



## CHILDREN'S MUSEUM HOUSTON

### Chief Executive Officer

### Position Description

#### THE OPPORTUNITY

For over 40 years, [Children's Museum Houston](#) (CMH) has been transforming communities through innovative, child-centered learning that improves the trajectories of children in Greater Houston. Children's Museum Houston is a critical part of this city, an important partner in our community, a trusted resource for parents and educators, and a fun educational experience for children. The racial and ethnic demographics of Museum visitors mirrors those of the community, and CMH offers programming in bilingual formats. CMH maintains the most extensive free admission practices of all of the nation's children's museums with over 30% of the visitors attending for free. Accessibility of these experiences is critical.

For the city, CMH is part of Greater Houston's educational fabric, serving as a treasured institution that is necessary for a vibrant, thriving, inclusive Houston — a safe and joyful physical space for all families and children to engage in the kind of learning experiences we want for all children. Serving over 1 million people a year, CMH is touted nationally as one of the premier children's museums, winning numerous awards for its innovation and creativity.

For community partners, CMH is a reliable and trusted partner to community institutions, matching our capabilities and objectives with other groups to further the wellbeing of children and ensure their bright futures. CMH staff work alongside community-based partners at 1,200+ locations throughout Greater Houston and serve over 120,000 people annually at the Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center.

For parents and educators, CMH serves as a powerful link to families, equipping and empowering them in their roles as first teacher to their children, through both on-site scaffolding and via off-site workshops, trainings, and toolkits. Helping parents ensure that their children experience this joy and love of learning drives CMH's work.

For children, CMH deepens their understanding of the world around them by engaging them in hands-on inquiry and problem-solving through rich, socially-mediated, stimulating environments that engage children's natural curiosities in ways that inspire and advance their learning.

**CMH is seeking the next CEO of the museum** to ensure that these critical roles continue to be met and the impact deepens. CMH has a dedicated staff of over 90 people, strong Board leadership and tremendous community partners. Working closely with an outside consultant, CMH has just completed a 5-year strategic plan that confirms among key stakeholders, including funders and policy influencers, the



on-going need for CMH to serve Houston's families. This plan includes ensuring world-class interactive exhibits, high-quality out-of-school-time learning engagement that prioritizes equity of educational opportunity, and support for parents as their children's earliest teachers. Over the next five years, the CEO will strengthen partnerships to further its program excellence, present new exhibits and lead a capital campaign to solidify and deepen the Museum's impact.

## **THE ROLE**

The CEO will provide the leadership and planning necessary to ensure that Children's Museum Houston is strategically positioned to maximize its attendance and community-based outreach for current and future generations. Reporting directly to the Board of Directors, the CEO will be based in Houston, TX. The CEO will manage a \$10MM+ annual budget, 90+ employees, 2 physical locations including retail and food services, and over 1,200 community partnerships throughout Greater Houston. Cultivating these valuable relationships with a range of stakeholders including philanthropic organizations, local and national nonprofits, educational organizations, city officials and individuals will be crucial.

## **KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

The CEO will spend time working with the broader community to accomplish the following strategic initiatives:

- Continue to strengthen its core: reinvest in the physical museum through major exhibit updates
- Become families' go-to partner in child-centered experiential learning in Houston
- Drive deep and targeted impact in extended/out-of-school time learning in service of educational equity and learning for all
- Continue to rebuild and strengthen our organizational and team foundation

To enable the attainment of these initiatives, the CEO has the following responsibilities:

### ***Strategic Leadership & Organization Management***

- Lead the organization to optimize the potential of updated facilities, eliminate boundaries to access, and develop enduring ties to the community
- Continue to serve as an engaged, committed and credible partner in the Greater Houston area
- Set annual targets, organizational priorities, and operational plans that drive impact and align the team and the organization at large
- Drive a positive organizational culture through communication, meaningful relationship development and an on-going cycle of feedback and improvement
- Build and coach a strong, results-driven team, increase internal staff capacity, and ensure that direct reports are maximizing their potential as a team and as organizational leaders



