

A Sea of Thoughts: A Community Installation Proposal for the Dundee V&A



Fig 1: A rendered frame of the overall mock-up animation.

Proposal Summary

I am proposing a community-based installation where people from the public can submit their thoughts on selected topics to appear within a “sea” of thoughts on the walls of the Dundee V&A. The installation will consist of ceiling mounted projectors and wall mounted interactive tablets. Texts that are submitted will float among each other along walls, almost as if being pushed along by a tide. At intervals, a text will be picked to be highlighted and grow.

This installation will be built up from community input on topics that you, Dundee V&A, will select. These can relate to your current exhibits, Dundee culture, celebratory weeks such as International Women’s Week, or even just objects and concepts. It will be controlled by you.



Fig 1: Thumbnail of demo video (<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1q3waYFmf6cEMJX0sf2dPQJTbknqIHziK/> or scan QR code)

Background

As an interaction designer and artist, my work often exposes the connection that I have with the world around me. In my work Peacelove in particular, I explored these varied intimate connections through writings, photography and sound. The work was exhibited in an intimate space and consisted of words being etched on a screen with vivid imagery and audio being interlaced at random. People were captivated, sitting and reading for long stretches of time. I had feedback saying they felt they could see into the mind of the TV.

My proposal would explore this with texts from anyone from the public, people would be able to sit and read and explore different thoughts from different people, letting it wash over them. This could manifest in a feeling of sonder and connectedness with the people around them.

Cost

Direct costs involved in realising this project would be:

- Short-throw projectors and mounts
- Touch screen monitors and mounts
- Content Filtering payment plan
- Potential licenses to fonts and other assets
- A high-end PC

Details

The interaction I suggest being best is a touchscreen monitor with a virtual keyboard. This virtual keyboard can show purely symbols able to be input into a submission, excluding the need for keys typically seen on a keyboard (either physical or virtual), such as Escape and Emojis. This could be done physically with bespoke keyboards, but the costs would be high, and it would be harder to launch more interaction points if so desired.

d that fish communicate with ea
n's beauty is mesmerizing.

That fish has the most vit
a smells fresh and salty.

I love the
The fish are sc
to catch; it kept getting away!

sounds.

The boat ride to the
across the water.

Share your thoughts on

the sea

Entry

I like the glittering waves and the|

by submitting, you agree to the terms of use

-	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	⌫	
[]	Q	W	E	R	T	Y	U	I	O	P	Submit
⌵	"	A	S	D	F	G	H	J	K	L	?	!
⌴	'	Z	X	C	V	B	N	M	,	.	⌵	
()	&							⬅	➡		

Fig 2: Close-up of display

The display would be angled, allowing small children to tall adults to be able to utilize the screen clearly. It would also be easily accessible for people in wheelchairs due to the height of the display. Accessibility for the blind and motor-impaired is to be considered, such as a button for Voice Dictation and or Narration. This can be discussed further.



Fig 3: A close-up of an adult in a wheelchair using the interface, accompanied by a parent and a child.

When a submission is made, the intended vision is for the text to appear or shoot out from the screen, as if flung into “sea” of words. These responses to the prompts will go on to develop into a vast gallery of human responses from the very people that visit the Dundee V&A. It would be a big collaborative project where people can read responses to people all around them, bringing the community and people closer together.

