

KITTLEMAN

The First Source for Nonprofit Leaders SINCE 1963



Position Guide

President and CEO

<http://www.exploration.org/>





POSITION: President and CEO
REPORTS TO: Board of Trustees and Sedgwick County
LOCATION: Wichita, Kansas

VISION STATEMENT

Our focus is STEM education to feed the workforce pipeline. STEM learning begins with the youngest preschooler and onward through elementary school. We are here to get that spark ignited in these young learners.

MISSION

Inspiring a deeper interest in science through creative and fun experiences for people of all ages.

HISTORY

The idea of creating a new, private, not-for-profit institution out of the Children's Museum and the OMNISPHERE had been on the minds of community leaders for years. This vision led to a City of Wichita planning study in 1989. In 1994, a new Board of Trustees and a team of planning professionals began to lay the foundation for Exploration Place. Community input and involvement was, and would continue to be, an essential component of the development of this state's premier science center.

The Strategic Master Plan was completed in 1994 and, along with the architectural schematic design, was approved by the Board of Trustees in 1995. Internationally acclaimed architect Moshe Safdie of Boston designed the building and park. Construction began in May 1997 and exhibit construction documents were completed and fabrication begun in November 1998. With installation of exhibits in the fall of 1999, Exploration Place opened April 1, 2000.



This \$62 million project was funded through a public/private partnership. Community support was also received from area organizations, schools, universities, corporations and youth groups.

As Kansas's premier science center, Exploration Place is a mission-driven private 501(c)(3) not-for-profit institution governed by a self-perpetuating Board of Trustees. Through a partnership with Sedgwick County, Exploration Place currently receives support and is recognized as the Sedgwick County Science and Discovery Center. Exploration Place is also supported by admissions,

memberships and voluntary contributions from the public, area businesses and foundations.

ABOUT EXPLORATION PLACE

Located in Wichita, Kansas, and situated on twenty acres along the banks of the Arkansas River, Exploration Place offers award-winning exhibits, STEM educational experiences for all ages – from preschool to adult, creative events (rentals and fundraisers) and many supportive programs for home schooling families. The museum's permanent exhibits include: Where Kids Rule, Explore Kansas, CreatorSpace, Big Mouth, and the award-winning Design Build Fly. Exploration Place is deeply committed to all their exhibits being STEM based and inspiring a deeper interest in science through creative and fun experiences for people of all ages.



In addition to the permanent exhibits, the museum has also engaged several traveling exhibits, including T. Rex Named Sue, Titanic: The Artifact Exhibition, CSI: The Experience, and Star Wars®: Where Science Meets Imagination. Currently, the museum is featuring Wild Weather, Sun, Earth and Universe, and The Science of Ripley's Believe It or Not®.

The campus includes a festival plaza and a picnic grove that can be rented for events or parties. The Museum also houses the largest dome theater in Kansas with a 60-foot high, 360-degree screen.

Exploration Place is a premier STEM education leader in Kansas of programming for school-age children. Exploration Place serves 88,000 students through its organized education programs each year. The museum works in partnership with the school districts in Sedgwick and Sumner Counties primarily but has recently extended its reach around the state. Additionally, the museum welcomes over 1,000 children for summer camps.

The museum has over 5,200 members and welcomes over 300,000 people a year, 10,000 of which are at-risk youth. The museum employs 40 full-time staff but flexes up to 80 in the summer with additional camp staff. In addition, numerous volunteers contribute many hours of service to the museum. The museum operates on a \$6 million annual budget and is governed by a 28-member Board of Trustees.

THE OPPORTUNITY

Over the past decade, Exploration Place has emerged as the largest children's museum and a sought-after destination in the state of Kansas. The leadership of the organization has worked tirelessly to meet the community's needs and be true to their mission focus on STEM education which has been marked by strong achievement across the organization in many areas including excellent exhibits, robust fundraising, solid financials, and deep community partnerships.

Over the next several years, the President & CEO of Exploration Place will have the opportunity to build upon the very solid foundation of the museum. The opportunity to be transformative and take the organization to the next level is fully supported by the Board and the County. Growth of the programming, physical expansion on the footprint of the

campus, and leveraging the excellent reputation of the museum are just a few of the strategic objectives.

