

FY 2018 Annual Report

October 1, 2017-September 30, 2018

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Message from the Executive Director


Children's museum professionals face a unique challenge in the museum field: people often ask us, "What is a children's museum?" Children's museums have led the way in so many important trends in the museum community: a focus on using objects, hands-on learning, and putting children first. But this work can be invisible to those unfamiliar with it.

Over the past year, ACM has grappled with this question, resulting in our new document, "What Is A Children's Museum?," which articulates how every children's museum—regardless of its size—functions across four key dimensions: local destinations, community resources, educational laboratories, and advocates for children. ACM also continues to expand its capacity to gather and disseminate relevant and timely data on the impact of children's museums.

Over this year, we continued to explore new frontiers in practitioner-led research through the activities of the Children's Museum Research Network and our IMLS-funded partnership with New Knowledge Organization, Ltd. to develop the first analysis of the national and regional economic impacts of children's museums, launched in October 2018 (detailed on page 9).

As we continue to raise awareness about our field, and to highlight excellent work and innovations, we also look to the core tenets of ACM's work: professional development services, revamped data collection methods, and initiatives and partnerships that advance our field to continue in our role as the premier professional society championing children's museums worldwide.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Laura Huerta Migus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Laura" being the most prominent.

Laura Huerta Migus

Executive Director, Association of Children's Museums



Children play in
Thinkery (Austin, TX),
an ACM member and
Museums for All
participating museum.

Who We Are and What We Do

About ACM

Since its founding in 1962, the Association of Children's Museums (ACM) has become the world's foremost professional member-services organization for the children's museum field. With more than 460 members in 50 states and 19 countries, we leverage the collective knowledge and experience of children's museums through a host of meetings, publications, and creative exchanges, both in person and online.

Our Mission

ACM champions children's museums worldwide.

Our Vision

A world that honors all children and respects the diverse ways in which they learn and develop.

Why We Do What We Do

We believe children's museums are unique community institutions where...

- Children are valued citizens with the right to developmentally-appropriate and high-quality learning experiences.
- Play is learning, and it is critical to the healthy social, emotional, and cognitive development of children.
- Family, culture, environment, and society are recognized as critical factors in all children's lives to serve them effectively.
- Pursuing equity and inclusion is a best-practice that reflects a commitment to serving all children and families and advancing the growth of our field.

Our Core Values

- **Membership and Community:** Our primary focus is working with and on behalf of our membership. All activities are in service to the enrichment, expansion, and advancement of this community.
- **Leadership and Innovation:** We pay close attention to emerging trends and opportunities for advancing and elevating the field through risk-taking, while being accountable to our mission and fiscal responsibilities.
- **Collaboration:** We implement our work through partnership and dialogue with our members and other stakeholders to ensure equitable and inclusive processes and effective outcomes.



Children's museums
contributed \$5.5
billion to the U.S.
economy in 2016



The first two children's museums, Brooklyn Children's Museum (top), opened in 1899, and Boston Children's Museum (bottom), opened in 1913, were among those featured in the History & Culture Summit issue of *Hand to Hand*.

Accomplishments

Responding Rapidly

Guided by the ACM Strategic Roadmap launched in October 2016, ACM worked to respond nimbly to current events affecting our field.

- In March 2018, ACM issued a statement in support of children participating in the National School Walkout to protest gun violence in the U.S. Read the full statement [here](#).
- In June 2018, ACM issued a statement in response to the family separation crisis at the border of the U.S. and Mexico. In part, the statement read: “On behalf of the leadership and membership of the Association of Children’s Museums, we must express our outrage at the separation of children from their families. Yesterday, President Trump signed an executive order ending this policy, and we urge the administration to quickly reunite separated families. We remain concerned for the well-being of the children in their care. We are enraged by the administration’s willingness to put children in harm’s way for political purposes.” Read the full statement [here](#).

2019 and Beyond: In October 2018, ACM shared Children’s Museum of Pittsburgh’s response to the Squirrel Hill shooting, amplifying the museum’s commitment to its community. ACM will continue to respond quickly to current events.

