

The image features a dark, atmospheric forest scene with tall, thin trees and dense foliage. In the lower-left foreground, a group of people are walking away from the viewer into the misty woods. In the lower-right foreground, a small, dark, four-legged creature is visible. In the distance, a bright light source, possibly a campfire or a clearing, illuminates the path. The overall mood is mysterious and adventurous.

CRYPTIC

RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS

BACKGROUND

FOR YEARS, whisperings about mysterious and fantastical creatures have permeated across the globe. Hundreds of these elusive beings have been solidified in stories of unexplainable encounters, evidence, and events. Some of them are popularly known: The Himalayan Yeti. The Puerto Rican Chupacabra. The North American Sasquatch, or Bigfoot. Many of them are not, such as Dobhar-chú of Ireland. They all share one common thread, however: they are cryptids.

Cryptids are animals that are rumored to but not yet proven to exist; the study for and search of these creatures is known as cryptozoology. Cryptozoology is a thrilling field that unites science, history, mystery and adventure into a large treasure hunt for anomalous creatures. The search for cryptids invites all people to

engage their curiosities to question what they know and what could be as they explore their histories and environments.

A cryptozoology-based entertainment center will provide guests the opportunity to look beyond their realities and find the magic in everyday life in and after the experience. They can experience the thrill of searching for their own local legends and be empowered in the idea that not everything has yet to be discovered. Guests will be inspired to respect and maintain our wild lands in the hopes of protecting creatures known and unknown. Furthermore, with cryptid stories across the globe, a cryptozoology theme provides opportunities for different branch locations with unique cryptic discovery options.

WELCOME TO

CRYPTIC

RESEARCH EXPEDITIONS

OVERVIEW

CRYPTIC: Research Expeditions will be a location-based entertainment facility that will provide a multi-sensory, immersive experience through the facilitation of cryptozoology themes, activities, and storylines.

CRYPTIC will utilize VR and AR technology along with physical sets and theming to fully immerse guests into the story. There will be two main exploration areas - The LAB and The ARCHIVES - with a separate sector dedicated to the FIELD EXPERIENCE, where guests will be brought along a journey of learning how to track cryptids and potentially meet one along the way in a blend of escape room puzzle solving and VR rooms!

CRYPTIC will also have a themed cafe and gift shop for meals and merchandise.

CRYPTIC'S BIG(FOOT) IDEA:

Guests will be empowered to explore by their newfound role as cryptozoologist at CRYPTIC: Research Investigations. Here they will utilize their imaginations and curiosity to challenge the status quo of the world around them. Families and friends will bond through stories that connect them to the cultures around them while establishing a renewed relationship of respect to nature. Whether it is through analyzing evidence in the lab or coming face to face with their own local cryptid, we want visitors to leave fulfilled in themselves and their experience.





THE STORY

NICK KRANTZ, after coming face to face with the elusive Sasquatch during a hike in 2020, became possessed with a passion to prove Bigfoot and other cryptid's existence in order to protect them and their habitats.

He dedicated himself to the hunt: he invested in tools such as infrared cameras, casting kits, and regularly dove into the wilderness with the hope of re-encountering the creature. He met others who were impassioned with the hunt and recruited them for his mission, eventually founding CRYPTIC: Research Expeditions.

Flying under the radar of most, CRYPTIC attracted the sharpest and most curious minds in the search of creatures across the globe. Krantz began building research centers in hotspots of activity. Skilled researchers and scientists continued to join the team.

Now, it is the guests' turn to join Krantz's team of cryptozoologists. They will enter through CRYPTIC's gates into secret labs and an overflowing archives, where they too can participate in Krantz's mission to unearth and protect these unknown beings.

After grabbing a bite to eat at the employee cafeteria (Cryptid Crunchies), guests will partake in a field expedition to try and capture evidence that your local cryptid (1) exists and (2) resides in the plot of land currently scheduled to be bulldozed for a shopping center! Will they be able to put their new skills to the test and find the elusive creature before it's too late? That's something only visitors of CRYPTIC: Research Expeditions will find out!



MASTER PLAN

Square Footage: 15,000 -20,000 sq ft*

Capacity: 100-200 Guests

Duration of Stay: 2-4 Hours

There are 9 main sections guests will experience during their time at CRYPTIC.

