

Press Release
For immediate release

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Water returns to the iconic LEGO® Millyard Project. This is the first of many changes coming to the SEE Science Center as part of the organization's first-ever capital campaign.

With nearly 1.2 million raised to date, the *Science For All* Campaign includes participation of over ninety supporters.

Manchester, NH—This summer, visitors to the SEE Science Center will see water running through the iconic Guinness World Record®-holding LEGO® Millyard Project. The upgrades to the model are the first of many enhancements coming to the SEE Science Center as part of the organization's first-ever capital campaign.

The *Science For All Campaign* has two strategic goals: 1) innovative exhibits and 2) accessibility and inclusion. The campaign has raised nearly 1.2 million to date. With scheduled completion by the end of 2026, the improvements at SEE Science Center will include enhancements to entrance areas, classrooms, restrooms, exhibit upgrades and the design and construction of all-new exhibit experiences. The campaign will also ensure ongoing maintenance for exhibits and continuous services for underserved populations far into the future through establishing Exhibit Excellence and Science For All funds. These funds will be an investment in both the future of SEE and the community it serves.

The new exhibit gallery will be called the Millyard Design Zone and will include more than twenty hands-on experiences on the topics of city planning, energy and conservation and manufacturing. There will also be new opportunities to explore and connect with the SEE Science Center's LEGO® Millyard Project, the world's largest permanent LEGO® installation at minifigure scale. Ongoing exhibit upgrades include the exciting return of running water to this model built with approximately 3 million LEGO® bricks. The deck on which this renowned model sits has been refreshed and includes a growing collection of donor recognition bricks on permanent display for everyone contributing \$250 or more to the *Science For All* campaign.

Visitors will also notice the first completed accessibility upgrades with button-activated accessible doors now installed in many places throughout the building and more accessible stools and benches in the exhibit halls. This summer, campers will enjoy the completely updated chemistry lab space at SEE that has been re-equipped to create an immersive modern lab environment for programming. Campers will also find more accessible chairs in all our

classroom spaces. A new entry area experience and renovated restrooms will follow these changes in the next eighteen months.

The *Science For All* campaign is anchored by local gifts from Dean Kamen and DEKA, the lead sponsors of the Millyard Design Zone gallery, and by St. Mary's Bank, the presenting sponsor for the SEE Science Center's fully upgraded chemistry lab. Major contributions have also been made by Eversource Energy, Bob and Lynn Tuttle and Dartmouth Health Children's, our exhibit topic sponsors. In total, ninety different individuals, foundations and agencies have contributed to this effort.

"The *Science For All* campaign is critical to ensuring the ongoing success of the SEE Science Center as it approaches its fortieth anniversary as a community resource for southern New Hampshire," said Shana Hawrylchak, the SEE Science Center's executive director. "We are eagerly working toward the completion of our new exhibit hall filled with unique, engaging hands-on exhibits and facility upgrades in 2026. The now-public phase of our campaign offers an exciting opportunity to engage the community in support of this transformative project. We are grateful to the many foundations, individuals and government agencies who have played an important role in our efforts thus far. We look forward to the next phase of our campaign which will help us reach our final goal."

SEE deputy director, Peter Gustafson, added, "The LEGO® Millyard Project put the SEE Science Center on the map when it was built brick by brick with the assistance of members of our local community. Through this campaign, we continue to invite our community to build for the future with us with donations of any size. Gifts of \$250 or more include name recognition on graphic bricks that are displayed on the base of the LEGO® model. Our 2026 completion will also coincide with the twentieth anniversary of the LEGO® Millyard Project's dedication, and we are looking forward to celebrating with our supporters and community members."

About the SEE Science Center's new exhibits and upgrades

The SEE Science Center began working on the vision for the Millyard Design Zone in late fall 2020 when staff and stakeholders gathered to establish the goal, vision and look and feel for the gallery in consultation with Betsy Loring from expLoring exhibits and engagement. The process continued with brainstorming hands-on experiences that could meet this project's goals. From summer 2021 through 2025, SEE tested exhibit prototypes at community events with focus groups and visitors. As each component was refined, SEE staff worked with Green Dot Design to create construction drawings for each custom exhibit kiosk. Panoptic Design/Build in western Massachusetts is constructing the exhibit kiosks with finish work being completed in-house by

SEE staff. Visitors can see and use the first finished kiosks on the exhibit floor this summer at SEE.

