

The Museum of Science will debut its new Bloomberg wing in October. Here's a first look.

By **James Sullivan** Globe correspondent, Updated August 19, 2026, 12:01 a.m.



The William and Charlotte Bloomberg Public Science Common will open to the public on Oct. 10, 2026. HANDOUT

The Museum of Science is on track to unveil a major makeover on Oct. 10. The William and Charlotte Bloomberg Public Science Common — a state-of-the-art, 10,000-square-foot performance and presentation space overlooking the Boston and Cambridge skylines

on either side of the Charles River — will serve as the museum’s centerpiece for engaging the public in all aspects of the natural world and human ingenuity.

Bloomberg Philanthropies, the charitable foundation of the billionaire entrepreneur and former New York City mayor Mike Bloomberg, donated \$155 million to the renovation. The Public Science Common is named in honor of Bloomberg’s parents, who often brought him to the museum while raising him in nearby Medford.

Bloomberg previously donated \$50 million to the museum in 2016 to establish a science education center, also named for his parents. In 2011, Bloomberg helped fund the renovation of the museum’s Hayden Planetarium.

The Bloomberg Public Science Common will be an [immersive, multi-use space](#) adaptable for high-tech presentations, artistic performances, and other public-facing programming, said Tim Ritchie, the museum’s president since 2020.

“The intellectual capital of the world is around us,” said Ritchie, wearing a hard hat while walking a visitor through the new theater. “We owe people exposure to science at the pace that science is changing.

“We’re in the business of having people love and trust science.”

Established as the Boston Society of Natural History in 1830, the museum assumed its familiar name in 1939 and opened in its current location in 1951.

In recent years, the museum has addressed the science world’s most pressing issues, including artificial intelligence, robotics and bioengineering, and human genome sequencing.

“We believe we live in a knowable world, and the answers are out there,” said Ritchie. At the same time, he said, “we’re not tone-deaf to the challenges of any new technology.”



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The Bloomberg Public Science Common can be configured for two concurrent events, with adjustable elements including movable walls, LED video screens, and retractable seating. Fully soundproofed, the space features up-to-the-minute advances in sound and lighting, including 3D projection mapping known as Deep Space, developed by an Austrian company called Ars Electronica.

“The room is performing great,” said Evan DelGaudio, the museum’s technical director.

The goal, DelGaudio said, is to present a wide range of public programming, with “shows of all kinds, including ones we haven’t even dreamed up yet.”

Following the “soft” opening of the new wing on Oct. 10, the museum will host a day of celebration on Oct. 28. Bloomberg is expected to attend.

Bloomberg has often cited his youthful visits to the Museum of Science as a catalyst for his inquisitive mind.

“He credits us with giving him the confidence to own his own questions,” Richie said. “I think he wants that for other young people.”

Bloomberg's latest gift to the museum appears to be a record-setting number for science museums in America. In 2019, hedge fund manager Kenneth C. Griffin donated \$125 million to Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry, which changed its name in his honor.

With the unveiling of the Public Science Common's spectacular, 270-degree view of downtown Boston and the world-class education and research institutions of Cambridge, the new physical space celebrates the fact that the Museum of Science is located in "likely the most science-rich city in the history of the world," Ritchie said.

"Our mission is to be globally significant," he said. "We want to experience wonder in community together."

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