

A large, stylized silhouette of a dinosaur, likely a Tyrannosaurus Rex, is rendered in two shades of blue against a dark blue background. The dinosaur is facing left, with its head at the top right and its body extending towards the bottom left. The silhouette is composed of solid blue shapes, with a lighter blue shade used for the body and a darker blue shade for the head and tail.

STRATEGIC PLAN

CARNEGIE MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY

2020-2022

GREETINGS

It gives us great pleasure to present to you the 2020–2022 Strategic Plan for Carnegie Museum of Natural History (CMNH). Advancing our vision to be *the world’s most relevant natural history museum*, we have achieved many important outcomes over the last three years, encompassed by our 2016–2019 plan.

- We broke our all-time visitation record, two years in a row.
- We produced our first in-house temporary exhibition, *We Are Nature: Living in the Anthropocene*, enjoyed by an estimated 300,000 visitors.
- We hired the world’s first Curator of the Anthropocene.
- We secured the largest science grant in the history of Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh, a National Science Foundation grant of almost \$1.3M.
- Our daily Facebook posts are now circulated to over 600,000 people.
- Scientific publications are on track this year for an 8-fold increase in scientific impact.

These accomplishments demonstrate the power of developing a cohesive vision and supporting process, and attaining it through the collaboration of our internal and external stakeholder communities,

becoming more outwardly focused in an increasingly competitive landscape.

In 2020–2022, we aim to leverage this strong foundation, transitioning to become more nimble, empowered and productive, setting a positive example for our industry nationwide. The current plan includes work on infrastructure, building strong teams and, above all, continuing to embed best practice into our culture. Throughout this process, we will continue learning more about our visitors, while we keep them front of mind.

So many people contributed to the production of this plan. We are grateful to the CMNH Taskforce who led the process and drafting of this document and to all those who participated in the charrettes. We are also deeply indebted to the many donors who make this work possible.

Finally, we wish to acknowledge and thank Lee Foster, outgoing Chair of CMNH. His inspired leadership and commitment to the Carnegie Museums has set us in good stead for the future. We are looking forward to the next three years as we steward this important institution further on its trajectory.

Mike Popper
CHAIR ADVISORY BOARD

Eric Dorfman, PhD
DANIEL G. AND CAROLE
L. KAMIN DIRECTOR

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VISION

The world's most relevant natural history museum.

MISSION

To seek inspiration in our collections and advocate for a sustainable future.

CORE VALUES

THE INHERENT WORTH OF NATURE

Humans are part of the natural world and cannot exist in its absence. A relationship to the natural world is beneficial to society, boosting mental acuity and creativity, promoting health and wellness and the building of more sustainable communities.

A PLACE FOR LEARNING AND INSPIRATION

Museums are a place for learning, both formally and informally, at every stage of life and ability. We work to facilitate this throughout the institution's exhibitions and activities, inside the museum to serve as an incubator for scientists, and outside the museum to create a more scientifically informed community.

ENVIRONMENTAL ADVOCACY

We are honest and responsible for our actions and how they affect the environment, we share important, scientific information with the general public in a way that they can understand, and we practice stewardship of the natural world.

INTERGENERATIONAL EQUITY

We inherit the Earth from previous generations and have an obligation to pass it on in reasonable condition to future generations.

VISITOR FOCUS

Our activities are embedded in an understanding of the needs of our communities; we start with the people and work back to the museum.

MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCIES

We use continuous quality improvement methods to improve efficiency in how we work, while maintaining our high professional and scientific standards.

AN INCLUSIVE WORKFORCE

A more diverse and inclusive work environment fosters productivity and enhances our ability to attract, hire and retain the best talent while ensuring CMNH responds to workforce changes and dynamic market conditions. In all of our actions, we aim to foster a workforce that reflects our community.

HUMAN-INDUCED CLIMATE CHANGE

Multiple lines of evidence confirm that the clearly measurable rise in greenhouse gases over the past few hundred years, which adversely affect the quality of life for the whole biosphere, does not stem from natural mechanisms. Rather, post-industrial human activity has increased the proportion of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, resulting in a change to the Earth's climate patterns. We support activities that use human ingenuity to mitigate and adapt to these changes.

THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC LITERACY

Science, technology and innovation are important to our economic well-being and quality of life and are foundations of an innovative culture.

COLLECTIONS

Our collections form one of the world's great archives of biodiversity, as well as the history of life and human relationships to nature. We are responsible for stewardship of a collection that is critical to the discovery, communication and inspiration that are central to the museum's mission and values.

