



Dear Play Africa friends,

As I announce some personal news, I'd like to share how Play Africa's promise and potential came alive in Johannesburg's inner city last week. To support local children during the school holidays, our team had created a free pop-up children's museum in Jewel City, transforming an unfinished retail space with no electricity into a safe, child-friendly space for play, imagination and discovery. Every way I turned, children were leaning in, captivated and excited to learn as our facilitators used play to introduce children to new ideas, new vocabulary and new careers. It was a master class in teaching and learning, and it made me so proud of our team.

I've had many moments like this with Play Africa, as we've innovated to create dozens of scalable playful learning programmes to help build Africa's future. In recent months, we've launched [STEM Seeds](#) and [My Constitution](#) resources, expanding access to teaching materials that extend high-quality learning to new communities. Our [Design Thinking with Children](#) programme has expanded across South Africa, with massive global interest and a waiting list for our upcoming expansion across sub-Saharan Africa. We've reached thousands of new children through our inspiring [Dinosaur Dig](#) and [I am a Scientist](#) travelling exhibitions.

As a founder, I feel incredibly lucky to have spent nine fantastic years building and leading Play Africa. I've jumped out of bed every morning thrilled by the chance to work with an amazing team, inspiring board and generous donors. During my time as CEO, Play Africa has grown from a nascent concept to become an award-winning children's museum. Working closely with communities, we've pioneered 46 education solutions for children, teachers and parents that can be replicated in low-resourced settings across Africa. With a demonstrated track record, world-class financial controls and a strategy for sustainable growth, we were recently named "[one of the world's most impactful and scalable education innovators](#)" by HundrED.org and the "[best rising NGO in South Africa](#)" in the inaugural CSI Legacy Awards by CSRNews.

We have tremendous momentum, and we're poised for greatness. After much reflection, I have realised that now is the perfect time to create space for new leadership. While I absolutely love my work, the reality is that I am also at a time of my life when I feel the need to spend more time in the Seattle area with my aging parents. I have therefore started a four-month process to transition my role as CEO to an active member of Play Africa's Board of Directors. My last day as Play Africa's CEO will be Thursday, 14 July 2022.

Working closely with the board and the team, we will hire a new Managing Director to take Play Africa into the next phase of its promising future. We are focused on making this transition as smooth as possible. I remain fully committed to Play Africa, its mission, our programmes, and our relationships and I have complete confidence in our incredible, dedicated team, who will continue to grow from strength to strength. Since day one, change is something we've planned for, and our board and team have spent years setting up strong



systems, policies and values as a proudly African institution. As the region's leading children's museum, we have built a rock-solid foundation:

- Strong, independent governance, best-practice financial accountability and transparency
- Year-on-year revenue growth (even amid Covid), conservative expenditure, no debt and a 12-month+ runway
- Leading corporate, foundation, government and academic partners, relationships with 245 school and community partners, and engagement in global sector, industry and development networks

A new managing director will build on these achievements to reach all-new heights. While day-to-day operations will continue smoothly, there's also tremendous upside potential for our team to generate even more revenue with new programmes, exhibits, curriculum, training and field trips. I'm excited to support the team as they experiment with new ways to leverage these resources for Play Africa's long-term sustainability.

Already, the board and I are working closely together to identify the best candidate with the right mix of skills, expertise and experience to advance Play Africa's mission. Over the next several months, we will together undertake a thorough onboarding process, supported by committed HR consultants and qualified volunteers.

It has been my joy to unlock potential with Play Africa, and I hold the organisation, its board and its team in the very highest regard. I'm truly grateful for the opportunity to have worked with so many of you. As I take my own next steps, I am excited to gain fresh perspectives and new expertise, which I hope to bring back to benefit both Play Africa and South Africa in the years to come. Thank you for being part of the journey so far, and for your continued support of our team, our board and our powerful mission.

Yours in fearlessness,

Gretchen Wilson-Prangley
CEO, Play Africa