

GODDARD SPACE FLIGHT CENTER VISITOR CENTER FISCAL YEAR 2009 FUNDS SUMMARY

Prepared and Submitted by Carmel Conaty, Informal Education Lead, Phone:
301-286-7996

For 2009 the GSFC VC funding was once shared by 1) the Greenbelt Visitor Center and 2) the Wallops Visitor Center. There were four main areas in which the funding was spent:

1. Feasibility study for a new Visitor Center at Greenbelt.
2. Technology support for implementation of an educational virtual and phone tour of Goddard to augment the physical tours currently offered by the Visitor Center. Transfer and deployment of NASA Science on a Sphere (SOS) education content to all spherical display technology users.
3. Procurement of new technology education exhibits including portable Magic Planets and Touch Tables for both Wallops and Greenbelt Visitor Centers.
4. Informal Education Workshop for museum educators in the Goddard Region.

1. Name of Project: Feasibility study for a new Visitor Center at Goddard in Greenbelt.

Administered by: Lord Cultural Associates
Type of Agreement: Contract
Project Manager: Kris Brown
Center: Goddard Space Flight Center
Telephone Number: 301.286.4994

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Goddard is investigating the possibility of implementing a new Visitor Center at the Greenbelt Campus. After an open competition, GSFC contracted with Lord Cultural Associates to perform a feasibility study and strategic master plan.

PROJECT GOALS

- Determine the feasibility of a new Visitor Center through a comprehensive and objective analysis of the market.
- Derive geographic location, visitor projections, characteristics, functions and overall annual operating budget based upon market analysis.
- Develop a master plan that provides design concepts demonstrating the form, functionality and attributes of a new Visitor Center, as well as the operational concepts for a self-sustaining non-profit institution.

PROJECT BENEFIT TO OUTCOME (1,2, OR 3)

This project has a direct benefit to both formal and informal education (Outcome 2 and 3). The existing Visitor Center is inadequate to showcase NASA's work and accomplishments in a Goddard context. A new Visitor Center could increase the impact when meeting NASA's educational objectives.

The specific objectives of a new Visitor Center are to:

- Inspire, engage and educate the next generation of scientists, engineers and technologists;
- Provide compelling experiences to all to increase understanding of our home planet and our place in the Universe;
- Create a destination of choice that effectively showcases NASA and Goddard's current work.

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Determine the feasibility of a new Visitor Center through a comprehensive and objective analysis of the market.
- Derive geographic location, visitor projections, characteristics, functions and overall annual operating budget based upon market analysis.
- Develop a master plan that provides design concepts demonstrating the form, functionality and attributes of a new Visitor Center, as well as the operational concepts for a self-sustaining non-profit institution.

PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO PART MEASURES

The results of this feasibility study are informing Goddard on its formal and informal education customer base. This will improve the formal and informal education programs currently offered. Results of benchmarking and the desired functions can be immediately applied to the current Visitor Center planning and will impact Outcome 2.4 and 3.1. In addition, new collaborations with museums in the Goddard region have developed as a result of this process. Finally, if a new Visitor Center is implemented the number of students and public served will increase many fold.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN THE PAST YEAR

As this is the first and only year for this study, project improvements are the applicable or anticipated as a result of this research.

PROJECT PARTNERS AND ROLE OF PARTNERS IN PROJECT EXECUTION

Not applicable for this study.

2. Name of Project:

Technology support for implementation of a virtual and phone tour of GSFC to augment the physical tours currently offered by the Visitor Center.

Transfer and deployment of NASA Science on a Sphere (SOS) education content for use with smaller spherical display exhibits.

Administered by: Honeywell
Type of Agreement: Task on existing contract
Project Manager: Wade Sisler
Center: Goddard Space Flight Center
Telephone Number: 301.286.6256

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Technology support for implementation of a virtual and phone tour of GSFC to augment the physical tours currently offered by the Visitor Center. Transfer and deployment of NASA Science on a Sphere (SOS) education content to other spherical displays including Hurricanes, Cryosphere, Heliosphere and Jupiter Education content. SOS media will also be translated (Largest, etc) to aid in the education program.

PROJECT GOALS

- Develop a virtual tour of Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt that will engage and educate visitors at the Goddard website.
- Augment the current tour of Goddard offered by the Visitor Center with a cell phone audio tour in order to augment the education provided and engage interested visitors further.
- Take high education value products developed for Science on a Sphere that have been through education product review and translate them for all spherical display platforms and then deploy to formal and informal education users.

PROJECT BENEFIT TO OUTCOME (1,2, OR 3)

This project has a direct benefit to both formal and informal education (Outcome 2 and 3).

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The virtual tour will be linked to the mission life cycle and will allow interested visitors to the Goddard website to understand and learn about not only our science, but the engineering process. This will allow visitors to Goddard to learn more about the work and people of NASA and Goddard, as well as inspiring interest in STEM disciplines and careers. The virtual tour will include links to allow further opportunities to participate in NASA mission activities and education products and programs.

