



## 1 EXTERIOR



The Academy building combines elements of Greek, Egyptian, and Byzantine architecture. The classical symmetry and simplicity of the exterior includes pillars carved directly into the walls rather than the usual row of columns. The ornamental cornice at the roofline features images of the owl and lynx, symbols of wisdom and observation. The bronze window panels, painstakingly cleaned during the recent restoration, depict famous figures in the history of science.



## 2 FOYER

Just through the main doorway are a vestibule and foyer with walls of cream stone and a mahogany ceiling. At both ends of the foyer are bronze and glass gates decorated with the signs of the zodiac. These may seem curious in a building dedicated to science, but they symbolize human observations of nature from ancient times and the progress of science from its beginnings to the modern era.



## 3 MEMBERS' CENTER

Just inside the main entrance and to the left is the Members' Center. Once the Academy's Library, it is now used by visiting Academy members. A carved relief above the fireplace depicts the history and development of writing systems and technologies, with an obelisk at the center inscribed "To ages yet unborn in accents yet unknown." Three panels in the plaster ceiling show figures making a discovery, recording it on a tablet, and reading about it on a scroll.

## 4 LECTURE ROOM

Opposite the Members' Center, just inside the main entrance and to the right, is the Lecture Room. It was designed for demonstrating laboratory experiments and for showing films on scientific subjects. It is now used for meetings and press conferences. Above the walnut paneling, grilles near the ceiling mimic the convoluted designs associated with Leonardo da Vinci and Albrecht Dürer.



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

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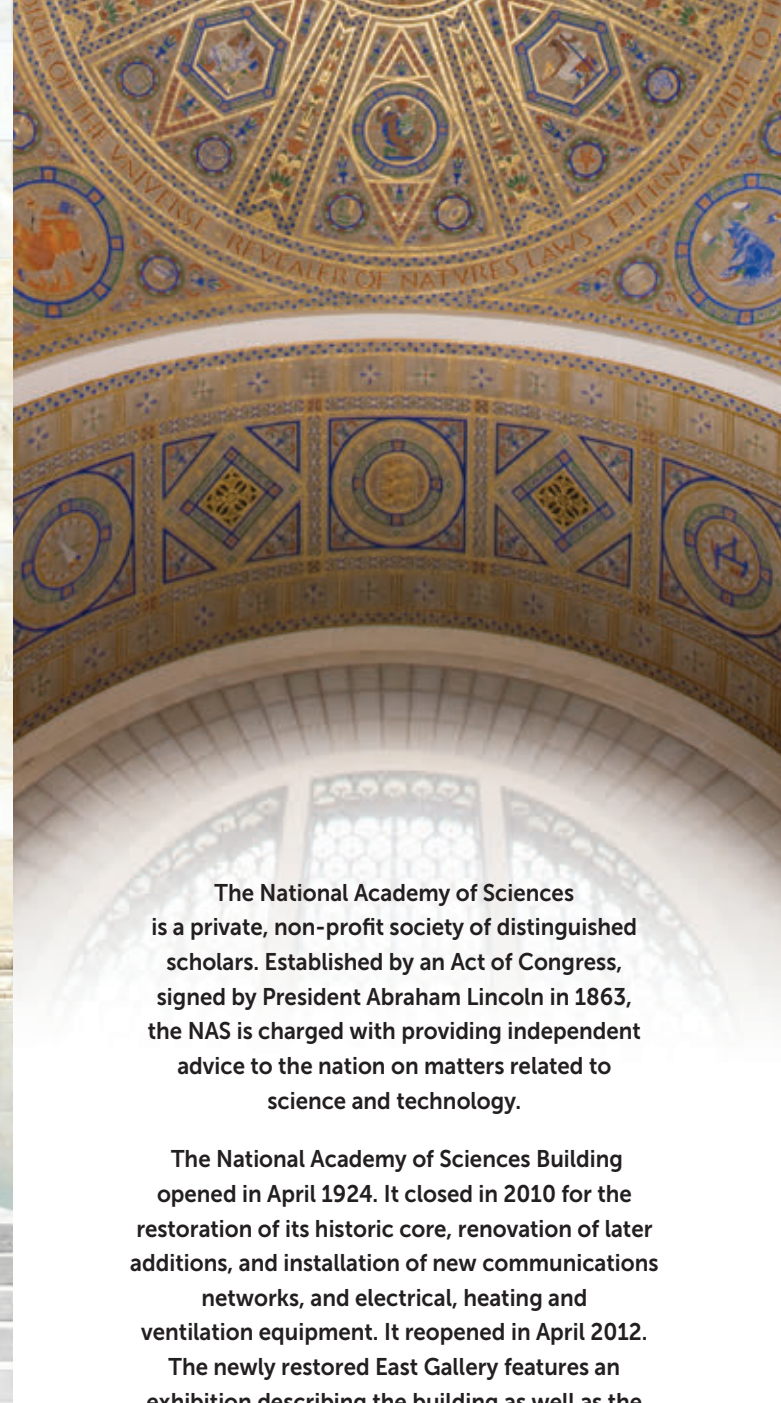
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# Visitor's Guide



NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES



The National Academy of Sciences is a private, non-profit society of distinguished scholars. Established by an Act of Congress, signed by President Abraham Lincoln in 1863, the NAS is charged with providing independent advice to the nation on matters related to science and technology.

