

Children's MUSEUM

OUR CASE FOR SUPPORT





Who We Are

Play Matters.

The **London Children's Museum's** mission is to curate powerful play experiences through immersive environments, authentic materials, and meaningful relationships. As a champion for children, we advocate for their unique perspectives, contributions, and ways of learning. Our vision is a community where children's voices are honoured, play is valued, and lives are transformed by a love of learning.

The London Children's Museum understands that **learning happens when children play**. Play counters stress and anxiety. It builds resilience and helps children process change and adversity. It promotes empathy, inclusion, and a sense of belonging. Play is essential to every child's healthy growth and development.

Through **hands-on learning experiences**, the London Children's Museum:

- Encourages children's healthy social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth
- Nurtures curiosity, creativity, experimentation, and innovation
- Promotes critical thinking and problem-solving
- Cultivates interest in science, technology, art, history, culture, and nature
- Offers a safe and welcoming environment for all children and families
- Encourages friends, families, and community members to learn alongside one another

Our Work

Exhibits & Collections

- 8 Hands-On Exhibits
- 7,000 Artifacts
- Pop-Up Exhibits
- Collections Interactions

Public Programs

- Daily Demonstrations
- Early Years Programs
- STEAM Programs
- Day Camp
- Birthday Parties

Education Programs

- At the Museum
- In the Classroom
- Virtual Field Trips
- Museum School
- Edukits

Accessibility

- Free Family Fun Night
- Partner Nights
- Outreaches
- Low Sensory Nights
- Sensory Kits

By the Numbers

In 2022-2023, the London Children's Museum:

- Provided **95,000** visitors with meaningful learning experiences
- Housed **8** interactive and engaging exhibits
- Cared for **7,000** artifacts in our permanent collection
- Delivered **400** education programs to **7,500** students in classrooms
- Provided **150** education programs to **3,500** students on-site
- Supported **240** families with subsidized memberships & day camps
- Facilitated **24** community outreaches
- Hosted **12** Low Sensory Nights



A Case for Children's Museums

Our work is powerful. Our work is important.

Caregivers want the best for their children. Over the last few years, families have experienced heightened stress, increased financial challenges, and fewer opportunities to simply play. Resources are stretched thin, making it more difficult for children to engage in **meaningful learning opportunities that best support their social, emotional, cognitive, and physical growth**. The London Children's Museum responds directly to these challenges by:

Celebrating Childhood

The London Children's Museum is a place where children are free from agendas, prescribed outcomes, and over-scheduling. We allow children to explore at their own pace and celebrate their unique ideas.

Promoting Development

Play promotes critical thinking, problem solving, and executive functioning skills. Engaging exhibits and programs at the London Children's Museum encourage children's creativity, cultivate collaboration, and promote physical literacy.

Nurturing Curiosity

Children are competent and curious learners. Through play and exploration, the London Children's Museum empowers children to explore intense interests and become the directors of their own learning.

Building Community

The London Children's Museum is an open and welcoming space that honours all children and families. Interactive exhibits, programs, and special guests allow visitors to build shared experiences, explore different perspectives, encounter new ideas, and make new friends.

Expanding Quality Time

The London Children's Museum is a space where families can slow down, spend time together, and connect in meaningful ways. It is a place away from distractions, where parents and caregivers create memories and strengthen relationships with their children.

Creating Possibilities

Hands-on exhibits and programs allow children to become astronauts, artists, doctors, caretakers, and more. With opportunities to explore interests, develop new skills, and build confidence, the London Children's Museum allows visitors to dream big.



A Case for Children's Museums

Working Towards Equity

The London Children's Museum has a critical role to play in addressing economic inequities, racial injustice, and calls for Truth & Reconciliation. Every child deserves access to safe, engaging, and culturally relevant educational experiences. Through community curators, organizational partnerships, and innovators-in-residence, the new London Children's Museum will celebrate numerous ways of knowing and being. A robust subsidy program will continue to ensure all families, regardless of socioeconomic status, have access to our services.



