NEH Application Cover Sheet
Challenge Grants

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Field of Expertise: Interdisciplinary

INSTITUTION

Wisconsin Children's Center
Madison, WI UNITED STATES

APPLICATION INFORMATION

Title: *Ready, Set...Grow! Capital Campaign for the New Madison Children's Museum*

Grant Period: From 12/2008 to 12/2010
Field of Project: Interdisciplinary
Description of Project: Madison Children???s Museum (MCM) seeks a National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant of $250,000 toward the Ready, Set???Grow! Capital Campaign. The $10 million campaign provides for the renovation of the museum???s new facility???a 1929 five-story building in the heart of historic Capitol Square.

The Challenge Grant of $250,000 and matching funds of $750,000 will be used for construction costs for the new facility scheduled to open to the public in 2010. With 26,000 square feet of space for exhibitions, programs and offices, the new museum will house expanded humanities exhibitions and programs for a regional audience of over 130,000 family visitors annually.

BUDGET

Fiscal Year # 1	$100,000.00	**Total from NEH**	$250,000.00
Fiscal Year # 2	$150,000.00	**Non-Federal**	$750,000.00
Fiscal Year # 3		**Total**	$1,000,000.00
Fiscal Year # 4		**Matching Ratio: 3.00 to 1**	

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Project Abstract

Request: Madison Children's Museum (MCM) seeks a National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant of $250,000 toward the Ready, Set…Grow! Capital Campaign. The $10 million campaign provides for the renovation of the museum's new facility—a 1929 five-story building in the heart of historic Capitol Square.

Specific Use of Funds: The Challenge Grant of $250,000 and matching funds of $750,000 will be used for construction costs for the new facility scheduled to open to the public in 2010. With 26,000 square feet of space for public use, the new museum will house expanded humanities exhibitions and programs for a regional audience of over 130,000 family visitors annually.

Impact: The move to a larger permanent facility will transform MCM's capacity to present humanities programs to the public. The physical building will be three times larger, with an additional 15,000 square feet for future expansion, and offer much needed visitor amenities including on-site parking, a café, orientation room for school group, and expanded exhibits for children up to age twelve. As the only children's museum serving Dane County and south central Wisconsin, **MCM is also the only organization of its kind in the Capital Region that offers both facilitated and self-guided humanities programming in an informal, intergenerational learning environment.** The expansion of humanities exhibitions and programs that the new location will support is critical to the community and will complement other education opportunities such as the Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, and the Overture Center for the Arts.

Humanities Themes: Madison Children's Museum will draw deeply from its experience in creating humanities exhibitions and programs that help children and adults understand and appreciate the diversity of the world around them. The museum's new facility will support the following:

- *Faistel Cabin* - a relocated 1835 structure from Walworth County, Wisconsin.
- *Community Concourse* - a 6,975-square-foot publicly accessible space that introduces visitors to the history of the building.
- *Local Treasures* - a multi-faceted cultural and historical initiative that examines the people, the geography, and the institutions that influenced the development of the Capital City of Madison.
- *Early Learning Global Village Exhibition* - an environment built of natural materials for children under age six and their caregivers that interprets the cultures of the world through architecture, literature, and environmental studies.
- *Possible-opolis* -an open-ended gallery made of 90% recycled and repurposed objects and artifacts with activities focused on architectural history, urban planning, and the history of communication and technology.
- *Rooftop Ramble* - a green rooftop terrace that supports cultural learning through engagement with native species and historical gardens, cultural foodways, global garments, and indigenous building structures.
- *Our Town Programming* - Civics and history education programming for a state-wide school audience in partnership with the State Capitol, Wisconsin Historical Museum, and the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

Fundraising:
Madison Children's Museum is in the final stretch of its *Ready, Set…Grow! Capital Campaign.* As of April 2009, the museum has raised over $7 million towards the $10 million private goal. This is in addition to a $5 million gift by W. Jerome Frautschi through the Overture Foundation to purchase the building in 2005. In December 2008, The Kresge Foundation pledged $750,000 as a challenge grant, which has been met with excitement and garnered significant gifts from the community. A Challenge Grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities would not only assist MCM to meet the Kresge Challenge, but also propel the campaign to a successful completion.

Challenge Grant Budget

No prior NEH Challenge Grants

Total NEH funds requested:		
		$250,000
Year 1:	$100,000	
Year 2:	$150,000	
Total nonfederal contributions		$750,000
Total grant funds (NEH + match)		$1,000,000
Planned Expenditures		
Building Renovation/Construction		$1,000,000

Institutional Fact Summary

History: Madison Children's Museum (MCM) was founded in 1980 by a group of visionary early childhood specialists. The museum began as a series of traveling exhibits that were displayed at neighborhood centers, parks, and playgrounds. This widely successful pilot program prompted the museum to rent permanent space. The museum moved twice to accommodate expanding crowds until finding its current 8,000-square-foot facility in 1991. The museum has flourished at this downtown location, but given significant growth in visitors, plans to relocate and expand into a 42,000-square-foot building donated by a local philanthropist.

Mission: Throughout its 29-year history and growth, Madison Children's Museum's mission has remained the same: to connect children with their families, their communities, and the world beyond through discovery learning and creative play.

Governance & Administration: Madison Children's Museum is a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization governed by a 30-member Board of Directors. The six board committees (Executive, Board Development, Building, Fund Development, External Relations, Finance, and Public Programs) meet regularly throughout the year and are comprised of board members, staff and community volunteers.

Physical Facilities:
Current: MCM's current 8,000 sq. ft. rented facility is located in downtown Madison, on Capitol Square. Visitor capacity is 230 individuals, with exhibit space totaling 3,700 sq. ft. and classroom space totaling 545 sq. ft. Visitor parking is off-site.
Future: MCM's future home at 100 N. Hamilton is just two blocks down from the current location, still on Capitol Square, and will accommodate 1,000 daily visitors and offer on-site parking. Over 26,000 square feet of new space will be open for public use.

Staff Size & Composition:
Current: MCM has 19 full time and 7 part time multi-disciplinary staff among five main departments: Administration, Development, Exhibits, Education, and Visitor Services. An estimated 30% of staff composition and responsibilities directly relate to the humanities.
Future: MCM's long-range plan calls for an increase in staff with six additional full time positions including Humanities/Arts Program Coordinator, Garden Educator, Early Learning Educator, Membership Coordinator, IT Administrator, and Building Manager. Additional part-time positions include Camp Coordinator, Gallery Guides, and Education Assistants.

