

## Contact:

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(773) 947-6003**GUEST EXPERIENCES AND MUSEUM AMENITIES**

To support our vision—to inspire and motivate our children to achieve their full potential in the fields of science, technology, medicine and engineering—we are encouraging Museum guests to participate in entirely new ways and making it easier to extend participation after leaving the Museum.

**Interactive Experiences and Surprising Performances**

Our goal is to make sure that the Museum’s 1.5 million annual guests have engaging and educational experiences throughout their visit. To that end, we have looked for new ways to interact with our guests, within exhibits and all throughout the building.

The Museum’s facilitators are now positioned to focus on helping make each guest’s experience come alive, creating “a-ha” moments throughout their visit. Staff spend time learning science content that relates to the exhibit program and have tools at their disposal to engage guests on the floor and waiting to enter an exhibit experience. The team is now wearing brightly colored lab coats to emphasize their role as content experts and to be even more visible throughout the Museum.

New exhibit experiences will also encourage guests to get involved with facilitated learning opportunities. The newly constructed *Earth Revealed* is a prime example of an exhibit that fosters engagement and discussion among guests around the topic of climate change and global weather patterns. Our new permanent exhibits will provide many opportunities for guided exploration as Museum staff facilitate hands-on activities, lead discussions about science topics in the news and provide the opportunity to try out scientific tools and objects.

The Museum’s dramatic spaces afford the opportunity for unique performances and large-scale demonstrations. Science topics like chemistry are now brought to life for guests on the floor through dozens of demonstrations like “Bangs, Flashes and Fire,” which uses fire and explosions to illustrate the chemistry of combustion. Other daily demonstrations let guests see their own DNA, test the power of magnets, make slime, get dizzy while learning about rotation—and more.

Newly renovated spaces will also provide the opportunity for new programs. Our new fabrication laboratory, FabLab, invites guests into a small scale workshop to design and fabricate personalized items using computer software, laser cutters, milling machines and other cutting-edge technology. The Science Theatre will let guests enjoy original presentations on a range of topics such as the digestive system and sound.

**SmartVisit**

The “SmartVisit” program uses technology to help guests personalize their visit and extend their experience after leaving the Museum. New technologies will be incorporated into each iconic exhibit that will allow guests to communicate and interact with the content. For example, guests will be able to scan the barcode on their ticket in select exhibits and capture their interaction with exhibit content through a set of videos and images. Guests can then access additional topic content and resources at home from a personal Web page located at [www.msichicago.org](http://www.msichicago.org) and share it with friends and family online. Guests also will be offered online activities, programs and events that are related to their favorite Museum exhibits and experiences.

**Web site**

The newly revamped Museum Web site at [www.msichicago.org](http://www.msichicago.org) will play a critical role in helping the Museum extend transformative science experiences beyond our walls and into homes, classrooms and communities. The new site brings

many of our unique and educational science-based experiences to life online and allows kids to conduct hands-on science experiments at home using everyday household items. It provides teachers with access to new and useful activities to use in their classrooms and helps them create customized, educational field trips to the Museum. Families can even plan their day at the Museum in advance by creating and printing custom itineraries and maps as well as printing tickets from their home computers. Plans for future releases include video programming that can be streamed into classrooms, podcasts of events and a science news center.

### **Wayfinding**

With more than a million square feet of space, four levels and an underground parking garage, navigating the Museum's large facility can be daunting. As a way to provide our guests with a great experience that will make a visit even more inviting, the Museum has created a new and effective signage system that accomplishes the following: provides distinct routes to destinations throughout the Museum, communicates the building spaces through easy-to-use orientation and navigational tools, creates a more efficient and easy-to-understand entry and ticketing process, and offers a new and more flexible guest map with event and activity listings for the week. With more than 1,000 elements (signs, maps, labels etc.) this will be one of the largest wayfinding efforts in any North American museum.

### **Restroom Facilities**

The Museum is adding two new sets of restrooms and renovating the building's Ground Floor facilities. Restrooms recently opened on the Museum's Main Floor as well as the First Balcony, near the Yellow Stairs. All restrooms are designed to be environmentally friendly. Water is conserved by incorporating low-flow toilets and water-free urinals, and a system that allows for continual monitoring of water consumption and operation of the restrooms has been installed. In the near future, Museum guests will be able to view water consumption and usage of the toilets in an interactive multimedia presentation that explains various concepts regarding water consumption. In addition, all of the facilities will be equipped with occupancy sensors to enhance lighting efficiency, and the new facilities at the balcony level have skylights that allow for natural light to fill the room during the day, minimizing the use of building lighting.

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