

## **Guide to Hosting InterActivity**

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## Section I: Introduction

Thank you for your museum's interest in hosting InterActivity. The Association of Children's Museums (ACM) welcomes proposals from member museums in good standing. Use this guide to explore what it takes to host the conference and to submit a hosting proposal.

Since 1987, ACM has convened the InterActivity conference to strengthen professionalism and build capacity in children's museums (with the name InterActivity reflecting the nature of children's museums.) InterActivity is an important tactic to fulfill our mission: *We champion children's museums and together enrich the lives of children worldwide.* Every ACM staff member helps to plan and execute the conference and ACM commits the majority of its budget to the conference.

Since the first InterActivity, the Host Museum has been a critical partner to the success of the conference. By using its local contacts and resources, the Host Museum contributes through fundraising, content development, and offerings that maximize attendees' experience in the host location. Planning the InterActivity conference enables ACM to develop and strengthen its relationship with the Host Museum, establishing connections that deepen as the two teams work together to welcome children's museum staff and stakeholders to the host community. This partnership offers an opportunity to identify museum staff who may be interested in participating in future advisory or leadership roles with ACM.

At InterActivity, children's museum professionals from all over the world gather to learn, network, and collaborate. The conference provides an unparalleled opportunity for an intense two days of professional development focused on optimizing museums' resources to support learning while remaining sustainable, vital, and relevant to their communities. In short, there are four main goals:

**1. InterActivity Goal: Networking**

InterActivity is the world's leading professional meeting for children's museums and other informal learning organizations whose audiences include children and families. Representatives from ACM's 500 museum, business, and individual members worldwide attend the conference. In a typical year, 900–1,000 museum professionals attend InterActivity. Attendees represent museums located in Asia, Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Oceania, North, Central, and South America.

**2. InterActivity Goal: Professional Development**

Each day of InterActivity features a rich selection of concurrent sessions that highlight innovative trends and effective practices in community engagement, learning, exhibits, partnerships, change, and sustainability, while relating to the conference theme chosen for that year. Impressive keynote speakers inspire and challenge InterActivity attendees. InterActivity supports hundreds of museum professionals who help educate young children and their families, whether directly by developing exhibits and programs or behind the scenes by supporting museum operations.

**3. InterActivity Goal: Advancing the Children's Museum Field**

InterActivity provides an opportunity for the rich exchange of ideas, both philosophical and practical, leading to innovation and collaboration that advance the field. An average of three representatives per museum attends, helping InterActivity act as a catalyst for change in individual museums, which leads to growth across the museum field.

**4. InterActivity Goal: Conducting the General Business of ACM**

InterActivity serves as the annual meeting of the Association's membership for the purpose of announcing major initiatives and award program winners, and informing members of previous and future activities.

## Section II: InterActivity Site Selection Process

Over the years, ACM has refined the process for selecting sites for InterActivity. Here are the steps involved:

1. To begin, museums interested in hosting InterActivity are asked to complete a Letter of Interest through SurveyMonkey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HostingIA27or28>. The letter of interest is a short survey with the following questions:
  - a. Have you read the InterActivity Host Proposal Guide and understand the selection process and what it takes to host InterActivity?
  - b. Which years would you be interested in hosting InterActivity?
  - c. What is the museum's total annual operating expenses? Building size? Annual attendance? Staff size?
  - d. What is the contact information for the Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) to explore the viability of holding InterActivity in the city where the museum is located?
  - e. On a scale of 1 to 5, how strong is your relationship with your CVB to negotiate a competitive deal? [1 is weak, 5 is strong]
  - f. Is the museum's board of directors aware of this exploration into hosting InterActivity?
2. Once the letter of intent is received, ACM will contact the host museum's local CVB with the Event Specifications (see Section VII, p. 16, for details) and request for a preliminary meeting proposal with available dates and financial package.
3. Receipt of a preliminary meeting proposal from the CVB will be reviewed by ACM for financial viability.
4. If the meeting proposal is financially viable, ACM will arrange for a site visit to the city and museum. The site visit provides an opportunity to discuss all aspects of hosting InterActivity with museum staff. Note: Conducting a site visit is not a commitment from ACM.
5. Depending on the outcome of the site visit, the potential Host Museum submits a proposal to host InterActivity. See Section VIII: Host Museum Proposal Instructions, page 23. Note: Host Proposal will include a final meeting proposal from the local CVB.
6. ACM staff evaluates the Host Proposal using the InterActivity Selection Scoring Rubric (next page) to assist in the objective assessment of proposals received.
7. The ACM Board of Directors will be informed of the options as well of the decision of the Executive Director, which will be informed by input from the ACM leadership team.
8. Once the ACM Executive Director selects future InterActivity sites, he will contact the museum CEO(s) with the decision.
9. For selected sites, ACM staff sends Hosting Agreement to museum, notifies CVB and begins contract process with hotel/convention center as applicable.
10. Once contracts are executed, ACM posts future InterActivity sites and dates to website.
11. For selected sites, InterActivity planning commences (see Section VI: Planning Timeline, p. 13).

As the Selection Scoring Rubric (next page) indicates, the city and facilities metrics carry greater weight (Max 47 points) than the Host Museum metrics (Max 28 points) as the costs to conduct and attend the conference are of paramount concern for site selection.

## InterActivity Host Selection Scoring Rubric

The maximum score according to this rubric is **75 points**.