Affiliations: Madison Children's Museum is a member of the Association of Children's Museums (ACM), (Executive Director Ruth Shelly is a board member), American Association of Museums (AAM), and Association for Science and Technology Centers (ASTC). Locally, Madison Children's Museum is active in the Greater Madison Chamber of Commerce and Downtown Madison, Inc.

Recent Humanities Activities: Madison Children's Museum integrates its core initiatives of the arts, culture, science, health, early learning, and civic engagement into all exhibitions and programs. This broad blend of disciplines allows for a strong backbone of humanities related content in exhibits and education programs. This is best illustrated through the award-wining exhibition Hmong at Heart, an exploratory journey through the lives and history of the Hmong from Laos, to Thailand and then the United States. Developed in tandem with the Hmong community and elementary school students in the Madison Metropolitan School District, this exhibition resulted in the publication of multiple educational resources that are used in college teaching programs throughout the country and have been translated into four languages for international use. When this traveling exhibition returned home in 2008, MCM received a major grant from the Wisconsin Humanities Council to deliver Hmong culture kits accompanied by teacher training to all 31 elementary schools in the Madison Metropolitan School District. Subsequent grants from Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission and the Wisconsin Humanities Council resulted in the distribution of these materials in Dane County and statewide.

Madison Children's Museum—*Ready, Set…Grow! Capital Campaign*
A Request to the National Endowment for the Humanities Challenge Grant Program

Mission

Madison Children's Museum (MCM) serves over 115,000 individuals from south central Wisconsin annually through nationally recognized exhibits and education programs. From its grassroots inception in 1980 to today, the museum has advanced its mission ***to connect children to their families, communities, and the world beyond through discovery learning and creative play***. Exhibitions and programs reflect an interdisciplinary approach that blends culture, arts, civic engagement, science, health, and early learning, enabling children to gain a deeper appreciation and understanding of their communities and world. Throughout 29 years of growth, Madison Children's Museum has emerged as the leading informal education institution in south central Wisconsin, and the only youth organization that provides facilitated humanities experiences to the public in this region.

Request Summary

Madison Children's Museum seeks a Challenge Grant of $250,000 to be matched by $750,000 in private funds to support construction and renovation costs of a new expanded facility scheduled to open to the public in 2010. NEH challenge funds and matching funds will represent 10% of Madison Children's Museum's capital campaign to relocate the museum to a larger, permanent home on Capitol Square in the heart of the city, and will help leverage the remaining $2 million in private funds needed to reach the $10 million private goal. A Challenge Grant from NEH will support MCM's goal to present humanities-based exhibitions and programs to an expanded audience in the new museum, including:

- *Faistel Cabin* – a relocated 1835 structure from Walworth County, Wisconsin.
- *Local Treasures,* a multi-faceted cultural and historical initiative that examines the people, geography, and institutions that influenced the development of the capital city of Madison.
- *Community Concourse* – a 6,975-square-foot publicly accessible space that introduces visitors to the history of the building.

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- *Early Learning Global Village Exhibition* – an environment built of natural materials for children under age six and their caregivers that interprets the cultures of the world through architecture, literature, and environmental studies.
- *Possible-opolis* – an open-ended gallery made of 90% recycled and repurposed objects and artifacts with activities focused on architectural history, urban planning, and the history of communication and technology.
- *Rooftop Ramble* – a green rooftop terrace that supports cultural learning through engagement with native species and historical gardens, cultural foodways, global garments, and indigenous building structures.
- *Our Town* – Civics education programming for a state-wide school audience in partnership with the State Capitol, Wisconsin Historical Museum, and the Wisconsin Veterans Museum.

Organizational Overview

Madison Children's Museum was founded in 1980 as the vision of a group of early childhood specialists. The museum began as a series of traveling exhibits that were displayed at neighborhood centers, parks, and playgrounds. This widely successful pilot program prompted the museum to rent permanent space. The museum moved twice to accommodate an expanding audience until finding its current 8,000-square-foot facility in 1991. MCM has flourished at this downtown location, but given significant growth in visitors will relocate and expand into a 42,000-square-foot building purchased with a $5 million gift from a local philanthropist. The new facility is only two blocks away, still on Capitol Square, but will triple exhibit square footage and add needed amenities such as a free community concourse, classrooms, art studio, café, family bathrooms, and a 7,160-square-foot rooftop terrace. A campaign is underway to secure funding for building renovation, and gifts totaling more than $7 million have been committed toward the $10 million private goal. With a construction line of credit in place, construction began in February 2009 with a goal to open the new museum in late 2010.

Madison Children's Museum places particular emphasis on creating a unique children's museum that has a true "sense of place." The museum invites families to learn about their local community, and much like the Montessori method, gain mastery in their immediate surroundings before moving on to learn about the world at large. This commitment to a strong sense of place is evident in the museum's most successful exhibitions and programs. Over the years, Madison

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Children's Museum has received local and national acclaim for these innovative, community-based humanities programs including:

1997 National Telemedia Council Award for "*Reading Against the Grain"* a workshop and temporary exhibit on media literacy.

1998 Distinguished Service Award for International Education from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction for *Sin Fronteras*, a MCM education and integrated arts initiative celebrating Mesoamerica. *Sin Fronteras* was recognized by the Smithsonian Institution and cited during Congressional hearings by the United States Information Agency as a key example of how international programs can change a community. The project was featured in a documentary produced by Globo TV, Brazil's largest network, reaching over 69 million viewers.

2003 Freeman Foundation Asian Exhibit Initiative major grant (one of nine awarded nationally), resulting in the exhibition *Hmong at Heart*.

2004 American Folklore Society Dorothy Howard Prize for Folklore and Education for *Hmong at Heart* educational resources.

2004 Wisconsin Humanities Council major grant for *The Democracy Project* exhibit, with corresponding programming created in partnership with the Wisconsin Education Communications Board, Dane County, and the South Central Library System.

2007-08 Wisconsin Humanities Council major grant for *Hmong at Heart* school-based educational materials.

2008 Wisconsin Humanities Council grant for *The Polling Place Exhibition*, a civic engagement project launched during the 2008 presidential election.

Audience

In fiscal year 2007-08, Madison Children's Museum welcomed over 90,000 children and families on site, with an additional 25,000 individuals served through outreach programs. Currently, exhibits and programs target children from birth through age eight. With the move to the new facility, the museum will able to support exhibits, programs and outreach for an expanded audience of children up to age twelve; and for the first time in its history, MCM will be able

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to serve both the public and school-aged visitors simultaneously. Madison Children's Museum expects to serve over 130,000 on-site visitors in the new facility in the first year, in addition to providing civic education programming for the 65,000 statewide fourth graders who make annual field trips to the State Capitol as part of their Wisconsin history curriculum.