Improving Organizational Infrastructure

In June 2018, ACM moved to a new space in Arlington, Virginia:

2511 Jefferson Davis Highway
Suite 600
Arlington, VA 22202

The new office provides additional space and amenities, allowing ACM to host meetings and events, starting with the October 2018 ACM Board Meeting.

2019 and Beyond: ACM continues to use its new space to host convenings, such as the Museums for All Hub Cities Convening in December 2018 and the Collaborative Project Management (CoPM) Institute, a two-day working session presented by the Association of Science-Technology Centers and ICS Group in February 2019.

Expanding Our Reach

Throughout 2018, ACM pursued key areas of growth, both for our membership and business development interests.

- In December 2017, Laura Huerta Migus attended the “Why do we need children’s museums?” meeting held in Warsaw, Poland, to support the opening of a children’s museum there. Representatives from five ACM member museums also presented at this meeting, providing a blueprint for how ACM can host similar meetings to support developing children’s museums around the world. Participating museum staff shared their experiences in a [post on the ACM blog](#).

Expanding Our Reach (*Continued*)

- Throughout 2018, ACM increased its involvement in the Cultural Competence Learning Institute, and hosted a meeting in Washington, DC, in March 2018.
- On April 8, 2018, Laura Huerta Migus presented on the kickoff Power PLAYer Panel at the U.S. Play Coalition's Play Conference.
- On May 21, 2018, Laura Huerta Migus represented ACM at the Brookings Institution's Citizens of the Future conference.
- In June 2018, at the invitation of the Children's Museum Research Center, China, Laura Huerta Migus traveled to Beijing to a series of meetings and conferences to promote children's museums in China.
- On July 9, Senior Director of Development and Advocacy Jeannette Thomas represented ACM by joining the National Summer Learning Association in ringing the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange, in celebration of National Summer Learning Day on July 12. Leslie Bushara, ACM Board Member and Deputy Director of Education and Guest Services at the Children's Museum of Manhattan, also attended, joined by CMoM Board Member Miyoung Lee and Brooklyn Children's Museum President and CEO Stephanie Hill Wilchfort.
- In September 2018, Laura Huerta Migus was named an Aspen Institute Ascend Fellow for her work advancing innovations and solutions on behalf of children and families. She is joined by twenty leaders in a cohort that will convene and network to carry out action in support of family wellbeing.

2019 and Beyond: ACM will continue to identify opportunities to represent our field on a larger stage. Laura Huerta Migus's Ascend Fellowship will continue throughout 2019, culminating in a new project to be presented at InterActivity 2020—stay tuned!

Supporting Partnerships and Advocacy

- In 2018, ACM continued its support of the American Alliance of Museum's Advocacy Day program for the ninth year. Twelve ACM members advocated on Capitol Hill from February 26-28, 2018.
- In FY18, ACM sent nine Advocacy Alerts to CEOs and Executive Directors in our museum member community. These resources represented research and next steps valuable to museum leadership as they advocated for their institutions at the state and national levels.
- The Cultural Competence Learning Institute (CCLI) entered its second phase in October 2017, made possible by a National Leadership Grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services awarded in September 2017. The second phase has opened up the program to all museum types, with the goal of reaching an additional 18 museums by September 2020. Launched in September 2012, CCLI is both a process and set of resources designed to help museums increase their organizational capacity around diversity and culture, led by the Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose in cooperation with ACM, the Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC), and Garibay Group.
- In May 2018, ACM launched our partnership with Vroom, with the goal of sharing Vroom's brain-building resources with children and families. Vroom shared its history and vision for children's museums with an article in the "Brain Research and Children's Museums" issue of *Hand to Hand*.

