



Mary Baerg

Chief Operating Officer
Space Center Houston
Manned Space Flight Education Foundation

Mary Baerg is responsible for the center operations, including exhibits, finance, education, facilities, safety and security and guest operations of the nonprofit science and space exploration learning center, Space Center Houston. With approximately 450 employees and contractors, Space Center Houston is the No. 1 international attraction in the greater Houston area, generating a \$118.7 million annual economic impact, 1,710 jobs and \$53.7 million in personal income. A dynamic science and engineering learning destination, the center is a Smithsonian Affiliate, the Official Visitor Center of NASA Johnson Space Center, a Certified Autism Center and named “Best Museum in Texas” by *USA Today*.

Baerg joined Space Center Houston in spring of 2020 – just as the center welcomed its newest exhibit, a flown SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket, adding to the nonprofit’s ongoing commitment to engage the public to be a part of the NASA mission.

She brings more than 25 years of combined experience in communications, museum and space industries; specializing in guest and team engagement and program strategy.

Baerg was previously the chief experience officer for the Perot Museum of Nature and Science in Dallas, Texas. For the Perot Museum, Baerg designed an onsite engagement framework to elevate the culture from transactional to relational experiences with a focus on innovative guest engagement. She directed vision for new programs, guided community engagement and grew education programs.

Her extensive museum experience includes the Natural History Museum of Los Angeles County, where she served in multiple roles including director of guest experience operations, director of guest relations, associate director of marketing and communications and oversaw youth education programs. She directed key guest experience projects during a time when the museum was transforming 60 percent of its public space and adding an outdoor learning laboratory. She also played a pivotal role in overseeing the guest experience at the Natural History Museum’s sister museum, The La Brea Tar Pits and Museum and the Great Lakes Science Center.

With proven leadership and strategy experience in the space industry, Baerg served as duty lead for the Mars Public Engagement team at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL). She directed daily operations for nationwide education and outreach efforts for NASA’s Mars Exploration Program and served as a key strategist for museum collaborations, a nationwide loan program, teacher professional development and informal education projects.

Baerg earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications from California State University, Fullerton. Her previous board service includes board president for the Child Educational Center in La Canada, California.

The Manned Space Flight Education Foundation is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit science and space exploration learning center with extensive educational programs. Space Center Houston is the cornerstone of its mission to inspire all generations through the wonders of space exploration. The center draws more than 1.25 million visitors annually, was named “Best Museum in Texas” by *USA Today* and generates a \$118.7 million annual economic impact in the greater Houston area. Space Center Houston is a Smithsonian Affiliate, the Official Visitor Center of NASA Johnson Space Center and a Certified Autism Center. More than 250,000 teachers and students from around the world visit the center annually to experience the educational space museum with more than 400 things to see and do. For more information, go to www.spacecenter.org.