

http://www.ims.gov/applicants/national_leadership_grant_guidelines.aspx

National Leadership Grants – FY12 Guidelines
Application Deadline: February 1, 2012
(Projects must begin October 1, November 1, or December 1, 2012.)

Date Posted: November 28, 2011
Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance (CFDA) Number: 45.312

Questions? See the [National Leadership Grants Web page](#) for IMLS contact info.

Teletype (TTY/TDD) (for persons with hearing difficulty): 202/653-4614
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Upon request, IMLS will provide an audio recording of this or any other publication.

Web Conferencing with Program Staff

IMLS staff are available by phone and through e-mail to discuss general issues relating to National Leadership Grants. We also invite you to participate in one of two pre-application Web conferences to learn more about the program, ask questions, and listen to the questions and comments of other participants. See the [National Leadership Grants Web page](#) for date/time information.

Equal Opportunity

IMLS-funded programs do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. For further information, write to the Civil Rights Officer, Institute of Museum and Library Services, 1800 M Street, NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036-5802.

Office of Management and Budget Clearance Numbers

Guidelines: OMB No. 3137-0029; Expiration Date: August 31, 2013.
Forms: OMB No. 3137-0071; Expiration Date: August 31, 2013.

How long should it take me to complete this application?

We estimate the average amount of time needed for one applicant to complete the narrative portion of this application to be 40 hours. This includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and writing and reviewing the answers.

We estimate that, in addition to the time needed for you to answer the narrative questions, it will take you an average of 15 minutes per response for the Program information Sheet, 3 hours per response for the Detailed Budget and Summary Budget, and 10 minutes per response for the Partnership Statement.

Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Institute of Museum and Library Services at 1800 M Street, NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036-5802, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3137-0029), Washington, DC 20503.

1. Program Information

What are National Leadership Grants?

National Leadership Grants (NLG) support projects that address challenges faced by the museum, library, and/or archive fields and that have the potential to advance practice in those fields.

Successful proposals will generate results such as new tools, research findings, models, services, practices, or alliances that can be widely used, adapted, scaled, or replicated to extend the benefits of federal investment.

IMLS Information

- [About the Institute of Museum and Library Services](#)
- [National Initiatives](#)

Guideline Contents

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This year, we are requiring NLG applicants to align their projects with one of the following three goals and their associated objectives from the agency's new [Strategic Plan](#).

1. Place learners at the center and support engaging experiences in libraries and museums that prepare people to be full participants in their local communities and our global society.
 - Invest in projects that provide inclusive and accessible learning opportunities to individuals of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds; individuals with special needs; and underserved communities.
 - Support communities of practice that draw on current research and evaluation literature to develop effective informal and formal learning experiences in museums and libraries.
 - Facilitate partnerships among museums, libraries and other education providers to expand learning opportunities for the public.
2. Promote museums and libraries as strong community anchors that enhance civic engagement, cultural opportunities, and economic vitality.
 - Invest in projects that strengthen the role of libraries and museums as core components of the broader community learning and service infrastructure.
3. Practice exemplary stewardship of collections and use the power of technology to facilitate discovery of knowledge and cultural heritage.
 - Support the care and management of the nation's collections, both material and living, to expand and sustain access for current and future generations.

In addition, for 2012, the Library Museum Collaboration Category of NLG will focus on museums and libraries promoting early learning (learners from ages 0-8 and their parents and caregivers). Libraries and museums are encouraged to partner with each other and/or with applicable 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. In recognition of this national priority and the role that museums and libraries play in early learning, we intend to provide up to \$2 million over two years to this initiative subject to the availability of funds and agency discretion.

What are the important characteristics of successful National Leadership Grant applications?

- *National Impact:* Your proposal should address key needs and challenges that face libraries, museums, and/or archives. Your project should expand the boundaries within which libraries, museums, and archives operate; show the potential for far-reaching impact, influence practice throughout the museum, library, and/or archival communities; and reflect awareness and support of current strategic initiatives and agendas in these fields.
- *Innovation:* Your proposal should demonstrate a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter, and show how the project will advance museum, library, and/or archive service.
- *Collaboration:* While partners are not required in all NLG categories, partnerships can help demonstrate a broad need, field-wide buy-in and input, access to appropriate expertise, and sharing of resources.

