

## Panda diplomacy as Zoo Berlin launches new €10m enclosure

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Chinese President Xi Jinping were on-hand to mark a momentous occasion for Zoo Berlin, with the debut of its new €10m (US\$11.4m, £8.8m) giant panda enclosure.

A pair of giant pandas, which prove very lucrative for zoos with visitors travelling from far and wide to get a glimpse of the rare animals, arrived in Berlin on 24 June, making their debut to the public on 6 July for the first time following a quarantine period.

Covering 5,480sq m (59,000sq ft), the Dan Pearlman-designed Panda Garden is themed as a Chinese-style pavilion, centred around a new building with a visitor plaza and educational experience for both adults and children on the life of a panda.



President Xi and Chancellor Merkel attended the launch at the zoo

Habitats are designed after the giant panda's natural surroundings in China's Sichuan Province, with rock formations, small watercourses and 815 bamboo plants.

Dan Pearlman worked with Berlin-based emproc Bauprojektmanagement on the project, who handled construction work for the nine-month development.

The arrival of the two pandas was preceded by a lengthy negotiation period between the German and Chinese governments, with a 15-year loan deal agreed between the two nations. Under the agreement, any panda offspring produced during that time would be returned to China.

"We have two very likable diplomats here – the two pandas," said Merkel. "I think Jiao Qing and Meng Meng will be special ambassadors for our two countries."

More: [http://lei.sr?a=b6c3v\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=b6c3v_A)

## Wanda 'wolf pack' dwindles with US\$9.3bn property deal

After spending a number of years rapidly developing its tourism assets across China in an attempt to become the world's largest tourism entity, Wanda has taken a step back by selling 91 per cent of its physical assets in a deal worth US\$9.3bn (€8.15bn, £7.22bn).

Wanda chair Wang Jianlin took aim at Disney last year, saying that "one tiger" was "no match for a pack of wolves" as his company eyed up the position of the world's most powerful tourism entity, going as far to say that in the next 10 to 20 years Wanda "must make Disney unprofitable".

The sale to Sunac China Holdings, which is the second-largest real estate deal in the history of China, has been carried out in order to cut Wanda's debt as it prepares for a mainland listing after delisting from Hong Kong last year.



Jianlin's Wanda has set its sights on Disney

The deal includes 13 of Wanda's cultural tourism projects comprising theme parks and leisure complexes, as well as 76 hotels, which have also been acquired by Sunac.

According to a joint release by Wanda and Sunac, projects acquired will continue to use the "Wanda Cultural Tourism City" brand, with Wanda remaining responsible for operations management. Additionally Wanda will continue to be responsible for the projects' design, construction and quality.

Wanda's tourism plan is based on construction of at least 20 cultural tourism enterprises across China. With the new asset-light strategy "projects will continue to be developed according to the plans and contents approved by the government", says Wanda.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=n3E6a\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=n3E6a_A)

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The entire UK sculpture library will be catalogued over the next three years

## Art UK to digitise UK's 170,000 sculptures

Art UK has announced plans for a £3.8m (US\$4.9m, €4.3m) project to digitise the UK's entire public collection of 170,000 sculptures.

The three-year project – which has Heritage Lottery, Arts Council England and government funding – will focus on sculptures from the last 1,000 years, with all objects recorded and the majority to be photographed, some in 3D. This collection will then be displayed on the

[artuk.org](http://artuk.org) website from 2018, with the full collection to be available by the end of 2020.

The funding will also be used for training schemes taking place across Britain. Additionally, 60 films about sculpture and sculptors will also be made with and by young people, with the work linked to the UK's National Curriculum.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=y9q5P\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=y9q5P_A)

## 'Benchmark' US\$46m waterpark comes to North Carolina's Outer Banks

A US\$46m (€40.5m, £35.6m) waterpark development has opened its doors in the Outer Banks region of North Carolina.

