



# On Preparing Successful IMLS Grant Applications

Connie Bodner



# Today's Agenda

- About IMLS and Our Funding Opportunities for Museums
- Preparing to apply
- Developing a project justification
- Creating a project work plan
- Defining and measuring project results
- The Review Process





# About IMLS

## Who are we?

- IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums.
- We make **grants**, **convene groups**, **conduct research**, and **publish** in order to build the capacity of museums and libraries to serve the public.

## Who is eligible to apply for museum grants?

- Varies by program but includes museums; libraries within museums; colleges and universities; organizations that serve museums; federally recognized Native American tribes; organizations that serve Native Hawaiians





# What is a museum?

- aquariums
- arboretums
- art museums
- botanical gardens
- children's/youth museums
- general museums
- historic houses/sites
- history museums
- natural history/ anthropology museums
- nature centers
- planetariums
- science/technology centers
- specialized museums
- zoological parks

Museums may be standalone or administered by a governing body (e.g. college, university, tribe, or a state or local government).

*Be sure to check specific program guidelines for details.*

# Who is not eligible to apply for IMLS funding?



- For-profit organizations
- Individuals
- Federally funded institutions
- Foreign countries or organizations

Entities that are not eligible to apply can be partners or third-party service providers.

# Funding Opportunities for Museums

## Assessment Programs

- Museum Assessment Program
- Collections Assessment for Preservation

## Grant Programs

- Museums for America
- Inspire! Grants for Small Museums
- Museums Empowered
- National Leadership Grants for Museums
- Museum Grants for African American History and Culture
- Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program



<https://www.nps.gov/preservation-grants/sat/>



# Museum Assessment Program (MAP)



American  
Alliance of  
Museums

**Program Goals:** To help small and mid-sized museums of all types strengthen operations, plan for the future, and meet professional standards

**Five Assessment Types:** Organizational, Collections Stewardship, Education & Interpretation, Community & Audience Engagement, and Board Leadership

**Applications due:** December 1, 2019

**Administered by:** American Alliance of Museums, Washington DC

**Visit:** <https://www.aam-us.org/programs/accreditation-excellence-programs/museum-assessment-program-map/>

**Email:** map@aam-us.org



# Collections Assessment for Preservation (CAP)

**Program Goals:** To provide small and mid-sized museums with prioritized recommendations for improving the care of their collections

**Applications available:** November 1, 2019

**Applications due:** ~February 1, 2020

**Administered by:** The Foundation for Advancement in Conservation (FAIC), Washington DC

**Visit:** [www.culturalheritage.org/cap](http://www.culturalheritage.org/cap)

**Call:** 202.452.9545

**Email:** [cap@culturalheritage.org](mailto:cap@culturalheritage.org)



# Museums for America

Program Goal	To strengthen the ability of individual museums to serve the public
Project Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lifelong Learning</li><li>▪ Community Anchors and Catalysts</li><li>▪ Collections Stewardship and Access</li></ul>
Duration	1-3 years
Funding	\$5,000-\$250,000
Cost Share	1:1 cost share required
Deadline	November 15, 2019





# Inspire! Grants for Small Museums

Program Goal	To support small museums in addressing priorities identified in their strategic plans
Project Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lifelong Learning</li><li>▪ Community Anchors and Catalysts</li><li>▪ Collections Stewardship and Public Access</li></ul>
Duration	1-2 years
Funding	\$5,000-\$50,000
Cost Share	None required
Deadline	November 15, 2019





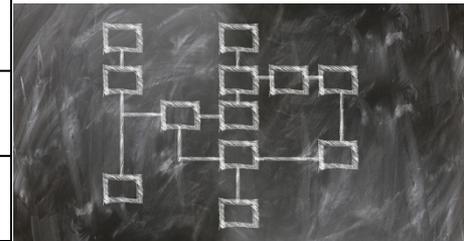
# Museums for America and Inspire!

