



## Museums for America

Sample Application MA-251711-OMS-22  
Project Category: Lifelong Learning

### Children's Discovery Museum

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$249,997
Amount of cost share:	\$296,163

The Children's Discovery Museum will expand its early childhood outreach program, Growing STEAM Potential through the Power of Play, to four new locations. In partnership with the Bloomington and Normal Libraries and the Illinois State University's Psychology Department, the museum will develop and implement high-impact, multi-interaction programs designed to engage students along with their families and teachers, including activities such as in-classroom lessons, field trips, family fun events at partner sites, and private family nights at the museum. The expanded Growing STEAM program will enhance and support formal school curricula with informal learning experiences; increase opportunities for positive STEAM experiences for at-risk youth; provide families with resources to reinforce their role as their child's first teacher; and provide teachers with professional development resources to empower them to continue teaching hands-on learning in four new locations.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the current Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

## Narrative

## I. Project Justification

**1. Advancing IMLS and Museums for America Goals:** The Children’s Discovery Museum (CDM) respectfully requests \$249,997 for a three-year project to expand its early childhood outreach program, Growing STEAM Potential through the Power of Play (Growing STEAM), to meet the changing needs of its community. The proposed project aligns with IMLS’s Lifelong Learning goals and objectives by empowering people of all ages and backgrounds through experiential and cross-disciplinary learning and discovery. Specifically, the project meets IMLS objectives by supporting family programs, early childhood programs, and in-school and out-of-school programs. During the three-year grant period, CDM will continue to provide Growing STEAM to children enrolled with Heartland Head Start and Scott Early Learning Center and IMLS grant funds will be utilized to expand the program to reach children enrolled with Milestones Early Learning Center, YWCA of McLean County’s Young Wonders Program, and both school districts – Unit 5’s Early Learning and District 87’s Sarah E. Raymond School of Early Education. Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries and Illinois State University’s (ISU) Psychology Department will provide program support by offering additional resources for participating families and helping CDM adapt and improve its formal evaluation and analysis of its program outcomes. Growing STEAM is a high-impact program strategically designed to have multiple interactions with children throughout the academic year and includes special components to engage their families and teachers. Program outreach is completed through in-classroom learning, field trips, family fun events at our partner sites, and private family nights at the Museum. The purpose of Growing STEAM is to enhance and support formal curriculum with informal learning experiences, to increase opportunities for positive STEAM experiences for at-risk youth, to provide families with resources to reinforce their role as their child’s first teacher, and to provide teachers with professional development resources to empower them to continue teaching hands-on learning in their classrooms.

**2. Statement of Need:** The proposed project will meet several critical needs. First, young children are currently facing urgent and significant academic challenges. The pandemic has disrupted normal learning for students nationwide for three consecutive school years, hitting hardest our nation’s youngest learners who have yet to experience a normal school year.<sup>1</sup> Nationwide studies are reporting that enrollment in preschool programs declined<sup>2</sup> and first and second graders fell two or more grade levels below expectations than in previous years.<sup>3</sup> Statistics like these are concerning given the major strides children at this age typically make in mastering academic skills like math and reading, which are key to their future academic success. With reports showing 40 percent of first graders and 35 percent of second graders are ‘significantly at risk’ of needing intensive academic intervention<sup>4</sup> many schools have turned to solutions such as longer school days, summer school, and before and after-school learning programs. As a result of the extra time in the classroom, teachers and students are experiencing academic burnout.<sup>5</sup> Within our community, local educators have shared that in response to achievement gaps their curriculum will focus heavily on math and reading with little to no science learning taking place in the classroom. Though this is not a permanent change, regional experts estimate it will take several years to recover learning losses due to extended and repeated school closures during the pandemic.

