

Introduction

The mission of the Institute of Museum and Library Services is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. We provide leadership through research, policy development, and grant making.

U.S. museums and libraries are at the forefront in the movement to create a nation of learners. As stewards of cultural heritage with rich, authentic content, libraries and museums provide learning experiences for everyone. IMLS has adopted a new [strategic plan](#) for 2012-2016, "Creating a Nation of Learners." In FY2013, each Museums for America award will support one of the following three goals:

1. IMLS places the learner at the center and supports engaging experiences in libraries and museums that prepare people to be full participants in their local communities and our global society.
2. IMLS promotes museums and libraries as strong community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality.
3. IMLS supports exemplary stewardship of museum and library collections and promotes the use of technology to facilitate discovery of knowledge and cultural heritage.

The goals focus on achieving positive public outcomes for communities and individuals; supporting the unique role of museums and libraries in preserving and providing access to collections and content; and promoting library, museum, and information service policies that ensure access to information for all Americans.

How are IMLS's Strategic Plan goals reflected in the Museums for America grant categories?

Learning Experiences: These grants support museums as core providers of learning in conjunction with schools, families and communities; providing access to collections, information and educational resources; encouraging the use of technologies; and developing programs for specific segments of the public.

Community Anchors: These grants encourage leadership and innovation through local networks and partnerships; support museums as part of economic development and revitalization in communities; stimulate greater collaboration; and support the sharing of resources.

Collections Stewardship: These grants support the highest standards in conservation and care of the cultural, historic, natural and scientific heritage of the United States to benefit future generations.

Supporting National Initiatives

For FY2013, IMLS continues to pursue its commitment to early learning by seeking proposals addressing learners from ages 0-8 and their parents and caregivers. Museum applicants are encouraged to partner with community organizations to address at least one of the challenges identified by the [Campaign for Grade Level Reading](#) including school readiness, summer reading loss, and chronic school absence. Click [here](#) to learn more about this initiative. Projects addressing the goals of the Campaign for Grade Level Reading should check the appropriate box on the Program Information Sheet component of the application.

Program Information

What are Museums for America grants?

The goal of the Museums for America (MFA) program is to strengthen the ability of an individual museum to serve the public more effectively by supporting high-priority activities that advance its mission, plans, and strategic goals and objectives.

MFA grants support activities that strengthen museums as active resources for lifelong learning, as important institutions in the establishment of livable communities, and as good stewards of the nation's collections. MFA grants can fund both new and ongoing museum activities and programs. Examples include planning, managing and

conserving collections, improving public access, training, conducting programmatic research, school and public programming, producing exhibitions, and integrating new or upgraded technologies into your operations.

Note to applicants: The FY2013 expanded Museums for America grant opportunity now encompasses those types of proposals that were previously solicited through the Conservation Project Support program. IMLS maintains its commitment to collections care, conservation, and preservation, and encourages a stepwise, progressive approach to conservation. Applications in this category will be reviewed and evaluated by conservation professionals.

What is the deadline for applying for a Museums for America grant?

The deadline for the FY2013 Museums for America grants is January 15, 2013.

What is the period of time in which my organization can conduct activities funded by a FY2013 MFA grant?

Projects must begin on October 1, November 1, or December 1, 2013. Projects must begin on the first day of the month and end on the last day of the final month of the project. Generally, project activities supported by MFA grants may be carried out for up to three years.

How much money can my institution apply for?

MFA grant awards range from \$5,000 to \$150,000, subject to the availability of funds and IMLS discretion.

Do we have to provide funds from other sources in order to be eligible for a MFA grant?

In order to receive a MFA grant, you must provide funds from non-federal sources in an amount that is equal to or greater than the amount of the grant. [Click here for further information on cost sharing.](#)

How many applications can we submit to this program?

There is no limit on the number of applications your museum may submit to this program in FY2013.

What categories of funding are there in the MFA grant program?

There are three categories within the MFA program, and you will need to select one of them for your application. Select a category that best supports your project proposal.

Learning Experiences

IMLS places the learner at the center and supports engaging experiences in museums that prepare people to be full participants in their local communities and our global society. Projects should deliver high quality, inclusive, accessible and audience-focused programs and services for lifelong learning in formal or informal settings.