1. Main Lobby

2. Main Hallway

3. Facility Entrance

4. Rotunda

5. Laboratory

6. Archives

7. Cryptid Crunchies (Cafe)

8. Field Exploration

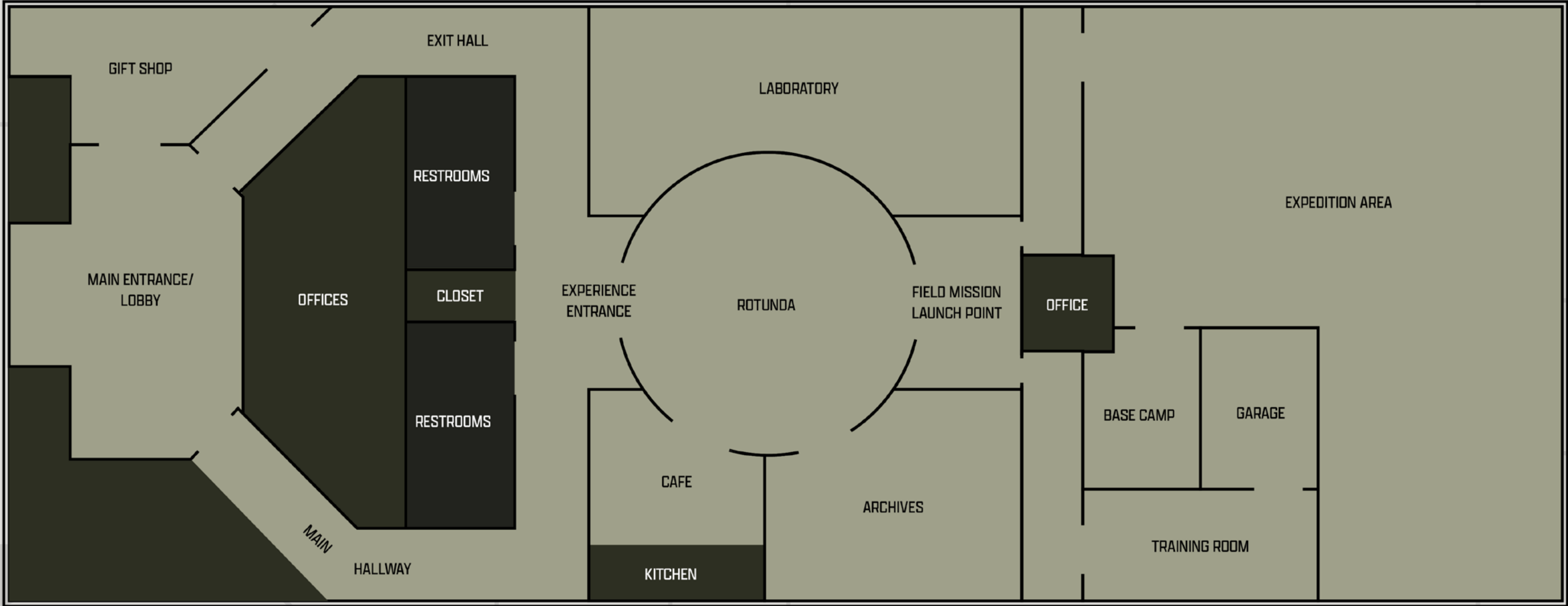
Launch Room - Training Room -

Garage - Base Camp - The Forest -

The Cave - The End

9. Gear/Gift Shop

MASTER PLAN





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ENTERING 'CRYPTIC'

① THE LOBBY

Jump into CRYPTIC: Research Expeditions with your family and friends as new cryptozoologists ready to take on the task of discovering the most elusive species! Check-in to receive your all-access security pass, which will grant you access to even the *most* secure sectors of the facility.

Read the plaques around the lobby detailing CRYPTIC's history and successes as you wait for everyone's badges to be prepared. _____

THE 'ACCESS CARD' INTEGRATES THE NECESSARY STEP OF PURCHASING/RECEIVING TICKETS INTO THE CRYPTID STORY, MAKING THE TYPICALLY MUNDANE PROCESS IMMERSIVE WHILE BUILDING ANTICIPATION FOR THE ACTUAL EXPERIENCE. THE GUEST WILL ALSO FURTHER ADOPT THEIR ROLE AS A NEW EMPLOYEE AT A SECRETIVE, SECURE CRYPTOZOOLOGICAL CENTER.

② THE HALL

Armed with a new all-access security pass, begin your journey down the main hallway.

