

### **How the Brain Wants to Learn: Cognitive Science Informing Interactive Exhibit Design • E/E**

The brain makes inferences about an exhibit's subject matter from the structure or design of the exhibit, not just from the exhibit content. The design of interactive exhibits can work with or against the brain's learning agenda, so invest early and wisely in your exhibit design. Panelists will translate cognitive theories into a practical explanation of interactive exhibit design based on current research, using case studies from various domains. Participants will actively work on design problems in groups.

#### **10:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m. Concurrent Museum Study Tours**

*Pre-registration is required; cost for each tour is \$25. Participants will meet in the lobby level of the Crowne Plaza Saint Paul-Riverfront Hotel at 10:45 a.m. to walk three-four blocks to either museum study tour site.*

#### **Museum Study Tour: Minnesota Children's Museum's Spaces for Our Youngest Visitors**

Explore Minnesota Children's Museum's "Habitot®" gallery and the early learning Tot Spots in other galleries designed to meet the needs of children ages birth through 48 months and their caregivers. Participants will learn about the criteria used in the design and evaluation of spaces for our youngest visitors and gain knowledge of how the museum has partnered to create early learning spaces in the community.

#### **Museum Study Tour: Science Museum of Minnesota Brighter Futures: Public Deliberation about the Science of Early Childhood Development**

Brighter Futures, a partnership between the Science Museum of Minnesota (SMM) and the Center for Early Education and Development at the University of Minnesota and Public Agenda, a nonpartisan civic engagement organization, aims to provide policy makers, museum visitors and community leaders with opportunities to form a deeper understanding of early childhood development through exhibition design and program development. Participants are invited to explore the exhibition prototypes, share thoughts with the project team and learn more about the highly interactive exhibits, programming and research studies being developed through this unique collaboration.

#### **12:00 p.m. – 1:00 p.m. Concurrent Brown Bag Sessions**

*Boxed lunch is available for these sessions. Pre-registration for boxed lunch required; cost of boxed lunch is \$35. Attendees are also welcome to bring their own lunch.*

### **Promising Practice Award Showcase**

The 2009 *Promising Practice Award* recipients share innovative practices that promote the impact of children's museums in the lives of children, families and communities through innovative programs, exhibits and management practices highlighting health, diversity and play with a proven evaluation component that measures impact.



### **Federal Funding**

Staff from three federal funding agencies (National Endowment for the Humanities, National Endowment for the Arts and the Institute of Museum and Library Services) share information on new grant programs and describe the types of projects that their agencies hope to encourage in the children's museum field. Participants will receive tips on how to navigate the application process and hear about some of the exciting projects that have been funded.

#### **1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Concurrent Salons**

##### **● The Future of Philanthropy**

In recent years the American nonprofit sector has had to adapt its income strategy for sustainability and growth in response to reduced government support, uncertain foundation resources and increased competition to secure individual and corporate donations. Representatives from philanthropic organizations will speak about the changing forces that are reshaping the charitable giving landscape and how children's museums must abandon old patterns and assumptions and reposition their institutions to attract donors and fulfill community needs.

##### **● Connecting on the Grassroots Level**

From starting a children's museum, to activating community involvement, to advocating for a child's right to play, grassroots organizing is where it all begins. Panelists will discuss the important role children's museums and nonprofits can play in turning ideas to actions and creating civic engagement. Hear how single-issue organizations have found common ground with others, what coalitions have learned by using social media and how to use data to strengthen your grassroots network.

#### **2:45 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Concurrent Sessions**

##### **Technology in Children's Museums: The European Perspective • E/E**

This session will present highlights from the 2009 international conference of Hands On! Europe, The European Children's Museum Association, hosted by Cite des Sciences & de l'industrie (Paris, France). Panelists will debate this year's conference theme, *High Tech! High Touch!* and highlight the use of emerging technologies in children's museums where the emphasis has historically been on hands-on, tactile and multi-sensory experiences.