



The First Source for Nonprofit Leaders SINCE 1963



## POSITION GUIDE

**ORGANIZATION:** Space Center Houston

**POSITION:** Vice President of Development

**REPORTS TO:** President & CEO

**LOCATION:** Houston, TX



### MISSION

*The mission of Space Center Houston is to inspire all generations through the wonders of space exploration.*

### Core Vision

*We aspire to be the world's leading science and space exploration learning center.*

## **ABOUT THE MUSEUM AND EDUCATIONAL FACILITY**

Space Center Houston is a nonprofit science and space exploration learning destination with extensive education programs. The center is the cornerstone of the nonprofit 501(c)(3) Manned Space Flight Education Foundation's science learning mission and offers unique exhibits, space exploration artifacts, immersive experiences, public programs, learning programs for youth and adults, live presentations and hands-on activities that tell the story of NASA's human space flight program from its beginnings to the challenges and opportunities of today and plans for the future. A Smithsonian Affiliate, Space Center Houston has the largest collection of space artifacts in the American southwest.

Space Center Houston is the official visitor center for NASA Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center (JSC). Funding for operations is secured through earned and contributed revenues. Space Center Houston is a 250,000-square-foot educational complex that welcomes 1.2 million visitors annually (a 20% increase in 3 years), including more than 250,000 teachers and youth through field trips and facilitated educational programs. The top Houston tourist destination, visitors from around the world enjoy opportunities to view more than 400 space artifacts and changing exhibits featuring America's achievements in space exploration. Space Center Houston affords visitors the greatest access to NASA working facilities with behind the scenes on tours of JSC laboratories and research facilities, including the historic Apollo Mission Control Room, the Vehicle Mock Up Facility housing a full-scale replica of the International Space Station, astronaut training areas, a robotics laboratory, and Rocket Park where a Saturn V rocket is on exhibit.

The nonprofit opened Independence Plaza in January of 2016 featuring the Boeing 747 Shuttle Carrier Aircraft and high-fidelity space shuttle replica. It's an unprecedented, international landmark standing eight stories tall and displayed in the ferry configuration. Visitors can explore exhibits inside both the shuttle replica and the historic NASA 905 shuttle carrier aircraft. Multiple exhibits grant a rare glimpse into the historic shuttle era and describe its impact on future exploration. The giant complex is the biggest project for Space Center Houston since opening. Supporting Space Center Houston's educational mission, the exhibits also emphasize problem-solving concepts and encourage career paths in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Space Center Houston aims to strengthen the future workforce and empower students with 21st century skills. School visits include curriculum-based field trips that enable K-12 students and teachers to engage in hands-on activities with emphasis on practical applications to demonstrate the impact of science and technology on everyday life. Aligned with national and state curriculum standards, programs offer experiential learning based on data-supported evidence of effective teaching methods and student achievement. Overnight experiences, day camps, scout camp-ins and other learning experiences provide age-appropriate activities that introduce scientific concepts and inspire students to explore science, technology engineering and math.

A new Learning Innovation Center opened in 2017 to support the growing education programs. The education programs fuel the imagination to ponder boundless "What if?" and "Why can't we?" statements. Its youth STEM academies engage directly with school districts and are tied to national next generation science standards. The Girls STEM Pathway provides under resourced Houston-area middle-school girls with opportunities to engage in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) immersive programming. The hands-on program teaches young

girls and women about robotics, app design, computational thinking and telemetry among many other disciplines, while building confidence in construction and experimenting with engineering concepts and challenges. Also, a part of its youth STEM academies is the Exploration Academy, which teaches students about global issues such as air systems and green energy through a 16-week program.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility are core to Space Center Houston's values and practices. The first science center in the world certified as an Autism Service Center by the IBCCES, Space Center Houston provides a broad range of services and programs for all visitors to actively explore aspects of the space program. Some examples of inclusive programming include Sensory Friendly mornings and evenings, Space Center U® Visual Impairment Program for visually impaired students and collaboration with community organizations including the Houston Alzheimer's Association on memory nights and programming for Blue and Gold Star families.

In its capacity as the official visitor center for NASA Johnson Space Center, Space Center Houston closely collaborates with JSC in hosting special programming including recently returned from space Astronaut Debriefs, convenings, R&D competitions, special programming, and hosting celebrities, dignitaries and elected officials. Retired and current astronauts regularly participate in Space Center Houston programming.

Prior to the pandemic, Space Center Houston initiated the evaluation and planning phase of a comprehensive, institution-wide digital strategy. The pandemic was a catalyst to fully role out this plan leading to new revenue streams for creative digital programming. A new position, Vice President for Technology and Systems, was also created and filled to further advance digital systems throughout the organization including membership and development.



*Rendering of Independence Plaza*

Space Center Houston employs approximately 300 full- and part-time staff and engages over 100 volunteers who contribute over 11,000 hours of service annually. The annual operating budget of SCH is over \$30 million.

## **THE OPPORTUNITY**



For 29 years, Space Center Houston has provided visitors with a unique look at the history and future of human spaceflight. What began as an opportunity to preserve the historic achievements of the American space program has evolved into a resource for science learning and exploration for visitors of all ages from all over the world. With the opening of Independence Plaza in January 2016, the largest exhibit to open since the center was established, Space Center Houston has experienced a dramatic increase in attendance and aspires to grow to 2 million annual visitors. Its vision is to become the world's leading science and space exploration learning center.

In December 2017, the Board of Directors adopted a new Strategic Plan Framework to guide growth into the future. The Framework has three core pillars – the Vision, the Core Purpose, and the Credo supported by goals and corresponding strategies with metrics.

