



Sir John Soane's Museum announces a game-changing collaboration with Minecraft Education bringing design and creativity to the classroom

Sir John Soane's Museum has partnered with Minecraft Education, to create a one-of-a-kind experience that will bring history, architecture and design to life for students worldwide.

This marks the coming together of a 21st-century phenomenon with one of the most influential architects the UK has ever seen and is Minecraft Education's first ever world dedicated to creative thinking, architecture and design in the AI era.

Through complex problem solving, creative thinking and critical analysis the game will encourage students to learn, reinterpret and digest information, and utilise technology as a tool for creative expression.

No block of classical antiquity will be left unturned when *Soane's Portals to the Past* launches on **21 January 2026** for educators and learners to access in Minecraft Education.*

Sir John Soane will be able to talk to every pupil up and down the country as the blocky version of the architect shows them around his house, full of artefacts of inspiration, and talk about his life-long work, his design process and his wonderful Museum.

And it's not just the Regency era that pupils will be transported to, but far beyond – they can also visit Ancient Greece, Rome and Egypt in the game-within-a-game as they discover the ancient cultures that inspired Soane's own designs and collection.

The game will allow young audiences to study key artefacts in the Museum's collection and then design and build their own structures inspired by the ancient civilisations that influenced Sir John Soane (1753-1837), including sites like the Pantheon, the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, and Seti I's Hypostyle Hall.

After exploring the limestone, granite, and sandstone columns of the ancient world, students will find themselves back in London, in Sir John Soane's Model Room, where they will have the chance to build their own architectural legacy, inspired by design practices they have learnt about in the game.

It was Soane's wish that his former home and collection should become an 'academy' where the public can learn and be inspired to foster their own creativity, therefore what better partner than the globally renowned computer game which has been engaging a new generation with the fun, beauty and importance of design.

The video game is launched at a time of record-breaking visitor numbers for Sir John Soane's Museum. Over 160,000 people visited the London museum during 2024-25 and over 2,700 children and young people engaged with the Learning team. Now with the consolidation of the collection, building and architecture through this online space, it is hoped that hundreds of thousands more can engage with one of the UK's foremost architects and his legacy through *Soane's Portals to the Past*.

The video game has been created by BlockBuilders, a UK-based third-party developer, and the classroom resource will be available alongside lesson plans for free on the Minecraft Education website as part of the Microsoft Office 365 Education subscription.

Will Gompertz, Director of Sir John Soane's Museum says: "*Minecraft's gamification of our incredible Museum is a brilliant application of technology to help fulfill Soane's ambition for his Museum to be an Academy of the Arts, free to all. At a flick of a switch, we can now share Soane's remarkable collection and visionary architecture with a truly global audience of students through one of the world's most beloved game-based learning platforms.*"

Justin Edwards, Director of Learning Experiences at Minecraft Education said: "*Creativity and problem solving are unique human abilities that are in increasing demand from employers. This Minecraft Education world provides a unique opportunity to connect the past with the present to give young people the skills they need to thrive in the increasingly digital world. We are absolutely delighted to have worked with Sir John Soane's Museum on this project, given their history in promoting design, architecture and creative thinking.*"

Soane's Portals to the Past has been supported by John Clappier, Lady Brittan, The Rothschild Foundation and Lord and Lady Sassoon.

NOTES TO EDITORS

[HIGH-RES IMAGES FOR MEDIA USE CAN BE DOWNLOADED HERE](#)

*Minecraft Education is available in most Microsoft software subscriptions for schools. Anyone can [download](#) and try the demo, where *Soane's Portals to the Past* will be available for a limited time.

About Sir John Soane's Museum

Sir John Soane's house and collection at No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields has been a national museum since the early nineteenth century. Designed by renowned architect Sir John Soane and filled with his world-class collection of paintings, sculpture, artefacts and models, the Museum retains the same fabric and design as at the time of Soane's death in 1837. Today, the Museum encourages access to Soane's legacy in its broadest sense: architecture and design, creative originality, a commitment to learning and enquiry, and the connections between past and present that the Museum and its collections reveal. The Museum is open Wednesdays to Sundays, 10am to 5pm. Entry is free. There is no need to pre-book—you can walk in on the day. Sir John Soane's Museum, 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, London, WC2A3BP. More at www.soane.org, #SoaneMuseum | @soanemuseum

About Minecraft Education

Minecraft Education is a game-based learning platform that inspires creative, inclusive learning through play. Used by more than 40,000 school systems across 140 countries, Minecraft Education supports students and educators with immersive lessons that build critical skills such as problem-solving, collaboration, and digital citizenship across subjects including STEM and AI literacy. Minecraft Education support Microsoft's longstanding commitment to advancing education and lifelong learning worldwide. More at education.minecraft.net, #MinecraftEdu | @PlayCraftLearn

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO ARRANGE INTERVIEWS

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