

**wondrous**

**whimsical**

**playful**

**powerful**

**inspirational**

vision for the future 2020-2025

**national  
children's  
museum**

## mission

To inspire children to care about  
and change the world.

## vision

We will spark curiosity, ignite passion,  
and foster inclusivity to  
empower future innovation.



## goals for 2020-2025

Solidify world-class reputation as the **preeminent children's museum and science center** in one;

Provide equal education opportunities and promote learning for all children through comprehensive **inclusion, diversity, equity, and access programs** that touch every aspect of the Museum;

**Bridge educational gaps in STEAM learning with on-site and virtual learning** and spark early interest in these core competencies before the age of 12 when drop-off in the sciences occurs;

Lead by serving as a **national platform for dialogue** and celebrate differences through **global cultural education** in our nation's capital;

Innovate through fresh **relevant exhibits**, providing updated content, and creative rotating installations.

*"If good things come to those who wait, D.C. area kids certainly deserve the  
National Children's Museum, a learn-through-play space."  
- Washington Post, Feb 25, 2020*



National Children's Museum served children and families for 30 years in its original home on H Street in Northeast DC. Founded in 1974 as the Capital Children's Museum, this community museum was run by local volunteers and hosted a charter school and adult literacy programs in its early years. In 2003, the Museum was renamed with Congressional-designation and sold its building. Without a federal appropriation or space, for 17 years the Museum worked to serve children in various temporary locations throughout the District and Maryland. During that time, DC was the only major city in America without a children's museum or science and technology center, leaving a void for hands-on, early childhood and science learning.

In 2016, the District of Columbia provided critical start-up funding to reopen the National Children's Museum. After a long search the Board of Trustees identified an empty federal space in downtown DC and hired a President and CEO from the science center community to lead the initiative. The Museum reopened at 1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW in February 2020, welcoming visitors into a next generation, first-of-its-kind children's museum + science center designed for today's parents. Clean design and amenities for a new generation of parents wrap the dream-like world for families to explore together.



National Children's Museum serves as an important component of the region's workforce development pipeline by increasing interest in STEAM fields in young children under the age of 12, when curiosities are first sparked to begin driving passions and career ambitions. This is especially critical for children from low-income families or backgrounds currently underrepresented in these fields as museums provide equitable education to all children. As DC works to develop as a tech hub, the need for hands-on STEAM education and engagement for tech company employee families will continue to grow in the years to come.



*"The 'Dream Machine' gives children a chance to let off steam by climbing from the ground floor up three stories and sliding down... Great design is everywhere."  
- Architectural Digest, Feb 10, 2020*

## bringing magic to everyone

During the health pandemic, National Children's Museum continued to innovate and lead in the museum community through robust and original virtual learning opportunities. Free daily STEAM videos, standards-aligned digital curriculum, online exhibits, virtual field trips, a new children's podcast, and other resources have been collected and developed to serve children, families and educators. More than a half million people all over the world have been reached through these digital programs, and leaders in the education community and fans are celebrating this important work.



# strategic planning

## children's museum + science center

- Ensure sustainability through fundraising and grow community with a robust membership program;
- Increase earned revenue through innovative, modern café and gift shop partnerships, and private events;
- Develop innovative approaches to playful, hands-on learning to ensure safety in the post-COVID world;
- Present at Association of Children's Museum, Association of Science and Technology Centers, and American Alliance of Museum conferences and help cohost international museum conference;
- Develop and host national Child Innovators Fair;

Serve 5 million people over the next 5 years

Host at least 500,000 guests in person each year

Reach 500,000 people per year through virtual programs across the country + world

Endow Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access with a \$5 million fund

Provide free field trips for all low-income schools

Support free access to at least 100 community organizations and partners throughout the DMV to serve low-income families in the region

## empowering ALL children

- Nurture a creative, collaborate culture and develop a diverse and inclusive staff;
- Strategically grow a diverse Board of Trustees from 15 to at least 25 members;
- Develop strategic marketing partnerships with national and local brands to reach more visitors;

- Add new elements to permanent exhibits and produce engaging rotating content;
- Reconvene the national Education, Exhibits, and Inclusion, Diversity, Equity, and Access Advisory Councils for program and exhibit development;
- Partner with existing international media and technology partners to amplify initiatives;
- Work with Congress and the GSA to allow for growth into the Pavilion space above the Museum, creating new permanent exhibits to inspire children in other areas and serve more visitors;
- Develop an outdoor space on Woodrow Wilson Plaza to reach locals and tourists for free;

## innovative exhibits

## sparking curiosity in STEAM

- Expand virtual learning offerings, including digital field trips during COVID, and continue serving schools across the country and world once the Museum reopens to the public;
- Work with public schools in the DMV to fill gaps in STEAM;
- Create internship programs to engage older students and volunteers in inspiring a new generation of learners and further extend their interests in STEAM;
- Continue showcasing young innovators and educating kids through the podcast;

## inspiring the US + the world

- Build partnerships with international embassies and cultural organizations for global cultural programming;
- Amplify scientific research and apply it to practice to ensure healthy physical + mental child development;
- Increase and strengthen our relationships with federal institutions to serve as a platform for national research and dialogue.



2020-2025

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[nationalchildrensmuseum.org](http://nationalchildrensmuseum.org)