In 2018, the organization adopted a new Facilities Master Plan detailing a metamorphosis of Space Center including the development of 48 acres of its 100 acre footprint. In 2019, the Space Center completed a comprehensive exhibit interpretive plan. Over 2 years, the board has authorized \$14 million in capital improvements including a new special event building on Independence Plaza, the Flex Building to house education programming, expanded office space and many improvements to the physical plant.



*Restored Apollo Mission Control*

In 2019 Space Center Houston conducted a highly successful \$5 million campaign to support the restoration of the historic Apollo Mission Operations Control Room (MOCR). This important site was named in 1985 to the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in recognition of its historical significance and worthiness of preservation. Only through the efforts of Space Center Houston can the general public visit the control room area and experience the July 20, 1969 first lunar landing. The restoration was completed to coincide with the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Apollo 11 lunar landing and the world premiere of a Smithsonian traveling exhibit featuring the Columbia capsule at Space Center Houston.

The Board has also undergone a transformation from a caretaker, operations focused body to a development focused, growth-minded and diverse leadership board. A Board Investment Committee was established and in 3 years has placed \$25 million under quasi-endowment management. The organization is preparing to launch a comprehensive capital campaign.

Having emerged from the complexities of the 2020 COVID shutdown in a position of strength, Space Center Houston is poised to advance the realization of its approved Facilities Master Plan. This plan will transform the footprint of Space Center Houston to support fulfillment of its ambitious strategic vision and is the guiding force for the continued dynamic growth that the organization has been experiencing over the past 5 years. Given the scope of activity underway at SCH and the scale of ambitious projects, the Vice President of Development will be the key leader within the institution driving the fundraising activities to support execution of the vision.

### **POSITION SUMMARY**

Reporting to the President & CEO, the Vice President of Development will provide strategic leadership to continue growing Space Center Houston's nascent advancement program including Membership, Individual Giving, Grant Development, Major and Planned Gifts, Principal Gifts and government funding. Serving on the Executive Leadership and Management Teams, this individual will work closely with the President & CEO and Board of Directors to fulfill Space Center Houston's strategic plan and facilities master plan. They will have staff management oversight of the Membership Director and a professional team of eight (8) fundraising professionals. The successful candidate will thrive in a dynamic and entrepreneurial environment as a key leader in the realization of an ambitious vision and will in partnership with the President & CEO, establish and achieve aspirational goals in all assigned areas.

Responsibilities include:

- **Leadership:** This leader will work closely and collaboratively with the President & CEO and across the organization on creating and implementing cultivation, solicitation and stewardship strategies. They will interface with SCH staff members to ensure strategically aligned brand, messaging, image and information in all materials, presentations and website content in the advancement strategy. The VP will directly supervise a team of development professionals with a focus on mentoring, training, evaluating and counseling.
- **Development:** This professional will qualify and manage a major gifts portfolio of high-capacity, high-profile prospects and donors. They will identify cultivate, solicit and steward primarily gifts of \$100,000 or greater from individuals, foundations and corporation. The VP will conceptualize and direct fundraising initiatives of SCH, including development special events, donor engagement and stewardship activities and specialized campaigns; develop and coordinate the creation of appropriate materials including case statements, major gift solicitation proposals and other development collateral materials; and oversee and provide strategic direction for Space Center Houston's membership program and annual giving program.
- **Board Interface:** This individual will have oversight of the Board development committee including working with the committee chair and the President & CEO to develop the

committee strategy, agendas, advancing goals and objectives of the committee including the management of follow-up activities with volunteers. In coordination with the President & CEO and Board Chair, the VP will actively engage all members of the Board of Directors in advancement support and strategies and participate in the identification, recruitment and engagement of potential Board members.

- **Ambassadorship:** They will represent the Space Center in the professional and philanthropic community, including conferences and professional development opportunities. This individual will serve as an ambassador with individual major donors and prospects, community leaders, senior management in major corporations and foundations, elected officials and their staff, and members of the Board of Directors.

### **CANDIDATE PROFILE**

Space Center Houston seeks a senior development executive with proven management and leadership experience in a similar position in a museum, science center or related non-profit organization. This individual's background and experience would include proven expertise and a record of achievement in development and fundraising practices including major, principal and planned gift development. This person will have a demonstrated track record in a leadership role in the conceptualization, planning and realization of large-scale capital campaigns. They must have strong leadership and managerial skills with experience directing a team of fundraising professionals. Experience in researching, writing and securing grants is desired.

The successful candidate must have excellent communication skills, oral and written, along with stellar public speaking and presentation abilities. The skill to build and nurture relationships, internally and externally, and a willingness to master a thorough understanding of NASA Johnson Space Center's and Space Center Houston's goals and strengths and express these clearly and effectively to prospects, donors and constituents is critical.

The VP of Development is a vital member of the staff leadership team who will work closely with an active volunteer Board of Directors. The successful candidate must demonstrate the ability to understand and operate effectively within a 501c3 nonprofit governing environment while providing strong leadership in the implementation of best practice management techniques in development/fundraising.

Additional personal qualities we seek are strategic, a highly entrepreneurial mindset, integrity, credibility, and a commitment to the mission of Space Center Houston.

A bachelor's degree from an accredited four-year college or university is required. A proven record of successful fundraising and demonstrated experience in securing major contributions is required.

To apply, please send a current resume and letter of introduction to Kittleman & Associates, LLC at <https://bit.ly/3uigdo7> (click on the Apply button at the bottom of the page).

For more information about Space Center Houston please visit [www.spacecenter.org](http://www.spacecenter.org)