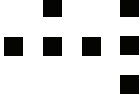




ANNUAL IMPACT REPORT

July 2022 - June 2023

SPARK's Mission is to enrich the lives of young learners by creating shared, interactive experiences that engage people of all ages in the joy of play, the power of learning, and a sense of community.



Your support of SPARK is helping our community thrive

Thank you for taking the time to review SPARK's Annual Impact Report.

Most importantly, thank you for your support of our children's museum. This is our community's safe place for all families to experience joy and wonder, and we could not have accomplished this work without YOU. From keeping our googly eyes and glue sticks stocked to making sure our exhibits remain safe, accessible, and fun, your support is humbling. You'll have a chance to read measurable data which shows how SPARK is supporting the needs of our community. Since our doors opened in August 2020, **more than 181,000 visits** have occurred. We're proud to be a destination in Olmsted County where memories are formed, and play leads to critical developmental milestones like creative thinking, language, problem-solving, and collaborative play.

As a nonprofit organization that continues to grow, it is worth noting that general admission and membership sales cover only a portion of our operating costs. SPARK relies on contributions from individuals, corporations, and foundations to fulfill our mission.

Please know we are **forever grateful** for our loyal supporters, hard-working volunteers, and dedicated staff. With your help, the museum continues to deliver life-changing moments.

Tim Deutsch
Board of Directors, Chair

Heather Nessler
Executive Director

YOUR SUPPORT MATTERS

Ways you can contribute:



Donate



Volunteer



Partner



Member

SUSTAINABILITY

How is the museum funded?



- Admissions & Memberships 42%
- Sponsorships 20%
- Grants & Foundations 9%
- Other Contributed 9%
- Individual Donors 8%
- Other Earned 7%
- Parties, Camps, & Field Trips 5%

**unaudited financials*

As a 501(c)(3) community supported non-profit organization, SPARK relies on the support of individuals, corporations, foundations, volunteers, and community members.

COMMUNITY ACCESS

Serving our community is critical to our mission. We know that removing barriers to access is vital to that aim. In our community, more than 42% of families are receiving financial assistance through the Free or Reduced Lunch Program (data provided by the February 2023 Minnesota Report Card demographics for Rochester Public Schools). This is why SPARK offers Community Events, at no charge, after hours each month to organizations that provide direct services to families who are historically marginalized and experience discrimination of any kind due to race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, economic status, culture, and language for example. In fact, access to the museum via free or reduced admission has increased by 1800% since SPARK opened its doors in August 2020.

“ After a long day of appointments, a trip to SPARK is the perfect way for a child to unwind and forget about the pokes, tests, and heartache. The partnership between SPARK and Ronald McDonald House through community access nights creates an environment where kids can be kids and parents can lean on one another for support. At SPARK, families are able to create positive memories during some of the most difficult days of their lives - *Angela Christensen, Ronald McDonald House Midwest*

Organizations we've hosted this year:

Families First of MN - Head Start

Ronald McDonald House Charities Midwest MN, WI, IA

Parents of Incarcerated Sons and Daughters (POISD)

American Indian Education Department of Rochester Public Schools

Alliance of Chicanos, Hispanics, and Latin Americans (ACHLA)

Gage Full-Service Elementary School

Overland Elementary School

Pamoja Women

MUSEUM TO GO

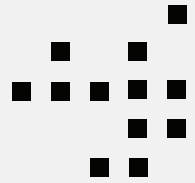
Museum to Go is a traveling program often seen in schools, hospitals, and other youth-serving organizations. The program is all about boosting critical thinking through fun, playful challenges. With a focus on literacy, math, science, art, technology, collaboration, as well as independence, the goal of this traveling program is for children to learn and gain skills through play.

While schools support learning around a wide range of topics, children's museums bring play into the equation, which is critical to the healthy social, emotional, and cognitive development of all children. At SPARK, we are an advocate for children, and pursuing equity and inclusion is a best practice that reflects our commitment to serving all children and families whether it's within our four walls or elsewhere.

“ Students have found these experiences very enjoyable. One student mentioned, after the class on felting, that he was happy to have the pot holder because he loves to help his mom cook in the kitchen and now he felt like he was contributing more. After the reader's theater course, a girl shouted, 'This is my jam!' Another responded, 'Best day ever!' Students truly appreciate and enjoy the vast experiences Museum to Go provides. - *Danielle Olson, Riverside Elementary School*



Economic Impact



SPARK is a community anchor, serving our region with hands-on interactive exhibits and educational programming. Our visitors come from all over the world. Nationally, museums generate more than \$50 billion in direct and indirect spending, as reported by the American Alliance of Museums.