Here, you will be enchanted by the silhouetted shadows of the popular cryptids in your region as they lead you towards the facility's top-secret area. Your curiosity will pique as you gear up to join the leagues of cryptozoologists awaiting you.

THIS HALLWAY, WHILE INTEGRAL TO FULLY CONTEXTUALIZING THE ROOM GUESTS WILL SOON STEP INTO, IS PRACTICAL IN THAT IT HELPS ESTABLISH SIGHT LINES AND CREATE A "REVEAL" WITH THE UPCOMING ROOM.





③ FACILITY ENTRANCE

Arrive at the main facility entrance. Large “WARNING: RESTRICTED AREA” and “SECURITY BADGE REQUIRED BEYOND THIS POINT” signs are plastered across heavy metal doors.

Scan your security pass- whether it be on your phone or on the reusable RFID security badge you were given at the front desk- at the reader to collect experience and to hear your name and clearance level read!

Push open the doors to reveal the heart of CRYPTIC: the Rotunda.

THE KEYCARD ADDS A LEVEL OF PERSONALIZATION TO THE EXPERIENCE, WHILE ENCOURAGING ENGAGEMENT WITH SEVERAL INTERACTIVE POSTS THROUGHOUT THE CRYPTIC EXPERIENCE. GUESTS CAN BUILD ‘EXPERIENCE’ THROUGH THESE CHECKPOINTS TO ACHIEVE INCREASINGLY HIGHLY ‘CLEARANCE’ LEVELS TO EARN ASSOCIATED REWARDS= THIS WILL ENCOURAGE REPEAT VISITS.



④ THE ROTUNDA

Step through the doors and be awed by the hub of excitement at CRYPTIC: the Rotunda. This large open space provides seating area for our employees (including you, now), and gateways to the facilities most advanced sectors. It's your first day on the job, and you can begin anywhere.

THE ROTUNDA IS THE HUB OF CRYPTIC'S COMPANY AND THE HUB OF OUR EXPERIENCE. HERE, VISITORS WHO TRAVELLED TOGETHER CAN CHOOSE TO TACKLE A HALL LIKE THE LAB AS A GROUP OR SPLIT UP AND EXPLORE ON THEIR OWN. THEY CAN GRAB A SNACK AND RECONVENE AT DIFFERENT SEATING AREAS WHEN FINISHED! THE OPEN FLOORPLAN ALLOWS GUESTS TO DETERMINE THE FLOW AND DIRECTION OF THEIR DAY.





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⑤ THE LABORATORY

Welcome to the LAB, where you will learn how science and folklore are blended together to solve the world's most prevalent mysteries through a variety of hands-on activities!

You will first enter a “decontamination” zone*, where you will be UV treated and cleaned to eradicate any chance of contamination to CRYPTIC's sample collection.

Here you will have the option to don a lab coat before learning how (and why) DNA is tested from samples gathered in the field (samples such as hair, environmental samples, and organic matter) with an expert. Other activities include interactive kiosks where you can design a new cryptid (learning what adaptations would make them successful in specific environments), use an interactive microscope, match specimens, and many more!

THIS PORTION OF THE EXPERIENCE IS MEANT TO FURTHER THE IMMERSIVE FEEL WITH A STERILE LAB TYPE OF EXPERIENCE WHERE GUESTS MUST GO THROUGH DECONTAMINATION SIMILAR TO HOW A REAL FACILITY WITH DELICATE SPECIMENS WOULD. *THE DECONTAMINATION ROOM WILL USE A COMBINATION OF SOUND DESIGN, LASERS, AND BRIEF BURSTS OF AIR TO SIMULATE A 'CLEANING.' THIS IS ALSO A PLACE TO ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO LEARN! THEY WILL EXPERIENCE REAL SCIENTIFIC TOOLS AND PROCESSES, WITH SOME SIMULATED DATA.

⑥ THE ARCHIVES

What do the platypus, komodo dragon, and giant squid all have in common? They were once all considered cryptids!

Learn more about cryptid alumni and the history of cryptozoology in the ARCHIVES, a themed area that specializes in the folklore and stories from the first murmurings of cryptids until now. Several activities will be stationed around this area, such as:

- Virtual Reality Cryptid Encounters: Don't just hear stories of fisherman out on the lake encountering the lake cryptid Champy- experience it first hand through a VR simulator!
- Full-Scale Models of Cryptids: Visualize the legends you're reading about, and mabe take a picture with one!
- Cryptid Files: Open the drawers to learn more about specific creatures and cultures they're associated with!
- Cryptid Interactive Map: Click on the interactive screen to discover where cryptids have been spotted, and what they are!

