Executive Summary

Purpose

*Float* was developed by a multidisciplinary team of six (three students, one volunteer and two academic staff) in response to the increasing digitisation of museums. Recognising the proliferation of apps and social media, the team sought to create an app that offers visitors to The Ian Potter Museum of Art a unique way to experience the collections and museum environment.

*Float* is different from standard museum apps because it does not focus on merely delivering information that is already covered by brochures, guidebooks or existing wall panels. Instead, *Float* develops connections by engaging with visitors on personal and emotional levels. Users are asked eleven questions (based on eleven key ‘themes’, such as curiosity, love or time), which prompts them to move around the museum in order to ‘answer’. Because of the reflective nature of the questions, responses are based on a visitor’s own opinions, experiences and memories. This creates a new way in which visitors engage with artworks and the gallery space as a whole.

Conclusions

Although the trial of the pilot is still currently underway, evaluation surveys that have been completed to date by visitors who trialed *Float* indicate that there is favourable response to introducing *Float* or a similar app permanently. The following conclusions can be drawn:

1. *Float* confirms to visitors’ expectations of modern museums today.
2. *Float* is effectively interactive and connects with visitors on a personal level.
3. *Float* appeals to and can be used by people from a variety of different age groups.
4. *Float* has the potential to be made popular by word of mouth.
5. *Float* has found to be relevant and inclusive to visitors.

Recommendations

In addition to continuing to obtain both quantitative and qualitative data during the trial period in the form of written evaluation surveys and verbal interactions with users, the following recommendations are to be taken into account in order to improve *Float’s* usability and presence in the art world:

1. Implementing evaluation feedback by addressing technical and sequencing issues
2. Increase the Potter’s Facebook presence and feature *Float*
3. Present *Float* at MuseumNext 2014