

Mid-America Science Museum
Job Description
Chief Development Officer

2025

About Mid-America Science Museum

The mission of the Mid-America Science Museum is to stimulate interest in science, to promote public understanding of the sciences, and to encourage life-long science education through interactive exhibits and programs.

Mid-America Museum opened to the public on January 20, 1979. The 65,000 square foot facility was constructed in Mid-America Park on 21 beautiful, wooded acres. The multi-million-dollar facility is divided into two wings, connected by a glass-enclosed bridge that spans an outdoor stream. The Museum was designed by museum architect E. Verner Johnson and Associates of Boston, MA and Stuck, Frier, Lane, Scott, Beisner of Little Rock and Jonesboro, Arkansas and construction began in 1977 by Nabholz Construction Company. Sunday, April 22, 1979, was proclaimed "Mid America Day" by the mayor of Hot Springs as the Museum was dedicated by then Governor Bill Clinton in a Grand Opening Ceremony.

The Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism owned and operated the Museum until 1981, when the facility and property were deeded to the Hot Springs Advertising and Promotion Commission. In late 2004, the Museum began efforts to reorganize as a private 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Mid-America Science Museum now operates with an independent Board of Trustees.

In 2011, the Museum was awarded a \$7.8 million grant from the Donald W. Reynolds Foundation to upgrade the facility and install all new exhibits. Construction and exhibit installation began in 2014, culminating in a completely renovated and updated Museum in 2015.

In the Fall of 2018, the Museum held a successful bond election to authorize funding to construct a \$1.5 million 8750 square-foot addition on the property. Branded the Hall of Wonder, this venue opened in 2020 and hosts temporary exhibits, programs and events. Mid-America Science Museum opened the *Oaklawn Foundation DinoTrek* on Memorial Day Weekend in 2018, Arkansas' only outdoor dinosaur exhibit. In 2025, the Museum opened *Mystic Ozark* in the Ozark Bathhouse on historic Bathhouse Row in downtown Hot Springs.

Each year over 120,000 visitors come to the Museum and over 17,000 students visit for educational programming. As the largest and oldest hands-on science center in the state, the Museum enjoys visitors from around the country and contributes to the local tourism economy. Conservative estimates place the Museum's annual economic impact at \$14,000,000 in the city of Hot Springs.

Position Overview

Mid-America Science Museum seeks to fill the Chief Development Officer (CDO) position. The CDO serves on the Senior Management Team and is lead fundraiser for the Museum. The CDO represents the Museum in a professional manner, working collaboratively with community members, stakeholders and other staff. The CDO is a thoughtful leader for a dynamic, successful Development Department in all aspects of fund development for the Museum including, but not limited to, grant writing, sponsorship solicitation, annual giving solicitation, major gift procurement, planned giving, capital project funding, and donor stewardship, cultivation, and research. The successful candidate is eager to work as a part of the Museum team, supporting

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the mission by making a positive contribution to the internal culture. The CDO is willing and able to do what it takes to go above and beyond for excellent guest service and donor stewardship and cultivation. The CDO must possess a positive attitude, superior work ethic, impeccable integrity, and a strong willingness to be a part of an innovative team. Superb written and oral communication skills and a high level of emotional intelligence are key components for success.

Skills and Qualifications

- Minimum five (5) years' development experience.
- Bachelor's Degree required in Communications, Public Administration, Management, Education, or related field. CFRE a plus.
- Demonstrated track record of successful fundraising.
- Skilled at public speaking.

Key Responsibilities

- Create and execute all aspects of Mid-America Science Museum's Annual Development Plan to meet annual contributed revenue goal.
- Secure financial support from individuals, foundations and corporations through annual gifts, sponsorships, grants, planned giving, naming opportunities, and other resources as defined in the Annual Development Plan.
- Understand and perform best practices in donor stewardship and cultivation.
- Be proactive and autonomous in donor cultivation and solicitation.
- Research and evaluate potential local, state, national, and federal resources including, but not limited to, individual donors, corporations, foundations and public funding.
- Work closely with Board of Trustees, Chief Executive Officer and Chief Operations Officer on fundraising projects, and other museum activities as required.
- Collaborate with department directors on fundraising and educational events and projects.
- Work closely with contract marketing team to produce effective fundraising materials.
- Work closely with contract accounting firm to ensure accurate donation tracking and reporting.
- Create accurate and timely donor recognition and solicitation materials.
- Accurately and efficiently track and maintain the Museum's donor database to ensure precise record keeping. Keep accurate detailed records of donations and grants.
- Supervise, direct, support, mentor and evaluate Development Staff to encourage success.
- Conduct public speaking engagements.
- Assist with annual reporting where necessary.
- Prepare and monitor department budget.
- Other duties as assigned.

Requirements and Special Skills:

- Ability to work as an independent problem-solver.
- Strong planning and organization skills, with attention to detail.
- Ability to coordinate many activities simultaneously.
- Strong written, verbal, presentation, and interpersonal skills.

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- Flexibility in work schedule and work assignments; occasional weekend and evening work is required.
- Desire and ability to work as part of a team.
- Basic computer skills in document creation, online applications, financial spreadsheets, and scheduling.
- Ability to create and work within a budget.
- Valid driver's license with reliable transportation.

Values-Based Behaviors:

- Listens attentively to others. Asks clarifying questions to gain a better understanding of the other person's views and assumptions.
- Works effectively in a team environment and actively participates in joint problem solving; willingly cooperates with co-workers.
- Identifies and takes advantage of opportunities for personal and professional development.
- Comes to meetings prepared and on time; honors work commitments; follows through on commitments; meets deadlines.
- Collaborates with other work groups and outside organizations as appropriate, in a proactive and responsive manner.
- Honors the private and confidential matters of co-workers. Protects the proprietary and confidential information of Mid-America Science Museum and its donors.
- Follows rules, regulations, and policies. Positively contributes to implementing change.

To Apply: Send cover letter and resume to Diane LaFollette, Chief Executive Officer at dianel@midamericamuseum.org.