

## New STEM Opportunity – Permanently Install a Voyage Scale Model Solar System in Your Community as a Focal Point for STEM Education



### Voyage Mark II Exhibition Available for Permanent Installation Spring 2025

**Opportunity for a Community to Engage Students, Families, and the Public at Large in an Outdoor STEM Experience in the Space Sciences**



**For Immediate Release  
May 22, 2024**

**Time Sensitive:** for installation as early as Spring 2025, interested colleges, museums/science centers, school districts, and local government organizations are directed to inquire as soon as possible

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The National Center for Earth and Space Science Education and Exhibitology LLC are inviting communities across the U.S. to explore permanent installation of a Voyage Mark II Scale Model Solar System as part of the Voyage National Program. The Arthur C. Clarke Institute for Space Education is extending this invitation to communities across Canada.



Voyage Mark I exhibition in Washington DC.

The exhibition is a 1 to 10-billion scale model of the Solar System that balances sculpture with a deep conceptual understanding of Earth's place in space. The planets and large moons are laser sculpted in 3D inside crystal block, and high resolution full color storyboards carry compelling text and imagery.

Local organizations with an interest in STEM education, and experiential learning more generally, are invited to consider installing a Voyage on a college campus, in a local park, along a walking path, or along a downtown street. The exhibition is designed to serve as a community focal point for STEM education – for students, families and the general public.

There are currently 15 permanently installed Voyage exhibitions, 4 on community college campuses; 3 on 4-year university campuses; 3 at museums/ science centers; 1 on a school district campus; 1 in a city park; and 3 along cityscapes. An additional 3 more Voyages are to be installed in 2024.

The exhibition is ADA compliant, and a secondary tactile scale model solar system on the storyboards allows the blind and vision impaired to have as rich an experience as other visitors. A tour brochure promotes self-guided inquiry-based exploration of the Solar System, and online content resources for both teachers and parents extend the Voyage experience beyond the exhibition site. A grade K-12

curriculum on Solar System science allows a visit to *Voyage* to be placed in the context of a multi-week classroom unit on the Solar System.

- a college or university can incorporate the *Voyage* experience into non-science major classes in astronomy and geology; designate campus as a STEM education destination site for pre-college student groups and classes, introducing these students to an undergraduate setting; and add a sculptural element to the campus experience
- a museum or science center can extend learning experiences to outdoor spaces, and beyond normal operating hours
- a school district can install *Voyage* on a corridor between schools; provide tours district-wide led by student explainers; and enhance a tour with the *Voyage* K-12 curricular lessons for grades: K-2, 3-5, 6-8, and 9-12
- city government can use *Voyage* as both a sculptural and educational experience along a 2,000 ft path, and invite new visitorship to a business district
- a park can provide a greater view of the natural world, with the exhibition fostering an understanding of Earth's place in the Solar System, and providing a context for planets visible in the night sky

This is also an invitation to become part of a network of *Voyage Communities*, all sharing a common heritage of *Voyage* on the National Mall in Washington, DC, and sharing programmatic recipes for success with each other.

### **Background – *Voyage on the National Mall in Washington, DC***

In October 2001 a 1 to 10-billion scale model of the Solar System was permanently installed on the National Mall in Washington, DC, between the U.S. Capitol and Washington Monument. Located along a 2,000-foot path in front of the Smithsonian Institution – from the National Air and Space Museum to the Smithsonian Castle – 13 stanchions allow the visitor to explore the Solar System from the Sun out to the dwarf planet Pluto.

Appropriately called *Voyage*, the exhibition allows visitors to leave our Earth and gain a profound conceptual understanding of humanity's place in a greater space, in a way that only a scale model of the Solar System can convey. Approved by the U.S. Commission of Fine Arts and the National Capital Planning Commission for placement on this reverential ground, the commissioners also recognized a deeper objective – *Voyage* would celebrate our remarkable capacity as a race of explorers to decipher our place in space, and through scientific inquiry, reveal the majesty of the universe. They viewed this as a story that would captivate young and old, appeal to the millions of annual international visitors to the National Mall from across the planet, and inspire a new generation to find their way to the frontiers of human exploration – so they may continue the voyage.

Given the story of our existence knows no national boundaries, the intent was that *Voyage* would be replicated and permanently installed at 100 sites across the U.S. and around the world. The National Center for Earth and Space Science Education therefore established the *Voyage* National Program to bring this experience to communities everywhere. The Mall Exhibition – the Mark I Exhibition – while available, is expensive for replication given the unique constraints imposed by the Commissions in DC. The Center and Exhibitology have therefore designed a lower cost *Voyage* Exhibition – the Mark II – that preserves the design aesthetic of *Voyage on the National Mall*. The *Voyage* Mark II is available for potential installation in Spring 2025.

Through these programs we want to invite your community to take this voyage with us.

We all share this world, are charged with its stewardship, and through education believe that it should be the birthright of all our children to understand the story of our existence. We invite you to take a *Voyage* that will forever change your perspective of home.

*I say!" murmured Horton. I've never heard tell  
Of a small speck of dust that is able to yell.  
So you know what I think?... Why I think that there must  
Be someone on top of that small speck of dust!  
Some sort of creature of very small size,  
Too small to be seen by an elephant's eyes...  
—Dr. Seuss, Horton Hears a Who!, 1954.*

To consider this opportunity for your community, explore the *Voyage National Program* website  
<http://voyagesolarsystem.org>

the current Network of *Voyage* Communities  
<http://voyagesolarsystem.org/community-network/>

and the *Voyage* Mark II Exhibition page  
<http://voyagesolarsystem.org/available-exhibitions/voyage-mark-ii/>

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The *Voyage National Program* (VNP) is a program of the National Center for Earth and Space Science Education (NCESS) in the U.S., and the Arthur C. Clarke Institute for Space Education internationally. It is enabled through a strategic partnership with Exhibitology LLC. Big Kid Science is a National Partner on the *Voyage National Program*.