



**STRONG FOUNDATION.
BRIGHT FUTURES.**

The Final Phase of the **Play Your Part Campaign**
for the Children's Museum of Eau Claire

FAQ



CAMPAIGN FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

ABOUT THE CHILDREN'S MUSEUM OF EAU CLAIRE

What is CMEC?

Children's Museum of Eau Claire (CMEC) was founded in 2004 and is an interactive environment where learning and play come together in a safe and inclusive environment for kids and their grown-ups. We provide interactive exhibits that foster social and academic growth through important developmental milestones, with fun, engaging experiences.

What is CMEC's Mission?

CMEC exists to inspire learning through play. CMEC believes all youth deserve to be inspired to learn through play and acknowledges that finance can be a barrier to impactful opportunities. Ongoing philanthropic support subsidizes the cost of memberships and daily admissions make them more affordable for families.

Who visits and benefits from the CMEC?

- Approximately 90,000 visitors per year, which includes over 5,000 students that visit on field trips from schools and childcare centers
- Approximately 40% of CMEC visitors are from outside Eau Claire County
- Visitors to CMEC have been from 5 countries, 47 states and 67 Wisconsin counties

Who are the CMEC staff?

CMEC's full time staff includes Executive Director, Operations Manager, STEM Educator, Membership Coordinator and Facilities Manager, and 15 part-time Playologists. CMEC also partners with Peace Tree Care, Chippewa Valley Museum, UWEC education departments faculty and students and Beaver Creek Reserve.



ABOUT CMEC'S NEW BUILDING

Why was a new building needed?

Leadership went through a strategic planning process, beginning in 2018, and the original building was determined to have reached a point where the repairs and updates to serve our mission became financially cumbersome. At the same time, CMEC had the opportunity to take advantage of a New Market Tax Credit. The groundbreaking for the new building was in September of 2021 and the new building opened to the public in January of 2023, and features innovative environmentally sustainable design. The new space is intentionally designed for play, for the interaction of kids with adults, for kids of a variety of ages and abilities. The new space is larger and more open, allowing for less crowded spaces and updates to exhibits and spaces.

What makes the design, construction, and sustainability of the new building unique?

The first-of-its-kind 2-story building constructed with a primary support system consisting of round timber whole trees sourced from around the country. The new building features innovative environmentally sustainable design, featuring 308 solar panels, 16 geothermal wells and whole tree construction. In November 2023 the National Council of Structural Engineers Associations awarded CMEC the Outstanding Structure in the New Building under \$30M category and the 2023 Outstanding Structure of the Year.

What was the total cost of the building project?

The final total project costs are \$15,250,000

How will ongoing building maintenance and repairs be paid for?

CMEC operations budgets include the cost of ongoing maintenance and repairs of the facility and exhibits. The operations budget is supported by membership, daily fees, program revenue, facility rentals, field trips and philanthropic support.



THE CAPITAL CAMPAIGN – STRONG FOUNDATION. BRIGHT FUTURES.

What is the ‘*Strong Foundation. Bright Futures.*’ Campaign?

Our community campaign entitled, “*Strong Foundation. Bright Futures.*” *The Final Phase of the Play Your Part Campaign for the Children’s Museum of Eau Claire*” is a \$7 million project that will go towards the total cost of the new building.

CMEC is committed to providing opportunities to inspire through play. The new building has allowed the museum to expand and grow in ways the old building didn’t allow. The campaign will ensure that the museum is in the best financial position to fulfill the mission and continues to provide fun and engaging opportunities for our community and others from around Wisconsin and beyond to enjoy all that Eau Claire has to offer.

Why should I support this project?

Eau Claire is a special place, and the Children Museum of Eau Claire is one of the many things that helps make it a place that people want to live, work, and visit. Contributions to the campaign will ensure that the Children’s Museum will be in the best position to grow, improve and provide a great place for families to play and learn for years to come. Community projects like this require inspirational gifts and support from civic, corporate, and private communities.

What is the goal of the Campaign?

Previous efforts raised over \$8M towards the new building and the CMEC Board of Directors has set a goal of \$7M to cover the additional balance of the total cost of the new building.

How can I support this project?

CMEC will accept one-time or multi-year pledges and would be happy to discuss options with you. Donations are contributed to the campaign as a whole and exceptions of formal naming opportunities. We are also positioned to accept many forms of valuable assets, such as appreciated stocks.