EVOLUTION

Evolution is the best explanation for how the diversity of life around us came to exist. It remains the only compelling scientifically rigorous account of how life has developed – and continues to develop – on our planet.

SCIENTIFIC PRINCIPLES

INTRODUCTION

Carnegie Museum of Natural History is a leader in thinking about our rapidly changing world. Species decline, habitat loss, anthropogenic climate change and many other issues are pressing problems that science and public awareness can address better in concert than separately. Our institution provides a forum to blend robust scholarship with community engagement and, in doing so, strengthen organic ties between society and nature. To do this, we need a roadmap to ensure our vision and mission are empowered operationalize our goals. This strategic plan is that roadmap.

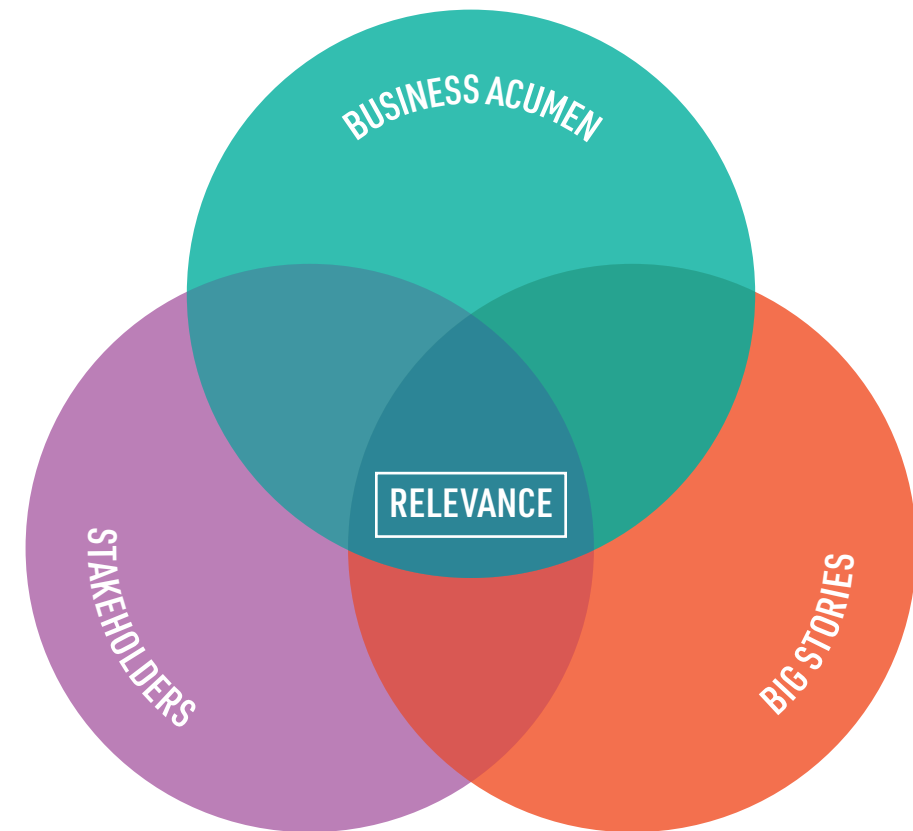
In the 2020–2022 Strategic Plan, we aim to:

- Transition CMNH from a consolidation phase in our business life cycle to one of growth.
- Create a planning document that represents a useable tool for doing this.

We have developed a process that will ensure a seamless connection between philosophy and end results. The model (opposite page) is based on the vision of relevance. This is a philosophical construct designed as a foundation for further thinking. Three elements form the basis of the framework on relevance. These are: 1) Telling big stories, those that resonate with our guests and other customers,

2) Treating those stakeholders as individuals, recognizing that each person who engages with us has her or his own way of interacting with us, as well as unique needs, drivers and expectations, and 3) Demonstrate business acumen, recognizing that in order to engage properly with our mission-driven activities, we must have sufficient resources.

This model prompts us to ask high-level questions about the fundamental aspects of our most important issues. How will societies respond to pervasive climate change? How will we welcome people who need reduced sensory input? Or people who speak in another language? How can we achieve these things while maintaining ongoing business sustainability?



CMNH Relevance Model. Three strategic perspectives (business, stakeholders and stories) inform objectives, which have been contributed to by community members as well as museum leadership and their teams.



TELL BIG STORIES

The museum is a portal to an amazing world.

By offering immersive experiences to those who engage with us, we can make learning and discovery accessible. The important stories are, for us, narratives that reach outside the here and now and make unexpected connections between disparate ideas. This is especially true around the interrelationship between humanity and the rest of nature, through showcasing large-scale stories that impact the lives of individuals.