THESE HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES WILL ENGAGE GUESTS IN THE WORLD OF CRYPTOZOOLOGY AND ENCOURAGE DISCOVERY.

⑦ CRYPTID CRUNCHIES

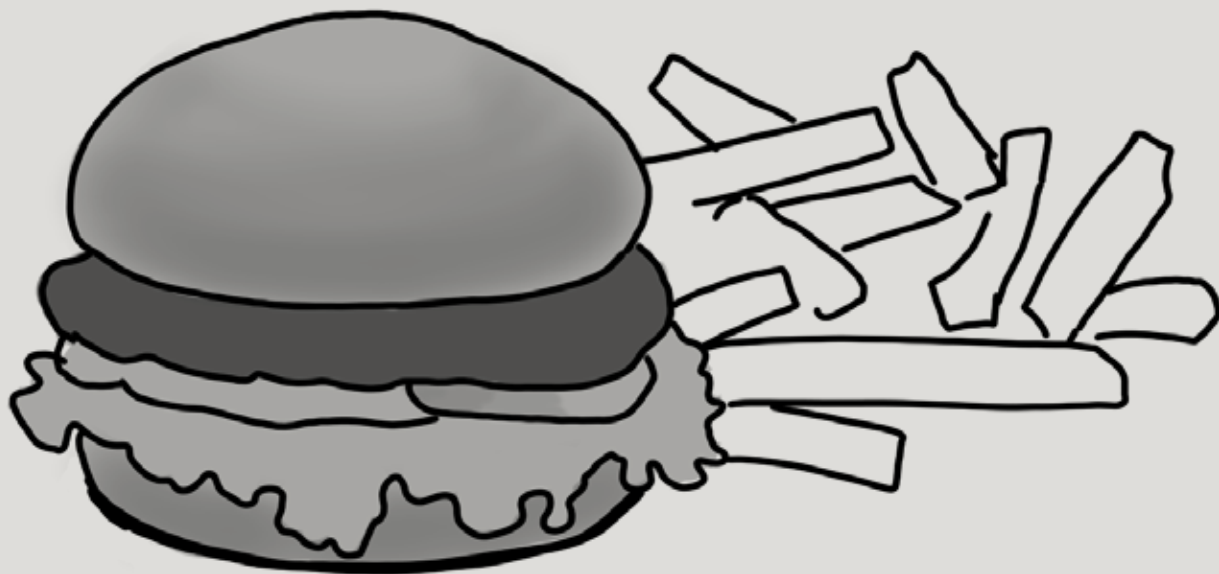
Feeling hungry? Step by the Cryptid Crunchies Cafeteria, where employees and guests alike enjoy grabbing a quick drink and meal after a long day of cryptid investigation.

Large-print and braille menus are available for patrons who might otherwise have trouble reading the menu.

Cryptid Crunchies will utilize reusable dishes and utensils to eliminate the need of single use paper and plastic products; guests will place used dishes on a conveyor belt to be washed and sanitized for reuse.

THEMED ATTRACTIONS CONTRIBUTE A HUGE AMOUNT TO GROWING WASTE PROBLEMS, BOTH WITH FOOD AND WITH PACKAGING MATERIALS. HERE WE ARE IMPLEMENTING INITIATIVES TO DIVERT WASTE FROM LANDFILLS BY STARTING A STEP AHEAD WITH SUSTAINABLE CONCESSIONS PACKAGING AND PLACES TO DISPOSE OF WASTE.

THE CRYPTID CAFE WILL BE A SMALL OPERATION, WITH A SELECT GROUP OF FOODS TO MINIMIZE KITCHEN SPACE AND WORKERS NEEDED.