Where We're Going

To better deliver on our mission, we are building a new home at **100 Kellogg**. This **state-of-the-art educational and cultural destination** will allow visitors to explore a space designed to support their wonder and curiosity.

A \$23 million campaign will support the construction of eight immersive and interactive galleries. More importantly, it will allow children to access learning opportunities essential to their healthy growth and development.



"After a visit with our dear friends in Boston and a visit to the Children's Museum there, my path became clear! My Dream! With the help of all my family and friends, the germ of an idea of a children's museum for London was born... Now, a new plan is afoot. The London Children's Museum will be moving to 100 Kellogg. With such interesting spaces and thoughtful exhibits, I am sure it will be a resounding success! Hallelujah and Bon Voyage!"

- Carol Johnston, London Children's Museum Founder
Excerpt from her self-authored obituary

A Time for Change

More than 45 years ago, our founder Carol Johnston called on our community to help build **Canada's first children's museum** here in London, Ontario. Carol assembled a group of forward-thinking educators, tenacious leaders, and skilled community members who secured our first location on Dundas Street. In 1982, after outgrowing this space, we relocated to what would be our home for the next several decades: an old school on Wharncliffe Road.

After more than 40 years in the same location, and with over **3 million visitors**, our beloved building on Wharncliffe Road has seen a lot of play. Decades of visitors, staff, and volunteers can speak to the endless laughter and learning that have filled these walls. Time and time again, we hear generations of Londoners, Ontarians, and tourists share the lifelong impact of their experiences at the London Children's Museum.

However, **there have also been challenges**. The age, structure, and maintenance needs of the building have imposed limitations on new exhibits and programs. The current space inhibits our ability to create new, dynamic content that aligns with the needs and interests of today's children and families. Spread over three floors, the current building has limited accessibility and is increasingly at capacity.

Our new home at 100 Kellogg is essential to ensure more interactive play, innovative exhibits, and shared spaces where all children can learn and grow through play for years to come.



Why a New London Children's Museum?

Children need us now more than ever.

Growing Attendance

In the five years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, London Children's Museum attendance grew 25%, reaching nearly 90,000 individuals annually. Attendance has now increased another 10% over 2019. A new location is key to meeting this growing demand. The new London Children's Museum will engage more than 145,000 visitors annually.

More Square Footage

The current London Children's Museum at 21 Wharncliffe Rd S only supports 11,000 sq ft of exhibit space. With over 36,000 sq ft of open concept space, the new London Children's Museum will nearly double exhibit square footage. An expanded 1,300 sq ft collections room will support the care and display of over 7,000 artifacts.

Innovative Exhibits

The new London Children's Museum will feature eight immersive galleries. Thoughtfully and intentionally designed, these exhibits reflect the principles of play-based, child-centred learning. Incorporating diverse voices and perspectives, these exhibits weave a story of the community's river, forest, industry, and agriculture.

Inclusion & Accessibility

The new London Children's Museum was designed in consultation with visitors, partner organizations, and accessibility specialists. An accessible treehouse, dig pit, water table, and customizable lighting ensure exhibits are available to all visitors. Quiet spaces, feeding areas, and accessible washrooms allow families to participate in a space designed specifically for them.

Financial Accessibility

1 in 4 children in London live in poverty. The London Children's Museum's robust subsidy program provides hundreds of families with access to memberships, admissions, and day camps. Free programming will continue in our new home, including Free Family Fun Nights, Partner Nights, and Low Sensory Nights.

Expanded Audience

Children aged 9-12 have been challenged with increased social isolation and screen time, resulting in stress, anxiety, and decreased self-regulation. New exhibits and programs at the London Children's Museum will allow us to engage older children in hands-on science, technology, and arts, allowing them to indulge their interests and build real world skills in a community setting.



"Now, more than ever, children need play. It is an essential part of their overall health, happiness, and wellbeing. By providing children with accessible play experiences, the London Children's Museum acts as an essential community service. Every child deserves the opportunity to laugh, learn, and experience the uninhibited joy of play."