Madison Metropolitan School District's elementary school population, which reflects the museum's target audience, is 51% children of color (Asian, Hispanic, and African American), in contrast to the county-wide statistic which reflects a much smaller number (13%) of people of color. Through the use of multi-lingual signage and bi-lingual staff, Madison Children's Museum reduces real and perceived cultural barriers to allow for full inclusion in museum activities and programs. The community Madison children experience is far more diverse than that of their parents' generation, and as these children grow older, the city as a whole will become more diverse. MCM recognizes both the opportunity and obligation to raise children's awareness of their own culture, and to understand and appreciate the culture of others, as they mature into a community far more socially complex than that of their elders.

The museum is committed to welcoming all audiences and celebrates diversity, minimizing cultural and economic barriers, and reaching out to underserved and underrepresented populations. Through the Family Access program, MCM strives to ensure educational opportunities are accessible to the most vulnerable families in the community. Family Access is an exceptionally successful model as it has evolved to include community partnerships, educational outreach, and subsidized admissions/membership opportunities. For example, MCM has an ongoing program with Dane County Head Start, which begins with teacher training in inquiry-based learning, proceeds to a three-visit classroom presentation, continues with a conversation at the monthly Head Start parent night, and concludes with a private evening for Head Start families at the museum (food and transportation provided). Families are then offered a $5 annual membership (valued at $70). A significant 21% of the museum's 1,950 members participate in this subsidized program. In 2008 alone, MCM served 32% of total visitors through Family Access's free, subsidized, or outreach programs.

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Capital Expansion

The building at 100 N. Hamilton was specifically chosen by the museum for its historical significance and location at the center of state government and Madison's cultural district. Madison Children's Museum plans to take advantage of this unique location and history of the building through interpretative exhibitions and programs. Located on historic Capitol Square, the new Madison Children's Museum will become part of a vibrant center for community engagement, featuring:

- A free community concourse, serving as a place for community gathering and public programs.
- Expanded exhibit and program experiences for children up to age twelve.
- Performance space, larger classrooms, art studio, and birthday party rooms.
- Increased education programs and cultural performances.
- Accommodations for visiting school groups including orientation area, lunchroom, and coat/lunch storage.
- Improved visitor amenities such as on-site parking, family bathrooms, coat/stroller storage, food service, and comfort areas.
- Venues for community, civic, and corporate events, including a stunning four-season rooftop terrace.

The new building addresses immediate operational needs and provides potential for future growth. After 18 years of accommodating staff in off-site locations, all employees will be brought under one roof. The new facility's lower level features an exhibit design studio and fabrication/maintenance workshop. The top (fourth) floor provides staff offices and 4,000-square-feet of tenant space. This tenant space and the entire third floor will be held in reserve for future expansion, funded separately from this plan. In all, combining public and staff space, 32,000-square-feet will be in active use on opening day.

Historically, Madison Children's Museum has been the gateway for families to experience the downtown cultural district. This role will expand with the new facility, as MCM's reach will grow regionally and statewide. While there are other cultural institutions on Capitol Square such as the State Capitol, Overture Center for the Arts, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, and Wisconsin Historical Museum, it is typically the children's museum that brings young families downtown and encourages their return.

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Project Background

In 1999, local philanthropist W. Jerome Frautschi pledged $5 million for Madison Children's Museum to purchase a new facility within walking distance of Overture Center for the Arts, a $205 million performing arts facility that Frautschi donated to the community. This pledge set into motion several significant steps that have guided the capital expansion project.

2004: While still searching for a suitable site, MCM received a planning grant from the Institute for Museum and Library Services to develop a master exhibit plan for the new facility by:

- Increasing staff awareness of best practices through travel to and study of other museums.
- Engaging the community in development of six exhibit initiatives.
- Creating a foundation document for future architectural planning.

A museum staff team began travel to seven museums: Brooklyn Children's Museum, Boston Children's Museum, Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, Minnesota Children's Museum, Science Museum of Minnesota, Indianapolis Children's Museum, and Chicago Children's Museum. Staff researched best practices throughout, met with colleagues, and created a comprehensive strategy for exhibit and program development.

2005: The museum's long search for the perfect site concluded with the acquisition of 100 N. Hamilton, a five-story building constructed in 1929 as a Montgomery Ward department store which was later converted to office space. Only two blocks from the museum's current facility, 100 N. Hamilton is one of eight classic flatiron buildings that grace the corners of Capitol Square. The purchase included not only the building, but also the two-level parking structure behind it, which together comprise the entire triangular city block.

With the future location secured, MCM assembled its architecture, project management, and construction team with specific emphasis on sustainable design and historic preservation:

- The Kubala Washatko Architects (TKWA) received critical acclaim for its historically sensitive addition to the Frank Lloyd Wright Unitarian Meeting House in Madison. TKWA's projects also include the Aldo Leopold

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Legacy Center in Baraboo, Wisconsin—the only platinum LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certified building in the state.

- Huffman Facility Development, the owner's representative and project management firm, has supervised Madison historic preservation projects including the Harvester Building (using preservation tax credits), and Overture Center for the Arts, which features restoration of the Capitol Theater and preservation of the Yost's Department Store façade.
- J.H. Findorff and Son, general contractor, has worked on major historical projects in Madison including the UW Red Gym, The Madison Club, Tobacco Row, and Doris House.

The team consulted with Wisconsin state historic preservation officers, who determined that the building is not eligible for designation as a national historic landmark. However, determined to preserve and restore the building's best historic features, MCM is prepared to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and all construction and renovation will comply with the Davis Bacon Act.

Also in 2005, the staff and architects commenced community listening sessions with content professionals, teachers, parents, and board members to inform the museum's master plan within the new building. Six core themes of the arts, culture, science, health, civic engagement, and early learning emerged. Over 100 participants attended the professionally facilitated sessions to identify community needs that should be addressed through exhibits and programs in the new facility. Place-based learning emerged as a central humanities theme that aligned with the museum's mission to instill a "sense of place" which develops local and global understanding

2006: Listening sessions concluded. The staff and architects compiled results into a comprehensive Exhibit and Architectural Overview document outlining MCM's future vision, which the museum's Board of Directors officially approved before further design development. The museum identified fundraising counsel and began a feasibility study for the capital campaign.

2007: Design development for both the building and exhibits continued. Based on results from the feasibility study, the museum initiated the quiet phase of its capital campaign.

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2008: The museum's Board of Directors approved final architectural plans and determined to pursue LEED certification. Upon certification, Madison Children's Museum will become the first LEED certified museum in Wisconsin.

