**The Resources You Need Are Available. We’re Here to Help.**

At StarLab, we understand the challenges of finding appropriate funding to implement academic enhancements. That’s why we’ve gathered what you need to help make it happen.

Letter-of-Inquiry Template Instructions

Many funders require a short Letter of Inquiry in order to consider a funding request.  These examples provide ideas of how to develop an LOI.  Just follow the format, tell your organization's story, your needs, your demographics, and use the descriptions of StarLab to complete your letter. All customizable fields are highlighted in **red** so you can easily identify and change the fields relevant to your mission.

{Foundation Name}

{Foundation Address}

{Foundation City, State, Zip}

{Date}

Dear {Insert Funding Foundation’s Contact Name}:

This letter of inquiry is written on behalf of {Insert Museum Name}, an immersive and engaging 501(c)3 science museum and outreach initiative whose mission is “to promote STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) education through exploratory, interactive learning experiences.” The purpose of our request is to seek resources to replace our antiquated mobile planetarium program that has served our curriculum objectives for the past 20 years with a new, 21st century STEM resource known as StarLab. This mobile planetarium package features state-of-the-art 360° videos under a six-meter portable dome. This technology immerses viewers in virtual reality field trips without having to leave a school’s campus and is the most requested outreach program we feature. These engaging experiences will reach every student we serve and hundreds of families at our community events. All audiences may voyage to distant planets, wonder under starry skies or journey to the center of the Earth, guided by our educators along the way.

The overall cost to replace and implement this portable interactive STEM experience is {$49,000}. We are asking the {Insert Foundation Name} to consider funding {$10,000} of the total amount. As important as this project is to our school program improvement efforts, we are unable to fund this effort on our own. We are spreading this ask over multiple sources and are committed to providing the internal time and resources needed to implement this effort once Starlab is purchased.

At {Insert Museum Name}, we serve the students of this 82% Hispanic Border Region who need access to more science, technology, education, art, and mathematics (STEAM) education. Approximately 65% of the jobs today’s middle school students will face do not yet exist. The U.S. labor force cannot meet the current demand in high-tech; and, only 16% of Hispanic students complete a STEAM postsecondary degree. Our {Insert Local Region / City} is fast becoming the aerospace hub. Unfortunately, this aerospace innovation in the region is not trickling down to education. Few programs exist to share innovations or general space education throughout the region. With the local planetarium closing this year and school field trips to out of state space education centers cost prohibitive, {Insert Museum Name} Outreach Programs are fast becoming the only 21st century science resource for the region. Our Science Outreach programs are the proactive, engaging space education programs that will meet the community where they are: Border Space.

{Insert Museum Name} has been inspiring cosmic curiosity for over 40 years. For the past 20 years, {Insert Museum Name} used an inflatable StarLab planetarium to provide a powerfully educational and immersive space experience. Unfortunately, after many years of use, the museum’s StarLab must be replaced; the dome is torn and not wheelchair accessible; when projector bulbs burn out, they are no longer produced; and, the associated curriculum is outdated. {Insert Museum Name} currently offers a space outreach program using NISE Network Earth and Space Kits, evening star parties with telescopes, and a blended reading NASA program for schools. None of these programs equal the same immersive and inspirational experience provided under the StarLab dome.

The vision of {Insert Museum Name} is to be “a vital resource for the community by inspiring curiosity for STEAM subjects and promoting innovative, collaborative and cross disciplinary thinking.” StarLab will provide a portal that permits our educators to use their collective imaginations to assist area teachers in improving instruction and increase learning through innovative and interactive lessons. Imagine a classroom experience where:

• A “field trip” inside the building can bring Earth & Space Science to life in ways never

 before imagined;

• Interactive lessons in astronomy, geology, history, weather, mythology and biology are

 taken to an entirely new level of experience for students and teachers;

• Students are more engaged in the lesson and better equipped to retain important

 Information - all aligned with national standards;

• Visual representations of the stars, the planets and other subjects are in a dynamic space that naturally invites exploration;

• Students are motivated to learn because they are actively engaged, not just a passive

 receiver of instruction;

• Student passion for Science and STEM careers can be ignited without leaving our

 Campus - and they can connect curriculum to real life situations;

• Students are excited about learning, and teachers are excited about teaching.

This is the interactive experience we imagine at {Insert Museum Name}. When students experience STEM education directly, they are more engaged, more motivated, and achieve more. StarLab provides an opportunity to bring a variety of science experiences to life for our community. It is like taking a field trip without leaving school - and it can be repeated again and again. It is an engaging and empowering environment where teaching and learning is a shared adventure.

The potential impact throughout the {Insert Region/City Name} over the next decade and beyond is priceless. This one-time purchase will provide a sustainable technology that will be used by students, teachers, parents and community members for years to come. Thank you for reviewing this request and we look forward to working with the {Insert Foundation Name}. Certainly, any help and consideration at this point is greatly appreciated by our staff and more importantly, our students. If you need additional information or a formal application completed, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe

ABC Museum Director

Work 123/456-7891  Cell 985/590-2476