72,476

visitors this fiscal year

1,264

community members connected through SPARK's Museum to Go

688

volunteer hours

9,296 visitors

attended the museum for free or reduced admission

1,555

annual member families

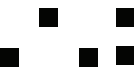
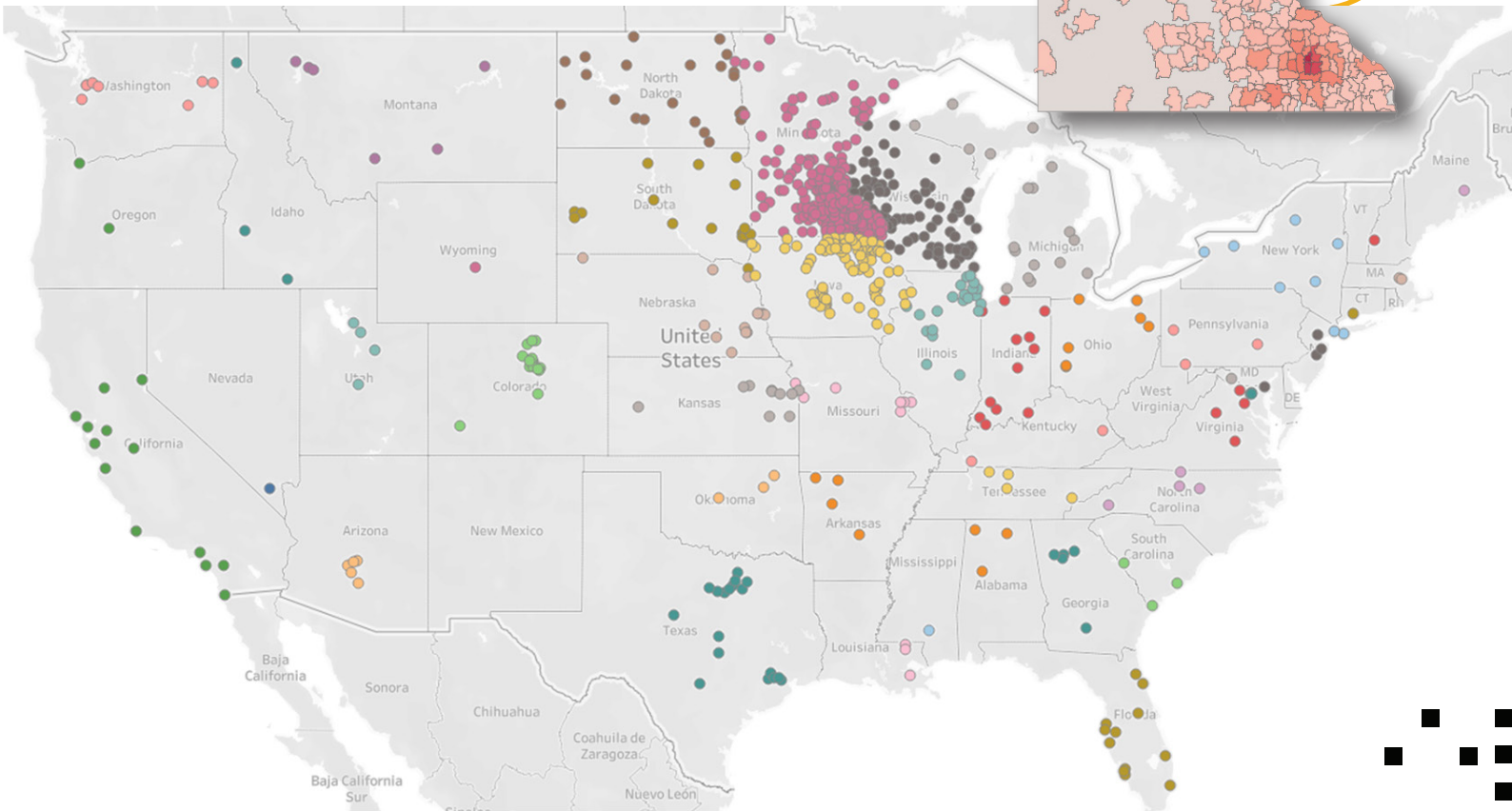
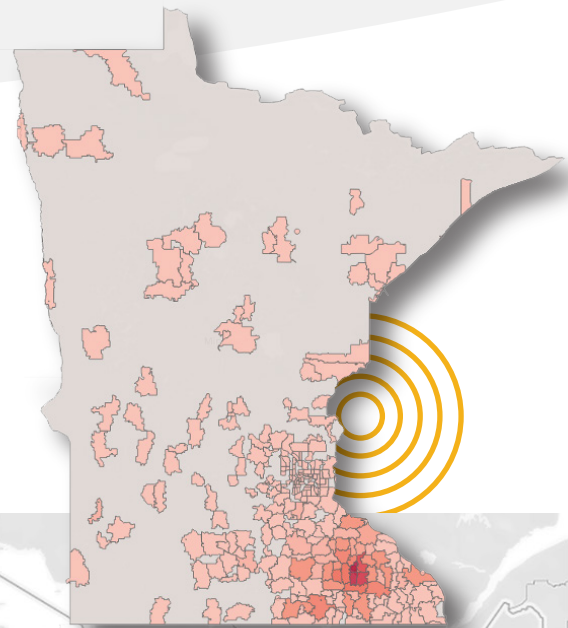


