



June 25, 2021

Eugene Science Center plans to reopen to the public September 10, 2021 after being closed since March 16, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. After successfully running full day camps during the summer of 2020, and operating as an emergency childcare facility since September 2020, the region's only hands-on science center is excited to once again engage its extended community onsite in science exploration through its exhibits, programs, and planetarium shows.

Eugene Science Center has been operating with minimal staff since last September when it had to lay off half of its employees to survive the pandemic. Federal funding through Oregon Cultural Trust, two Paycheck Protection Program loans, amazing community support, and its collaboration with the NAACP to provide free childcare to BIPOC community members helped the organization survive and retain its education team while providing an essential service to its community. The science center also modified its planetarium for private tutoring of middle and high school students.

"We had a feeling last summer that schools wouldn't be in person in the fall, so we quickly filed to become an emergency childcare facility and then worked with the City of Eugene, EWEB, and XS Media to make use of a dark fiber optic connection so we could support numerous simultaneous student online connections with their teachers," said Tim Scott, Executive Director. "Our collaboration with the NAACP to support students with their distance learning activities each morning, and then engage them with camp activities each afternoon has been amazing."

Staff are now focusing on a full summer camp season, and filling positions vacant since last year. "We have a lot to do before we reopen," says Tim Scott. "Many exhibits need repairs and renovations, and we've had to reorganize our space quite a bit to run our childcare program. We'll also need a couple of months to recruit, hire, and train a Guest Relations team and new exhibits and planetarium staff."

Eugene Science Center staff will work throughout the summer to get the museum ready to reopen to the public this fall. It may begin offering planetarium and laser shows to the public later this summer based on county restrictions and staffing levels. To stay up to date on its offerings, visit its website [eugenesciencecenter.org](https://www.eugenesciencecenter.org), or follow the museum on [Facebook](#).