

PROPOSAL NARRATIVE

Submitted by the [Name of Organization], [Date]

STATEMENT OF NEED

With over 800,000 jobs lost since 2001 and state revenue down by 80%,¹ experts believe that Michigan's best hope for a brighter future is to reinvent itself as a key player in the new knowledge-based economy.²

Research reveals that prosperous states all have highly-concentrated knowledge, creativity, and entrepreneurship, and that Michigan's economic turn-around ultimately depends on our ability to incubate educated, skilled, and innovative talent.³

In the context of this year's \$382 million reduction in state school aid,⁴ Michigan's museums are playing an increasingly crucial role in educating children—the leaders of tomorrow's economy. Exhibits, multimedia presentations, and cultural events facilitate active learning and critical thinking; complement and reinforce K-12 material; and promote cultural competence. This is especially important in Grand Rapids, a city experts believe will help "drive" Michigan's transformation.⁵

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

[Name of Organization] respectfully requests \$XX,000 in operational support to fund 2011 children's programs.

Our extensive collection of XXX,000 artifacts offers numerous opportunities for experiential learning for visitors of all ages. Special exhibits like [Name of Exhibit] and ongoing planetarium programs reinforce biology, astronomy and other science content children are learning in the classroom. Your support will help underwrite the following programs:

- **[Program Descriptions]**

SIGNIFICANCE

Accomplishments

In 200X, the [Name of Organization] adopted a new organizational structure, strategic plan, and eco-friendly brand. We are extremely encouraged by the progress we have made over the past year towards sustainable energy, community support, and new programming.

¹ Scorson, Eric, and David Zin. "The Michigan Economy and State Revenue: A 10-Year History."

² Michigan Future, Inc. "Michigan's Transition to a Knowledge-Based Economy: Third Annual Progress Report."

³ Ibid.

⁴ Center for Public Education. "Examples of State and District Funding Cuts."

⁵ Op. cit., Michigan Future, Inc.

We introduced expanded evening hours and new pricing packages to make visiting accessible and affordable for working families. As a core part of our new brand, “green” projects are vital to our sustainability. Specific recent program highlights include:

- Students learned to incorporate resource responsibility into their daily lives during the [Name of Program] summer camp. This special summer academy is an incubator for responsible resource use, and incorporates historical, ethnographic, economic, and scientific models of instruction.
- The popular [Name of Event] Festival annually attracts approximately X,000 diverse visitors for a free celebration co-hosted by musicians, artisans, educators, storytellers, vendors, and chefs from nearly X0 ethnic and cultural organizations.
- The single best-attended program was last [Name of Exhibit], a unique collaboration that [Name of Foundation] helped fund. On opening night, X,XXX visitors toured our [Location] facility—twice the number we originally anticipated. This collaborative event featured original artwork by XXX artists from [Number] universities and UICA’s ArtWorks program. The public’s response to this multimedia presentation has been extremely heartening as we continue our discussions on how best to steward and utilize this iconic space.
- During ArtPrize, we served nearly XXX,000 visitors—nearly three times the number we originally anticipated!—who toured our flagship facility over three weeks. Countless more came out to see [Name of Artist]’s [*Name of Sculpture*], the 13-foot outdoor sculpture that won 4th place in this incredible competition.

DELIVERY

Marketing and promotion

Over the past year, [Name of Organization] increased its use of social media marketing through Facebook, Twitter, and eBlasts. The grant helped support the salary of the communications specialist who implemented these initiatives.

At the time of this writing, X,XXX have connected with us through Facebook. Over X,X00 individuals and groups “follow” us on Twitter, and we follow X,XXX users. Many of the [Name of Organization’s] more than X,000 members have signed up to receive e-communications, which include newsletters and e-Blasts. The public can visit our behind-the-scenes look at programs and exhibits through our blog and view over 100 photos on our Flickr page.

We believe these new marketing strategies have supported an overall increase in attendance; increased our visibility to “Millennials”, homeschoolers, and other special interest groups; and, over time, will help us retain these new audiences by providing meaningful opportunities for online engagement.

MANAGEMENT

Personnel

The [Name of Organization] currently employs X0 full time and XX0 part time staff, and engages another X00 interns and volunteers. Key staff involved in delivering the children's programs to be funded by this grant, include:

- **[Staff Name, Title]:** [Short bio]
- **[Staff Name, Title]:** [Short bio]
- **[Staff Name, Title]:** [Short bio]

Community engagement

The community's response to new strategic initiatives has been extremely enthusiastic. Ticketed admissions rose to XXX,XXX in FY2009—an impressive increase of XX%! Membership is currently at all-time high of X,XXX, and our last fiscal year ended with record attendance. More than XXX,000 people visited the Museum—nearly double the prior year's attendance.

Since [Date], we have served more than X,000,000 customers, at [Number] sites. Statistically, XX% come from Michigan's 83 counties, while the remaining X% come from out of state. We serve a wide demographic and a range of life-long learners.