



PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL HERITAGE BOARD LAUNCHES FIRST ONLINE GAMING COMPETITION TO BOOST HERITAGE-AWARENESS AMONG YOUTHS

Singapore – 16 December 2008

Young gaming enthusiasts who dream about producing their own online games can now do so through an exciting new platform. To engage the web-savvy young to cherish Singapore's invaluable heritage, the National Heritage Board (NHB) has launched its first online gaming competition entitled *Mission Darkstar – Heritage Gaming Redefined*.

Through *Mission Darkstar*, we hope to harness the collective creativity of web-savvy Singaporeans to raise the awareness and appreciation of Singapore's unique heritage and culture.

Divided into two stages, the competition invites members of the public who are keen to produce online games to submit their detailed proposals to NHB in the first stage. The top five proposals will each receive S\$4000 seed funds to execute their projects. In the second stage, the top three teams who produce the best online games as judged by a panel along with votes from the public, stand to win a total of S\$13,500 worth of cash prizes.

NHB is partnering several tertiary institutions in encouraging young gaming enthusiasts to compete in *Mission Darkstar* and the response has been very encouraging.

Said Mr Mervin Beng, Director (School of Information and Communications Technology) of Republic Polytechnic: "Republic Polytechnic sees this competition as an excellent platform for our students to apply what they have learned in their course of study via our unique problem-based learning approach. In the process, we also hope to see our students cultivate an interest in our national heritage and culture."

A Mission to Remember

Mission Darkstar aims to reach out to the younger generation aged between 17 and 35. Competitors will have to incorporate parts of Singapore's history and heritage into their game designs which can range from simple Flash animation to more elaborate massively multiplayer online role-playing game (MMORPG). The scope of possibilities is only limited by the talent and imagination of competitors.

The competition will be the first museum and heritage-based online game competition to be held in Singapore. It aims to use the power of social media, the popularity of online gaming and the collective creativity of web savvy Singaporeans

to engage these youths. Through this initiative, NHB hopes to help foster a sense of community, national identity and rootedness' among the younger generation. This competition which started on 10 December 2008 will run until November 2009. Students from Universities, Polytechnics, Institutes of Technical Education, private schools and young working adults are welcomed to take part.

This competition is managed by Rapture Gaming, a marketing and events management company which has conceptualised and organised events such as the World Cyber Games Asian Championship, Compaq AMD Pro-Gaming League, The New Paper Cyber Challenge and the Funan Inter-School e-Gaming Challenge among others.

*For more details, please refer to **Annex A**.*

Visit www.missiondarkstar.com.sg for more information.

About Mission Darkstar – Heritage Gaming Redefined

Managed by the National Heritage Board, Mission Darkstar aims to draw on the dynamism and creativity of Singaporeans to develop an edutainment heritage-based gaming product. It also seeks to cultivate an interest and appreciation amongst youths in heritage and culture by appealing to their love for web gaming. This will instill a better sense of community, national identity and rootedness among the youths and showcase the creative online works of Singapore youths.

About National Heritage Board

The National Heritage Board (NHB) champions the development and promotion of a vibrant cultural and heritage sector in Singapore. It makes heritage enriching, relevant and accessible to all through staging innovative programmes and forging collaborative partnerships. NHB leverages on technology and refreshing new approaches to make heritage more dynamic, alive and exciting for different audiences. It also manages both national and public museums, the National Archives of Singapore, and the Heritage Conservation Centre.

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***Mission Darkstar – Heritage Redefined* Background Information**

Mission Darkstar – Heritage Gaming Redefined aims to reach out to the younger generation aged between 17 and 35 in Singapore. The competition will be the first museum- and heritage-based online game competition to be held in Singapore. It seeks to harness the power of social media, the popularity of online gaming and the collective creativity of web savvy Singaporeans to raise the awareness and appreciation of Singapore's unique heritage and culture. This contest will commence in mid-December 2008 and scheduled to end in November 2009.

The contest comprises the following stages:

Stage 1

- Call for heritage game proposals from the public. Participants to submit proposals along with sketches and other relevant supporting documents for web-based games with a social media and heritage elements

Stage 2

- Five teams will be chosen and each team will be awarded a seed fund of S\$ 4000 to develop an online prototype of a heritage game.
- Upon completion of the games, they will be publicly available online through social media platforms where the public can play the game and interact through comments and voting. The judging process will be two-pronged, with a panel of expert judges and public votes deciding the results. The winners will be selected based on the quality of the game and how it resonates with the intended users and its strong link to Singapore's history and heritage.

