



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **The Jim Henson Company and Novel Effect Launch Partnership for Voice Interactive Stories**

**Hollywood, CA and Seattle, WA** – The Jim Henson Company, renowned leader in family entertainment, and Novel Effect, innovators in voice driven storytelling, today announced a new partnership to bring favorite titles from Jim Henson’s beloved library of IPs to Novel Effect’s voice-driven storytelling platform. Stories will be available in the free Novel Effect mobile app at the beginning of December 2020.

Jim Henson’s library of characters and stories are beloved by families and educators around the world. This collaboration includes the Emmy®-nominated productions *Dinosaur Train* (PBS) and *Sid the Science Kid* (PBS), as well as *Word Party* (Netflix), and *Fraggle Rock* (Apple TV+).

The thoughtful approach Novel Effect takes integrating sound and music into its soundscapes transforms reading The Jim Henson Company’s titles aloud into an unforgettable experience. Background music, sound effects, and character voices bring the story to life, providing additional context and cues to support the underlying message of the stories. Whether choosing to read aloud from the print version, or the in-app book, the unique, award-winning format of Novel Effect engages kids and inspires a love of reading.

“Partnering with Novel Effect on this innovative project will bring our fans new ways to interact with their favorite characters and stories” said Stephanie Wise of The Jim Henson Company. “Through the magic of Novel Effect’s unique voice technology, families can explore lessons of friendship, overcoming adversity, and the power of curiosity together in an exciting new format.”

This collaboration brings together two innovative companies, forming a long-term mission-driven partnership to promote early childhood development and family togetherness through books and shared experiences.

“Our mission is to empower kids and their grown-ups to read, listen, and have fun together every day through storytelling,” said Matt Hammersley, CEO of Novel Effect. “Generations of families, teachers, and children have been inspired by The Jim Henson Company’s legacy. We really can’t imagine a better fit for our families and educators.”

The pair will also be exploring new experimental formats in voice interactive TV and video to be distributed across Novel Effect’s apps as well as major cable and VOD networks in 2021.

### **About The Jim Henson Company**

The Jim Henson Company has remained a leader in family entertainment for over 60 years and is recognized as an innovator in puppetry, animatronics, and digital animation. Best known as creators of the world-famous Muppets, Henson has received over 50 Emmy Awards and nine Grammy Awards. Henson’s most recent television credits include *Earth to Ned* for Disney+, *Fraggle Rock: Rock On!* for Apple TV+, and the critically acclaimed Emmy-winning Netflix Original series *The Dark Crystal: Age of Resistance*, along with the Emmy®-nominated productions *Dinosaur Train* (PBS), *Sid the Science Kid* (PBS), *Splash and Bubbles* (PBS), and *Julie’s Greenroom* (Netflix), as well as *Word Party* (Netflix), *Dot*. (Universal Kids /Hulu), and *Doozers* (Hulu/Universal Kids). Previous productions include *Fraggle Rock*, *The Storyteller*, and the sci-fi series *Farscape* for TV, and the feature films *The Star* (Sony Pictures Animation), *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day* (Disney), as well as *The Dark Crystal*, *Labyrinth*, *MirrorMask*, and *Jim Henson’s Turkey Hollow*. The Company is currently in production on *Harriet the Spy* and *Fraggle Rock* for Apple TV+, and Guillermo Del Toro’s *Pinocchio* for Netflix.

With additional locations in New York and London, The Jim Henson Company is headquartered in Los Angeles on the historic Charlie Chaplin lot, complete with soundstage and post-production facilities. The Company is home

to Jim Henson's Creature Shop™, a pre-eminent character-building and visual effects group with international film, television, theme park and advertising clients, as well as Henson Recording Studios, one of the music industry's top recording facilities known for its world-class blend of state-of-the-art and vintage equipment. Credits under the Company's Henson Alternative brand include *The Curious Creations of Christine McConnell* (Netflix), the feature film *The Happytime Murders* starring Melissa McCarthy, and *Puppet-Up! – Uncensored*, a live puppet improvisational show that continues to tour globally.

### **About Novel Effect**

Seattle-based Novel Effect's use of patented voice technology enables groundbreaking products that seamlessly blend real-life and imaginary worlds to create innovative, entertaining, and immersive story-based experiences. Their unique approach to storytelling brings together the power of voice-recognition and the best creators in entertainment to add dimension and interactivity to the traditional media people enjoy together—books, television, games, and more.

Novel Effect: Read Aloud Books is free to download in the Apple App Store and Google Play Store. The award-winning app follows your voice as you read out loud and responds at just the right moment with music, sounds, and character voices. Enjoy any soundscape available in the app for free with your own copy of the book, or subscribe to Novel Effect Premium for instant access to hundreds of popular ebooks!

Founded in 2015, Novel Effect participated in the 2017 Alexa Accelerator, powered by Techstars, and has patented technology that was featured on Shark Tank. Their flagship app of the same name has received numerous awards including Webby, Cynopsis, Parents' Choice and Mom's Choice awards. Learn more at [www.noveleffect.com](http://www.noveleffect.com)

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