

**Responses to OMB comments on Partnership for a Nation of Learners Applicant Survey  
3137-NEW**

1. If an applicant submitted grant applications in both 2005 and 2006, will they be asked to complete two surveys? Was the application process sufficiently different to warrant this?

We will revise the survey to issue one survey at one point in time to all applicants in grant rounds 2005 and 2006. The survey will ask respondents to indicate which rounds they applied to (2005, 2006, or both).

2. Please elaborate on the impact if this survey is not conducted. (For example, learning the lessons from unsuccessful applicants is critical to IMLS' ability to improve the process for applying for grants.) Also, please provide specific examples of how IMLS plans to use the information to improve its programs.

One of the key goals of this partnership and its grants was to foster partnerships among libraries, museums, and public broadcasting outlets in their communities. In addition, anecdotal evidence indicates that even unsuccessful applicants learn from the application process. This can lead to improved program design for a subsequent application and can seed projects for other funding sources. This survey offers our only access to information about the extent to which the application process initiated or strengthened such partnerships, and thus to one key indicator of PNL program success. IMLS will also review any significant or frequently reported observations about the application process and identify desirable changes for implementation in future grant rounds.

3. How was the expectation for an 80% response rate developed? Given that the universe is entirely composed of unfunded applicants, what is their motivation to participate?

This a standard target for IMLS surveys. It provides a desirable confidence level for data. The universe of people who will be asked to respond are staff of institutions that are potential beneficiaries of IMLS grant funding. We believe with this engaged group of individuals, we can expect a high response. Further, the survey is short and easy to complete. We will use standard survey strategies such as multiple follow-up notices to strengthen response. We will assess response rate mid-way through the survey process, and, if needed, work with OMB to increase the rate of response.

4. The survey cover page indicates that "IMLS, in exercising its statutory authority, can ensure that your responses will be kept confidential." What statutory authority are you referring to? The supporting statement (A10) does not discuss this statutory authority.

IMLS does not have such authority; we will revise this language to assure respondents that responses will be aggregated in the analysis and that individual identity of responses will be protected in any reports of the data.

5. There is a misspelling in Question 6 of the survey: “Deciding which organizations should be **involved**...”

We will correct this error.