

LEADERSHIP PROFILE



Children's Museum
of Atlanta

Executive Director Atlanta, GA

“To change the world by sparking every child’s imagination, sense of discovery and learning through the power of play.”

– Children’s Museum of Atlanta mission statement

THE OPPORTUNITY



As the only venue of its kind in the Southeast the Children’s Museum of Atlanta strives to spark every child’s imagination, sense of discovery and learning through the power of play. Over its more than 30-year history, the Museum has established itself as the city’s foremost interactive hub for creativity and exploration for young children.

The organization is at an important inflection point and is navigating both the transition of its long-serving Executive Director and continuing its successful efforts to manage revenue and programs in response to the pandemic. To lead these efforts, the Museum seeks a bold, innovative and collaborative leader who can both imagine and deliver a vibrant future for the organization. This leader will build on the Museum’s reputation as a unique epicenter of hands-on, informal learning and a leader in creatively engaging children via tactile and three-dimensional exhibits and spaces.

Known as much for its strong organizational culture and committed staff as the excellence of its programming and exhibits, the Museum is a special place, and its next leader will inherit a stable and creative organization and be charged with leading

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the Museum to even greater levels of innovation, stability, reach and connection with the Greater Atlanta community.

Key priorities for the new Executive Director will include:

- Working with the board and staff to create a growing, sustainable, and financially successful business model to support the mission of the Museum
- Passionately advocating for the power of play and communicating clearly and persuasively their excitement about the future of the Museum
- Being an inspired leader that will engage broad support for the Museum and help the organization continue to attract committed and talented staff



THE ORGANIZATION

Founded in 1988 as a “museum without walls” and establishing its permanent home in Museum Tower adjacent to Centennial Olympic Park in 2003, the Children’s Museum of Atlanta has become Atlanta’s premier source of hands-on and exploratory learning for young children, a recognized authority on children’s informal learning, a committed advocate on behalf of children, and a signature element in Atlanta’s cultural landscape. Geared towards children ages 0-8, the 20,000 square-foot facility hosts more than 200,000 guests annually.

The Museum owns its space and underwent an \$8 million renovation in 2015 that included adding a 3000 square-foot, second floor mezzanine, a two-story climbing structure and several new exhibits. The Museum’s growth, development and reach is a current and future priority, and the next leader, staff, board and community will work together to plan for program and capital needs in the years ahead. While a new, larger facility is not imminent, the evolving facility needs of the Museum will be a part of the organizational agenda and future planning.

Exhibits, Programs and Community Outreach

Permanent exhibits are core to the Museum’s mission and programming and include [*Fundamentally Food*](#), [*Gateway to the World*](#), [*Leaping Into Learning*](#), [*Let Your Creativity Flow*](#), [*Step Up To Science*](#) and [*Tools For Solutions*](#).



Featured exhibits rotate and reside at the museum for a specific period of time. [**Rube Goldberg™: The World of Hilarious Invention**](#) is the current exhibit at the [Museum](#); future exhibits will include [**Storyland: A Trip Through Childhood Favorites™**](#), [**Wild Kratts®: Creature Power®!**](#), and [**PAW Patrol: Adventure Play**](#).

Programming for children includes [**Daily**](#) (interactive activities that include STE(A)M programs, literacy and Innovation Station for

design-thinking challenges all included in the admission), [**Cultural**](#) (events that feature local artists and performers), and [**Access and Inclusion**](#) (unique initiatives for children with disabilities or sensory processing disorders) programs.

[**Community Outreach**](#) initiatives are an essential component of the Museum's relationship with the region. Programs focus on literacy and nutrition, mobile pre-school experiences for young children, and initiatives that reduce or eliminate barriers to accessing the Museum due to limited financial resources.

Programs in partnership with educators include [**On-The-Go Activities**](#) (featuring both in-person and virtual formats), and [**Homeschool Days**](#), unique programs tailored to the specific needs of the home school community.

The museum also offers **curated virtual experiences** designed to reach audiences beyond the physical space. Initiatives include virtual workshops that are presented to schools, etc. focused on STEM, literacy, social-emotional learning and the arts.

The organization has a full-time staff of 50 and a 2022 annual budget of \$3.5 million. Revenues are a combination of earned (35%) and contributed (65%) income (representing a departure from a balance of 65% earned and 35% contributed pre-pandemic); contributed income is a product of two annual events (a gala, and a golf tournament), a bridge the future fundraising initiative developed during the pandemic, and foundation and individual support of approximately \$1.1 million annually. The organization is financially stable with a \$1.3 million endowment and a \$700k line of credit.

For more information about the Children's Museum of Atlanta, go to www.childrensmuseumatlanta.org.

THE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Executive Director is charged with overseeing all aspects of the organization. Combining a strong managerial skill set built on a foundation of relevant experience, an authentic desire to work collaboratively, and a passion for the power of exploration and play, the new leader will bring the multiple talents required to ensure that the Museum realizes its ambitious aspirations.



