# Submit Grant Proposal | VR@Illinois

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### 3. Your Status
Graduate Student

### 4. Your Department
Recreation, Sport, and Tourism

### 5. Provide a brief summary of the VR/AR project that would be funded by this grant proposal

Humans geographically moved for survival in the past in a form a migration, but now move for other purposes as well such as tourism. Tourism is regarded as an unprecedented phenomenon that causes human mobility after World War. A considerable number of people are moving every day to visit other places in the form of tourism. The motivations for tourism have been studied for decades, but why people must physically move for travel has not been focused because tourist mobility is taken for granted in tourism. However, we may need to re-think the meaning of tourist mobility as people became able to travel without physically moving due to Virtual Reality (VR) technology. VR is a promising industry in tourism as a substitution for physical tourism. It is viewed that VR tourism can replace physical tourism as it could provide lower costs, no lines, no transportation problems, safer experience, and environmental preservation in a destination. More and more people are experiencing VR for their vacations around the world. It is anticipated that the value of the tourism-related VR industry as 200 billion US dollars in 2027. In spite of these potentials, it seems VR tourism is not satisfactory enough to replace physical tourism. Many studies about VR tourism revealed that people who have experienced VR tourism prefer physical tourism over VR tourism for their future vacations. There is a wide range of reasons for the preference from technological limitations to non-technological limitations. Examining those limitations are crucial for tourism development and tourism researcher. In terms of technological limitations, it can provide an opportunity for VR tourism industry to think about how to improve VR quality. In the meantime, non-technological limitations can provide academic insight into the meaning of tourist mobility (physical tourism) as well as an opportunity for destination developers to think about the future direction of physical tourism. In these regards, the aim of this study is to explore the perceived limitations of VR tourism to seek the meaning of tourist mobility and the future directions of tourism. This study aims to adopt qualitative research methods. The participants will have a VR tourism experience in

a VR laboratory and then have an in-depth interview to talk about the VR experience, to compare between VR tourism and physical tourism, and to explore the limitations of VR tourism. The participants will be any U.S. citizens who are over 18. The participants will be recruited through the weekly e-newsletter of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. It is expected to gather around 30 participants. The participants will be rewarded with a $15 Amazon coupon for participation. For the VR tourism experience, there will be three different VR tourism simulations in order to provide diverse tourism situations. The first one will be a virtual experience of getting on a city tour bus in New York City. This simulation will be designed to provide an urban tourism experience. The second one will be a virtual experience of a road trip to Yellowstone National Park. This simulation can provide an experience of vast nature. The third one will be a virtual experience of American pyramids in Cahokia, IL. Heritage tourism can be experienced through this simulation. There will be 10 participants for each simulation.

6. How much funding are you requesting?
$3000

7. Provide a brief preliminary budget of how the funds would be used
The budget for this study will be highly decreased if it is supported by VR@Illinois since it is expected that the expenses for VR gears are saved. Most of the funds will be used for VR simulation productions. It is estimated to take about $1500 for the trip expenses to three destinations for VR tourism simulations. Also, it is estimated that about $1000 will be used to create VR tourism simulations. To be specific, it is expected to purchase computer software for VR simulation editing and/or to hire an expert in VR simulation production. Lastly, around $500 will be used for recruiting research participants as they will be rewarded $15 for completing the VR tourism simulation and interview. However, the budget is not fixed as proposed since the research could be dependent upon the budget. For instance, the destinations for the three simulations can be changed depending on the available budget.

8. Describe the anticipated outcomes of your project.
It is expected that most participants respond that they prefer physical tourism over VR tourism. The participants are expected to discuss both the technological and non-technological limitations of VR tourism. Those limitations could be in line with the existing studies as well as unexpected ones. The result of this study can provide the direction of future VR tourism development as well as of the future physical tourism development. VR industry can obtain ideas about the direction of future technological development, and the destination managers can get an insight into how to position their destination in the increasingly competitive and high-technology society in the future. Thus, this study can provide benefits to both VR and tourism industry. Academically, it is expected that this research contributes to the knowledge expansion of VR tourism as VR has been limitedly studied in tourism field. In addition, this study can contribute to the knowledge expansion of the meaning

of tourist mobility. The reasons why people physically move for their vacations in spite of a higher quality of VR technology can lead tourism researchers to re-think the meaning of tourist mobility.

9. What is the proposed timeline for your VR project?
It is expected to complete the research and submit the manuscript to a journal within a year from the time when the funds are available.

10. Additional information
no answer provided