Community Anchors

IMLS promotes museums as strong community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality. Projects should address common community challenges and demonstrate how your museum improves the quality of life and enriches community members' knowledge and understanding of critical local and global issues, provides forums for community dialogue, and/or connects individuals to resources in the broader community service infrastructure through its programs and services. Projects may include capacity-building activities that position your museum to be more effective in fulfilling its role as a community anchor institution.

Collections Stewardship

IMLS supports exemplary stewardship of museum collections and promotes the use of technology to facilitate discovery of knowledge and cultural heritage. Projects should support the care and management of collections to expand and sustain access for current and future generations. Projects should reflect systematic, holistic, logical approaches to the documentation, preservation, and conservation of tangible and digital collections to sustain and improve public access.

What activities may be funded under the Learning Experiences category?

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interpretive and educational program research, development, and delivery
- Exhibition research, development, design, and fabrication
- Website and social media content development, design, and delivery
- Publication research, design, and printing
- Training for staff, volunteers, and educators

Click [here](#) for examples of recently funded projects that support activities in the Learning Experiences category.

What activities may be funded under the Community Anchors category?

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Developing and delivering programs and services to strengthen the role of the museum as a core component of the broader social and economic infrastructure of the community
- Training staff and volunteers to support the museum's role as a community anchor organization, with an emphasis on assessing and evaluating community needs and building 21st century skills
- Improving museum capacity in areas, such as
 - Financial management
 - Personnel organization and management
 - Volunteer training and development
 - Planning
 - Policy development
 - Technology enhancements

Click [here](#) for examples of recently funded projects that support activities in the Community Anchors category.

What activities may be funded under the Collections Stewardship category?

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Planning for collections management, care, and conservation
- Inventorying, registration, cataloguing, and documentation
- Developing and enhancing collections databases
- Rehousing
- Digitization
- Surveys (Click [here](#) for helpful information about collection surveys.)
- Treatment of collections
- Environmental improvements for collections storage and exhibit areas
- Conservation research
- Training of staff, volunteers, and interns in the care, management, and/or conservation of collections

Click [here](#) for examples of recently funded projects that support activities in the Collections Stewardship category.

What requirements govern the use of IMLS funds?

You may only use IMLS funds for activities that may be funded under program-specific requirements of the Learning Experiences, Community Anchors, and Collections Stewardship categories of these Museums for America guidelines, and that are allowable under IMLS and government-wide cost principle rules, including OMB Circulars and regulations. Call us with questions about the allowability of specific expenses.

How do I determine what costs are allowable?

In addition to program-specific requirements, organizations of similar types doing similar work with the federal government must follow similar cost principles and procedures. Title 2 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) provides specific information on cost principles for allowable costs in Federal grants.

Consult these Museums for America program guidelines and the appropriate cost principles in the CFR to determine the allowability of a proposed cost item in your budget proposal.

| If your organization is a | Then use these cost principles | Locate a copy of the CFR using |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|
| Non-profit Organization | 2 CFR 230 (OMB Circular A-122) | http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov |
| State, Local or Indian Tribal Government | 2 CFR 225 (OMB Circular A-87) | http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov |
| College or University | 2 CFR 220 (OMB Circular A-21) | http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov |

What are some examples of allowable costs for the FY2013 Museums for America grants?

The following list includes some examples of allowable costs in this grant program. Please consult the appropriate cost principles in the CFR for additional guidance on allowable costs.

- personnel salaries, wages, and fringe benefits
- travel expenses for key project staff and consultants
- materials, supplies, software, and equipment, including basic environmental monitoring equipment and conservation supplies, related directly to project activities
- heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment to improve collections storage and exhibit environments
- consultant fees
- publication design and printing
- services (e.g. design, technical support, printing, non-construction labor)
- staff and volunteer training
- internships/fellowships
- contracts and subcontracts
- indirect or overhead costs ([read more about Indirect Costs](#))

What are some examples of unallowable costs for the FY2013 Museums for America grants?

