

EPC Museum
(permanent name TBD)
Founding Director

The Board of the new EPC Museum seeks a dynamic, energetic leader to build and operate a world-class destination designed to inspire the next generation to dream, act and contribute.

Located in El Paso, Texas, a new family-oriented nonprofit museum is being developed to spark imaginations, curiosity, creativity and critical thinking through immersive, experiential learning environments. The new organization will provide an outward facing view of the world to people of all ages through hands-on, interactive exhibits, programs and special events.

There is palpable excitement and support for this project, from both the public and private sectors. This new museum will be a world-class destination for both residents and tourists.

The museum will be located at the heart of El Paso's Downtown Arts District, which welcomes 1.5M local, national and international visitors each year. The Arts District is home to the El Paso Museum of Art, the Museum of History, the only bilingual Holocaust museum in the country, artist lofts, award-winning performing arts venues, stadiums, a convention center, public art, festivals, green spaces, and more. The El Paso Streetcar Project, a 4.8 mile route that will run from Downtown to the University of Texas at El Paso and back with a station adjacent to the new museum, will be completed in 2018.

El Paso is a progressive city on the move. It is the 19th largest city in the country and has been ranked the safest large city in the US for four consecutive years. It is situated on the Rio Grande across the border from Ciudad Juárez, Chihuahua, Mexico. El Pasoans and their neighbors in Juárez consider themselves one community regardless of the border, interconnected through culture, family, and economies.

Most children in El Paso grow up with bilingual education. The city has a population of 700,000 and includes more than 100,000 enlisted soldiers and their families at Fort Bliss. The aptly named "Borderplex" (El Paso, Juarez, and Southern New Mexico) is the largest bilingual, bi-national workforce in the Western Hemisphere, and is the world's largest international border community with an approximate combined metropolitan population of over 2.6M.

El Paso is a thriving international city that plays a key role in world trade, manufacturing and distribution, and serves as a regional center to six universities, three medical schools, and four technology incubators. In the past ten years El Paso has seen \$2B in capital investments made in life sciences, education, research and commercialization. It has been said that "El Paso is doing more in 20 years than other cities do in 100."

The El Paso Community Foundation, which has invested more than \$60M into the Arts District, has committed considerable funds for exhibition development and start-up operations for the new museum, and has assembled a strong and supportive board of directors. The Foundation is the champion for this project and will work with the City to secure additional building funds if needed.

As part of a \$473M quality of life bond passed by voters in 2012, the 40,000 - 60,000 square foot museum will break ground in 2018 and is expected to be completed in 2020. Strategic master planning is underway with Gyroscope, Inc., an award winning museum planning, architecture and exhibitions design firm located in Oakland, CA. An architectural competition will launch soon with the architect selection in October, 2017. A permanent name will be chosen shortly.

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THE POSITION

The Founding Director (FD) will embrace and carry the dream, mission and vision for the new museum. He or she will assure that the building and exhibitions are of the highest quality and at the cutting edge of innovation, that the visitor experience is exceptional, the community is engaged, and there is a plan developed toward sustained earned and contributed revenue.

Reporting to the Board of Directors, the FD will work collaboratively with the exhibition and architectural firms, manage the overall build project, and will be the primary point person within the community, city government, business, potential funders, supporters and other stakeholders.

The FD will build a team as the project scales and nears opening, and will be responsible for developing the staff and operating plans, earned and contributed revenue, marketing/external relations, educational programming and outreach. He or she will lead the institution as it ignites a love of lifelong learning through innovative, exciting, engaging, fun and enriching educational experiences for children, families and educators.

ONGOING RESPONSIBILITIES

LEADERSHIP & GENERAL MANAGEMENT

- With the Board, understand and be an ambassador for the mission of the museum and communicate its relevance in El Paso, the broader region, and with like-minded experiential, active learning institutions nationally and internationally;
- Work with design and development teams to build a world-class venue. This includes interaction with architects, contractors and vendors, to maintain schedules, standards of quality and overall building needs; monitor schedules and cash flows; maintain accurate records; remain in frequent contact with the Board and update progress toward goals;
- Develop the museum's strategic operating plan for pre-opening, and 3-5 years beyond;
- Recruit, hire, supervise, motivate, develop and evaluate staff, ensure that staffing is appropriate to meet the organization's goals;
- Manage the business affairs of the museum; develop organizational and HR policies and procedures; ensure that the organization's finances are responsibly managed, that strong controls are in place, and that financial reports and other documents are prepared in a timely and accurate manner;
- Provide for appropriately scaled, lean information technology and other management systems.

VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- Work with exhibition developers, designers and staff to create a long-range plan to continually refresh and enrich the museum's exhibits;
- Have a keen eye toward the diverse needs of people who will interact with the space (ages 0-100, families with strollers, accessibility and families with special needs, school groups, etc.) so that the museum feels effortless and welcoming; ensure that all materials and text are bilingual English/Spanish;
- Leverage the space in ways that deepen the visitors' experience and inspire return visits;
- Oversee the preservation and high-quality maintenance of the museum's physical assets (the exhibits, the building and infrastructure).

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EDUCATIONAL AND PUBLIC PROGRAMMING

- Assume a leadership role in developing robust educational programs/camps for young children, youth, teens and families that inspire them to dream, act and contribute;
- Develop adult and junior docent and volunteer programs, internships, and community college partnerships;
- Develop symposia, lectures, and events that draws technologists, scientists, artists, educators, performers and other leaders in the field that capture the attention of adult participants;
- Encourage educators, artists and makers in the region to contribute ideas, creativity and resources to ensure the museum stays at the cutting edge of interactive learning experiences.

CONTRIBUTED AND EARNED INCOME

- Serve as the chief fundraiser for the museum; work closely with staff, the Board, and advisors to expand and diversify earned revenue streams from admissions, membership, licensing, facility rentals, concessions and other sources;
- Set high expectations for contributed support from foundations, corporations, individuals, governments and other philanthropic sources for the museum's programs and exhibitions;
- Work with the board to establish an endowment, enabling the museum to continually upgrade exhibitions, enhance the facility, and provide for financial stability as the institution matures.

MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Pre-opening and beyond, expand the reach so the museum is known as a must-visit/experience in El Paso, and that the reputation becomes widely known for its innovative and cutting-edge practice;
- Reach audiences by both traditional and technological means; employ social media as the way to target parents, teens, adults, educators, strategic partners, guest speakers/curators, visitors to El Paso, etc.;
- Develop partnerships with other museums and attractions, schools, universities, patrons, volunteers and other community members; serve as an advocate for the organization, assuring that the interests of the museum are advanced and fully understood.

GOVERNANCE

- With the Board, set the strategic direction for museum; implement board policies, goals, priorities and objectives; keep the Board informed of all relevant issues;
- Identify and help recruit new board members with the intent of deepening the museum's connection to the community;
- Work with the Board Chair to cultivate a mutually supportive relationship with stakeholders that are important to the future of the institution.

IDEAL EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS

The ideal candidate should have the following experience and qualifications:

- Strong management and leadership responsibility in a museum, cultural, education or related institution that attracts a similar audience, is known for innovative programming, and is deeply rooted to the needs and demographics of the community;

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- Led or worked as part of the core team that delivered, built or expanded a cultural institution of this scale;
- A deep understanding of how young people learn; a passion for the “game changing” value of education; the role and value of life-long informal learning environments, experience working with scholars and educational leaders as active and valued collaborators;
- Demonstrated ability to select and shape exhibitions that appeal to different age cohorts;
- An extensive background and/or the ability to work successfully with donors, community members, boards of directors and other stakeholders to strengthen the museum; measurable and successful results in raising funds and in identifying, cultivating and soliciting donors and other sources of revenue;
- A detailed understanding of operations and financial management in the for-profit or nonprofit world, with a particular understanding of nonprofit revenue and expense models;
- Outstanding oral and written communication skills, including the means to address issues in non-confrontational and non-polarizing ways, but nevertheless with determination; and a track record as an effective leader.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The successful candidate should be:

- An individual who gets their energy from the intended chaos of active learning; a leader adept at planning, prioritizing, organizing and following through; a hard worker with a high output level;
- An individual who thrives on start-ups tasks, can wear many hats, and enjoys challenges;
- A team player and team builder who is a good listener and strategist comfortable receiving input from many sources; a graceful communicator able to connect with a broad spectrum of people;
- A person who cultivates trust and engages the interest of constituents; an individual who is straight-forward, shares information easily, receives as well as gives advice, and respects the abilities of others;
- A collaborator who thrives on entrepreneurial partnerships of community significance.
- An individual possessing a sense of humor, who is able to maintain balance and perspective.

For more information please contact:

Lisa Grossman – San Francisco
(650) 323-3565 lisag@moppenheim.com

Lee Kappleman – Washington DC/Baltimore
(202)803-6674 leek@moppenheim.com

m/Oppenheim Associates
425 Market Street, Suite 1020
San Francisco, CA 94105