

National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Headquarters
Washington, DC 20546-001



April 6, 2017

Reply to Attn of: **Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity**

Dr. Richard Lariviere
President and Chief Executive Officer
The Field Museum
1400 S. Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60605-2496

Dear Dr. Lariviere:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has completed its compliance review of the Field Museum (the Museum). The review was conducted pursuant to Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Section 504) and its implementing regulations at 14 C.F.R. Part 1251, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in programs receiving financial assistance through NASA. A copy of the report of our compliance review is enclosed.

NASA has determined that the Museum is in substantial, but not full, compliance with the Agency's Section 504 regulations. This determination is based on an evaluation of data provided by the Museum, onsite interviews, and an architectural accessibility review. While the compliance review reveals that the Museum offers accessible programs, services and facilities, as required under the Section 504 regulations, NASA found several compliance issues. Of particular concern are: 1) architectural issues which require the Museum to make programmatic changes to ensure that the identified physical barriers do not limit access to people with disabilities; 2) website and mobile app accessibility changes are needed to the current website (notably the "accessibility" page is inaccessible to blind visitors; 3) clear and comprehensive non-discrimination policy and a fair and comprehensive grievance process must be established, published and made available to program participants; and 4) the Museum must adopt and implement procedures to ensure that interested individuals, including individuals with vision or hearing disabilities, can obtain information as to the existence and location of services, activities, and facilities that are accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities

To be in full compliance with NASA's Section 504 regulations, the Museum must take the recommended corrective actions with respect to a number of outstanding accessibility issues identified in the compliance report. NASA requests that the Museum provide a written compliance plan to rectify outstanding compliance issues no later than October 31, 2017. This plan must incorporate timelines for resolution of these issues. NASA stands ready to assist the Museum in the development and implementation of this plan, and staff will contact the Museum to follow up on progress made. To the extent that progress is deemed insufficient, we may require the Museum to take further action.

We also wish to inform you that, on January 22, 2016, NASA published a Final Rule notification in the Federal Register that the Agency has revised its Section 504 regulations. The revised Section 504 regulations took effect on February 22, 2016. The regulations are also enclosed.

For additional civil rights technical assistance, the Museum may also wish to visit our MissionSTEM website at <http://missionstem.nasa.gov/>. The MissionSTEM site is designed to assist NASA grant recipients in meeting their compliance obligations under NASA's equal opportunity laws and regulations. To this end, the site provides a host of information and resources on compliance requirements as well as promising practices of our grant recipients.

Be advised that, in the interest of transparency, ODEO posts completed Section 504 compliance reports on our MissionSTEM Web site, which is accessible to the public. The report and related records may also be requested through the Freedom of Information Act. However, the reports are written—to the extent possible—without revealing personal information that could result in an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

NASA wishes to thank the Museum for its cooperation during this review. If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Mr. David Chambers, Director, Program Planning and Evaluation Division, at 202-358-2128 or david.r.chambers@nasa.gov.

Sincerely,



Janet E. Sellars
Associate Administrator for
Diversity and Equal Opportunity (Acting)

Enclosures