÇATALHÖYÜK - A SECOND SITE

A second UNESCO World Heritage site will also be discussed at the workshop. Çatalhöyük is a Neolithic settlement in central Turkey that dates back 9000 years. Like The Hunterian, Çatalhöyük is a cultural partner on the Emotive project and will be used to test methods and prototypes as the Emotive software platform is developed.

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“Çatalhöyük has a vast landscape of buildings and many exquisite works of art and craft,” says Dr Sara Perry, Lecturer in Cultural Heritage Management at the University of York. “Like the Antonine Wall, it’s a perfect canvas to develop and test emotionally engaging stories for visitors”.

OBJECTIVES

“This workshop is the first step” says Dr Economou. “We’ll gather key data on the process of designing emotional narratives and the mechanics of engaging with a range of artefacts, visitor types and scenarios. This will then inform the technical direction of the project as we start to develop and test the Emotive platform.”

“How can we help heritage professionals create interesting characters and engaging stories?”, she asks. “That’s the question we want to answer in Glasgow.”

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ABOUT EMOTIVE

Emotive is a Research and Innovation Action project funded under the European Commission's H2020 programme that aims to use emotionally-resonant digital storytelling to dramatically change how we experience heritage sites. From 2016-2019, the Emotive project team will research, design, develop and evaluate a series of storytelling methods and tools for the cultural heritage sector. The output of this process will be:

- a prototype software platform for heritage professionals that can be used to create characters and narratives for archaeological sites and museums
- smartphone and tablet interfaces for visitors that will provide personalised, emotionally-engaging stories which can be experienced at a cultural site, remotely, or a combination of the two.

Website: www.emotiveproject.eu. **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/emotiveproject/

Twitter: [@emotive_eu](https://twitter.com/emotive_eu)

ABOUT THE HUNTERIAN

The Hunterian is one of the world's leading University museums and one of Scotland's greatest cultural assets. Built on Dr William Hunter's founding bequest, The Hunterian collections include scientific instruments used by James Watt, Joseph Lister and Lord Kelvin; outstanding Roman artefacts from the Antonine Wall; major natural and life sciences holdings; Hunter's own extensive anatomical teaching collection; one of the world's greatest numismatic collections and impressive ethnographic objects from Captain Cook's Pacific voyages.

The Hunterian is also home to one of the most distinguished public art collections in Scotland and features the world's largest permanent display of the work of James McNeill Whistler, the largest single holding of the work of Scottish artist, architect and designer Charles Rennie Mackintosh (1868–1928) and The Mackintosh House, the reassembled interiors from his Glasgow home.

Website: www.glasgow.ac.uk/hunterian