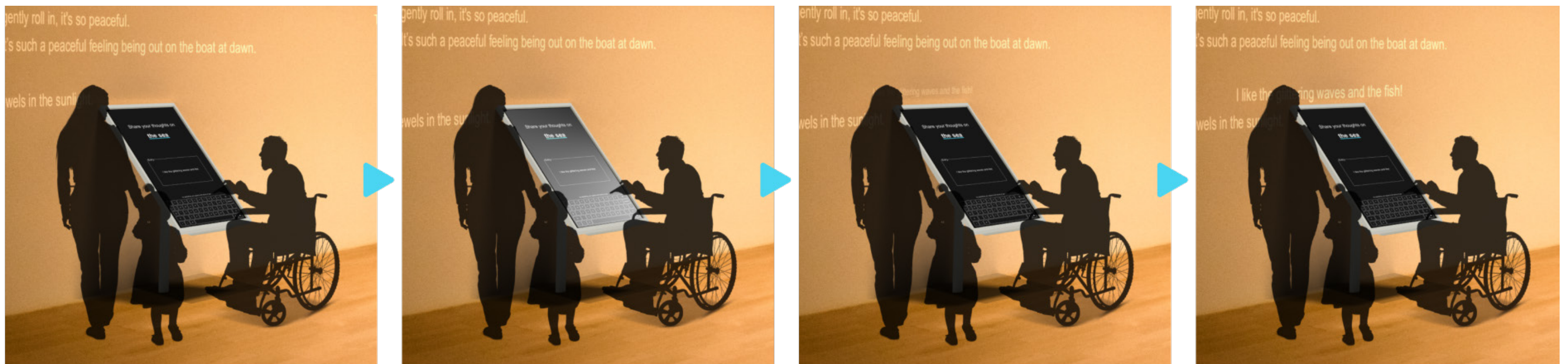


Fig 4: A series of frames of the interaction process.



Fig 5: A rendered frame close-up of highlighted text on a wall.

Maintenance and Upkeep

An Operations Manual (OM) will be provided to help guide fix any problems that may occur during the operation of the installation. The OM will also help migrate the systems over to a different computer if needed. Finally, the OM will provide instructions on options and setup for different aspects of the installation.

Content Filtering

When someone submits their response to the prompt, the text will go through a vigorous filtering process to ensure that no harmful content is put up on display for the public. The text will go through a specialised Content Filtering API. APIs such as these are specially trained to separate harmful text from appropriate text. It can use context to filter if text is harmful, so even if no profanity is present, no hate will be allowed through.

There are many different Content Filtering services with different payment plans and options. A couple are Microsoft's Azure OpenAI Service and DeepSeek's API services.

