



Museum of Science Fiction  
Preview Museum Exhibit Design Document

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The Museum of Science Fiction is a US-based nonprofit organization established in 2013. The organization is led by an Executive Director and a Board of Advisors, and it is staffed by a corps of 119 volunteers, all unified by a shared vision to build a museum and inspire visitors to embrace the genre. The Museum of Science Fiction will be the world's first comprehensive science fiction museum, covering the history of the genre across the arts and providing a narrative on its relationship to the real world.

### **Mission Statement**

Education is central to the Museum's mission. Science fiction presents an ideal device for sparking interest and spurring proficiency in STEM academic areas (science, technology, engineering, and math). However, Museum activities will go beyond STEM and include a broader focus to include the arts.

The mission of the Museum of Science Fiction is to present the story of science fiction, which at its foundation is the story of humanity: who we were, who we are, and who we dream to be. This story will be presented through displays, interactivity, and programs in ways that excite, educate, entertain, and create a new generation of dreamers. The Museum will create a center of gravity where art and science are powered by imagination.

### **Preview Museum Objectives**

As a first step in fulfilling the Museum's mission, a preview museum will be built where exhibition concepts and interactive technologies can be tested and evaluated.

The purpose of the preview museum is to give visitors a place to provide feedback on the Museum's exhibit designs and programming. Visitor involvement early in the development process will help create a better and more effective museum experience. Collecting visitor input at an early stage will allow increased flexibility to improve the visitor experience in the full-scale facility – matching or exceeding expectations.

The preview museum is intended to give visitors an advanced look at what's coming. The preview museum will also allow the Museum to begin programming activities with evening lectures and film screenings.

Experimenting with wireless, interactive exhibits can also be used as educational tools with classroom materials that teachers can integrate into their daily lesson plans. The preview museum will also show donors and corporate sponsors how they might participate in specific areas. Above all, it is essential that visitors have fun—and learn a few things along the way.

Most importantly, the preview museum will create a center of gravity where art and science are powered by imagination.

**Center of Gravity** The preview museum will be a place for people to come together around a shared interest in science fiction. Not only will people be able to visit the museum to learn about science fiction through artifacts, display objects, and archives, but they will also be able to attend and host special events.

**Art** The preview museum will be a repository of science fiction depictions throughout the ages, covering centuries of literature, paintings, sculpture, scale models, film, architecture, and music.

**Science** The preview museum will show the connections between science fiction and science fact, demonstrating how art can play a role in inspiring scientific investigations and how scientific discovery can inspire art.

**Imagination** The preview museum will be a place to celebrate the unique human characteristic of conceiving stories, ideas, and solutions to problems.

The Preview Museum must accomplish the following objectives:

1. Prove its value proposition in the museum marketplace
2. Establish a physical presence
3. Solicit funding from potential donors and corporate sponsors
4. Create a social hub for the science fiction to community to celebrate the genre
5. Establish an institution which can become a comprehensive source of science fiction knowledge
6. Showcase world-class content, design, technology, and programming
7. Demonstrate the educational potential of a science fiction museum
8. Gain visitor experience insight to inform planning for the full-scale museum
9. Generate excitement, media interest, and increase web traffic
10. Test innovative, new technologies
11. Build and strengthen key progressive partnerships

## **Program / Project Requirements**

The 3,000 to 4,000 square foot preview museum will be initially located in Washington DC in a yet to be determined location, near a transportation hub. It will be relocated to another city after four years. It will contain a large 3,000 square foot exhibition space. The exhibits within that exhibition space will be rotated periodically over the four-year life of the preview museum. The exhibits will also be reconfigurable to make the space ready for special events.

The exhibits will interpret science fiction through four themes. The themes will explore science fiction's influence on society and will allow visitors to walk away with a better understanding of the impact science fiction has on our daily lives. The themes are not distinct and ideas may flow from one theme to another. The four themes are:

**Speculation** Science fiction is speculation. By simply asking “what if?” science fiction has allowed humanity to expand the limits of imagination and explore endless possibilities. Science fiction transports us to other worlds, lets us visit different dimensions, allows us to travel through time, and even to experience alternate realities. Along the way, science fiction encourages us to reflect on our own society by exploring social issues, from imperialism and colonialism to more sensitive racial issues.