The cell phone audio tour will allow participants to hear directly from NASA scientists and engineers and inspire interest in STEM disciplines and careers. This

will allow deeper learning about the work and mission of NASA and Goddard than a typical tour would allow.

The tour will present rich multimedia assets, including interviews with our scientists and engineers, photographs, videos, graphics, and animations. Visitors will have immediate access to educational content and experiential learning that they might not otherwise encounter prior to the production of this tour.

PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO PART MEASURES

The results of the Cell phone audio tour and the Virtual tour will contribute primarily to PART measures 2.4 and 3.1.

The main Goddard home page receives about 215,000 unique user sessions per month. When we add in the visitor center section and other areas of the Goddard site, the Goddard site averages at least 250,000 potential visitors per month.

A conservative assumption would be that at least 10% of visitors to the Goddard home page will take the virtual tour, which translates to about 250,000 visitors to the site annually.

While there is a limited number of Science on a Sphere locations (approximately 40 in 2009), there are a number of smaller spherical display technology users - over 150 museums and schools in the United States. By deploying our education content to these users we have a potential to reach a vast number of formal and informal educators and students with our NASA education products.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN THE PAST YEAR

As this is the first year for this project, so no project itself is considered an improvement to the visitor experience.

PROJECT PARTNERS AND ROLE OF PARTNERS IN PROJECT EXECUTION

Not applicable for this project.

3. Name of Project: Procurement and implementation of new technology education exhibits including portable Magic Planets and Touch Tables for both Wallops and Greenbelt.

Administered by: Carmel Conaty (Greenbelt) and Keith Kohler (Wallops)

Type of Agreement: Procurements

Project Manager: Carmel Conaty

Center: Goddard Space Flight Center

Telephone Number: 301.286.7996

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Procurement and implementation of new technology education exhibits including portable Magic Planets and Touch Tables for both Wallops and Greenbelt.

PROJECT GOALS

The goal of this project is to develop hands-on educational exhibits for the Visitor Centers that will showcase the research not only at the Goddard Centers but also throughout NASA. In addition, portable Magic Planet systems will allow Goddard Greenbelt and Wallops to use these systems in classrooms throughout the region.

PROJECT BENEFIT TO OUTCOME (1,2, OR 3)

This project has a direct benefit to both formal and informal education (Outcome 2 and 3).

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Touch tables and were installed in both NASA Visitor Centers at Goddard and Wallops in November 2009. The Magic Planet also was installed at Wallops. Two portable Magic Planets were delivered to Greenbelt in December 2009. These tables, as well as the Magic Planets, have allowed students and the general public to immerse themselves in the science research and space flight activities conducted by NASA. Training on the Magic Planet was delivered at both Wallops and Greenbelt in January 2010.

PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO PART MEASURES

These education exhibits at Wallops and Greenbelt contribute primarily to PART measures 2.4 and 3.1.

The Greenbelt Visitor Center hosts between 36,000 and 42,000 visitors annually, the majority of whom are K-12 students and who could potentially engage with this educational exhibit.

Wallops received over 37,600 visitors in calendar year 2009 (up 26% from 2008) of which over 7,300 were student groups.

The two 18" portable Magic Planets will be used in schools and museums by Goddard educators as part of professional development and school programs.

IMPROVEMENTS MADE IN THE PAST YEAR

As this is the first year for these exhibits, no project improvements were made.

PROJECT PARTNERS AND ROLE OF PARTNERS IN PROJECT EXECUTION

Not applicable for this project.

4. Name of Project: Informal Education Workshop for museum educators in the Goddard Region.

Administered by: UMBC

Type of Agreement: Task on existing contract

Project Manager: Carmel Conaty
Center: Goddard Space Flight Center
Telephone Number: 301.286.7996

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Goddard is hosting a two-day professional development workshop at the Visitor Center on March 9 and 10, 2010. Up to 20 museum educators from up to ten museums and science centers in the Goddard region will participate. They will hear an overview of NASA science and engineering and will be able to choose a track in which to focus. They will all produce a product/event/program targeted at middle school children that will align with the Summer of Innovation as applicable.

PROJECT GOALS

- Increase the number of museums and science centers in the Goddard region that are using NASA expertise and content in their programs/exhibits and/or events.
- Develop improved communications and collaborations with museums and science centers in the Goddard region.

PROJECT BENEFIT TO OUTCOME (1,2, OR 3)

This project has a direct benefit to informal education (Outcome 3).

PROJECT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Once implemented in March 2010 the workshop will increase number and amount of NASA content used in programs/exhibits and events.
- As a result of this workshop, we expect to have increased collaborations and an improved pipeline to NASA materials and expertise to these museums and science centers.

PROJECT CONTRIBUTIONS TO PART MEASURES

This project directly contributes to Outcome 3.2, Informal education professional development. Since one of the requirements for participating in this workshop is to hold a informal education related program or event, it will have a direct impact on the outcome measure 3.2.2.

IMPROVEMENTS (MADE IN THE PAST YEAR)

As this is the first year for this project, no project improvements were made.

PROJECT PARTNERS AND ROLE OF PARTNERS IN PROJECT EXECUTION

Not applicable for this project.