
Request for Proposals

Design & web development of an online exhibition

Submission deadline: Sunday March 7, 2021

For further information, please contact:

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BACKGROUND

InterAccess is a gallery, educational facility, production studio, festival, and charity dedicated to new media and emerging practices in art and technology.

Our mission is to expand the cultural significance of art and technology by fostering and supporting the full cycle of art and artistic practice through education, production, and exhibition. InterAccess was founded in 1983.

PROJECT SUMMARY

In Spring 2023 InterAccess will be launching an online exhibition of Canada's earliest born-digital artworks. These artworks were created using Telidon, a pre-web, telephone/computer graphic system developed by the Canadian government in the late 1970s. From 1981 to 1987, Canadian artists harnessed Telidon as a ground-breaking experimental tool to push the borders of its technical, educational, and creative potential.

The revived Telidon artworks, recently recovered by a cross-country team of digital archaeologists, will be presented to the public as part of the the *Telidon Art Project*.

We are looking for proposals from full-service web agencies to design and develop an interactive virtual exhibition that showcases early Telidon artworks as intended, within a natively digital environment. The exhibition will feature a Telidon Graphics Simulator, allowing audiences to learn about and create their own Telidon graphics.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The *Telidon Art Project* is made possible with the generous support of the Virtual Exhibits Investment Program, Digital Museums Canada. Digital Museums Canada is managed by the Canadian Museum of History, with the financial support of the Government of Canada.

TIMELINE

March 7, 2021	Proposals received
March-April 2021	Website discovery & planning, including accessibility discovery Begin preliminary visual branding discussions Develop information architecture & wireframing
July 2021	Web Agency develop version 1 of the website. Website version 1 will include: -wireframes -maquettes -preliminary design and graphics -visual assets
August 16 - September 15, 2021	Web Agency to develop version 2 of website Website version 2 will include: -back-end & front-end -quality assurance check & accessibility test
November 2021	Web Agency to develop version 3 of website, including fixing bugs
March 2022	Web Agency to develop version 4 of website, which will include: -a fully functional developed version of the online product, with all completed and working content and placeholder content and working links
April 16 - May 15, 2022	Web Agency to develop final unilingual website, which will include: -a fully functional unilingual developed version of the online product based on the approved interpretive plan and preliminary version, with all completed and working content and placeholder content and working links in the other official language site(s)
October 2022	Web Agency to develop bilingual website, which will include: -a fully functional bilingual version of the online product that meets all content and technical requirements
December 2022	Web Agency to revise bilingual website

BUDGET

Up to \$20,500.00 CAD for a completed, fully functional website (including graphic design), basic maintenance, and trouble-shooting for twelve months post-launch.

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS & ACCESSIBILITY

The website must adhere to the Technical Specifications document (viewable at: <https://bit.ly/3qacXbw>)

The site framework must accommodate a variety of media types including video, audio, custom javascript and webassembly. Examples are viewable at:

Javascript: <http://wmperry.ca/telidon/artvsart/>

Webassembly: <https://telidonart.ca/vtdemo/>

MAINTENANCE

InterAccess prefers to be able to do some basic site maintenance in-house, including editing text. It is important that web pages are easy to update.

EXPECTATIONS

The Web Agency shall:

- Consult on the design of the exhibition
- Develop a work plan
- Develop an information architecture diagram and list of enhancements
- Adhere to the accessibility & technical specification requirements
- Consult on and develop visual branding and assets
- Design graphics for the website
- Design the website
- Develop the website, including all aspects detailed in the 'Website Elements' section.
- Provide training manual and instruction for internal users
- Provide support for one year (included in project fee)
- Ongoing site support for a fee (outside initial scope of work)

WEBSITE DESIGN AND AESTHETIC

The overall aesthetic of the website will be a contemporary interpretation of 1980s computer graphics and functionality. The web agency will work with the exhibition team to creatively interpret this design brief.

The static, low resolution graphics produced by videographer and digital producer Davin Henson for the video linked here acts as a point of aesthetic inspiration: <https://vimeo.com/430137152>.

Below is a list of websites that will serve as inspiration for our digital production, in both structure and visual identity:

The Whitney Museum of American Art: <https://whitney.org/>

VIVO Media Arts Centre: <https://www.vivomediaarts.com/>

MIT Press: <https://mitpress.mit.edu/>

Philip Ocampo (artist): <https://www.philipocampo.com/>

Terminal (online exhibition): <http://terminal.front.bc.ca/>

Myseum of Toronto: <http://www.myseumoftoronto.com/>

Reference images that could be used for the design of the discussion forum:



WEBSITE ELEMENTS

The platform's homepage will showcase a dynamic historical account of Telidon technology and the story of the artists that experimented with it.