### City/Facility Metrics

Criteria	Score
Ease of travel to city (including airport volume and proximity to meeting site) and drivability (# of museums within 200 mi radius).	Low=1; High=5
Implications of local policies/politics. (Are there local policies/politics, especially around inclusion, that might negatively affect attendance?)	Low=1; High=5
Meeting room space, flexibility, and fit.	Low=1; High=5
Meeting space cost (includes additional rentals, fees, etc.)	Low=1; High=5
Food & Beverage cost (includes rating of the F&B minimum and food costs).	Low=1; High=5
Proximity of meeting space to hotel(s), host museum, and other conference event venues.	Low=1; High=5
Restrictions on facility staff (preferred ability to bring in our own vendors).	Low=1; High=3
Cost/availability of WiFi.	Low =1; High=3
Hotel sleeping room price (affordability, uniformity of price, uniformity of quality, based on deviation from GSA rates).	Low=1; High=3
General appeal of meeting site/hotel neighborhood.	Low=1; High=3
Easy access to restaurants for attendees.	Low=1; High=3
Date pattern for meeting (Tuesday–Friday highest preference; weekend lowest preference).	Low=1; High=2
<b>MAX Subtotal</b>	<b>47</b>

### Host Museum Metrics

Criteria	Score
Quality of museum’s planning capacity and strategy pre-IA (major projects affecting planning/staffing capacity? Overall staffing capacity).	Low=1; High=5
Capacity for onsite IA staffing (how existing staff will be utilized during IA; plans for volunteer recruitment).	Low=1; High=5
Plan for museum party (ability to host <b>700-800</b> , food/beverage plans, etc.).	Low=1; High=5
Access to quality keynote speakers (including ability to recruit high-quality speakers for free).	Low=1; High=5
Explicit and achievable plan to fulfill cash fundraising obligation.	Low=1; High=5
Quality of plan for proposed study tours (appeal, relevance, attendance capacity).	Low=1; High=3
<b>MAX Subtotal</b>	<b>28</b>

### **Section III: Hosting InterActivity**

For the Host Museum, hosting InterActivity is a gift to the field requiring a substantial commitment of resources, both financial and human. This commitment yields benefits for the Hosting Museum, raising the museum's profile in the field, with funders, and within its community. Hosting InterActivity showcases the Host Museum to an international audience, providing an opportunity to highlight its unique culture, exhibits, programs, and local and regional partnerships.

Previous InterActivity Host Museums report the following benefits:

- InterActivity involves federal, foundation, and corporate funders, and hosting the conference provides the opportunity to burnish the museum's reputation and develop relationships with those funders.
- InterActivity offers a platform to advance community partnerships that can be highlighted in conference programming.
- InterActivity provides an opportunity for the Host Museum to garner local media coverage both in advance—for being selected to host an international conference—and onsite as the conference is underway.
- InterActivity allows the Host Museum to raise its visibility in the field, giving them a potential advantage when attracting new talent to work at the museum.
- InterActivity helps Host Museum staff to improve their project management skills and demonstrate their capacity to plan and execute a major event.
- InterActivity gives Host Museum staff the opportunity to attend the conference for free or at a lower cost, enabling more staff to benefit than when attendance requires travel costs.
- InterActivity is a wonderful way to introduce Host Museum staff at all levels to the field and the opportunity to develop relationships with other museum professionals.
- InterActivity highlights the host city's innovative cultural and educational resources through conference sessions, study tours, evening events, and the Museum Open House Program.
- InterActivity has a significant economic impact for the host city, generating an estimated \$765,000 of income through attendee spending on expenses such as hotel, meals, and taxis. In addition, ACM spends approximately \$185,000 on conference venue rentals, transportation, and catering expenses.

#### **What It Takes to Host InterActivity**

As previously mentioned, hosting InterActivity is a gift to the field. The combined total of the Host Museum's staff and volunteer time and the cost of the evening event is estimated to be \$100,000. This total includes a commitment from the Host Museum to raise a cash contribution to ACM from local funders in an amount to be determined. Historically, this amount is around \$35,000 and is contingent on the total financial package received from the city. The amount is negotiated between ACM and the Host Museum.

## **Section IV: InterActivity Roles & Responsibilities**

Planning for InterActivity is a partnership between ACM and the Host Museum. In the nature of partnerships, each has roles and responsibilities that contribute to the conference's success. Overall, ACM has administrative and fiduciary responsibility for the conference. Program content is developed in a variety of ways. Concurrent session proposals are submitted by the field and Host Museum. Session Proposals are selected by the InterActivity Program Committee. The Host Museum has representatives on the Program Committee and its session proposals highlight the museum's expertise and community resources. As the local contact, the Host Museum arranges for educational Study Tours and enlists participants in the Museum Open House Program. Below is an outline of major roles and responsibilities.

### **Joint Roles & Responsibilities**

#### **Program Development**

ACM and the Host Museum will work together to create a mutually agreed upon theme and logo for proposed InterActivity. ACM will have final approval of theme and logo. In addition, ACM and Host Museum will work together on the following:

- Great Friend to Kids Award (GFTK): ACM will identify and nominate an individual or organization for the Great Friend to Kids Award. The Host Museum is encouraged to suggest nominees. Nominations are vetted and selected by ACM. The ACM Executive Director promptly informs the ACM Board of Directors of the decision. See Section X: Great Friend to Kids Award Nomination Criteria, page 26.
- Keynote Speakers: ACM and Host Museum will work together to identify and invite the keynote speakers for proposed InterActivity.
- Local Museum Open House: ACM and Host Museum will work together to coordinate free admission to local museum(s) for InterActivity attendees.
- Museum Study Tours: ACM and Host Museum will work together to coordinate educational Study Tours to local museums and other venues for InterActivity attendees.
- InterActivity Program Committee Meeting: The InterActivity Program Committee is a committee of individuals from ACM member organizations that shapes the InterActivity call for session proposals and reviews and selects sessions for the InterActivity program. ACM and Host Museum will work together to host the ACM Program Committee meeting in the host city, which will take place in September prior to proposed InterActivity. Host Museum will provide connection(s) with local caterer(s) for breakfast and lunch during meetings and recommendations for local restaurants for dinner. ACM pays for breakfast and lunch on the meeting days and one dinner for the Program Committee.

#### **Fundraising**

- Typically, a total of \$135,000 to \$150,000 in sponsorships and other contributed income is raised to support InterActivity every year. Those funds are raised through the combined efforts of ACM and the Host Museum, including the Host Museum's cash contribution as negotiated between ACM and the host. ACM commits to raising the balance of the total sponsorship goal.
- The Host Museum develops a fundraising plan as part of its hosting proposal. Based on this plan, ACM and the museum jointly develop approaches to potential funders and donor benefit

packages. ACM and the Host Museum jointly review solicitations before approaching potential funders. See Section V: InterActivity Fundraising Strategies and Support, page 12, for additional information about the fundraising process.

