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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Name of organization** | | |  | Discovery Park of America | | **Address** | | |  | 830 Everett Blvd Union City, Tennessee 38261 [Map It](https://maps.google.com/maps?q=830+Everett+Blvd+Union+City%2C+Tennessee+38261) | | **Contact Name** | | |  | Scott Williams | | **Title** | | |  | President and CEO | | **Phone** | | |  | (731) 599-9749 | | **Email** | | |  | [swilliams@discoveryparkofamerica.com](mailto:swilliams@discoveryparkofamerica.com) | | **Website** | | |  | <http://www.discoveryparkofamerica.com> | | **Section 1- Qualifications:** | | | **1. What story does your institution tell about the Mississippi River as part of its regular daily visitor experience? How does it relate to the themes for interpretation which are attached? Why do you feel that this significant aspect or relationship to the river is presented at a high level of quality? Describe the quality of the visit your guests receive.** | | |  | Since Discovery Park of America, a $100-million-dollar museum and heritage park, opened its doors in 2013, millions of children and adults have benefited from the big idea of Robert Kirkland and the community of Union City, Tennessee to create a place where inspiration would happen every single day. That means inspiration to learn, inspiration to grow, inspiration to consider new ideas and inspiration to see beyond wherever an individual is in life, regardless of age or education.  Specifically and as set forth in its original charter, the mission of Discovery Park of America is to create and serve the public as a premier museum and educational institution, with an emphasis on assembling, displaying, preserving and/or protecting important and interesting artistic, cultural, historical and scientific items, collections, works and exhibits dedicated to and celebrating the human experience; specifically, our culture, our spirit, our accomplishments and our history, with an emphasis on Northwest Tennessee's unique cultural heritage and natural history. That includes our region's unique relationship to Reelfoot Lake and the Mississippi River.  Our museum's focus also includes efforts to foster an interest in the appreciation and exploration of and knowledge regarding natural and cultural history, science, technology and the arts by using its collections and resources to enlighten, to educate, to engage and to delight the public, children and adults alike, through well-designed exhibits, creative and engaging public programming, ongoing thought leadership where applicable, academic research and academic excellence. We encourage an entrepreneurial effort from our staff to enhance our substantive and fiscal principles in our day-to-day operations and contact with the public.  Regarding the Mississippi River, there are numerous ways we incorporate the story of the Mississippi River and the surrounding communities:  > There are many places at Discovery Park of America where guests can experience folk hero, frontiersman, politician and West Tennessee settler David Crockett. He lived in our region from 1822 until he departed for the Alamo in 1835. Crockett was also one of the earliest hunters around nearby Reelfoot Lake and his use of the area's rivers—including the Mississippi—are included in the exhibit and film.  > Our 10-minute immersive Earthquake Simulator features a surround screen and moving platform to take you back in time to experience firsthand the science behind the 1811 and 1812 earthquakes along the New Madrid Fault Line. The earthquakes contributed to the creation of Reelfoot Lake as the Mississippi River flowed backward and filled in the gaping hole that was formed.  > Discovery Park celebrates the unique cultural heritage and natural history of Northwest Tennessee, Reelfoot Lake and the other bodies of water around us. The fish you see in our aquarium would be right at home in the Mississippi. Included are largemouth bass, black crappie, bowfin, shortnose gar, longnose gar, smallmouth buffalo and blue and channel catfish. Housed in several smaller tanks in the gallery are a red-eared slider turtle, snapping turtle and eastern box turtle. There are also several snakes, including a speckled king snake, corn snake and pine snake.  > Opening Nov. 10, 2023 at Discovery Park is "Duck, Duck, Goose: Waterfowl of the Mississippi Flyway." In this new, one-million-dollar permanent exhibit, guests will discover how a combination of federal land protections and private land conservation unites the government, landowners, hunters, scientists, conservationists and other nature lovers to protect and restore waterfowl populations and the land needed for them to thrive.  > Other areas, while not specific to the Mississippi River, do relate to the history, environment and science of the area, and that certainly includes the river. Included in a visit is a reproduction of an early 20th-century town with a working gristmill, windmill, one-room schoolhouse and more; a turn-of-the-century train station and depot with locomotive, cars and caboose to explore inside and out; the Simmons Bank Ag Center showcasing the agricultural traditions and heritage of this region and a new permanent exhibit on innovation in agriculture; and a reproduction of an entire mid-19th century frontier settlement.  Discovery Park is known for the quality of the experience guests receive. That includes the cleanliness of the museum and grounds, the technology and hands-on experiences, the highest level of customer service and the dedication of adherence to museum best practices. | | **2. What is the length of stay for the typical visitor experience at your institution? Please provide what you consider an average time, what you consider a short stay and what you consider a long stay for regular attendance.** | | |  | With three new hotels next door and another one opening up down the street, we're seeing an increase in two-day visits. Some of the highlights can be experienced in four hours or so, but at least a full day is required to experience the entire museum and park. | | **3. What educational or interpretive programs beyond exhibits do you conduct that interpret the Mississippi River or some significant aspect or relationship to the river?** | | |  | >We currently have "birds-of-prey," pollinator and other programs taught by rangers from Reelfoot Lake state Park. They incorporate the lake and Mississippi River as applicable. There is an opportunity to include more programming relating to the Mississippi in the programs and activities we implement in the future. We have programs and panel discussions, author talks, hands-on teaching opportunities with school groups and similar initiatives. We are also a gathering place and host hundreds of organization and company gatherings each year. Our president, Scott Williams, is currently on the Tennessee Tourism Committee of the Department of Tourist Development for the State of Tennessee, the boards of the Obion County Chamber of Commerce, the Northwest Tennessee Tourism Committee and Hospitality Tennessee, the advisory board of the UTM College of Business and Global Affairs and the Northwest Tennessee Arts Center Advisory Board. He is able to represent the organizations we partner with in that capacity. Additionally, we have an information desk staffed with volunteers who help our visitors learn more about the area utilizing brochures and maps that are available there. | | **4. What are your published and regular hours? Please describe hours for various seasons.** | | |  | March – August 2023 Open 10 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Monday – Saturday Open 11 a.m. – 5 p.m. on Sunday Closed on Easter, Apr. 9, 2023.  September – December 2023 Open 10 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Tuesday- Saturday Open 11 a.m. – 4 p.m. on Sunday Closed Mondays, Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day. Open on Labor Day, Monday, Sept. 4, 2023 | | **5. What is the annual attendance for regular museum hours at your site, exclusive of special events? What is the admission fee?** | | |  | An average of 250,000 per year.  GENERAL ADMISSION Adult (18 and older): $21.99 Child (4-17): $14.99 3 and under are free  VIP DISCOVERY PACKAGE BEST VALUE! This is a great package to enjoy as is or add select attractions to enhance your visit. Enjoy general admission PLUS: Unlimited access to the Cooper Tower 10% off in the Gift Shop 10% off in the Cafe and Eats & Treats Collectible VIP badge Adult (18 and older): $29.99\* Child (4-17): $22.99 3 and under are free  EXPLORER PLUS PACKAGE BEST VALUE FOR ALL INCLUSIVE! Explore the whole museum and park with a ticket to Discovery Park and a ticket to all the special attractions where you and your family can relax and recharge throughout the day. With your Explorer Plus Package, you will also get: Unlimited access to the Cooper Tower during park hours One ticket to the Discovery Theater “Dinosaurs of Antarctica 3D” One ticket to the Discovery Theater “Tiny Giants 3D.” One ticket to the Earthquake Simulator 10% off in the Gift Shop and the Hugh Wade Feed Store 10% in Sabin’s Cafe and Eats and Treats Discovery Park of America Guidebook Explorer Plus Package Pricing: Adult (18 and older): $64.99 Child (4-17): $39.99 Children 3 and under are free.  