



PRESS RELEASE – EMBARGOED UNTIL 4PM ON MARCH 26

MADE-IN-SINGAPORE ONLINE GAMES BY YOUTHS TO ENCOURAGE HERITAGE APPRECIATION AMONG THEIR PEERS

Singapore – 26 March 2009 :: Think you can be the hero who helps to create the early history of Singapore? Or maybe you would like to meet Sir Stamford Raffles in a digital domain? These are just some of the exciting made-in-Singapore gaming proposals the National Heritage Board (NHB) received from the participants of the *Mission Darkstar – Heritage Gaming Redefined* competition.

A total of 21 game proposals were received from 18 teams mainly from polytechnics and ITEs. A team of judges from NHB, IDA and Nextgen Studios, a professional game development outfit, have picked five proposals and the teams will each receive S\$4000 in seed funding to transform over the next six months their creative ideas into online games.

In the second stage of the competition the teams will compete against each other for the top spots where they stand to win a total of S\$13,500 worth of cash prizes. They will be judged by a panel along with votes from the public, The winner of Mission Darkstar will be announced in December 2009.

*For more details on Mission Darkstar, please refer to **Annex A**.*

*For information on the five winning teams and their proposals, please refer to **Annex B**.*

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.

For more media enquiries, please contact:

David Miller

Assistant Director

Corporate Communications

National Heritage Board

DID: (65) 6332 3962

Email: david_miller@nhb.gov.sg

Viviane Then

Assistant Manager

Corporate Communications

National Heritage Board

DID: (65) 6332 3590

Email: viviane_then@nhb.gov.sg

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 made publicly available online through social media platforms where the public can play the games 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 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. 26th Mar 09 : Announcement of results (Five groups selected)
- V. 26th Mar 09 : Prize presentation ceremony
- VI. Apr to Sep 09 : Winning team WIP on project
- VII. Oct 09 : Presentation of games by five winning teams
- VIII. Oct to Nov : Public to play the games and vote (50% of results)
- IX. Nov : Panel of Judges to make final decision (50% of results)
- X. Dec 09 : Announcement of results
- XI. Dec 09 : Launch of Mission Darkstar Winning Game

THE FIVE SELECTED PROPOSALS

Back in Time is an adventure role playing game (RPG) proposed by Team Square Root 25. This team consists of five students from the course Diploma in Game and Entertainment Technology of Temasek Polytechnic. *Back in Time* enables players to learn about Singapore's heritage through a series of fun mini-games. Included in these games are several key moments in Singapore history, different aspects of local culture, important heritage sites, and figures from the past such as Sir Stamford Raffles.

Singapura Fiesta – The Lahyon Roars is a game proposed by Team Cravirtua, consisting eight members from the Institute of Technical Education Central. This game aims to cover all genres, including action, adventure and puzzles incorporating tactical thinking. It also has elements of RPG. Imbedded in this game is a high level of heritage involvement delivered in a fun and entertaining way. The game has much educational value aiming to hook players through active gameplay in delving into Singapore's heritage. Various game genres will challenge players and keep them coming back for more. The multiplayer feature will further increase the repeat gameplay value.

Legends of Singapura is a game proposed by four staff members of Republic Polytechnic. This game revolves around several historical legends of Singapore, showcasing a variety of myths and urban folklore. It will take a look at the story behind Redhill, the legend of swordfish invasion and Badang The Strongman amongst others. This game allows players to experience these stories which form part of the rich folklore history of Singapore.

Red Dot Tycoon is a game proposed by Sunnyside – a team made up of five members of the public. Red Dot Tycoon is an addictive simulation game especially for those who love a mind boggling challenge. To do well players need good organization, strategy and management skills. Gamers will be tasked to develop a precious piece of barren land and transform it into a vibrant hub for art-loving citizens.

Lucen is a game proposed by a team of six from Republic Polytechnic made up of students and lecturers who call themselves Dark Ridge. Essentially a puzzle game, players will delve into Singapore's culture through the eyes of one who knows nothing of the country nor its history.