Additionally, the pandemic has negatively affected children’s social-emotional and behavioral development. Nationwide, parents are reporting elevated levels of social-emotional problems including conduct problems such as antisocial behavior and disregard for rules, prosocial behaviors such as trouble helping, cooperating, comforting, and sharing, and peer problems such as trouble with communication, emotional regulation, and social awareness.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Wells, Valerie. “Report Card Shows Pandemic’s Continued Impact on Illinois Students.” *Herald&Review*, [https://herald-review.com/news/local/education/report-card-shows-pandemics-continued-impact-on-illinois-students/article\\_29957bb2-24bb-5745-9405-9d31d135fc5d.html](https://herald-review.com/news/local/education/report-card-shows-pandemics-continued-impact-on-illinois-students/article_29957bb2-24bb-5745-9405-9d31d135fc5d.html).

<sup>2</sup> Dorn, Emma, et al. “COVID-19 and Education: The Lingering Effects of Unfinished Learning.” *McKinsey & Company*, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/covid-19-and-education-the-lingering-effects-of-unfinished-learning>. Accessed 11 Nov. 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Mader, Jackie. 2021, *The Hechinger Report*, <https://hechingerreport.org/early-childhood-parents-report-declines-in-academic-social-emotional-skills/>. Accessed 2021.

<sup>4</sup> *The Hechinger Report*, <https://hechingerreport.org/early-childhood-parents-report-declines-in-academic-social-emotional-skills/>.

<sup>5</sup> Wells, Valerie. “Report Card Shows Pandemic’s Continued Impact on Illinois Students.”

<sup>6</sup> Barnett, W.S., & Jung, K. (2021). Seven Impacts of the Pandemic on Young Children and their Parents: Initial Findings from NIEER’s December 2020 Preschool

Successful development of social-emotional and behavioral skills is linked to children’s academic growth and better outcomes later in life. As CDM has recently been able to resume its in-person programming – our educators have confirmed the impact of the pandemic locally is reflective of what is happening nationwide. In our on-site Early Childhood programs, children ages 2-5 are struggling with increased anxiety caused by separation from their families and classroom basics such as remaining seated and raising their hand to communicate. As schools return to in-person programming, students who struggle with social-emotional development may not be able to focus on learning which could stifle even the best efforts to get students back on track.<sup>7</sup>

Early exposure to playful STEAM learning has been proven to develop the foundational framework children need for future educational achievement, economic productivity, responsible citizenship, lifelong physical and mental health, and to build stronger communities. In fact, studies report that access to positive STEAM experiences have shown growth in math and science proficiency in low achieving US youth for three consecutive years prior to the pandemic and the gaps between the lowest and highest achieving students narrowed.<sup>8</sup> Working through STEAM concepts assists in the development of social-emotional skills by offering hands-on connection and providing practical application of what children are learning. When given a STEAM experiment, children actively practice self-awareness by brainstorming, self-management as they research and overcome obstacles, managing relationships as they communicate and collaborate with one another, responsible decision-making as they problem-solve using iterative thinking, and social-awareness as they use design-thinking and understanding.<sup>9</sup>

If STEAM experimentation and hands-on learning are proven to help children understand that they can build things, design solutions, and work together despite their age, why are more teachers not taking advantage of the large amounts of curiosity our young learners have? A report by Schwartz & Gess-Newsome revealed that many elementary teachers are unlikely to have science backgrounds<sup>10</sup>, and a survey conducted by Margot and Kettler in 2019 found that while many teachers valued STEAM education, they reported barriers such as pedagogical, curriculum, and structural challenges, concern for student learning outcomes, and lack of support were limiting them from implementing STEAM into their classrooms. Within their responses, teachers shared that teaching STEAM requires a shift from teacher-led instruction to student-led instruction which might involve unexpected direction and voiced concerns about student learning outcomes and meeting the needs of diverse learners.<sup>11</sup> Additionally, teachers reported that building a STEAM curriculum is difficult because district alignment and grade level standards can be inflexible and without proper support from their districts, collaboration could be a better solution to increase STEAM learning in their classrooms. In 2019 the National Association for the Education of Young Children’s professional standards published their best practices including that early childhood educators should use community resources to support young children’s learning and development and support families, and build partnerships between early learning settings, schools, and community organizations.<sup>12</sup>

**3. Advancing CDM’s Strategic Plan:** CDM is requesting funds from IMLS to expand its existing Growing STEAM program. The Museum is currently in the development stages of a new strategic plan. While capturing feedback from our current stakeholders and gauging interest from new partners, we learned that early learning sites across the community need

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Learning Activities Survey. New Brunswick, NJ: National Institute for Early Education Research.