### **Host Museum Roles & Responsibilities**

For the Host Museum, planning InterActivity may start soon after its selection by ACM. Planning efforts ramp up in January of the previous year—about 17 months before the museum hosts InterActivity. See Section VI: InterActivity Planning Timeline (p. 13) for details.

### **Invitation to Proposed InterActivity**

- Produce short promotional video or slide show for presentation at preceding year's InterActivity Closing Plenary.

### **Content Development**

- Host Museum participates in the content development process through the Host Committee Team Leader and Program Committee Liaison who serve on the InterActivity Program Committee.
- See also, Joint Roles & Responsibilities, Program Development, page 6.

### **Study Tours and Museum Open House Program**

- Host Museum will plan and host at least one study tour at the museum for 50 attendees during the conference.
- Host Museum will coordinate other study tours by identifying and inviting local museums or community/local venues with content relevant to children's museum professionals.
- Host Museum will coordinate local museum involvement by identifying and inviting museums to participate in the Museum Open House Program.

### **Evening Events**

#### **Evening Event at Host Museum**

- Host Museum will plan and host an evening event for approximately 700-900 attendees on either the first or second night of proposed InterActivity. The Host Museum is solely responsible for the staffing, onsite logistics, and all costs associated with the evening event, including but not limited to catering, insurance, and entertainment for the event. The one exception is transportation, if needed; ACM will pay for the cost of any transportation to and from the event.
- Host Museum will provide a preliminary event plan, including description suitable for publication in the Preliminary and Final Programs.

### **Volunteers**

- Host Museum will recruit local volunteers to fill approximately 100-120 volunteer slots over the course of InterActivity to help with various duties including tote bag stuffing, session room monitoring, registration check-in help, etc. It is the Volunteer Coordinator's responsibility to recruit for these slots from museum staff, museum volunteers, local universities, local businesses, etc.
- Volunteers are expected to attend an orientation prior to the conference once ACM staff arrive. Upon arrival for the shift, volunteers will report to the Volunteer Coordinator. ACM does not pay for parking for volunteers. If there is a meal served during their shift, they may

partake in the meal. Depending on the number of hours volunteering, volunteers may qualify for a complimentary one-day registration.

### **Miscellaneous**

- Host Museum will provide meeting space at the museum for in-person Program Committee Meeting, including coffee, tea, water, and snacks as needed.
- Host Museum will offer InterActivity registrants free admission to the museum during the week of the conference as part of the Museum Open House Program.
- Host Museum will identify partners such as NAEYC chapters, universities, state and regional museum associations, which will promote the conference.

### **Local Fundraising**

Host Museum raises funds from local funders as described under Joint Responsibilities. The museum understands that it may need to pursue additional funding and sponsorship to cover costs of fulfilling the responsibilities outlined above, e.g., evening events.

- Host Museum sends prospect lists for local fundraising efforts to ACM for review.
- Host Museum reviews and approves InterActivity fundraising templates developed by ACM.
- Host Museum develops and submits proposals to local funders.
- Host Museum shares all local sponsorship information with ACM for appropriate recognition.
- Host Museum remits its negotiated fundraising commitment to ACM no later than 30 days after InterActivity.

### **Host Committee**

To fully support the success of InterActivity, the Host Museum will identify a team of individuals to complete the Joint and Host Museum tasks. ACM recommends a Host Committee composed of the positions listed below, though the Host Museum may design the committee as it deems appropriate. While Host Committee members are traditionally selected from staff, the Host Museum may elect to outsource activities at its own cost.

#### **Team Leader:**

Serves as main point person between ACM and Host Museum in planning and preparing for InterActivity. Oversees Host Committee efforts. Assists ACM staff in coordinating logistics and meeting established deadlines. Participates in regular status meetings with ACM team, in preparation for the conference. Serves on the InterActivity Program Committee.

#### **Program Committee Liaison:**

Ensures Host Museum submits session proposals highlighting the museum's expertise and community resources. Recommends local speakers for sessions and museums/venues for study tours. Provides written descriptions of Study Tours and photos for inclusion in preliminary and final programs. Coordinates arrangements for onsite Program Committee Meeting. Serves on the InterActivity Program Committee.

#### **Fundraising Leader:**

Serves as the main point person between ACM and Host Museum to develop a list of sponsor prospects, solicitation materials, and agreements. Coordinates implementation of Host Museum's fundraising plan. Ensures joint review of solicitations before funders are approached. Sends secured sponsor information to ACM for appropriate recognition at conference.



**Volunteer Coordinator:**

Recruits volunteers (museum staff, museum volunteers, additional volunteers) to fill all required InterActivity volunteer slots (tote bag stuffing, attendee check-in, session room monitors, etc.). With ACM staff, develops a volunteer schedule to be distributed to all volunteers in advance of the conference. Reviews responsibilities with volunteers in advance; oversees volunteer check-in at the conference; and supervises volunteers throughout conference.

**Evening Event Coordinator:**

Oversee all aspects of planning and hosting the Host Museum evening event. Submits written descriptions of the event and photos of the venue to be included in the preliminary and final conference programs. Provides ACM and evening event attendees with a floor plan of Host Museum with food stations, bar locations, and evening activities.

**Local Arrangements Coordinator:**

Secures participation of local museums in Museum Open House Program (free admission for InterActivity attendees during conference). Identifies and secures giveaway items (in quantities of approximately 1,000) for inclusion in the InterActivity tote bags distributed to all attendees. Note: giveaway items are separate from sponsored tote bag items secured by ACM.