The landing page will be populated with a detailed visual timeline of the technology's development and its creative adaptation by artists. The timeline will feature digitized archival documents and photographs that tell the story of Telidon art and the media art centres that made the technology accessible to artists.

From the homepage users will be able to navigate through a curated selection of Telidon video and videotext works as embedded media assets. Each page of this section of the site will be dedicated to a different artwork and will include technical, artistic, and historical content about each piece. Viewers can navigate through the restored interactive artworks, emulating the original 1980s computer interface experience. Artworks will be accompanied by contextualizing texts.

Viewers will have the opportunity to create their own visual responses with the Telidon Graphics Simulator. Ideally, users of the simulator will be able to save the images they make. We will work with the digital development team to determine a way that the works created using the simulator will be shareable via social media. The Web Agency will be responsible for integrating the Telidon Graphics Simulator into the site, but will not be responsible for building it.

The exhibition will also include a discussion forum page, connecting Telidon artists from across the country and viewers looking to engage with the content and its history.

OBJECTIVES OF ONLINE EXHIBITION

The online exhibition has 6 core objectives:

Inform audiences about a specific aspect of Canadian art history and telecommunications:

The exhibition will inform and engage its audience, from technological, art historical, and visual perspectives. Viewers of the exhibition will learn Telidon's national story and its local plotlines through a dynamic collection of content.

Introduce and expose uninitiated audiences to a brand new form of art and art restoration:

Our audience will be exposed to a set of historical works, many of which they will have never encountered. In addition to gaining a familiarity with this genre of digital art that is a critical component of Canada's media art history (whether as inspiration for their own work, for future curatorial projects, or as a reunion of work they have not see in decades) they will also be introduced to the pioneering strategies that have been applied to restore and preserve them. The multiple exhibition essays,

newly digitized artworks, and Telidon Graphics Simulator along with the exhibition's lo-fi aesthetics and unique user experiences, will generate new knowledge and excitement about this uniquely Canadian achievement and how it was commandeered by a pioneering group of artists.

The online product will be designed such that no prior knowledge of the technology will be necessary to enjoy the content presented. Uninitiated visitors will be provided the opportunity to learn about this important story of Canadian technological achievement and to add to their existing knowledge of the Canadian media art canon.

Develop new knowledges:

The exhibition's digital timeline will feature up to 20 archival images that visually map the Telidon as a government invention and its appropriation as an artistic tool from the late 1970s to the mid-1980s. Viewers will be introduced to this obscure and now obsolete technology and will gain an understanding of its impact on Canada's early media art community.

Engage:

Users will engage with video and interactive artworks that were produced during Telidon's short lifetime. The artworks' diverse visual and conceptual themes and descriptions demonstrate the particular aesthetic concerns of the artists at the time, during a decade of great technological progress.

Visitors will also be encouraged to create their own simple, Telidon-like graphics through the Telidon Art Simulator. The outcomes of their experimentation will be downloadable, can be posted to the Telidon art discussion forum, and can be posted to user's own social media accounts tagged with the virtual exhibition's hashtag.

Connect:

The virtual exhibition will include a discussion forum, allowing visitors of the site to comment on what they've seen and interact with the artists, curators, and each other. Veteran artists who experimented with Telidon who are featured in the exhibition and now live and practice across Canada will be able to respond to visitors encountering the work the first time.

This centralized discussion forum will be formatted with the tree-like structure and simple graphics consistent with the era. Modelled after the BBS (Bulletin Board Systems) of the 1980's the forum will be organized by topics. There will be various categories so that topics can be properly organized. Each topic will hold messages posted by exhibition visitors. A topic acts as a thread, and all the messages hang from it.

Inspire:

Artists from across the country and their community of peers and successors will view these works most for the first time, resurrecting art thought to be lost forever

while a younger born-digital generation of cultural workers will be introduced to this paradigm-shifting early-digital art genre. The breadth of materials will inspire contemporary artists, catalyze curatorial projects, and amend Canadian media art history.

AUDIENCE

Primary Audience:

The primary audience for The Telidon Art Project encompasses Canada's vibrant, multi-generational media arts community. This includes the artists, curators, and critics who creatively engaged with Telidon during the 1980s and the next generation of born-digital artists, critics, and curators within the digital art sector, including those who are committed visitors of the multitude of media art centres located across the country.

Secondary Audience:

Our secondary audience includes information professionals engaged with research and practices related to the restoration, preservation, and presentation of archival media art materials. This group includes a variety of gallery and museum professionals, university faculty, and practicing artists, both emerging and established. The exhibition will build on this community's knowledge about media art archives and the history and preservation of Canadian media art.