<sup>7</sup> Gunn, Jennifer. “The Real and Lasting Impacts of Social-Emotional Learning with At-Risk Students.” *Resilient Educator*, <https://resilienteducator.com/classroom-resources/sel-at-risk-students/>. Accessed 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Pai, Judit, et al. “Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) Results from PISA 2018.” *Programme for International Student Assessment*, 2018, <https://www.oecd.org/pisa/>.

<sup>9</sup> Maslyk, Jacie. “5 Benefits of Integrating STEM and SEL.” *Carly and Adam*, 2021, <https://carlyandadam.com/thecarlyandadam/5-benefits-of-integrating-stem-and-sel>. Accessed 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Schwartz, R., & Gess-Newsome, J. (2008). Elementary science specialists: A pilot study of current models and a call for participation in the research. *Science Educator*.

<sup>11</sup> Margot, K.C., Kettler, T. Teachers’ perception of STEM integration and education: a systematic literature review. *IJ STEM Ed* 6, 2 (2019). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-018-0151-2>

<sup>12</sup> “Professional Standards and Competencies for Early Childhood Educators.” National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2021.

programs like Growing STEAM to support their curriculum because they are reducing science learning opportunities for at least the next year in an effort to recover lost learning in reading and math.

As we enter our new strategic planning phase, CDM is committed to restructuring its programming model to better meet the changing needs of its community. Currently, the Early Childhood Educator splits their time between teaching Growing STEAM and teaching revenue-producing camps and classes which limits Growing STEAM's outreach to two partner sites. IMLS funds will help CDM restructure its Early Childhood Educator role by temporarily easing burden on our budget to hire a part-time staff to handle the revenue-producing early childhood programs. Transitioning the revenue programs opens the Early Childhood Educator's schedule to solely focus on offering Growing STEAM to more partners as our schools need us the most. Working in parallel with the grant period, but independently of the proposed project, the Museum's parent organization, the Town of Normal, and its supporting Foundation will be hiring the part-time staff taking over the revenue programs and implementing new fundraising strategies to vest an endowment for the Growing STEAM program.

Additionally, the proposed project will engage current and new partners in a meaningful way. To expand Growing STEAM, CDM will partner with Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries and Illinois State University (ISU). Both libraries will provide additional support to families and teachers by sharing information on how to access their resources. The Museum will also work with ISU's Psychology Department to create a new research and evaluation internship within their graduate study program. With this role, CDM hopes to adapt and improve its evaluation models and tools for measuring family engagement with the program. Creating this intern position will increase the Museum's capacity to complete more in-depth data collection and analysis of the program over time – something that Museum staff have previously not had the capacity to complete due to limited time and resources. This internship will continue beyond the three-year project period.

**4. Target Audience and Project Beneficiaries:** The target audience for the Growing STEAM program is children, ages 3-5, enrolled with Heartland Head Start of McLean and Livingston counties, Scott Early Learning Center, YWCA of McLean County's Young Wonders, Milestones Early Learning Center, and our local school districts - Unit 5's Early Learning and District 87's Sarah E. Raymond School of Early Education. If the project is successfully funded, we will expand from reaching 300 children at two sites to reaching more than 1,300 children at six sites. Participating children will engage directly with the program in their classrooms where they can explore STEAM concepts in-depth and receive age-specific, supplemental materials to continue their learning at home with their families. Additionally, students will receive information about how to use their public library as a resource to further their individual learning interests and promote early literacy.

