Frequently Asked Questions

Where are the museum’s public facilities located?
The museum’s National Mall building, opened in July 1976, is near the U.S. Capitol at Independence Avenue and Sixth Street, Southwest, in Washington, D.C. The Steven F. Udvar-Hazy (pronounced OOD-var HAH-zee) Center, opened in December 2003, is located in Chantilly, Va., off Route 28 north, near Washington Dulles International Airport. The distance between the two museum sites is 28 miles.

What are the hours for visiting the museum’s two locations?
Both the museum in Washington and the Udvar-Hazy Center are open 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. daily (closed Dec. 25).

Is there an admission charge to visit the museum’s two locations? What is transportation and parking like?
There is no admission charge at either location. There is no public parking available at the National Mall building but public parking lots, on-street parking and Metro rail stations and Metro bus stops are nearby. There is a $15 fee to park at the Udvar-Hazy Center and there are no Metro rail stations or Metro bus stops nearby. There is a Virginia Regional Transportation Association shuttle bus that stops at the Udvar-Hazy Center as well as Dulles airport, Dulles Town Center and Dulles Crossing Plaza. There are fees for museum planetarium shows, IMAX movies and simulator rides.

May visitors take still photographs and video in the museum’s buildings?
Still and video photography for personal use is permitted. Public use of tripods or lights is not permitted. News photographers and videographers who wish to shoot in the museum must contact the Office of Communications in advance at (202) 633-2374.

Does the museum have any other facilities?
Museum staff members are currently moving the majority of the museum’s collection from the Paul E. Garber Preservation, Restoration and Storage Facility in Suitland, Md., to the Udvar-Hazy Center.

Where can the public get information about the museum and group tours?
The museum’s website home page address is airandspace.si.edu. The tour office phone number is (202) 633-2563.

Where can the public get more information about the Smithsonian and group sales?
The phone number for visitor information is (202) 633-1000. For group sales for planetarium and theater shows and for food services, the toll-free phone number is (866) 868-7774 and the Web address is www.si.edu/imax.

What is the National Air and Space Museum’s annual budget?
Approximately $34 million (this does not include security costs, which are covered by the Smithsonian Institution).

Is the National Air and Space Museum funded by the government?
Yes, in part. An annual congressional allocation pays the salaries of most of the museum’s staff, and some basic operating expenses. Profits from the museum’s IMAX theaters, Albert Einstein Planetarium, museum stores, food services and simulator rides are shared by the Smithsonian Institution and the National Air and Space Museum. New exhibitions, educational programs and public programs are supported with private funds.

**How is the museumstaffed?**
There are 219 National Air and Space Museum employees. Most, including administrative and curatorial staff, are based at the museum’s flagship building in Washington. Seventeen staffers are based at the Paul E. Garber Preservation, Restoration and Storage Facility in Suitland, Md., and 50 staffers are assigned to the Udvar-Hazy Center. Smithsonian staff not directly employed by the museum, such as store cashiers and custodial workers, are also based at museum locations.

The museum is supported by some 600 volunteers who serve primarily as education docents and visitor services specialists at the National Mall building and the Udvar-Hazy Center. More information on volunteering at the museum can be found at: airandspace.si.edu/getinvolved/volunteer.

**How many people visit the National Air and Space Museum?**
The National Air and Space Museum is recognized as the most visited museum in the country. For 2012, more than 6.8 million people visited the building in Washington. The Udvar-Hazy Center saw a significant increase in visitation due to the acquisition of the space shuttle *Discovery* and welcomed 1.4 million visitors in 2012.

**Was the Udvar-Hazy Center built to replace the National Air and Space Museum in Washington?**
No. The Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Center and the Washington building comprise the largest aviation and space museum complex in the world. The Udvar-Hazy Center displays 80 percent of the museum’s aircraft and large space artifact collection, most of which was in storage for many years because of a lack of display space. The museum in Washington, DC can only house about 10 percent of the collection and another 10 percent is on loan.

**How do you reach the Udvar-Hazy Center by car?**
The Udvar-Hazy Center is located conveniently near the major intersection of Routes 28 and 50 in the Dulles corridor in Northern Virginia. A special interchange built by the Commonwealth for the center is on Route 28 north of Route 50.

From Washington, take I-66 West to Exit 53B, for Route 28 north. Go 5.3 miles to Air and Space Museum Parkway and follow the signs. On the Capital Beltway (I-495), take the exit for the Dulles Toll Road West (Route 267). Take Exit 9, for Route 28 south, and go 3.5 miles to Air and Space Museum Parkway, follow the signs.

**What is the cost of the Udvar-Hazy Center, and was it built with federal funds?**
The total cost of the project is $311 million, which includes design, site infrastructure, construction, move-in and startup. Federal funds ($8 million) were allocated for the initial planning and design but by congressional mandate, no federal funds have been or will be used for construction.

**Who is Steven F. Udvar-Hazy?**
Steven F. Udvar-Hazy (born 1946) is the CEO of Air Lease Corporation and the former chairman and
CEO of International Lease Finance Corp., the leading commercial aircraft owner/lessor operating worldwide. In 1999, he pledged $60 million dollars for a new National Air and Space Museum companion facility in Virginia. At the time, it was the largest-ever contribution by an individual to the Smithsonian Institution. He later increased his pledge by $5 million. Udvar-Hazy, who emigrated from Hungary as a boy, holds an FAA Airline Transport Pilot license and has more than 6,000 hours flying time.

Who was James S. McDonnell?
James S. McDonnell (1899-1980) founded the McDonnell Aircraft Corp., which became one of the world’s leading producers of military and passenger airplanes and built both the Mercury and Gemini spacecraft that carried the first American astronauts into space. The company merged with Douglas Aircraft Corp. and produced the third stage of the Saturn V rocket that took men to the moon; built Skylab, America’s first space station; and was a major subcontractor for development of the space shuttle orbiter.

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