The National Academy of Sciences Building opened in April 1924. It closed in 2010 for the restoration of its historic core, renovation of later additions, and installation of new communications networks, and electrical, heating and ventilation equipment. It reopened in April 2012.

The newly restored East Gallery features an exhibition describing the building as well as the history and work of the Academy. This brochure complements that exhibit, guiding the visitor through some of the building's most prominent features and highlighting the work undertaken during the restoration and renovation.

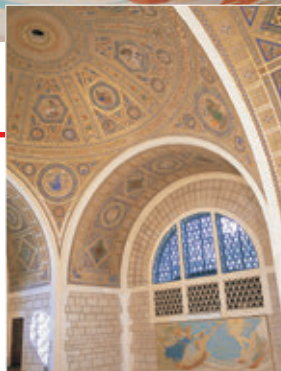
Additional information can be found online at [www.NASonline.org/NAS-Building](http://www.NASonline.org/NAS-Building).





## 5 GREAT HALL

Designed as the building's focus and central feature, the Great Hall was used for the large Academy meetings until completion of the auditorium wing in 1970. The dome and its supporting elements are decorated with images that illustrate the history of science. The paintings on the dome were carefully cleaned during the restoration, as was the mural on the north wall that shows Prometheus lighting a torch from the chariot of the sun god Helios to bring knowledge to humanity. Below that image is a quote from Aeschylus's play "Prometheus Bound" describing the transformative effect of science and learning.



## 6 AUDITORIUM

The 670-seat auditorium is used extensively for scientific symposia and meetings. Its interior was designed to eliminate acoustic focal points and to ensure an optimal distribution of sound. The auditorium also provides an excellent setting for music and is used for concerts sponsored by the Academy through its Office of Cultural Programs.



## 7 GALLERIES

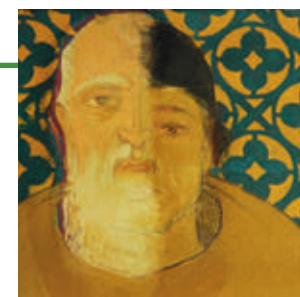
The original design for the building included galleries adjacent to the Great Hall that were used for public exhibitions. Removed when additions were constructed in the 1960s, two of these spaces have been restored, one for exhibits on the history and work of the Academy and another for exhibitions on the relationship of science and art. A third gallery, adjacent to the upper level of the auditorium, also displays rotating art exhibits.



## 8 MEMBERS' ROOM

Beyond the Members' Center, in the southwest corner of the building, the Members' Room was originally a reading room for members of the Academy. On the walls above the dark walnut panels are stylized insignias of eight of the world's great universities of the 1920s. During the restoration, conservators cleaned and removed over-painting, returning the imagery

to its original grandeur. The carving on the fireplace is an art deco rendering of the Academy's seal. This room, which is now used for meetings and social functions, also contains a display case that provides information about the Academy's medals and awards.



Original 1924 building Newly enclosed courts Renovated and enlarged conference rooms



## 9 BOARD ROOM

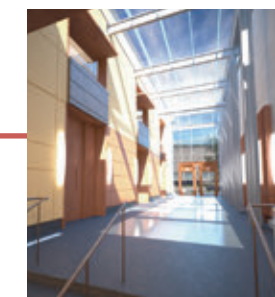
In the southeast corner of the building, the Board Room features a decorative light fixture in the shape of a globe based on a 1515 map by Leonardo da Vinci. The newly restored portrait above the fireplace imagines a scene with President Lincoln signing the Academy's charter in the presence of its founders.



## 10 CONFERENCE ROOMS

The renovation of the 1960s additions to the Academy building increased the space available for meetings of its advisory committees and other scientific groups. The first floor was reconfigured to include two enlarged meeting

rooms with adjoining spaces for smaller sessions and social events. All meeting rooms now include state-of-the-art audiovisual capabilities, improved acoustics, and energy-efficient lighting.



## 11 COURTS

Three existing open-air spaces adjacent to the first-floor conference rooms were converted to enclosed courts with skylights. Two of the courts incorporate solar technologies in their roofs for energy conservation.

## 12 EINSTEIN STATUE

The statue of Albert Einstein in the southwest corner of the Academy's grounds has become perhaps the Academy building's most recognizable feature. The bronze sculpture depicts Einstein holding a tablet with equations symbolizing three of his most important scientific contributions. A circular sky map shows the planets, sun, moon and stars positioned as they were when the memorial was dedicated in 1979.

