

Agency Purpose

The Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM) is a private, nonprofit statewide educational resource developing and presenting exhibitions, programs and research to encourage a better informed citizenry more able to make decisions around complex and critical issues of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math).

SMM succeeds through three primary program strands: our Exhibition and Omnifilm production, presentation and rental draws visitors from around the state and country while providing an important earned revenue stream; formal and informal science education programs such as field trips, teacher professional development and youth and family science classes engage students and families in unique science learning opportunities; original research and outreach programs in areas from archaeology to water quality contribute to the body of science knowledge used by a variety of decision makers in Minnesota and beyond.

At a Glance

Science Exhibitions and Omnifilms:

- 749,619 visitors to Saint Paul
- 1,406,001 visitors around the US and world
- 324 FTE and 1,262 volunteers

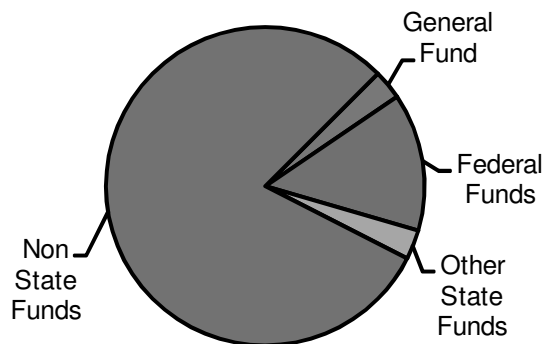
Science Education:

- 98,880 students on field trips
- 1,399 teachers in Professional Development
- 74,693 students visited with in-school programs

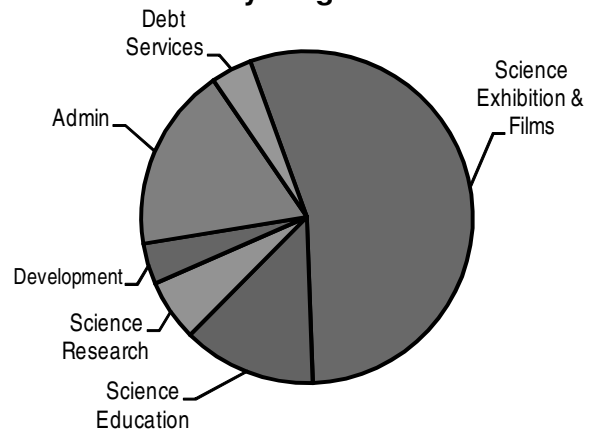
Science Research:

- Four federal competitive grant awards for total of \$4,144,567
- Winner of 2009 Gulf Guardian award for water quality research affecting the Gulf of Mexico region
- 1,750,000 items in collections

Est. FY 2010-11 Expenditures by Fund



Est. FY 2010-11 Expenditures by Program



Source: SMM.

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*Administration costs include facility and maintenance upkeep expenses totaling 11% of program expenditures.

Strategies

- Inspire excitement and engagement for informal science learning in individuals and families by offering a broad and accessible range of programs and exhibitions.
- Support formal science learning structures through partnerships and services for teachers and administrators and through programming directly tied to student outcomes.

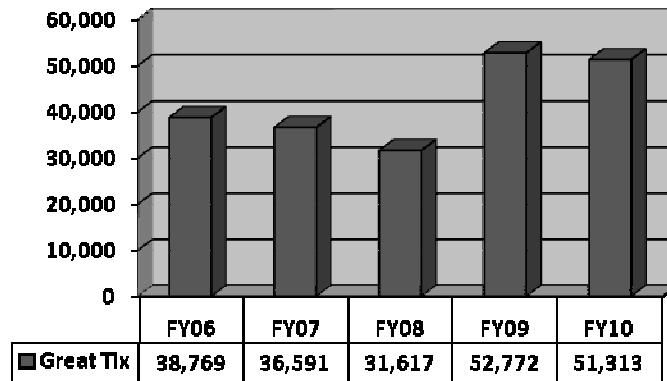
- Increase our relevancy to decision makers by offering data and facts to help scientists and policy makers speak a common language the public understands.
- Cultivate a flexible and responsible financial base with appropriate diversification of funding streams, the majority coming as earned and privately contributed income.

Operations

- Five long-term galleries, rotating special exhibits and a convertible dome theater present exhibitions and Omnifilms to nearly 750,000 visitors to our flagship location in downtown Saint Paul.
- SMM School Outreach teachers visited 64 Minnesota counties bringing programming to over 75,000 students in their classrooms.
- 3000+ students from across Minnesota participated in special group programming such as overnight stays in the museum galleries.
- 26 cities in seven different countries showed our Omnifilms while 17 cities in the United States and Canada hosted our exhibitions, reaching over one million people worldwide.
- SMM is a valued science education and research partner with a variety of institutions including the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, the University of Minnesota, the Minnesota Historical Society, Winona State University and the White Earth Reservation.

Key Activity Goals & Measures

The museum’s strategic framework identifies key goals tied to each of our program strands. Our first strategic goal is building sustained relationships with a broader, more diverse array of local and regional communities. Providing access to the museum for low income families is a measure of progress towards this goal we review annually. The chart illustrates the demand for the Great Tix program for low income families over the past 5 fiscal years.



