A Dialogue with IMLS Reviewers: Tips and Techniques from the Experts

Reagan Moore and Ashley Jones
Today’s Panelists

- **Reagan Moore**, Program Officer, IMLS
- **Ashley Jones**, Program Specialist, IMLS
- **Beth Fitzgerald**, President, Magic House
- **Michael Luria**, Executive Director, Tucson Children’s Museum
- **Sarah Brenkert**, Senior Director of Education and Evaluation, Children’s Museum of Denver
Today’s Session Agenda

• Introduction to IMLS (10 minutes)
• Funding Opportunities for Museums (15 minutes)
• Application and Review Process (10 minutes)
  • Reviewer Perspective (30 minutes)
• Additional Resources and Q&A (10 minutes)
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 make grants, convene groups, conduct research, and publish in order to build the capacity of museums and libraries to serve the public.
Promote Lifelong Learning: IMLS supports learning and literacy for people of all ages through museums and libraries.

Build Capacity: IMLS strengthens the capacity of museums and libraries to improve the well-being of their communities.

Increase Public Access: IMLS makes strategic investments that increase access to information, ideas, and networks through museums and libraries.
# IMLS Funding – FY2018 Appropriations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Division</th>
<th>Appropriations</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Office of Library Services</td>
<td>$189,272,000</td>
<td>79%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office of Museum Services</td>
<td>$34,715,000</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Administration, Research, Evaluation, Data Collection</td>
<td>$14,000,000</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$240,000,000</strong></td>
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IMLS Museum Funding Opportunities

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

- Program Goal: To strengthen the ability of individual museums to serve the public
- Project Categories: Learning Experiences, Community Anchors, & Collections Stewardship
- Funding Level:
  - $5,000-$250,000 (1:1 cost share required)
- Deadline: December 15, 2018 (tentative)
Museums Empowered (ME)

- Program Goal: To invest in professional development of museum staff
- Project Categories: Digital Technology, Diversity and Inclusion, Evaluation, & Organizational Management
- Funding Level:
  - $5,000-$250,000 (1:1 cost share required)
- Deadline: December 15, 2018 (tentative)
**Inspire! Grants for Small Museums**

- **Program Goal:** To support projects that strengthen the ability of small museums to serve their community.
- **Project Categories:** There are currently no project categories in this program
- **Funding Level:**
  - $5,000-$50,000 (cost share not required)
- **Deadline:** November 1, 2018 (tentative)
National Leadership Grants for Museums (NLG-M)

• Program Goal: To address critical needs of the museum field and advance museum practice

• Project Categories: Digital Assets and Capacity, Collections Care, Access, and Use, Diversity & Inclusion, and Professional Development

• Funding Levels:
  • $5,000-$50,000 (rapid prototyping; no cost share)
  • $50,001-$1M (non-research; 1:1 cost share)
  • $50,001-$1M (research; no cost share)

• Deadline: December 15, 2018 (tentative)
Museum Grants for African American History and Culture (AAHC)

- Program Goal: To support projects that build the capacity of African American museums
- Project Categories: There are no project categories in this program
- Funding Levels:
  - $5,000-$50,000 (cost share not required)
  - $50,001-$250,000 (1:1 cost share required)
- Deadline: November 1, 2018 (tentative)
Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Grants (NANH)

- Program Goal: To provide opportunities to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge through strengthened activities in areas such as exhibitions, educational services and programming, professional development, and collections stewardship
- Project Categories: There are no project categories in this program
- Funding Level:
  - $5,000-$100,000 (cost share not required)
- Deadline: November 1, 2018 (tentative)
Your museum must have a D-U-N-S® number and be registered with SAM.gov & Grants.gov

- D-U-N-S® Number: www.dnb.com/us
- SAM Registration: www.sam.gov
- Grants.gov Registration: www.grants.gov
Application Process

www.imls.gov

Notice of Funding Opportunity
Table of Application Components

- Found in each Notice of Funding Opportunity
- Serves as a checklist of application components
- Identifies document formats and naming conventions
- Provides links to instructions and forms
- Identifies categories of documents (Required, Conditionally Required, Supporting)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Format</th>
<th>File name to use</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Required Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Application for Federal Assistance/Short Organizational Form (57-0240)</td>
<td>Grants.gov form</td>
<td>info</td>
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<tr>
<td>Abstract (one page max.)</td>
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<td>INLS Program Information Sheet</td>
<td>INLS PDF form</td>
<td>Programinfo.pdf</td>
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<td>Organizational Profile (one page max.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Strategic Plan Summary (two pages max.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Narrative (seven pages max.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schedule of Completion (one page per year max.)</td>
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<td>Budget Justification</td>
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<td>Budgetjustification.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of Key Project Staff and Consultants (one page max.)</td>
<td>PDF document</td>
<td>Projectstaff.pdf</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examples of Key Project Staff and Consultants that appear on the list above (two pages each max.)</td>
<td>PDF document</td>
<td>Resumes.pdf</td>
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<td>Conditionally Required Documents</td>
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<tr>
<td>Proof of Nonprofit Status</td>
<td>PDF document</td>
<td>Proofnonprofit.pdf</td>
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Application Tips

- Choose the right grant program
- Align the need, activities, and intended results
- Show you know your stuff
- Include your intended audience in the planning of the project
- Don’t be late or incomplete
The Review Process

How are applications reviewed?

✓ Experienced and knowledgeable peer reviewers score all eligible and complete applications and provide comments based on the criteria outlined in the program guidelines.

✓ The field and panel reviewers use different scoring systems and review criteria.

How are applications selected for funding?

✓ By law, the IMLS director is charged with the authority and responsibility to make final award decisions.
The Reviewer Perspective

- Best advice from an experienced reviewer?
- Pitfalls to avoid?
- What catches your attention?
Where to learn more...

The Awarded Grants Search gives you an opportunity to explore our archive of grants.
Sample applications include the abstract, narrative, and schedule of completion.

Samples are organized by grant program, project category and funding level.

Museums for America

Learning Experiences

- Garfield Park Conservatory Alliance (PDF, 1.14 MB)
- Friends of the Briar Bush (PDF, 1.13 MB)
- Hands On Children’s Museum (PDF, 748 KB)
- Arab Community Center for Economic & Social Services (PDF, 1.1 MB)
- City of Palo Alto (Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo) (PDF, 255.95 KB)
- Buffalo Bill Memorial Association (PDF, 249.66 KB)
- Thomas Cole Historic House (PDF, 215.04 KB)
Talk to Us!

IMLS
- Reagan Moore, rmoore@imls.gov
- Ashley Jones, ajones@imls.gov

Children’s Museum of Denver
- Sarah Brenkert, SarahB@cmdenver.org

Magic House
- Beth Fitzgerald, beth@magichouse.org

Children’s Museum of Tucson
- Michael Luria, michael@childrensmuseumtucson.org