What are the National Leadership Grant categories?

The National Leadership Grant program accepts applications under four categories:

- *Advancing Digital Resources*—Support the creation, use, presentation, and preservation of significant digital resources as well as the development of tools to enhance access, use, and management of digital assets.
- *Research*—Support research that investigates key questions that are important to museum, library, and/or archival practice.
- *Demonstration*—Support projects that produce a replicable model or practice that is usable, adaptable, or scalable by other institutions for improving services and performance.
- *Library Museum Collaboration*— Support collaborative projects (between museums and /or libraries and other community organizations) that address the educational, economic, cultural, or social needs of a community. In 2012, a funding priority will be projects that promote early learning.

What types of grants are available in the NLG program?

Applicants may choose to submit a Project Grant, Planning Grant, or National Forum Grant proposal in any of the four NLG categories listed above.

- *Project Grants* support fully developed projects for which needs assessments, partnership development, feasibility analyses, prototyping, and other planning activities have been completed.
- *Planning Grants* allow project teams to perform preliminary planning activities that could lead to a subsequent full project, such as needs and feasibility analyses, solidifying partnerships, developing project work plans, or developing prototypes or proofs of concept. Applications for Planning Grants must include at least one formal partner in addition to the lead applicant.
- *National Forum Grants* provide the opportunity to convene qualified groups of experts and key stakeholders to consider issues or challenges that are important to libraries, museums, and/or archives across the nation. Grant-supported meetings are expected to produce widely disseminated reports with expert recommendations for action or research that address a key challenge identified in the proposal. The expert recommendations resulting from these meetings are intended to guide future proposals to the NLG program.

What is the deadline for applying for a National Leadership Grant?

The FY2012 deadline for National Leadership Grants is February 1, 2012.

What is the period of time in which my institution can conduct activities funded by a FY12 NLG grant?

Projects must begin on October 1, November 1, or December 1, 2012. 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 NLG grants may be carried out for up to three years.

How much money can my institution apply for?

The award amount limitations are as follows:

- Project Grants: \$50,000 - \$500,000 (except for Library Museum Collaboration (LMC) category projects addressing the Campaign for Grade-Level Reading, which are capped at \$250,000)
- Planning Grants: up to \$50,000
- National Forum Grants: up to \$100,000

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

In order to receive an NLG grant, you must provide funds from non-federal sources in an amount that is equal to or greater than the amount of the grant. This rule does not apply to applications in the Research category, or to applications for grants under \$250,000 regardless of category. In these instances, no matching funds are required, but we encourage you to provide non-federal funding in an amount equal to or greater than one-third of the amount of the grant. [Click here for further information on cost sharing.](#)

What types of activities can be funded under the Advancing Digital Resources category?

Advancing Digital Resources grants support enhanced access, use, and management of digital content over its entire life cycle by incorporating new technologies or new technical practice. Projects should harness the power of technology to permit new types of information use and experiences.

Examples of potential projects include those that

- develop and disseminate new tools or services that facilitate access, presentation, management, preservation, sharing, and use of digital resources;
- increase community access to online information resources through innovative use of existing technology-based tools and/or social networking environments;

- support collaborations to enhance online access to digital content from multiple sources, including cultural heritage institutions of all types to provide innovative opportunities for the use of museum, library, and/or archival content and materials for research, teaching, and learning; or
- deploy and test new processes or tools that support the evolving practices and needs involved in creating, managing, using, and sharing digital information.

Proposals that involve the creation of new digital products such as digital collections, software tools, or other digital resources **must** include as part of the application the [Digital Specifications Form for Projects That Develop Digital Products](#) with the relevant portions of Part I and II completed.

What types of activities can be funded under the Research category?

Research grants support projects that have the potential to inform and improve museum, library, and/or archival practice, resource use, programs, and services. Research project proposals should answer each of the following questions in the narrative portion of their application.

- What are the specific research questions this investigation will attempt to answer?
- What is the relevance of the proposed research for current practice?
- What research method(s) will be used to conduct the research?
- What type of data will be gathered?
- How will the data be analyzed?
- How will the information be reported?
- How will the research data be managed and made available for future use (as applicable)?