**Public Relations/Communications Coordinator:**

Serves as point person between ACM and Host Museum in promoting InterActivity to local museum community. Contacts area media to invite coverage of InterActivity and all award events. Provides ACM with photos of museum for inclusion in InterActivity promotional materials. Works with ACM staff onsite to ensure photographer gets photos of Host Museum VIPs at plenary sessions and evening events.

**ACM Roles & Responsibilities**

For ACM, InterActivity planning involves all staff and is a year-round endeavor. In addition to working on the next year's InterActivity, ACM is working with confirmed Host Museums and potential Host Museums sometimes several years ahead of the conference.

**Administration and Logistics**

- Develops and administers all conference budgets and timelines.
- Administers the contracts with the conference venues, hotel/convention center (including guest room block, ACM MarketPlace, meal functions, meeting rooms).
- Manages communication systems between ACM, Host Museum Committee, Program Committee, session presenters, and ACM Board.
- Conceptualizes and coordinates all conference logistics (including bus transportation, AV/meeting room arrangements at the conference hotel/convention center, catering, room block).
- Coordinates the ACM MarketPlace, including identifying and recruiting potential exhibitors.
- Schedules all concurrent and plenary sessions as well as pre-conferences.
- Oversees award programs, including Great Friend to Kids, Champion of the Field, Diversity in Action Fellowships, and Small Museum Financial Aid Program, etc.
- Oversees keynote speaker and Great Friend to Kids Award invitations.
- Develops and/or edits text for all written/printed conference materials.

- Oversees all conference graphic design and printing for promotional materials, programs, badges, tote bags, signage, etc., with the exception of proposed InterActivity invitation presentation.
- Develops and analyzes conference evaluations; produces evaluation report.
- Hires local photographer to document proposed InterActivity.
- Directs all conference details onsite including sessions, registration, speakers, transportation, hotel, food and beverage, etc.

### **Content Development**

- Manages all aspects of field-wide Call for Session Proposals.
- Develops Emerging Museums Pre-Conference, Museum CEO and Executive Directors Retreat, and other pre-conference programs.
- Works directly with Program Committee and session presenters to develop and refine content, as needed.
- Writes scripts for Plenary Sessions.

### **InterActivity Program Committee**

- Recruits InterActivity Program Committee co-chairs and members. Oversees committee communications.
- Oversees InterActivity Program Committee activities including evaluation of session proposals and follow up.
- Provides logistical support for the in-person Program Committee meeting, including, but not limited to:
  - Develops agenda for committee meeting.
  - Arranges hotel block for Program Committee members.
  - Arranges local transportation to and from meeting site.
  - Orders and pays for Program Committee meeting meals during meeting.

### **Promotion**

- Develops a comprehensive Communications Plan to promote InterActivity.
- Creates messaging and produces blast email campaign.
- Oversees production of:
  - InterActivity Prospectus, including copywriting, design, printing and mailing.
  - Electronic Preliminary Program, including design, providing content, pagination, ads, etc.
  - Program-At-A-Glance, including copywriting, design, and printing.
  - Final Program, including, content, pagination, ads, design, and printing.
  - Onsite signage including content, design, and printing.

### **Fundraising**

- Commits to raising \$85,000 to \$100,000 toward the larger goal of \$135,000 to \$150,000 to support InterActivity.
- Prepares InterActivity case statement, proposal templates, personalized letters of inquiry, proposals, slide presentation, etc., for use by the Host Museum when making requests of local funders.

## **Section V: InterActivity Fundraising Strategies and Support**

As stated in Section IV, page 7, a total of \$135,000 to \$150,000 in sponsorships is raised to support InterActivity. This goal is reached through the combined efforts of ACM and the Host Museum.

As part of its hosting proposal, the Host Museum submits a plan that articulates how the museum will raise its portion of the total InterActivity fundraising goal. Using the plan, ACM and the Host Museum jointly develop approaches to potential funders and sponsor benefit packages. ACM and the Host Museum jointly review solicitations before approaching potential funders.

Previous Host Museums have used a variety of strategies to fulfill their fundraising commitment, among them:

- Members of the museum's board of directors may make a gift;
- Individual donors may "add on" to a gift as part of the museum's annual campaign;
- Local government agencies including cultural agencies, school districts, or tourism offices may support the conference;
- The convention and visitors bureau may provide funding or help generate leads for support;
- National corporations headquartered in the community that already support the host museum may want to support the broader children's museum field;
- Corporate funders that have invested in the museum may want to showcase their support or market themselves to a broader audience;
- Local and regional foundations may be interested in supporting children's museums or content connected to InterActivity;
- While ACM welcomes assistance from the host museum to identify exhibitors for the ACM MarketPlace at InterActivity, income generated from booth and advertisement sales do not count toward the Host Museum's fundraising commitment.

ACM provides supporting materials for use by the Host Museum when making requests of local funders:

- InterActivity case statement (contact ACM for sample)
- Funding proposal templates (contact ACM for sample)
- Personalized letters of inquiry, proposals, etc.
- Slide presentation

ACM schedules regular fundraising calls with the Host Museum (Host Committee, Fundraising Leader) to discuss all leads and pending requests. ACM maintains a funding status chart that details the status of funding requests. This chart is hosted on an online file sharing site so that the Host Museum can access it at any time.

## Section VI: InterActivity Planning Timeline

### Up to Two/Three Years in Advance

- ACM issues a Call for Hosting InterActivity.
- Museums interested in hosting complete the Letter of Intent (questionnaire in SurveyMonkey, <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/HostingIA>).
- ACM contacts local CVB to request a preliminary meeting proposal.
- ACM staff conducts site visits to proposed cities/museums.
- Host Museum submits Hosting Proposal for InterActivity.
- ACM Board of Directors will be informed of the contents of the Hosting Proposal(s) and Projected Expenses for ACM to convene InterActivity in the host museum location. ACM notifies museums regarding the decisions.
- Hosting Agreement between ACM and Host Museum is executed.

### August (21 months before hosting)

- Fundraising kickoff call with ACM and Host Museum fundraising staff. ACM provides existing InterActivity fundraising templates for review.
- Local fundraising approach and prospects reviewed.