The following list includes some examples of unallowable costs in this grant program. Please consult the appropriate cost principles in the CFR for additional guidance on allowable costs.

- general museum fundraising costs, such as development office staff or other staff time devoted to general fundraising
- contributions to endowments
- general museum operating support
- acquisition of collections
- general advertising or public relations costs designed solely to promote activities other than those related to the specific project

- construction and renovation of museum facilities (generally, any activity involving contract labor of the construction trades is not an allowable cost)
- exhibit fabrication that involves contract labor of the construction trades
- reconstruction or renovation of historic sites
- social activities, ceremonies, receptions, or entertainment
- subgrants or subawards
- pre-award costs

If you have questions about allowable costs, please call us for guidance.

Are partners required for MFA?

Partners may strengthen a MFA application, if they are appropriate to the project, but they are not required. An application may include one or more partners. The lead applicant must be eligible to apply as an individual entity, and all partners should be active contributors to project activities. Please note that we encourage the lead applicant to include a letter of support from each partner. [Read more about partners.](#)

Eligibility

Is my organization eligible for an award under the FY2013 Museums for America program?

To be eligible for an award under the FY2013 Museums for America program, you must be an organization that meets all three of the following criteria:

- (1) You must be either a unit of State or local government or be a private nonprofit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code;
- (2) You must be located in one of the 50 States of the United States of America, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau; and
- (3) You must qualify as one of the following:
 - (a) A museum that, using a professional staff, is organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes; owns or uses tangible objects, either animate or inanimate; cares for these objects; and exhibits these objects to the general public on a regular basis through facilities that it owns or operates.

What types of museums are eligible?

Museums include, but are not limited to, aquariums, arboretums, art museums, botanical gardens, children/youth museums, general museums (those having two or more significant disciplines), historic houses/sites, history museums, natural history/anthropology museums, nature center, planetariums, science/technology centers, specialized museums (limited to a single distinct subject), and zoological parks.

What does it mean to be using a professional staff?

An institution uses a professional staff if it employs at least one staff member, or the full-time equivalent, whether paid or unpaid, primarily engaged in the acquisition, care, or exhibition to the public of objects owned or used by the institution.

What does it mean to exhibit the objects to the general public?

An institution exhibits objects to the general public if such exhibition is a primary purpose of the institution. An institution that exhibits objects to the general public for at least 120 days a year is deemed to exhibit objects to the general public on a regular basis.

An institution which does not have the exhibition of objects as a primary purpose and/or does not exhibit objects to the public for at least 120 days a year may be determined to be eligible as a museum under certain circumstances. For more information, please see 45 CFR §1180.2(d).

(<http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov/>)

- (b) A public or private nonprofit agency which is responsible for the operation of a museum may apply on behalf of the museum.

If my museum is located within a parent organization, can my museum apply on its own?

A museum located within a parent organization that is a State or local government or multipurpose not-for-profit entity, such as a municipality, university, historical society, foundation, or cultural center, may apply on its own behalf if the museum:

- (1) is able to independently fulfill all the eligibility requirements listed in the above three criteria;
- (2) functions as a discrete unit within the parent organization;
- (3) has its own fully segregated and itemized operating budget; and
- (4) has the authority to make the application on its own.

When any of the last three conditions cannot be met, a museum may only apply through its parent organization.

Is a nonprofit organization eligible if it is affiliated with a museum?

IMLS may determine that a nonprofit organization that is affiliated with a museum is eligible for this program where the organization can demonstrate that it has the ability to administer the project and can ensure compliance with the terms of these guidelines and the applicable law, including the [Assurances and Certifications](#). The applicant organization must submit an agreement from the museum that details the activities that the applicant and museum will perform and binds the museum to the statements and assurances made in the grant application.

Registration Requirements

Before submitting an application, your organization must have a current and active D-U-N-S® Number, CCR registration, and Grants.gov registration. Check your materials and registrations well in advance of the application deadline to ensure that they are accurate, current, and active.

What is a D-U-N-S® Number and how do I get one?

[Read more about Getting a D-U-N-S® Number.](#)

What is the CCR and how do I register?

