

STRATEGIC PLAN 2022-2025



OUR PLANNING PROCESS

We are delighted to present our strategic plan believing that the process to create it emphasizes two of our core values--collaboration and excellence.

Our initial strategic planning session lasted for an entire day and included board members, museum members and most of our employees. We were navigated through an interesting day filled with both questions and discussions. While we collectively brainstormed and shared our dreams for the future of the children's museum, we noticed clear themes taking place.

Upon reflection and more work, these themes became our pillars and they include--STEAM Focus, Multi-cultural Inclusion, Financial Stability, and Research & Evaluation.

Over several months, the senior staff team met a few times to organize the key highlights under these pillars. From there we built an overarching strategy for the museum as well as working in collaboration with each department head to create subsequent departmental strategies.

We have already started to pilot some of the key concepts presented here and believe this strategy will position us well for the future.

Kathleen Bodenlos
Executive Director



WHO WE ARE



MISSION

To inspire children of all ages and abilities to imagine, discover, and connect with their world to make a difference.



VISION

We strive to be the most trusted and preferred family discovery center and child-centered educational resource in the Intermountain West.



VALUES

Excellence, Collaboration, Community, Diversity, Inclusion



OUR PHILOSOPHY

Discovery Gateway Children's Museum (DGCM) provides opportunities for children and families to learn through play, in a hands-on exhibit environment of over 60,000 square feet serving as a platform for education and creativity. Early childhood, science and arts educators provide programming that cultivates deeper learning and fosters parent-child interaction.

Cultural programming and collaborations with a variety of community organizations and artists help establish a diverse and inclusive approach, that reaches diverse populations and is representative of the community that we serve.

Additionally, extensive outreach programs expand our reach throughout Utah. Our primary demographic is children between the ages of 0-8 and their caregivers, however, our museum brings out the kid at heart for all ages.

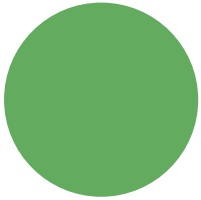
DGCM will continue to pursue this vision into the future as we grow and revitalize the museum experience, to continue to inspire creativity and learning through play.



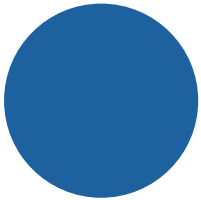
PILLARS OF STRATEGY



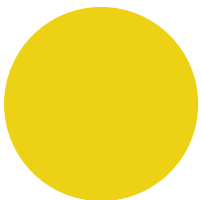
STEAM Focus



Financially Stable



**Multi-Cultural
Inclusion**



**Research and
Evaluation**

STEAM FOCUS

For over 40 years Discovery Gateway Children's Museum has been serving the needs of our community through exhibits, educational programming, and outreach. By maintaining a focus on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Math) we have kept our exhibits and programming relevant and engaging. Building on this history, we will continue to expand our offerings in the next three years through new exhibits, in-house and outreach education as well as elevating our offerings in fee based and grant-funded offerings.

Young children 0-8 will always be at our core and the first floor of the museum continues to serve this age group well. However, when new exhibits are added our goal will be to offer a clear STEAM focus, serving our core young children but also expand our demographic by offering older children programming and engaging new exhibits. This will enable us to serve larger families with multiple age children and expand our demographic to enhance growth while still serving our core audience.



