

Statewide School Initiative



Support from the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund of the Minnesota Legacy Amendment has generously enabled the Science Museum of Minnesota to **reach students and teachers in all 87 Minnesota counties** with valuable science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) programming. Last year, over 160,000 students and teachers participated in field trips or programs; and the museum's Teacher Professional Development Group reached teachers and administrators from 33 Minnesota school districts.

With support from previous Legacy funds, the Science Museum implemented initiatives to ensure that a field trip to the museum is a valuable use of instructional time and meets the needs of the schools we serve. We also send science instructors through statewide outreach to Greater Minnesota schools to provide excellent programming and assemblies, featuring hands-on, interactive STEM learning experiences. Per teacher surveys:

- **94% of teachers said their field trip to the Science Museum met their learning goals.**
- **75% of teachers said a Science Museum field trip supported academic standards.**

With Legacy funding in the FY16-17 biennium, we will provide programming to the entire state of Minnesota, bringing science education into the classroom and offering programs at the museum designed for school groups. We are proud of our long history of serving schools and Legacy funds in the FY16-17 biennium would be used wisely to meet the needs of today's students and teachers.

“Having exhibits that support or reinforce a standard is just what is needed to cement learning for students.”

-Teacher feedback

“The Science Museum’s outreach programs are such a valuable science resource for our school. They bring real-life science experiences to the students in a way most classrooms cannot provide.”

-Teacher feedback

"We have had the good fortune of experiencing many wonderful professional development opportunities in our combined 30 years of teaching, and we can confidently say that Nexus [Science House professional development] has been the most significant professional development program we have experienced."

-Teacher professional development participant



***RACE: Are We So Different?* Exhibition—School Programs**

The award-winning ***RACE: Are We So Different?*** exhibition, which was developed by the Science Museum of Minnesota and premiered in Saint Paul in 2007, will return for a 30-month residency in the fall of 2015. In 2007, the exhibition drew 250,000 visitors in five months. Over 66,000 of these visitors were school groups, primarily high school students. Since 2007, the exhibition has been seen by more than 4 million people.

Race and racism affects students and families in myriad ways throughout Minnesota. Due to the critical and timely importance of this topic, the Science Museum is requesting Legacy funding to produce and deliver programs for schools statewide to extend the conversation far beyond the walls of the museum.

During the FY16-17 biennium, the Science Museum will use the ***RACE*** exhibition as a thematic springboard to frame school field trips, outreach programming, and teacher professional development around equity and educational disparities, particularly in the STEM fields. Key project components are described as follows:

- **Develop a *RACE* Curriculum for Schools:** Legacy funds will be used to develop curriculum around the ***RACE*** exhibition that will be aligned with Minnesota academic standards. Museum staff will work with educators to develop standards-aligned materials, including multimedia and online resources that will support classroom teachers across the state in continuing the conversation on race.
- **Develop *RACE* Programming for Schools:** The Science Museum will develop program packages for school audiences for the ***RACE*** exhibition that will combine curriculum resources, programming and the exhibit experience into a valuable learning experience for students. The museum will conduct school programs serving communities statewide and will partner collaboratively when possible to leverage Legacy resources, e.g., the Science Museum has been named a grantee of the Saint Paul Knight Arts Challenge, a program of the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation, to explore race and racism through workshops paired with the ***RACE*** exhibition. The workshops will be led by Penumbra Theatre and will be grounded in theater techniques. Focus age groups include middle school and high school students across Minnesota.
- **Provide Teacher Professional Development:** The Science Museum's Teacher Professional Development Group (TPDG) is a leading provider of professional development for Minnesota STEM educators across the state. Its mission is to increase STEM literacy and eliminate achievement disparities in math and science. Funding is requested to develop and conduct intensive 5-day summer institutes for teachers at the Science House on the museum campus. The institutes will be held at the Science Museum campus but will serve teachers across Minnesota, including those from Greater Minnesota school districts. The ***RACE*** exhibition will be extensively used to address issues of educational disparities and equity, as well as closing the achievement gap in Minnesota.