### November (18 months before hosting)

- Fundraising templates finalized, which necessitates finalization of conference name/theme.
- Local fundraising approach and prospects finalized, including identification of prospects that would benefit from a visit by both Host Museum and ACM staff.
- Ongoing calls with ACM and Host Museum fundraising teams begin.

### January (the year before hosting)

- Host Museum finalizes its Host Committee members.
- ACM provides Planning Guide to the Host Museum for the InterActivity it's hosting.
- Team-to-Team Kick-Off Meeting (Host Committee team/ACM team via conference call) to review Planning Guide and deadlines.
- Host Museum begins meeting with fundraising prospects; proposals submitted as appropriate.

### February (the year before hosting)

- Host Museum provides theme description for inclusion in the InterActivity Final Program (will be edited to ACM style).
- Host Museum provides photos of facilities for using in InterActivity promotion.
- ACM and Host Museum update fundraising templates with InterActivity theme.

### March–April (the year before hosting)

- Host Committee-ACM planning calls.
- Updates to ACM website as information becomes available.

### May (the year before hosting)

- Host Museum invitation presentation (video or slide show) at InterActivity Closing Plenary Session, introduced by Host Museum CEO/Executive Director.
- Team-to-Team meeting (Host Committee/ACM, conference call) following InterActivity.
- Launch of field-wide Call for Session Proposals.

### June (the year before hosting)

- Webinar on writing a session proposal: Host Museum participates to talk about the conference theme.
- Planning calls: joint discussions regarding keynote speakers, Great Friend to Kids Award honoree, and any additional programming.
- Continued promotion of Call for Session Proposals.

### **July (the year before hosting)**

- New Program Committee members selected.
- Ongoing planning calls. ACM shares publications production schedule with Host Museum.
- Prospectus (InterActivity Exhibit, Sponsor, and Advertiser catalogue) in production.
- Host Museum invites local museums to participate in the Museum Open House Program.
- Host Museum develops Study Tours.
- Session Proposal deadline: July 31 (or Friday before if date falls on a weekend).
- List of keynote speaker(s) and Great Friend to Kids Award candidates finalized.
- ACM budgets for following fiscal year, including InterActivity.
- Fundraising prospects updated based on keynote speaker(s) and Great Friend to Kids Award honoree.

### **August (the year before hosting)**

- Keynote speaker(s) invited and Great Friend to Kids Award nomination submitted. Any additional programming finalized.
- Draft InterActivity schedule.
- Prospectus in production.
- Program Committee reviews and evaluates Session Proposals.
- Planning calls, including Team-to-Team check-in as needed.
- ACM website updates as information is available (monthly).

### **September (the year before hosting)**

- E-mailing of Prospectus.
- Program Committee Meeting held at Host Museum (second or third week of September)
- InterActivity schedule finalized.
- ACM schedules concurrent professional development sessions following Program Committee Meeting.
- Ongoing planning calls.
- Begin development of Preliminary Program.
- ACM Board of Directors approves budget, including InterActivity budget.

### **October (the year before hosting)**

- Host Museum materials for Preliminary Program, including sponsor recognitions, due to ACM on the first Friday of the month. Program copy to designer on the last Monday of the month.
- Registration opens mid-month. Promotional communications.
- Planning calls/check-in.
- ACM sends acceptance/rejection notices to Session Proposal chairs by October 20 (or Friday before if date falls on a weekend).
- ACM sends Volunteer Matrix (breakdown of volunteer needs for Host Museum to begin recruitment).

### **November (the year before hosting)**

- Layout drafts of Preliminary Program for review by ACM and Host Museum; final opportunity to include new sponsor recognitions.
- Promotional communications.
- Ongoing planning calls.

### **December (the year before hosting)**

- Final draft of Preliminary Program for review by ACM and Host Museum.
- Preliminary Program posted to ACM website (third week of December). Promotional communications.

- At least fifty percent of fundraising goal should be secured, either with written commitments or cash in-hand.

### **January**

- Early Bird Registration closes in late January (all presenters must be registered by this date). Advance Registration begins. Promotional communications.
- Host Museum requests Welcome letter from the city Mayor and State Governor and gathers additional materials for Final Program.
- Team-to-Team check-in.

### **February**

- New material for Final Program from Host Museum to ACM by mid-February, including new sponsor recognitions.
- Planning check-ins.
- Continued promotional communications.

### **March**

- Layout drafts of Final Program for review by ACM and Host Museum; final opportunity to include new sponsor recognitions.
- Continued promotional communications.
- Check-in calls.

### **April**

- Final review and approval of Final Program before being sent to printer.
- InterActivity signage printed, including sponsor recognitions.
- Host Museum sends completed Volunteer Matrix to ACM (date dependent on dates of InterActivity).
- Advance Registration ends; Late Registration starts (date dependent on dates of InterActivity).
- Host Museum staff registration deadline: close of Advance Registration.
- Final Team-to-Team meeting (via webinar) in preparation for onsite (logistics, schedule, etc.).

### **May**

- Onsite tote bag stuffing and Volunteer Orientation.
- InterActivity occurs.
- Concurrent session evaluation delivered through meeting app.
- Following InterActivity: thank you to attendees with link to online evaluation collecting responses on dimensions of the conference other than the concurrent sessions.

### **May-June**

- ACM sends thank you letters to Host Museum, presenters, Museum Open House Program Participants, Study Tour hosts, Program Committee members, keynote speakers, sponsors, volunteers, etc.

### **July**

- ACM sends Host Museum conference evaluation report. Debrief with Host Museum.

## Section VII: InterActivity Event Specifications

ACM will share this section with your local Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) or other appropriate local agent for production of a preliminary meeting proposal to include potential meeting dates, locations, available lodging, and any local incentives. The information below is for reference only.

