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Math Museum Announces Move to New Location

The National Museum of Mathematics in New York is expected to open a 34,363-square-foot building in 2026.



The National Museum of Mathematics will bring some of the current favorite exhibitions to its new space, along with explorations of Egyptian fractions and the birthday paradox. via The National Museum of Mathematics



By Annie Aguiar

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The National Museum of Mathematics announced Thursday that it will move to a new, larger building, which will double its classroom space and allow for more hands-on exhibitions to explain mathematical concepts to children.

The new space, a 34,363-square-foot leased location at 635 Sixth Avenue, in Chelsea, is expected to open in 2026, the museum said in a news release.

It is nearly double the size of its original location, at 11 East 26th Street, which opened in 2012 and closed in 2020 and pivoted to virtual programming during the pandemic. The museum is currently at a temporary space, MoMath on Fifth, at 225 Fifth Avenue, which it moved into this spring.

The move is “an objective measure of the success we’ve had over the years, and the success we’ve had because of people’s interest in informal math education,” Cindy Lawrence, the museum’s chief executive and executive director, said in an interview.

The new location will feature a space for toddlers, a presentation area and a total of six classrooms.

Planned exhibitions coming to the larger site include an exploration of the birthday paradox, the unlikely principle that in a room of just 23 people, at least two have over a 50 percent chance of sharing a birthday. Another planned exhibition is Allot Like an Egyptian, focusing on Egyptian fractions like one-third and one-eighth, which can be tricky for children to understand in relation to each other as bigger denominators mean smaller values.

Popular current museum exhibitions will be brought to the new space, Lawrence said, including the interactive Tessellation Station, a wall of tile magnets that are designed to be arranged into repeating patterns.

That will be updated to include einstein tiles, a shape recently discovered by mathematicians that tiles an infinite flat surface in a nonrepeating pattern. One of the authors of the paper announcing that discovery for the shape, which they called “the hat,” was Chaim Goodman-Strauss, the museum’s outreach mathematician.

The pop-up location on Fifth Avenue is expected to stay open into 2026, the museum said in the news release.

Lawrence hopes that new space, at the corner of Sixth Avenue and West 19th Street, will offer similar drop-in discoveries.

“We’re seeing a tremendous difference in walk-bys and people popping in to say, ‘What’s going on here?’” she said. “We’re really looking forward to more people learning about us.”

Annie Aguiar is a reporter covering arts and culture and a member of the 2024-25 Times Fellowship class, a program for journalists early in their careers. More about Annie Aguiar