The secondary beneficiaries are the families of the participating children. While many of the children enrolled with our partner sites come from low-income families, all families regardless of socio-economic status benefit from this program. Whether families have previously visited the Museum or not, Growing STEAM incorporates several components where adults can engage with our content. Encouraging adults to play with their children empowers them and helps them to understand their role as their child's first teacher as well as how to use play as a tool for learning. As a part of each program, children receive kits designed to engage their caregiving adults at home and families are invited to join us in the Museum for private family nights and family fun events at their school.

Finally, thirty local formal and informal educators and education students are beneficiaries of the project. Growing STEAM helps relieve burdens on teachers by supporting their curriculum with science learning, provides high-quality professional development resources and materials, and empowers teachers to continue teaching STEAM in their classrooms beyond the program. CDM will provide STEAM curriculum resources and offer expert techniques for the implementation of hands-on learning experiences to help teachers feel more comfortable leading activities on their own. School administrators have seen the positive impact of this program at existing partner sites and are excited to be able to participate with their schools (see SupportingDoc1). CDM's educators build curriculum in close communication with teachers, often covering concepts that teachers or their classes are struggling with. There is open communication with partners throughout the program as well, allowing for swift changes to be made if the need arises.

## II. Project Work Plan

**1. Program Activities:** There are four components that make up the Growing STEAM program: Museum in Motion, specialized field trips, family fun events, and a private family night at the Museum. These components combined create a continuous touch point between CDM and the participating children throughout the academic year.

Museum in Motion is a one-hour program that takes the CDM experience into the classroom. During the program, CDM's Early Childhood Educator presents a STEAM topic to the class by reading a story related to the concept, leading a topical discussion, and then assisting students with hands-on activities or experiments. As a part of each classroom visit, the Museum provides its partner teachers with a professional development kit to continue facilitating hands-on learning in their classroom between Museum in Motion events. The kits include the book read in class, curriculum resource books related to the concept, manipulative toys to support continued student learning, and a list of resources available to them at the Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries to support their classrooms. Children also receive a take-home kit with a book, reading resources they can find at their public library as well as tips for their parents and caregivers to facilitate a positive reading environment in their home, and age-specific materials and instructions to complete an activity at home with their families. Museum in Motion programs will occur once per semester in each partner sites early childhood classrooms.

Many of the children attending this program are from low-income households and have not previously accessed CDM's facility, so CDM will provide specialized field trips for all participating classrooms. While they are in the Museum, children, teachers, and chaperones get to experience our nineteen in-house exhibits that support the hands-on learning that took place during their Museum in Motion program. Unfortunately, most of our partners do not have funding for the bussing required to attend a field trip. IMLS grant funds will help us ensure that all children enrolled with our partners receive equitable access to the powerful play experiences that take place during our field trips.

Family fun events are hosted by each of our partner sites to engage parents and caregivers in their child's learning. During these events, families are encouraged to play with their children in a series of hands-on activities relating to STEAM concepts. CDM coordinates with the hosting partner to develop several themed activities to encourage multi-generational play. Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries attend these events and provide hands-on resources as a part of their Lending Library programs. These resources include books as well as digital resources. At the family events, the libraries also showcase their resources and offer tips for families to access these resources at home.

Finally, the Museum hosts private family nights at its facility for all participants and their families. These events are traditionally hosted near the end of the school year to celebrate the activities that transpired throughout the academic year. Several of our agencies will have their own private event due to the size of their programs and the three smaller organizations have agreed to share their family night so there are enough attendees present to have a fun and enjoyable time together. These events provide children and their families with the opportunity to play and learn together in a safe, welcoming environment. During their event, they are treated to a light dinner and then given full access to the Museum's facility to play and explore together. CDM's Guest Services and Play Facilitators are given special training on how to engage guest families in play-based learning and give special attention to facilitate the best play experience possible during our time together. At the conclusion of the event families will be given resource packets that includes information about their Library's summer reading programs to continue support until the next school year.