**Exploration** Science fiction is a tool for exploring not only the universe, but humanity as well. It reflects our curiosity and the desire to expand boundaries, to colonize new frontiers, both on Earth and beyond. But, science fiction also allows humanity to look inward by holding a mirror to society and exploring what makes us human.

**Innovation** Science fiction has led to real world innovation. Real-world innovation in turn drives the creative thinking that fuels science fiction.

**Inspiration** Science fiction uses the extraordinary to inspire people to dream and envision a better world. Many of history's most influential scientists were inspired by science fiction to make the world a better place.

The four-concept framework will not appear in any labels or signage – it is simply intended to guide exhibit development and interpretation.

### **Exhibit Objectives**

1. Exhibits must be movable to create open space for large events
2. Exhibits must tell compelling stories
3. Some exhibits must contain interactive and immersive components
4. Exhibits must extend across a broad subject range, covering eras, media, and subgenres
5. Exhibits must allow the Museum's education department opportunities to develop related classroom-ready educational tools to aid STEAM education
6. Exhibits must use ambitious technology that can be updated as needed
7. Exhibits must be striking, and employ on-brand design
8. Exhibits must extend the visitor experience to the digital realm and establish a visitor pull-through strategy to the robust website
9. Exhibits must integrate the Museum into the community

### **Target Audiences**

1. Future financial donors
2. Science fiction fan communities
3. Tourists
4. Future full-scale museum visitors
5. Parents
6. Educators
7. Future artifact donors
8. Partners



**Visitor Segments**

<p><b>Fans</b></p>	<p>This visitor segment includes people of all generations that love science fiction as presented in television, film, literature, video games, art, music, and comics. Fans seek out science fiction as consumers for entertainment and intellectual value. The Preview Museum artifacts and display objects should appeal to this segment. The Museum may include artifacts and display objects from the literary works of Asimov, Clarke, Shelley. The older generation potentially needs to be presented with a different perspective or at least a deep analysis on science fiction that they have never seen in a museum. This older generation may be looking for possible self-validation of their love and knowledge of their favorite genre. One caution: this segment consists of both the older and younger generations. The younger generation may need more exposure to science fiction history.</p>
<p><b>Casual Fans</b></p>	<p>This segment can also be labeled, "Pop Culture" fans because of their enthusiasm for science fiction. This segment usually follows the latest popular or mainstream science movies or television shows. They casually seek out science fiction as entertainment. For example, they have probably seen the film, <i>Alien</i> but would not remember the name of the ship "Nostromo." This segment will appreciate a deeper exposure to science fiction. They would most likely be open to expanding their appreciation for science fiction and this aspect should be tested and monitored in the Preview Museum.</p>
<p><b>Enrichment Parents</b></p>	<p>These parents want to enrich their children's life experiences with subjects that they see as fun, educational, and intellectual. These parents have likely watched science fiction entertainment with their children and would probably like to be presented with an intellectual perspective on science fiction. The Preview Museum should enable these parents to share with their children at a more intellectual / educational experience on science fiction.</p>
<p><b>Children (ages 4-14)</b></p>	<p>With museums, most children will want excitement but are receptive to learning, especially if learning is fun. Science fiction is a perfect vehicle for them as they can relate learning to the science fiction they see in their everyday "entertainment universe."</p>
<p><b>Non Fans</b>  The most critical visitor segment</p>	<p>These visitors might say they are uninterested, or do not like science fiction. This visitor segment must be used as a benchmark to create a positive experience. The Preview Museum must be designed with the non-fan segment in mind, and determine the most effective way to make this group feel welcome and comfortable in a space devoted to science fiction.</p>

### **Intended Project Outcomes and Measures of Success**

When the Preview Museum is ready to open, the exhibits are expected to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Support fundraising goals
2. Establish the Museum as an authentic knowledge source in the science fiction community
3. Establish Museum as a primary destination for visitors and tourists
4. Collect visitor experience data to inform full-size museum planning
5. Position the space as an attractive events venue

The success of each exhibit will be measured by the following visitor responses:

1. "This is a viable museum concept; I am compelled to contribute to the initiative."
2. "Science fiction is a deep and integral part of our culture."
3. "I can use these resources to help teach STEM concepts."
4. "I was inspired by science fiction to enter a STEM field."
5. "I want to visit the full-scale museum."
6. "I want to tell my friends and family about the Museum of Science Fiction."
7. "I want to learn more about science and science fiction."
8. "I am inspired."