[Read more about CCR Registration.](#)

What is Grants.gov and how do I register?

[Read more about Grants.gov Registration and Tips for Using Grants.gov.](#)

Preparing and Submitting an Application

WE MAKE GRANTS ONLY TO ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS THAT SUBMIT COMPLETE APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING ATTACHMENTS, ON OR BEFORE THE DEADLINE.

For the FY2013 Museums for America grants, Grants.gov will accept applications through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on January 15, 2013.

We strongly recommend that you REGISTER EARLY and COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THE APPLICATION EARLY.

Click here to learn more about Grants.gov: www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp

Use one of the following identifiers to locate the Museums for America Grants package in Grants.gov:
CFDA No: _____, or
Funding Opportunity Number: _____

What documents are required to make a complete application?

The Table of Application Components below will help you prepare a complete and eligible application. Links to more information and instructions for completing each application component are provided in the table. **Applications missing any Required Documents or Conditionally Required Documents from this list will be considered incomplete and will be rejected from further consideration.**

How should the application components be formatted, named, and sequenced?

- **Document format:** Aside from the first two documents listed below which are created in Grants.gov, all application components must be submitted as PDF documents.
- **Page limits:** Note page limits listed below. We will remove any pages above the limit, and we will not send them to reviewers as part of your application.
- **Naming convention:** Use the naming convention indicated below.
- **Document order:** In Grants.gov, append all application components in the sequence listed below. Use all available spaces in the "Mandatory Documents for Submission" box first. You should append any remaining application components in the "Optional Documents for Submission" box.
- **Complete applications:** Use the table below as a checklist to ensure that you have created and attached all necessary application components.

If you create a document in Microsoft® Word, you must convert it to PDF format before submitting. For assistance in converting documents to PDF, visit www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs. Also, please do not send secured PDFs because we cannot process these files.

Table of Application Components

| Component | Format | File name to use |
|---|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Required Documents | | |
| Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424S) | Grants.gov form | n/a |
| Abstract (to be uploaded through Grants.gov) (one page, max.) | Text document that you create | n/a |

| | | |
|---|---------------|---|
| Program Information Sheet | IMLS PDF form | Programinfo.pdf |
| Organizational Profile (one page, max.) | PDF document | Organizationalprofile.pdf |
| Strategic Plan Summary (two pages, max.) | PDF document | Strategicplan.pdf |
| Narrative (seven pages, max.) | PDF document | Narrative.pdf |
| Schedule of Completion (one page per year, max.) | PDF document | Scheduleofcompletion.pdf |
| Detailed Budget Form (by year, as appropriate) | IMLS PDF form | Detailedbudgetyear1.pdf Detailedbudgetyear2.pdf Detailedbudgetyear3.pdf |
| Summary Budget Form | IMLS PDF form | Summarybudget.pdf |
| Budget Justification | PDF document | Budgetjustification.pdf |
| List of Key Project Staff and Consultants (one page, max.) | PDF document | Projectstaff.pdf |
| Resumes of Key Project Staff and Consultants that appear on the list above (two pages each, max.) | PDF document | Resumes.pdf |
| Conditionally Required Documents | | |
| Proof of Nonprofit Status | PDF document | Proofnonprofit.pdf |
| Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement | PDF document | Indirectcostrate.pdf |
| Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products Form | IMLS PDF form | Specificationsdigital.pdf |
| Supporting Documents | | |
| Information that supplements the narrative and supports the project description provided in the application | PDF document | Supportingdoc1.pdf Supportingdoc2.pdf Supportingdoc3.pdf etc. |

Abstract

A project abstract should be no more than one page. Insert the text, which you generate through a word processing program and save as a PDF, into the Abstract field in Grants.gov.

Information in the abstract should cover the following areas as related to the proposed project:

- Who is the lead applicant and, if applicable, who are the partners?

- What need, problem or challenge will your project address?
- What activities will you carry out and in what time frame?
- What are your intended results and how will you measure success?
- How will this project provide public benefit?

This abstract may be used for public information purposes, so it should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields, as well as to the lay reader. The abstract must not include any proprietary or confidential information.

