

Kspace – FAQs for media

1. What is Kspace?

Kspace is a time-travelling interactive adventure game for kids at the National Museum of Australia in Canberra. Kids design time-travelling robots and blast back in time to Australia's past to complete a mission unique to that time and place.

2. What does the main Kspace experience involve?

Kspace is a three-stage experience and up to 12 visitors can take part in each stage. Visitors start their adventure in the Design Station where they use touchscreens to create a time-travelling robot. They then enter a Time Pod where they are blasted back to a mystery location, such as the Victorian goldfields of 1854 or Sydney in the 1930s when the Harbour Bridge was being built. Visitors then use their robots to explore the location and collect points and team up with others as one big robot to complete a mission unique to that time and place. At the end of the adventure, visitors move to the Cool-down area to reflect on the experience, learn more about the location visited and send home a postcard.

3. Who is the target audience for Kspace?

Kspace has been developed for 5–12 year olds, but it's fun for adults too!

4. What is unique about Kspace?

- Kspace allows kids to engage with Australian history in a fun and interactive way.
- Kspace puts kids in control of their experience, they create their own robot and control what they do when they arrive in the scene.
- Kspace is a collaborative game which encourages team work: the more kids work together the more 'Kstars' they'll collect.
- Kspace encourages kids to look closely and notice the things that are different in the scene from what they see today.
- Kspace puts kids in the picture – *literally* – by having their photo taken and superimposed upon their robot design, this robot is then used in each of the scenes to complete a series of mini-games.
- Kspace is different every time kids visit: they may travel to a different place (there are eight possible scenes), and even if they travel to the same place the real-timing gaming environment means that what they experience each time will differ.

5. Is Kspace just about fun, or are there some educational aspects to it?

Kspace is a lot of fun, but the narrative and visual elements in each of the scenes have been carefully researched and wherever possible the Museum has presented an authentic view of the historical places and events. The Cool-down area of Kspace delves deeper into the key themes and ideas explored in each of the scenes, and highlights objects from the Museum's collection that relate to each scene. Kspace was developed to meet the requirements of the Australian curriculum and a range of online teacher resources and student activities can be used in the classroom to help prepare for, or to reflect on, a visit to Kspace.

6. Why did the Museum undertake the project?

In 2001 when the Museum opened with a children's space called Kspace. It was a very popular attraction for our young visitors and had a long life. However, with age it was become increasingly difficult to maintain and the time had come time for it to be re-imagined and renewed. In 2013 we undertook to develop a new experience to replace Kspace, and in 2014 Kspace 1.0 closed to make way for the new version to be built.

7. What was the overall objective of the project?

To create a fun, engaging, and interactive experience for our young visitors, to allow them to experience something of Australia's history.

8. How long did the project take?

It took about 3 years to develop Kspace from scoping through to opening to the public in July 2015.

9. What was the total cost of the project?

About \$2 million.

10. How does the redevelopment fit in with the National Museum's broader strategic vision?

Children are a core part of the Museum's audience – whether visiting with family and friends, or as part of a school group – and we are always interested in new and interesting ways to delight, entertain and educate young people about Australian history and the complex and interesting material culture we hold in the National Museum of Australia's collection. Kspace allowed us a way to do this in a fun and engaging way.

11. How were audiences involved in the development of Kspace?

An important part of the Kspace redevelopment project was involving audiences – and in particular kids – throughout the development process, from concept stage through to delivery, to ensure that what we were creating met the needs of these audiences. This included helping brainstorm concepts for Kspace, providing feedback on the game world designs, prototype testing and then testing beta versions of each of the scenes.

12. What is the technology behind Kspace?

The Kspace software is custom built. The games are developed using the game engine Unity. The backend is a Ruby on Rails application running on GNU/Linux Ubuntu. The Cool-down touchscreens are HTML5 interactives with a custom content management system. The Kspace software interfaces with the Museum’s lighting and hardware control systems.

13. Are there any vendors or major partners involved, and what has their contribution been?

The Museum commissioned lead contractor Spinifex Group to work on Kspace. Spinifex had a number of contractors and freelancers working on the project. In particular, they collaborated with Well Placed Cactus for development of the main games, Oblong Design for the physical design of the space and Wingove Design for the graphic design and identity in the physical space.

[Visit our Kspace website for a full list of credits](#)