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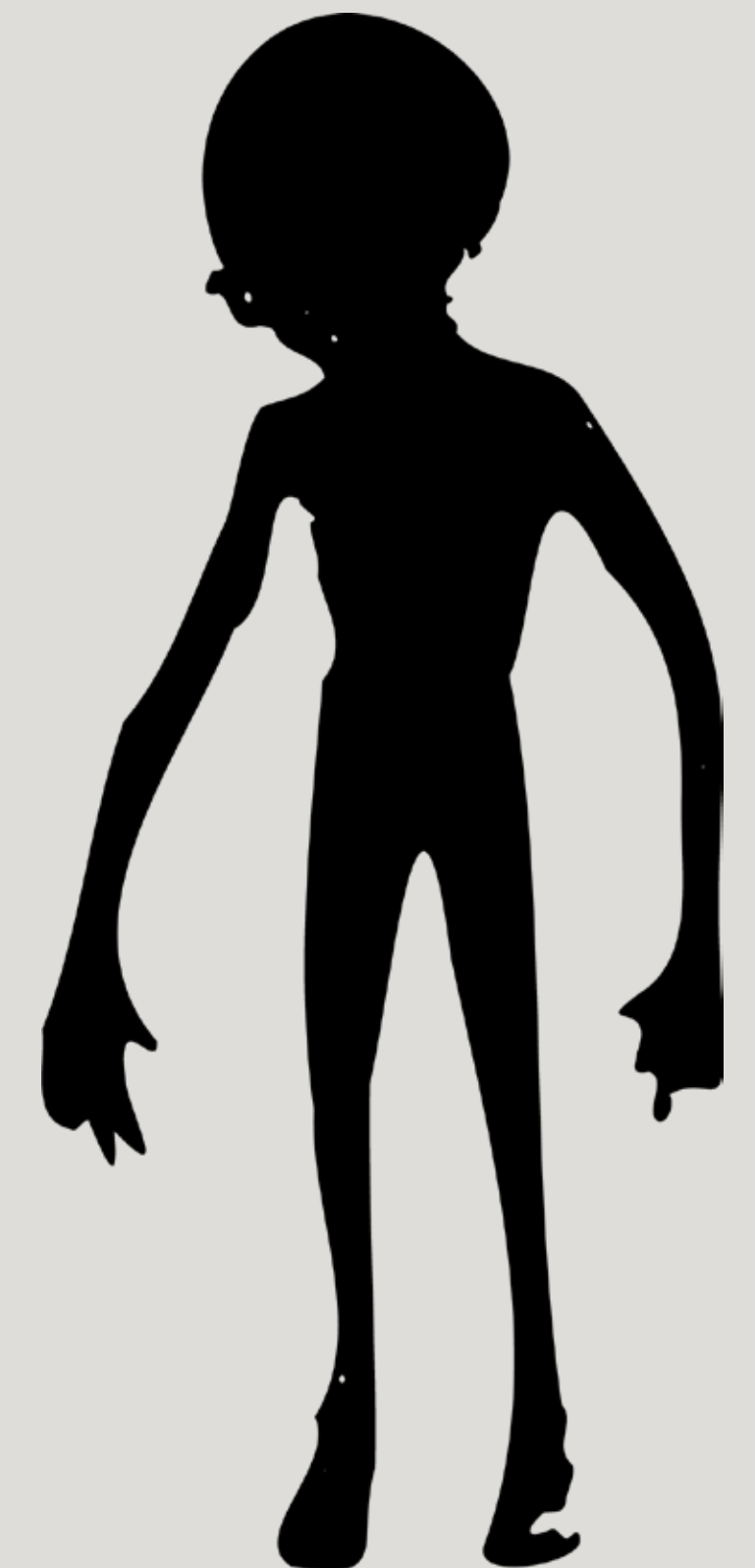
FIELD EXPEDITION LAUNCH AND EXPERIENCE

THE FIELD EXPEDITIONS ARE THE MAIN THE THRILL OF CRYPTIC.

Welcome to the place all cryptozoologists dream of being: the Field Exploration Launch Center. Only the best of the best make it here. But don't get too excited just yet- you'll need to be trained. Use your security pass to make arrangements for an instructor and take in the details of current investigations as you await your training session.

CRYPTIC IS DESIGNED TO BE ABLE TO GROW/SHRINK TO ACCOMODATE DIFFERENT SIZED VENUES- WITH LARGER SPACES, THE FIELD EXPEDITION SPACE COULD HOST A MULTITUDE OF DIFFERENT ADVENTURES. FOR A SMALLER LOCATION, AS DESCRIBED HERE, THERE IS JUST ONE.

THE CRYPTID BEING SOUGHT AFTER WILL IDEALLY BE LOCAL/POPULAR IN THE SPECIFIC LOCATION OF EACH CRYPTIC BRANCH.



