



## National Living Laboratory 2015-2016 Final Report KidsQuest Children’s Museum and the Institute for Learning and Brain Sciences

### Who Are We?

KidsQuest Children’s Museum is a hands-on museum in Bellevue, WA that engages children birth to age 8 and their families through educational exhibits and programs. KidsQuest integrates science, technology, engineering, art and math for whole-body, whole-brain whole-family learning.

The Institute for Learning & Brain Sciences (I-LABS) at the University of Washington is an interdisciplinary research, education, and outreach center. I-LABS is dedicated to discovering the fundamental principles of human learning, with a special emphasis on early learning and brain development.



Amelia Bachleda, Ph.D. Leading a Parent Workshop at KidsQuest

KidsQuest and I-LABS started working together in 2008, but the relationship had been inconsistent. In 2014 our two organizations reimaged our partnership using the Living Laboratory model. The Living Laboratory program fit perfectly with both institutions’ visions for their education and outreach efforts and provided a clear framework for expanding our work. In 2016 we added two parent workshops and formal staff training to the partnership.

Program Year	Educational Experiences	Participants	Children in Free Childcare
2014-15	350	10	0
2015-16	338	0	11

### Our Core Living Laboratory Team

- Alison Luk, Associate Director of Education at KidsQuest
- Nicole Frymier, Museum Educator and On-Site Volunteer Manager at KidsQuest
- Sarah Roseberry Lytle, Ph.D., Director of Outreach and Education at I-LABS
- Lily Shafer, Outreach and Education Assistant at I-LABS
- Amelia Bachleda, Ph.D., Outreach and Education Specialist at I-LABS
- Dario Cvencek, Ph.D., Research Scientist at I-LABS

### Goals and Outcomes of the NLL Stipend and Educational Assistance Awards

#### 1. Provide a format for extended educational opportunities for parents and caregivers to learn about research while providing free childcare

I-LABS facilitated two Parent Education Workshops at KidsQuest “Making Playtime and Even Screen Time Social” and “Using STEM Skills to Develop Young Scientists”. KidsQuest provided the space, marketing, and free childcare for these events. These workshops provided 37 adults with the opportunity to take a deep dive into the research.



## 2. Provide a formal professional development opportunity for Museum staff

In February, I-LABS facilitated a research based training for 17 KidsQuest staff members. The training covered how kids use and build STEM and reasoning skills through play as well as STEM stereotypes. Additionally, as a result of this enhanced professional development KidsQuest has incorporated published I-LABS materials as a standard part of the training for all Museum floor staff.



KidsQuest Staff Participating in a Training Led by I-LABS

*“The training presented by I-LABS ... guided the information and activities that I present to children and their caregivers. This opportunity made me a more informed educator, allowing me to provide direct data for the concepts that I teach parents regarding STEM and brain development...”*  
**-Chauntae Kukowski**  
**Museum Educator at KidsQuest**

## 3. Plan to move the existing Living Laboratory program to KidsQuest’s new home when the Museum moves in the summer of 2016

Due to changes in the construction timeline, KidsQuest will be moving to its new home in January 2017. KidsQuest was still able to establish a possible program schedule, as well as identify an ideal space for Living Laboratory activities to take place in the new facility in 2017. In the meantime, KidsQuest and I-LABS have maintained monthly partner programs in a variety of formats in order to keep Museum visitors engaged with I-LABS research.

## 4. Establish a set of best practices and institutionally specific procedures for the Living Lab Program.

Because of the change in KidsQuest’s construction timeline, many of the aspects of onboarding/training for visiting researchers have yet to be determined as logistics for the new space are still being finalized. The team will continue to work over the summer to develop a plan for an expanded program format at the new facility.

### Outcomes and Future Goals

Over the course of the 2015-16 season, KidsQuest worked with Dr. Dario Cvencek’s team at I-LABS to craft a 3-year program covering 8 research studies and incorporating a new partner, The Pacific Science Center in Seattle. I-LABS applied for a grant through the National Science Foundation in order to fund the project. Though the team did not receive funding for the project during this cycle, we are making adjustments to the proposal in order to reapply in the fall of 2016.