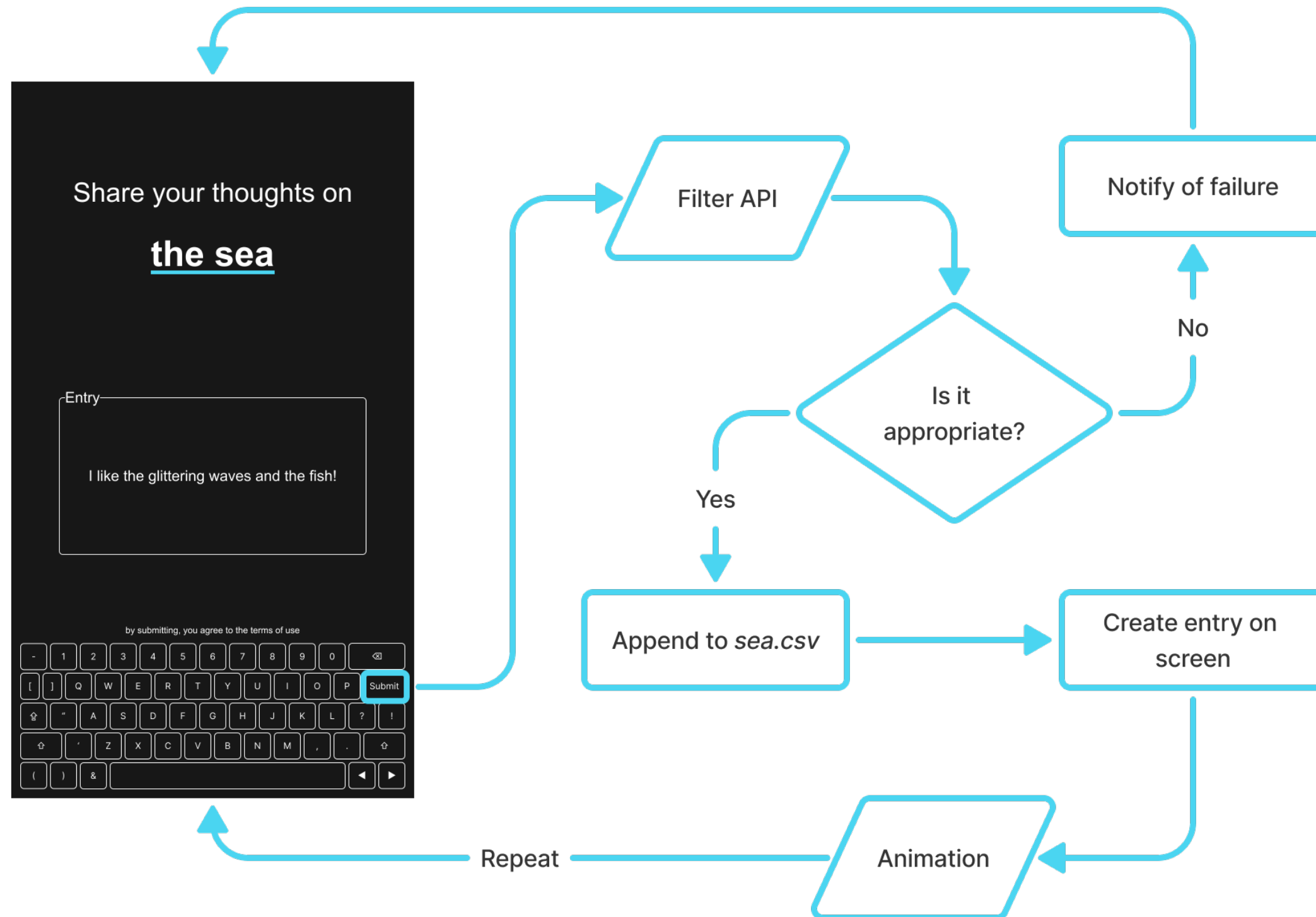


Fig 6:

If a submission is rejected, there are many ways in which the system could continue. It could present the user with a message saying that the submission was denied [this is present in the flowchart]. It could offer a strike system that notifies a staff member if someone continuously tries to input inappropriate material. The amount of feedback to the user trying to submit something that is inappropriate is up to you.

There are many options with the Content Filtering system. The idea of moderation levels can be introduced, enabling the choice between light to heavy moderation. Heavy moderation could even go so far to only include a submission if specific words are present. A system for reviewing submissions can also be set up. A series of different options can be implemented to be configured in the Control Panel settings, so that the system can be tailored on the fly.