Designed by Aquatic Development Group (ADG), the H2OBX waterpark caters to families, and reflects the feel of the Outer Banks area, according to ADG, who have called it a "new benchmark in Carolina coastal tourism."

The 81,000sq m (871,000sq ft) development took eight months to complete, and features more than 20 waterslides and attractions, including the Twin Tides Wave Pool with a dual beachfront on opposite ends.

The waterpark also offers 50 private cabanas, shaded seating areas and multiple food and beverage outlets. The waterpark has



The development features more than 20 new attractions

put a cap on daily visitor numbers to "create a resort-like feel", according to the developers.

ADG served as lead designer for H2OBX, with WhiteWater West supplying the park's slides and Weber Group designing themed buildings. Ken Ellis, president and CEO of ADG, is also one quarter of the development team.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=N2M3M\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=N2M3M_A)



# Unesco makes 23 new additions to its World Heritage list

Palestine's Hebron old city, the UK's Lake District and the male-only sacred Japanese island of Okinoshima are among 23 new additions to Unesco's World Heritage list.

Also added immediately to Unesco's 'In Danger' list, Hebron is highly contentious, as it contains the Tomb of the Patriarchs – the burial place of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

The decision has received criticism from Israel, which objects to Hebron's designation as a part of Palestine. The country also refuted Palestinian allegations of attacks on the site and has complained that the UN resolution denies a Jewish connection to the city.

The Lake District becomes Britain's first national park to receive World Heritage status.

With 18 million tourists visiting the region each year, Unesco suggested the site should be closely monitored and that there should be improvements in conservation efforts.

Awarding World Heritage status, the Committee praised the area's beauty, saying "the combined work of nature and human activity has produced a harmonious landscape where mountains are mirrored in the lakes."



Hebron is a highly contentious area as it contains the Tomb of the Patriarchs

Located 60km (37.3m) off the western coast of Kyushu Island, Okinoshima is home to the 17th century Okitsu shrine, which was built to pray for the safety of sailors.

The island observes its long-standing traditions, which controversially include a

ban on women. To this day, men must take off their clothes and undergo a cleansing ritual to visit the island. When they leave, they are not allowed to take away souvenirs or reveal the details of their visit.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=H6B6c\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=H6B6c_A)

# Rock and Roll Hall of Fame launches Power of Rock experience

Music fans can now get a taste of what it would be like to be inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, with a new US\$14m (€12.3m, £10.8m) visitor experience at the iconic Cleveland, Ohio location which launched on 1 July.

Created by BRC Imagination Arts, the immersive Power of Rock exhibition brings to life more than 30 years of legendary induction ceremonies through a three act pre-show, film and exhibition.

Following the pre-show, fans enter the Connor Theater to watch a short film produced by Academy Award-winning director Jonathan Demme.

In the theatre, moving screens, concert lighting, smoke and dynamic concert-style audio recreate the experience of attending a Hall of Fame induction. The film itself was Demme's final piece before his death in April this year, with more than 100 artists featured.

"There are usually 18-20 cameras filming at any one time in those inductions," said BRC executive creative director, Christian Lachel, speaking to AM2. "We went into the vault to look at this footage, look at the different



The immersive Power of Rock experience features the inductions of more than 100 artists

isolated cameras, look at the things people have never seen before – the little moments.

"Demme used this footage to create a rock concert with moments he thought were phenomenal. The film is a special view of a master filmmaker with a passion for music."