CURRENT INVESTIGATIONS



SECURITY NOTICE
SECURITY CLEARANCE
REQUIRED BEYOND
THIS POINT

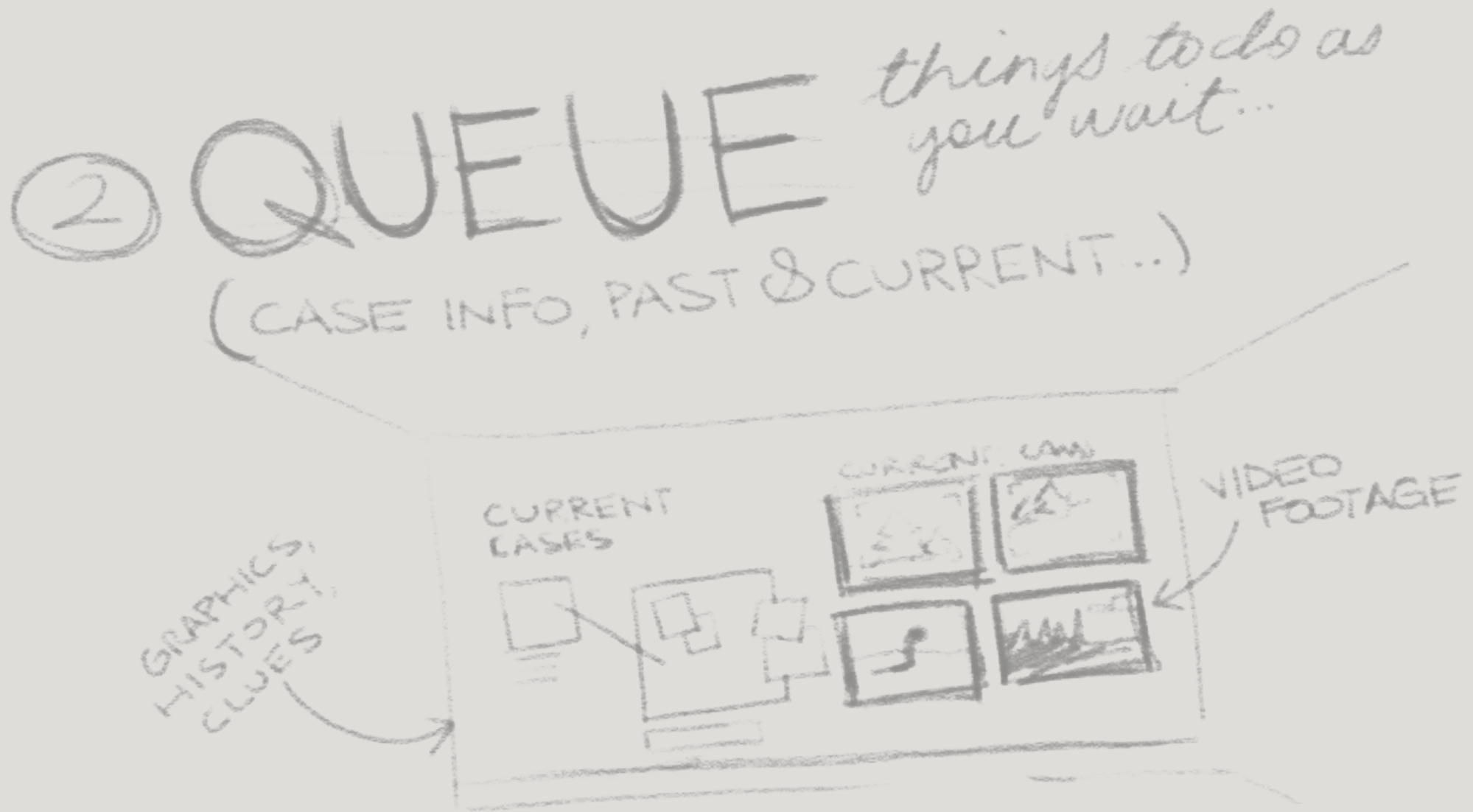
LAUNCH CENTER

The door leading to the Training Room opens, and a voice calls out your group's name. You turn around, suprised to come face to face with the very founder of CRYPTIC - Agent Krantz!

He says he will be your trainer today. You follow him to the training room.

