

National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Headquarters

Washington, DC 20546-0001



January 4, 2010

Reply to Attn of:

Office of Diversity and Equal Opportunity *Cert. Mail No.: 70007 2680 0001 2215 9200*

Dr. Ioannis Miaoulis  
President and Director  
Museum of Science  
Science Park  
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Dr. Miaoulis:

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has completed a compliance review of the Museum of Science (MOS), a recipient of NASA financial assistance. 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 regulations is enclosed.

Based on an evaluation of data provided by MOS, on-site interviews and an architectural accessibility review, we find MOS to be in compliance with NASA's Section 504 regulations. However, our review revealed a number of compliance concerns. Some of these concerns pertained to Section 504 procedural requirements, such as the need for a Section 504 Coordinator and internal grievance procedures. Others pertained to MOS's program accessibility, particularly architectural accessibility. The report of our compliance review provides recommendations and a proposed implementation plan as a means of strengthening existing compliance efforts and addressing specific barriers to program participation observed during the review. A copy of our compliance report is enclosed.

In addition, the report identifies promising practices at MOS for ensuring equal opportunity regardless of disability. For example, MOS does an exceptional job at meeting the needs of participants with disabilities in its exhibit design, in part through applying Universal Design concepts to its museum exhibitions. MOS goes beyond the basic incorporation of Universal Design principles in its exhibits to consider the full cognitive and social impact of its designs. Also, by creating a seamless experience for all users, MOS's innovative staff creates a more enriching and thought-provoking experience for all users. NASA views MOS as a leader in this area.

NASA staff will contact MOS in one year to follow up on MOS's progress in implementing NASA Section 504 compliance recommendations.

Under the Freedom of Information Act, it may be necessary to release the report and related records on request. If NASA receives such a request, it will seek to protect, to the extent provided by law, personal information which, if released, could reasonably be expected to constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

If you have any questions regarding this correspondence, please contact Mr. Robert Cosgrove, External Programs Manager, Program Planning and Evaluation Division, on 202-358-0446.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Brenda R. Manuel". The signature is written in black ink and extends across the width of the text area.

Brenda R. Manuel, Esq.  
Assistant Administrator for  
Diversity and Equal Opportunity

Enclosures

cc:

Wayne Bouchard

Stan Howe

Paul Ippolito