Math All Around Me: Exhibit Bid Document

Opening Bid Date: March 23, 2026

Bid Closing Date: April 3, 2026

Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago ("KCM") 2100 Patriot Blvd, Glenview, Illinois 60026 respectfully requests qualifications and a proposal for the design of the *Math All Around Me* (working title) Exhibit.

I. Project Description:

As one of the only museums in the upper Midwest offering programs specifically designed to support the learning and developmental needs of children from **infancy through age eight**, KCM has been a favorite destination for Chicago-area visitors since its founding in 1985. In 2005 the museum built a new LEED certified facility including 18,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space and 1.8 acres of bounded, outdoor space. All public space is ADA accessible and exhibits follow principles of universal design, ensuring children and families with varying abilities/special needs are able to benefit fully from the museum experience. KCM also operates a series of Pop-Up Museums and a Mobile Learning Lab program in Northern Lake County, providing hands-on learning to communities that face barriers to children's museum attendance. More than 3,000,000 children and families, and school and community groups have visited Kohl Children's Museum and its outreach programs.

The museum has received funding from the State of Illinois to design and fabricate three small modular STEM traveling exhibits that can be combined to form a 1,000 sq ft exhibit. The small exhibits will be focused on the early math concepts of shape, patterns, and measurement and will be used at the main Museum as well as the Pop-Up Museum and Mobile Learning Lab programs. It is the intent of the Owner to select an Exhibition Design Company through the evaluation of bids, interviews and contract negotiations by April 3, 2026 ***This BID is for schematic and detail design services.***

This is an open, competitive bid process. Minority business firms are encouraged to submit bids and the successful business is encouraged to use minority sub-contractors for supplies, services and construction. This document shall be submitted by completing all of the required information as described in the section **Exhibit Design Qualifications**. Bid documents shall be emailed to Stephanie Bynum (sbynum@kcmgc.org) using the subject line "KCM Math Exhibit BID."

BID must be submitted to KCM by 5:00 pm April 3, 2026 and will not be considered if received after the time stated. Only those submittals that follow the required format described in this request will be considered. KCM may reject any submittal not in compliance with the requirements stated herein. Further, KCM will not be responsible for any costs associated with the preparation and presentation of submittal. This submittal process does not obligate KCM to enter into a contract.

An optional webinar to discuss the unique aspects of this project will take place at 1:00 CST on March 27, 2026. Please register for the webinar by emailing Stephanie Bynum (sbynum@kcmgc.org) no later than March 26, 2026.

All questions concerning this submittal shall be directed in writing to Stephanie Bynum at sbynum@kcmgc.org.

II. Exhibit Project Team Composition

a) Stephanie Bynum, Vice President of Programs, Kohl Children's Museum
b) Joe Sarr, Director of Exhibits, Kohl Children's Museum
c) Erika Gray, Director of Education, Kohl Children's Museum

III. Performance: Roles and Responsibilities

(a) **Schematic Design**

(b) **Detail Design**

Responsibilities of KCM include Design Drawing review and approval; Meetings with the Designers; Final narratives and label texts; and Monitoring of the process for design intent and quality of design.

IV. Schedule

The following list of dates constitutes the preliminary project schedule. The fabrication project schedule will be completed following a separate fabrication bid process.

Project Timeline	Start	End	Months
Schematic Design	4/15/26	5/15/26	1
Detail Design	5/15/26	7/15/26	2
Fabrication	7/15/26	1/8/27	5

V. Exhibit Designer/Fabricator Qualifications

A. Business Organization
   1. Name, phone number and address of Business
   2. Contact name, phone number, fax, mailing and email address
   3. Local Office

B. Business Profile
   1. Number of years your firm has been providing Exhibit Design services under this firm name.
   2. Description of services your firm currently provides under the name above
   3. Documentation of Insurance

C. Codes, Permits, and Inspections
   1. All work shall meet or exceed the latest requirements of all national, state, county and municipal authorities exercising jurisdiction over the construction work of the project.

D. Schedule – Are you able to meet the milestones as outlined in this request?

E. Fees – Describe how you would calculate your fees for this project? Provide a preliminary estimate of probable costs for design, fabrication and installation of this Exhibit. (Fees will be paid at the completion of each approved phase of the project)

F. Claims and Suits (If the answer to any of the questions below is yes, please attach details)
   1. Is your firm currently involved in any litigation from past or current projects?
   2. Has your company ever failed to complete any work awarded to it?

G. Experience
   1. List the categories of work that your organization normally performs with its own forces.
   2. List recent Exhibits of similar type and scope, their square footage, design budgets and final costs. Indicate percent of costs over or under design budgets.

3. List the projects your organization has in progress that will overlap with the proposed fabrication and installation period outlined in this BID. Give the name of the project, owner, contract amount, percent complete and schedule dates.
4. List the design experience and present commitment of key individuals in your organization. Include resumes or experience outlines for your firm's proposed Exhibit Designer for this project.
5. Provide a brief outline of your firm's experience, including work in the following areas:
    a) Work with Children's Museum Exhibits
    b) Work with Libraries

H. References
1. For three (3) references, list the Project Name and location, project dates, Project Manager, Owner, address, email and contact name and phone number.