**Collections Stewardship and Public Access** projects in either grant program may include :

- Planning for collections management, care, and conservation
- **NEW!** Preparing to mitigate the impact of natural and man-made disasters on collections and collections information through planning and training for preparedness; developing networks for response; executing strategies for recovery; and developing resilience
- Collections cataloging, inventorying, documenting, and registration
- Content Management Systems
- Collections digitization
- Conservation surveys
- Conservation treatments
- Rehousing collections
- Environmental improvements for museum collections storage and exhibit areas

# Museums Empowered

<b>Program Goal</b>	To provide professional development and internal capacity-building opportunities for museums
<b>Focus Areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Digital Technology</li><li>▪ Diversity and Inclusion</li><li>▪ Evaluation</li><li>▪ Organizational Management</li></ul>
<b>Duration</b>	1-3 years
<b>Funding</b>	\$5,000-\$250,000
<b>Cost Share</b>	1:1 cost share required
<b>Deadline</b>	November 15, 2019





# National Leadership Grants for Museums



<b>Program Goal</b>	To address critical needs of the museum field and to advance museum practice		
<b>Project Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collections Care</li> <li>▪ Data, Analysis, and Assessment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Digital Platforms and Applications</li> <li>▪ Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>▪ Professional Development</li> </ul>	
<b>Duration</b>	1-3 years		
<b>Funding Levels</b>	\$5,000-\$50,000	\$50,000-\$1,000,000	\$50,000-\$1,000,000
<b>Cost Share</b>	Rapid Prototyping Projects: None required	Research Projects: None required	Non-research Projects: 1:1 required
<b>Deadline</b>	November 15, 2019		



# Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

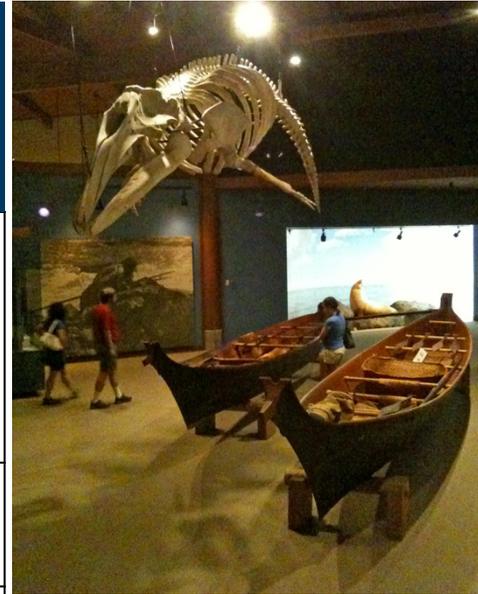
<b>Program Goal</b>	To build the capacity of African American museums and support the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums and HBCUs	
<b>Duration</b>	1-3 years	
<b>Funding Levels</b>	\$5,000-\$50,000	\$50,001-\$250,000
<b>Cost Share</b>	None required	1:1 required
<b>Deadline</b>	November 15, 2019	





# Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program

<b>Program Goal</b>	To enhance museum services to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge among Indian tribes and organizations serving Native Hawaiians
<b>Duration</b>	1-2 years
<b>Funding Levels</b>	\$5,000-\$100,000
<b>Cost Share</b>	None required
<b>Deadline</b>	November 15, 2019



# Preparing to Apply



- Make sure your **three registrations** are current and active and that you know the usernames and passwords.
- Check out our webinar entitled “IMLS OMS: Choosing a Funding Opportunity for FY2020” and skim descriptions of all six programs and to find the funding opportunities likely to work best for you.

D-U-N-S® Number  
<http://www.dnb.com/>

SAM.gov Registration  
[www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov)

Grants.gov Registration  
[www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov)

Choosing a Funding Opportunity for  
FY2020:  
<https://www.ims.gov/webinars/ims-oms-choosing-funding-opportunity-fy2020>



# Use IMLS Online Resources



## Notices of Funding Opportunities

- <https://www.imls.gov/grants/apply-grant/available-grants>

## Webinar Schedules and Recordings

- <https://www.imls.gov/webinars>

## Sample Applications

- <https://www.imls.gov/grants/apply-grant/sample-applications>

## Logic Models

- [www.shapingoutcomes.org/](http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/)

## Museum Reviewer Resources

- <https://www.imls.gov/grants/become-reviewer/reviewer-resources/museum-reviewer-resources>

