

Media Contacts:

Michelle Gaseau, 617-824-3547, michelle_gaseau@emerson.edu

Carole McFall, 617-824-8415, carole_mcfall@emerson.edu

Emerson's Engagement Lab and ENGAGE Boston Partner with City of Boston, Niantic, Inc, to Promote Youth Civic Advocacy with New Pokémon GO Competition

BOSTON, MA (July 6, 2017) - On Monday, July 10, the [Engagement Lab at Emerson College](#) and [ENGAGE Boston](#), in partnership with the City of Boston and [Niantic, Inc](#), the publisher and developer of the interactive mobile game [Pokémon GO](#), will launch a youth-led, city-wide creative competition to promote equitable representation of Boston neighborhoods in the popular mobile game.

The [Participatory Pokémon GO](#) project is meant to familiarize youth with the relationship between physical and digital civic spaces, while strengthening the representation of all Boston neighborhoods in Pokémon GO.

From July 10 through August 18, 2017, youth across Boston will be able to join the competition and explore their neighborhoods and identify meaningful locations that could become new PokéStops, real-world locations that reward players in the game. These locations could include sites ranging from small parks to local buildings, public artwork to cafes.

After locating a potential PokéStop, student participants will be charged with creating [60-second videos](#) explaining why these locations matter and why they should be highlighted in Pokémon GO. A selection process that involves local youth will review all video submissions and choose up to 100 new PokéStops to be added to the game.

"We hope to engage young people in a conversation about the location data they interact with on a daily basis, whether playing games or walking around their neighborhoods. Everyday life in the city is composed of physical structures, and increasingly, the data that defines digital experiences," said **Eric Gordon**, Executive Director of the Engagement Lab and Professor of Visual & Media Arts at Emerson College.

In addition to the creative video component, the Participatory Pokémon GO project features curriculum for summer youth programs designed by the Engagement Lab and ENGAGE Boston that provides students with enrichment through cultural and community exploration. The project

will culminate in September with a Pokémon GO Walk, where youth across Boston will come together to explore the new PokéStops.

About the Engagement Lab

The Engagement Lab is an applied research lab at Emerson College that investigates and creates media and technology to reduce disparities in civic participation. From public health to public streets, the Engagement Lab specializes in playful approaches to data, art, and design. For more information on the Engagement Lab, visit www.elab.emerson.edu.

About the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics

The Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics in Boston serves as the City's innovation incubator, building partnerships between internal agencies and outside entrepreneurs to pilot projects that address resident needs. For more information on the Mayor's Office of New Urban Mechanics, visit www.boston.gov/mechanics.

About the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity

The Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity leads efforts to help Boston plan for and deal with catastrophes and slow-moving disasters — like persistent racial and economic inequality — that have become part of 21st century life. For more information on the Mayor's Office of Resilience and Racial Equity, visit www.boston.gov/resilience.

About Pokémon

The Pokémon Company International, a subsidiary of The Pokémon Company in Japan, manages the property outside of Asia and is responsible for brand management, licensing and marketing, the Pokémon Trading Card Game, the animated TV series, home entertainment, and the official Pokémon website. Pokémon was launched in Japan in 1996 and today is one of the most popular children's entertainment properties in the world. For more information, visit www.Pokemon.com.

About Niantic, Inc.

Niantic Inc. builds mobile real-world experiences that foster fun, exploration, discovery and social interaction. Originally incubated within Google, Niantic, Inc., spun out in 2015, with investments from Google, The Pokémon Company, and Nintendo. The company's immersive real-world mobile game Ingress has been downloaded more than 20 million times and is played in more than 200 countries and territories worldwide. Niantic, Inc. also developed and published Pokémon GO, the real-world Pokémon game for iOS and Android mobile devices that was downloaded more than 750 million times in its first year. For more information on Niantic, visit www.nianticlabs.com.

About ENGAGE Boston

ENGAGE Boston, an initiative of Be The Change, Inc., is missioned with ensuring that all youth in the Boston area grow up aware of self, others, and world so that they can take positive social action in strengthening their surroundings. Focused on building the next generation of great

community members, they do this through providing support, resources, and capacity to educators, youth workers, parents, and peer leaders so that meaningful civic and community engagement can be woven into all aspects of a young person's life. For more information on ENGAGE Boston, visit www.engageboston.org.