



**bell museum**

## **2026/2027 K-12 Programs**

**Gallery Experiences**

**Whitney and Elizabeth MacMillan Planetarium**

**Hands-On Science Labs**

**Traveling Planetarium**

**Learn more at [bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups](https://bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups)**



# Explore, discover, and connect with the University of Minnesota

*Located on the University's St. Paul campus, the Bell Museum brings together science, art, and the environment with a unique Minnesota perspective.*

*We offer school groups a world-class experience, working with you to achieve your educational goals.*

#### **Booking**

To request a group booking for Bell programs, please fill out our Booking Request Form on our website. If you need additional assistance or have more questions, email [bellgroups@umn.edu](mailto:bellgroups@umn.edu).

#### **Scholarships Available!**

For more information visit [bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups](http://bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups) or scan the QR code below.



#### **PreK-12 Student Group Visit Pricing**

Create your own learning experience. The first experience is \$8 per student and each additional experience is just \$3 per student. Pricing includes one free adult for every 8 students; additional adults are charged the student rate.

#### **Experiences**

Planetarium Shows, Exhibit Galleries, and Science Labs

<b>One Experience</b>	\$8 per student
<b>Two Experiences</b>	\$11 per student
<b>Three Experiences</b>	\$14 per student

On Native Land field trips are \$16 per student.

#### **Indigenous Admission Policy**

The Bell Museum sits on the traditional and treaty land of the Dakota people who, along with the Ojibwe people, are the Indigenous peoples of the land now called Minnesota. In recognition of this fact, and to honor the Dakota people for their care of and knowledge of this land, the Bell waives general museum admission for Dakota and all Indigenous peoples.



Richard M. Schulz Family Foundation



# Gallery Experiences

*The Bell's gallery experiences are designed to allow for self-directed learning with content support from museum educators along the way!*

Length: 60 minutes  
Appropriate for all grade levels

Take your students on a journey through space and time in our Minnesota Journeys gallery. Your visit will be enhanced by our printed Discovery Journals. These standard-aligned and grade-specific materials are designed to support and shape your visit through our interactive and immersive galleries.

Dive into space exploration and the diversity of life, learning about topics like survival, family, Minnesota's biomes, and current University of Minnesota research. Check out the Touch & See Lab, where students can have the thrill of interacting with live animals and exploring the characteristics of living things and natural history specimens.

## **Discovery Journals**

Discovery Journals are provided for students to explore the galleries with experiences aligned with their curriculum standards. All materials are available for preview on our website. Discovery Journals are available for students in 2nd grade to high school.



# Hands-On Science Labs

*The Bell Museum's hands-on science labs are interactive, inquiry-based, science-learning experiences for school groups. Each lab is designed for the specific grade level and supports many of the Minnesota state science standards. For more information about our educational standards alignments, please visit [bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups](http://bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups).*

Lab content spans astronomy, earth science, life science, physical science, engineering practice, and the arts with offerings for kindergarten through middle school. Labs are approximately 45 minutes in length.



## **Grades K – 1 Lab**

### **Compare, Connect, Create**

Use observation skills, and work together to classify living and nonliving things. Students will then use those comparing skills to connect the “classes of animals” to their environments and create their own diorama. This lab also explores the concepts of vertebrates versus invertebrates and gives students a chance to meet live animals from our Touch & See Lab.

## **Grades 2 – 3 Labs**

### **Honey Bees, Pollination & Plants**

Learn about the process of pollination by dissecting flowers and investigating the diverse range of pollinators that participate in the process. Students will explore the concepts of pollination by making and simulating bee and flower models.

### **Mission to Mars**

Using real data from NASA, students will learn how rovers navigate Mars and what information they have collected so far. After making observations and exploring details about Martian terrain and atmosphere, students will use design and test a “rover” using educational robots.

[bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups](http://bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups)



## **Grades 4–6 Labs**

### ***Mission to Europa***

Learn about gravity, Europa, properties of water, and NASA’s Europa Clipper mission to explore Earth-like worlds and astrobiology. Use the information learned to engineer a lander on Europa’s surface! Students will use critical thinking skills and scientific tools while learning about planets and engineering in this collaborative student-centered learning experience.

### ***Climate Change Solutions***

Learn about climate change and ways researchers are working to reduce the negative impacts that increasing greenhouse gases have on the environment. Students will participate in a demonstration to help them understand the difference between renewable and nonrenewable resources, explore stations, and work together to develop possible solutions.

## **Grades 6–8 Labs**

### ***Science in the City:***

#### ***Studying Animal Behavior and Ecology***

Students will investigate questions about how squirrels and their rodent relatives adapt to city life. They will learn about current research on ecology and evolution happening in the Twin Cities and will use real museum specimens and animal behavior data to test hypotheses about squirrel body length and behavior.

