

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Grand Rapids Public Museum Unveils PublicOS: A New Digital Learning Platform to Boost Digital Literacy**

PublicOS Prioritizes Online Safety and Engages Learners with Hands-On Digital Experiences,  
Empowering the Next Generation of West Michigan Innovators

**GRAND RAPIDS, MI** - The Grand Rapids Public Museum (GRPM) is proud to announce the launch of PublicOS, an innovative digital learning platform designed to advance educational technology and promote digital literacy. Supported by the Wege Foundation, PublicOS provides an intuitive, step-by-step approach for all types of learners, empowering users to build foundational digital skills in an accessible and engaging way.

“The Museum, at its core, is a learning institution dedicated to accessibility and knowledge to all,” said Dale Robertson, president and CEO. “We are offering the public this accessible platform to promote new levels of both digital and human connection, *safely and responsibly*.”

PublicOS is the first platform of its kind in the nation to be awarded Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) certification by FTC-approved safe harbor PRIVO.

“Our partnership with PRIVO reflects our dedication to empowering users while safeguarding their privacy, making PublicOS a trailblazer in responsible digital education,” said Josh Freeney, the GRPM’s Senior Vice President of Digital Strategy. “This forward-thinking approach sets a new benchmark for educational platforms everywhere, and will help build user confidence in digital literacy.”

PublicOS has been certified as compliant with COPPA and is working towards compliance with the EU’s General Data Protection Act (GDPR) and Children’s Code and is poised to set a new standard in digital learning environments. This certification underscores the Museum’s commitment to providing a secure, enriching online experience for all users, particularly children, with proper parental consent. PublicOS also utilizes PRIVO’s certified consent and verification SaaS solutions.

After years of thoughtful ideation and development, PublicOS became a reality through a collaborative process that included hands-on “practice permits.” These pilot experiences allowed students to access the platform, create their own digital projects, and design small digital exhibits using the GRPM’s online collections that showcased what they were learning in class, turning concepts into interactive, real-world applications. PublicOS will grow more than technology consumers; it’s here to develop leaders in digital production.

“As the stewards of information and primary sources for nearly 170 years, the GRPM prides itself on being a trusted source of inspiration and a place to cultivate curiosity,” said Robertson. “Now, it also serves as a hub for expanding digital literacy in the region by combining the power of our extensive Collections with emerging technologies like augmented reality and artificial intelligence in an ethically and responsibly developed platform.”

With the development of PublicOS, the Museum will offer new digital experiences to learners of all ages including two camps where students use computer code and design thinking to scan Artifacts in 3D, build multiplayer mobile experiences, and customize a 3D globe to make your own Museum metaverse. [Camps are now open for registration.](#)

“We’re equipping students for a future where digital literacy is more and more important,” said Freeney. “The Museum is providing users with emerging, innovative tools that not only allow them to navigate digital spaces but also empower them to create digital content.”

For more on Grand Rapids Public Museum’s PublicOS platform, visit [grpm.org](http://grpm.org).

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#### **About PRIVO:**

PRIVO is a leading authority in children’s online privacy, minors’ digital identity, and consent management. PRIVO’s signature Kids Privacy Assured program aids companies in navigating the online privacy landscape from COPPA, GDPR to the Children Codes. Additionally, PRIVO’s specialized suite of cloud-based solutions including age verification, youth registration, and parental consent, enable companies to seamlessly engage with - or block access to - minors. PRIVO has been an FTC-approved COPPA Safe Harbor since 2004, trusted by leading and well-known family brands.

<https://www.privo.com/>

#### **About The Grand Rapids Public Museum**

A public institution with over 250,000 artifacts, The Grand Rapids Museum has been in town since 1854. It tells the history of Kent County. The Museum offers three floors of exhibits, a planetarium, and educational programs. A 10-year tax from Kent County taxpayers in 2016 helped fund part of the museum. It also protects The Mounds, a National Historic Landmark. The museum holds accreditation from the American Alliance of Museums. It is at 272 Pearl Street, NW, in downtown Grand Rapids, MI. For more information, including hours, admission, and events, [visit grpm.org](http://grpm.org). Be curious!