



CASE FOR SUPPORT

In the nearly two decades since we opened our doors as Baltimore's Children's Museum, close to five million guests have visited Port Discovery. Looking to the future, it's now time for some changes. The new Port Discovery will reflect our commitment to offer the children of our City and region the highest quality exhibits, events, and programs. We will encourage children to participate in the Port Discovery experience via an array of entertaining and educational activities – both within the Museum and beyond our walls. It's time to open our doors wider than ever to expand outreach, forge new partnerships, and ensure that our world of learning is readily accessible to all children and families.

Why We Need You

Today, Port Discovery's home in the historic Fish Market Building is a signature feature of the Baltimore landscape. But, for quite some time, it has been showing its age. Not just to those passing by, but inside as well. Since our opening in 1998, significant changes in education, technology, and public expectations have emerged. Our goal is to bring Port Discovery into the 21st Century, ensuring a modern, accessible, and safe environment for children and adults alike.

To fund our renovations, we need to raise \$15 million in philanthropic support. There are a number of special naming opportunities to honor or memorialize family or friends. The major elements of the renovations are:

- Installation of five new innovative core exhibits and improvements to existing core exhibits.
- Structural enhancements to introduce a new guest experience that will better serve both families and school groups, and ensure ADA compliance and safety.
- Development of new and enhanced art programs for the Museum.
- Restoration and preservation of Port Discovery's historic facility.

In addition, our plan for the future includes:

- Growing our endowment to help sustain our programs & services.
- Increasing access for more children and families.
- Addressing on-going maintenance needs of the Museum.

Timetable

This campaign is designed as a highly-focused initiative with a timetable and plan that will allow the Museum to remain open even as work on the project proceeds.

- By year-end 2018 – Secure sufficient gifts & pledges to begin the 1st round of renovations.
- By year-end 2019 – Conclude our capital campaign.
- By year-end 2020 – Complete all interior renovations at Port Discovery.

Our Plan for the Future

Looking to the future and our plan's top priorities, we are focusing on new programs and services that align with the capital improvements to be completed over the next couple of years. For example, we are abundantly aware that there are many financially challenged families with children who do not have the resources to include visits to Port Discovery in their budget. We need to create ways to increase opportunities for these families and children to access the Port Discovery experience. We want to be sure that students in Baltimore's Title I schools have a way for Port Discovery to be a part of their lives.

We anticipate that the capital improvements we envision will bring to life new and exciting ways for children to interact with a new generation of exhibits. Beyond an amazing Port-oriented exhibit and new climber on the first floor, we are re-imagining the wonders that will be available for children on the second and third floors of the museum as well as in the Atrium, the 10,000 sq. foot glass building adjacent to the historic Fish Market building. We also hope to restore the Fish Market building's exterior, including the windows, brick, terra cotta and glass walls.

Why Now?

It's the right time to take this step. "Play is the work of childhood" (Jean Piaget) and we see everyday examples of how the power of play transforms the lives of children:

- The confidence building experience of mastering a three-story web of paths & obstacles.
- The opportunity to make new friends while creating one-of-a-kind works of art.
- Unlocking a few mysteries of geometry and physics while kicking a soccer ball or exploring the DNA of a strawberry.

At Port Discovery, children discover ways to learn they never before imagined. But we're not reaching all the children who need the Port Discovery experience. Our potential to transform more children's lives simply exceeds our capacity to do so. It has never been more important for the children of Baltimore and Maryland to have access to our world-class children's museum.

Please Join Us

This campaign comes at a time when Baltimore is facing serious issues and concerns about its future. The situation is beyond the reach of any one solution or institution's influence. We have an opportunity to be a change-driver within the community. Port Discovery is respected for our holistic approach to learning. This campaign offers an optimal forum to focus donors, volunteers, and community leaders on ways we can create uniquely effective learning environments.

Nobel Laureate James Heckman is an expert in economics and early childhood development. His research has proven that a nation's economic health rests on the opportunities we provide our children from birth. His equation is simple: *"Investing in early childhood development builds the human capital we need for economic success."* Our plans reflect this principle. We aim for long-term benefits for our community as a whole that will last for generations.

We invite you to join with others and be a part of Baltimore's future, one truly in the hands of our children. An investment in this campaign is an investment in our children. Together, we can create a Port Discovery that will benefit the next generations who will live, work, play, and raise their families in our community.

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