2009: Construction began and will be completed in 2010, with the new facility opening in early fall of that year.

Institutional Approach to Developing Humanities Exhibitions and Programs

Madison Children's Museum has advanced its approach to exhibition development since 1990, with its first exhibition about Wisconsin's rich agricultural tradition and dairy culture, *Cows, Curds, and Their Wheys*. That project was the first time an outside cultural anthropologist was contracted for exhibit development. This established precedence for how exhibits are still developed at MCM today**: collectively, with solid scholarly research teams at the core, resulting in a learning experience that is content-rich, developmentally appropriate, place-based, and tied to community needs and interests.** MCM's key exhibits and education staff who began this process remain with the museum today, and their approach has emerged as an institutional value that has become the core of MCM's exhibition and program development process.

A subsequent successful collaboration with the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Madison Metropolitan School District produced *Sin Fronteras: Building Bridges Between Wisconsin and Mesoamerica*. This two-year, community-wide education initiative brought content consultants, teachers, museum staff, volunteers, and schoolchildren together to create mobile museums interpreting Mexico, parts of Central America, and an "America without borders." For the past nine years, Madison Children's Museum has helped children and adults in the Madison area to build cultural bridges in their schools, workplaces, neighborhoods, and global communities as part of the *Sin Fronteras* program initiative. A unique community partnership, *Sin Fronteras* has been hailed as a model program by the American Association of Museums, the Smithsonian Institution, and the U.S. Information Agency.

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With the success of *Sin Fronteras,* MCM was emboldened to create *Hmong at Heart*, a national traveling exhibition funded by the Freeman Foundation as part of the Association of Children's Museums' *Go East!* Asian Exhibits Initiative.; **MCM was the smallest museum in size and budget chosen to participate in the project based on its strong reputation in the field.** *Hmong at Heart* tells the story of Hmong people from Southeast Asia who came to the U.S. as refugees and today comprise Wisconsin's largest Asian population. Development of this project involved working intimately with the University of Wisconsin Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Cultures, the Wisconsin Arts Board Folk Arts program, the University of Wisconsin Southeast Asian Studies Department, local fourth and fifth grade classes, and a host of Hmong community groups. These groups included Kasjiab House, a division of Mendota Mental Health Center that is dedicated to supporting Hmong elders suffering from Post-traumatic Stress Disorder as a result of the horrors of war, their refugee experience, and feelings of extreme cultural isolation in America. The return of this exhibition to MCM in February 2008 created new opportunities to extend collaborations with the Wisconsin Humanities Council, Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, and local school districts to disseminate Hmong educational resources in school-based "kits" designed to extend the exhibit experience. *Hmong at Heart* has since traveled to Minnesota's Children's Museum and is scheduled for the Fresno Metropolitan Museum in 2011.

Extensive collaborations surrounding civic education commenced in 2004 with development of the *Democracy Project*, an educational initiative to bring civics and democracy to the forefront of learning. Through partnership with the Wisconsin Humanities Council, South Central Library System, Dane County, and the Wisconsin Education Communications Board, MCM's civic engagement initiative was addressed in terms of process: connecting children, adults, and community institutions in innovative partnerships that create a two-way path of enrichment that benefits the entire community. This project inspired *The Polling Place Exhibition* during the presidential elections of 2004 and 2008, giving youth the opportunity to campaign, deliberate, and cast votes to provide feedback on museum programs and future exhibits. The *Dream Machine*, a whimsical hands-on exhibit that is part airplane, boat, and car, was selected by youth audiences in 2004. In 2008, this exhibit was "re-elected" to be part of the new museum. The *Dream Machine* embodies the museum's commitment to inspiring young audiences to embrace civic involvement, demonstrating how people and ideas can influence the development of a community.

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Today, MCM's civic engagement initiative remains vital to the museum's operations and exhibit development process, and is one of the museum's six institutional priorities. In fact, MCM has dedicated an entire gallery for prototyping exhibit concepts and education programs that provides formative evaluation during transition to the new facility. This *Experimental Gallery* has afforded MCM education and exhibits staff the opportunity to learn what public audiences desire and expect in the new museum. Thus far, MCM staff has prototyped large and small format education programs (guest residencies, workshops, and speakers) with future plans to prototype exhibit components such as materials for structure-building activities, children's literature selections, gardening programs, and more.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Integration of Humanities Exhibitions and Programs in the New Museum

In developing exhibits and programs for the new building, Madison Children's Museum will build on its extensive experience in translating solid scholarly research into age-appropriate experiences. The project team includes: Dena Wortzel, Executive Director of the Wisconsin Humanities Council; Dr. Bobbie Malone, Director of School Services, Wisconsin Historical Society; Dr. Anne Pryor, Folk Arts Education Specialist, Wisconsin Arts Board; and Ruth Olson, Associate Director, Center for the Study of Upper Midwestern Culture. These humanities scholars, who have long conferred with MCM exhibits and education staff on previous projects such as *Hmong at Heart,* the *Democracy Project,* and *The Polling Place Exhibition,* will once again draw upon their own intellectual and professional resources, both locally and nationally, to guide exhibition development.

The result will be an experience in the new museum that provides the public with new knowledge, understanding, and awareness of their community and the world. From the moment visitors enter the museum's grounds, they will be immersed in the human experience that evolved as Madison changed over time, illustrated by the museum's city block that transitioned from open prairie to a center for religious, retail, military, governmental, and educational purposes. Exhibits located throughout the building will interpret the unique history and development of Capitol Square as a major cultural, educational, and political center. The museum building itself will be used as an interpretative exhibit, examining the people and purposes for which the location and structure has been used through time from Native Americans over 12,000 years ago to Wisconsin State Legislators in the 1980s. The visitor experience is described in detail below.

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FAISTEL CABIN

Located outdoors on the northeast corner of the museum's grounds, Faistel Cabin will be the historical entry point for museum visitors. The 16 by 20-foot cabin is an original 1835 structure built in Walworth County, Wisconsin, which MCM acquired after the media reported its possible demolition to make way for urban development. Educational programming will focus on family and community life in the early 19th century, demonstrating the social dynamics of a community transitioning from a Native American homeland to a European American territorial capital. The cabin will feature rotating exhibits of animal furs depicting the European fur trade and historical furniture, kitchenware, and garden tools that convey family life. Interpretation will be developed through a strategic partnership with area third-grade classrooms, as part of a new Madison Metropolitan School District local history curriculum. Using the model perfected in *Hmong at Heart* exhibition development, third grade students will conduct historical research in the classroom to contribute content for the exhibition, while gaining in-depth knowledge and understanding through a hands-on, interactive learning process.