2019 and Beyond: Approximately fifteen ACM members attended Museums Advocacy Day on February 25-26, 2019. ACM is also continuing its pursuit of partnerships that offer a win-win for our member institutions, including further implementation of our work with Vroom

Engaging Members

- Staff from twenty-three ACM member organizations contributed pieces to ACM's quarterly journal, *Hand to Hand*, throughout FY2018. The journal has been in publication since 1987. This year's slate of issues included a double issue on the history and culture of children's museums. The issues released included:
 - History & Culture Summit (Summer/Fall 2017)
 - Brain Research and Children's Museums (Winter 2017/2018)
 - Satellite Museums (Spring 2018)

The History & Culture Summit issue was a special double-issue of *Hand to Hand*. The issue included stories from historians, architects, scholars, exhibit designers, museum directors, board members, and more. It grew from The Children's Museum History & Culture Summit held after InterActivity 2017 on May 5, 2017, with support from the National Endowment for the Humanities.

- E-Forum is shared with an average 2,800 staff members from our member institutions each month. The e-blast contains information about grant opportunities, job postings, exhibit rentals, and advocacy opportunities, and also shares members' media coverage.
- ACM maintained its blog launched in February 2017, *The Run Around*, at www.ChildrensMuseums.blog. This year, the blog featured guest posts by Vroom, DoubleKnot, Sietecolores, and Eco Boys and Girls.



**ACM has more
than 460
members in 50
states and 19
countries**

- 2018 marked the first full year of ACM's Find a Children's Museum website, www.FindAChildrensMuseum.org, after its launch in October 2017. Over time, the site has grown in visibility, growing from 1,096 views in October 2017 to 14,669 views in September 2018. Find A Children's Museum provides ACM's public-facing platform for members of the public, providing parents and families a custom-designed interface to facilitate children's museum visitation around the world.

2018 and Beyond: ACM will continue to grow our online presences, including visitorship to Find A Children's Museum.

Expanding Professional Development

InterActivity:

More than 850 children's museum leaders, staff, and stakeholders from eleven countries attended InterActivity 2018: *Open Source Play, Sharing the Creative Code*. Hosted by Marbles Kids Museum, the conference was held in Raleigh, North Carolina, from May 15-18, 2018. This year's InterActivity featured:

- Fifty-nine concurrent professional development sessions on subjects across seven content streams: Business Operations, Design - Sponsored by Roto, Equity and Inclusion, Learning, People, Research and Evaluation, and Safety. On a scale of 1-5, the median rating for each session was 4.6.
- The ACM MarketPlace welcomed more than seventy exhibitors supporting the children's museum field.
- Twenty museums participated in the Museum Open House Program, offering free admission during InterActivity 2018 to conference attendees. Three area museums, three innovative workspaces, two playgrounds, and a local school offered Study Tours.
- The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University was honored with the 2018 ACM Great Friend to Kids Award for its outstanding contributions toward closing the gap between what we know and what we do to improve the lives of children facing adversity. The award was accepted on behalf of the Center by Chief Knowledge Officer and Deputy Director Al Race.
- At the Inaugural ACM Awards Dinner on May 15, 2018, ACM presented the first-ever Champion of the Field Award to Jeri Robinson, vice president of Early Childhood Initiatives at Boston Children's Museum.

- Other programming included a plenary session by Jim Whitehurst, CEO of Red Hat. Marbles Kids Museum also organized SmallTalks 2018, a series of short talks and performances sharing perspectives from seven speakers who practice open source play every day.
- Marbles Kids Museum provided key support in planning and executing the conference. Twenty-three representatives from eighteen ACM member museums and two ACM business members served on the InterActivity 2018 Program Committee, playing a key role in shaping the conference content and shepherding sessions.

Webinars:

ACM offered fifteen webinars throughout FY2018 as part of our effort to expand our professional development offerings. Webinars were offered as a free benefit for ACM members, and viewed by 659 live attendees.

Workshop:

ACM partnered with the Discovery Museum in Acton, Massachusetts, to present our third annual in-person exhibit workshop, "Thinking Outside the Museum: Creating Outdoor Spaces and Experiences for All Visitors Design Workshop," from June 25-26, 2018. Twenty-one participants attended. Said one attendee in their evaluation, "I am invigorated and will be able to look at our campus with a clearer lens as to where to place/include outdoor spots."