I. Evidence
1. Provide images of work completed applicable to this project or demonstrative of your company's abilities (may include photographs, drawings, CAD generated documents in JPEG format etc…).

VI. Summary of Deviations and Exceptions

Explain any deviations, exceptions, or conditional assumptions taken with respect to this BID. Any exception taken to the BID, if provided with adequate justification, will be considered. Such exceptions will not, of themselves, automatically cause a proposal to be deemed unacceptable. ***Please Note***: KCM reserves the right to eliminate from evaluation any submittal that has a substantial number of exceptions with inadequate or no justifications.

VII. Award

The bid will be awarded based on a careful review of the information to the lowest responsible qualified bidder.

Exhibit Qualifications and Proposal is due by April 3, 2026

Detailed Project Description

RATIONALE

Research shows that exposure to foundational mathematics concepts at an early age improves both math and reading test scores in elementary school. Open-ended play with these math concepts helps children learn at their own pace and try different ways of creating and solving problems, forming a foundation of mathematic thinking.

Unfortunately, many young children are not provided with opportunities to explore math concepts in developmentally appropriate ways. In addition, some adults have mathematic anxiety (math phobia) that can be passed down to the young children in their lives. To counteract these trends, the Math All Around Me exhibit will provide open-ended (low stakes) experiences to play with mathematical concepts in an age-appropriate way, positively impacting visitors' relationships with mathematics.

GOALS

Promote a foundational understanding of the mathematical concepts of Shape, Pattern, and Measurement.

Nurture a positive emotional connection children have with mathematics.

Provide opportunities for children and their caregivers to play with math and engage in math talk.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through play with the exhibit components and associated activities, children will:

Recognize the defining attributes of shapes.

Learn that shapes can be combined (composed) and separated (decomposed) to make new shapes.

Identify the rule of a pattern and make predictions and generalizations to continue a pattern.

Learn that patterns are found all around us, and that the same pattern structure can be found in many different forms.

Make “fair” comparisons by using a consistent unit of measurement.

Describe and compare items by quantifying measurement.

Work and play together to create, explore, and accomplish tasks.

Make connections between the exhibit and their previous and future experiences with math concepts of shape, pattern, and measurement.

DESCRIPTION

With funding from the State of Illinois, Kohl Children's Museum of Greater Chicago (KCM) seeks to create three small modular exhibits highlighting the early math concepts of shape, pattern, and measurement that can be utilized in our Pop-Up Museum and Mobile Learning Lab programs, as well as be combined into a 1,000 sq ft exhibit at the main Museum. The target audience for the exhibit will be children ages 2 to 8 and their families. The exhibit will encourage creativity, cooperation, and problem solving. To be consistent with all other exhibits at KCM, the Math All Around Me exhibit will be aligned to Illinois Early Learning and Development Standards and Common Core Standards for children preschool to 3rd grade.

Exhibit components will introduce and reinforce key messages that promote "playing with mathematical concepts." The exhibit components will be open-ended, hands-on, and will allow for ample exploration and problem solving. Visitors of all ages will be able to interact with the exhibit in meaningful and new ways with each visit. As with all exhibits created by KCM, the *Math All Around Me* exhibit design and fabrication will be based on the Principles of Universal Design, ensuring visitors of all ability levels will be able to engage in meaningful play in the exhibit.

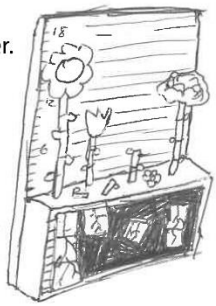
All three exhibit segments will engage users in the concepts of shape, pattern, and measurement. While each segment will highlight these mathematical ideas in equal measure to the other two modules, all three will be thematically and visually distinct from each other. One segment will explore its subject matter through the lens of a community/urban garden setting; the second will do the same through the setting of a schoolyard/playground; the third environment will be that of a house under construction. The individual components in each module will be simple in design and lack electronic features. Each module will contain a few freestanding wall stations, short table-based interactives, and open-floor physical activities. Everything must be durable enough to withstand heavy hands-on play. The visual aesthetic of the components will conform to the settings of their respective modules, but they must remain simple enough in design to allow for easy installation in a wide variety of exhibition spaces.

When presented separately, the modules will be visually unique and conceptually engaging enough to effectively stand on their own in a museum or other educational settings. When combined, the three modules will present the look of a miniature neighborhood, each "location" complementing the other to provide an emergent sense of immersion for its users. By providing children with a series of familiar everyday environments in which to play with the concepts of math, we hope to foster senses of ease and comfort with these often-intimidating subjects.