- Calibrate the business model, human and financial resources, and program opportunities to ensure that operations thrive and that CMH continues to exhibit relentless operational excellence
- Champion the educational philosophy of the Museum as an essential out-of-school-time resource that positively advances children's learning trajectories
- Stay abreast of current trends in out-of-school-time learning organizations and anticipate potential changes in program design

#### ***External Relations & Communications***

- Serve as the external face of CMH with a wide range of partners to advance the organization's mission, reputation and funding
- Lead and advance healthy, transparent and collaborative relationships with the board, staff, community leaders and the many individuals and entities that support the Museum
- Work with local media to expand public awareness of CMH programs and successes and publicize the activities of the organization, its programs and goals

#### ***Fund Development***

- Continue to grow a sustainable, diversified local and national funding base that includes investments from individuals, corporations and foundations
- Play primary role in cultivating, soliciting and stewarding key funders to increase participation and contributions
- Ensure financial stability and sustainability by maintaining healthy cash flow and adequate reserves through revenue generation, fundraising and development
- Develop a transformational capital and endowment campaign with the support of the Board

#### ***Diversity, Equity, Accessibility & Inclusion***

- Engage in setting DEAI initiatives to ensure that CMH is increasing its effectiveness in serving children, staff and the community across lines of difference
- Continue and expand programs to serve low income, underserved and underrepresented communities, including those served by social service agencies and people with special needs and disabilities

#### ***Financial Management/Business Operations***

- Establish annual financial goals, internal systems and operational processes that are responsive to current realities and accommodate future needs
- Work with the staff and Board in preparing annual budgets and periodic financial reports while ensuring that the organization operates within budget guidelines
- Manage earned income strategy to increase revenues
- Oversee annual strategic planning and priority setting for CMH



- Ensure smooth operation of 2 physical museum locations (1500 Binz and Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center), a retail location and a cafe at 1500 Binz, an office building, and a parking garage; all operating six days per week (7 days during school holidays)
- Maintain the current systems and continually update to allow for efficient operation and compliance with HR, tax, audit, IRS regulations, and any other legal requirements for a 501(c)(3)

### **Board Governance**

- Work closely with the Executive Board, Board of Directors, Advisory Board and its Committees to ensure ongoing communication of progress, successes, risks and challenges and to provide information necessary to make informed decisions in a timely and accurate manner
- Help build and maintain a diverse and inclusive non-profit Board that is representative of the community, highly engaged and willing to contribute to, and advocate for, the Museum's mission

### **THE LEADER**

We are seeking a leader with experience, knowledge and demonstrated success in contexts relevant to leading Children's Museum Houston. The CEO is a person who is passionate about the role that CMH can play as an early childhood education leader and partner in the local and regional community. The ideal candidate will possess many of the following qualities, experiences and skills:

- Passion for and/or lived experience with CMH mission
- High emotional intelligence, integrity, charisma and confidence
- Ability to compellingly convey CMH's mission, impact, and needs across the community in an authentic way; exceptional written, verbal and interpersonal communication skills
- Team player and team builder with outstanding interpersonal, communication and listening skills
- Demonstrated adaptability and creativity; desire to be innovative; builder of people, teams and systems
- Direct experience with key themes and concepts in early and primary grades education programming and education systems
- Success in gaining the trust of a wide spectrum of community stakeholders, educational partners and an involved Board
- Demonstrated experience in fundraising to include increasing the recurrence and predictability of contributions and engaging long-term institutional and individual donors
- Strong business and financial acumen; experience managing large budgets and awareness of business operations
- Personal and professional commitment to diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion and the requisite skill to facilitate critical conversations on the design of increasingly inclusive programming
- Familiarity with diverse business functions including marketing, public relations, human



resources, accounting and building maintenance

- Ability to articulate vision and strategy and the tactical skills to manage the systems and processes necessary to implement the strategy
- Good analytical and problem-solving skills, with an ability to use data to make decisions and recommendations
- Strong commitment to the growth and professional development of staff
- Fun and energetic! A leader who can engage with families and young children and that exhibits a sense of humor and perspective
- Connection to the Houston community, preferred
- 10+ years of progressively responsible leadership of a similar size, successful nonprofit and/or related entity
- Bachelor's degree required; advanced degree in business, public administration, non-profit management preferred

## HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates should apply [here](#). We will receive letters of interest and resumes until November 11, 2022. Children's Museum Houston offers a competitive salary and benefits package that includes vacation, medical, dental and vision insurance. CMH also provides access to short-term and long-term disability insurance, and life insurance. We provide compensation that takes into account each candidate's prior experience and responsibilities. This position is located in Houston, TX.