#### ***Planning for Climate Change: Urban Heat Islands***

Explore what heat islands are and how they are created by investigating the materials and the actions taken when cities are built. Students will conduct investigations and learn about the actions we can take to reduce the urban heat island effect. Then they will work as a team of urban planners to redesign a city and try to “beat the heat.”

# Planetarium School Shows

*The Whitney and Elizabeth MacMillan Planetarium offers a wide variety of programs in our state-of-the-art domed theater. With interactive live programs and recorded presentations, you will find content to support your class's learning objectives with immersive learning.*

All shows are 45 minutes long, with the exception of Your Sky Tonight. Recorded shows are followed by a 15 minute live portion.

## **Your Sky Tonight**

Live show (30 minutes), Grades K–1

Explore the wonders of the night sky with your youngest learners. From planets to constellations, your class will learn all about the sky they can see that night!

## **Out of This World!**

Live show, Grades 2–6

Investigate the solar system in a show where your class is the co-pilot! Explore an asteroid, be the first humans to land on Mars, fly through the rings of Saturn, or find out what makes a planet a planet.

## **Minnesota Night Skies**

Live show, Grades 2–12

The skies above Minnesota carry a hidden treasure trove! Join our expert staff in discovering the seasonal constellations, visible planets, and other astronomical objects that you can see in your sky tonight.

## **Minnesota in the Cosmos**

Recorded show, Grades 3–7

The land beneath our feet holds a deep cosmic and geologic history. Join Jacob as he explores this history while on a field trip to Interstate State Park. Starting with the formation of the solar system, follow along on this uniquely Minnesota journey through time and space.

## **Mysteries of Your Brain**

Recorded show, Grades 3–7

Jump into an animated adventure following a girl and her crow companion as they explore what makes the human brain so special. Together you'll zoom along the paths of neurons, find out how human and animal brains differ, and experience illusions on a grand scale! Along the way, you'll learn how your brain makes you, well, you, and see that ultimately, we each have the power to change our brains.

## **Mars: The Ultimate Voyage**

Recorded show, Grades 4–8

On a 2 year journey across space, how will astronauts stay motivated? How will they stay healthy? What challenges will they face along the way? Mars: The Ultimate Voyage, dives into these questions while showing what the first journey to Mars might look like — and how creativity, communication, and collaboration come together to ensure safe, deep space travel.

## **Habitat Earth**

Recorded show, Grades 6–12

From the tallest trees to the smallest fungi, your class will dig into the dynamic relationships in our connected world. This cinematic program features stunning renderings of both biological and human-built networks (and of how they intersect!), taking your class on an incredible, immersive journey through the interconnectedness of life on Earth.

### **Supervolcanoes**

Recorded show, Grades 6-12

Supervolcanoes looks back at rare classes of eruptions that have marshaled the energy that lurks, like a sleeping dragon, beneath the surface of planet Earth. The program moves beyond Earth to explore the impact of giant volcanic eruptions around our solar system. Audiences will fly down to Neptune's frigid moon Triton, and onto the ultimate volcanic world: Jupiter's moon Io. On a visit to a legendary North American hot spot, Yellowstone National Park, the film asks: can a supervolcano erupt in our time?

### **We Are Guardians**

Recorded show, Grades 3-8

We Are Guardians looks at how our world, its peoples and ecosystems are intrinsically connected, and how with the help of satellite monitoring we can examine the links between human activities and climate change.



# On Native Land: Indigenous Field Trips

*Kapémni: From Earth to Sky, a Dakhóta Perspective Field Trip*

*Gidinendamowinaan: From Earth to Sky, an Ojibwe Perspective Field Trip*



*The Bell Museum is expanding its K12 visit experiences with our new On Native Land program, Gidinendamowinaan and Kapémni field trips, with funding from Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community.*

These programs explore Minnesota's natural history through Dakhóta and Ojibwe traditional ecological ways of knowing. In each field trip, students will journey the biomes of Minnesota learning from Dakhóta or Ojibwe perspectives, increase awareness of Indigenous star knowledge and make earth-sky connections, and partake in hands-on outdoor learning on the Bell Museum Learning Landscape or Gibbs Farm.

This content has been developed and refined with leadership from Bell Museum Native American Initiatives Education Specialist, On Native Land program staff, and in consultation with Native led organizations and individuals across Minnesota, South Dakota, and Canada including Dakhóta and Ojibwe knowledge keepers, educators, first language speakers and scholars, and artists.

Please note: This program is only available on specific Tuesdays, for grades 3-7.

