

## **Betty Brinn Children's Museum Summary Report**

### **Information about the Applicant**

For more than twenty years, the Betty Brinn Children's Museum's mission has been to inspire all children to wonder through play and interactive, hands-on learning experiences. Educational opportunities offered by the Betty Brinn Children's Museum promote learning outside of the confines of the classroom and beyond what can be achieved at home. Learning experiences that reach all learners' styles provide a full sensory experience and built-in differentiation that enables all children to build connections and practice skills in approachable ways. As a uniquely child- focused environment, the Museum encourages child-directed play that promotes emotional, cognitive, and social development without the expectations of a "correct" way to experience the exhibits or programs. The Museum offers children and families opportunities to experience the most effective way to learn: hands-on play.

We are dedicated to educational innovation and equitable access, working to ensure that all children can experience the Museum's exciting exhibits and activities. For children with sensory processing disorders, however, the excitement of the exhibits and activities can often be overwhelming. We recently opened a sensory room, in which children with sensory processing disorders can take a break from the outside Museum environment if necessary.

### **Statement of Need**

As sensory processing disorders become more widely understood, families' abilities to best meet their child's needs can expand. Spaces outside the home in which those needs can be met, however, can still be limited, complicating families' plans and limiting children's access to educational opportunities. In the past, when children with sensory processing disorders became overwhelmed by the lights, sounds, and actions of the Museum exhibits and activities, they would have had to leave the Museum entirely. In order to ensure that children with sensory processing disorders can still have equitable access to the Museum and its educational benefits, we developed a sensory room, where children can go to take a break from the Museum environment for as long as they need, returning to the Museum floor when they're ready.

Our current sensory room can achieve this purpose, but space and materials are extremely limited. Our goal for the sensory room is to move it from its current temporary location to a more permanent, larger location that isn't a shared space. Support from the Wispact Foundation would enable us to better design and outfit the sensory room.

### **Project Goals and Expected Benefits**

Our ultimate goal for the sensory room is to create a space that meets the needs and strengths of children with sensory processing disorders. To meet this goal, we aim to design and construct a sensory room that is large enough, quiet enough, and furnished enough for children with sensory processing disorders to have a safe space to take a break from the Museum floor.

### **Project Implementation Plan**


Museum educators and exhibit designers will work together, taking direction from members of the DEI committee, to design and construct a more permanent, larger, more well-equipped sensory room. During the course of the next year, the current sensory room will be moved out of its existing temporary space into a larger, currently underused space. Construction will take

place first, and then the space will be outfitted with furniture, decorations, and supplies to create a calming atmosphere. Maintenance of the sensory room will involve frequent cleaning and replenishing of consumable supplies.

### Evaluation Plan

The success of our sensory room relies on the completion of the design and construction of the room in a timely manner. We will also receive guidance and feedback from members of our DEI committee during the design and construction processes.

### Budget

			
<b>Sensory Room Budget</b>			
Special Admissions Fund			
Renovations			
			<b>Wispect Contribution</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
<b>Construction</b>		<b>\$6,000.00</b>	<b>\$6,000.00</b>
<b>Supplies &amp; Materials</b>		<b>\$3,000.00</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>
	Reusable Supplies	\$2,000.00	\$2,000.00
	Consumable Supplies	\$500.00	\$500.00
	Activity Supplies	\$500.00	\$500.00
<b>Operating Costs</b>		<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>
<b>Sensory Room Expenses</b>		<b>\$10,000.00</b>	<b>\$10,000.00</b>

### Staff Recommendation

The grant application can be approved. The grant will provide for the cost of the construction and outfitting of a sensory room that can provide for the needs of persons with disabilities who visit the museum. The entirety of the grant will directly benefit persons with disabilities.