



# IMLS Grants for Libraries and Museums: Tips and Techniques for Success

Helen Wechsler and Sarah Fuller



# Today's Session Agenda

- Introduction to IMLS
- Funding Opportunities for Museums
- Funding Opportunities for Libraries
- Techniques for Preparing Competitive Applications
- Questions



# About IMLS

## Who are we?

- IMLS is an independent federal grant-making agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums.
- The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) helps ensure that all Americans have access to museum, library, and information services.

## What do we do?

- We advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.





# IMLS Funding – FY2018 Appropriations

• Office of Library Services: Grants to States	\$166,803,000
• Office of Library Services: Discretionary Programs	\$ 28,669,000
• Office of Museum Services: Discretionary Programs	\$ 38,515,000
• Administration, Research, Evaluation, Data Collection	\$ 18,013,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$252,000,000</b>



Palo Alto Art Center's Art Cart sets up shop, ready to engage visitors. (Photo courtesy of Palo Alto Art Center.)

# Museum Funding Programs

Fiscal Year 2020



# Eligibility for Museum Grants

- Eligible: museums located in the United States, its territories and freely associated states. Colleges and universities, and nonprofit organizations eligible for some programs also.
- Not eligible: federally funded institutions, for-profit organizations, individuals, and foreign countries and organizations.



# Other Requirements for Museums

In addition to meeting governance and geographic requirements, to qualify as a “museum,” an organization must also:

- use a professional staff;
- be organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes;
- own or use tangible objects, either animate or inanimate;
- care for these objects; AND
- exhibit these objects to the general public on a regular basis through facilities that it owns or operates.



# Museums for America

<b>Program Goal</b>	To strengthen the ability of an individual museum to serve its public
<b>Project Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Lifelong Learning</li><li>▪ Community Anchors</li><li>▪ Collections Stewardship and Access</li></ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	November 16, 2020
<b>Duration</b>	1-3 years
<b>Funding</b>	\$5,000-\$250,000
<b>Cost Share</b>	1:1 required



Mystic Seaport  
Mystic CT



Portland Museum  
Louisville KY



Palo Alto Art Center  
Palo Alto CA



# Inspire! Grants for Small Museums

<b>Program Goal</b>	To support small museums in addressing priorities identified in their strategic plans
<b>Project Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lifelong Learning</li> <li>▪ Community Anchors</li> <li>▪ Collections Stewardship and Access</li> </ul>
<b>Deadline</b>	November 16, 2020
<b>Duration</b>	1-2 years
<b>Funding</b>	\$5,000-\$50,000
<b>Cost Share</b>	None required



# Museums Empowered



Program Goal	To support staff capacity-building projects that use professional development to generate systemic change within a museum
Project Categories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Digital Technology</li> <li>▪ Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>▪ Evaluation</li> <li>▪ Organizational Management</li> </ul>
Deadline	November 16, 2020
Duration	1-3 years
Funding	\$5,000-\$250,000
Cost Share	1:1 required



# National Leadership Grants for Museums

<b>Program Goal</b>	To address critical needs of the museum field and advance practice in the profession so that museums can improve services for the American public		
<b>Project Categories</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Collections Stewardship and Access</li> <li>▪ Data and Evaluation</li> <li>▪ Digital Platforms and Applications</li> <li>▪ Diversity and Inclusion</li> <li>▪ Professional Development</li> </ul>		
<b>Deadline</b>	November 16, 2020		
<b>Duration</b>	1 year	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





# Characteristics and Eligibility: MFA vs NLG

Museums for America, Inspire Grants for Small Museums, and Museums Empowered		National Leadership Grants - Museums	
Characteristics of Successful Proposals			
Institutional Impact		Broad Impact	
In-depth Knowledge		In-depth Knowledge	
Project-based Design		Innovative Approach	
Demonstrable Results		Collaborative Process	
		Shared Results	
Eligibility			
Museums		Museums	
		Higher Ed	
		Organization advancing museums and the museum profession	



Participants hold up story boards from the Community Catalyst Listening Session in Jackson, MS, 9/13/2019

# Library Funding Programs

# Library Funding Programs

- National Leadership Grants for Libraries (October 2, 2020)
- Laura Bush 21<sup>st</sup> Century Librarian Program (October 2, 2020)
- Native American Library Services (Spring 2021)
- Native Hawaiian Library Services (Spring 2021)



# National Leadership Grants for Libraries (NLG)

## The program supports projects which:

- Enhance the quality of library and archival services
- Advance theory and practice

## Characteristics of successful proposals:

- National impact
- Current significance
- Strategic collaborations
- Demonstrated expertise



# Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program (LB21)

## The program supports projects focused on:

- training and professional development of library and archives professionals;
- Developing faculty and library leaders
- Recruiting, educating, and retaining the next generation of library and archives professionals

## Characteristics of successful proposals:

- Broad impact
- Current significance
- Strategic collaborations
- Demonstrated expertise
- Diversity, equity, and inclusion





# Funding Categories

Funding Category	NLG	LB21	Project Period
Planning	Up to \$100,000	Up to \$100,000	1-2 years
National Forum	Up to \$150,000	Up to \$150,000	1-2 years
Project	Up to \$1,000,000	Up to \$1,000,000	1-4* years
Research in Service to Practice	Up to \$750,000	Up to \$750,000	1-3 years