*On Native Land's program development was supported by*

On Native Land Kapémni Field Trip is offered in partnership with





# ExploraDome Traveling Planetarium

*From inner space to outer space, and everything in between. Our expert science staff bring exciting content to you in a unique, immersive environment.*

*Our portable planetarium travels throughout the state of Minnesota and is perfect for classes, school fairs, and community events. ExploraDome programs range from journeys through the universe and all the way back to Earth in explorations of seasons, climate, and even the human brain.*

You can schedule multiple grades (preK–12) and a variety of interactive programs on the same day. An empty gym, auditorium, or cafeteria is a great location for the ExploraDome. Minimum clear space requirements of 31' x 31' and a 14' ceiling are required. Indoor use only.

For more information on booking, show content options, scholarships, and all other details, visit [bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups](http://bellmuseum.umn.edu/K12groups) for latest information.

***“Many of our students have never been to a planetarium or even know what one is. Being able to ‘see’ the stars and planets in the ExploraDome enabled them to recognize them in the night sky and realize that science can be part of their everyday lives.”***

**- 3rd Grade Teacher**



### **Mars: The Ultimate Voyage**

Recorded show, all ages

On a 2 year journey across space, how will astronauts stay motivated? How will they stay healthy? What challenges will they face along the way? The Bell original production Mars: The Ultimate Voyage dives into these questions while showing what the first journey to Mars might look like — and how creativity, communication, and collaboration come together to ensure safe, deep space travel.

### **Seasons, Phases, Eclipses**

All ages

Our Minnesota sky changes throughout the day, and across the seasons. Students will learn how to make observations about the sky: noticing constellations, planets, and the changing positions of the sun and moon.

### **Observations of the Sky**

Grades Pre-K–1

Our Minnesota sky changes throughout the day, and across the seasons. We will learn how to make observations about the sky: noticing constellations, planets, and the changing positions of the sun and moon.

### **Zoom! From the Earth to the Edge of the Universe**

Grades 2–12

The audience decides which objects in space to visit in this program, from Earth to the edge of the observable universe and anywhere in between. The journey will help students appreciate the scale of the Solar System, galaxy, and universe, the vast distance separating these objects, and how these objects change over time.

### **Minnesota in the Cosmos**

Recorded show, Grades 3–7

The land beneath our feet holds a deep cosmic and geologic history. Join Jacob as he explores this history while on a field trip to Interstate State Park. Starting with the formation of the solar system, follow along on this uniquely Minnesota journey through time and space.

### **Mysteries of Your Brain**

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Jump into an animated adventure following a girl and her crow companion as they explore what makes the human brain so special. Together you'll zoom along the paths of neurons, find out how human and animal brains differ, and experience illusions on a grand scale! Along the way, you'll learn how your brain makes you, well, you, and see that ultimately, we each have the power to change our brains.

### **Living in Balance: Anishinaabe Star Knowledge**

Grades 3+

“All around Gichigaming (the Great Lakes), Anishinaabe star knowledge teaches us about anangoog (the stars), baamiskobidegin giizisong (the planets), aandakiiwinan (the seasons), and how to live mina-maadziwin (a good life).” Travel through the seasons and learn more about the Earth sky connection between the moon(s) and constellations, and what’s happening here on earth in this 30 minute production in both English and Ojibwe language.

### **H2Out of This World**

Grades 3-12

From asteroids and comets to moons orbiting other planets, water can be found in many places throughout our solar system. In this program students will visit these water-filled worlds, and learn where water can exist in our solar system, as well as how it's different from here on Earth.

# Serving Our Statewide Audiences

*Through the Museum Without Boundaries initiative the Bell aims to be a leader in access, equity, and inclusion programs. This initiative is the gateway for the Bell to reduce barriers to participation in its programming, and extend the museum's reach outside its walls.*

Let us know if you'd like to get involved in one of our Statewide Initiatives or have an idea about how the Bell can serve your school community by emailing us at [Bell-Statewide@umn.edu](mailto:bell-statewide@umn.edu)

## **Science & Nature Kits**

Science & Nature Activity kits are one of the ways the Bell delivers hands-on science content to youth and families who may not typically have access to STEM education resources or experiences and helps to curb the summer slide. These kits contain everything needed to complete fun, hands-on activities that a student can do on their own or with others. The activities, developed by Bell educators for students in grades K-5, promote curiosity for nature, both close to home and out into the universe. This year the Bell is working with partners all of the way from Albert Lea to Roseau to deliver 15,000 Science and Nature kits to youth throughout Minnesota.

## **Statewide Star Party**

Each year, the Bell hosts a Statewide Star Party which engages individuals in a collective weekend of stargazing events across the state. During this annual event, partner sites throughout the state host their very own star parties with support from the Bell Museum's Statewide Star Party activity kits and resources. The program also includes a live virtual program component and web resources to ensure participation and access to opportunities.



[bellmuseum.umn.edu/statewide-engagement](https://bellmuseum.umn.edu/statewide-engagement)

## ***STEAMquest Activity Packs***

STEAMquest is one of our exciting STEM Nights programs that gives schools the opportunity to host a STEAM event for up to 200 people at their own home site!