(click to play video)

More specifically, the Executive Director will:

- 1. Be a strategic, inspiring leader who will lead the Museum with purpose and an authentic passion for the power of highly engaging, immersive, hands-on learning.** The Executive Director will be a strong leader and strategist who will guide the vision of the Museum and move the organization forward with quiet confidence, gravitas, and palpable passion for the mission of the Museum. With grace, humility, and poise, the Executive Director will build on the unusually strong culture of the organization and its people. The new leader will embrace innovation, capitalize on opportunities to expand the diversity of the staff and board and will champion a culture of experimentation and inclusion with new approaches to broaden the Museum's connection to the Greater Atlanta community.
- 2. Be a humble servant leader that embraces the need for a strong organizational culture as a critical priority.** The Executive Director will be guided by the mission of the Museum and be approachable, respectful, authentic and a good listener with high emotional intelligence. They will be a person with integrity and someone people from all walks of life will naturally trust and want to work with. The Executive Director will be a proven developer of great talent and teams and a leader who is gifted at working through others and who will foster an environment of shared vision, values, high standards and alignment around mission. Further, the new leader will continue a tradition of inspired leadership and collaboration with the Museum's board of directors and build on a mature and successful model of governance.
- 3. Build relationships and grow both earned and contributed revenue.** The Executive Director will be a credible, engaging and trustworthy leader capable of developing and deepening relationships with Board members, civic leaders, donors and partners of all kinds. With capability and courage, the new leader will work to find ways to develop approaches to enhance financial performance and mission through program growth, excellence and long-term sustainability. Through creativity, collaboration, follow-through, and results, the Executive Director will enhance current relationships, develop new opportunities, and advance the Museum's financial sustainability through not only traditional means, but also through new ideas, creative strategies and well-considered approaches to cultivating support.

- 4. Advance a bold vision for the future of the Museum and help ensure that the organization thrives going forward.** The Executive Director will be a collaborative architect for the Museum's vision for the future and a creative thinker who embraces new things. They will work with the Board and staff to actualize the vision for the Museum in concert with the 2018-2023 strategic plan and in ways that ensure that the organization broadens its reach and connection with the Greater Atlanta community. The new leader will be deeply committed to the mission and success of the Museum and uncommonly good at communicating the vision. Additionally, the Executive Director will balance tradition and legacy and find ways to grow and advance the impact of the Museum while continuing to celebrate the unique elements of the organization that have contributed to its credibility and reputation.
- 5. Be the external face of the Museum and its most public champion.** The Executive Director will be the internal and external face of the Museum and its most public advocate. The new leader will be gifted at connecting with members of the business, civic, philanthropic, education and cultural communities and with all generations of current and prospective supporters. The new leader will enthusiastically share the joy of the work and the uniqueness of the Museum's exhibits, programs, culture and people.

THE CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate is a compelling leader with significant knowledge, passion, and demonstrated success in contexts relevant to leading the Museum. The leader will have a proven track record of leadership, working with a nonprofit brand, fundraising, cultivating relationships and program management in an organization of similar complexity. Personal characteristics include integrity, insightfulness, charisma, high emotional intelligence, and outstanding interpersonal and communication skills. The Executive Director will have an established history of supporting a talented operational team; the candidate will have successfully led large organizational initiatives and cultivated the funding necessary for these initiatives to become a reality.



Assets being sought in the new Executive Director include:

- Passion for the mission of the Children's Museum of Atlanta
- A strong sense of grit and resilience
- Experience and success with cultivating and growing a financially strong organization
- The ability to foster and lead an environment of innovation and experimentation
- Strong business acumen
- The ability to lead, inspire and mobilize people to accomplish important goals

- The cultural competence to be a senior leader in an organization that values and embraces diversity, equity and inclusion
- Success in scaling initiatives and growing programs
- A vision for how to increase the visibility and awareness of an organizational brand through traditional and digital media
- Superlative listening skills
- Experience with leading and working with a highly engaged board
- A strong commitment to the professional development of staff
- The ability to lead a strong organizational culture that is reflected in productive, positive relationships with Board and staff members, donors, and community partners
- Proven capability in strategy, planning and driving consensus
- The courage to lead and implement change and make key organizational decisions with confidence
- Success with STEM education and programming
- The ability to present and communicate clearly, persuasively and effectively to a broad array of audiences and stakeholders
- An authentic persona that inspires trust, invites collaboration and engenders an environment of teamwork



THE RELATIONSHIPS

The Executive Director will report to the Museum’s Board of Directors, supervise four direct reports and be responsible for a staff of fifty. Key relationships are outlined below:

Reports to	Children’s Museum of Atlanta Board of Directors
Direct reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Strategic Advancement and Marketing • Director of Finance and Human Resources • Director of Exhibits and Education • Director of Operations and Guest Experiences
Other key relationships including:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Museum staff • Local, regional, national and global leaders in the children’s museum community • Peers and colleagues in the local and regional cultural community • Current and potential donors and supporters of the Museum • The Advisory Board • Educators and leaders in the public and private school systems • Civic, foundation and philanthropic leadership

THE LOCATION

The Children's Museum of Atlanta is located in Centennial Olympic Park – an iconic and historic venue in the center of Atlanta - home to over 20,000 residents, 65,000 workers, and 6 million annual visitors. It is a key component of Atlanta's cultural landscape that includes the Woodruff Arts Center (composed of the award-winning High Museum of Art, Alliance Theatre, and Atlanta Symphony), Atlanta Botanical Gardens, and the Savannah College of Art & Design.

With over 6 million residents, Atlanta is the country's 9th largest metropolitan area. It is the commercial and cultural center of Georgia and the Southeastern United States. Some of the world's largest companies are headquartered in the city, including the Coca-Cola Company, UPS, Delta Airlines, and Home Depot. Atlanta is also the entertainment industry capital of the South hosting major record labels and movie production companies including Tyler Perry and Pinewood studios. It features a thriving spiritual community, award-winning restaurants and chefs, and recreation and entertainment offerings of every kind rivaling those of any city in North America.

For more information, please visit www.atlanta.net.



**For potential consideration or to suggest a prospect, please email
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