### A. Event Profile

Event Name **Association of Children’s Museums InterActivity Conference**

Event Organizer **Association of Children’s Museums (ACM)**

Event Organizer Address **2550 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202**

Event Organizer Phone **703.224.3100**

Event Organizer/ Host Web Address **[www.ChildrensMuseums.org](http://www.ChildrensMuseums.org)**

Event Scope **Convention Center and Hotels to cover block**

Event Type **Annual Meeting/Convention**

Event History **Most Recent Dates & Venues for this Event:**

May 15-17, 2024, Monona Terrace Community & Convention Center, Madison, WI  
Hilton Madison Monona Terrae, The Madison Concourse Hotel, and the Best Western Premier Park Hotel  
Attendance for this event: 1057

April 26–28, 2023, New Orleans Marriott, New Orleans, LA  
Attendance for this event: 1026

May 16–18, 2022, Union Station Hotel, St. Louis, MO  
Attendance for this event: 828

May 8–11, 2019, Hyatt Regency Denver at Colorado Convention Center, Denver, CO  
Attendance for this event: 1010

May 15–18, 2018, Raleigh Marriott City Center, Sheraton Raleigh Hotel, and Raleigh Convention Center  
Attendance for this event: 864

May 2–5, 2017, The Westin Pasadena, Hilton Pasadena, and Pasadena Convention Center, Pasadena, CA  
Attendance for this event: 912

May 5–7, 2016, Hilton Stamford & Stamford Marriott, Stamford, CT  
Attendance for this event: 907

May 13–15, 2015, Indianapolis Marriott Downtown, Indianapolis, IN  
Attendance for this event: 946

May 14–16, 2014, Hyatt Regency Phoenix and Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix, AZ  
Attendance for this event: 850

April 29–May 1, 2013, Wyndham Grand Pittsburgh Downtown, Pittsburgh, PA  
Attendance for this event: 900

May 10–12, 2012, Hilton Portland, Portland, OR  
Attendance for this event: 850

May 19–21, 2011, Hyatt Regency Houston, Houston, TX  
Attendance for this event: 775

**Future Dates & Venues for this Event:**

May 14-16, 2025, Albuquerque Convention Center, Albuquerque, NM  
Doubletree Albuquerque, The Clyde Hotel and The Hotel Andaluz

April 2-23, 2026, Sheraton San Diego Hotel and Marina, San Diego, CA,

Other Event Profile Comments: Although ACM supports fair labor and wages, as a small nonprofit organization, main venue must be a non-union facility.

**B. Preferred Dates and Times**

The InterActivity annual conference is generally held anytime from the last week of April to mid-May. The preferred meeting pattern is Tuesday to Friday, with the ACM MarketPlace (exhibit hall) starting on the second day of programming.

**C. Key Event Contact**

Sharon Chiat, CMP Associate Director, Professional Development & Events, ACM	Telephone: 703.224.3100, x109 Fax: 703.224.3099 Email: Sharon.Chiat@ChildrensMuseums.org
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**D. Attendee Profile**

Expected Attendance: 800–1,000

Domestic Attendees: 96%  
International Attendees: 4%

Attendees come from 12 countries and 45 states, plus DC.

Demographics Profile (Attendees Only):

- 96% of attendees are domestic
- Approximately 82% female, 18% male



- 84% of attendees are institution executives or senior management

*Accessibility/Special Needs:* Site must be ADA compliant with at least seven wheelchair accessible rooms.

**E. Exhibitor Profile**

Number of Exhibitors Attending: 125-150

Number of Exhibiting Companies/Organizations Represented: 70-75

*Accessibility/Special Needs:* Exhibit hall space must be wheelchair accessible.

**F. Arrival/Departure Information**

*Information based on first choice dates*

Major Arrivals: Day of Pre-Conference

Major Departures: Last Day of conference

Drive-in Instructions: Preferable that arrival to venue from airport/other arrival station cost under \$40.

Parking Instructions: 10 parking space amenities needed for group.

**G. Housing**

Amenities: 20 complimentary amenities for VIPs and Upgrades to club level.

In-room deliveries: None

Room Drops (outside doors): None

**Room Block based on 2024 pick-up – Total rooms needed 1350**

<i>Facility Name</i>	<i>HQ Hotel</i>	<i>ACM Staff / Board Arrival</i>	<i>Conference Prep Day</i>	<i>Pre-Con Day</i>	<i>Day 1</i>	<i>Day 2</i>
Headquarter Hotel	Yes	25	275	450	450	175

Reservation method: Prefer online registration and reporting system; telephone.

- Suites: 1 complimentary luxury suite for Executive Director
- 1 complimentary one-bedroom suite
- 1 one-bedroom suite at group rate

*Accessibility/Special Needs Rooms:* Require at least 7 wheelchair accessible rooms

Double/Single Occupancy: The majority of room needs is for double/double rooms. At least 275 double/doubles are needed on peak night.

Other Housing Comments:

- Room rates must be around \$250 for both single and double occupancy.
- Target room rate is \$200.
- Discounted (50%) staff room rate for up to 10 guest rooms during event, and for Program Committee (conference pre-planning meeting) to be held in September of year before proposed InterActivity (max 25 rooms/night/3 nights)
- 2 complimentary room nights for each ACM staff attending Program Committee meeting (3 staff members).

## H. Function Space

Off-Site Venue(s): Study Tours and up to 2 Evening Events

Function Rooms:

- Require a ballroom for General Sessions each day seating at least 1200 with a 12' x 24' stage and rear screen projection.
- At least 12 concurrent session rooms seating for 100 in rounds of 10 or 100 theater style.
- Ballroom space for exhibit hall that can accommodate 70-75 10' x 10' booths with meals served in this space (minimum 20,000 square feet).
- Ballroom Foyer space to accommodate 15 tabletop exhibits of 6' tables.

***Packages waiving meeting room rental fees are highly preferred.***

Office(s): Require one office for ACM staff, available staff arrival day to end of Day 2 near registration area and one office for our volunteers.

Registration Area(s): 1 registration area

Storage: ACM staff office will be used for storage during event, but if registration area is not next to staff office, additional storage space needed next to registration area.

General Reader Board Information: In registration area and on meeting rooms.