THE EXPERIENCE WILL REQUIRE AT LEAST ONE ACTOR/EMPLOYEE TO BRIEF THE GUESTS, ENTERTAIN THE SKIT, OPERATE THE RIDE VEHICLE, AND MONITOR THE PROGRESS THROUGHOUT THE ESCAPE ROOM PORTION OF THE EVENT.

WE FOUND THAT THIS EMPLOYEE WOULD BE NECESSARY TO INJECTING LIFE INTO THE STORY AND BUILDING ANTICIPATION FOR THE ADVENTURE TO COME.





TRAINING ROOM



Agent Krantz leads you to the Training Room and urges you to sit.

He begins playing a training video, in which you are introduced to several different tools cryptozoologists use in the field- heat thermal cameras, night vision goggles, casting kits, bait, audio recorders, trail cameras, the likes when the picture is interrupted by a call.

Krantz, suprised, accepts the video message.

It is two field agents, surrounded by trees. They frantically share the news that they've narrowed down an area they're near certain a Bigfoot is living in- and it's the exact area that's been marked to be bulldozed for the city's

latest infrastructure project. They need Krantz's - and your! - help to capture irrefutable evidence of the creature's existence tonight.

"Well," Krantz addresses you and your team after the call is finished. "I guess you'll be learning on the job. Let's load up."

BOTH THE TRAINING VIDEO AND VIDEO CALL WILL BE PRERECORDED- THE ACTOR PORTRAYING KRANTZ WILL READ FROM A SCRIPT TO MAKE THE VIDEO CALL AND INTERACTION SEEM REALISTIC AND IMPERATIVE. MULTIPLE VERSIONS OF THIS CLIP CAN BE RECORDED TO CREATE NEW EXPERIENCES FOR REPEAT CUSTOMERS.

THE TRAINING VIDEO WILL BE RELEVANT TO THE LATER PART OF THE EXPERIENCE.



GARAGE

Enter the garage, where a company van awaits you! Krantz leads you up the path and opens the van doors, ushering you inside. You and your friends sit down before he closes the van doors and takes a seat up front.

You hear a garage door lift, before the van shakes and rumbles on its way into the forest. Base camp, a video screen informs you. CRYPTIC's team has been surveying this land for over a year, but they've only just now found crucial footprints. They need you to find more clues to narrow down where the creature is hiding and take pictures without harming it.

The van settles down, parks, and shuts off. Krantz opens the opposite side door of the vehicle and beckons you out into the base camp of the operation.

AN ACCESSIBLE PATH LEADS THROUGH THE GARAGE, UP A SLIGHT INCLINE TO A LOADING AREA WITH A BARRIER/LOADING DOCK STYLE THAT HAS ENTRY DIRECTLY INTO THE SIDE VAN DOOR. THE VAN DOOR ACTS THE SAME AS A NORMAL LARGE VAN DOOR, EXCEPT IT WILL SLIDE OPEN TO ALLOW A 36" WIDE ENTRY FOR THOSE WITH MOBILITY DEVICES.

THE SLIDING DOOR IS OPENED BY THE STAFF MEMBER ACTOR THAT IS ACCOMPANYING YOU THROUGH THE TRAINING ROOM. IT MAKES AN AUDIBLE AND MECHANICAL SLIDING NOISE AS A REAL ONE WOULD.

THE GROUP LOADS INTO THE VEHICLE FROM THIS SIDE ENTRANCE, MAKING THEIR WAY PAST THE ACCESSIBLE SEATING ZONE WITH AN OPEN AREA FOR A WHEELCHAIR. THIS ZONE ALSO HAS SLIGHT CIRCULAR INDENTATIONS IN THE FLOOR TO ACCOMMODATE WHEELCHAIR PARKING AND STABILITY. THE CENTER OF THE VEHICLE IS LEFT CLEAR WITH SPACES FOR 2-3 WHEELCHAIR USERS TO PARK IN IF NECESSARY, THESE ARE UNOBSTRUCTIVE WHEN NOT IN USE. NORMAL VAN SEATING BENCHES LIE AROUND THE PERIMETER.

ONCE ALL GUESTS ARE LOADED INTO THE VEHICLE, THE STAFF MEMBER WILL CLOSE THE DOOR.