Program Information Sheet

1. Applicant Information

- Legal Name: Enter 5a from the SF424S.
- Applicant D-U-N-S® Number: Enter 5f from the SF424S.
- Check **Yes** or **No**, and provide expiration date, if you check the **Yes** box. Please note that, before submitting an application, your organization must have a current CCR registration.
- Organizational Unit: If you cannot apply for grants on your own behalf, then enter your organizational unit's name and address in these spaces. For example, if your museum is part of a parent organization, such as a university, then enter the name of the university under **Legal Name** and the museum as the **Organizational Unit**.
- Organizational Unit Address: Be sure to include the four-digit extension on the ZIP code.
- Organizational Governance: You should check the box that best characterizes your organization.
- Organizational Unit Type: Select the one that most accurately describes your organization.

2. Organizational Financial Information

a-d: All applicants must provide the information requested.

3. Grant Program Information

Select one project category under **d. Museums for America**.

4. Check this box if your project addresses the Campaign for Grade Level Reading initiative.

5. Funding Request Information

- IMLS Funds Requested: Enter the amount in dollars sought from IMLS.
- Cost Share Amount: Enter the amount of non-federal funding you are providing, which must be at least one-half of the total project cost. [Read more about cost share.](#)

6. Project Subject Area

Check the boxes that reflect the subject areas to be addressed by your project.

7. Population Served

Check the boxes that reflect the population(s) to be served by your project.

8. Museum Profile

Museum applicants must answer all questions (a - m) in this section.

9. Project Elements

Museums for America and National Leadership Grants-Museums applicants must complete this section. Refer to the project category you selected in Question 3 above and check the box that reflects the primary element that is core to your project. For conservation projects only, check additional box(es) corresponding to the material type(s) that will be primarily affected by your project.

Download Program Information Sheet:

[Adobe® PDF](#) (318 KB)

[Microsoft® Word Document](#) (118 KB)

Strategic Plan Summary

A strategic plan, sometimes called an institutional, long-range, or master plan, is the foundation for MFA project proposals. Reviewers will use your strategic plan summary to understand how your project activities will further your institutional goals and objectives. Please do not submit a copy of your institution's entire strategic plan. The summary submitted must not exceed two pages in length and should indicate when and by whom the plan was approved.

Narrative**How should my narrative document be formatted?**

Limit the narrative to seven single-spaced, numbered pages. We will remove any pages above the seven-page limit, and we will not send them to reviewers as part of your application.

Make sure your organization's name appears at the top of each page. Use at least 0.5-inch margins on all sides and a font size of at least twelve-point. See the instructions for "Supporting Documents" to provide supplementary material.

How will my narrative be reviewed?

Reviewers with a variety of professional backgrounds will read these applications and advise us on their merits. They will base their evaluations on the information presented in the application. Your project narrative should therefore be clear, concise, and well organized with a minimum of technical jargon.

Review criteria are listed below for each section of the narrative. These criteria describe what the reviewers are instructed to consider as they evaluate proposals. Keep these application review criteria in mind when writing your narrative. Be certain to address the bullet points under each of the narrative sections as you write. Address the sections of the narrative separately and in the same order in which they are listed below.

Narrative—Learning Experiences

The elements listed below will guide you as you write your narrative.

1. Project Justification

- What do you propose to do?
- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address?
- Who or what will benefit from your project?
- What are the intended results of your project?
- How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?

Review Criteria:

- Is the project clearly explained?
- Is the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence?
- Are the people who will benefit from the project clearly identified, and have they been involved in planning this project?
- Are the intended results well formulated and achievable?
- Are the ways in which this project advances your institution's strategic plan specific, actionable, and measurable?

- Does the project align with the MFA learning experiences category? [Insert link to program description]

2. Project Work Plan

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

If a budget surplus or deficit above or below 10% of your annual operating budget for any of the three most recently completed fiscal years is shown on the Program Information Sheet, provide an explanation as part of this section of the narrative.