### **Project Scope**

The exhibit designer will develop conceptual designs of the exhibit experience for the Museum of Science Fiction's Preview Museum, including exhibits and conceptual graphics. Exhibit designs may also include audio-visual specifications, sound design, lighting specifications, visitor flow, signage, iconography, and wifi-enabled interactive components.

### **SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS**

The designer will submit a conceptual design package, consisting of the following:

1. Schematic floor plan
2. Schematic elevations
3. Details as necessary to illustrate concepts
4. Exhibit renderings, three-dimensional perspectives
5. Plans and elevations shall be submitted as a package; image files should be in JPEG format 300 dpi. The total package size must not exceed 15 MB and must include a pre-assigned registration number in all file names.

### **Evaluation Criteria**

Submissions will be judged by a jury on creativity and adherence to program requirements.

### **Schedule and Registration**

The registration deadline is Friday, October 31, 2014 at 5pm EST.

The submission will be due on Sunday, November 30, 2014 at 5:00pm EST.

Design package submissions should be uploaded to this location:

[http://mathkin.com/MoSf/upload\\_entry.htm](http://mathkin.com/MoSf/upload_entry.htm)

Winners will be announced on or about Monday, December 15, 2014

Email [greg.viggiano@museumofsciencefiction.org](mailto:greg.viggiano@museumofsciencefiction.org) to receive a registration number.

### **Prizes and Recognition**

Selected designs will be awarded the following prizes: overall winner, top ten, people's choice, selected categories (to be determined), and executive director's award.

### **Contact**

Visit the Museum of Science Fiction website for updates at [www.museumofsciencefiction.org](http://www.museumofsciencefiction.org)

Submit questions to [greg.viggiano@museumofsciencefiction.org](mailto:greg.viggiano@museumofsciencefiction.org)

Answers to commonly submitted questions will be displayed here:

[www.museumofsciencefiction.org/exhibitcompetition](http://www.museumofsciencefiction.org/exhibitcompetition)

## APPENDICES

## Appendix A: Visitor Experience Suggestions and Examples

1. Entry and approach into building
  - a. Audio/visual components
  - b. Holographic greeting
  - c. Iconic door noises
  
2. Large suspended models
  - a. Star Trek
  - b. Star Wars
  - c. Battlestar Galactica
  - d. 2001: A Space Odyssey
  
3. Museum computer and mobile app functionality
  - a. Central computer that can control all wifi-enabled objects
  - b. Central computer that will carry out mobile app commands
  - c. Central computer that will interact with visitor wireless devices
  
4. LED TV wall – media wall
  - a. Very large wall space covered by multiple HD LED screens
  - b. Display of announcements and special messages as well as content from all media types
  
5. Displays / clear displays (ie: Minority Report) throughout the Museum
  - a. iPads and MS Surface touch screens vs. wall text or placards
  - b. Large, freestanding, transparent LCD displays
  
6. Control methods
  - a. Mobile app
  - b. Gesture controls
  - c. Touch control
  
7. Tesla coils
  - a. Large coils, ie. for use with Frankenstein’s creature
  - b. Smaller coils for use with musical performances/demonstrations

## Appendix B: Proposed Exhibit Checklist

Each of the exhibits will be evaluated by a checklist to determine the exhibit's effectiveness. Please note that each exhibit may not need to fulfill or answer each point on the checklist. The checklist is intended to be a method to achieve a degree of balance and comprehensiveness within both the preview and later full-scale museum. Further, the Preview Museum may not perfectly mirror the full-scale museum in its scope and reach.