SPECIAL ATTRACTION PRICING:  DISCOVERY THEATER Two award-winning 3D films, “Dinosaurs of Antarctica 3D” and “Tiny Giants 3D.” $5.99.  EARTHQUAKE SIMULATOR 10-minute story and simulation of historic earthquakes. Show begins every 30 minutes. $5.99  THE TOWER Ride the elevator up 120 feet and see for miles! $5.99 | | **6. What is your proximity to the Great River Road?** | | |  | We are located 15 miles from Hickman, Ky, 28 miles from Columbus Belmont State Park, 24 miles from the Reelfoot Lake State Park Welcome Center and 38 miles from New Madrid, Mo. We are frequently included as a part of a visit to other attractions on the Great River Road. | | **7. Did you enclose a letter of endorsement from your state Mississippi River Parkway Commissioner?** | | |  | No | | **Section II - Duties and Obligations:** | | | **1. Members of the network must have the Great River Road map at their site, at a minimum for reference, but preferably for sale or for distribution to visitors. One map will be provided as will an order form for additional maps. Will you agree to stock and/or sell the Great River Road map?** | | |  | Yes | | **2. Members of the network must ensure that front line personnel who have contact with the public are knowledgeable of and will promote the Great River Road and the museums and interpretive centers in the region. Describe how you will ensure that your front line personnel will be trained, briefed and monitored.** | | |  | We have a very engaged and enthusiastic front-line team that is able to communicate about all our partnerships because of our training and dedicated HR team. We also include education of this kind in our quarterly all-staff meetings and our weekly one-to-one departmental meetings.  You can get a good idea of how we communicate publicly about partnerships at:   <https://discoveryparkofamerica.com/press/press-releases/> | | **3. Are you willing to display signage at your center showing that you are a member of the Great River Road Network? This may be inside or outside signage, but must be prominently displayed. Where will you display the Interpretive Center sign? Both inside and outside** | | |  | Outside the museum just before guests enter and in our lobby. | | **4. Are you willing to secure the needed funds to have an officially approved Great River Road Interpretive Center sign erected at your site?** | | |  | Yes | | **5. Are you willing to use and incorporate the Great River Road network language and logo on all future marketing and promotional materials (i.e. radio, newsprint, social media, websites, maps, rackcards and brochures, etc.)? Sample language: [Name of Interpretive Center] is an Interpretive Center of the Great River Road – Mississippi River Parkway Commission National Scenic Byway.** | | |  | Yes | | **Section Ill - Capacity:** | | | **1. Do you have access to the internet? If your facility has a website, what is the address? Do you have the ability to post the**[**experiencemississippiriver.com**](http://experiencemississippiriver.com)**website on our website?** | | |  | Yes, we have access to the internet.  Website: <https://discoveryparkofamerica.com/>  Other digital urls: <https://www.facebook.com/discoveryparkofamerica> <https://www.pinterest.com/discoveryparkTN/> <https://www.instagram.com/discoveryparkuc/> <https://www.youtube.com/@discoveryparkofamerica/> <https://twitter.com/DiscoveryParkUC> <https://www.flickr.com/photos/192836029@N07/albums/with/72157719029643296> <https://www.tiktok.com/@discoveryparkuc> | | **2. Do you have traveling exhibit space? If so, what size is it in square footage? Would you be willing or interested in hosting a traveling exhibit?** | | |  | We have multiple spaces for temporary exhibits. To date, we have hosted: Titanic Bodies Jurassic Journeys DaVinci Machines and Robotics World of Giant Insects Nature's Ninjas Science of Rock N Roll Thomas and Friends: Explore the Rails Towers of Tomorrow with LEGO Bricks Hot Wheels: Race to Win Astronaut Murray Hudson Globes and Maps 40 Chances/Howard Buffet Photo Exhibit  Yes -- we are always looking for compelling and interesting temporary exhibits. | |