

# Asheville Museum of Science

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*FY 2017 Buncombe County Community  
Funding*

## ***Colburn Earth Science Museum***

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# Application Form

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## Project Name\*

Name of Project

Asheville Museum of Science

## Amount Requested\*

Amount Requested

\$125,000.00

## Service Area\*

**Which Commissioner Districts are served by this program?**

Access a map of Buncombe County Commissioner districts [here](#).

- District 1
- District 2
- District 3

## Which county sustainability goal aligns best with the goals of this project?\*

Based on the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan, select a Category, Goal & Objective that align with the focus of the project and the specific results that will be achieved.

Access the Buncombe County Sustainability Plan [here](#).

Community > Educational Resources that Match the Needs of the Community > Promote programs that supplement equitable educational opportunities for all ages

## If applicable, select a second sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.

**Result 2 is optional** - Select if project aligns with more than one Sustainability Category, Goal & Objective.

Environment > Partnerships for Conservation/Preservation/Restoration of Natural Resources > Educate the public to help them reduce their environmental footprints

## If applicable, select a third sustainability goal that aligns with project goals.

**Result 3 is optional** - Select if project aligns with more than one Sustainability Category, Goal & Objective.

Community > Equity in Access > Increase quantity and quality of recreational activities

## **Project Description**

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### **Project Description\***

#### **Description of Project**

The Colburn Earth Science Museum is re-locating and re-branding with a name change to Asheville Museum of Science (AMOS). While staying true to its roots, the museum will expand into a broader science center by adding programming and state-of-the-art exhibits incorporating Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) programming. The freshly designated AMOS will provide a rich experience emphasizing the connection of people to science and of Asheville's unique natural resources. With its new presence in the Wells Fargo building, AMOS will reinforce the vibrant character of downtown Asheville and the region. "Bringing the Colburn to the heart of downtown Asheville is like polishing and celebrating a priceless gem! A discovery, a destination, and a treasured place for children of all ages." (Karen Tessier, MarketConnections)

The Wells Fargo building presents AMOS with a highly discernible street presence and 8,000 square feet of space (with double the current exhibit and classroom space). AMOS will house captivating and interactive exhibits, classrooms, offices, and an expanded gift shop. The gift shop's sales are expected to increase significantly to support AMOS as a sustainable science center.

### **How many people will this project serve?\***

State the number of individuals or households in Buncombe County that will be served by this project. Also state the number of people that will experience the desired result. For example, if dropout prevention services are being delivered to 100 students, how many will successfully graduate from high school?

In FY 2014-15, 8,875 children participated in educational programming. 8,048 were with school field trips, the remaining 827 participated in summer clubs, after school clubs and Super Science Saturday events. 72% of these children are Buncombe County residents (6,390 of 8,875). We anticipate revamping the summer camp program once AMOS opens in the Spring of 2016, and this will significantly increase the number of students served.

Overall visitor attendance at Colburn Earth Science Museum in FY 2014-15 was 30,229. Based on attendance data from the NC Grassroots Science Museums Collaborative and downtown traffic information from the Chamber of Commerce, we expect a 40% increase in attendance at AMOS in FY 2016-17.

### **Describe the people this project will serve.\***

Characterize the demographics of the project's target population in terms such as age, gender, income, race, ethnicity, geographic area, etc. Include information about method of referral/recruitment of the target population.

AMOS serves people of all ages, especially young families and school groups. The demographics of visitors are representative of the region.

Our proportion of school group visitors is much higher than the median among ASTC members. In 2014-15, 42% of attendance was students participating in educational programming. An additional 39% of visitors were children and students who did not partake in programming.

Recruitment of our target population occurs through our website, Facebook, electronic newsletters, printed brochures, printed advertising, and direct mail to 110 WNC schools (including 47 in Buncombe Co). In the new space, all these and more will continue with a significantly increased budget for advertisement,

plus we will benefit from more public visibility and foot traffic from a street-level entrance, large display windows, and better signage.

### **What key steps will you take to achieve the results of this project?\***

Describe the core elements of your implementation plan, including milestones that will take place within the funding timeframe.

- Spotlight capital campaign launches December 9, 2015
- Construction starts immediately December, 2015
- Phase I complete by February '16 (Initial 3,500 sq. ft. open)
- Phase II complete by May '16 (Full 8,000 sq. ft. open)

Approaching the expansion in two phases allows AMOS to remain open to the public, provide educational programming, and generate revenue throughout the entire construction process. Local contractors and designers are being throughout the buildout.

AMOS' educational programming and interactive exhibits will continue to align with Buncombe County's Sustainability Plan and supplement equitable educational opportunities for all ages, increase quantity and quality of recreational activities in WNC, and will educate the public to help them reduce their environmental footprints. Summer 2016 will feature more educational entertainment events in evenings and on weekends and will draw adults, families, and children to AMOS.