- Kate Ledgley, Executive Director
London Children's Museum



"The London Children's Museum allows my family to spend time together, making lasting memories during this precious time in their young lives. I am thrilled we will one day be able to experience the new London Children's Museum together. Projects like this make me proud to call London home."

- Amanda Bruner, Member
London Children's Museum





Community Impact

The London Children's Museum is **essential to our community's cultural, social, educational, and economic landscape**. As one of only nine children's museums in Canada, we are a defining feature of this city. Incorporated in 1977, the London Children's Museum is tightly woven into the memories of millions of children throughout the region.

The new London Children's Museum will:

- Contribute **\$6.4 million** annually to the local economy
- Provide **145,000 annual visitors** with engaging learning experiences
- Become a desirable destination for **58,000 annual tourists**
- Make London an **ideal place for families** to live and grow
- Contribute to the **attraction and retention of residents**
- Generate **meaningful employment**, volunteer, and cooperative education opportunities
- Extend classroom learning through **field trips, education programs, and day camps**
- Support the **revitalization of London's Old East Village**
- Supply **59% more families** with access to subsidy programs, memberships and free admissions

A New Home

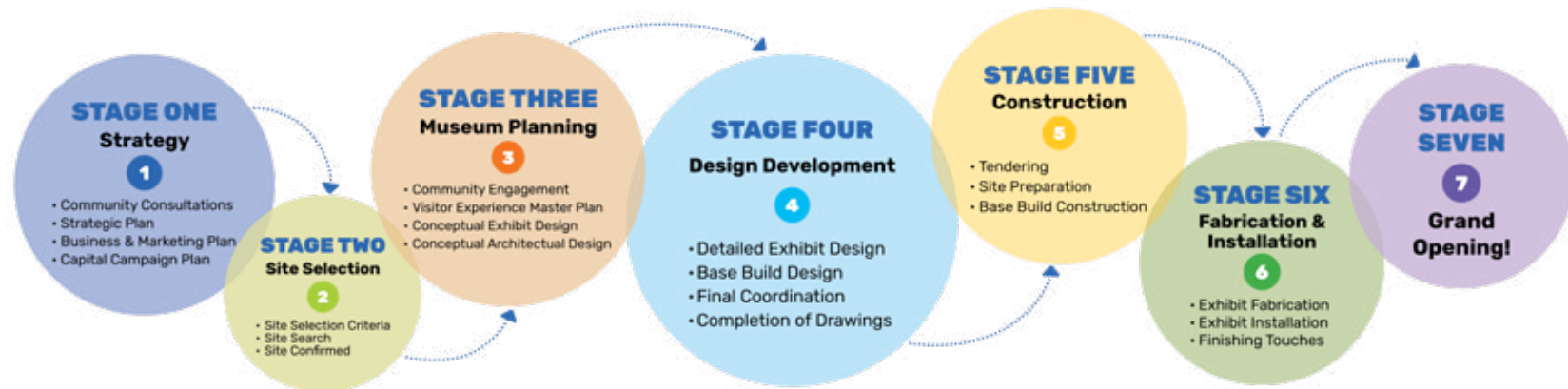
Igniting Imagination, Investing in the Future

The new London Children's Museum at 100 Kellogg is the result of input from over **500 children, families, and community members**. Years of thoughtful consultations, workshops, surveys, interviews, dream camps, and in-depth conversations have informed every step of the planning and design process. From the floor plan to exhibit themes, the new London Children's Museum is a **museum designed for children, by children**.

Working alongside Gyroscope Inc., Cornerstone Architecture, Reich + Petch, Skolnick Architecture & Design Partnership, and michael + clarke construction, the London Children's Museum has completed a master plan, detailed exhibit design, and architectural planning. We are expected to enter stage seven in late 2024.

Campaign Plan

The London Children's Museum has embarked on a **\$23M** fundraising campaign. A **\$5M Community Phase** of this campaign will finalize the project, making our community's vision for a new London Children's Museum a reality.





“Charitable donations to the London Children’s Museum are a lasting and meaningful investment. By supporting the new London Children’s Museum, we are supporting new opportunities for children to fall in love with learning.”

