

Attachment C: Museum Administrator Discussion Guide

[Each interviewer will have reviewed background information on the museum's mission, history, budget and major programs before visiting the organization for this interview.]

I. Introduction

Thank you very much for agreeing to contribute to this study of public support for museums in the United States. The purpose of this research, which the Urban Institute is conducting for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), is to better understand how mechanisms currently in place for delivering federal dollars to museums around the country influences museum services, and how changes to these mechanisms might influence the museum field and public support for museums. There are two components to this study, a survey of museums, and a set of targeted, state-based interviews with museum stakeholders.

In the course of this interview, I will ask you a set of questions centered around four basic themes:

- the public roles of museums,
- the relationship between the public roles of museums and public support for museums,
- the relationship between federal and state funding of museums, and
- the ways in which funding mechanisms impact museum services.

This interview will take about an hour. Your answers will be kept confidential. Neither your name or your institution's name will be linked to any of your responses and nothing you say will affect current or future funding from IMLS or other federal agencies. If you would like to participate, I ask that you review and sign the following consent form. [Attachment F]

Do you have any questions before we begin?

II. Questions about Public Purpose

1. What are the public services provided by this museum?
2. How would you describe the public value of this museum?

3. Do you think that public funds play a role in the programming and mission of this museum?
4. Do you think that other resources provided by government play a role in the programming and mission of this museum? (E.g.: benefits of nonprofit status such as property tax exemption, nonprofit postage rates, tax deductions for contributors; donations of land or property; services provided by government agencies such as National Park Service or Convention and Visitor's Bureaus).
5. Has there ever been a case where public funds or other types of support from a government source played an essential role in developing the programming or mission of this museum?

6. How do you think museums best serve the public?
 1. How well do museums provide access?
 2. How well do museums provide education?
 3. How well do museums provide innovation?
 4. How well do museums provide stewardship?
 5. How well do museums provide effective management?
 6. How well do museums work in partnership?

2. Do you think that public resources tend to be targeted toward specific types of museum programming?
 1. *Should they be targeted toward specific types of museum programming?*
3. Do you think that public resources help museums to fulfill their public roles?

III. Questions about the Public Funding of the Organization

1. How would you characterize the importance of public funds to the financing of this museum?
2. How would you characterize the importance of other resources provided by government to the financing of this museum? (E.g.: benefits of nonprofit status such as property tax exemption, nonprofit postage rates, tax deductions for contributors; donations of land or property; services provided by government agencies such as National Park Service or Convention and Visitor's Bureaus).
3. Has there ever been a case where public funds or other types of support from a government source were essential to the maintenance or development of this museum?
4. Has this museum ever applied for or requested funding from the federal government?
 1. Has this museum ever received funding from the federal government?
 2. From what agency, agencies or branches?
 3. What were the funds used for?
 4. Would you describe these funds as essential or supplemental?
2. Has this museum ever received other types of support from the federal government? (E.g., donations of surplus property, rent-free land or buildings, easements, etc.).
3. Has this museum ever applied for or requested funding from state or local government?
 1. Has this museum ever received funding from state or local government?
 2. From what agency, agencies or branches?
 3. What were the funds used for?
 4. Would you describe these funds as essential or supplemental?
 5. Has this museum ever received other types of support from state or local state government? (E.g., donations of surplus property, rent-free land or buildings, easements, etc.).

IV. Questions about the Character, Purposes and Effectiveness of Public Funding Mechanisms

1. Do you think public funding has contributed to your institution's public service role, encouraging public understanding of culture, science, art, history, or nature?
2. Do you think public funding contributed to your institution's carrying out its educational role, especially in conjunction with schools, family, and community?
3. Do you think public funding has encouraged leadership, innovation, and applications of the most current technologies and practices at your institution?
4. Do you think public funding has assisted, encouraged, or supported your institution's stewardship responsibilities for the conservation and care of your institution's collection?
5. Do you think public funding has helped your institution achieve high standards of management and service to the public?
6. Do you think public funding has encouraged resource sharing and partnerships among your institution and libraries, schools, and other community organizations?
7. Do you think that museums are well served by cultural sector agencies and officials of the federal government?
8. Do you think that museums are well served by cultural sector agencies and officials of the state government? county government? local government?

9. Do you feel that federal funds and other resources are equitably distributed to museums of different types and sizes? Why or why not?
 1. Do you feel that federal funds and other resources are equitably distributed to museums in different settings (e.g. rural or urban) and geographical areas? Why or why not?
 2. Do you feel that federal funds and other resources are equitably distributed among museums with differing programs and missions? Why or why not?

2. Do you feel that state and local funds and other resources are equitably distributed to museums of different types and sizes? Why or why not?
 1. Do you feel that state and local funds and other resources are equitably distributed to museums in different settings (e.g. rural or urban) and geographical areas? Why or why not?
 2. Do you feel that state funds and other resources are equitably distributed among museums with differing programs and missions? Why or why not?

3. In reference to federal funds:
 1. Do you think that national competitive grant programs benefit museums of any particular type or size? geographical area? museums with any particular kind of programs or mission?
 2. Do you think that a population-based block grant program would benefit museums of any particular type or size? geographical area? museums with any particular kind of programs or mission?
 3. Do you think that earmarks benefit museums of any particular type or size? geographical area? with any particular kind of programs or mission?

V. Closing

Thank you for your time.

Provide business card with full contact information. Provide information about release date for IMLS meetings and report.