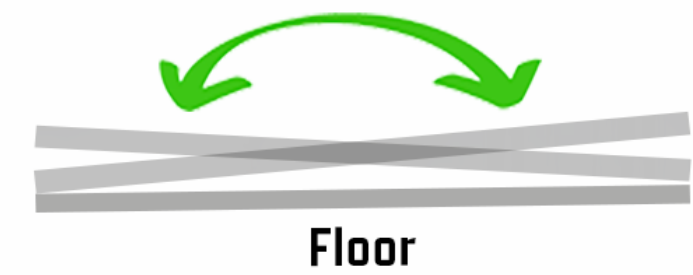
THE VAN IS SET UP ON A PNEUMATIC PLATFORM THAT WILL EMULATE AN OFFROAD DRIVING EXPERIENCE. THE FLOOR WILL TILT SLIGHTLY SIDE TO SIDE AND BOUNCE WITH THE TERRAIN FOR A SHORT RIDE OF 1-2 MINUTES WHILE A VIDEO/AUDIO RECORDING PLAYS ON THE INSIDE, BRIEFING THE GROUP ON WHERE THEY ARE HEADED AND WHAT HAPPENS NEXT. DURING THE EXPERIENCE THE "WINDOWS" OF THE VAN ARE SCREENS THAT ARE SHOWING THE TERRAIN THEY ARE TREKKING THROUGH, TO FURTHER GIVE THE FEELING OF MOVEMENT. WHEN THE RIDE IS COMPLETE A MEMBER OF THE FIELD RESEARCH TEAM AT BASE CAMP WILL SLIDE THE DOORS ON THE OPPOSITE SIDE OPEN FROM THE OUTSIDE AND WELCOME GUESTS TO BASE CAMP. THIS DOOR IS A PART OF THE WALL SO IT OPENS DIRECTLY TO A NEW AREA THAT GUESTS HAVE NOT EXPERIENCED YET. THE RIDE SYSTEM ITSELF IS STATIONARY AND DOES NOT PHYSICALLY TRAVEL ANYWHERE.

VAN INTERIOR



VAN MECHANICS

Vehicle status station



Electronically controlled pneumatic suspension floor is able to articulate in all directions to simulate an off road experience. Built with a grid of air suspension and dampening springs with movement limited to 4 inch elevation change on either side.



CAMP 352



BASE CAMP

You arrive at base camp, where there is a tent and table full of the tools you learned about in the training video! You are encouraged to pick one up before being set out into the woods.

EACH TOOL WILL GIVE GUESTS A UNIQUE ROLE IN THE 'ESCAPE ROOM' TYPE EXPERIENCE, WHERE THEY WILL HAVE TO WORK TOGETHER TO PIECE TOGETHER CLUES AND SOLVE PUZZLES TO TRACK DOWN WHERE THE CREATURE IS HIDING.

THE 'FOREST' WILL BE IN A NEW ROOM, THE ENTRYWAY OF WHICH IS DISGUISED USING FAUX FAUNA AND CANOPIES. PRINTED WALLPAPER LAYERED WITH PRACTICAL ELEMENTS WILL CREATE DEPTH. HIDDEN SPEAKERS WILL PLAY SOUNDS OF NATURE, WHILE SCENT DIFFUSERS WILL INJECT THE SMELL OF PINE.

THE CAVE - VR EXPERIENCE

After diligently solving the puzzles and following the clues with your team, you arrive at the entrance of a large beckoning cave! Over the walkie-talkie, Agent Krantz reminds you to put your night vision goggles on, as they will help you see in the dark. You do as he says and step in together.

THE 'NIGHT VISION GOGGLES' WILL BE VR HEADSETS THAT WILL TRANSPORT USERS INTO A CAVE ENVIRONMENT WHERE THEY CAN ENCOUNTER THE A CRYPTID. THEY WILL BE CHALLENGED TO PHOTOGRAPH THIS CRYPTID BEFORE RETURNING TO THE FACILITY!



GEAR SHOP

After a successful day of cryptid discovery and fun, treat yourself to the gear shop, where you can load up on CRYPTIC merch and your own cryptozoology tools!

GEAR SHOP



COLOPHON

CRYPTIC: Research Expedition is a location-based entertainment concept designed by Jared Cross and Danielle Byrne, practicing designers out of Huntsville, AL, for the 2024 Storyland Studios Design Competition with Gensler.

Softwares used in the making of this project included SketchUp, SketchBook, Adobe Illustrator, Adobe Photoshop, and Adobe InDesign.