The CEO will have the opportunity to work with and further develop a strong community Board and committed donors to outline a vision for the museum that is respectful of its past and founding principles while also recognizing the trends and needs of children and students in the future. This will include seeking out new resources in the community, creating new partnerships and developing the core leadership within the museum to achieve ambitious goals.

Exploration Place is at a great time in its history. Having achieved wonderful success while managing through past challenges, the institution is poised to step forward into the future and expand upon all of its excellent accomplishments.

POSITION SUMMARY

The President & CEO has overall responsibility for providing creative innovative leadership, programmatic vision, and overseeing all aspects of the operation including exhibits, marketing, education, administration, fundraising, visitor services, business enterprises, fiscal management and community relationships. S/he will support the work of the Board of Trustees and will collaborate with the Sedgwick County government. The CEO serves as the steward for the building which is an architectural icon.

This leader is expected to communicate a vision and inspire motivation; engage with others (direct reports and peers) in a team process to solve problems; work to find a win/win resolution of differences; possess the management savvy to meet situational requirements; and provide leadership and direction to the senior staff. The CEO will demonstrate the ability to make well-informed, data-driven decisions and encourage input from a variety of stakeholders.

S/he maintains overall responsibility for delivering a quality visitor experience that provides interactive and innovative math, science, and art exhibits and educational programs that are financially sustainable through marketing and fundraising initiatives. The President & CEO is also responsible for sound business and financial practices.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

We seek a creative and visionary leader who demonstrates a passion for education and life-long learning. The ideal candidate is a proven leader with multiple aptitudes who understands the impact of interactive, informal learning environments, which may include children's museums and science centers. S/he has extensive experience and success leading high-performing teams that deliver financially sustainable results.

As the key spokesperson for Exploration Place, the President & CEO will be an enthusiastic, passionate, and outgoing individual who will serve as an ambassador for the museum. S/he will be willing to engrain him/herself into the fabric of the community and seek partnership with board members, donors, elected officials, corporate executives and other supporters. The ideal candidate will show evidence of successful fundraising leadership that includes the acquisition of major gifts and grants from foundations, corporations, individuals, and the public sector at the local, state, and national level. Experience working in public/private partnerships with a high level of community involvement and impact is beneficial.

This individual will be both leader and coach – one who understands effective design and implementation of staff management and organizational structures. S/he will have experience in hiring, coaching, collaborating, delegating, problem solving, and goal setting within a multidisciplinary staff. The successful candidate will be a good listener, someone who invites input before acting decisively. S/he will enjoy working in a collaborative environment thereby demonstrating the ability to successfully manage people and operations while empowering subordinates and delegating to, motivating, and mentoring the work force. A strong desire to build and support volunteer resources is highly valued.

The preferred candidate will demonstrate museum experience with evidence of advancement to high levels of responsibility and leadership. An undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university is required. An advanced degree is preferred. Demonstration of continuing professional education and/or accreditation in a professional field would be highly desirable.

To apply, please send a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC to <http://ww2.kittlemansearch.com/Jobs>.

For more information about Exploration Place, please visit www.exploration.org.

ABOUT WICHITA

As the largest city in Kansas, Wichita boasts more than 600,000 residents throughout the metropolitan area. Located on the Arkansas River, Wichita began as a trading post on the Chisholm Trail in the 1860s and became a destination for cattle drives from Texas to the Kansas railroads earning it the nickname Cowtown.

Culture abounds in the city where residents and visitors alike enjoy the Wichita Art Museum, blossoming urban public art displays, Botanica Wichita, the Mid American All-Indian Center and more. Since 1972, the Wichita Riverfest has welcomed more than 370,000 annual patrons to enjoy musical entertainment, sporting events, traveling exhibits, fireworks and more.



McCConnell Air Force Base.

The discovery of oil in the 1900s sparked a business boom in Wichita. This strong entrepreneurial spirit exists today. Known as the “Air Capital of the World,” Wichita has a rich tradition of aircraft manufacturing and remains the headquarters of Spirit AeroSystems. Other prominent local employers include Learjet, Airbus, Koch Industries, Coleman Company and Cargill. Food favorites Pizza Hut and White Castle are among others founded here. The city is also home to

Additional information about Wichita and citations for this summary may be found at:
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wichita,_Kansas
<https://www.whereverimayroamblog.com/9-reasons-to-visit-wichita-kansas/>