Following the show's conclusion, guests view artefacts from the performances they

have just seen, and have the opportunity to interact with inductees and capture their own personal memories in the 'Say it Loud' pods, which have inductees including Deep Purple's Glenn Hughes, Smokey Robinson, Alice Cooper and others 'interview' visitors in special interactive booths.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=S8a9F\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=S8a9F_A)

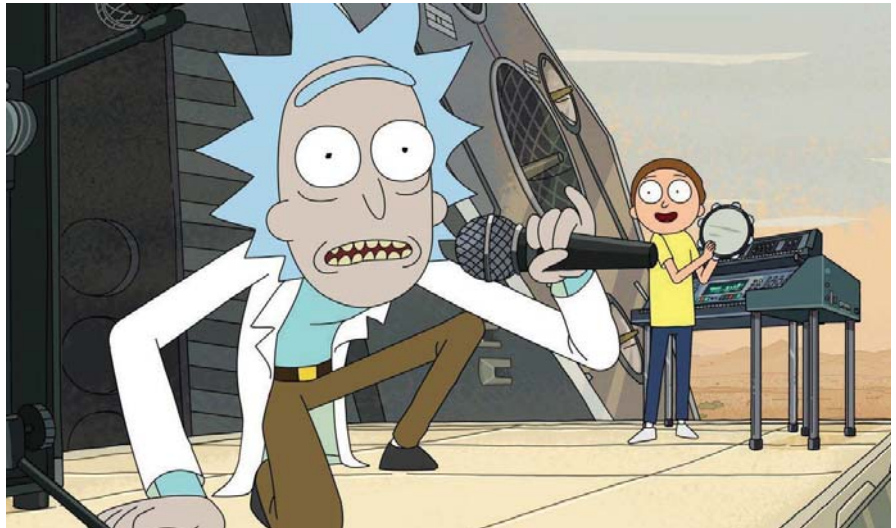
# Could interactive narratives be incorporated into attractions?

An immersive storytelling expert has discussed the possibility of using new and evolving technologies to give visitors to attractions rein over interactive experiences, allowing them to make personal choices and drive narrative in a story unfolding before them.

Aaron Bradbury, who is VFX supervisor for immersive storytelling studio NSC Creative and is working on how the medium can be applied to virtual reality, believes despite numerous roadblocks for this genre of storytelling, there are many avenues of that could still potentially be unlocked.

"Linear media loves to toy with the idea of interactive and branching narratives whether it be the setting for visitors to *Westworld* or the mind bending world of *Rick and Morty*," said Bradbury, speaking in the latest edition of *Attractions Management*.

Netflix recently took a step into choose-your-own-story style adventures, with the company recently launching a new feature based on *Puss-in-Boots*. Aimed



Bradbury says interactive media could work with a show like *Rick and Morty*

at children, the show uses interactive cut scenes to allow viewers to select from branching decision paths, a technique that could also be branched out in some form to visitor attractions.

"Interactive narratives are already very much in the games industry," said Bradbury. "The optimistic path is a feeling that among the dead ends, there are many avenues to explore."

More: [http://lei.sr?a=m9r8R\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=m9r8R_A)



The first collection debuted in Leiden

## Dutch celebrities create museums for stations

Waiting rooms at railway stations across the Netherlands are being converted into temporary mini museums in an effort to promote the National Museum of World Culture's vast unseen collections.

Showcasing the organisation's unseen collection, five Dutch celebrities were asked to choose their favourite artefacts to go on display at the temporary installations. Television presenter Floortje Dessing was the first celebrity to debut a collection, which opened at Leiden central station last month.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=D8F4N\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=D8F4N_A)

## West Midlands Safari Park announces opening date for new *Boj* attraction

West Midlands Safari Park has announced that its new addition based on the CBeebies intellectual property *Boj*, will open to the public on 22 July.

Sitting next to the park's African Village, Boj's Giggly Playground has been developed at a cost of £850,000 (US\$1.1m, €964,000), with the soft play area also including a café and Boj-themed shop.

Split into different interactive zones, children get to "explore their inner rockstar" as Denzil's Music Mayhem allows them to play with congas, chimes, tubular bells, babel drums and more.

