

A Trampoline to Reach Higher

An Impact Grant from our Community Foundation will fund phase two of a three phase facility improvement plan at Impression 5 Science Center.

There's only one place in Lansing where you can find a life-size Lite-Brite with color changing pegs, a two-story exhibit that makes fluid dynamics fun, and a brand-new makerspace designed by teens, for teens, to experience science and technology with real tools.

Impression 5 Science Center was created to provide an interactive learning environment for families to explore STEM. The Community Foundation's impact grant will help Impression 5 enrich visitor experiences through the addition of amenities such as a pop-up café, first floor restrooms, and family comfort treatments like a designated nursing area. The new travelling exhibit space also provides an opportunity to bring in exhibits from across the nation including Hot Wheels, Curious George, and Clifford the Big Red Dog.

"These additions provide a space in which people can spend more time at the science center," Executive Director Erik Larson said. "If we have amenities in place for families when the need arises, they may stay longer, and we have a greater chance to achieve our mission."

Completing the guest experience with increased exhibit space and comfort amenities fits into Impression 5's larger strategic plan to develop the 20,000 square feet of inaccessible, unused space on the first floor. This will make the science center a 2-story exhibit space boasting 30,000 square feet, larger than the Ann Arbor Hands-On Museum.

"Culture organizations like Impression 5 play an extensive role in creating a meaningful fabric of things for people to do," Larson said. "Things that make people feel good about the cities they live in."

Impression 5 provides an interactive learning environment for families to explore STEM, encouraging visitors to play together with science, create new things using science, and challenge their understanding of science.

"Many visitors don't even realize they're experiencing science. They're visiting because they want to do something fun," Larson said. "We use that motivation to get them asking questions about the world in which they live."

The \$75,000 impact grant from our Community Foundation has helped the science center leverage additional investment for the project's \$150,000 budget.

“You might look at this [project] and see just restrooms, but what we’re really doing is increasing people’s perspective of their visit to Lansing and Impression 5 specifically,” Larson said. “[Matching funds for the project] bring everyone together. It’s the foundation taking leadership, bringing together resources from around the region and beyond to help culture organizations move forward.”