Accessibility improvements at the SEE Science Center began in September 2022 after completing an independent third-party Universal Design Audit of the existing facilities. The resulting recommendations allowed SEE to receive a grant from the federal agency Institute of Museum and Library Services to engage with local partners from the disability community to help refine accessibility and inclusion goal's scope for the campaign. The grant also allowed the SEE to create standardized accessibility training for all staff. Work began to select universal seating in 2023 when SEE engaged with the Moore Center to test options. The selected chairs for all classroom and gathering spaces arrived in April 2025 and were put into immediate use for field trip students and event attendees. All design work for the campaign projects are done with consideration to accessibility standards and recommendations.

Throughout the 2024–2025 school year, students have increasingly benefited from the ongoing upgrades to the SEE chemistry lab, which include a new accessible sink and eyewash station, new cabinetry, tables and flooring and new chairs. In this space, students of all ages can embody what it is like to be a lab scientist. SEE is looking forward to welcoming all field trip students to this completed space in the new school year.

The design for the future upgrades to the entry area is focused on creating a welcoming space for people who are new to museum experiences. These efforts will include multilingual support for key information. The restroom upgrades will better accommodate families and field trip groups and ensure all visitors have a secure and seamless experience.

We invite the public to visit SEE this summer to experience the progress for themselves and to join us in this campaign. Donations of any amount are critical to helping us reach the finish line and achieving all the goals we have set. All donors will be recognized at the SEE Science Center entrance and donors contributing gifts of \$250 or more will have a permanent recognition brick on the LEGO® Millyard Model. Donations can be made on the SEE website <https://see-sciencecenter.org/science-for-all/>, during a visit to SEE or by contacting us at 603-669-0400. With your help, we aim to make 2026 an amazing year for our community by celebrating the SEE Science Center's fortieth anniversary, the LEGO® Millyard Project's twentieth anniversary and the successful completion of the *Science For All* campaign.

About the *Science For All* Campaign

Planning for the *Science For All* campaign began in early 2023 with a feasibility study guided by Alan Cantor Consulting. The campaign was officially launched in October 2023. Throughout the eighteen-month silent phase of the campaign, SEE received enthusiastic support from

community stakeholders. This allowed for expansion of both the goal and scope of the campaign in summer 2024. This community support is incredibly important as the federal funding landscape continues to evolve. The campaign will continue through the dedication of the Millyard Design Zone planned for 2026.

About the SEE Science Center

Located in the heart of New Hampshire's queen city in Manchester's historic millyard, the SEE Science Center has been creating fun, hands-on science learning opportunities since 1986. Over the decades, SEE has more than doubled in size and furthered its reach throughout the region. SEE offers a welcoming space where all generations can play, explore, and discover our world and one another with fun, memorable experiences. Current exhibit topics include forces, light, space, dinosaurs, bubbles, sound, human biology, innovative technologies and more. SEE also offers programs for kids, adults and groups. SEE is an IRS-designated 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a mission to engage our community in the joyful, active exploration of science and innovation. SEE is open to the public seven days a week now through Labor Day.

About the LEGO® Millyard

The LEGO® Millyard is the largest permanent LEGO® installation at minifigure scale in the world as recognized by Guinness World Records®. The model represents Manchester's Amoskeag Millyard as it might have looked circa 1900. The project took more than three years of planning, development and building to complete. It covers 2,200 square feet of space. More than 250 individuals contributed an estimated 10,000 person hours to construct the model. The project marked the first time the LEGO Group worked on a creative display of this scale with outside partners. These partners included the SEE Science Center, FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology), CLD Consulting Engineers, and NELUG (the New England LEGO® Users Group). The City of Manchester also sponsored this project. The Manchester Historic Association provided research materials. The project was dedicated on November 29, 2006.

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