Review Criteria:

- Are the proposed activities, technologies, and/or methodologies informed by appropriate theory and practice?
- Are the technical details including all information required using the *IMLS Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products* form provided for projects generating digital products?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
- Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable? Are the time, personnel, and financial resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Does the institution provide evidence of its capacity to carry out the project activities and meet the cost-share requirement?
- Is a clear methodology described for tracking the project's progress and adjusting course when necessary?
- Is there an effective plan for communicating results and/or sharing discoveries?

3. Project Results

- What knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or attitudes do you expect to change and among whom?
- What tangible products (e.g. reports, inventories, catalogues, treatment plans, publications, presentations, databases) will result from your project?
- How will you [measure success](#) in achieving your intended results?
- How will you sustain the project and/or its benefit(s)?

Review Criteria

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated?
- Will the tangible products be useful?
- Are the [measures of success](#) in achieving results appropriate for the project?
- Is there a reasonable and practical plan for sustaining the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of this grant?

Narrative—Community Anchors

The elements listed below will guide you as you write your narrative.

1. Project Justification

- What do you propose to do?
- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address?
- Who or what will benefit from your project?
- What are the intended results of your project?
- How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?

Review Criteria:

- Is the project clearly explained?
- Is the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence?
- Are the people who will benefit from the project clearly identified, and have they been involved in planning this project?
- Are the intended results well formulated and achievable?
- Are the ways in which this project advances your institution's strategic plan specific, actionable, and measurable?
- Does the project align with the MFA community anchors category? [Insert link to program description]

2. Project Work Plan

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

If a budget surplus or deficit above or below 10% of your annual operating budget for any of the three most recently completed fiscal years is shown on the Program Information Sheet, provide an explanation as part of this section of the narrative.

Review Criteria:

- Are the proposed activities, technologies, and/or methodologies informed by appropriate theory and practice?
- Are the technical details including all information required using the *IMLS Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products* form provided for projects generating digital products?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
- Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable?
- Are the time, personnel, and financial resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Does the institution provide evidence of its capacity to carry out the project activities and meet the cost-share requirement?
- Is a clear methodology described for tracking the project's progress and adjusting course when necessary?
- Is there an effective plan for communicating results and/or sharing discoveries?

3. Project Results

- What knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or attitudes do you expect to change and among whom?
- What tangible products (e.g. reports, inventories, catalogues, treatment plans, publications, presentations, databases) will result from your project?
- How will you measure success in achieving your intended results?
- How will you sustain the project and/or its benefit(s)?

Review Criteria

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated?
- Will the tangible products be useful?
- Are the measures of success in achieving results appropriate for the project?
- Is there a reasonable and practical plan for sustaining the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of this grant?

Narrative—Collections Stewardship

The elements listed below will guide you as you write your narrative.

1. Project Justification

- What do you propose to do?
- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address?
- Who or what will benefit from your project?
- What are the intended results of your project?
- How will your project advance your institution's strategic plan?

Review Criteria:

- Is the project clearly explained?
- Is the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence?
- Are the materials (e.g. objects, specimens, collections) that are the focus of the project and their current condition described and quantified in sufficient detail?
- Are the people who will benefit from the project clearly identified, and have they been involved in planning this project?
- Are the intended results well formulated and achievable?
- Are the ways in which this project advances your institution's strategic plan specific, actionable, and measurable?
- Does the project align with the MFA collections stewardship category? [Insert link to program description]

2. Project Work Plan

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

If a budget surplus or deficit above or below 10% of your annual operating budget for any of the three most recently completed fiscal years is shown on the Program Information Sheet, provide an explanation as part of this section of the narrative.

Review Criteria:

- Are the proposed activities, technologies, and/or methodologies informed by appropriate theory and practice?
- Are the technical details including all information required using the *IMLS Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products* form provided for projects generating digital products?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
- Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable?
- Are the time, personnel, and financial resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Does the institution provide evidence of its capacity to carry out the project activities and meet the cost-share requirement?
- Is a clear methodology described for tracking the project's progress and adjusting course when necessary?
- Is there an effective plan for communicating results and/or sharing discoveries?

3. Project Results

- What knowledge, skills, behaviors and/or attitudes do you expect to change and among whom?

