

British Museum reveals 35,000 places for virtual visits



The British Museum and Samsung reopen the award-winning Samsung Digital Discovery Centre (SDDC) after a significant upgrade, and announce an ambitious new digital learning programme that brings together the world of museums with the world of technology.

The new SDDC sees a major expansion of the Virtual Visits programme, where schools that are unable to visit the Museum, can still experience the world-class collection and expert staff via a learning session broadcast directly into their classroom.

After successful pilots, the British Museum and Samsung have created 35,000 places over the next five years for pupils to take part. It is hoped that schools from across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland will become virtual visitors, giving them access to the Museum's global collection and expertise, without any charge to the school.



Virtual Visits have been created with the curriculum needs of schools in mind and is designed around the realities of classroom technology. Sessions are offered on prehistory Britain, Roman Britain and the Indus Valley, and new sessions on ancient Egypt and ancient Greece are in development. Each class will have the session tailored to their needs and pupils can enjoy direct interaction with British Museum staff, as well as high resolution digital assets such as 3D digital objects being shared with students.

The British Museum and Samsung will also begin to develop an innovative and exciting new strand of programming for teenagers, which young people themselves will help shape. The needs of this audience change more rapidly than any other that the Museum works with, and so by working directly with teenagers, it will help develop quality programming that fully understands and meets the diverse needs of this age group, as well as enhancing their experience of the museum's collection through Samsung technology.



The SDDC itself, which is based at the Museum in Bloomsbury, provides a state-of-the-art technological hub for children and young people to learn about and interact with the British Museum's collection. **Ahead of the refit, the SDDC welcomed its highest ever number of visitors, with 25,000 school children and families using the Centre in 2018/19.** Since it opened, 150,000 people have visited the space to take part in a wide variety of activities such as workshops, family drop-ins, and facilitated school visits. This major refit revealed today sees improvements to the user experience to cater for the growing number of visitors, as well as a full upgrade in the Samsung technology available. This will include the Samsung Flip, E-boards and the latest range of Galaxy Smartphones, tablets and smartwatches.

Over the past 10 years, the SDDC has provided the largest programme of digital learning activities in any UK museum. It continues to demonstrate the highest levels of audience satisfaction, with 95% of families surveyed in 2017/18 stating they found the sessions 'good' or 'very good', and that 96% of teachers said they would recommend the SDDC to a colleague and would bring a student group to the SDDC again. Thanks to Samsung's generous support, expertise and technology, the SDDC schools and family programmes have transformed the Museum's digital learning provision into a world class, sector leading and award-winning programme.

Hartwig Fischer, Director of the British Museum, says: 'We are delighted that thanks to the generous support of Samsung, we can now offer 35,000 school children over the next five years the opportunity to interact with the world class collection and expertise of the British Museum, who ordinarily might not be able to. Pupils from Andover to Aberdeen and Brecon to Belfast can now experience some of the Museum's incredible treasures from their own classroom, potentially sparking a lifelong curiosity in the history of the world. The advances in digital technology have enhanced the learning opportunities within - and now outside - the Museum, and the SDDC has been at the very forefront of our efforts to share the collection more widely. We are grateful for the longstanding and continued partnership with Samsung for making it possible.'

Francis Chun, President & CEO of Samsung Electronics UK & Ireland says: 'At Samsung, under our global Corporate Citizenship vision of Enabling People and supporting education for future generations, we're committed to empowering the next generation of innovators to discover and unlocking their full potential. Our collaboration with the British Museum for the past ten

years has allowed us to constantly trial new technologies that engage children and young people in innovative ways to not only help them learn about lessons in history, but enable them to better understand the present and prepare for the future. By extending this long-standing partnership for a further five years to 2024, we stand beside the British Museum as we together navigate the ways in which emerging technologies can further enhance the way we learn.?



About the Samsung Digital Discovery Centre

The Samsung Digital Discovery Centre at the British Museum was created in 2009 to provide a state-of-the-art technological hub for children and young people to learn about and interact with the Museum's collection. Offering the most ambitious and extensive on-site digital learning programme of any UK museum, the SDDC runs a number of different school programmes throughout the school year, and has family programmes operating over fifty-two weekends a year. All activities are free and over 150,000 children and families have been welcomed to the Centre since it opened. Through its work with Samsung the British Museum remains at the forefront of digital learning. Recent innovations within this exciting partnership include the use of augmented reality and video conferencing technologies to engage a new generation with the British Museum's Collections.

https://www.britishmuseum.org/learning/samsung_centre.aspx

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