



MEDIA ALERT | For Immediate Release

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CARNEGIE SCIENCE CENTER PLANS FOR THE NEXT DECADE **FUTURE FOCUS 2023: STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETS STORYTELLING**

PITTSBURGH, Aug. 15, 2022 – For more than 30 years, Carnegie Science Center has delighted, educated, and inspired visitors of all ages through interactive experiences in science and technology. From field trips and summer camps to adult after-hour events and science lectures, the Science Center has strived to attract and engage an audience that reflects the diversity of the regional community and be the region's leading family-centered destination for fun and learning. As the Science Center plans for the next 10 years and beyond, the desire to be an accessible attraction for all runs even deeper.

In collaboration with the Thinkwell Group, a global strategy design and production agency, Science Center officials are working on a 7- to 10-year Strategic Master Plan that looks at various components across multiple experiences within the Science Center. Not only does the plan address the needs within the institution, but it also connects directly with voices in the community to make sure every voice is heard.

"We want to ask a lot of people and then have the outcome of those responses be reflected in this plan so that the folks who were included have agency and say, 'I see my answers where they are going and therefore, this place is relevant to me, meaningful to me, and responsive to me,'" said Jason Brown, Henry Buhl, Jr., Director of Carnegie Science Center and Vice President of Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh.

Strategic planning process

Carnegie Science Center's strategic planning process started at the beginning of 2022 and included meetings with key stakeholders and workshops designed to spark discussion. This included conducting a SWOT analysis (looking at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) and direct interaction with community members.

“We want to see how our community views us, what they want to see us do, and how we can make a plan moving forward based on what the systems are in place and how we can adapt that to be more high functioning,” added Brown.

With that in mind, the inclusive planning process includes feedback from the Science Center’s Advisory Board Members, leadership team across Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, and staff members across all departments at the Science Center.

The all-encompassing, multi-faceted plan features specific components including a community engagement and IDEA (inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility) strategic master plan strategy, a museum experiences master plan strategy, a branding study, a theory of change analysis of the Center for STEM Education and Career Development, a long-term conservation plan for USS Requin (SS 481) Submarine, and the evaluation and study of different business models within the Science Center.

Key strategic priorities for the Science Center include turning the museum inside out – taking the work the Science Center does and bringing it out to the community, putting in place a greater support for staff – offering resources and opportunities for professional development – and enhancing the Science Center’s digital innovation and engagement.

“We are reimaging our greater campus – what the riverfront looks like, what our parking lots look like, and what our experiences look like,” said Brown. “We are looking at renewing and refreshing our exhibits, looking to build new programs based on what our constituents are telling us what they want, including being culturally responsive and focused on the most important topics in science today.”

Community connection

The Science Center’s core audience is families with children, but the goal is to also appeal to other audiences including high schoolers, empty nesters, seniors, millennials, and people in the immediate Northside.

“Our Northside community is our closest neighbors, and we want to create greater partnerships with them,” said Brown. “We want to make sure we are a place that is welcoming to people with all levels and intersections of identity – a place that is more than just welcoming to all, but a place where people walk in and say, ‘Oh, this place has been waiting for me to be here.’”

New experiences

Directly working with the community is one way the Science Center is preparing for the opening of the new permanent exhibition, *Mars: The Next Giant Leap*. Towards the end of the exhibition,

slated to open in November 2022, visitors will encounter *Dream Big: Space*. Here, visitors are invited to consider and weigh in on decisions facing an imagined Martian settlement and see the impact of their decisions in digital and analog ways. A model of the settlement in the center of the space is built over time to reflect the visitors' collective decisions, allowing them to see their own thoughts shape the future on Mars. The community's input will be reflected immediately on a digital model and on the physical model over time.

A community anchor

Greenspace and science interactives are on the top of the list for consideration to beautify the Science Center's external space – along the riverfront trails and the parking lots.

"I think people who come here now think I am going to come to the Science Center, and we are going to go in the building and do something fun," said Brown. "What I want them to think is I am going to go to the Science Center because there is so much going on – not only in the building but on the riverfront behind it and in front of the building."

We would love to see science interactives along the riverfront trail, science interactives in front of the building, and new greenspace. I would love to be a place that draws people from the Northside down to the riverfront and a place that pulls people off the riverfront and into the Northside neighborhoods," added Brown.

The Science Center hopes to facilitate a more connected community with the Northside and help revitalize a neighborhood that is on the rise to foster greater economic development.

"I hope to see Carnegie Science Center as a community anchor," concluded Brown.

About Carnegie Science Center

Carnegie Science Center is dedicated to inspiring learning and curiosity by connecting science and technology with everyday life. By making science both relevant and fun, the Science Center's goal is to increase science literacy in the region and motivate young people to seek careers in science and technology. One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, the Science Center is Pittsburgh's premier science exploration destination, reaching more than 700,000 people annually through its hands-on exhibits, camps, classes, and off-site education programs.

Accessibility: Features for All

Carnegie Science Center welcomes all visitors. We work to assist visitors with disabilities in obtaining reasonable and appropriate accommodations, and in supporting equal access to services, programs, and activities. We welcome visitors in wheelchairs on the deck of our USS Requin (SS 481) submarine. Below-deck visits require full mobility. Hearing assistance devices are available for The Rangos Giant Cinema. Please ask when you buy your ticket.

Please note that requests for accommodations should be made at least two weeks prior to your visit. For specific questions about wheelchairs, strollers, or other programmatic or equipment needs, see the ticket counter located on the first floor of the main building or contact Customer Service at 412.237.1641 or

info@carnegiesciencecenter.org. Please contact Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh's Accessibility Coordinator with concerns regarding accessibility for visitors with disabilities at the museums. On weekdays, call 412.622.6578 or email accessibility@carnegiemuseums.org.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, [Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh](#) is a family of four dynamic, distinctive museums: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. The museums reach 1.5 million people a year through exhibitions, educational programs, outreach activities, and special events.

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