## I. Exhibits/Table Tops

Location-Exhibits: Within main venue building—no offsite location.

Location-Tabletops: Stationed in the foyer outside of the ballroom that will hold the 10' x 10' exhibit booths.

Number of Exhibits: 70-75 (10' x 10' booths)

Number of Tabletops: 15 (6' tabletops)

Show Days, Dates & Hours: Pre-Con Day, 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. and Day 1, 7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Storage Needs: Need space for empty boxes/crates while exhibit is being set and open.

Anticipated POV (Privately Owned Vehicle) Arrivals: 7-10

Show Days, Dates & Hours:

Conference Prep Day: Drayage company move-in, 8:00 am

Pre-Con Day: Exhibitor move-in, 8:00 am – 3:00 pm, MarketPlace open 5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m.

Day 1, MarketPlace open 7:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Move-out & Tear-down, 5:00 pm – 10:00 pm

**ACM must be able to bid pipe and drape and drayage to outside decorators at no penalty.**

## J. Utilities

Some exhibitors may require electricity, A/V, water, and internet.

## K. Safety, Security, and First-Aid

Key Event Organizer/Host Contact in Case of Emergency: Sharon Chiat, CMP, Associate Director Professional Development & Events.

Onsite Communications: ACM staff can be reached by cell phone and/or email.

General Security/Surveillance: Security needed from Conf Prep Day at 10:00 p.m. to Day 1 at 7:00 a.m. in the exhibit hall ballroom.

First-Aid Services: Not Required

Keys: 15 sets of keys required for Staff office Volunteer office, and Registration area (if applicable) with no lock change fee.

## L. Food and Beverage

Onsite F&B Description: Multiple continental breakfasts each day; boxed lunches and buffet lunch; morning and afternoon beverage breaks.

Catered Food & Beverage Total Expected Attendance

	Pre-Con Day	Day 1	Day 2
Breakfast(s)	150	800	800
Lunch(s)	150	900	0
PM Break(s)	150	800	0
Reception(s)	500	0	0
Dinner(s)	0	0	0

“On Own” Food & Beverage Potential Attendance\*

	Pre-Con Day	Day 1	Day 2
Breakfast(s)	0	0	0
AM Break(s)	0	800	800
Lunch(s)	0	0	800
PM Break(s)	0	0	800

Reception(s)	0	0	0
Dinner(s)	800	900	800

**M. Special Activities**

Study Tours: Attendees opt to participate in off-site, in-depth tours arranged by host museum at area museums and other relevant locations.

Pre-Event Programs/Pre-Con Day: Emerging Museums Pre-Conference Workshop, ACM Board of Directors Meeting, CEO Retreat, and other special programming.

Evening Events: Several off-site evening events

ACM to work with local bussing company for all transportation needs.

**N. Audio/Visual Requirements**

ACM must be able to open A/V bidding to outside vendors with no penalty.

Hotels or venues to provide complimentary or discounted WiFi services.

**O. TRANSPORTATION**

Shuttle(s) Provided for Off-Site Events: Sample schedule below, varies year to year.

Day & Date	HQ Hotel Departure Time	Off-Site Departure Time
Pre-Conference Day <b>Museum Study Tours (AM)</b>	1:00 p.m.	4:00 p.m.
Pre-Conference Day <b>Museum Study Tours (PM)</b>	1:30 p.m.	4:30 p.m.
Day 1 <b>Museum Study Tours (AM)</b>	9:30 a.m.	1:00 p.m.
Day 1 <b>Museum Study Tours (PM)</b>	2:00 p.m.	5:00 p.m.
Day 2 <b>Host Museum Event</b>	6:30 p.m.	9:30 p.m.

Times and events are flexible based on location and on Host Museum preferences.

Transportation Provider: TBD

**P. Media/Press**

All press inquiries should be directed to the ACM Director, Communications.

**Q. Shipping/Receiving**

# Boxes Sent: approximately 75-100

Address to Which Boxes Are Being Sent: Main Venue

Expected Box Arrival Date: 2 Days prior to Staff Arrival Day

Expected Outbound Shipping Requirements: approximately 25 boxes

Freight Elevator Usage: Conference Prep Day and Pre-Con Day for Exhibit Hall and A/V move-in; Day 1 for Exhibit Hall move-out if necessary; Day 2 for A/V move-out.

Other Shipping/Receiving Comments: ACM must be able to ship up to 100 boxes to main venue at no charge and return ship up to 25 boxes at no charge.

**S. Billing Instructions**

Group is tax-exempt: Yes, in Virginia. May file for tax exempt status in event location.

Room & Tax to Master: No (except ACM Staff and some VIPs)

Incidentals to Master: No (except for ACM Staff)

Guests Pay on Own: Yes

Onsite Bill Review Instructions: Pre-event meeting with main ACM contact: Conference Prep Day

Final Bill to Be Provided to: Sharon Chiat, CMP

Final Bill to Be Sent to: Association of Children’s Museums  
2550 South Clark Street  
Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

**T. Authorized Signatories**

<b>Full Name</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Maximum Approval Authority</b>
Sharon Chiat, CMP	Associate Director, Professional Development & Events	No max

## **Section VIII: InterActivity Host Museum Proposal Instructions**

The Association of Children’s Museums (ACM) welcomes proposals from member museums in good standing. Proposals submitted from a consortium of museums are welcome; however, we ask that the consortium submit one joint proposal. Please read all sections of this guide to help in your proposal preparation. In addition, museums are encouraged to contact ACM with any questions prior to submitting a full proposal.

Please submit a written proposal that answers all questions in each of the five (5) categories listed below: 1) Host Museum Information; 2) Programming; 3) Fundraising; 4) Museum Resources/Capacity; 5) Host City Resources. Proposals may be submitted as PDFs or Word documents.

### **I. Host Museum Information**

1. Proposal contact information:
  - a. Museum name
  - b. Contact name
  - c. Title
  - d. Email
  - e. Telephone number
2. Indicate proposed conference year.
3. Indicate proposed fundraising goal.
4. Why do you feel it is important for your museum to host InterActivity at this time?
5. What is your museum’s mission and how do your programs and exhibits exemplify the mission?

