

For Immediate Release

Thinkery welcomes Andy Bell as new CEO

Bell assumes his new role effective Monday, May 4; current CEO Patricia Young Brown will retain an advisory role

April 27, 2020 – Austin, TX – Thinkery is pleased to announce that Andy Bell, a longtime Thinkery board member and STEM education advocate, will take on the role of Chief Executive Officer beginning Monday, May 4, 2020.

"Thinkery has engaged and inspired countless children to use their imagination and embrace their natural creativity through joyful STEAM based learning experiences," said Bell. "It is an absolute honor to join Thinkery to serve this mission and work to deepen our relationship with the community and reach more children and their families."

Bell is a STEM education advocate & thought leader who has spent his career building and leading programs that improve student outcomes through engaging, hands-on learning. As Director of Innovation at LEGO Education, he shaped products and experiences that inspired creativity in children across the globe through play-based learning. More recently Bell led the Academic Business Group for National Instruments, driving significant improvement in student engagement and success through project-based learning.

Bell served on Thinkery's Board of Directors for three years; he and his family have been enthusiastic Members of Thinkery since their first daughter was born. He holds a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Georgia Tech and a certificate in integrative STEM Education from Virginia Tech.

The leadership transition has been in the works for several months. Patricia Young Brown, who has served as Thinkery's CEO since January 2017, announced her pending departure to staff in February. She will retain an advisory role with the organization, as needed.

"I am delighted that Andy agreed to take on the role of Chief Executive Officer," Young Brown said. "I worked with him extensively during his time on our Board of Directors, and I know what an innovative, passionate advocate he is for our mission and our team."

While the original plan envisioned a more gradual transition, Thinkery's March 13 closure due to the coronavirus pandemic accelerated Bell's on-boarding. "Andy has been working with Thinkery's executive leadership team over the past month, leading the development and implementation of [Thinkery at Home](#), our new effort to support parents and caregivers providing free play-based, inquiry-rich learning experiences online," Young Brown reports.

Bell says he looks forward to helping shape Thinkery's future and finding new ways to impact the community and advance the museum's mission. "Inspiring children to become the problem solvers of tomorrow has never been more important for our community. Thinkery will continue to find new and exciting ways to be that STEAM engine, creating engaging experiences for children all across our community."

For more information, please contact Jeff Dellinger at 512.469.6224 or jdellinger@thinkeryaustin.org.

About Thinkery

Thinkery is Austin's home for "why" and "how." Our mission is to create innovative learning experiences that equip and inspire the next generation of creative problem solvers. Thinkery offers 40,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor exhibits for children and families to learn through play. It's a place where science and families play side by side and people connect with ideas by doing, making and experiencing.

Thinkery is a 501(c)(3), private nonprofit organization; last year we served more than 460,000 children and their grown-ups.