Inside the second zone, kids will be able to explore a sensory trail called Mia's Ladybird Spot, with dens to hide in and logs to climb over. Mr Cloppity's shed



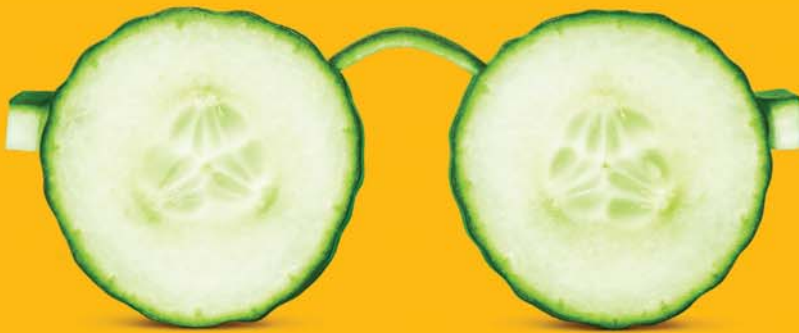
Boj will be making its attractions debut at the safari park

also features, as do interactive puzzles involving the show's Twitchlets.

The attraction will host a further three zones – Boj's Burrow, Rupa's Gym and Gavin's Giggly Playground – though what they will contain has not yet been revealed by the safari park.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=J8D5m\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=J8D5m_A)

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## VR startup bringing Norse mythology to life with theme park

Plans are underway in Denmark to develop a travelling virtual reality fantasy exhibition based on Norse mythology, which if successful will eventually be turned into a fully-fledged theme park unique to Scandinavia.

Known as Yggdrasil, the concept is rooted in the region's cultural heritage and folklore, with the startup initially developing an exhibition and VR experience called Yggdrasil GO.

Scheduled for Q3 2018, the attraction will be centred around the VR experience, with the accompanying exhibition explaining how the fantasy story matches up with Viking history and Norse mythology.

"If you look at Denmark's existing heritage attractions, they are mainly strictly based in factual history. No one is telling the folklore that is still a part of Denmark today," said Yggdrasil co-founder Peter Würtz, speaking to *AM2*.

"We're trying to open up this cultural heritage and storytelling from our region of the world, which has been so heavily



The Yggdrasil story is being created by Peter Würtz in consultation with Josefine Ottesen

influenced by the Vikings. With our mobile GO setup, we want to add value to Denmark's existing visitor experiences and possibly even Europe or the rest of the world. This can go not only to existing

museums, but also festivals, malls and other visitor attractions. Viking footsteps are all over the northern hemisphere, this has the potential to have a global appeal."

More: [http://lei.sr?a=3H2F5\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=3H2F5_A)



The scheme will diversify the sector

### Scottish government creates new skills fund

Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) has set up a Vocational Skills Fund dedicated to diversifying the museum sector.

Financed by the Scottish government, the fund will make work-based learning in museums accessible on every rung of the career ladder – from top to bottom.

"This fund represents an excellent effort to provide an alternative route into museums work and address the shaping of the current and future workforce of our cultural industry," said Cabinet secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs, Fiona Hyslop.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=a9c6w\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=a9c6w_A)

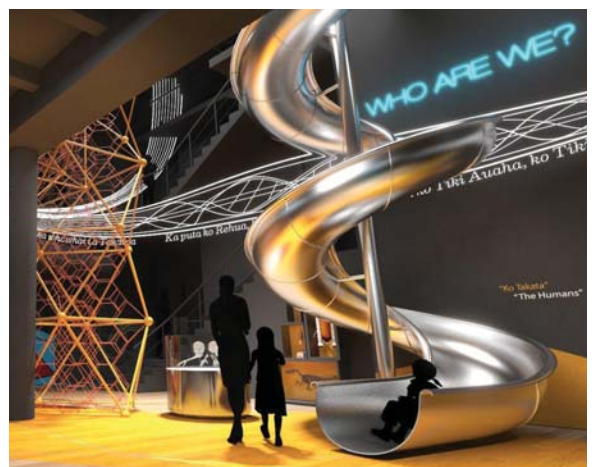
## Otago Museum undergoing final stage of science-focused redevelopment

The Otago Museum in Dunedin, New Zealand, is closing its Discovery World Tropical Forest to allow work to begin on the second stage of the attraction's NZ\$4m (US\$2.9m, €2.6m, £2.3m) redevelopment.