LOCAL TREASURES INITIATIVE

This museum-wide historical and cultural project will explore the human experience during the evolution of Madison over time, as it relates to the city block inhabited by the new museum. Planning for *Local Treasures* is being conducted in collaboration with the Madison Metropolitan School District, the Wisconsin Historical Society, and the Wisconsin State Capitol. Content development for *Local Treasures* will be carried out within a vibrant, ongoing collaboration with third grade students from throughout the district. Students conducting original historical research, with an emphasis on children's history, will influence fully realized exhibit environments that the students themselves will have designed, similar to the development of Faistel Cabin. Ultimately, the initiative will highlight exhibit components (identified with an icon) that are present throughout the building and include the following complementary programming:

Capital City Walking Tours will be a public program for family audiences free with museum admission. These tours will encourage interactive learning to augment family visits to historic Capitol Square. Printed guides and audio/text message tours accessed via cell phones will highlight Madison's architectural history, center of state government, and

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cultural district. Programming will be modeled after the History Link Cell Phone Audio Tour used in Springfield, Illinois, which provides an audio tour of several historic sites in the downtown area.

Local Treasures Scavenger Hunt is a new program in development targeted for the museum's newest audience—upper elementary school-aged students. After checking out modified cell phones from the Visitor Services desk, students will embark on a museum-wide scavenger hunt using wireless technology. Following icons linked to *Local Treasures,* students will answer questions and receive clues via text message as they search for information about the historical people, places, and things around them. Youth will become active detectives, taking on the role of historian, cultural anthropologist, or archeologist in a focused and content-rich experience. Content will complement school group field trips curricula and tie in to the *Our Town* civics programming described below.

COMMUNITY CONCOURSE

This 6,975-square-foot space located on the museum's first floor will be free and open to the public, and can be accessed from on-site parking or the Capitol Square entrance. The Community Concourse will offer families a sense of place for community gathering and provide a welcoming environment for people of all cultures through inclusive tri-lingual signage (English, Spanish, and Hmong), cultural images, and sculptural elements created through community collaboration with YWCA families in transitional housing and Madison Metropolitan School District elementary students. Visitors will be able to explore the following exhibits at no charge:

Photo Gallery Then and Now: The history of Madison Children's Museum's building at 100 N. Hamilton will be depicted through photographic images, original hand-drawn architectural plans, and text that illustrate the building's original use and architectural details. First constructed as a Montgomery Ward department store in 1929, the building is one of eight triangular flat-iron buildings surrounding Capitol Square, and it is the only one made of Bedford limestone. The original front door was on the point of the building, flanked by carved Art Deco detailing which welcomed pedestrians from the Square. Tall storefront windows extended down each side of the building to display merchandise and flood the two-story entry lobby with light. In 1942, Montgomery Ward moved to State Street to be closer to its competitor, Sears Roebuck. The building at 100 N. Hamilton then became home to the United States Armed Forces

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Institute (USAFI), the largest institution in the country at the time dedicated to providing correspondence courses to military personnel throughout the world until 1974. Soon after, while the State Capitol was renovated in the 1980s and 1990s, the building served as office space for the Legislative Reference Bureau and state lawmakers. After sitting vacant for over a decade, the museum purchased the building as its new home in 2005. Historic photographs, displayed in collaboration with the Wisconsin Historical Society, and stories from community elders will make this unique history come alive.

Oral History Booth: Building on the Community Concourse's main purpose of being a center for community gathering, kinship, and intergenerational learning, the public will be invited to share their own personal stories in a format similar to the popular National Public Radio's StoryCorps. Children will be encouraged to interview their parents or grandparents, and the museum will provide a changing list of questions to focus families on their memories and experiences with Madison's historic people, events, institutions, and pastimes. Families will make recordings to post on a museum portal or send to their home computer via the Internet.

Observation sites: Beginning on the first floor, observation sites will provide visitors with views of Madison from multiple vantage points throughout the building, with the most dramatic view from the Capitol overlook on the rooftop. From all three sides of the building, views of the State Capitol, historic downtown neighborhoods, and Lake Mendota will connect past and present. For example, one view of the lake will display prehistoric glacial maps to show how Madison's lakes and drumlins were carved from the earth, while another shows Native American mounds, located now in green space and parks. These observation decks and viewfinders will provide visitors with maps and telescopes framing landmarks of geographical, historical, and cultural significance.

EARLY LEARNING GLOBAL VILLAGE EXHIBITION

Located on a lower level accessed from the Community Concourse, the *Early Learning Global Village Exhibition* will promote cultural awareness and literature, while offering unique historical and geographic perspectives of Wisconsin's landscape and indigenous and immigrant cultures through time. The design of the village is inspired by local and global architecture crafted of natural materials, many from Wisconsin. Conceived as a global village for caregivers and children

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age five and younger, this interdisciplinary exhibition is steeped with themes of cultural history, geography, folklore, and literature—building the skills for later humanities understanding. Examples of exhibit components include:

"I Spy" Indigenous Rocks and Minerals Grotto: This hands-on Wisconsin geography exhibit enhances inquiry-based learning through the study of rocks and minerals. A stone grotto, layered with igneous, sedimentary, and metamorphic rocks collected from local Wisconsin landscapes, will illustrate principles underlying the formation of Wisconsin land surfaces. Children can use an "I Spy" guide to help them discover, classify, and identify different rock and minerals embedded in the grotto walls. The guides will include a picture of each rock, geological classification, examples of human use through time, and a geographical map of Wisconsin surface features. Even the youngest children will learn to differentiate rocks by size, color, and sensory appeal, while older children will gain an awareness of how the state's physical features influence human activity.

Cob Oven and Sequencing Activity: Children will learn about cultural foodways as they pretend to bake bread in a cob oven constructed of clay, sand, and straw. Books about bread from around the world will support home cultures from the diverse families who visit the museum and help children make connections across cultures while they explore bread making.

Living Stories: This exhibit area will bring literature to life for families through the exploration of well-known children's stories and cultural folklore from around the world. Multi-lingual oversized books and puppets will augment family engagement and literary experiences. A small library and reading nook in a quiet area of the *Early Learning Global Village* will promote family literacy, while a large "reading circle" in the center of the exhibition will be used for group storytelling. MCM is currently prototyping this exhibit component with funds from the Dane County Cultural Affairs Commission.

