

about YOUR museum



SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM MISSION

Through innovative partnerships, comprehensive collections and stimulating exhibitions and programs, the South Carolina State Museum provides educational environments that entertain, inspire imagination and creativity and enrich the lives of visitors.

MUSEUM OVERVIEW

As the state's largest and most comprehensive museum, the South Carolina State Museum offers a unique, entertaining and educational experience to visitors throughout its 225,000 square foot facility located in the heart of downtown Columbia's Congaree Vista. The State Museum is housed in one of its largest artifacts, an 1894 former textile mill full of character and charm. Guests can explore outer space in one of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, watch a multisensory 4D movie and look through a vintage telescope in a one-of-a-kind observatory. These opportunities are all in addition to the four floors of permanent and changing exhibits dedicated to South Carolina art, cultural history, natural history and science & technology.

MUSEUM COLLECTION

The State Museum's collection, featuring more than 100,000 artifacts and specimens, focuses on four disciplines that reflect and celebrate South Carolina.

1 South Carolina Art - Art plays an integral role in the story of South Carolina and can be seen in nearly every exhibit throughout the museum. See paintings, pottery, 3D work and installations.

2 Natural History - The extensive and nationally-known natural history collection showcases prehistoric animals, fossils and specimens. See a giant shark display, a dinosaur and the South Carolina habitats exhibits.

3 Science & Technology - The science and technology floor provides historic and contemporary exhibits and activities. Explore space, science, discover the principles of flight and learn about the inventor of the laser.

4 Cultural History - The cultural history floor covers roughly 14,000 years of the state's heritage. See a Civil War submarine, a train diorama and an exhibit on African American history.

BLUECROSS BLUESHIELD OF SOUTH CAROLINA PLANETARIUM

One of the largest planetariums in the Southeast, this massive 55-foot dome planetarium and theater takes guests on journeys to the deepest reaches of space through educational and entertaining astronomy shows, non-space films dealing with art, history or natural history and laser light shows set to music of the Beatles, Pink Floyd, U2 and more.

DR. REV. SOLOMON JACKSON, JR 4D THEATER

The only permanent theater of its kind in South Carolina, the 4D theater couples high-definition 3D digital projection movies with physical features to provide multisensory, interactive experiences for guests. Physical features, including water sprayers, leg ticklers, air blasters, scents, snow, bubble and smoke effects, strobe lights and vibrating seats, are synchronized to the images displayed on the screen.



BOIENG OBSERVATORY

The observatory, equipped with a computer controlled 1926 Alvan Clark 12^{3/8} inch refracting telescope, is playing a central role in the museum's distance learning initiatives. For the first time in the nation, remote access of a vintage telescope is being provided free-of-charge to classrooms across a state. The observatory is also available to the public for on-site solar and night sky viewing.

ROBERT B. ARIAIL COLLECTION OF HISTORICAL ASTRONOMY

The telescope gallery features an expansive collection of antique astronomical instruments dating back to 1730. This incredibly rare collection has been praised by the Antique Telescope Society as the best public collection of early American telescopes in world and includes the oldest surviving American-made observatory instrument.



CHANGING AND BLOCKBUSTER EXHIBITIONS

More than 100,000 square feet of the museum is dedicated to permanent and changing exhibit spaces with mission-focused, educational exhibits that draw from the museum's and other significant collections. The State Museum is proud to showcase large traveling exhibits pertaining to a variety of subjects throughout the world, historic and current, accompanied by a variety of programs and educational opportunities.

TRAVELING EXHIBITS PROGRAM

The Traveling Exhibits Program provides museums, art centers, universities and other qualified institutions with high-quality, affordable traveling exhibits. The goal of this program is to advance the appreciation and understanding of South Carolina's art, history and culture by offering exhibits on a variety of topics and disciplines.

EDUCATION

Since its founding, serving South Carolina school children has been a major part of the State Museum's mission and outreach. The museum offers free general museum admission and a variety of free educational programs focusing on art, cultural history, natural history and science & technology to South Carolina school groups.

SPECIAL EVENTS AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS

The State Museum presents a variety of special events and programs, allowing the museum to involve the community in fun and engaging ways. There is something for guests of all ages – from family-friendly Halloween and Holiday events, to evening food and beverage parties, to book signings and scholarly discussions.

COTTON MILL EXCHANGE

The Cotton Mill Exchange museum store covers every corner of the state to bring the best of South Carolina to guests. The store has long been considered a premier destination for those seeking a unique and comprehensive selection of South Carolina art, pottery, books, gifts and apparel.

CRESCENT CAFE

The newly renovated Crescent Café is located on the second floor mezzanine. The fresh, deli-style food is provided by Southern Way Catering, one of the largest and most sought after catering companies in the area. Southern Way Catering is the State Museum's exclusive day-time caterer and preferred evening caterer.

LOBBY PARTNERS & CAROLINA GALLERY

The Carolina Gallery, located in the museum lobby, features several iconic artifacts that represent the museum's four disciplines. Three of the museum's partners, Columbia Metropolitan Convention & Visitors Bureau, South Carolina Educational Television and the South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism Department have unique exhibit spaces in the lobby, allowing guests to explore and learn about the great things happening across South Carolina.

MEMBERSHIP

Being a member is a great way to take advantage of free general admission and ongoing discounts, as well as support the museum's programs and exhibits. Member benefits include free general admission, free or discount tickets to planetarium shows, 4D movies, blockbuster exhibits, discounts to special events, birthday parties, the museum's store and cafe and a subscription to the museum's e-newsletter and quarterly magazine.

FACILITY RENTAL

The historic building, filled with modern elements and unique features, makes for a beautiful and unforgettable event venue. The possibilities are endless with the vast amount of event spaces available throughout the museum. Whether an event seated for 50 or a reception for 1,300, event guests are always dazzled by what the State Museum has to offer.

SOUTH CAROLINA STATE MUSEUM FOUNDATION

The mission of the South Carolina State Museum Foundation is to support and promote the purposes of the State Museum. The foundation gives people in South Carolina an opportunity to become involved in educational efforts of the State Museum. When people support the foundation, they help grow and provide quality exhibits and educational programming for all ages.

ADMISSION

Adults 13 - 61: \$8.95
Seniors 62 & over: \$7.95

Children 3-12: \$6.95
Children under 2: Free

SC School groups with
advance reservations: Free

The museum offers special combination tickets to experience the planetarium, 4D theater and blockbuster exhibit.
EXPLORER 1 \$11.95 - \$15.95, **EXPLORER 2** \$14.95 - \$16.95 and **Master Explorer** \$17.95 - \$19.95.

HOURS

Open Mon. Weds. Thurs, Fri. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Tues. 10 a.m. - 8 p.m.,
Sat. 10 a.m. - 5 p.m., Sun. 12 - 5 p.m.
Closed Thanksgiving, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day & Easter