In 2020–2022, we will look for opportunities to align our scientific output with the strategic goal of telling big stories. We will also continue to showcase our researchers, who create new scientific knowledge. We will explore new audiences through multidisciplinary partnerships for guiding student inquiry, dialogue, and critical thinking. We find partners who are strong in the creative arts, humanities, community-building, and other areas are key to expanding our audiences. Through this, we will encourage experiential learning, creative problem-solving, and collaboration.

ANTHROPOCENE

The Anthropocene, or Age of Humanity, is a proposed epoch dating from the commencement of significant human impact on the Earth's geology and ecosystems. Over the next three years, we will continue to demonstrate leadership around the Anthropocene and build global awareness. We will achieve this internally through sharing our vision and goals among museum personnel. Externally, we will build relevance and awareness through partnerships beyond the walls of the museum. We will continue to explore identifying collections of the Anthropocene and explain the predictive potential of systematic scientific collections. We will also advocate for activities that support a more sustainable relationship between humans and nature.

ECOLOGY

Ecology, the study of the relationships between living organisms, including humans, and their physical environment, helps us to understand the vital connections between plants and animals and the world around them. Ecology also provides information about the benefits of ecosystems and how we can use Earth's resources in ways that leave the environment healthy for future generations. A focus between 2020 and 2022 will be to continue our world-class research in this area. We aim to connect people further to the natural world through an exploration of biophilia, the hypothesis that suggests that humans possess an innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life.

EVOLUTION

Understanding evolution is critical for an understanding of the Earth and its inhabitants. It is the only scientific explanation for the diversity of life, the mechanism responsible for the striking similarities among vastly different forms of life, the changes that occur within populations, and the development of new life forms. In 2020-2022, we will continue our preeminent work on evolutionary relationships among species, leveraging our outstanding collection. We will also continue our work of explicitly showcasing evolution in our new and existing visitor experiences.





TREAT STAKE- HOLDERS AS INDIVIDUALS

STRATEGIC GOAL 2

The duty to treat people as individuals is an obligation for us as a public-facing institution. Ethically, it forms an important thread in the moral case for inclusion and relevance. We are intentional about exploring communities to gain an authentic understanding of their needs and drivers. From a business perspective, providing opportunities to engage personally creates a relationship that keeps our global community engaged.

USE STAKEHOLDERS' LANGUAGES

We aim to communicate impactfully. We work to know our audiences, what they care about, and how they will engage most openly. We will continue to define stakeholder communities and their needs. This knowledge will enable us to use languages (both verbal and non-verbal) that are both sensitive and effective.

CHANNELS

We will broaden communication channels to align our brand message to our audiences. We will increase both onsite and offsite engagement and find ways to integrate our brand voice further into the culture of Pittsburgh and further afield.

ACCESS

We will broaden the diversity of our staff, board, and leadership. We will implement initiatives that remove barriers to participation and physical access. We will provide pathways for professional development and expand programs and partnerships that improve our inclusivity.

DEMONSTRATE BUSINESS ACUMEN

STRATEGIC GOAL 3

As we move into the future, we will need to work to anticipate and manage the many change agents in our working environment. To manage these challenges and lead effectively, we must become more adept at recognizing change and be more aware of the issues that come with creating it. We will succeed by building on traditional business models for a future that combines robust systems with a strong ethical compass.

CONTRIBUTED REVENUE

We aim to generate ongoing funding for our important activities. A basic set of methods forms the backbone of our donor-centric perspective. Nationally, individuals are the largest source of charitable donations for nonprofit organizations. In 2020-2022, we will focus on increasing the proportion of contributions from individuals. We will also formalize systems that explore new populations of donors, push compelling stories that connect to our institution, and foster a proactive culture of grant seeking.

EARNED REVENUE

Earned income is an increasing focus for CMNH, encompassing branded merchandise, special events, and targeted educational programs, as well as consultancy, augmenting more traditional revenue streams. In the next three years we will continue to develop formal systems to explore and grow revenue generating opportunities. We aim to increase the proportion of our revenue that is earned, with expanded brand recognition, greater diversity of CMNH merchandise, as well as improved access to products and services.

MAXIMIZING EFFICIENCIES

We are interested in creating more value using fewer resources. The most effective way for us to do this is through eliminating waste from our operations. In 2020-2022, we will do this by focusing on two guiding tenets: continuous quality improvement and respect for people. We will maximize efficiencies by adopting lean practices throughout our activities and introduce systems to improve interdepartmental and cross-component knowledge communications.

IN EVERY WALK WITH
NATURE ONE RECEIVES
FAR MORE THAN HE SEEKS.

JOHN MUIR