### **2. Programming**

1. Describe specific programs or exhibits your museum offers that are regarded as models of excellence by the field.
2. What is unique about your museum and how would like to showcase the museum during the conference (describe specific session ideas, focus of study tour at museum, other special programming)?
3. Describe local resources (universities, early childhood education centers, other nonprofits partners, etc.) and how you would include in the InterActivity program. List speaker names if available, session ideas, etc.
4. Describe institutions/venues in the city that would be suitable for Study Tours. Include the appeal, relevance, and attendance capacity.
5. Is there a theme or set of ideas you would like to propose for the conference? If so, describe.
6. Who does the museum recommend for keynote speakers and/or Great Friend to Kids Award recipients? What is the unique knowledge/inspiration they will bring to the field?

### **3. Fundraising**

1. Share your plan for fulfilling the fundraising goal listed in Section IV, Fundraising, page 7, i.e., what are the potential sources for funding InterActivity? Please identify local companies, corporations, foundations, or other potential funders.
2. How can ACM help you in cultivating relationships with possible funders?
3. Does the museum have any long-range plans or issues that might affect the conference fundraising?
  - i. Are you entering or in a capital campaign?
  - ii. Are you planning on hosting another conference?
  - iii. Please describe any other potential plans.

#### **4. Museum Resources/Capacity**

1. Considering the proposed dates for InterActivity in the final meeting proposal, do you have any annual events or other scheduling conflicts 60 days prior to or after the conference?
2. Has your museum hosted other conferences onsite? If so, what are some key events management lessons learned from hosting?
3. What is the size of your staff, i.e. ,how many full-time, part-time, and volunteer staff?
4. Describe your staff capacity to take on and fulfill the Host Committee responsibilities.
5. Describe how you will recruit the approximately 120 volunteers needed onsite to stuff tote bags, serve as session monitors, check in attendees at registration, etc.
6. Describe any staff resources outside the museum that might help fulfill the Host Committee responsibilities.
7. For the Evening Event, describe food, beverage, and entertainment plans for the Evening Event at the museum. What is the maximum capacity of museum for the evening event?

#### **5. Host City Resources**

1. Overall, how is the proposed city a compelling location for InterActivity? Tell us why your peers would enjoy being in your city.
2. Describe amenities and unique attributes the city offers.
3. Describe other museums and cultural institutions in the city not previously mentioned and how they could be involved in InterActivity.
4. Discuss any additional resources available in your city (e.g., museum studies programs, etc.) and how they could be involved in InterActivity (e.g., provide professional development).

### **SUBMISSION CHECKLIST**

**Please include in your submission:**

- Narrative response to categories outlined above
- Fundraising plan
- Letter of commitment signed by museum CEO and Board President (see sample letter below)
- A copy of your museum's most recent audit or Form 990
- Programmatic, exhibition, or other museum materials that highlight the museum's unique attributes (optional)
- Materials that highlight your community (optional)

Electronic submissions are required. Please scan any museum print materials such as brochures, etc.

Contact Victoria Garvin, Sr. Director, Professional Development with questions or for additional information prior to submitting a proposal.

#### **Proposal Review Process**

As outlined in Section II, all proposals are reviewed by selected ACM staff and the Executive Director following a site visit by ACM staff.

**SUBMIT PROPOSALS TO: [Victoria.Garvin@ChildrensMuseums.org](mailto:Victoria.Garvin@ChildrensMuseums.org).**

**Section IX: Sample Letter of Commitment  
Submit with Hosting Proposal**

**[Put letter on museum letterhead]**

**[Insert date]**

Arthur Affleck, Executive Director  
Association of Children’s Museums  
2550 South Clark Street, Suite 600  
Arlington, VA 22202

Dear Arthur,

As representatives of the **[Host Museum Name]**, we are pleased to submit this proposal to host InterActivity in **[20xx]** or **[20xx]**.

We understand that hosting InterActivity is a gift to the field requiring a substantial commitment of resources, both financial and human. Upon selection as a Host Museum, **[Museum Name]** commits to fulfill its responsibilities as outlined in the Host Proposal Guide and Sample Hosting Contract, including:

- Working with ACM staff to shape InterActivity programming, including the Great Friend to Kids Award honoree and keynote speakers.
- Raising a [amount TBD] cash contribution to support InterActivity, remitted to ACM no later than 30 days after InterActivity.
- Covering all costs associated with hosting an evening event (except for transportation to and from the event).
- Staffing the Host Museum Committee through the museum’s staff or by outsourcing activities at the museum’s expense.
- Supplying approximately 120 volunteers during InterActivity.

Further, we understand and commit to raising funds sufficient to cover all the museum’s direct expenses associated with hosting InterActivity.

For the **[Host Museum Name]**, signed

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Signature  
[Name]  
[Title, i.e., CEO/Executive Director]

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Signature  
[Name]  
[Title, i.e., President/Chair, Board of Directors]



## **Section X: Great Friend to Kids Award Nomination Criteria**

The ACM Great Friend to Kids Award is presented annually at InterActivity and honors those individuals or organizations that have made significant contributions to strengthen education and advance the interests of children.

To nominate an individual or organization for the Great Friend to Kids Award, please submit a description (200 word maximum) that includes the following information:

- Why the candidate is eligible/a good choice for the award (e.g., accomplishments, impact);
- Appeal to InterActivity audience;
- Speaking ability;
- Connection to conference theme (why this year).

In addition to the description, indicate:

- Personal connection(s) to the candidate (name, contact information, nature of connection);
- Related publication(s)/collateral that may be sold at InterActivity.

Links to video, publications, etc., may be included in the description.

Submit description to:

Victoria Garvin, Sr. Director, Professional Development, [Victoria.Garvin@ChildrensMuseums.org](mailto:Victoria.Garvin@ChildrensMuseums.org) for review and approval by the ACM staff and Executive Director.