POSSIBILE-OPOLIS

Ascending to the building's second floor, visitors will be further immersed in history and urban development as they enter the city of *Possible-opolis*. This gallery will inspire audiences to see the world as full of possibilities through

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examination of architectural history, urban planning, the development of modern communication, and historical objects. Built using 90% reclaimed materials, *Possible-opolis* models creative re-use of contemporary and historical objects as a design approach that is environmentally friendly, resource-conserving, and aesthetically inviting to older children. Key features include:

The Construction Area will introduce children to the complex issues urban planners face when determining priorities like affordable housing, green space, or business districts. Using a giant-sized interactive map of downtown Madison, children can make their own decisions about where streets, green spaces, and parking lots should be placed, and how much public space should be dedicated to schools, city infrastructure, or housing. This area puts civic engagement into action, giving youth the opportunity to become decision makers. Programming for older audiences will highlight architectural design and history throughout Madison—including historic buildings like the State Capitol, and newer structures like Monona Terrace, designed by Frank Lloyd Wright, whose boyhood home was in Madison.

The Switchboard serves as a communication center for *Possible-opolis*, where visitors can send messages throughout the gallery while experimenting with pneumatic tubes, historical communications, and contemporary audio and video technologies. Audiences will learn about the development of modern communication from written media to the electric telegraph and from telephones to e-mail and text messaging. Audiences can explore how these modes of communication have evolved over time to meet community and individual needs in response to an increasingly global world.

The Tinkerer's Workshop will introduce children to the history of technology and help them understand the precursors to modern conveniences like computers, air conditioning, and CD players. In this area, senior volunteers will help children take things apart such as typewriters, old fans, or record players and help them make new inventions out of the pieces. Acting as historical liaisons, senior volunteers will use story telling to impart knowledge of the past into their facilitation.

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The Odditorium is a museum within the museum, with displays of unique collections, hands-on artifacts, and curiosity-shop oddities to spark kids' curiosity and imagination. Here the museum will display collections of objects like toys, masks, or models on loan from private collectors or institutions. This exhibit will also celebrate children's innate desire to collect and offer rotating exhibit space for kids' collections and stories about the objects they acquire.

ROOFTOP RAMBLE

Rooftop Ramble is the crown jewel of the new museum—a 7,160-square-foot outdoor space that will be open throughout the year for exhibit, programming, and community purposes. This physical space will be a completely new experience for visitors, as there is no other publically accessible space in downtown Madison offering this vantage point and height. (Strict zoning laws, enacted by the Wisconsin legislature, prevent any building on Capitol Square to be taller than the State Capitol.). Programming, gardens, and exhibit components will immerse visitors into the diverse ethnicities that make up Madison today, while exploring native and world cultures throughout history including these elements:

Cultural Cloak Closet: When visitors access the roof from the elevator, they will be welcomed with an intriguing over-sized closet full of cultural garments from around the world. Children and adults can don a variety of coats, wraps, and footwear to experience first-hand how people from other cultures dress for the outdoors. These garments are intended to be worn by visitors to enhance the cultural experience of *Rooftop Ramble*, and will be especially useful in inclement weather to encourage visitors to go outside.

Clubhouse: This space will serve as an orientation space and classroom for school field trips, with seating for up to 24 children. The clubhouse will offer rotating urban ecology exhibits and nature collections of rocks, bones, and insects, with live animal terrariums on display.

Children's Garden: Each growing season, a Gardener-in-Residence will focus on a particular garden tradition in a large dedicated plot. Annual offerings may include an early Native American garden, a WWII Victory Garden, or a contemporary Hmong American garden. The resident gardener will play an important role in the cultivation and upkeep of the garden, while sharing personal expertise through public education programs, workshops, and summer camps.

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Programming will demonstrate cultural foodways, agricultural techniques, and gardening tools characteristic to Wisconsin's native and immigrant populations over time, including Native American, European American, Latin American, and Hmong American cultures.

Native Area: This area will offer visitors a chance to experience natural building techniques from various cultures, emphasizing Wisconsin-based Native American structures such as the Ho-Chunk *ciporoke*. Exhibit elements and programs will provide visitors with hands-on opportunities to experience and learn about native foodways, housing, plants, and textiles. Structure-building activities will rotate with the seasons and include igloos, wigwams, and yurts.

OUR TOWN PROGRAMMING

The museum's Faistel Cabin, Local Treasures Initiative, and Rooftop Ramble will set the stage for *Our Town,* a new facilitated tour program for third and fourth grade students, families, scout troops, and home school groups. In fall 2009, the Madison Metropolitan School District (MMSD) will launch *Madison: City of Four Lakes, Our History and Our Home*, a new third grade textbook and curriculum focusing on the history of Madison. Madison Children's Museum will provide on-site field trip programming for the city's 3,000 third graders each year, with facilitated tours and hands-on activities that serve to bring the textbook to life and support classroom research projects. MCM will collaborate with MMSD to present an annual Local History Symposium, at which classrooms will be invited to share their history research projects with other students and the public through temporary exhibits and student presentations. For the past five years, MCM has collaborated with MMSD to present an annual Elementary Science Symposium and an annual Fine Arts Showcase. Teachers consistently report that providing a public venue for student work has an enormous impact on their students' engagement level and enthusiasm for their classroom projects. The Local History Symposium will be modeled on the Science Symposium, which pairs volunteer mentors from the University of Wisconsin with classrooms according to their research topics and introduces students to MCM's exhibit development process and museum careers.

In addition to serving students from the Madison Metropolitan School District, MCM will offer field trip programming designed for the 65,000 fourth grade students who travel to Madison each year from throughout Wisconsin to visit the State Capitol as part of the statewide curriculum on history and government. As the Capitol's immediate neighbor,

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Madison Children's Museum is uniquely poised to enrich the students' experience by offering field trip programming to complement the Capitol tour—something the museum cannot support in its current location. The new Madison Children's Museum will offer important field trip amenities including a lunch room, orientation space, and coat/lunch storage for up to 70 children, as well as convenient bus drop-off and parking.

Many of these visiting fourth grade classrooms combine their Capitol visit with a field trip to the nearby Wisconsin Historical Museum, which offers several tour programs focusing on statewide history topics. The Wisconsin Historical Museum frequently gets requests from these out-of-town schools for content about the history of the city of Madison, which is not a part of their current program scope. Madison Children's Museum will bridge this gap with a fourth grade tour program built on the local textbook *Madison: City of Four Lakes, Our History and Our Home,* and the Wisconsin Historical Society's textbook *Thinking Like a Historian*. The State Capitol and Wisconsin Historical Museum currently work together to schedule classrooms for back-to-back field trips; In 2009, MCM will implement new registration software that will enable MCM to coordinate with these other two sites to offer three-stop field trip bookings. As with the third grade program, visiting classrooms will be encouraged to share their own history research projects via online archives that will serve as an extension of the exhibit experience. The fourth grade tour program will support the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies in History, Political Science and Citizenship, which uses historical context to engage youth in the civics process.