- Bill Tucker, Campaign Chair
London Children’s Museum



Help Us Build

The London Children's Museum is a **vital hub of play, learning, and discovery** for children in London, the region, and beyond. To continue providing enriching educational experiences, we need your financial support. **Every contribution to the campaign is significant.** Each gift:

- Is a lasting and meaningful investment in children and their futures
- Provides children with memorable learning experiences
- Promotes children's positive cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development
- Removes barriers for children in under-served communities
- Contributes to a thriving and distinct local community
- Shapes positive family interactions
- Supports financially, physically, and culturally accessible educational opportunities
- Makes London an incredible place for children and families to live and grow

We invite you to help provide enriching learning experiences for children and their families. We ask you to consider a financial contribution to this important project.

We extend our **heartfelt gratitude** to all our donors for their unwavering support of the London Children's Museum. We thank potential new donors for considering this project. **Your belief in our mission will allow children to access meaningful learning experiences for generations to come.**

Ways to Give

To make a financial contribution, contact:

Christine Walker, Director of Development
christine@londonchildrensmuseum.ca
519.434.5726 ext. 227

London Regional Children's Museum
21 Wharncliffe Rd S, London ON, N6J 4G5
Charitable Registration No. 10808 7263 RR0001

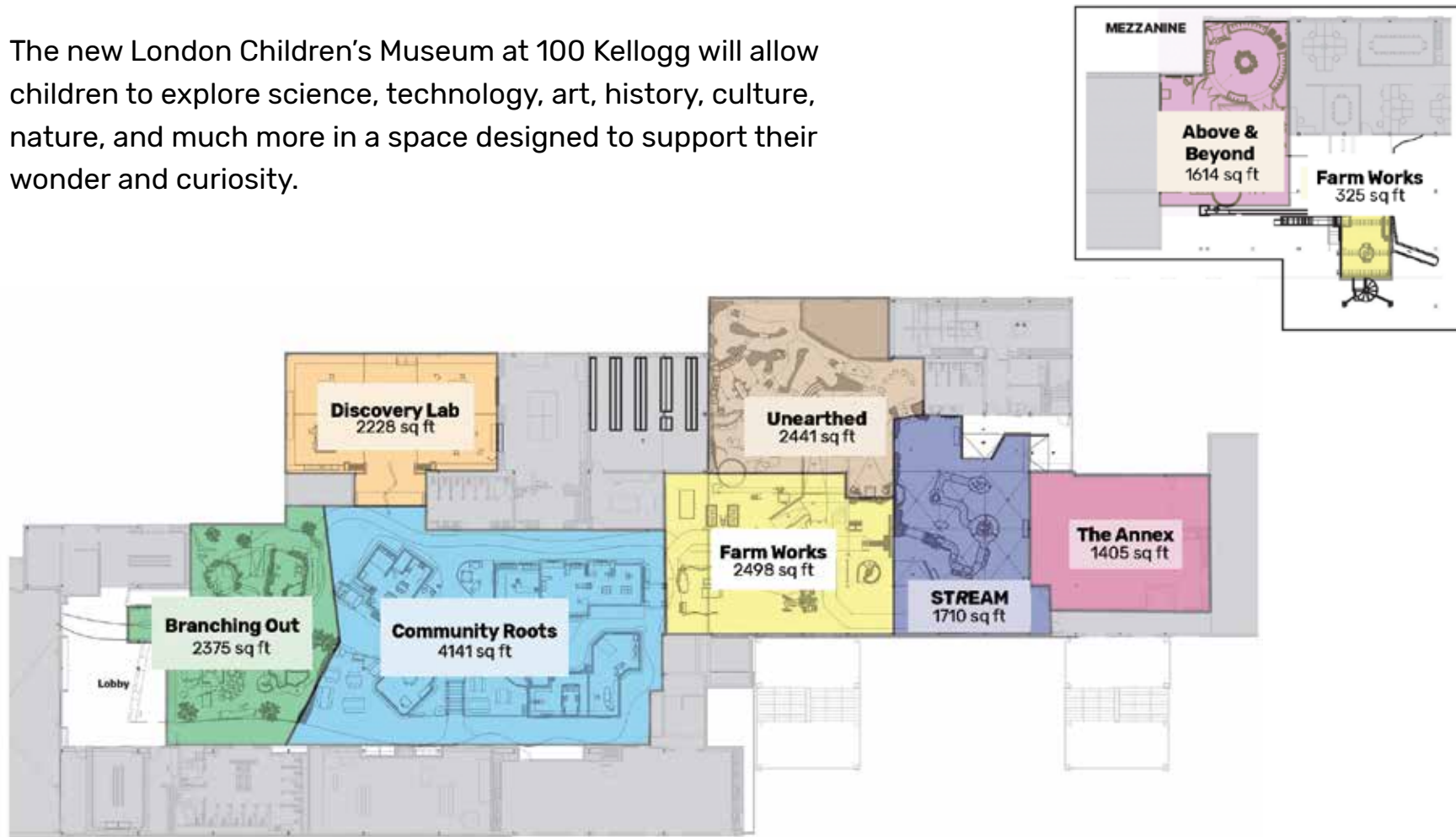


Learn More

londonchildrensmuseum.ca/donate

A State-of-the-Art Educational and Cultural Destination

The new London Children's Museum at 100 Kellogg will allow children to explore science, technology, art, history, culture, nature, and much more in a space designed to support their wonder and curiosity.





Branching Out

A treehouse village in a forest full of dancing light and wildlife hideaways encourages visitors to climb, crawl, balance, and explore. Through multi-level and accessible treehouses, children discover big-body movement, natural exploration, and artifact surprises. With opportunities to layer in Indigenous teachings through community partnerships and special guests, Branching Out expresses the interconnectedness of living things.



Discovery Lab