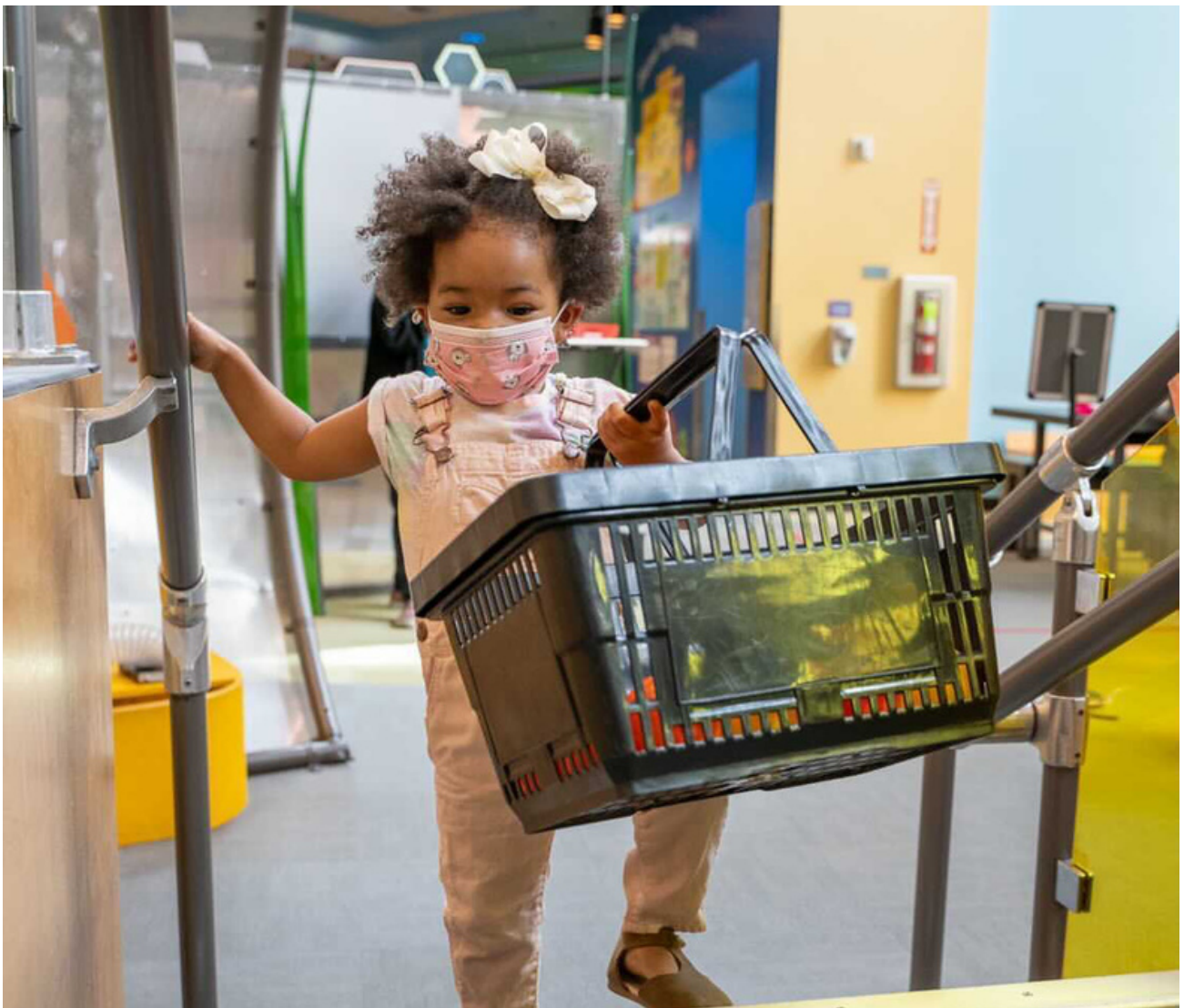
STEAM FOCUS

- Develop clear STEAM focus for all new exhibits--layering the exhibit to appeal to both young children (0-8) and also their older siblings (9-12)
- New in-house programming model explores Science and Art through dedicated instructors who provide the same quality educational learning as our outreach programs
 - Develop a coding workshop under the umbrella of our STEAM lab to further equip young children with skills that will serve them in adulthood
 - Develop a fine arts program for children, incorporating both a paid programming and grant model so all children can be served
- Education outreach serving our school districts continues to be a thriving initiative and we will constantly add and improve these offerings
- Continue building on our strong network with other museum leaders, locally and internationally, to borrow museum-quality art and science artifacts to enrich our STEAM programming and invest in the interpretation for our audiences
- Invite community partners and subject matter experts into our enhanced STEAM programming and exhibits to strengthen and expand our offerings
- Reimagine our gallery signage to empower parents to understand and share the STEAM learning in our offerings with young children



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

Through innovation and best practices, we will build upon our success to create a sustainable financial model. Our financial model is built upon both earned and contributed revenue. Over the next three years, we will grow revenue by increasing attendance, securing new revenue streams through entrepreneurial opportunities, grants/foundations, and individual giving. In addition, we will create new offerings to keep our mix relevant and desirable to our visitors and members.



FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

- Develop win-win and innovative revenue generation models like a new store that will provide ongoing income and enhance our offerings to visitors and members
- Continue to research and apply for existing and new grants/foundations
- Continue to evaluate discounts and ensure that barriers are removed for children with the most need
- Maximize the use of existing space and seek profitable event rentals
- Grow membership base to serve the community and create a sustainable financial future; by expanding our offerings to include older children, we will strive to keep members from "aging out"
- Develop budget models that coincide with historical seasonality to achieve as accurate a forecast as possible
- Develop a merit-based employee compensation system to reward ingenuity and conservative but effective use of resources
- Continue to keep an eye on expenses to ensure we retain savings and utilize resources carefully
- Continue to utilize digital advertising that is economical, scalable, quickly adjusted and deftly targets our audiences



MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION

It was clear from our strategic planning session that our entire staff and board members remain committed to our children's museum being an inclusive and diverse community resource. We strive to ensure that our board, staff and programming attracts a diverse population and our culture feels welcoming and inclusive. A big part of this is continuing to develop relationships with our partners that represent our diverse communities in Salt Lake City. We also need to consider barriers that may prevent diverse audiences from visiting and seek to effectively work to overcome them.



MULTICULTURAL INCLUSION

- Seek more community partnerships that represents our city's diversity including refugee and immigrant populations
- Add new programming that includes community partners from various communities to better represent our diverse city and celebrate various cultures
- Seek grants to provide a service project that will enable children to have educational and life-expanding experiences
- Integrate artwork, dance and music reflective of various cultures into our museum experience
- Seek to create a staff that reflects the diverse community in which we live, considering cultural, socioeconomic, religious, age, gender, LGBTQ+, physical, cognitive, and geographic diversity
- Continue to add new board members from various communities to hear their unique viewpoints
- Create community days and events that celebrate multicultural holidays and celebrations to engage new visitors



RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

We are curious and interested in knowing our existing audiences better, including members and one-time visitors. Our goal is that by understanding who they are and what they want, we can better serve them and be an even stronger community resource. To this end, we will start surveying regularly to gain feedback on gallery, programming, and outreach experiences. By exploring focus groups comprised of visitors and members, we will open the dialogue with our audiences and learn more about them. In addition, compiling evaluations enables us to seek grants with clarity of purpose and create an even more compelling narrative.



RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

- Get to know our audiences even more through research and evaluation
- Develop a quarterly focus group to explore new ideas and get feedback
- Continue to engage board members with task forces that ask for their unique perspectives and tap into their talents
- Continue to utilize the task force model to research and evaluate new offerings such as Children's Health Fair and new exhibits
- Conduct routine visitor surveys to collect insights, demographical information and ideas for improvements
- Evaluate new programs, exhibits, and classes in order to improve existing initiatives and gain a deeper understanding of changing needs of our audiences then utilize this research to acquire and report on various grants