## Search Awarded Grants

- <https://www.imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants>

## Publications

- <https://www.imls.gov/publications>



# IMLS applications have many components.

## Required of All Applications

- Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form
- IMLS Supplementary Information Form (including Abstract)
- IMLS Museum Program Information Form
- Organizational Profile
-  Narrative
- Schedule of Completion
- IMLS Budget Form
- Budget Justification
- List of Key Project Staff and Consultants
- Resumes

## Required of Some Applications

- Strategic Plan Summary
- Proof of Nonprofit Status
- Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Digital Product Form
- Detailed Condition Reports and/or Conservation Treatment Proposals
- Supporting Documents

# What is a project?

A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service or result. A project is temporary in that it has a defined beginning and end in time, and therefore defined scope and resources. And a project is unique in that it is not a routine operation, but a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a singular goal.



--[Project Management Institute](#)

# What is an activity?



- An activity is something that someone does.
- It has a beginning and an end.
- You know when you've finished it because it doesn't need to be done any more (or it is no longer on your To Do List).
- It is not a “goal,” “result,” or “outcome.” It is a thing you do as part of striving to achieve those.
- Aim for a reasonable level of granularity in identifying your activities—not too much, not too little, just right.



# The Narrative

- The application narrative has three sections:
  - Project Justification
  - Project Work Plan
  - Project Results
- All are equally important.



# Project Justification

- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified?
- What or who will benefit from your project?
- How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?
- How will your project address the goals of the grant program and the project category you have chosen?



# Project Work Plan

- What specific activities will you carry out?
- What are the risks to the project and are they accounted for in the work plan?
- Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?
- When and in what sequence will your activities occur?
- What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?
- How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?
- How and with whom will you share your project's results?



# Project Results



- What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, problem, or challenge you have identified?
  - *Collections Stewardship and Public Access Projects*: How will the care, condition, management, access to, and/or use of the museum collections and/or records that define the focus of your project improve?
- What data will you collect and report to measure your project's success?
- What tangible products will result from your project?
- How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project?

# Worksheets: Application Narrative

 **Worksheet 1: Developing a Project Justification**

**Project Category:** Check one.

Lifelong Learning Experiences  
 Community Anchors & Catalysts  
 Collections Stewardship & Public Access

- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified?
- What or who will benefit from your project?
- How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?
- How will your project address the goals of the Museums for America program and the project category you have chosen?

We will address the problem of \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We know this is a problem because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Our project will benefit \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Our project will address a key goal in our strategic plan by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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 **Worksheet 2: Creating a Project Work Plan**

- What specific activities, including evaluation, will you carry out?
- What are the risks to the project and are they accounted for in the work plan?
- Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?
- When and in what sequence will your activities occur?
- What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?
- How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?
- How and with whom will you share your project's results?

Activity	Personnel Resources (Who will do the work for this activity?)	Non-Personnel Resources (What supplies, equipment, travel, etc. will you need for this activity?)	Estimated Cost in \$	
			IMLS	Cost Share
Activity 1:				
Activity 2:				
Activity 3:				

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 **Worksheet 3: Defining and Measuring Results**

- What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, problem, or challenge you have identified?
  - Lifelong Learning and Community Anchors & Catalysts Projects: How will the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the intended audience change as a result of your project?
  - Collections Stewardship and Public Access Projects: How will the management, access to, and/or use of the museum collections and/or records that define the focus of your project improve?
- What data will you collect and report to measure your project's success?
- What tangible products will result from your project?
- How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project?

Our project's intended results will be \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

We will measure our success in achieving our intended results by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The data we will collect and report to measure our project's success are \_\_\_\_\_

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We will create (tangible products) \_\_\_\_\_

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We will sustain the benefits of our project beyond the conclusion of federal funding by \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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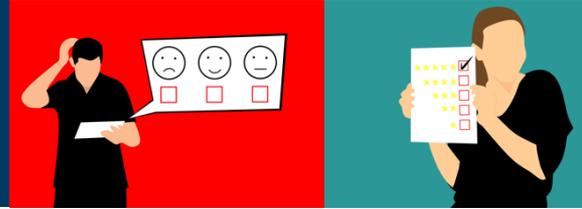
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# Today's Panel Process



