



ENGINEERS GUIDE: WORKING WITH MUSEUMS

DREAM BIG PARTNERS

One of *Dream Big*'s primary goals is to connect engineers and engineering organizations to the museums and science centers where the film plays. These institutions offer an excellent opportunity to reach families and the next generation of engineers. Visitors to these institutions—more than 20% are middle school students on field trips—have a natural curiosity about science and engineering. And the teachers, home-school parents, and other organizations that bring students to these informal education settings are eager to participate in STEM and engineering-related activities. With names like Smithsonian, Carnegie, and Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, and the many other world-class museums and science centers as hosts, the *Dream Big* film and outreach programs are an ideal way to bring the world of engineering to the public.

MUSEUMS ARE WAITING FOR YOU!

Dream Big will be playing in museums and science centers with giant screen theaters in locations from coast to coast. ALL are eager to work with engineers. Whether it's to promote the film, enhance established programs, or develop new programs, they want to find ways to work with you.

Each science center, museum, zoo, or aquarium where the film will play has a particular mission, particular areas of expertise, and varied experience with STEM and engineering programs or exhibits at its facility. Each has likely worked with engineers on past or current programs and has good relationships already established within the engineering community. And they are eager to grow these relationships!

10 THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT MUSEUMS & SCIENCE CENTERS

1. HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Contact Gwen Hearn at DiscoverE. Her full-time job is connecting engineers with their local museum. She'll be able to share ideas, tell you who else might be working on *Dream Big* in your area, and connect you to the **RIGHT** person at the museum. Save yourself time and energy by contacting her first.

GWEN HEARN
Gwen@DiscoverE.org
703-684-2861

2. FILM LAUNCH DATES WILL VARY FROM CITY TO CITY

While *Dream Big* officially premieres on February 17, 2017, your local theater may not have chosen to open the film on that date. Giant screen theaters may begin showing the film anytime in 2017, 2018, or later. Many exhibitors will open in February 2017 so that they can maximize national marketing and Engineers Week in their local market; for their own reasons, exhibitors will choose their own opening dates. Film opening dates by city and state can be found at www.dreambigfilm.com.

3. GIANT SCREEN FILMS ARE EVERGREEN

They can play in the museum world for many years. Even when the film is no longer a marquee attraction for audiences, it can still be marketed and shown to school groups or brought back for special events or festivals.

4. MUSEUMS HAVE REALLY COOL SPACES

Science centers and museums have many types of spaces that could be used by your organization and its members. Think outside the box with museum staff, whether it's to hold a special event in an exhibit hall or demonstrate something from the roof of the building! Some fun and crazy things have happened at these institutions to promote science and engineering.

5. SCIENCE CENTERS ARE INHERENTLY COLLABORATIVE

They want to work with you and members in their community to enhance STEM and engineering-focused learning at their institution.

6. MUSEUMS EXCEL AT EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Museums and science centers spend all day, every day making difficult topics understandable and fun for the general public, kids, and families. Institutions expect that volunteers will have varying degrees of experience communicating their work to the public. For that reason, most institutions can provide some type of communication training for you. It may be brief, done on the day of your volunteer work there or in a conversation over the phone. Or, they may require a more extensive training experience for you.

7. UNDERSTANDING VISITORS IS KEY

If you are a volunteer, it's important to know that you will encounter a variety of guests. Many guests may have little or no background in engineering. You'll need the flexibility to go light or go deep with your content.

8. TAKE THIS CHANCE TO HIGHLIGHT VARIOUS ENGINEERING DISCIPLINES

The diversity of engineering careers and specialties is attractive to these institutions. Remember, the *Dream Big* film is only 40 minutes long and alone cannot present the breadth of engineering. Use the film as a conversation starter to showcase the creative challenges inherent in engineering in all its forms.

9. BE PATIENT

Museum staff numbers tend to be lean, so it may take time to hear back from museum or theater employees, and it may take time to move through the planning process with them. Please be both patient and persistent.

10. BUILD A PARTNERSHIP THAT LASTS

Consider that the relationship you're building with your local institution may be long-term, not just focused on *Dream Big* and its release. Your mutual goals and missions could serve you both for years to come.