# Funding Categories

Funding Category	Sample Activities
Planning	Exploratory activities; analyzing needs and feasibility; solidifying partnerships; developing project work plans or early prototypes
National Forum	Convening key stakeholders and experts
Project	Full-scale development or implementation
Research in Service to Practice	Investigating key questions relevant to library and archival tools or services



# Project Categories

NLG and LB21 applicants must select one project category from the following:

- Lifelong Learning
- Community Catalysts
- National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives



# Lifelong Learning

**NLG:** We are interested in proposals that will have a significant national impact on the capacity of libraries and archives to support cross-disciplinary and inquiry-based methods of learning, foster attitudes of discovery, and cultivate skills such as critical thinking, innovation, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

**LB21:** We are interested in proposals that will recruit, train, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of library and archives professionals; and have a significant impact on the capacity of library and archives professionals to support cross-disciplinary and inquiry-based methods of learning, foster attitudes of discovery, and cultivate skills such as critical thinking, innovation, creativity, communication, and collaboration.



# Community Catalysts

**NLG:** We are interested in proposals that will have a significant national impact on the capacity of libraries and archives to serve as catalysts that contribute to the well-being of communities. |

**LB21:** We are interested in proposals that will recruit, train, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of library and archives professionals, and have a significant impact on the capacity of library and archives professionals to contribute to the well-being of communities.



# National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives

**NLG:** We are interested in proposals that will have a significant national impact on the capacity of libraries and archives to provide access to diverse digital content, collections, and services to a wide range of users.

**LB21:** We are interested in proposals that will recruit, train, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of library and archives professionals, and have a significant impact on the capacity of library and archives professionals to provide access to diverse digital content, collections, and services to a wide range of users.



# Project Types (LB21 only)

LB21 applicants must also select a project type from the following:

- Pre-professional
- Master's-level
- Doctoral-level
- Early Career Development
- Continuing Education



## **Positioning Library and Information Science Graduate Programs for 21st Century Practice**

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**Meeting Report**  
*November 2017, Columbia, SC*

Library tools for  
the blind and  
visually impaired over  
time, South  
Carolina State  
Library,  
November  
2017



# Techniques for Preparing Competitive Applications



# Preparing to Apply

- Visit [www.ims.gov](http://www.ims.gov).
- Select a grant program.
- Check eligibility requirements.
- Read the application guidelines (NOFOs).
- Review examples of funded proposals.
- Participate in IMLS webinars.
- Check your registrations: DUNS, SAM.gov, and Grants.gov.
- Talk with a Program Officer.



# Application Process

www.imls.gov

**INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES**

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Home » Grants » Apply for a Grant » Available Grants

## Apply for a Grant

Organizations and institutions that utilize third-party software to submit applications via Grants.gov may encounter old or outdated forms. IMLS cannot provide technical assistance for any issues applicants encounter with proprietary software. The final and correct versions of all IMLS application packages can be found on the [Grants.gov](#) portal directly.

> The Application Process

**National Medal for Museum and Library Service**  
**Deadline:** November 02, 2020  
**FY 2021 Nomination Form**  
Program Overview: The National Medals are designed to recognize outstanding libraries and museums that contribute significantly to the wellbeing of their communities.

**Inspire! Grants for Small Museums**  
**Deadline:** November 16, 2020  
**Application:** The [FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) (PDF, 510KB) is now available.  
**Grant Amount:** \$5,000-\$50,000  
**Program Overview:** Inspire! Grants for Small Museums is a special initiative of the Museums for America program. It is designed to help small museums implement projects that address priorities identified in their strategic plans.

**Museums Empowered: Professional Development Opportunities for Museum Staff**  
**Deadline:** November 16, 2020  
**Application:** The [FY 2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) (NOFO) (PDF, 433KB) is now available.  
**Grant Amount:** \$5,000-\$250,000  
**Program Overview:** Museums Empowered: Professional Development Opportunities for Museum Staff, a special initiative of the Museums for America grant program, supports staff capacity building projects that use professional development to generate systemic change within a museum.

## Notice of Funding Opportunity

**Museums for America Program**  
**FY 2018 NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

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OMB Control #: 3137-0094, Expiration Date: 7/31/2018

IMLS-CLR-D-0023



# Peer Review

The success of IMLS grant programs depends upon the quality of its peer review process. Each year hundreds of experts throughout the nation serve as IMLS peer reviewers.



Photo Courtesy of  
NCSU: Tangible  
Landscapes Coffee  
and Viz Event,  
October 29, 2019

<https://www.imls.gov/grants/peer-review>



# Application Tips

- Be certain your project goals relate to the goals of the program and category to which you are applying
- Be succinct—avoid jargon and acronyms
- Develop a realistic schedule of completion (project timeline)
- Identify consultants and other key personnel or outline the selection process
- Keep in mind the communities you serve and why this work is important.

# Application Tips

- Include an evaluation component to show how you will recognize and measure success.
- Prepare a budget that matches the activities described in your narrative.
- Write your budget justification that explains how you calculated each figure.
- Have an unfamiliar reader offer feedback.
- Proofread!





# Time for Questions