### **Describe the evidence of success that backs this project's approach.\***

What evidence of success (i.e. evidence-based research, practice model, accreditation, industry standards, and/or other framework) are you using as a basis for your project design?

Annual attendance has nearly doubled since 2009. Evidence-based research over the last decade of organized informal science programs have shown that they (1) raise student interest, confidence, and classroom achievement in math and science and (2) generate student interest in pursuing STEM studies and careers. The Museum is a member of the Association of Science and Technology Centers (ASTC) and the Southeastern Museum Conference (SEMC).

Teachers indicate the value of our programs by returning annually for field trips. Evaluation forms provide feedback that most students are engaged and interested in programs, enjoy the hands-on activities, and the programs meet NC Essential Science Standards.

### **Describe your data collection, tracking, and reporting procedures.\***

Explain your methods for documenting project, service and client information. Include a description of any software or other tools utilized.

Currently, ticket sales are correlated with a handwritten tally of attendance to determine visitor numbers. Educational programming attendance is tracked through school reservation forms and invoices, registration forms for after school clubs and summer camps, and sign-in sheets for Super-Science Saturdays. This is all managed in Microsoft Excel.

In FY 2015-16 AMOS will employ a point-of-sale (POS) system to track visitor numbers and zip code origins. A Director of Development staff along with a membership database manages member information.

## **Explain your technological resources and capacity.\***

Explain your current technological strengths and barriers and how this impacts your ability to track data and report outcomes. Who is responsible for adaptation and use of technology within your organization?

AMOS' technical strengths will manifest with re-location. Since the Collider is in the same building, museum staff will have access to high speed internet necessary for handling climate data. This will benefit our programming and interactive exhibits. A Point of Sale (POS) system, to be provided by the recently awarded Tourism Product Development Fund, will enable better data tracking and reporting. Epsilon is our local on-call technical support contractor.

The main barrier to data management in the current location is the archaic hardware and software, and the inadequate internet connection. Epsilon and the Museum staff are responsible for adaptation and use of technology.

## **Organizational Profile**

### **How does the proposed project support your mission and strategic plan?\***

State your mission and the date of your most recent strategic plan, and explain how the proposed project helps advance your organizational goals.

AMOS ignites imagination, enhances science capability, and unlocks innovation. The mission of AMOS is to foster an appreciation for the earth and its resources and environments through exhibits, educational programming and the care of its collection. AMOS recognizes that science literacy, knowledge of history and culture, and an understanding of STEM are essential for the conservation and preservation of our vibrant physical and social landscapes.

In 2013, the board developed a 2013-2016 strategic business plan to meet growth and science education demands. The opportunity to relocate and become WNC's premier science center prompted AMOS to launch the "Moving Science into the Spotlight" Capital Campaign for \$1.2 million. AMOS builds scientific literacy through interactive exploration so everyone can thrive in our dynamic world.

County Community Funding will enable us to complete our goal by providing capital for new exhibits and operational funding for K-12 and adult programming.

### **What expertise/accomplishments do you have that are relevant to the proposed project?\***

List your organization's strengths as well as accomplishments from the past 3 years that position the organization to be successful with the proposed project.

As a leader in informal science education since 1960, AMOS provides NC Standards-based science education to approximately 9,000 students annually. Our preschool science initiative (funded by Buncombe County in 2015) enriched 624 kids (exceeding the goal of 400). Weekly science fun provided to YMCA after school programs reached 448 kids last year, many from under-served populations. The staff works closely with area educators and schools to promote science literacy. Of the 36 Buncombe County schools served in FY 2014-15, 24 are repeat customers and 12 are new.

AMOS recently secured a \$400,000 grant from the Tourism Product Development Fund and \$200,000 from other sources. It has operated in the black every year since 2010. The staff is highly qualified and additional education and development staff will be hired soon. AMOS is poised to be fiscally sustainable and the premier science center for WNC.

## Describe partners that are critical to the success of your organization.\*

List any external partners, intermediaries or advisors important to your success, and describe their role and evidence of their commitment. Describe successful collaborations with these people or groups.

The board and staff are passionately committed to AMOS becoming the premier science center for WNC. Notable board members include Jon Neumann (Hedrick Industries), Drew Pollick (Eaton Corporation), Keith Krumpe (Dean of Natural Sciences at UNCA), and Tim Owen (NOAA). These individuals are pivotal to AMOS's future development, partnerships, and programming. AMOS's Spotlight Campaign director is Robert Wiltshire. With over 30 years of development experience, Robert is helping AMOS garner support from numerous community members who are passionate about science education. Robert helped assemble a Steering Committee to assist with development and branding for AMOS. Steering Committee members include Derek Allen, Jenny Dissen, Kerry Friedman, Chip Powell, and Kristie Quinn. Additional notable partners include Haizlip Studio and Sparc Design, who are designing the museum space and exhibits; Claire Callen, owner of the Wells Fargo building; and Robin Cape, with the Collider.