Costing NZ\$2.5m (US\$1.8m, €1.6m, £1.4m), phase two will include the installation of 50 interactive science exhibits and a revamped Tropical Forest butterfly house.

The Otago Community Trust has shown its support for the development, with a grant of NZ\$500,000 (US\$364,000, €321,000, £282,000).

Tropical Forest will close on 24 July, remaining shut until it reopens in December. The relaunched science centre will also incorporate the digitally



A double helix slide will be a focal point of the development

interactive Beautiful Science Gallery and Perpetual Guardian Planetarium, with those additions completed in 2015 during the project's first phase. The redeveloped centre will also be given a new name to be revealed at a later date.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=v5d6P\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=v5d6P_A)



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### **EAZA Annual Conference** Wildlands Adventure Zoo, Emmen, Netherlands

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30 JULY-3 AUGUST 2017

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1-6 OCTOBER 2017

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# Pub becomes first in the UK to be granted licence to operate as a zoo

Following a two-and-a-half year process, a family has taken the unique step of opening a pub with the aim of running a fully-certified zoo. That dream has now become a reality, with the Fenn Bell Inn recognised with certification

A pub in Kent is the first in the UK to be granted a licence to operate as a zoo, after Medway

Council granted the licence following a near three year process.

The Fenn Bell Inn in Rochester, owned by Andy and Kelly Cowell, has been home to the family's collection of exotic animals since it opened in 2014. The pub has over the last few years had issues with the council regarding the licensing agreement; for some time being asked to screen off some animal enclosures from the public. The licence approval now gives the zoo-pub hybrid full zoo status.

"In about 2011 we took on two pigs – Ginger and Spice," said Andy Cowell, speaking to AM2.

"Out of that it really developed, with us taking in more and more animals. My wife turned to me one day and said 'we can't live like this, you have turned the house into a zoo', and I thought 'what a good idea let's do it!'"

Since then the family has been taking in captivity-bred rescue animals which wouldn't survive in the wild. The pub was established to support the growing number of animals under the family's care.

"We decided to take on an old, disused pub with plenty of land, meaning we were able to have facilities such as toilets, car parking, food and drink, which would facilitate the zoo moving forward," said Cowell.

"We've never classed ourselves as a zoo – we've always classed ourselves as a rescue centre – but we had to fulfil the zoo criteria if we wanted to obtain the licence."



Andy and Kelly Cowell have built up a collection of 88 animals

“We are not a ‘boozier with a few animals in the garden’, we are an all singing and dancing, very well-structured little zoo”

To be granted a zoo licence, the pub had to meet a certain number of criteria, including health plans for the animals, veterinary care, on-site facilities, quarantine areas, hiring of trained staff, first aiders and more.

The 5 acre (20,000sq m) zoo currently has a collection of 88 animals under its care, including monkeys, meerkats, raccoons, parrots, birds of prey, lemurs, pigs, ducks, genets and more. Now the licence has been granted, plans include expanding the property by several acres, building a big cat centre for larger felines and conservation and rescue work

with hedgehogs and red squirrels. The pub and free-to-visit zoo work in harmony, with each drawing visitors to the other.

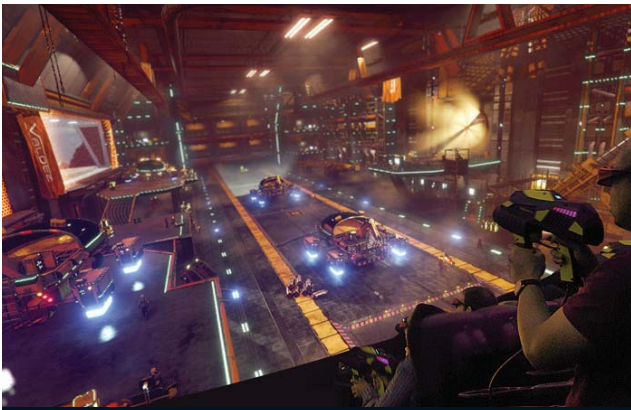
"The pub couldn't survive without the zoo and the zoo couldn't survive without the pub," said Cowell. "The zoo brings visitors to the pub, which allows us to do community events such as quiz nights and other activities a local village pub would host. In return, all the money we make at the pub goes back into animal health care, building the enclosures and feeding the animals."