The competition aims to:

- Draw on the dynamism and creativity of Singaporeans and students to develop edutainment heritage-based gaming product.
- Cultivate an interest and appreciation amongst youths in the heritage and culture by appealing to their love for web gaming.
- Spur the creation of new online projects that can demonstrate that Singapore has a vibrant and sustainable creative gaming cluster. A whole new talent pool is available, ready and waiting to be tapped from the schools
- Instill a better sense of community, national identity and rootedness among the youths

A. Contest rules

The following are the rules of the competition:

- I. Each team must have a minimum of 4 members

- II. Each team can submit multiple proposals but only one proposal can be selected from each team
- III. Games can be of any genre relating to heritage
- IV. Games with offensive language and pornographic material will be disqualified
- V. Games must promote a strong awareness of and a youth-connection with Singapore's heritage

B. Prizes (Second Stage)

- First Prize	\$8,000
- Second Prize	\$3,000
- Third Prize	\$1,500
- Two Consolation Prizes	\$500 each

C. Proposal Guidelines

Full proposal consisting of the following is to be submitted by the appointed deadline:

- I. Team Information
- II. General information
 - a. Short description
 - b. Level of heritage involvement
 - c. Overview and features
- III. Game information
 - a. Concept
 - b. Background story
 - c. Objective
 - d. Genre of game
 - e. Interface
 - f. Multiplayer support
 - g. Level of difficulty
 - h. Game control
 - i. Social Media engagement (How the game can be incorporated on sites like Friendster, Facebook)
- IV. Game Design
 - a. Visual arts
 - b. Sketches
 - c. Sound and Music
- V. Time schedule of game production
- VI. Detailed seed fund breakdown (how it will be used to produce the game)

D. Game Technical Guidelines

- I. Proposed game can only be created by the following platform
 - a. Java
 - b. Flash
 - c. Shockwave
 - d. PHP
 - e. ASP
 - f. Ruby on Rails
- II. Must be compatible on multiple OS (example Windows and Mac)
- III. Must be compatible with all web browsers (Internet explorer or Firefox)
- IV. Must be able to run on other social media platform (example Friendster, Facebook)
- V. Game must support uploading and saving of scores to the server
- VI. Must have a scoring element
- VII. Must include and Mission DarkStar's logo/banner on the top left corner with a tagline "Project supported by the National Heritage Board"

E. Evaluation and Award Process

Evaluation of Stage One is based on:

- Uniqueness (5%)
 - Proposed ideas leading to decision of the game
- Game Design (10%)
 - Concept
 - Graphics and visual arts
 - Sound and music
- Ease of use (10%)
 - Level of game difficulty for audience between age 12-35 years old
- Game interactivity (5%)
 - Type of control
 - User interface
- Public Engagement (20%)
 - Level of fun
 - Ability to attract public interest to play the game
- Heritage Awareness (30%)
 - Number of heritage sites (Singapore) featured
 - Degree of awareness raised in game
- Feasibility of Proposal (20%)

Evaluation of Stage Two is based on:

- Total number of hits on all game sites (15%)
- Total number of page views (15%)
- Total times of game play (20%)
- Ease of use (10%)

- Game Design (10%)
- Multiplayer functionality (10%)
- Number of museum roundtable museums, libraries and national monument sites in game (20%)

F. Contest Schedule

- I. 10 Dec 08 : Announcement of contest/ Call for entries
- II. 6 Feb 09 : NHB Social Media Launch
- III. 28th Feb 09 : Deadline for Submission of proposals
- IV. 7th Mar 09 : Announcement of results (Five groups selected)
- V. Mar 09 : Prize presentation ceremony
- VI. Apr to Jul 09 : Winning team WIP on project
- VII. Jul 09 : Presentation of games by five winning teams
- VIII. Jul to Oct : Public to play the games and vote (50% of results)
- IX. Oct : Panel of Judges to make final decision (50% of results)
- X. Oct 09 : Announcement of results
- XI. Oct 09 : Launch of Mission Darkstar Winning Game