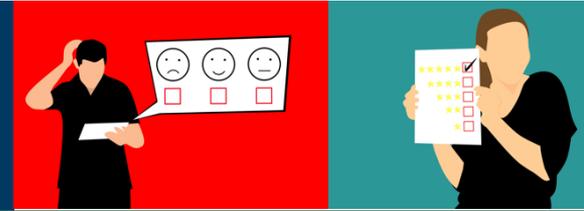
- Each group will work together as a panel. Designate a spokesperson, who will gather and then share the gist of the conversation with the group.
- Independently read the proposal assigned to your group and assign your Preliminary Score of 1 - 5 to each.
- Summarize, discuss, share your opinions of the proposals as a group; assign your Final Score of 1 - 5 to each. (No consensus required.)
- The spokespersons will report out, and we'll discuss all the proposals.

# Panel Review Criteria



1. Does the project meet the goals of Museums for America and the Collections Stewardship and Public Access project category?
2. Is the project poised for successful implementation?
3. If funded, will the project achieve its intended results?

# Score Definitions



## 5 – Excellent

The applicant's response is outstanding and provides exceptional support for the proposed project.

## 4 – Very Good

The applicant's response provides solid support for the proposed project.

## 3 – Good

The applicant's response is adequate but could be strengthened in its support for the proposed project.

## 2 – Some Merit

The applicant's response is flawed and does not adequately support the proposed project.

## 1 – Inadequate / Insufficient

The applicant's response is inadequate or provides insufficient information to allow for a confident evaluation.

# Worksheets: Panel Review

**INSTITUTE of Museum...Library SERVICES**

## Reviewer Worksheet 4: Panel Review

**Project Category:** Check one.  
 Lifelong Learning     Community Anchors & Catalysts     Collections Stewardship & Public Access

**Application 1:**

**Criterion 1. Does the project meet the goals of Museums for America ... and the selected project category?**  
 Strengthens the ability of an individual museum to serve its public Collections Stewardship and Public Access:  
 Improves the preservation, conservation, care, management, access to, and/or use of collections

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Weaknesses: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**Criterion 2. Is the project poised for successful implementation?**

- Demonstrates a thorough understanding of relevant issues and current practices
- Addresses an assessed need
- Allocates resources for the successful completion of the project
- Connects goals and objectives to appropriate activities and intended outcomes

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Weaknesses: \_\_\_\_\_  
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**INSTITUTE of Museum...Library SERVICES**

**Criterion 3. If funded, will the project achieve its intended results?**

- Tracks, measures, and adapts in order to achieve desired outcomes
- Generates continuing benefits for applicant and/or audience served OR
- Generates continuing benefits for collections and collections information

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
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Weaknesses: \_\_\_\_\_  
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SCORE DEFINITIONS	
<b>5 - Excellent</b>	The applicant's response is outstanding and provides exceptional support for the proposed project.
<b>4 - Very Good</b>	The applicant's response provides solid support for the proposed project.
<b>3 - Good</b>	The applicant's response is adequate but could be strengthened in its support for the proposed project.
<b>2 - Some Merit</b>	The applicant's response is flawed and does not adequately support the proposed project.
<b>1 - Inadequate / Insufficient</b>	The applicant's response is inadequate or provides insufficient information to allow for a confident evaluation.

**MY PRELIMINARY SCORE after reading alone:**    1    2    3    4    5

**MY FINAL SCORE after panel discussion:**    1    2    3    4    5

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# Full-Group Report-Out and Discussion



- Very brief summary of the proposal
- Summary of perspectives on strengths and weaknesses
- Range of scores
- Were there differences of opinion among panelists? What about?
- Did opinions change as the result of the discussion?
- What was the most challenging aspect of scoring an application?
- **What one piece of advice would you give an IMLS grant applicant, based on this experience?**

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### CONTACT

**Elizabeth Holtan**  
Communications  
202-653-4630  
[eholtan@imls.gov](mailto:eholtan@imls.gov)

**Gladstone Payton**  
Congressional Affairs  
202-653-4628  
[gpayton@imls.gov](mailto:gpayton@imls.gov)



**Connie Bodner**

Supervisory Grants Management Specialist

IMLS

[cbodner@imls.gov](mailto:cbodner@imls.gov)

202.653.4636

**Thank you!**