Evaluation

Madison Children's Museum is actively evaluating new exhibition components and programming through formative evaluation in the Experimental Gallery. This exhibit space has provided exhibits and education staff with regular feedback from public audiences and museum members. Prototyping has evaluated formats for program dissemination, guest presenters, artist and scientist residencies, with future plans to prototype exhibit components including materials for fort-building activities, children's literature selections, gardening programs, and more.

MCM plans to work with graduate students at the University of Wisconsin for formal project evaluation. Evaluation measures are aimed to determine the impact and effectiveness of the newly expanded humanities themes on museum

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audiences. For this capital project, MCM is specifically interested in learning how the renovation and expansion of exhibitions and physical space has enriched and deepened the experiences of museum visitors. A variety of evaluation techniques, including pre- and post-visit surveys, observation, tracking, and analyzing metrics related to increases in visitation, participation in programs, and community collaborations, will measure visitor and community satisfaction on multiple levels. Measuring audience engagement and enjoyment of the museum's new offerings will serve as a backbone of project evaluation, as these measures are often key indicators of successful learning. Evaluation will focus primarily on proving that significant learning has happened within the museum and that the museum was successful in outcome delivery. These data and careful interpretation will help MCM address the needs of the community for increased humanities-based programs, ensure a deeper visitor experience, and meet strategic educational objectives.

MCM regularly engages outside evaluation for special projects, including the nationally celebrated *Hmong at Heart* exhibition, developed as part of the Association of Children's Museum's Asian Exhibits Initiative. With *Hmong at Heart,* MCM worked closely with Cecilia Garibay, now of Garibay Group, and learned a great deal about formal evaluation methods, including literature reviews, front-end evaluation, and formative and summative evaluation. MCM will apply the lessons learned from *Hmong at Heart* to new humanities-driven exhibits for project evaluation and will supplement formal evaluation with additional informal collection of data to include:

- Attendance data from programs and workshops to quantify visitor participation and satisfaction.
- Visitor surveys to learn more about visitor motivations, interests, and reactions to the museum experience.
- Advisory panels of original listening session participants to ensure project delivery was responsive to expressed community need.

Fundraising Plan

As of April 2009, the museum has raised over $7 million towards the $10 million private goal. This is in addition to the $5 million gifted by W. Jerome Frautschi through the Overture Foundation to purchase the building in 2005. In December 2008, The Kresge Foundation pledged $750,000 as a challenge grant, and consequently, a grant from NEH would be eligible to help meet the Kresge challenge. In addition, the museum has a commitment from Governor Jim Doyle and is awaiting legislative approval for a $250,000 investment from the State of Wisconsin. With those two gifts

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secured, MCM has less than $2 million to raise in order to reach the campaign goal. A Challenge Grant from National Endowment of the Humanities would lend great credibility to the campaign and provide further leverage to secure community-based gifts.

Feasibility Study

In 2007, Madison Children's Museum retained the services of the Steier Group to conduct a feasibility study consisting of 80 personal interviews and a mail survey to the 1,300 museum members (129 respondents). The feasibility study proposed testing the priorities as outlined in the long range plan: renovating the Hamilton Street building, designing and installing exhibits, developing a rooftop terrace, providing bridge operating costs, and adding to the endowment.

Results of the feasibility study were essential in the formation of capital campaign strategy and helped MCM set priorities and goals. Those surveyed responded that renovating the building, installing new exhibitions, developing a rooftop terrace, and covering bridge operating expenses were the highest priorities. Growing the endowment was evaluated as secondary priority. Visitors responded eagerly to beginning the campaign immediately, especially with the building already purchased. Respondents also helped MCM test potential fundraising goals, and through a combination of data analysis, survey responses, and board and staff input, a goal of $10 million (in addition to the $5 million building investment) was confirmed.

In February 2007, recommendations of the Steier Group were presented to Madison Children's Museum's Board of Directors, who then approved to move forward on the capital campaign. MCM retained the Steier Group on a one-year contract to work with board and staff and initiate the campaign strategy. In April 2008, campaign management transferred to MCM's Development Department, overseen by Development Director Jennifer J. Collins. The Steier Group continues to provide advisory counsel as the campaign proceeds.

Capital Campaign Strategy

Strategy for the campaign is focused largely on obtaining unrestricted gifts dedicated to funding the three primary areas of 1) building renovation/construction, 2) exhibition design, fabrication, and installation, and 3) transitional operating costs. A majority of the anticipated philanthropic funding is from private individuals, foundations, and corporations.

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The museum has been aggressive in pursuing support for the campaign, especially to maintain momentum in the difficult economic climate. Most of the campaign's current supporters are from the local community, but the fundraising team has been assertive in pursuing all avenues of support including national private foundations and competitive federal grants. The campaign team, including board, staff, and volunteers, is actively soliciting gifts, and is expected to conclude fundraising efforts by the end of 2010. The campaign plan consists of three phases: preparation, solicitation, and follow-up:

The campaign preparation phase included these activities during the months of March to June 2007: identifying the goals to be addressed during the campaign, finalizing the campaign strategy and organizational structure, developing a communications plan, recruiting campaign leadership, and identifying lead gift donor prospects. This phase also included personal visits with key donors and community leaders to report the findings of the feasibility study in order to build credibility and continue to draw greater support.

The solicitation phase strategy includes these elements:

- Solicitation began with members of the board in mid-June 2007. Board participation rate was 100%. The current board committed $1,568,600, for 15.7% of goal, with recent past board members raising that commitment to $2,373,381, or 23.7% of the campaign goal.

- Members of the Campaign Cabinet, not already participating as members of the board, were solicited next in August and September as part of the leadership phase. These cabinet members contributed $410,000. Three out of four pledged a Lead Gift ($100,000 or above).

- Feasibility study participants who did not fall into the leadership groups mentioned above were solicited during fall 2007. Of the 92 mail feasibility participants who indicated they would support the campaign, 33 (36%) have made a gift or pledge for a total of $81,572.

- The solicitation phase then moved to those prospective individuals, corporations, and foundations that have the capacity to make a lead gift commitment of $100,000 or more over the five-year pledge period. This phase is on-going, but currently stands at 73% of the $7.5 million goal for this section.

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- The advanced gift section (gifts in the $10,000 to $99,999 range) addresses the recommendation in the feasibility study that Madison Children's Museum needs to recruit the next generation of donors. Currently, this section is at 81% of goal with 66 gifts. The goal is to secure another $500,000 through 30–40 additional gifts. This section will is targeted for May through December 2009.

