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Viacom Opens Lab to Reimagine Fan Experiences and Engagement

Giphy, Airbnb, FlickerLab, and Citia Named as Launch Partners

First Creators-In-Residence Include Neuroscientist Beau Lotto and Artist Raghava KK

NEW YORK--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- Viacom (NASDAQ: VIAB, VIA) today announced the first slate of projects and partners for the Viacom Lab, whose mission is to deliver products, platforms and businesses that inspire and empower the future of fan experience and engagement.

The Viacom Lab builds on the company's long-term strategic investment in cross-platform content and storytelling, world-class talent, and external partnerships. The unit, which reports to Ross Martin, Executive Vice President of Marketing Strategy & Engagement, and Kern Schireson, Executive Vice President of Data Strategy & Consumer Intelligence, will work both independently and in conjunction with Viacom's brands globally. Susan Claxton has been named the Lab's Executive Producer.

"Viacom's brands have always led the way in delivering breakthrough new content for our audiences, everywhere they are," said Martin. "The Viacom Lab builds on that unparalleled legacy, empowering visionary creative talent to bring their biggest and best 'fans first' ideas to life in powerful new ways."

Viacom's Lab will source and develop projects in a variety of ways, including: leveraging Viacom's vast intellectual property; joint ventures with an array of internal and external partners; and tapping the company's own creative community worldwide.

Select projects launching the Viacom Lab include:

GIPHY: The lab has partnered with GIPHY, the world's only GIF platform with the largest searchable database of GIFs, to create and distribute all the GIFs from fans' favorite hit shows - in real time and all the time - across the Viacom portfolio.

"Fanufacturing:" The Lab is developing ways to enable fans to bring their favorite characters and moments from Viacom content into the physical world across a broad range of technologies and materials.

Livestreaming: The Lab is testing a technology that will enable fans to livestream directly to a live Viacom television show, thereby creating new storytelling formats.

Experiential Fan Opportunities: Fans will have unique real life immersive experiences with opportunities to stay in replicas of places from their favorite shows and movies. The first location, available via Airbnb, is a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles [lair](#) in New York coinciding with the opening of Paramount Pictures' and Nickelodeon Movies' feature film, "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles: Out of the Shadows."

Citia: Viacom is expanding its use of Citia, a mobile-first publishing system that enables content and advertising to be instantly re-arranged and republished in multiple operating systems and social platforms. A recent pilot with MTV News saw a 20 percent spike in engagement for content utilizing Citia's interactive "card" technology.

The lab is also partnering with creators-in-residence who will explore ideas using Viacom's assets and resources as they embed themselves in the Lab for up to six months. The first group includes:

British neuroscientist **Beau Lotto** is the founder of augmented reality platform Traces, which allows users to leave content like video, audio and interactive experiences in virtual bubbles anywhere in the world. The Lab will explore opportunities to connect fans to content in new ways using Traces.

Harold Moss and **Tom Vedel** are founders of FlickerLab, a leading animation and technology company based in Brooklyn and Copenhagen. They have developed the live animation app Animgram, based on their proprietary technology that empowers fans and brands to create their own animation in seconds and instantly publish across all social media and broadcast platforms.

Raghava KK is a multi-disciplinary Indian artist, working in painting, film, installation, multimedia and live performance. He began as a cartoonist in 1997 with leading Indian publications. KK will explore identity construct, empathy, and interpersonal context through new forms of social storytelling.

The Lab resides in Viacom's global headquarters in New York in a new area of the building featuring an open plan, vibrant color, commissioned art and custom furniture meant to inspire a fresh, organic, progressive way towards collaboration and creation. In addition to its own slate of projects, the Lab will serve as an interactive showcase for innovation originating from Viacom's domestic and international teams.

About Viacom

Viacom is home to premier global media brands that create compelling television programs, motion pictures, short-form content, apps, games, consumer products, social media experiences, and other entertainment content for audiences in 180 countries. Viacom's media networks, including Nickelodeon, Comedy Central, MTV, VH1, Spike, BET, CMT, TV Land, Nick at Nite, Nick Jr., Channel 5 (UK), Logo, Nicktoons, TeenNick and Paramount Channel, reach over 3.5 billion cumulative television subscribers worldwide. Paramount Pictures is a major global producer and distributor of filmed entertainment.

For more information about Viacom and its businesses, visit www.viacom.com. Keep up with Viacom news by following Viacom's blog at blog.viacom.com and Twitter feed at www.twitter.com/viacom.

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