2019 and Beyond: InterActivity 2019: *FearLESS* was hosted by the Children's Museum of Denver at Marsico Campus from May 8-11, 2019. ACM has already started planning our next InterActivity conference, InterActivity 2020: *PLAY The Long Game* hosted by The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum from May 5-8, 2019. InterActivity 2021 will be hosted by Louisiana Children's Museum from May 10-13, 2020.

Building Knowledge

- FY2018 marked the completion of Volume I of the ACM Trends Reports series, which was launched in May 2017 with the release of the first six of twelve reports. Drafted in collaboration with New Knowledge Organization, Inc., this series draws from more than a decade of ACM member data. The last six reports in the volume, released in September 2018, covered topics such as museums and nontraditional families, the children's museum workforce, and operating income and expenses. Sold in subscription set (\$100 for ACM members; \$150 for non-members) or individually, the reports provide a revenue stream to augment other ACM offerings. The size categories introduced in the first volume of the ACM Trends Reports provided the structure for the "Birds of a Feather" Investigation Sessions at InterActivity 2018, with separate sessions for small, medium, and large museums.
- 2018 marked the sixth year of The Learning Value of Children's Museum project, which builds research capacity in the children's museum field, in partnership with the University of Washington's Museology Graduate Program and with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS). Now known as the Children's Museum Research Network (CMRN), FY2018 marked the end of the project's second phase, which ran from 2014-2018.

In FY2018, CMRN tackled its third Research Study: "Caregivers' Understanding of Learning in Children's Museums." Eight CMRN member museum asked their visitors to participate in online questionnaires during August-September 2017. A total of 223 visitors responded to the surveys, and data was analyzed by CMRN to determine parents' perceptions of learning in children's museums. This study found that parents appreciate the unique learning environments children's museums offer.

2018 and Beyond: In October 2018, ACM launched the second volume of ACM Trends Reports, with three reports on the economic impact of children's museums, made possible with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. The remainder of the reports in this second volume will be released in FY2019. In 2019, CMRN will share findings from its third research study on caregivers' perceptions of children's learning in children's museums—for the first time approaching a general audience of parents and caregivers. CMRN will continue to work on future research studies along with the sustainability of the network past the grant period.



Museums participating in the Children's Museum Research Network

Visitors enjoy Heart and Seoul, part of the Freeman Foundation Asian Culture Exhibit Series and produced by the Children's Museum of Houston.



Sustaining Special Initiatives

Freeman Foundation

Asian Culture Exhibit Series

Launched in 2014 with funding from the Freeman Foundation, this exhibit series includes five traveling exhibits produced by ACM member museums to share contemporary life in Asia with diverse audiences:

- Children of Hangzhou: Connecting with China, produced by Boston Children's Museum
- Children's China: Celebrating Culture, Character and Confucius, produced by The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum
- Heart and Seoul: Growing Up in Korea, produced by Children's Museum of Houston
- Hello from Japan!, produced by Children's Museum of Manhattan
- Voyage to Vietnam: Celebrating the Tet Festival, produced by Children's Discovery Museum of San Jose

The exhibit series ended its run in Fall 2018.

Ultimately, the series travelled to 49 museums in 31 states, reaching more than 3.4 million people.

Museums for All

A cooperative initiative between ACM and IMLS started on June 1, 2014, Museums for All is a national access program encouraging families of all backgrounds to build lifelong museum habits. Participating museums offer individual admission fees ranging from free to \$3.00 (USD) to individuals and families presenting an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, and a valid form of photo ID.

In fall 2018, Museums for All launched a standalone website, www.Museums4All.org, providing resources for participating museums as well as a searchable map for the public to identify Museums for All museums near them.

By October 2018, 315 institutions in 43 states participated in Museums for All, as well as the U.S. Virgin Islands, and the District of Columbia. Participating institutions include children's museums, science centers, art museums, history museums, zoos, and botanical gardens.