- How will the care, condition, and/or management of the materials (e.g. objects, specimens, collections) that define the focus of your project be improved?
- What tangible products (e.g. reports, inventories, catalogues, treatment plans, publications, presentations, databases) will result from your project
- How will you measure success in achieving your intended results?
- How will you sustain the project and/or its benefit(s)?

Review Criteria

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated?
- Will direct collections care, organizational capacity for collections care, and/or public awareness of the importance of collection care be improved as a result of this project? (collections stewardship only)
- Will the tangible products be useful?
- Are the measures of success in achieving results appropriate for the project?
- Is there a reasonable and practical plan for sustaining the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of this grant?

Conditionally Required Documents for Museums for America Grant Applications

If your organization is a private, nonprofit institution, you must submit a copy of the IRS letter indicating your eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. We will not accept a letter of State sales tax exemption as proof of nonprofit status.

Please consult the table below to determine if any other additional documents are required. If any of the conditions in the left column apply to your project, then the documents described in the right column are required. If you do not provide them, your application will be considered incomplete and **will be rejected from further consideration**.

| If your project involves ... | Then you must include ... |
|---|---|
| A federally negotiated indirect cost rate | A current copy of your Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement |
| A digital product (for example, a database of digital images, new software program) | Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products Form |
| A Detailed Conservation Survey | A document that identifies your institution's conservation priorities and describes how they were established* |
| An Environmental Survey | A document that identifies your institution's conservation priorities and describes how they were established* |
| Environmental Improvements | A document that identifies your institution's conservation priorities and describes how they were established* |
| Treatment | A document that identifies your institution's conservation priorities and describes how they were established* Detailed condition reports and/or treatment proposals for each object, specimen, or group to be treated |

*A document that identifies your institution's conservation priorities and describes how they were established might be one or more of the following:

- A Conservation Assessment Program (CAP) report (funded by IMLS, and administered by Heritage Preservation, Inc.)
- A Preservation Assistance Grant (PAG) report (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities)
- A General Conservation Survey Report (funded by a prior CPS grant)
- A similar survey report funded by local, state, regional, or private entities

- A current Long-Range Conservation Plan approved by the organization's administration and/or governing body

In each of these cases, the document should include a comprehensive, institution-wide assessment of collections, buildings if appropriate, and collections care policies. It should be created by professionally trained collections care experts, most often conservators, who may be from outside the organization. However, a museum with appropriately experienced conservation staff may conduct internal assessments and create its own report. You may submit the entire report, an executive summary, or those sections pertinent to your proposed project. **Your submission must, however, effectively identify your institution's conservation priorities and clearly demonstrate how they were established.**

Please note that we will not accept a collections management policy, a catalog/inventory list of objects, a building facilities report, or a strategic plan as a substitute for this document.

Supporting Documents

You may submit other attachments of your choosing as part of your application package, but do not overload the reviewers with too much information. These attachments should include only information that will supplement the narrative and support the project description provided in the application. They should help reviewers envision your project, but they should not be used to answer narrative questions. You may wish to consider the following:

- Letters of commitment from consultants, or other groups that will work closely with the applicant on this project
- Letters of commitment from partners who will receive grant funds or contribute substantive funds to the completion of project activities
- Letters of support from subject-matter experts who are familiar with your proposed project
- Needs assessments (e.g., community needs assessment, formal or informal documentation used to justify, evaluate, and plan projects, etc.)
- Reports from planning activities
- Collections, technology, or other departmental plans for the institution as applicable to the proposed project
- Sample curriculum or equivalent description of training activities
- Survey form template that shows the types of data you will collect during your General Conservation, Detailed Conservation, or Environmental Survey
- Photographs of existing conditions
- Floor plans
- Bibliography of references relevant to your proposed project design or evaluation strategy
- Products or evaluations from previously completed or ongoing projects of a similar nature
- Vendor quotes
- Equipment specifications
- Web links to relevant online materials

Note: When attaching these documents, give each one a specific title for clear identification. All Supporting Documents must include dates of creation and authorship.

Assurances and Certifications

What Federal laws do I agree to comply with when I submit my application?