1. An anchor piece, a "must see" object that appeals to the largest possible visitor population.
2. The exhibition space addresses a representative example of the seven galleries as described in the 2013 Prospectus.
  - a. Creators
  - b. Other Worlds
  - c. Vehicles
  - d. Computers and Robots
  - e. Time Travel
  - f. Aliens, Creatures, and Altered Life
  - g. Technology
3. There are not too many artifacts from the same sub-genre or era.
4. There are sufficient interactive elements in the gallery that are compatible with the museum's mobile app.
5. Educational elements are present in 40% of the exhibits and reach at least two age groups / visitor segments.
6. There is balance across:
  - a. Positive versus negative (ie: Dystopian versus Utopian)
  - b. International versus US-based origin
  - c. Vintage versus new
  - d. Visitor segments
  - e. Gender focus
  - f. Media (ie: film, television, music, literature, art, video games, comics)
  - g. Object types (ie: large, small, costumes, weapons, models, props, flat objects, costumes, etc.)
  - h. Technologies (clear screens, tesla coils, holograms)
  - i. Large floor to ceiling LED screen
  - j. Interactive display objects linked via wifi to the Museum's mobile app
  - k. Clarke's third law

## Appendix C: Gallery Content Matrix Example

This is a draft version of a potential gallery content matrix. This matrix will be revised to reflect the interpretative framework and other requirements that will become known after site identification and selection.

Gallery or theme	Exhibit	Source	Place of Origin	Display Object(s) Artifacts	Visitor Segment	Gender Balance	Media	Time Period
Creators / Exploration	Clarke	Literature Film Music	British	2001 Discovery Pod / full size	Older	Even	Book Film clips	Modern
Time Travel	Doctor Who	TV	British	TARDIS display object	Broad	Even	Film clips Art	Chrono evolution
Aliens, Creatures Altered Life	Alien	Film	British American	Alien display object	Broad	Male	Film clips Art	Modern
Other Worlds	Dune	Literature Film	American	Arrakis Stillsuit costumes	Older	Even	Film clips Art	Modern
Vehicles	Star Trek	TV	American	TOS Enterprise or Enterprise-E model	Broad	Even	Film clips Digital art	Chrono evolution
Technology / Speculation	Iron Man	Comics	American	Iron Man display object	Broad	Even	Film clips	Chrono evolution
Computers Robots	Star Wars	Film	American	R2-D2 and C-3PO	Broad	Even	Film clips Digital art	Modern

## Appendix D: Draft Preview Museum Narrative

Science fiction allows humanity to hold up mirrors to our own fallibilities and flaws, exposing profound possibilities. The museum's story is intended for a broad audience by identifying the real-world applications of ideas explored by science fiction. It provides flexibility to explore multiple mediums, eras and subthemes within the overall genre through a variety of exhibits containing iconic artifacts and interactive displays. The Museum of Science Fiction: Preview Museum will inform and define connections between art and life; and, because of historical resonance, the reverberant connections between life and art.

The following items provide a partial list of the preview museum highlights:

**Exhibits:** Rotating exhibits will inform and enlighten visitors, attracting new visitors and enticing past visitors to return.

**Change:** Events from our past inspire new ideas in an endless loop of building on past dreams and presenting future possibilities; drawing connections between what was once speculation and now has become part of our everyday lives.

**Exploration:** Visitors will be invited to explore the dynamics and dimensions of other worlds; from a bedroom window's backyard view, to standing on the edge of the big bang and straining against the blackness to see what's beyond.

**Inspiration:** The museum will inspire young and old alike to put aside set notions of the possible and imagine the impossible.

**Education:** Visitors and students will have the opportunity to enhance their education and understanding of science fiction through educational events with innovative lesson plans and presentations.

**Community:** The museum will be a gathering place for the public to attend lectures and seminars, film festivals, and public events such as the announcement of a new NASA discovery or publication of a major work of science fiction.

**Preview:** Most importantly, the preview museum will give visitors a sense of what the full-scale museum will have to offer through artist's renderings and video presentations.