These events give students and families the opportunity to learn about topics in natural history, science, technology, engineering, arts, and math through engaging, hands-on activities. With STEAMquest, each school receives an activity pack with all the supplies, materials, and resources needed to host a STEAM event with their school community.

STEAMquest is a unique program that encourages and empowers non-science educators in facilitating STEAM activities. With our materials, anyone can feel confident in facilitating science learning, from administrators, parent volunteers, or even older students looking for leadership opportunities. Consider STEAMquest as a way to engage families, youth, and the whole school community — making school conference nights more interesting, a topical way to add on to a school science fair, or maybe a great way to welcome families back to a new school year!

### ***STEM Nights Programs***

In addition to STEAMquest Activity Packs for schools, you can check out our other STEM Nights programs designed for Scouts and Communities on our Statewide Engagement site.



# Statewide Camps

*Bell Statewide Summer Camps bring STEM education to three sites across Greater Minnesota in collaboration with the University of Minnesota's Research and Outreach Centers. Our statewide camps are fun and enriching day-long experiences that encourage children to explore their scientific passions and discover new interests.*

*Campers experience science and nature like never before with activities led by scientists and experts, interactive discovery, games, creative projects, guided outdoor exploration and much more!*



## **Crookston**

Camps in Crookston are located at the University of Minnesota's North-West Research and Outreach Center, where staff conduct research on food and agricultural plants. Our STEM on the Farm day camp is geared towards teens entering grades 6-9 and covers science, technology, engineering and math while taking a closer look at soil, plants, and the science behind where our food comes from.

## **Grand Rapids**

Camps in Grand Rapids are located at the University of Minnesota's North-Central Research and Outreach Center, where research is conducted on food, plants, and forestry. Children entering grades 1-5 have five camps to choose from, with subjects ranging from the science behind where our food comes from to northern Minnesotan bogs and astronomy. Grand Rapids camps are open to individual registration as well as registration by community and school groups.

## **Waseca**

Camps in Waseca are located at the University of Minnesota's South Research and Outreach Center. Children entering grades 3-5 will experience science and nature like never before with interactive discovery, games, creative projects, guided outdoor exploration and advice from real farmers.

## **Lamberton**

Camps in Lamberton are located at the University of Minnesota's South-West Research and Outreach Station where staff research food, agricultural crops, and prairie ecosystems. Children entering grade 1-5 have two camps to choose from, Eco-Exploration of the Prairie and Agri-Science, both of which focus on observation and hands-on science skills outside on the farm.





# Access

*The Bell Museum strives to make its facility accessible to all. We are able to work with individuals and groups to provide appropriate accommodations for their specific needs to facilitate a lasting and meaningful experience for everyone.*

We are happy to arrange captioning, ASL interpretation, or other accommodations with a three-week notice. We also have sensory resources, including weighted blankets, sound-dampening headphones, and more. For additional information, please ask during booking.



# Regular Bell Programs

## Star Parties

A Star Party is an evening of astronomical celebration, exploration, and fun. At a Star Party, you'll find hands-on activities and demonstrations from Bell educators and community partners throughout the museum. If there are clear skies, you will be able to look through high-powered telescopes at astronomical objects. Additionally, there are typically free planetarium shows that are offered on a first-come-first-serve basis.

## Sensory Friendly Saturdays

This monthly program provides a welcoming and accessible environment for individuals, families, and children who have sensory sensitivities. Experience our Minnesota Journeys gallery, temporary exhibits, and the Touch & See Lab — all with lowered lighting, quieter sounds, and fewer visitors.

## Spotlight Science

Spotlight Science is a regular program that shines a light on current science conducted at the University of Minnesota and in our community. Drop in to join researchers, students, and special guests for conversations and unique interactive experiences.

Visit our website to find upcoming dates for these reoccurring events! Go to [bellmuseum.umn.edu/event](https://bellmuseum.umn.edu/event)



# Homeschool Days

*Join us for an exclusive Bell museum program designed for homeschoolers and their families. Explore captivating exhibits and collections, immersive planetarium shows, and hands-on inquiry-based classroom activities to complement your curriculum.*

This program offers a unique opportunity to explore subjects like astronomy, biology, Dakhóta and Ojibwe ways of knowing, engineering, and more!

Expert Bell staff will lead your group through interactive planetarium shows and classroom activities, and will be available to answer any questions during your self-guided tours of our galleries.

Come learn, have fun, ignite your curiosity for nature and the universe, connect with fellow homeschoolers and families to share the joy of learning together.

2026-2027 dates:

Tuesday, October 13, 2026

Tuesday, February 2, 2027

More info at [bellmuseum.umn.edu/homeschool](https://bellmuseum.umn.edu/homeschool)



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## Contact Us

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Scan the QR code to learn more about K-12 programs!

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The Bell Museum is a proud part of the College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