Initial Concept Sketches and Precedents

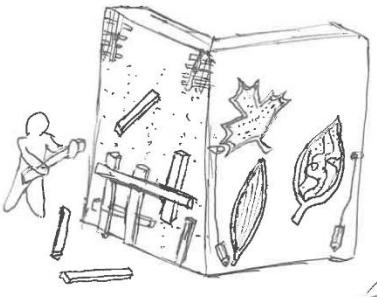
Community/Urban Garden

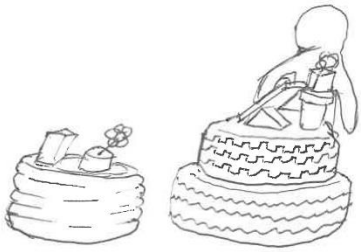
Measure a plant from root to flower.



Build lattice patterns.

Draw patterns in leaves.





Tire planters with different patterns. Fill with various plant-themed shapes.

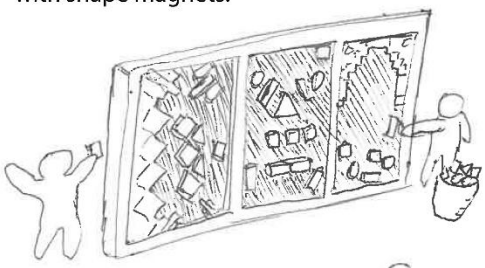
Measure time and weather patterns.

Scale with natural items.

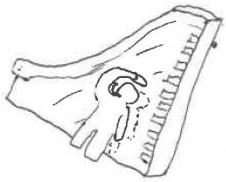
Patterned puzzle piece pathway.

Schoolyard

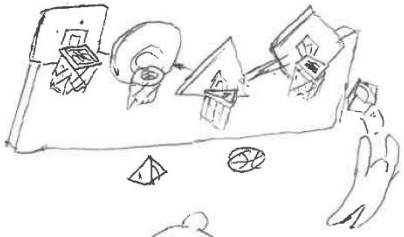
Complete a mural/create your own mural with shape magnets.



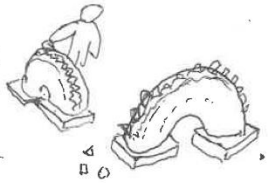
Measure your standing height/ how high can you jump?

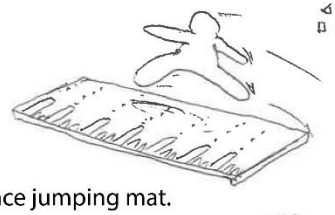


Basketball hoops of different shapes.



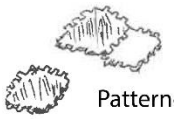
Tire interactives with different patterned treads.





Distance jumping mat.

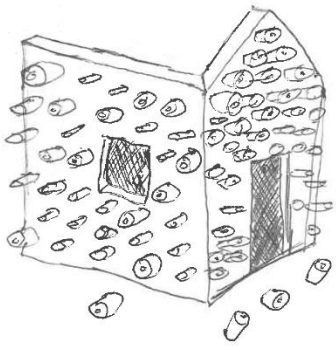
Mirror Me pattern game w/ various colored shapes.



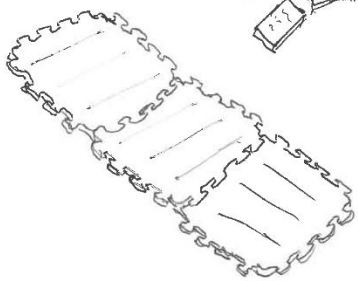
Patterned puzzle piece pathway.

Construction/House Section

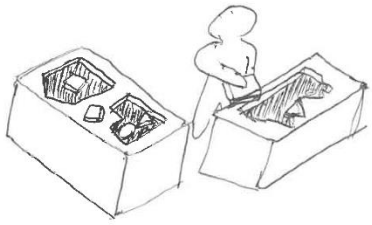
Bricklaying magnet wall
w/ different patterned bricks



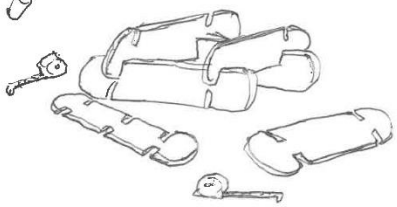
Pool noodle patternmaking/
building a house



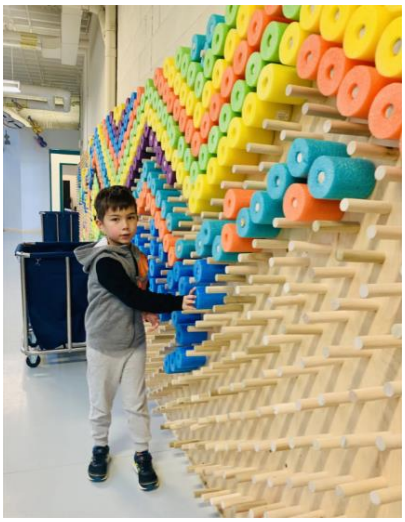
Patterned puzzle piece
pathway



Making shapes within shapes
(larger shapes are house-shaped)



2D to 3D construction
w/ measurements



Learning To Grow.

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