

Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment of Museum Capacity-Building Programs

Supporting Statement for PRA Submission

Part A: Justification

A.1. Circumstances Making the Collection of Information Necessary

A.1.1. Purpose of the Submission

Approval is requested for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to collect information as part of its “Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment of Museum Capacity-Building Programs.” This assessment is a cooperative effort with the Partnership for Public Good (PPG). The underlying purposes of the information collection are to:

- Understand the scope of existing museum capacity-building opportunities;
- Identify potential gaps in the suite of current capacity-building offerings; and
- Determine new opportunities and areas of growth for both IMLS and other funders.

For the purpose of this study, capacity building is defined as generating resources or support intended to help an institution enhance its ability to fulfill its mission or purpose (e.g., any activity or support that is focused on the health and sustainability of the museum rather than on specific exhibitions or programs).

This is a new effort through which IMLS seeks to strengthen the alignment of its grant-making with the relevant needs of the rapidly evolving museum sector. This proposed market analysis and assessment would encompass not only programs that IMLS has supported in the past but also those offered, or that could be offered, by other entities for the museum sector or similar programs that would have transferrable models or elements from sectors outside the museum field. This is an opportunity for IMLS to take a pause, learn from the field, and then make improvements as needed in its capacity-building programs informed with findings and recommendations of the study.

The mixed method assessment includes an opinion survey that will collect descriptive data from museum leadership and staff on their experiences with capacity building in the museum sector. Data collected through the survey will inform a formal report generated by PPG on participation levels of museums in capacity-building programs, museums’ perceived organizational strengths and challenges, gaps in capacity-building service offerings, perceived drivers and

barriers to participation, types of capacity-building initiatives in which participants have engaged (both IMLS-funded initiatives and others), and perceived levels of success in adopting and sustaining increased capacity-building initiatives.

Other assessment data collection activities include stakeholder interviews and focus groups, which, together, will provide important ways to understand more deeply the challenges museums face with respect to capacity building.

IMLS anticipates that the study will also have broad interest to the museum field since capacity-building needs and opportunities for small and medium museums have not been examined through a study of this kind.

Partners for Public Good (PPG) is a non-profit organization incorporated in 2017 for the purpose of conducting and supporting activities that will facilitate and promote an effective charitable sector, strengthen the governance mechanisms of charitable organizations, and foster collaboration and inclusive impact programming across the sector, including through the provision of educational initiatives, technical assistance, and strategic planning and guidance. Board members represent a broad range of capacity building, governance, strategic planning, and arts experiences.

In 2017, TCC Group (a 40-year-old social impact consulting firm) incorporated PPG to support government agencies, non-profits, and for-profits committed to improving and evolving the social sector. The unique collection of skills and experiences TCC Group has amassed positions it to increase the social sector's effectiveness in successfully addressing and supporting capacity gaps across multiple fields.

A.1.2. Legislative Authorization

IMLS is the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. It advances, supports, and empowers America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grant making, research, and policy development. IMLS envisions a nation where museums and libraries work together to transform the lives of individuals and communities.

IMLS conducts data collection, analysis and evaluation of its programs and field engagement efforts with the overall goal of continuous improvement. The Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment of Museum Capacity-Building Programs is one such effort. This data collection is authorized by 20 U.S.C. § 9108 (Policy research, data collection, analysis and modeling, evaluation, and dissemination).

A.1.3. Prior Related Studies

Though IMLS has funded technical assistance and capacity programs over many decades, such as the Museum Assessment Program (MAP) and the Collections

Assessment for Preservation (CAP) program, IMLS has not previously funded a comprehensive and cross-cutting study examining capacity-building effectiveness and gap identification in the museum sector. This work will build upon existing studies conducted by IMLS and other organizations that examine the capacity of museums to play a role in improving community social wellbeing and quality of life. Such studies include IMLS's report "Strengthening Networks, Sparking Change: Museums and Libraries as Community Catalysts"¹ and its current research initiative, "Understanding the Social Wellbeing Impacts of the Nation's Libraries and Museums."

Many general studies of museums lack an explicit focus on capacity building or conflate capacity building with professional development. As mentioned above, we have defined capacity building to be generating resources or support intended to help an institution enhance its ability to fulfill its mission or purpose. While others continue to use the terms "capacity building" and "professional development" interchangeably, we see capacity building as focused on the preservation of the institution or organization, while professional development is focused on the leadership and staff of an institution. In 2016, Museum International published a special issue explicitly focused on capacity building, titled *Museums, Heritage and Capacity Building*², which contained an extensive literature review and history of professional development with museums across the globe. This issue, however, focused primarily on professional development rather than capacity building and failed to include the small- and medium-sized U.S.-based museums included in this study.

Some professional museum organizations, associations, and networks have individually commissioned reports on aspects of capacity building amongst their members. In 2014, the New England Museum Association published "Essential Leadership: Investigating the Future of Museum Governance"³. Like many of the regional-and discipline-specific associations, this report focuses on only one aspect of capacity building (i.e., governance) and is limited in its scope to New England. The Wallace Foundation published "Services to People: Challenges and Rewards: How Museums Can Become More Visitor-Centered"⁴. While the report provides substantial information on how museums can build their capacity to become more visitor centered, it contains information from interviews with only 28 large and mostly urban art museums across the country. This report was followed by a report by the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) entitled, "Connecting the Wallace

¹ <https://www.imls.gov/publications/strengthening-networks-sparking-change-museums-and-libraries-community-catalysts>

² <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/toc/14680033/68/1-2>

³ https://nemanet.org/files/9914/2894/1720/Essential_Leadership_NEMA.pdf

⁴ <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/Documents/How-Museums-Can-Become-Visitor-Centered.pdf>

Foundation Methodology with the Museum Research Literature”⁵. The AAM report contains interesting articles in the literature review around organizational development, change management, community engagement, and visitor experience. However, the majority of referenced articles are individual case studies and, in one case, a study of non-museum visitors. PPG will leverage these articles to contextualize its findings; however, they lack the breadth and focus on capacity building.

