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**News Release**  
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**Contact:**

Karis Erwin, National WWI Museum and Memorial, (816) 888-8122, [kerwin@theworldwar.org](mailto:kerwin@theworldwar.org)

## **Mabee Foundation Issues \$2 Million Challenge Grant to National WWI Museum and Memorial**

*The public is called on to support the project and help raise \$4.4 million toward a gallery renovation project.*

**KANSAS CITY, MO.** – The National WWI Museum and Memorial announced it has been issued a \$2 million challenge grant from [The J.E. and L.E. Mabee Foundation](#). The Mabee Foundation issues challenge grants to both require and inspire widespread public support and act as a catalyst to assist grantees in reaching their fundraising goals. In support of a larger \$19.5 million gallery refresh project, this specific challenge grant will be issued to the Museum and Memorial if \$4.4 million is raised toward the gallery refresh project by April 2023.

The gallery refresh project is a multi-year effort that aims to create a richer and more immersive visitor experience by refreshing and expanding the galleries and access to the Museum and Memorial's collection. The project comprises renovation totaling 30,000 square feet and new construction totaling 7,200 square feet. It will provide enhanced interactive and engaging educational experiences for both children and adults in two areas – the lower level and the main gallery.

“The Museum and Memorial is a unique learning environment. We have seen over the past decade that as we have continued to invest in the quality and presentation of our spaces, the demand for learning grows,” said Matthew Naylor, President and CEO of the National WWI Museum and Memorial. “This challenge grant from the Mabee Foundation is exciting because, although still relevant and high-quality, our main gallery is over 15 years old. A refresh allows us to remain a world-class destination and continue to educate the public about the enduring impact of WWI well into the next century of our existence.”

The first phase of the project, [lower level construction](#), includes a stairs case for easier access and a new Open Study Collections Center, which includes two large educational gathering spaces, and new opportunities for sharing the Museum's vast collection. The main gallery expansion, to begin in 2023, will include new interactive and educational experiences with enhanced lighting, audio visual and media content, as well as an update to immersive encounters like the trenches. Each phase of the project will be completed in a sequence that will allow the Museum to remain open, and the public to enjoy the enhanced spaces as they are complete.



“The Mabee Foundation is honored to be a part of the National WWI Museum and Memorial’s capital campaign to enhance and refresh its amazing facilities,” said Michael Goeke, Executive Director of the Mabee Foundation. “The Mabee Foundation’s founder, J.E. Mabee, was a great proponent of the ideals of freedom, liberty and courage that have formed the USA. We know that he (as is true of us today) would be thrilled to support the engaging, enlightening and educational experience that greets so many people at the National WWI Museum and Memorial.”

The Mabee Foundation was founded in 1948 by John E. Mabee and his wife, Lottie E. Their legacy of giving includes projects in the areas of education, social and humanitarian services, medical and health and culture and religion. The foundation limits grants to ‘brick and mortar’ projects in a six-state region consisting of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Arkansas, Missouri and Kansas.

#### **About the National WWI Museum and Memorial**

The National WWI Museum and Memorial is America’s leading institution dedicated to remembering, interpreting and understanding the Great War and its enduring impact on the global community. The Museum and Memorial holds the most comprehensive collection of World War I objects and documents in the world and is the second-oldest public museum dedicated to preserving the objects, history and experiences of the war. The Museum and Memorial takes visitors of all ages on an epic journey through a transformative period and shares deeply personal stories of courage, honor, patriotism and sacrifice. Designated by Congress as America’s official World War I Museum and Memorial and located in downtown Kansas City, Mo., the National WWI Museum and Memorial inspires thought, dialogue and learning to make the experiences of the Great War era meaningful and relevant for present and future generations. To learn more, visit [theworldwar.org](http://theworldwar.org).

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