[Click here](#) to learn more about the elements of an effective research proposal.

Examples of potential projects include those that

- acquire new understanding of any broadly relevant aspect of library, museum, or archive practices, or the needs of communities these organizations serve;
- investigate how to improve the quality, effectiveness, or efficiency of library or museum management, programs, or services;
- investigate ways to enhance the archiving, preservation, management, discovery, and use of digital assets and resources;
- investigate or conduct research to add new knowledge or make improvements in the conservation and preservation of collections;
- re-use or re-purpose existing datasets to conduct new library or museum research; or
- investigate how learning takes place in museums, libraries, and archives and how use of library, museum, and/or archive resources affects learning.

If an electronic dataset will be created as a result of the proposed research, you **must** complete Part III of the [Digital Specifications Form for Projects That Develop Digital Products](#) and include this form as part of your application. Part III of this form asks you to summarize the dataset's original purpose and scope; provide technical information about the dataset's format, structure, and content; explain what metadata will be created about the dataset and what standards and formats will be used for the metadata; list any relevant hardware, software, or other dependencies for using the data; identify a repository where the data and metadata will be archived, managed, and made accessible (if applicable); and describe the long-term preservation plan for the dataset.

What types of activities can be funded under the Demonstration category?

Demonstration projects address key needs and challenges facing libraries, museums, and archives and should implement and evaluate innovative models for new services or practices that other institutions may replicate or adapt to improve their services or operations. Projects should be designed to document and make available key information about the processes, resources, and lessons learned from the project.

Examples of potential projects include those that

- demonstrate and/or test new types of partnerships, services, processes, or practices in the museum, library and/or archive field;
- demonstrate how museums, libraries, and/or archives can enhance services to their communities and contribute to local economic/workforce development, fostering public value and promoting systemic changes in the field;
- consolidate, restructure, or reorganize existing programs, services, and/or operational workflows in innovative ways through the use of technology or other creative means;
- demonstrate and/or test an expansion of collection management, preservation, and/or conservation practices.

Exhibition projects, unless they are truly broad collaborations that address identified field-wide challenges and demonstrate significant innovation are generally not funded under the National Leadership Grant program.

What types of activities can be funded under the Library Museum Collaboration (LMC) category?

Library Museum Collaboration (LMC) grants support collaborative projects (between museums and/or libraries and other community organizations) that address the educational, economic, cultural, or social needs of a community.

In 2012, a funding priority will be projects that promote early learning (learners from ages 0-8 and their parents and caregivers). Libraries and museums are encouraged to partner with each other or with applicable 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.

Grant funds in the Library Museum Collaboration category support innovative, collaborative projects—whether new or building on an existing project or relationship. While projects should position museums and/or libraries as important community anchors, recognizing and responding to community needs, you should structure your project to be a replicable or adaptable model, envisioning your institution as a member of a national community of practice around early learning.

As with all NLG applications involving partnerships, the lead applicant must be an eligible library or museum entity that will serve as the financial agent if a grant is awarded. Each partner of the lead applicant **must** complete a Partnership Statement form, to be included as part of the submitted application.

Examples of potential projects include those that

- combine the resources of community organizations to meet the early learning needs of children, their parents, and caregivers;
- provide increased services and support for underserved populations within communities;
- combine or coordinate existing programs, services, and/or operational workflows in innovative ways through the use of technology or other creative means;
- apply technology to serve audiences more effectively;
- assist in building effective local, statewide, or regional coalitions of museums, libraries, archives, and other cultural heritage organizations;
- conduct collaborative research; or
- increase the capacity of partnering organizations to provide effective services, creative venues, and meaningful resources for learning.

Acknowledgement and Copyright/Work Products

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

What requirements govern the use of IMLS funds?

You may only use IMLS funds for allowable costs as found in IMLS and government-wide cost principle rules, including OMB Circulars and regulations.

What expenses are allowable with NLG funds?