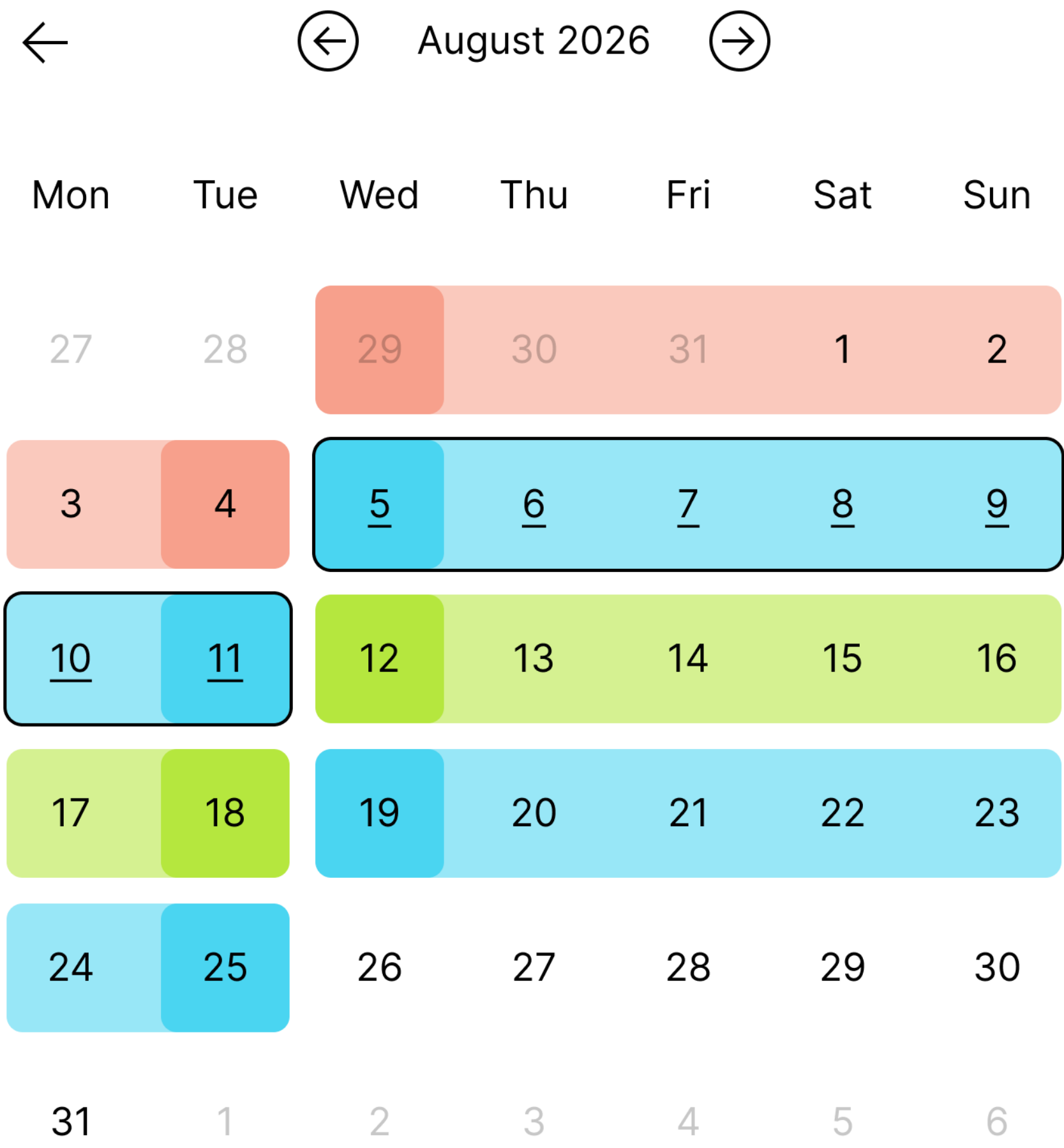
There are many factors to be considered, and this can be discussed in detail with you, so the system best fits you.

Scheduling

Topics will be able to be scheduled to appear on specific date ranges. As mentioned in the Proposal Summary, these can be entirely up to you. The nature of the project however is for the community. You can use the responses as feedback to tailor the experience of the Dundee V&A, but I advise against using it as an obvious feedback form.

The scheduling menu will allow all the topics and prompts to happen. You will be able to choose a colour associated with the topic to make it easily organisable in the calendar, it could even influence the visuals (such as a coloured underline under the topic). The filename of the CSV will be able to set to make it easily maintainable.

There will also be a button to edit submitted entries for a topic.



Scheduling

5th Aug 2026 - 11 Aug 2026

🗑️

Title

The Sea

🗑️

Prompt

🗨️ Share your thoughts on...

Topic

🗨️ the sea

CSV filename

📄 sea.csv

+

☰

 Edit submitted entries

Fig 7:

Even though the content filtering will be very robust, you will want a way to filter messages in case anything is to slip through the gaps of the moderation. This is a back-up and should rarely, if ever, be needed to be used.

A simple search bar to find the offending entry, and a simple click of the bin icon will remove it from the installation. This will be fed back to the content filtering AI so that it can realise the mistake and further decrease the chances of it happening again.

Filter

 boat|



Page 1 / 5



I love the sound of the boat's engine as it hums across the water.



That boat looks like it's built for adventure!



Do you think we'll need life jackets on this boat trip?



The boat glides so smoothly over the calm lake.



This boat is so cozy, I could nap here all day.



Boats are the best way to escape the crowds on land.





Settings





Entries on screen	
 Lots (Max 100)	▼
Focus Length	
 Medium (20s)	▼
Font	
 Arial.ttf	▼
Speed	
 Slow	▼

Fig 9:

Conclusion

In conclusion, I strongly feel this installation could be a big benefit for your museum. Museums are often a hub for the community by the community, and I see this strongly for the V&A in Dundee. You have had exhibitions in the past, such as The Dundee Tapestry, which explore the surrounding community of Dundee. My community installation proposal, I feel, could compliment the vision you have, and enhance the experience of connectedness whilst visiting your museum.

List of Figures

...