## Financial Information

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### Nonprofit financial assurance requirements:

Financial statements, prepared using a recognizable basis of accounting (i.e., modified accrual) and IRS Form 990s must be submitted to Buncombe County annually.

- Organizations with annual revenues of \$300,000 or greater must submit financial statements audited in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards.
- Those with revenues between \$100,000 and \$300,000 must submit financial statements reviewed in accordance with SSARS 19.
- Those with revenues of less than \$100,000 must submit non-disclosure financial statements compiled in accordance with SSARS 19.

All financial statements must be reported on by a certified public accountant and include a full balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement.

These requirements are considered minimum requirements. Organizations may submit a higher level of assurance than is required.

### IRS Form 990 - Upload Here

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the 990 form you most recently completed.

FY 2013 2014 990.pdf

**If your organization does not have a 990, briefly state the reason.**

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

N/A, the most recent completed 990 form has been uploaded.

**Financial Statements - Upload here**

Click Choose File to upload a copy of the most recently completed financial statements (audit, compilation or review).

**If your organization does not have financial statements, briefly state the reason.**

Include a statement of intent to comply with nonprofit financial assurance requirements as listed above.

Due to the fact that the Colburn's revenue exceeds \$300,000 annually, we have provided a copy of the most recent completed 990 form, per application instructions.

**Complete Budget Worksheet - Upload Here\***

Download the budget form [Here](#).

Complete the budget form for this project/program and the overall agency. Save it to your computer, then upload it by clicking Choose File.

Colburn AMOS community-funding-budget-form.pdf

**Budget Narrative\***

Describe all differences between current year and proposed year. List all pending funding sources with expected date of notification. Please detail any other information that may help clarify the budget.

The current year budget contains the majority of the capital improvements to the new location in the Wells Fargo building for the construction of AMOS. The proposed year budget is mostly operational costs, however, the \$125,000 proposed amount requested from the County Community Fund will cover the cost of new exhibits (\$75,000) and educational programming costs (\$50,000) for FY 2016/2017. Pending funding sources include the following foundations: Glass (1/16), Wells Fargo (4/16), Asheville Savings Bank (FY 16/17), Cannon (FY 16/17), SAS (FY 16/17), Morgan Stanley (FY 16/17), Parsec (FY 16/17), Z. Smith Reynolds (FY 16/17), Burroughs Welcome (FY 16/17), and PNC Bank (FY 16/17). Other pending funding sources for FY 15/16 include individual and commercial donations expected to total \$125,000 per a feasibility study conducted by Sims & Steele Consulting.

**What (if any) portion of requested funds will be used to support capital expenses?\***

Capital projects are defined as those used to acquire or upgrade physical assets such as property, buildings, or equipment. Please detail.

\$75,000 of requested funds is for capital expenses. AMOS will be acquiring several new interactive state-of-the-art exhibits in spring 2016. One will be Magic Planet®, a three dimensional projection on five foot diameter sphere showing the earth's surface features and climate data trends. Visitors will interact with the visual data by touch screen. A full size dinosaur skeleton will be purchased and kept on permanent display. Updated technology for all exhibits will keep the information fresh and dynamic. The space will be renovated from its existing open-plan offices to feature two classrooms, a larger gift shop, high quality exhibit cases and lighting, and a theater with tiered seating.

\$50,000 is requested for operational and educational expenses. Since so many people rely on our excellent educational programming, we will continue to provide education in some capacity regardless of the award amount.

## Employee Wages

Please provide information about the wage breakdowns of your employees. Living wage for Buncombe County has been identified as \$11.00 per hour for employees with employer-provided health insurance and \$12.50 per hour for employees without.

### Employees with employer-provided health insurance\*

List the number of employees in your organization with employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.

\$7.25 - \$10.99 per hour

\$11.00 - \$14.99 per hour

\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour

\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour

\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour

\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour

\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour

\$40.00+ per hour

Three full-time employees receive between \$11.00 - \$14.99 per hour and receive a \$200 monthly stipend for health insurance available to full-time employees. We anticipate to double our number of employees with the opening of AMOS to include more educators and development staff.

### Employees without employer-provided health insurance\*

List the number of employees in your organization without employer-provided health insurance in each wage category. For salaried employees, use hourly wage equivalents.



\$7.25 - \$12.49 per hour  
\$12.50 - \$14.99 per hour  
\$15.00 - \$19.99 per hour  
\$20.00 - \$24.99 per hour  
\$25.00 - \$29.99 per hour  
\$30.00 - \$34.99 per hour  
\$35.00 - \$39.99 per hour  
\$40.00+ per hour

Three part-time employees receive between \$12.50 - \$14.99 per hour and do not receive a monthly health insurance stipend due to their part-time status. We anticipate to double our number of employees with the opening of AMOS to include more educators and development staff.