2019 and Beyond: ACM will continue to pursue new opportunities, such as the Vroom initiative. ACM's collaboration with IMLS on Museums for All has been extended through March 2020, involving a new suite of work to ensure increased participation and continued engagement with Museums for All.



3.4 million people
visited a Freeman
Foundation Asian
Culture Exhibit
Series exhibit



Top: Jeri Robinson accepts the Champion of the Field Award at InterActivity 2018.



Bottom: The Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University accepts the 2018 ACM Great Friend to Kids Award.

Finances

FY2018 Supporters

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Boston Children's Museum
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The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum

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Michael Luria
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MindSplash
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TAM Retail
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Financial Overview

Thompson Greenspon & Co., P.C., performed the financial audit for ACM in fiscal year 2018, which ran from October 1, 2017 to September 30, 2018.

Key Performance Indicators

KPI	FY2018	FY2017	Budget
ACM Membership			
Membership Dues	\$397,200	\$391,157	\$370,000
Reciprocal Network Fees	\$51,837	\$50,670	\$51,705
InterActivity			
Meeting Revenue	\$551,366	\$516,694	
ACM MarketPlace Exhibitors	80	86	
Core Income			
Net Assets, End of Year	\$776,624	\$716,620	
Core Net Income	\$60,004	\$15,165	

Other Important Metrics

	FY 2018	FY 2017
Number of Open Museum Members	292	285
Reciprocal Network Participation	74%	75%
Number of Business Members	70	73
Number of InterActivity Registrants	InterActivity 2018: <i>Open Source Play, Sharing the Creative Code</i> in Raleigh, NC 864	InterActivity 2017: <i>Fun Is Serious Business</i> in Pasadena, CA 907

You're Invited to...

Make a Donation

You can donate to ACM any time through [ACM's Impact Fund](#). Your donation supports ACM programming including scholarships, InterActivity, advocacy, professional development, and data and research.

Attend InterActivity

[InterActivity](#) is ACM's annual meeting—and the world's largest convening of children's museum professionals. Mark your calendar for next year's conference, InterActivity 2020: *PLAY The Long Game*, hosted by The Magic House, St. Louis Children's Museum from May 5-8 in St. Louis, MO.



At the end of InterActivity 2018, staff from the Children's Museum of Denver at Marsico Campus invite attendees to InterActivity 2019.

ACM offers a number of [membership levels](#) for both individuals and for organizations. Each level is tailored to provide benefits to meet your needs. ACM supports its more than 400 museum, business, educational organization, and individual members through leadership, advocacy, professional development, and service.

Become a Museum Member

ACM ANNUAL MUSEUM MEMBERSHIP DUES

Open Museum Categories

Dues are based on annual operating income

Level 1 (under \$250k): \$450

Level 2 (under \$500k): \$800

Level 3 (under \$1 million): \$1,050

Level 4 (under \$3 million): \$1,400

Level 5 (under \$5 million): \$1,600

Level 6 (\$5 million and over): \$1,950

Special Museum Categories

Emerging Children's Museum: \$400

International Museum: \$650

Sponsor Children's Museum: \$2,500

Individual Categories

Friends of the Field: \$100

Student: \$75

Organizational Categories

Academic/Research Institution: \$450

Questions? Ask Keila Rone, Membership Manager, at Membership@ChildrensMuseums.org.

Become a Business Member

ACM ANNUAL BUSINESS MEMBERSHIP DUES

ACM business members represent a diverse range of organizations serving the field and supporting the growth of children's museums in their communities. They gain exposure to a unique and focused audience through ACM membership while acknowledging the value of children's museums worldwide.

Business Categories

Business Visionary: \$2,500

Business Supporter: \$750

Business Associate: \$300

Questions? Ask Dana Weinstein, Development Manager, at Dana.Weinstein@ChildrensMuseums.org

Contact Us

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ASSOCIATION OF CHILDREN'S MUSEUMS



ACM is a community of museums all over the world,
sharing the same vision:
a world that honors all children.

We're on our way to make this vision our reality.

Let's go!

Strategic Roadmap