IDEAS FOR YOU AND *DREAM BIG*

The following are just to start you thinking about your involvement with *Dream Big* while it plays at your local museum.

1. VOLUNTEER AT THE SCIENCE CENTER OR MUSEUM WHERE THE FILM PLAYS

Remember to email Gwen (Gwen@DiscoverE.org) and she'll connect you.

Opening Week or Weekend

- Film premiere time is when many theaters ramp up their special activities at their facility to gain maximum exposure for the film. They host special events for their members and donors and for the media and the public. Their marketing and theater teams work toward that premiere, while museum educators have a longer view for implementation. If possible, be open to working on all fronts to plan how you could be involved.
- The *Dream Big* project team chose to premiere the film during Engineers Week 2017, a time when many museums and science centers are already hosting engineering-related events and programs. Can you, your company, or your organization help make this a grand week for engineering in your city? Yes! Lend your time and talents.

During the Film's Exhibition at the Theater

Dream Big might play for three or six months or up to one year at your local museum. It may play to school groups even longer. The following are examples of how museums and science centers might work with engineers. Volunteers may:

- Facilitate hands-on engineering activities with visitors for a day or a weekend.
- Attend an Engineering Family Day, a *Dream Big* Girls Night Out, or a Camp-in/Overnight—serving as experts for a particular demonstration and/or role models for career-oriented presentations.
- Participate in a summer engineering camp for youth.
- Be the guest star at a Science Café or a museum speaker series that spotlights engineering careers, achievements, or hot topics in engineering.
- Serve as advisors for how to transform or augment a current exhibit with engineering. For example: How does an aquarium engineer a shark exhibit? How can an exhibit about the human body inform visitors about bioengineering?
- Bring local engineering projects to the museum. Look for local projects that might not normally be thought of as engineering. Connect the “BIG” projects in the film to “BIG” projects in your community. Volunteers could help host these displays or community Q&A sessions.

2. PLAN SPECIAL SCREENINGS

- Schedule a night out, day in, or lunch with fellow engineers. Depending on how many attend, you could qualify for group rate tickets, free popcorn, or discounted boxed lunches from the cafeteria. Museums will make it easy for you to gather—in a meeting space, for example—before or after you see the film.
- Plan a special event: casual or classy, host a cocktail reception or a meeting for your organization or company. Fees vary.
- Work with the theater to host an event just for kids and publish their reviews of the film (written and/or video) in your newsletters, on your websites, or in email blasts. Kid critics are great fun and great for promotion!
- Host a field trip for your child's classmates, the elementary school your company supports, or your church's youth group. Purchase their group rate tickets and visit the class before or after to lead a hands-on activity.

3. SPONSOR A *DREAM BIG* PROGRAM OR ACTIVITY FOR YOUR TARGET AUDIENCE

- Sponsor tickets and bus rides for underserved kids in your community (theaters can reach out and coordinate with schools or groups).
- Help fund Girls Night Out—a special screening for girls—at the museum. Use the tips included in this guide to organize these events.
- Pay the costs to bring one or more of the engineers featured in the film to your community to meet with the public, schoolkids, and the press, and for other special events.
- Check with your engineering society’s local or national office to see if there are grants available for outreach.
- See if your company wants to sponsor events or programs at the museum.
- Purchase materials for your favorite *Dream Big* activity that can be used at the science museum.
- Sponsor a special screening and training program for teachers and after-school providers who work with disadvantaged students.

4. BUILD AN AUDIENCE FOR *DREAM BIG* AND ENGINEERING

- Bring your family and friends to see the film and visit the museum.
- Use your organization or company newsletter, website, social media, and email blasts to promote the film. (Photos, logos, and more are available on the *Dream Big* website’s Media Assets page.)
- Promote the film to your whole community, such as your kids’ schools, other groups you belong to, or your faith-based community.
- Help theaters reach high school and college students, who are not typical museum visitors, through your organization or connections.

DiscoverE contact: Gwen Hearn, Outreach Coordinator

Gwen’s Phone: 703-684-2861

Email: Gwen@DiscoverE.org