**2. Program Management:** While CDM will partner with six individual program sites, the Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries, and Illinois State University, Museum staff will be coordinating and leading the program in its entirety. Rachel Carpenter, Education Manager, has been teaching in informal education settings for more than 15 years and will manage the Growing STEAM program's oversight. Carpenter has been with the Museum for eight years and manages one full-time educator and ten part-time staff. She will oversee the relationships with all partners and collaborators on this project. Carpenter holds a Master of Science degree in Forestry and a Bachelor of Science in Biology Secondary Education. Erin Wiese-Reichert, Early Childhood Educator, will conduct the scheduling and implementation of the program components. Wiese-Reichert has been teaching with the Museum for 15 years and has successfully

implemented the Growing STEAM program since 2011. Sammi Kern, Development Coordinator, will be responsible for managing the grant award and tracking progress to create quarterly grant reports. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in History and has worked with the Museum over the last year to formalize its grant system. Kern has worked as an administrator for grants for more than three years with large and small agencies. CDM's part-time Play Facilitators assist during the private family night at the Museum and are given special training on how to engage guest families in play-based learning and give special attention to facilitate the best play experience possible during our time together.

Though they will not manage the project, our partners at the Bloomington and Normal Public Libraries will be actively engaged in various components of the project. Randi Sutter is the Children's Outreach Librarian at Normal Public Library, and her primary role is to engage underserved populations. She is responsible for coordinating the Student Library Card Project, which issues library cards to each student enrolled in the Unit 5 school district. She also leads the 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program which provides a simple and fun approach to building children's literacy skills. Sutter holds a Master of Science in Library Science and has worked as a librarian for 15 years. Alex Bell is the Children's Librarian at Bloomington Public Library where she serves children, ages 0-11, their families, and teachers. She manages the Educator Card and Teacher Pack services and assists with Student Card information distribution amongst the schools. She is the Chair of the 2022 Notable Children's Books Committee for the American Library Association's Association for Library Service to Children.

Finally, the expansion of Growing STEAM will utilize one existing part-time position and one new intern position. CDM currently employs a part-time Early Childhood Assistant who helps coordinate, supervise, and facilitate the Growing STEAM program with our existing partners. Their role will remain part-time but with expanded hours. They will assist across all the sites to assist in preparation of materials, helping supervise children during the program, and interacting with the children in an inquiry-based environment. The new Research Intern position will be created in partnership with ISU's Department of Psychology Master's program to provide more in-depth evaluation of the Growing STEAM program. This student will receive course credit while conducting evaluation of the family engagement components of the program. The intern will work under the supervision of Dr. Gregory Braswell and have support from Dr. Alycia Hund from the Psychology Department. These faculty will work with CDM to select students who are well suited for this program and will work with them to apply for the internship and course credit (see SupportingDoc2).

**3. Addressing Risks:** In evaluation of the proposed project, CDM has recognized, accepted, and planned for several potential risks. The first, very real risk is to in-person programming. Schools may continue to restrict CDM's access to students in the classroom. Museum staff have prepared a contingency plan and have successfully implemented similar programs via classroom and individual kit-based learning and virtual classroom engagement in the last year. Kit-based Museum in Motion this semester consists of classroom kits with all the materials and resources needed for teachers to lead their classes through topical discussion, hands-on activities and experiments, and evaluation which is shared with CDM. Children will also receive their traditional take-home kits to supplement Museum in Motion learning. Museum Educators are ready to provide the option to schools for either in-person or kit-based programs, so each school can choose what best fits their needs during the ongoing pandemic.

Additionally, we recognize that curriculum at our partner locations is very fluid and reactive to children's needs as they are returning to in-person programming. CDM Educators have pre-existing evaluation models and are in regular communication with school educators and administrators at our partner sites. The Early Childhood Educator will be in contact with the partner sites to facilitate scheduling, discuss the concepts and resources, and to introduce the virtual format to teachers, if they so choose. This regular communication allows Growing STEAM to remain flexible and to make swift changes as necessary to meet our community's changing needs.