Tracking the attendance to SMM-designed exhibitions “on tour” nationally and internationally measures our reach to broader communities. As an example, our exhibit, *RACE, Are We So Different* opened in Rochester, Minnesota in May 2010 and to date has hosted over 30,000 visitors in that city.

Another strategic goal is to develop and implement the next generation of science learning. We are committed to science education through formal and informal means. Over 1400 teachers received SMM-led professional development in FY 2010, more than any other provider in the state. Teen-specific programs provide informal science learning and outreach experiences for youth typically underrepresented in the STEM disciplines. This table shows the numbers of youth participating in the program and how many people have benefitted by their outreach work:

	<u>FY08</u>	<u>FY09</u>	<u>FY10</u>
Youth Participants	94	120	123
Outreach Audiences	3066	2475	4098

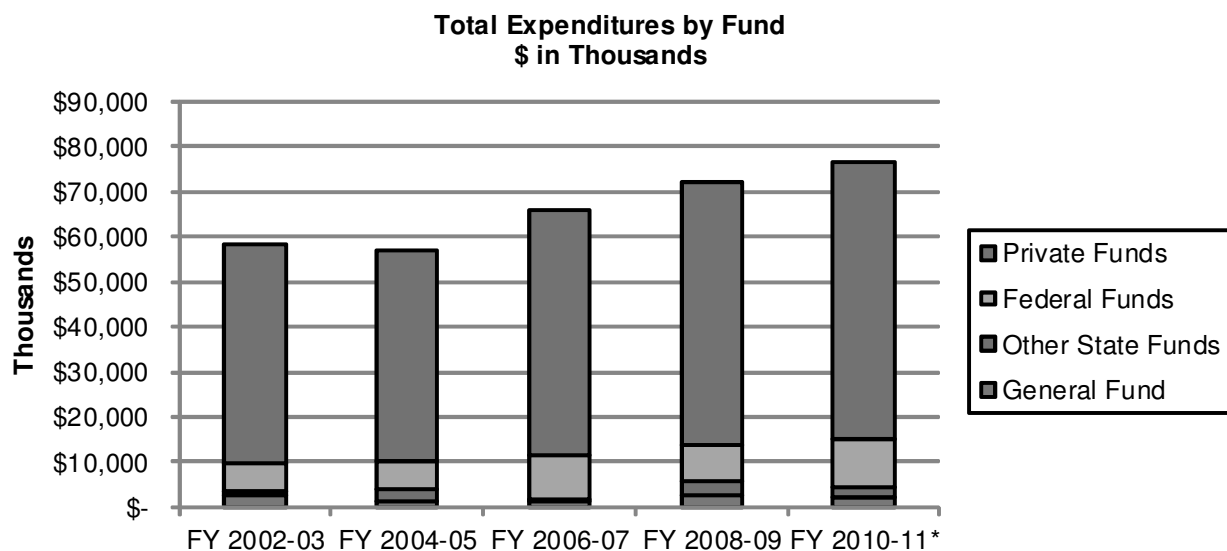
A third goal in our strategic framework is to deepen our science and science communication capabilities and reputation. One of the most effective ways SMM does this is through our capacity to reach general audiences with

specific scientific information. In 2009, SMM organized a set of three collaborative workshops to provide training about nonpoint source pollution, teaching 53 municipal officers how to mitigate its impact in their communities. SMM also leads the development and evaluation of public engagement activities for the more than 400 institutions across the country making up NISENet (Nanoscale Informal Science Education Network). As an example of this work, in May 2010, the second annual NanoDays drew over 352,000 participants at locations around the country.

The fourth goal in our strategic framework crosscuts all our program strands, speaking to strengthening our financial base through increased income, investment diversification, and prudent monitoring of ongoing expenses and progress toward all our goals. Key measures we use to hold ourselves accountable to this goal include keeping our earned income (including competitive grant awards) over 50% of our total budget. A primary piece of our earned income includes the exhibit construction work other museums contract us to do. As a nonprofit, our contracted work comes with specific obligations for most of the money received from this work. Additionally, private and corporate donors are increasingly placing program specific stipulations on their donations. As a result, the unrestricted funding from the state’s general fund, while only 3% of our total budget, is very significant to us. Those unrestricted funds are essential to providing the clean, safe and welcoming space our visitors expect while also demonstrating the state’s steadfast commitment to the museum.

Within all our goals, SMM uses its internal evaluation and learning research department as well as external evaluators to consistently measure how our work achieves our objectives.

Budget Trends



* FY 2010-11 is estimated, not actual. Source data are SMM audits

Our budget is based significantly on earned income from both attendance-based and privately contributed sources. The economic downturn impacted individual’s capacity to participate at levels we previously experienced and our low income ticket program maintains a steady demand for reduced price tickets. Additionally, while we have experienced great success with federal competitive grant awards, recent budget reductions to those federal sources coupled with revised funding priorities have the potential to negatively impact that revenue stream. In response to these trends, we continually explore ways to keep our funding base diversified and healthy while striving to provide a stellar visitor experience at a cost that is affordable to families of all incomes.

Contact

Science Museum of Minnesota, Government Relations: (651) 221-9499
<http://www.smm.org>