



Immersive Education Initiative receives \$1.2 Million STEM donation from the John C. Ford Program

BOSTON, MA – March 11, 2008 – On behalf of the Immersive Education Initiative, the Grid Institute has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding and Commitment with The John C. Ford Program's Global Education Initiative [Ford Program-GEI Project] to formalize a joint collaboration to further shared objectives, including accelerating and strengthening the acquisition of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) skills, problem-solving and creative thinking skills in underserved K-12 and college students, worldwide; achieving and sustaining the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and UNESCO Education For All goals; and using innovative technology and Internet solutions for building healthy, sustainable communities and increased access to critical knowledge and information, worldwide.



Under the terms of the agreement, The Ford Program-GEI Project will donate 67 STEM programs and associated learning materials and technologies to the Immersive Education Initiative under an Open Educational Resources (OER) Creative Commons license. The donation, valued at \$1.2 Million USD, was developed with funding by the United States Department of Commerce, W.K. Kellogg Foundation, Dallas Foundation, COMP USA, EDS Foundation, Bank of America Foundation, Microsoft Corporation, Chase Bank and private investors.

The donation provides the Immersive Education Initiative with a solid base of STEM programs from which a range of next-generation applied engineering immersive learning experiences will be developed.

The Ford Program-GEI Project is a 501(c)(3) international NGO donor whose mission is to help build global capacity and healthy, sustainable communities by strengthening the educational, economic, and environmental infrastructures of underserved communities, worldwide. The Ford Program-GEI Project has developed and is a partner in the Global Science-Engineering TeleCenters Programme, an alliance of private-public partnerships representing 40 developing countries and over \$1.2 Billion USD leveraged assets to deliver quality STEM programs, and teacher/student training to all government and municipal-operated public schools in participating developing countries. To this end, The Ford Program-GEI Project will grant to the Grid Institute the following donations for use by the Immersive Education Initiative:

1. **GEI STEM Programs, which includes 67 interdisciplinary K12-College STEM** problem-solving programs developed by leading educators and engineers with The Ford Program-GEI Project, including electronic audio-data [voice and visual] curricula, lesson plans, training materials and templates, focused on 12 areas of science vital to building healthy, sustainable communities: water purification; environmental preservation; alternative energy; prevention of communicable diseases, including HIV/AIDS, waterborne, childhood and other communicable diseases; energy flow through ecosystems; eco-design—eco-engineering; wastewater sanitation and treatment; agricultural science; irrigation; global warming and climatology; aerospace science and technology; and nanotechnology.
2. **New Interactions Applied-Learning Pedagogy**, which connects, empowers, motivates and accelerates the learning of integrated STEM and problem-solving skills by underserved youth, K-12-College.
3. **Unlimited Training On The Interactions Applied-Learning Pedagogy.**
4. **Global eConsultant-Mentors Program**, with templates for connecting leading engineers, educators and executives to mentor disadvantaged, under-served and vulnerable youth worldwide, and usage of the Global Science-Engineering Network.
5. **Four Micro-Entrepreneurship Programs**, including Business Plan Development, Marketing Plan Development, Customer-Relations Development, and Business-to-Business Sales Development Programs.

Online access to the donated STEM programs and materials will be staged out over the year 2008. Through the ImmersiveEducation.org web site, Immersive Education Initiative members will have online access to

approximately 25 of the STEM programs on May 30, 2008, with additional STEM programs to be available online on December 30, 2008.



About Immersive Education

Immersive Education (ImmersiveEducation.org) combines interactive 3D graphics, commercial game and simulation technology, virtual reality, voice chat (Voice over IP/VoIP), Web cameras (webcams) and rich digital media with collaborative online course environments and classrooms. Immersive Education gives participants a sense of "being there" even when attending a class or training session in person isn't possible, practical, or desirable, which in turn provides educators and students with the ability to connect and communicate in a way that greatly enhances the learning experience. Unlike traditional computer-based learning systems, Immersive Education is designed to immerse and engage students in the same way that today's best video games grab and keep the attention of players. Immersive Education supports self-directed learning as well as collaborative group-based learning environments that can be delivered over the Internet or using fixed-media such as CD-ROM and DVD. Shorter mini-games and interactive lessons can be injected into larger bodies of course material to further heighten and enrich the Immersive Education experience.

About the Media Grid

The Media Grid is a public utility for digital media. Based on new and emerging distributed computational grid technologies, the Media Grid builds upon existing Internet and Web standards to create a unique network optimized for digital media delivery, storage, and processing. As an on-demand public computing utility, a range of software programs and Web sites can use the Media Grid for delivery and storage of rich media content, media processing, and computing power. The Media Grid is an open and extensible platform that enables a wide range of applications not possible with the traditional Internet alone, including: Massive Media on Demand (MMoD); Interactive digital cinema on demand; Immersive Education and distance learning; Truly immersive multiplayer games and Virtual Reality (VR); Hollywood movie and film rendering, special effects, and composition; Real-time rendering of high resolution graphics; Real-time visualization of complex weather patterns; Real-time protein modeling and drug design; Telepresence, telemedicine, and telesurgery; Vehicle and aircraft design and simulation; Visualization of scientific and medical data.

The Grid Institute leads the design and development of the global Media Grid through the MediaGrid.org open standards organization in collaboration with industry, academia, and governments from around the world.

To learn more about the Media Grid and Immersive Education visit MediaGrid.org and ImmersiveEducation.org