Now the pub has its zoo licence, it means the Cowells

can take the next steps, helping the zoo to develop into a fully functional zoological park.

"This is the start of our journey really because now we can trade as a zoo, meaning we can become involved with other zoos and conservation projects, and we can offer school education and trips," said Cowell.

"What I also think it does is it gives us the credit that we deserve. We are not a 'boozier with a few animals in the garden', we are an all singing and dancing, very well-structured little zoo. Just because we're small and just because we have a pub on site, that doesn't make us any less good than anywhere else you would go in the country. That is what the licence gives us, that credibility. Moving forward that will allow us to do bigger and better things in the future."



Holovis and E2M met while working on project for Adlabs

## Holovis teaming up with E2M Technologies

Electric motion specialist E2M Technologies (E2M) has partnered with sensory experience design firm Holovis, in a strategic move that aims to enhance attraction experiences through a combination of motion-based solutions, complex AV and real-time media.

“There are a lot of synergies between our two companies

as our work crosses over in both our attractions and enterprise space,” said Stuart Hetherington, Holovis’ CEO. “Bringing our teams, technologies and delivery methodologies together will strengthen both of our offerings further and lead to the development of next generation solutions to our clients.”



The library opted for two ceiling 3-Chip DLP HIGHlite projectors

## Digital Projection installs AV at Alexis de Tocqueville

The Alexis de Tocqueville library in Caen, France has opened its doors following an extensive remodel.

Shaped like a cross, the building plays host to more than a million works of art, organised into four themed areas.

The sciences & technologies area – an impressive glass centre – welcomes visitors with a spectacular semi-cylindrical

video fresco. Due to the natural lighting and the unusual size of the projection area (22m by 5m) the fresco presented a number of challenges to integrate.

To overcome these issues Auvisys, a Caen-based company who handled the audio-visual installations, opted for Digital Projections’ two ceiling 3-Chip DLP HIGHlite projectors.



Tensator provided barriers for the Emirates Air Line cable car

## Tensator announces Emirates Air Line partnership

Queue management specialist, Tensator has signed a contract with Emirates Air Line cable car.

As part of the contract Tensator has provided 150 Tensabarriers, with Emirates branded webbing, to guide visitors quickly and safely through the attraction, while also managing passenger flow.

“Since the Emirates Air Line opened in 2012, people have

been arriving in their droves to get a bird’s-eye view of the capital,” said Kevin Hickson, general manager at Tensator.

“This is a popular route but it is also a destination in its own right and attracts a high-volume of people. To maximise capacity and avoid unnecessary queuing, we needed to ensure that passengers could move quickly through the system.”



Little Big City features image capture technology from Picsolve

## Picsolve collaborating with Merlin Entertainments

Picsolve has collaborated with Merlin on its newest attraction, Little Big City, Berlin.

Little Big City takes visitors on a whistle stop tour of Berlin’s history starting in the Middle Ages, through the rise and fall of the Third Reich and the Berlin wall, before culminating in modern day Berlin.

The attraction features 3D interactive miniature sets and

projection mapping to showcase key events from history and bring the experience to life.

Picsolve is the only content capture partner across Merlin Entertainment’s attractions in Berlin, having previously provided image capture solutions at Madame Tussauds Berlin, Sea Life Berlin, Legoland Discovery Centre Berlin and Berlin Dungeon.