Examples of allowable expenses for National Leadership Grants include

- project personnel (contract or in-house) whose staff time is necessary for the proper and efficient execution of the project;
- project consultants;
- project-related travel of key project staff and consultants;
- purchase of equipment, materials, supplies, or services;
- program development and implementation;
- integration of technology into operations or programs;
- research;
- publications based on project activities;
- software development;
- evaluation to show the extent to which the project has met its goals; and
- indirect or overhead costs.

You must explain all proposed expenses in your Budget Justification.

What expenses are not allowable with NLG funds?

Examples of unallowable expenses for National Leadership grants include

- general fundraising costs, such as development office staff or other staff time devoted to general fundraising;
- general operating support;
- general advertising or public relations costs designed solely for promotional activities other than those related to the specific project;
- construction and renovation of facilities (generally, any activity involving contract labor in the construction trades is not an allowable cost);
- exhibit fabrication that includes creation of large-scale permanent structures for animals or objects that would involve contract labor of the construction trades (applicants with questions about the eligibility of exhibition activities should call IMLS staff immediately);
- acquisition of collections;
- projects where the majority of requested funds go to training library or museum staff;
- contributions to endowments;
- social activities, ceremonies, receptions, or entertainment; and
- pre-award costs.

(Note: If you have questions about the allowability or unallowability of specific activities, please call us for guidance.)

Are Partnerships Required for NLG?

Partnerships may strengthen a National Leadership Grant application, if they are appropriate to the project. Partnerships are required for Planning Grants and under the Library-Museum Collaboration category. An application may include one or more partners. The lead applicant in a partnership must be eligible to apply as an individual entity, and all members of a partnership should be active contributors to project activities. [Read more about partnerships.](#)

2. Eligibility

What are the eligibility criteria for libraries and archives?

To be eligible as a library applicant for a National Leadership Grant, you must:

- be either a unit of State or local government or a private nonprofit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code.

- be located in one of the 50 States of the United States of America, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau; and
- qualify as one of the following six types of organizations:
 - a library or a parent organization, such as a school district, a municipality, a state agency, or an academic institution, that is responsible for the administration of a library. Eligible libraries include public libraries, public elementary and secondary school libraries, college and university libraries, research libraries and archives that are not an integral part of an institution of higher education and that make publicly available library services and materials that are suitable for scholarly research and not otherwise available¹. Research libraries, under the supervision of at least one permanent professional staff librarian, must be either generally recognized as possessing unique scholarly research materials and services that are made available to the public, or able to demonstrate that such is the case when submitting an application to IMLS. Private or special libraries that have been deemed eligible to participate in this program by the State in which the library is located;
 - an academic or administrative unit, such as a graduate school of library and information science that is part of an institution of higher education through which it would make application;
 - a digital library, if it makes library materials publicly available and provides library services, including selection, organization, description, reference, and preservation, under the supervision of at least one permanent professional staff librarian;
 - a library agency that is an official agency of a State or other unit of government and is charged by the law governing it with the extension and development of public library services within its jurisdiction;
 - a library consortium that is a local, statewide, regional, interstate, or international cooperative association of library entities that provides for the systematic and effective coordination of the resources of eligible libraries, as defined above, and information centers that work to improve the services delivered to the clientele of these libraries; or
 - a library association that exists on a permanent basis, serves libraries or library professionals on a national, regional, state, or local level, and engages in activities designed to advance the well-being of libraries and the library profession.

What are the eligibility criteria for museums?

To be eligible as a museum applicant for a National Leadership Grant, you must:

1. be either a unit of State or local government or a private nonprofit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code;
2. be located in one of the 50 States of the United States of America, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, 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. qualify as one of the following:
 - a museum² that, using a professional staff,³ 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.⁴
 - an organization or association that engages in activities designed to advance the well-being of museums and the museum profession;
 - an institution of higher education, including public and nonprofit universities; or
 - a public or private nonprofit agency which is responsible for the operation of a museum may apply on behalf of the museum.

Please note that 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 above; (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.

IMLS may determine that a non-profit 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.