As an applicant for Federal funds, you must certify that you are responsible for complying with certain nondiscrimination, debarment and suspension, drug-free workplace, and lobbying laws. These are outlined below and are set out in more detail, along with other requirements, in the [Assurances and Certifications](#). By signing the

application form, which includes the Assurances and Certifications, you certify that you are in compliance with these requirements and that you will maintain records and submit any reports that are necessary to ensure compliance. Your failure to comply with these statutory and regulatory requirements may result in the suspension or termination of your grant and require you to return funds to the government.

1. Nondiscrimination Statutes: You certify that you do not discriminate:

- on the grounds of race, color, or national origin (including limited English proficiency), in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. §2000d et seq.);
- on the grounds of disability, in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. §701 et seq., including §794);
- on the basis of age, in accordance with the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. §6101 et seq.); and
- on the basis of sex, in any education program or activity, in accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. §1681 et seq.).

2. Debarment and Suspension (2 C.F.R. Part 180 and 2 C.F.R. Part 3185):

You certify that neither you nor your principals: (a) are presently excluded or disqualified; (b) have been convicted within the preceding three years of offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. §180.800 (including but not limited to: fraud, antitrust, embezzlement, or offense indicating lack of business integrity) or have had a civil judgment rendered against you or them for one of such offenses within that time period; (c) are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of such offenses; or (d) have had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default. Where you are unable to certify to any of the above, you must attach an explanation to this application. You must also comply with applicable sections of the OMB guidance in 2 C.F.R. Part 180, and include a term or condition in lower-tier transactions requiring lower-tier participants to comply with subpart C of the OMB guidance in 2 C.F.R. Part 180.

3. Federal Debt Status:

You certify that you are not delinquent in the repayment of any Federal debt. Examples include delinquent payroll or other taxes, audit disallowances, and benefit overpayments.

4. Drug-Free Workplace:

You must provide a drug-free workplace by complying with the requirements of 2 C.F.R. Part 3186. This includes: making a good faith effort to maintain a drug-free workplace; publishing a drug-free workplace statement; establishing a drug-free awareness program for your employees; taking actions concerning employees who are convicted of violating drug statutes in the workplace; and identifying (either at the time of your application or upon award, or in documents that you keep on file in your offices) all known workplaces under your Federal awards.

5. Lobbying Activities (31 U.S.C. §1352):

You are subject to various restrictions against lobbying or attempting to influence a Federal employee or a Member of Congress or congressional employees, in connection with legislation, appropriations, or the award or modification of a Federal contract, grant, cooperative agreement, or loan. Certain additional restrictions apply if you are requesting over \$100,000 in Federal assistance. The [Assurances and Certifications](#) contain other general requirements that may apply depending on the nature of your grant activity (for example, the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 and the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966).

After You Apply

What is the application review process?

We use a peer review process to evaluate all eligible and complete applications. Reviewers are professionals in the field with relevant knowledge and expertise in the types of project activities identified in the applications. They are instructed to evaluate proposed projects according to the criteria identified in the program guidelines. The Director takes into account the advice provided by the review process and makes final funding decisions consistent with the purposes of the agency's programs.

How can I serve as a reviewer?

All competitive awards are reviewed by museum professionals who know the needs of communities, can share best practices, and are well versed in the issues and concerns of museums today.

If you are interested in serving as a reviewer, you may submit your information through our online reviewer application at www.ims.gov/reviewers/become.aspx. Please remember to attach your resume. Your information will be considered, and if accepted, your name will be entered into our reviewer database. You will be contacted prior to the next deadline regarding your availability to serve as a reviewer.

There are many benefits to reviewing applications, including enhancing your professional knowledge and serving the museum community. If you are selected to serve, you will be helping IMLS and strengthening our grant review process.

When will we find out if we have been selected to receive a grant?

No information about the status of an application will be released until the applications have been reviewed and all deliberations are concluded. IMLS expects to notify both funded and unfunded applicants of final decisions by September 2013. Funded projects may not begin earlier than October 1, 2013.

Acknowledgement and Publications/Work Products

What are IMLS's requirements for publications and other products that result from a funded project?

[Read more about Acknowledgement and Publications/Work Products](#)