An interdisciplinary space designed for visitors to take part in STEAM-based creativity through tinkering, making, crafting, designing, experimenting, and hacking. Visitors engage in self-directed making, collaborative projects, and staff-facilitated workshops. This gallery includes tools and materials that allow visitors to build on their skills, take risks, and follow their creative instincts.



Community Roots

This child-sized town allows visitors to take on roles of vital community members. Familiar community spaces such as a Neighbourhood Market, Restaurant, Rescue Headquarters, Wellness Centre, School, and Home present opportunities for imaginative and collaborative play. Local culture and history come to life in the buildings inspired by London's architecture, street art, and spaces designed for communal gathering and storytelling.



Farm Works

A Farm and Factory tell the story of the region's manufacturing, industrial, and agricultural history, helping visitors make connections about how food is produced, processed, and sold. On the ground floor, visitors explore a farm environment, interact with farm animals, investigate large farm equipment, discover a corn field, and plant and harvest produce. On the upper level, chutes, pulleys, and gears work together to keep the factory running.



Unearthed

Visitors explore the world of dinosaurs by uncovering bones, rocks, and minerals before taking objects into the field lab for further research and investigation. An accessible Dig Pit encourages visitors to indulge their senses, while a fully outfitted Dig Lab generates new answers and ideas. Deeper into the exhibit, children discover an immense cave system where they practice spelunking, find mineral deposits, discover cave ecosystems, and explore an ice cave.



Above & Beyond

From Earth to outer space and back again, children let their curiosity soar to the outer reaches of the universe in this exhibit. Visitors investigate the principles of astronomy, become astronauts, and blast off to the International Space Station. A digital planetarium invites children to explore the galaxy, fostering curiosity about stars, planets, and constellations.



STREAM

Taking inspiration from the Thames River (Deshkan Ziibi, Antler River), STREAM is an exploration of water physics and life on the water. The river emerges from a rock bed high overhead, making its way down a waterfall and over an aqueduct to fill a 21-meter-long water table. Visitors investigate wildlife, flood plains, and bridges. With opportunities to layer in Indigenous teachings about our precious waterways, STREAM allows children to become stewards of the environment.



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June 2023