1. Research libraries must be either generally recognized as possessing unique scholarly research materials and services that are made available to the public, or able to demonstrate that such is the case when submitting an application to IMLS.
2. 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 centers, planetariums, science/technology centers, specialized museums (limited to a single distinct subject), and zoological parks.
3. An institution uses a professional staff if it employs at least one professional 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.
4. 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 that exhibits objects by appointment may meet the requirement to exhibit objects to the general public on a regular basis if it can establish, in light of the facts under all the relevant circumstances, that this method of exhibition does not unreasonably restrict the accessibility of the institution's exhibits to the general public.

An institution that does not have as a primary purpose the exhibition of objects to the general public but that can demonstrate that it exhibits objects to the general public on a regular basis as a significant, separate, distinct, and continuing portion of its activities, and that it otherwise meets the museum eligibility requirements, may be determined to be eligible as a museum under these guidelines. For more information, please see 45 C.F.R. Chapter XI, Subchapter E (Institute of Museum and Library Services).

3. Registration Requirements

Getting a D-U-N-S® Number

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

CCR Registration

[Read more about CCR Registration.](#)

Grants.gov Registration

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

4. Preparing and Submitting an Application

PLEASE REVIEW THESE GUIDELINES AND THE GRANTS.GOV REQUIREMENTS CAREFULLY. WE MAKE GRANTS ONLY TO ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS THAT SUBMIT COMPLETE APPLICATIONS, INCLUDING ATTACHMENTS, ON OR BEFORE THE DEADLINE.

For the FY12 National Leadership Grants, Grants.gov will accept applications through 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time on February 1, 2012.

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

Apply for Grants: www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp

Use one of the following identifiers to locate the National Leadership Grants package in Grants.gov:
CFDA No: 45.312, or
Funding Opportunity Number: NLG-FY12

What documents are required and how should they be completed, formatted, named, and sequenced?

Please see the Table of Application Components below. Links to more information and instructions for completing forms are provided in the table. **Applications missing any Required Documents or applicable Conditionally Required Documents from this list will be considered incomplete and will be rejected from further consideration.**

You should also use this table to determine the format of each document, the name it must be given, and the sequence in which the documents should be attached.

We will not accept file formats other than PDF and we will not convert files for you. 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.

Please note that, aside from the first two documents listed, all documents must be submitted as PDF documents, regardless of how they were created. Documents listed as IMLS forms are available in both Microsoft® Word document and fill-in PDF formats, and are located [on the IMLS Web site](#). If you do not have Adobe® Pro, we suggest using the Word document to complete the forms. Remember, the Word version must later be converted to and submitted as a PDF.

Be sure to note the maximum page limits for certain components. We will remove any pages above the limit, and we will not send them to reviewers as part of your application.

Append all the documents to the attachments form in the sequence used in the Table of Application Components. Use all the available spaces in the "Mandatory Documents for Submission" box first. If there are more attachments than will fit there, use the "Optional Documents for Submission" box for the remaining ones, following the same naming convention and submitting them one at a time.

You may use this table as a checklist to ensure that you have created and attached all the documents that may be necessary for a complete application. We suggest assembling and uploading your documents in this sequence to assist you in confirming the inclusion of all required materials.

Table of Application Components

Component	Format	File name to use
Required Documents		
The Application for Federal Assistance/Short Organizational Form (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
Narrative (ten 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 (two pages, max.)	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 (if applicable)	PDF document	Proofnonprofit.pdf
Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (if applicable)	PDF document	Indirectcostrate.pdf
Partnership Statement Form(s) (if applicable)	IMLS PDF form	Partners.pdf
Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products Form (if applicable)	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 formal partners?
- What is the time frame for the project?
- What is the challenge, problem, or need the project addresses?
- Which one of [IMLS's strategic goals](#) does this project address?
- Who is the intended audience for the project outcomes?
- What will be the specific project activities and tangible products?
- What are the intended outcomes for audience members in terms of measurable changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, or behavior?

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

a. Legal Name: Enter the legal name of the applicant.

b. and c. Organizational Unit and Address:

If the eligible entity cannot apply for grants on its own behalf, then enter the name and address of the entity in these spaces. For example, if an entity that is applying is part of a parent organization, such as a university, then the

university would be the legal applicant, and the entity would be entered as the organizational unit. Be sure to include the four-digit extension on the ZIP code.

d. Web Address: If an organizational unit is listed, enter its Web address here. If not, enter the Web site of the entity listed under Legal Name in Section 1a above.

e. Type of Institution: Select the one that most accurately describes your organization.