58 out of 87

Minnesota counties represented

47 states

represented, 95% of visitors from Minnesota



Program Impact

Our programs are centered around the whole family while celebrating children's well-being, creativity, spirit, and imagination. According to Nickelodeon, 46% of kids don't feel powerful enough to create change in their day-to-day lives. But at SPARK, children have a voice, which helps them advocate for themselves, problem solve, support positive mental health, plan for their future, stay safe, and deal with uncertainty.

507 programs

offered in Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, & Math (STEAM), Health & Wellness, Culture, and Literacy

14 New Programs

were added including Sign-language Story Time, Marionette Puppet Show, Women in Science, Black Artist Series, Mayo Clinic Pharmacy Program, and Olmsted County Breast Feeding Coalition

90 SPARKAMP

attendees in nine different camps

56 community partners

shared their time and talents at SPARK

480 students

served during local school field trips



Discovery Play

Because some families require a sensory-friendly environment, sound and light reduction, and fewer people in the museum, SPARK offers Discovery Play each month. This program is offered for free to families needing special accommodations, to experience the museum on their own terms while providing a fun, safe environment for families to develop relationships with others. Programming partners include Healing Rhythms Music Therapy, offering music and movement.

93 Discovery Play attendees for a sensory-friendly experience



Grandparents Play Free

Intergenerational programming is an important part of who we are at SPARK. 88% of older adults reported fewer feelings of isolation after two years of intergenerational programming, and 84% reported better or more stable health (National Institute of Health). The benefits of intergenerational programming are realized in youth, too. Interacting with older adults helps young people develop communication skills, positive attitudes about aging, problem-solving abilities, social networks, and a sense of purpose. This symbiotic relationship is celebrated every Tuesday at SPARK where grandparents play for free, all day long.

682 grand parents played for free on Tuesdays



“ I took a 3 yr old to SPARK, and she absolutely loved it. So much to see, experience, and do! A lot of thought went into creating this magical playland. Fun for adults too. On Tuesdays, grandparents get in FREE. - Lisa W, grandparent

Signature Events



SPARKLE SPARK's annual New Year's Eve daytime celebration features family-friendly entertainment, activities, and the iconic ball drop in the museum. On December 31, 2022, 320 individuals danced, played, and celebrated in their sparkly best.



Great Cardboard Sled Race This community event occurs at a sledding hill and brings families and friends together for a great winter event. In 2023, SPARK celebrated the 10th year of this event with 120 individuals who cheered on their favorite cardboard sled and delighted in brownies, cookies, and hot chocolate.



Movie in the Park You're killin' me, Smalls! SPARK presented The Sandlot in August 2022 at no cost to 275 individuals at Mayo Field, home of the Rochester Honkers baseball team. The evening began with activities and games and free concessions.



Play it Forward Occurring under the big top tent at SPARK, our annual fundraiser drew more than 275 attendees who played games, won prizes, and enjoyed carnival-themed appetizers throughout the evening in August, netting \$96,900.



SPARKTACULAR A warm, safe evening of Halloween activities and museum exploration, concluding with a costume parade through the Apache Mall. October 2022's event provided entertainment and fun to 160 individuals.



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Thank you to this fiscal year's supporters (July 2022 - June 2023) for helping create positive experiences for thousands of individuals. We are grateful that you, along with our community, are helping further our mission.

Corporate, Foundations, and Government Contributors

\$50,000 and above

Mayo Clinic
Minnesota Department of Education

\$25,000 - \$49,999

Altra Federal Credit Union
Minnesota State Arts Board

\$10,000 - \$24,999

Carl and Verna Schmidt Foundation
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\$5,000 - \$9,999

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WSB

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Enterprise Holdings Foundation
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Metronet
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Minnesota Energy Resources
Pace International
People's Energy Cooperative
Prairie Island Indian Community
Premier Banks
Respira
Rochester Central Lutheran School
Waste Management Corporation
West Bank
Wiseth Smith Nolting

\$250 - \$999

Accord Electric
Benike Construction
Bleu Duck Kitchen & Bar
Cambria
Express Employment Professionals
First Security Bank
Heartland Gun Club
HGA Architects and Engineers
IBM International Foundation
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1201 12th Street SW Suite 632
Rochester, MN 55902
(507) 218-3100
SPARKRochesterMN.org

Heather Nessler, Executive Director
hnessler@sparkrochestermn.org
507-218-3102

Lindsey Hemker, Development Manager
lhemker@sparkrochestermn.org
507-218-3104