CDM also recognizes the risk of being a smaller institution and having limited staff, part-time staff assistance, and an intern working on the program's evaluation. Multiple full-time Museum staff will comprise the project's key personnel so that if any staff member cannot continue the project for any reason, someone else can step in immediately to help uphold the project timeline. When planning field trips and activities, CDM also has an established protocol for rescheduling field trips and classes in the case of staff or teacher illness or inclement weather. Extra time has been

allotted into each project activity in the schedule of completion to make sure that activities are completed accordingly. Each semester, the months of December and May are allotted as buffers in case any component needs to be rescheduled.

Additionally, the Museum is comprised of seven full-time staff members and more than 40 part-time staff. Our part-time staff are reliable and have experience working with children and families. Many of our staff are students at ISU, the largest producer of teachers in the Midwest, and we do not anticipate difficulty maintaining an assistant to help implement the program and have a pool of qualified candidates to hire from in case they cannot continue for any reason. Finally, ISU has a competitive process for recruiting graduate interns and does offer course credit and a stipend to those selected. CDM has worked successfully with the University to recruit interns for other programs and typically hosts about three to four interns per year.

**4. Tracking Progress and Evaluations:** CDM’s Early Childhood Educator will be in regular contact with teachers and administrators at each partner facility to discuss successes or issues classroom teachers are facing with regards to the program’s components. CDM plans to use the following methods of evaluation:

- An informal evaluation will be conducted during the Museum in Motion outreach program and recorded through anecdotal notes. CDM’s Educator or classroom teacher will ask questions at the start and end of the program about presented content to assess what the children learned and retained during the session.
- CDM will conduct formal evaluations with partner teachers and program directors at all partner organizations to assess the value of the Museum in Motion outreach program including whether the program successfully supported children’s learning experiences and whether the program is a beneficial classroom resource.
- The Museum will work with our Research Intern to conduct formal evaluations with the families at the family events and family fun night to assess the value of Museum programming for families.
- The Museum and the Libraries will track the number of students, parents and caregivers, and teachers that participate in all components of the Growing STEAM program.
- The Museum Educators, Librarians, University advisors, Research Intern, and School Administrators from partner organizations will meet in independent meetings at the end of each semester to review and assess program areas that need improvement or expansion.

**5. Communicating Results:** CDM has high expectations for the Growing STEAM program. The Museum is excited to share its successes with our local community and has an active audience. Program highlights will be shared via our quarterly newsletter (mailed to 4,000 households), regular e-blasts (emailed to 10,000 email addresses), website (450,000 annual page views), Facebook (12,000 followers), and Twitter (2,500 followers). CDM also has scheduled conversations and interviews with local radio and news outlets and frequently publishes press releases to various local print media outlets.

Additionally, the work of this project will hopefully be translatable to other museums and libraries. CDM Educators will seek to publish articles through the Association of Children’s Museums’ *Hand to Hand* periodical, Association of Science and Technology Centers’s *Dimensions* magazine, and the Association for Library Services *Children & Libraries* journal to reach a wide audience of our peers. CDM will also submit applications to present on the progress of Growing STEAM at local and national conferences in related fields. Finally, throughout the length of the grant award, CDM will monitor, adjust, and report on all grant activity quarterly.

### III. Project Results

**1. Intended Results:** Completion of the program will have immediate and long-term results for all its participants. Short-term intended results include:

- Young children, ages 3-5, will develop a love and eagerness for learning, a sense of curiosity, and various hard and soft skills to help them be fully prepared to learn in a formal setting. 80 percent will be able to articulate to

CDM's Early Childhood Educator or classroom teacher the STEAM concept they engaged with and answer questions about what they learned.