2. Grant Program or Grant Program Category

Select the appropriate funding office:

- Museum
- Library

Select the type of funding:

- Project Grant
- Planning Grant
- National Forum Grant

Select the grant category:

- Research
- Demonstration
- Advancing Digital Resources
- Library Museum Collaboration

3. Request Information

a. IMLS Funds Requested: Enter the amount in dollars sought from IMLS.

b. If you are providing non-federal matching funds in support of this project, enter the amount here. Although matching is not required, we encourage applicants to provide at least one-third of the total project costs from non-federal sources. [Read more about cost share.](#)

4. Museum Profile (Museum applicants only)

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

If you indicate a budget surplus or deficit for one or both of the two previous fiscal years on the Program Information Sheet, you should provide an explanation in the application narrative, Section 4: Project Resources. This explanation is intended to assist reviewers in evaluating the financial capacity of your institution to complete the project activities.

5. Project Partners

In the space provided, list all organizations that are partners for the project. Note: Each partner listed in this section is required to complete and submit a Partnership Statement form to the lead applicant for submission with the application.

6–8.

Skip these sections. They do not apply to NLG.

Download Program Information Sheet:

[Adobe® PDF](#) (318 KB)

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

Narrative

Write a narrative that addresses the components listed and explained below, noting that not all narrative components are required for all categories. Limit the narrative to ten single-spaced, numbered pages. We will remove any pages above the ten-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.

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.

Please be advised that reviewers may also choose to visit your organization's Web site, as listed on the SF-424S form provided with this application.

1. Statement of Need

Provide a justification for the proposed project as it relates to a field-wide need or challenge. Include information such as the following:

- The project's intended audience and the need or challenge it faces
- Evidence that there is some consensus around the urgency to address this need or challenge
- How this project differs from, complements, or builds upon, previous work in this area
- How the project will benefit the intended audience

For projects building on a prior NLG Planning Grant, include a discussion of what was learned during the planning process.

For research grants, [click here](#) for more information about the elements of an effective research proposal.

Review Criteria:

- Evidence that the applicant has identified an audience, performed a formal or informal assessment of its needs, is aware of similar projects completed by other institutions, and has developed the project and its goals as the best solution to answer those needs
- Evidence of innovation shown by the degree to which the project results in more than incremental change
- Research proposals should frame the project in the context of current research and explain what the project will contribute to the library, museum, and/or archive fields.
- Planning grant proposals should describe the field-wide need or challenge the planning grant is addressing but do not require full needs assessments and environmental scans since these types of activities can be part of planning activities.

2. Impact

Describe the benefits of this project for the museum, library, and/or archive field. Address issues such as the following:

- How the project innovatively addresses current issues that concern the library, museum, and /or archive fields and will have a lasting impact on the field(s)
- How the project design allows for input, consensus building, and buy-in from others in and/or outside the field

- Describe the design, integration, and implementation of an assessment method that will measure project outputs, outcomes, findings, and products. Include a description of evaluation measures and indicators of success. Describe how the evaluation plan is an integral part of the project design

Review Criteria:

- Degree to which the project is likely to have a far-reaching impact through results or products that serve multiple institutions and constituencies
- Evidence that the project will create, implement, and document workable models that have the potential for successful, widespread adaptation where appropriate
- Degree to which potential benefits of the project outweigh its potential risks
- Degree to which evaluation plan ties directly to project goals through measurable project outcomes, findings, or products
- Evidence that the project evaluation will provide reliable information on which to judge impact or base actions
- For projects that involve building digital collections, software, or other technology products, in addition to the above criteria, evidence that the project demonstrates interoperability and accessibility in its broadest context and potential for integration into larger-scale initiatives
- For research projects, evidence that the results will be generalizable and useful to the library, museum, and /or archive communities
- For planning grant proposals, evidence that the planning outcomes, findings, or products are identified, will be measured, and can be used to inform the development of a full project

Resources for Evaluating a Project's Impact

[Click here for helpful information about project evaluation.](#)

3. Project Design

Describe the proposed project's design. Include information such as the following:

- Project goals and activities, the planning process, and specifics of project implementation
- If the project is a partnership, describe how it will be managed

Review Criteria:

- Evidence that the project proposes efficient, effective, and reasonable approaches to accomplish its goals and objectives
- Evidence that methodology and design are appropriate to the scope of the project
- Evidence that the project uses existing or emerging standards or best practices
- If products such as digital collections or software tools will be generated by the project, evidence that applicant has considered key technical details and has included the form *Specifications for Projects That Develop Digital Products* with relevant portions of Parts I and II completed

4. Project Resources: Personnel, Time, Budget

Describe the resources, including those funded by the grant and those funded by the organization's cost share, required to implement and complete the project. Include information such as the following:

- The institutional responsibilities for the project's implementation and management
- The personnel who will complete project activities, and their qualifications and commitment to the project activities, particularly if they have other ongoing duties
- The budget allocated to accomplish project activities, including cost sharing

- If the project includes a partnership, the contributions to and benefits from the project for both the applicant and partner organizations, and how information will be shared and decisions will be made
- For museum applicants, if a budget surplus or deficit for one or both of the two previous fiscal years is shown on the Program Information Sheet, an explanation as part of this section of the narrative

Review Criteria:

- Clear description of how the applicant will effectively complete the project activities through the deployment and management of resources including money, facilities, equipment, and supplies
- Cost-efficient, complete, and accurate budget that uses appropriate resources to fulfill any cost-sharing requirement
- Evidence that project personnel demonstrate appropriate experience and expertise and will commit adequate time to accomplish project goals and activities
- If the project includes a partnership, evidence that all partners are active contributors to and beneficiaries of the partnership activities
- For museums, if a budget surplus or deficit for one or both of the two previous fiscal years is shown on the Program Information Sheet, include an explanation as part of this section of the narrative

5. Communications Plan [Not required for Planning Grants]

Describe the variety of media and other means the project will use to reach library, museum, archive, and other audiences that might benefit from its work. Include information such as the following:

- How new products, services, research results, and information will reach the audiences described in the first narrative section above, Assessment of Need. Many strategies that apply to publicizing an award may be used to disseminate project news as well. See <http://www.ims.gov/recipients/grantee.aspx>.)
- How new and emerging engagement and communications strategies, such as communities of practice, might be used to further the reach of the project
- If developing software or other technology tools, how these will be made available to the public for reuse and implementation

Review Criteria:

- Extent to which the results, products, models, data sets, processes, and benefits of this project will be made accessible through effective communication channels to the museum, library, and/or archive fields, and to other professional organizations and communities, as appropriate
- Extent to which research findings will be made available to the public

6. Sustainability [Not required for Planning Grants, National Forum Grants, or proposals in the Research Category]

Describe how the applicant will continue to support the project, its results, and/or the new model it creates beyond the grant period.

Review Criteria:

- Extent to which the project's benefits will continue beyond the grant period, either through ongoing institutional support of project activities or products, Web sites, and development of institutional expertise and capacity, or through broad long-term access to project products
- Extent to which the project will lead to systemic change within the organization as well as within the museum, archive, and/or library fields
- For projects that produce digitized collections, software, information systems, and other technology tools, in addition to the above criteria, the extent that project plans address activities to preserve and sustain the resulting digital products

For this section of the application, reviewers will consider information provided in the Narrative, Budget Forms,

Conditionally Required Documents

Proof of Nonprofit Status

If your organization is a private, nonprofit organization, you must submit a copy of the IRS letter indicating your eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provisions 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 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 partner who will receive grant funds or who will contribute substantive funds to the completion of project activities	An IMLS Partnership Statement form for each partner entity
A digital product (for example, a database of digital images, new software program)	Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products Form

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:

- Needs assessments
- Reports from planning activities
- Digitization plans
- Web links to relevant online materials
- Letters of support from experts and/or stakeholders

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).

5. After You Apply

What is the application review process?

We use a two-tiered peer review process that includes individual field review and/or panel review to evaluate all eligible and complete applications. Reviewers and panelists 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 and library communities. 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 late September 2012. Funded projects may not begin earlier than October, 2012.