

NEWS

For Immediate Release



NEW MUSEUM OF SCIENCE FICTION PLANNING WASHINGTON, DC PREVIEW SITE

Crowdfunding Campaign Sets Stage for First-of-Its-Kind Destination for Science Fiction Fans as Real Estate and Exhibit Construction Firms Line Up to Support Concept

Washington, DC — November 4, 2013 — The new Museum of Science Fiction today announced plans to develop a storefront preview museum in the nation’s capital, a forerunner to the first standalone museum dedicated to science fiction and how it inspires people of all ages and walks of life. Today, the Museum of Science Fiction is an all-volunteer non-profit organization, with a group of more than three dozen professionals working to turn the dream of a museum devoted to science fiction into reality.

“We believe Washington, DC is an ideal location for a museum dedicated to science fiction, based in part on the remarkable draw the District’s museums have for people from all over the world. Indeed, one of the most popular museum destinations worldwide is the Smithsonian’s National Air and Space Museum, and those who took humanity into orbit were inspired by science fiction, from Jules Verne to *Star Trek*,” said Greg Viggiano, the museum’s executive director. “If the project stays on schedule, a full-scale facility could open by 2017. In the meantime, we are planning to launch a small preview facility in late 2014. This ‘pop-up’ site will be the place to test exhibit concepts and share an insider’s look into the process of building the museum itself.”

Organizers envision the Museum of Science Fiction as home to an array of objects and experiences that share the history of science fiction. Because the genre is so encompassing, the organization’s goal is to have a diverse collection of artifacts, display objects, and interactive exhibits that span many varieties of art forms. Visitors will be able to look at cherished manuscripts and interact with exhibits. There will be robots, time machines, aliens, and creatures, as well as costumes, sets, props, and model spaceships.

Fans Unite to Create Science Fiction Museum

“Over the past six months, a diverse team of 38 volunteers has come together to develop a long-term plan that will make this museum a reality,” Viggiano explained. “We’ve made significant progress on everything from curatorial aspects such as gallery design and visitor experience, to the non-profit management areas of development, project management, education, information technology, public relations, marketing, finance, accounting, and legal compliance.”

“Just among science fiction fans in the area, I’ve found people from all walks of life who are willing to share their professional expertise, time, and drive to move this idea forward,” said Viggiano, himself a veteran of the satellite communications industry. “We have museum curators, lawyers, accountants, communications people, and other volunteers who have stepped forward to bring the Museum of Science Fiction from dream to reality.”

Crowdfunding Kickoff

“You need look no further than the popular fan conventions that occur almost every weekend to see that the power of the science fiction fan is undeniable. No other genre enjoys the same level of loyalty and support, and this campaign is a statement of support directly from the fans,” Viggiano said.

To bring this institution to life, the Museum of Science Fiction today launched a crowdfunding campaign, allowing the public to join in the building of this innovative museum dedicated to human imagination and its ability to shape our future. The goal of the campaign is to raise \$160,000 in 38 days, but the real value in the campaign will be its statement of support and enthusiasm from one of the world’s greatest fan bases. Contributions to the crowdfunding campaign can be made here: scificrowdfund.com. Conceptual renderings of the preview museum are available at the Museum of Science Fiction’s website: museumofsciencefiction.org.

Preview Museum Wins Support

The Museum of Science Fiction will start with a 3,000-square-foot proof-of-concept preview museum to demonstrate the potential and capabilities of the full-scale facility. This will allow the general public to help the organization fine tune its ideas and plan in accordance with their expectations.

The preview museum will house a sample collection of artifacts and display objects from film, television, literature, and art, along with prototype analog and digital interactive exhibits. The preview space will also host the museum’s first public lectures, education programs, film screenings, and donor events.

Commercial real estate advisory firm Newmark Grubb Knight Frank is working with the Museum of Science Fiction to identify an ideal site for the preview museum, with a focus on securing a highly visible location accessible to the 50,000 visitors who come to Washington, DC each day.

“We’re excited about the opportunity to work with the Museum of Science Fiction, since this project has the potential to become another powerful magnet in the District for tourists and residents alike,” said Scott Johnston, principal at Newmark Grubb Knight Frank. “A well-chosen temporary space for the museum will go a long way toward helping the final, full-scale facility become a reality.”

Virginia-based museum design and construction firm Color-Ad is already working on concepts for the preview museum, which is planned to open in late 2014.

“We believe this is a great opportunity for us to work together on the preview museum, through the design and fabrication of the permanent exhibition and then a continued partnership as the museum grows and evolves,” said Glen Zook, senior project manager at Color-Ad. The firm has built exhibits for the museum at George Washington’s Mount Vernon, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, and the White House Visitors Office, among many other projects.

“The preview museum is designed to give people a sneak peek of what’s coming. It will allow us to collect visitor opinions and validate our planning activities and design assumptions to make sure we ‘get it right’ when the full-scale museum is built,” Viggiano said. “The preview museum will also allow us to begin our programming with evening lectures and film screenings and also coalesce support for the concept from fans all over the world.”

The Museum Vision

Once fully realized, the Museum of Science Fiction will be the world’s first comprehensive science fiction museum to cover the history of the genre across the arts and provide a narrative on its relationship to the real world. The museum’s mission is to be a center of gravity where art and science are powered by

imagination. It is through this intersection that the museum will reach visitors both young and old. The museum will also host educational programs that encourage and inspire students to pursue careers in science, technology, engineering, the arts, and mathematics.

“Many franchises have contributed to and influenced science fiction whether in film, television, comics, or even radio,” Viggiano said. “In telling the story of science fiction, our galleries will certainly include works from those franchises and commentaries on their influence on the genre and society. The connection of science fiction and franchises is a fascinating one that we may also explore in our programming. Certainly franchises like *Alien*, *The Twilight Zone*, *The Matrix*, *Doctor Who*, *Star Wars*, *Star Trek*, *Back to the Future*, *Battlestar Galactica*, *Stargate*, and *Dune* are a few that we think are important to mention—but there are many, many more.”

Celebrating Fiction and Fact Through Education

The Museum of Science Fiction is committed to using science fiction as an educational tool to encourage interest in science, engineering, technology, math, art, history, literature, philosophy, and—ultimately—imagination. Organizers believe science fiction is rich with ideas that serve as a springboard for curiosity and learning, from understanding how warp drive might function to how cyborgs could affect people’s daily lives.

“The story of science fiction is very interesting,” Viggiano said. “We’re looking to explain how it began, how it has evolved, and how it influences us. While other museums and exhibitions have highlighted certain aspects of science fiction, our museum will look at it from all angles: its themes, contributors, artifacts, and messages. We hope the Museum of Science Fiction will become a comprehensive resource for learning more about the genre.”

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For a full press packet on the museum’s vision, renderings of the preview museum, and other information, visit museumofsciencefiction.org/presspacket.

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