Provocative Questions Area
Provocative Questions (PQ) is a set of engaging activities that enable visitors to develop their critical thinking skills through the lens of a current socio-scientific issue. Changing on a six month basis, this area is devoted to discussions about real social decisions that are currently debated and discussed, issues that science cannot inform but that science cannot answer. The activities are designed to help visitors better understand the difference between scientifically-based and value-based claims, learn about points of view different from their own, and become more aware of how they use scientific information and their own values to articulate their point of view. This aspect of the Hall of Human Life is emblematic of the Museum’s continued innovation and leadership in informal science education. Science museums increasingly see the need to engage audiences, in particular adults and older youth, in exploration of societal implications of science and technology, and the role of science in civic life; and to explore ways to stimulate discussion in exhibits and programs. Just as earlier science process exhibits gave visitors practice in the kinds of science thinking skills that scientists use in observing, classifying, modeling, and experimenting, Provocative Questions (PQ) will give visitors practice in socio-scientific argumentation skills that citizens can use in listening critically, assessing arguments, and framing arguments of their own.

Provocative Questions includes four exhibit elements:
1. The Question: an overview of the current socio-scientific issue under consideration, e.g., whether sugary drinks should be taxed, featuring multiple perspectives on the question (from scientists, policy makers, community leaders, etc.). This area also introduces visitors to each of the three types of supports used in socio-scientific arguments (social values, personal experience, and scientific evidence).

2. Break It Down: In this step, visitors hone their critical thinking skills in a fun analytic game focused on differentiating between scientific evidence, personal experience, and social values in other people’s opinion statements.

3. Build and Analyze Your Case: Visitors here are invited to build their own argument to the Provocative Question at hand using all three types of claims. After accessing other example arguments, visitors will use an intuitive interface to choose levels of personal experience, select what scientific evidence is most appealing, and then identify which social value they most closely identify with in considering the particular Provocative Question. Visitors will be encouraged to participate in this activity with a partner, with conversation starters included throughout the process to prompt discussion and analysis. Then visitors will be invited to log in their claim and see how their choices compared to those of both their partner and of other PQ participants.

4. Scientific Evidence: Here, visitors will have a chance to sit back and explore any and all of the collected scientific evidence relating to the Provocative Question at hand. With comfortable seating and intuitive touch screen interfaces, this area will encourage reflection and conversation amongst visitors.

Exploration Hub
In the Exploration Hub, volunteer interpreters engage visitors in a range of dynamic activities, including exploring a real sheep heart and lungs to learn how these organs work together, dissecting a sheep eye to reveal how we -- and other animals -- see, putting together a mystery skeleton puzzle, and participating in a taste test to understand why food tastes different when you have a stuffy nose.
**Human Body Theater**
The Human Body Theater provides an anatomical canvas for the stories presented in the *Hall of Human Life*. Visitors can choose among five stories, each of which plays out at different levels of scale: environmental, anatomical, and cellular/molecular. The five stories are:

- **Running the Distance**: Have you pushed your limits? Learn how inherited traits, combined with training, allow some of us to run long distances.
- **Brain Storm**: Have you ever had the urge to push back? Learn what happens in the brain when we react aggressively.
- **Double Immunity**: Is your immune system armed and ready? Learn how the immune system fights viruses with the help of vaccines.
- **Switched Before Birth**: What might make your DNA switch? Learn how environmental exposures can turn our genes on or off, even while we are still developing in the womb.
- **Eat, Cook, Evolve**: What are you cooking up? Learn how what our ancestors ate affected human evolution, and how what we eat today may continue to affect human evolution.

**Living Laboratory®**
Living Laboratory® is a unique, educational on-site research program that brings together scientists, Museum educators, and visitors. Living Laboratory visitors can learn about science through active participation, just as they do at the hands-on activities throughout the Museum. Participation in these activities comes with the added bonus of actually helping researchers advance science.

Living Laboratory research partners are trained by Museum educators to talk with visitors about the scientific process, as well as their own specific way of studying how people function. Visitors can get answers to their questions about science directly from the source.

For the past nine years, over 27,000 visitors to the *Discovery Center* have helped our partners advance the science of cognitive development and an additional 27,500 have learned about science by directly interacting with a researcher. With the opening of the *Hall of Human Life* this program is expanding into exciting new areas of research on human physiological and psychological functioning. The researchers joining Living Laboratory for the opening of this new exhibition investigate balance, vision, hearing, and how changes in development may be linked to changes in the brain. Living Laboratory has also expanded as a national model for partnership between museums and research institutions. With support from the National Science Foundation, similar programs have been established in 14 cities across the United States and Canada through the National Living Lab project (learn more at: [www.livinglab.org](http://www.livinglab.org)).