*Children's Museum Houston seeks to fully represent our community and constituencies, particularly low-income communities and communities of color.*

*Children's Museum Houston is an equal opportunity employer. We do not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, sex, age, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, status as a veteran, disability, or other federal, state or local protected class.*



## More about [Children's Museum Houston](#)

**Mission:** Our mission is to transform communities through innovative, child-centered learning. We address six key community needs identified through community forums: 1) fostering the development of the child population of the Greater Houston area; 2) increasing parental engagement; 3) providing learning experiences that reinforce classroom instruction; 4) reducing effects of poverty on learning; 5) serving a multicultural, multilingual population; and 6) promoting workforce readiness.

**Values of CMH:** In order to reach all the audiences mentioned above and to transform communities through innovative, child-centered learning, we must:

- Be true to ourselves
- Be honest with our fellow team members
- Recognize and respect our partners
- Value the people we serve

Valuing community and learning for all is a core value that drives all of CMH's decisions and strategy, from pricing to admissions mix, and to the portfolio of offsite programmatic work CMH pursues and maintains.

**Audience:** We serve the families of children ages birth through twelve. Prior to COVID, we served 1.4 million people per year – reaching 750,000 at the Children's Museum, 560,000 through community-based outreach performed at 440+ locations throughout Greater Houston, and 120,000 at the Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center. When COVID forced closures, we launched virtual All-Time Access programming, reaching more than 9 million viewers through September 2022. Attendance continues to rebound steadily. We served 651,000 people in FY22 – including 412,000 at CMH, 176,000 through outreach performed at 284 locations, and 63,000 at the Fort Bend Children's Discovery Center.

**Exhibits and Programs:** Our Museum-based offerings include thirteen exhibits, the Parent Resource Library (a Houston Public Library branch), and programming that changes daily. Outreach includes seven parent engagement programs that increase the ability of parents to serve as their children's first and most influential teachers; and seven afterschool/summer programs that engage children in hands-on, inquiry-based activities aligned with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) standards. Resource development is guided by the Building Blocks objectives created by our educators to ensure strategic connections with the TEKS and 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace skills. We facilitate programming in bilingual (English/Spanish) formats, providing translation in additional languages as needed.

**Inclusion:** We maintain the most extensive free admission practices of all of the nation's children's museums. We provide free admission for 30%+ of visitors via weekly Free Family Nights and the distribution of our Open Doors admission passes to low-income families by community-partners at



1,200+ locations across Greater Houston. The racial/ethnic demographics of Museum visitors mirror those of the community, with 48% of visitors of Hispanic/Latino descent, followed by African Americans (23%), Anglos (21%) and Asian Americans (7%). Outreach prioritizes under-resourced, predominantly BIPOC neighborhoods having the greatest level of need, with 100% of outreach programming provided free of charge to participants. Within the 500 square miles inside of Beltway 8, every family lives within two miles of a community partner that hosts our outreach programs and/or distributes our Open Doors family admission passes.

**Evaluation:** Our Manager of Evaluation annually assesses each of our offerings with the support of a Board Evaluation Committee chaired by Dr. Cathy Horn, Professor and Interim Dean of the College of Education at the University of Houston. Methods include external evaluations conducted by locally and nationally-focused researchers and internal evaluations including pre/post-tests with comparisons to control groups; participant interviews/observations; surveys that determine satisfaction levels and quantify perceptions of needs/benefits; and focus groups. Evaluations indicate a success rate of 99% since 2010 in achieving/surpassing output and outcome goals.