- 75 percent of families will participate in at least one of our activities designed to connect them with their child's in-school learning, i.e. attending the family nights events at their partner site, visiting the Museum during the family fun night event, or engaging their children with the Museum in Motion at-home activity kits.
- Of those families, we believe at least 60 percent will share that they feel more confident and knowledgeable about their role as their child's first teacher outside of the classroom and that they are more confident locating resources to support them in that role.
- Those same parents and caregivers will report that they feel supported by connecting with multiple agencies who offer resources designed to effectively support positive learning environments for their children as they recover from lost learning due to the pandemic.
- 80 percent of teachers at partner sites will report that they feel supported with quality physical and community resources as they adjust to changing learning environments due to the pandemic.
- CDM will build stronger relationships with its Public Libraries and ISU by broadening their work together.

Long-term, Growing STEAM helps lay foundational frameworks in children's brains that will have lasting long-term impacts on the entire community. STEAM learning achieves this by putting children in charge of their playful learning – and bringing abstract math and science learning to life. According to Harvard's Center for the Developing Child, healthy development in the early years provides the building blocks for educational achievement, economic productivity, responsible citizenship, lifelong health, strong communities, and successful parenting of the next generation. A federal investment in early childhood education is an investment in a better future.

**2. Tangible Products:** When the Growing STEAM program is completed, all 1,355 student participants will have received multiple books, up to two per academic year, related to STEAM learning and have increased access to their Public Libraries' resources. Additionally, more than 30 teachers will have gained valuable professional and teaching resources including the book read during the Museum in Motion program, a resource book with various ready-to-teach STEAM activities and curriculum, and supplemental classroom supplies such as art supplies and science tools to continue facilitating STEAM learning beyond the program. Finally, CDM will collect research data and analysis reports from the Research Intern at the end of each semester.

**3. Sustainability:** Our successful outreach programs such as Growing STEAM are highly consistent with the goals of the Museum's current strategic plan. CDM will continue our existing relationships with current partners to support the ongoing outreach to Heartland Head Start and Scott Early Learning Center. CDM's parent organization, the Town of Normal, and its supporting nonprofit Foundation are committed to securing new funding partners throughout the granting period, particularly with donors who have a vested interest in the recovery and future of our community. IMLS funding is critical to establish the restructured Early Childhood Educator position and expand the Growing STEAM program to new partner sites. CDM has the momentum to attract additional revenue and we believe before the three-year grant period is up that we will have established and vested an endowment for Growing STEAM to provide critical outreach to our youngest learners for generations to come.

As previously stated, CDM is entering a new phase of strategic planning with emphasis on outreach, accessibility, and diversity, equity, and inclusion. As we move into this new planning phase, we are also expanding our fundraising infrastructure to make sure that we can sustain this change long-term because it is aligned directly with our mission. In August 2020, CDM hired a new development professional. As we enter our new strategic planning stage, we are setting new fundraising priorities, including expanding our sponsorship offerings, developing a more thorough grant program, finalizing a formal annual giving program to complement our existing major gift structure, and vesting an endowment specifically for the Growing STEAM program to continue. These improvements will help CDM formalize and expand its existing successful fundraising structures, ultimately offering a more sustainable future for programs such as this.



Schedule of Completion

	2022				2023								2024								2025																	
	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A		
<b>Program Planning and Evaluation</b>																																						
Pick Program Topic																																						
Edit and refine program components																																						
Meet/communicate with Library Staff to discuss topics and themes																																						
Conduct Evaluation of Programs																																						
Quarterly Reports to IMLS																																						
Analyze data																																						
<b>Communicate with school/program administrators to:</b>																																						
Schedule deliverables																																						
Check in on progress of program																																						
Discuss evaluation data and program improvement																																						
<b>Public Libraries</b>																																						
Create resources tools for teachers																																						
Create resources tools for parents																																						
Participate in Family Events at schools/library																																						
Provide materials for Family Fun Night at Museum																																						
<b>Program Deliverables</b>																																						
Museum in Motion/ Teacher PD																																						
Family Event at schools/library																																						
Family Fun Night at CDM																																						
Field Trips																																						