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Ross Snipp MSc, Flamingo Land Deputy Executive  
 Vice-Chair of BIAZA living Collections Committee





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**Job Location: Northamptonshire, United Kingdom**



As 'the Home of Children's Play', Wicksteed Park is Northamptonshire's leading visitor attraction and attracts over half a million visitors a year to its 27 rides and other attractions. For more information, see [www.wicksteedpark.co.uk](http://www.wicksteedpark.co.uk)

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Job location: Northamptonshire, United Kingdom

● **Duty Manager**

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Salary: £18,000

Job location: Oxford, United Kingdom

● **Marketing and Sales Executive**

Legoland Discovery Centre

Salary: Competitive

Job location: Chicago, IL, United States,

● **Facilities Manager**

Madame Tussauds

Salary: Competitive

Job location: Hollywood, FL, United States,

● **Recruitment Manager**

Legoland

Salary: Competitive

Job location: Windsor, United Kingdom

● **Facilities Manager**

Madame Tussauds

Salary: Competitive

Job location: Hollywood, United States

● **Technical Manager**

The Dungeons

Salary: Competitive

Job location: Edinburgh, United Kingdom

● **Finance Director**

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Job location: Chertsey, United Kingdom

● **Facilities Technician**

Madame Tussauds

Salary: Competitive

Job location: San Francisco, CA, United States,

● **Performance Team Leader**

The Dungeons

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● **General Manager**

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Salary: Competitive

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● **Marketing Manager**

Legoland Discovery Centre

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Job location: United Kingdom

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The Eye Brand

Salary: Competitive

Job location: Orlando, FL, United States,

● **Partnerships Manager**

The Eye Brand

Salary: Competitive

Job location: London, United Kingdom,

● **Digital Character Modeler**

Merlin Entertainments Group

Salary: circa £22-24K

Job location: Acton, London, United Kingdom,

● **Water Park Lead Lifeguard**

Legoland

Salary: Competitive

Job location: California, United States

For more details on the above jobs visit [www.am2.jobs](http://www.am2.jobs)

## Coral reefs at risk of extinction unless global warming curtailed, warns Unesco

Coral reefs are likely to disappear by the end of the century unless global CO2 output can be reduced drastically, says Unesco's World Heritage Centre.

Over the last three years, 21 of 29 World Heritage-listed reefs have suffered from severe heat stress, causing usually colorful corals to become white and translucent – a process known as coral bleaching.

According to a report by Unesco, the social, cultural and economic value of the world's coral reefs has been estimated at US\$1tn (€881bn, £774bn) annually, with loss of reef ecosystems totalling US\$500bn (€440.5bn, £387bn) by 2100.



Coral Reefs are worth an estimated US\$1tn a year

"All properties will experience annual severe bleaching, and thus will cease to host functioning coral reef ecosystems unless CO2 emissions are reduced," said the report. "Delivering

on the target of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels offers the only opportunity to prevent coral reef decline."

More: [http://lei.sr?a=A8x3d\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=A8x3d_A)

## ABBA: Super Troupers coming to London's Southbank Centre this year

London's Southbank Centre will team up with ABBA The Museum in Stockholm to create an immersive exhibition charting the hit group's journey as one of the world's most iconic pop labels.

Opening at the Southbank Centre on 14 December, *ABBA: Super Troupers* will look at the rise of ABBA set against the socio-economic and political conditions of the time.

The exhibition will feature previously unseen archive material including original costumes, handwritten notes, sketches, and personal photographs, music and instruments, plus album artwork, photography and film by collaborators such as director Lasse Hallström.



The exhibition will feature previously unseen material

For the first time, objects from ABBA The Museum and its archives will be brought together in the UK, charting the band's individual careers, their Eurovision win and their chart-topping runs in the 70s

and 80s. Theatrical backdrops will also be used for the exhibition, with a hotel room, music studio and disco setting the stage to provide context for the ABBA story.

More: [http://lei.sr?a=B3m6a\\_A](http://lei.sr?a=B3m6a_A)

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