



The State Education  
Department

The University  
of the State  
of New York

Albany, New York

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## State Museum Gallery Renewal Update

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**TO:** Cultural Education Committee

**FROM:** Mark Schaming

**DATE:** September 6, 2018

**AUTHORIZATION:**

  


New York State Museum staff will present an update on the Museum's gallery renewal project. The project will include new exhibitions and interactive technology to better tell the story of New York's natural and human history, from its geological formation billions of years ago through the current cultural events of today.

In June 2015, State Museum staff presented a master plan for the Museum's gallery renewal project. This presentation is an update on the master plan as well as an overview of the content outline for the new exhibitions and visitor experience concepts.

This major renovation will be the first since the Museum moved to the Cultural Education Center in 1976. Across 40,000 square feet of gallery space, the renovation will result in new exhibitions about New York's natural, human, and cultural history; incorporate interactive technology; and provide a visitor-friendly environment with a flexible wall system and clear orientation and way-finding. Key exhibition content areas include:

- **Emergence of a State:** establishes the core relationships between the natural world and humans and their impact on each other.
- **A State of Change:** focuses on the natural world of New York and how it transformed into what exists today.
- **Native Peoples of New York:** conveys the origins, complexity, and diversity of New York's Native Peoples and individual tribes; explores how contact with Europeans affected the lives of Native Peoples; and highlights the Museum's world-class collection of contemporary Native American art.
- **Colonial New York:** explores the Dutch colony of New Netherland and how it transitioned into Colonial New York.
- **Immigration, Culture, and Community:** explores the growth of New York economically and culturally as the state became a melting pot of different cultures and ethnicities.
- **Politics and Activism:** focuses on the formation of New York's governing system to the continuing social struggles and triumphs of today.
- **New York Now:** highlights the impact of the words, works, and actions of New Yorkers today in politics, art, music, science, social issues, and activism.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff will continue to develop content for the new exhibitions with the goal that the renovation will result in an impactful, memorable, and world-class educational experience for all visitors – one that reflects the ingenious, inclusive, and creative spirit of New York State.