- The community gift section consists of a grassroots "Kids Campaign," and community-wide efforts to engage museum member, volunteers, businesses, and neighborhoods. This effort is expected to take place May 2008 through 2011. Currently the museum has received 143 gifts totaling $251,140, or 40% of the $625,000 goal for this section.

- Gift commitments from foundation and corporate solicitations are included in the gift categories named above. Foundations have contributed $3,400,000 and corporate gifts total $835,819.

- Grant writing is conducted by Madison Children's Museum. Currently there are 33 pending requests with individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Plan to meet NEH Challenge Grant

Madison Children's Museum is prepared to meet the 3:1 match of the NEH Challenge by seeking support from a diverse group of major donors. MCM has several pending requests to donors who are willing to pledge their gift toward the NEH match including the William Randolph Hearst Foundation ($50,000), Robert & Isabelle Bass Foundation ($25,000), Madison Rotary Foundation ($100,000), and 1772 Foundation ($50,000). In addition, there are three major individual donors with pending requests totaling $350,000, with an additional 38 lead gift prospects ($100,000 +) and 185 advanced gift ($10,000 - $99,000) prospects to be solicited.

Several additional strategies will help the campaign garner wide-spread community support:

- A volunteer-based **Community Committee** was formed in January to help solicit the 440 prospects below the $10,000 level. The committee received training in face-to-face solicitation and an orientation to

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the campaign and new building plans. They now meet monthly, report on their success, and select new prospects to pursue. Since January 2009, the committee has raised $9,200.

- **MCM Members Make a Difference** campaign encourages each of the museum's 1,950 member families to make a gift of any size with a goal of 100% participation. It was launched in April 2009.

- **Step Up Campaign** offers three sizes of interactive wood or metal wheels, priced at $250, $500, and $1,000, that will display photographs of a child, family, or donor on the space between the handrail and the tread of the new museum's main staircase. Visitors walking on the stairs can spin the wheels, visible on both sides of the staircase.

Leadership for the campaign includes the chair of the board, Eliot Butler, and the five-member Campaign Cabinet which was largely responsible for the success of the leadership gift phase. A staff team consisting of Executive Director Ruth Shelly, who has over 30 years of museum experience, Director of Development Jenni Collins, with 17 years of museum fundraising experience, and Development Associate Cate Redman, who joined the museum staff in 2007, are responsible for meeting the NEH Challenge grant matching requirements.

Endowment

The current market value of the museum's endowment is $2,685,374 and is held in trust with the Madison Community Foundation. As of 12/31/08, $500,000 in outstanding pledges toward endowment remained, and these will be paid off by 2011. **This is a substantial endowment for a children's museum of MCM's size and of organizations in the Madison community.** In fact, of the 220 established children's museums in the nation, only thirteen have endowments with a value greater than $3 million. The total annual return is up to 5%, depending on Madison Community Foundation's board distribution policy each year. For 2009, the total distribution was $151,546, which was expended towards annual operating expenses. During the feasibility study, adding to MCM's endowment was rated fourth of five priorities by those surveyed. The Board of Directors will revisit a separate endowment campaign once the museum is fully operational in its new site. In addition, donors considering planned gifts are encouraged to assign bequests to the permanent endowment.

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Strategic Plan

The museum's board of directors has integrated its financial planning with its strategic planning process since 2003. The first plan, 2003–05, focused on identifying and purchasing a building for renovation. The second plan, 2005–2009 (complete this June 30, 2009), focused on architectural development, capital fundraising, and project financing. On May 27, 2009, the board will develop the next strategic plan for 2009–2012, which will focus on operations: the year before opening the new building, the year of opening, and the year after opening. The Board of Directors will articulate four to five overarching goals to guide the next multi-year strategic planning period (what the museum is going to do). Every year, senior staff members will develop specific objectives to advance each goal (how the museum is going to do it), and these objectives form the staff's annual work plan and the museum's operating budget. Operating budgets are projected at least three years out and modified annually as per the previous year's actual income and expenses.

Anticipating that the next strategic plan will focus heavily on the shift from a small operation to a larger one, the board Finance Committee has requested that senior staff articulate income enhancement initiatives for the new building that will be incorporated into the next planning phase. These income initiatives focus on new opportunities that the larger building space affords and include: increasing school group visits, developing a niche for facility rental, expanding education programs to adult audiences, engaging a tenant in space slated for expansion, initiating new annual income-generating events, increasing admissions with a broader and expanded audience, and expanding programming to take advantage of new funding sources. When linked to the upcoming strategic plan, staff will focus on how to prepare for these potential income streams the year before opening, which to debut the year of opening, and how to make these income streams sustainable the year after opening and into the future.

Use and Impact of NEH Challenge Funds

A NEH Challenge Grant in the amount of $250,000 and matching funds of $750,000 will be designated towards building renovation and construction costs, and will ultimately transform the museum's delivery of humanities content. Exposing the youngest museum-goers to strong and age-appropriate humanities content prepares them to be inquisitive visitors, students, and citizens in the community. The museum has a tremendous new opportunity to present engaging, interactive humanities content for elementary age children who have not been served in the community in the past.

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With support from NEH, the museum can create a new experience for museum visitors by providing permanent, innovative humanities exhibitions and programs for all visitors, from infants through adults.

A Challenge Grant would not only validate, but also strengthen Madison Children's Museum's strong reputation as a leader in high quality humanities experiences for young children and their families. As the only children's museum serving Dane County and south central Wisconsin, MCM is also the only organization of its kind in the Capital Region that offers both facilitated and self-guided humanities programming in an informal, intergenerational learning environment. The critical expansion of humanities exhibitions and programs provided by the new location will seamlessly integrate other humanities resources such as the Wisconsin Historical Society, Wisconsin Veterans Museum, Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, and the Overture Center for the Arts.

Most significantly, an award from NEH has the potential to leverage increased major gifts and donations, and is a vital to the success of the museum's capital campaign—especially significant given this economy, when donors are approaching giving cautiously and looking to maximize their gifts. MCM is at critical juncture in its fundraising as it enters the final and most difficult stretch of the campaign. An aggressive strategy energized by a Kresge Challenge Grant and new financial commitments from the Board of Directors has spurred new donors to invest in this project. Support through a Challenge Grant from NEH would propel this campaign forward to a successful completion.

The campaign has an outstanding opportunity to build a broad base of financial and community support that will sustain and enhance the museum's award-winning humanities endeavors for future generations. It is Madison Children's Museum's hope that the National Endowment for the Humanities will support these efforts that will foster the museum's tradition of engaging scholars and stakeholders in creating content-rich, effective exhibitions and programs for families into the future.

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