Other museum practitioners have discussed their own experiences with capacity building and what they have witnessed over the course of their careers. This includes a recent 2015 blog post in Museum Notes by Jeanne Vergeront, “Building Capacity to Have Capacity”⁶ and a press release by Karen Stark from Utah Museums Association⁷ entitled “Building Capacity.” These anecdotal reports from blogs and newsletters contain interesting information around perceptions of capacity-building best practices and experiences but fail to examine the field as a whole.

In preparation for this survey, PPG also reviewed current and prior landscape scans of the state of nonprofit capacity building. The most relevant studies included Grantmakers for Effective Organizations (GEO), “Strengthening Nonprofit Capacity”⁸ and Center for Effective Philanthropy, “Strengthening Grantees: Foundation and Nonprofit Perspectives”⁹. While both reports provide substantial information on the state of capacity building in the nonprofit sector from leaders across the country, neither focuses specifically on the unique needs of museums.

In conclusion, the secondary literature has provided inadequate coverage of the state of capacity building across the museum sector. The three components of the Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment of Museum Capacity-Building Programs study are expected to provide great value to the field, as it will focus on small to medium-sized museums across all disciplines, regions, place types, and institutional size. The specific value and purpose of this data are described in Section A.2 below.

A.2. Purposes and Uses of the Data

The purpose of this project is to provide resources including research and analysis, best practices, and models for the larger benefit of the museum field. This project will address the need, as identified by IMLS leadership based on its experience with

⁵ <https://www.aam-us.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Wallace-Foundation-Annotated-Bibliography.pdf>

⁶ <https://museumnotes.blogspot.com/2015/08/building-capacity-to-have-capacity.html>

⁷ <https://www.utahmuseums.org/news/230233/Building-Capacity.htm>

⁸ <https://www.geofunders.org/resources/strengthening-nonprofit-capacity-710>

⁹ http://cep.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Strengthening_Grantees_FNL_forwebsite.pdf?utm_referrer=https%3A%2F%2Fcep.org%2Fportfolio%2Fstrengthening-grantees-foundation-and-nonprofit-perspectives%2F

past grant recipients, and as part of its organizational four-year strategic plan, to determine how IMLS and other funders may most effectively invest in today's rapidly changing museum sector through capacity-building offerings. Additionally, the study will be of general interest to the museum field since capacity-building experiences of small and medium museums have not yet been the topic of a study.

Data will be collected from museums primarily through an opinion survey supplemented with information gathered via interviews and virtual focus groups. As mentioned above, no other report has surveyed museums to collect their perceptions of the state of capacity building in the museum sector. As such, the proposed survey and mixed methods data collection provide an opportunity to collect, analyze, and report on the opinions of various types of museum leaders and funders of non-profit capacity building. This mixed method design engages different stakeholder groups to cross-validate results.

Goals for data collection include identifying perceptions of:

- 1) Existing **capacity-building opportunities** for museums;
- 2) Current **participation** of the museum sector in capacity-building funding and services;
- 3) How **funds and services** are being utilized;
- 4) **Motivations and barriers** that drive participation in capacity building;
- 5) A nuanced understanding of capacity-building participants' **ability to adopt, sustain, and evaluate** their capacity-building initiatives; and
- 6) **Growth opportunity** areas where the sector's organizational strengthening needs are not being met.

PPG will collect qualitative and quantitative data to fully appreciate each of these areas from museum leaders, capacity-building providers, and funders through the following provisional methods:

- **Museum Survey:** PPG will administer a field-wide survey to a sample of 3,000 museum leadership and staff, aimed at understanding which types of museums do and do not participate in capacity building (Goals 1 and 2), types of capacity-building initiatives in which participants have engaged (Goal 2 and 3), museums' perceived organizational strengths and challenges (Goal 4), perceived drivers and barriers to participation (Goal 4), perceived levels of success in adopting and sustaining increased capacity (Goal 5), and gaps in capacity-building service offerings (Goal 6). Although a variety of analyses will be conducted, the primary dependent variables for survey analysis include museum region, income, museum type, and place types (e.g., rural, suburban, city). (See Appendix B for survey instrument, and Part B for full survey methodology.)

The survey is mainly an “opinion survey” including a needs assessment, which also involves respondents’ subjective opinions about previous capacity-building strategies. The term “perceived” is used merely to underscore that the Likert scale responses provided by respondents represent a set of perceptions rather than objective reality. The perceptions, of course, have great value. The analyses will be framed in this way as well.

- **Interviews:** PPG will conduct up to 20 individual interviews with individuals at foundations and other funders providing financial support and/or services to non-profit organizations for capacity building to review survey findings. These interviews will target individuals most knowledgeable about capacity building and will include a diversity of funder and provider types (e.g., funders at the fore of providing cohort-based and individual organization capacity-building initiative support, independent consultants and firms, both art and culture-specific specialists and those serving the entire nonprofit sector, and a number of museum practitioners familiar with capacity-building programs) (Goal 1). Interviews will gather specific data on grantmaking strategies, capacity support offered, structures of engagement, and specific capacities addressed, as well as the process by which museums are invited to, or prevented from, participating in capacity-building offerings (Goals 1, 3, 4, 5 and 6). These interviews provide an opportunity to vet the findings from the survey and to obtain more detailed qualitative information from experts in the field to inform the virtual focus groups and final report. (See Appendix A for guiding questions.)
- **Virtual Focus Groups with Museum Leadership and Staff:** PPG will conduct two virtual focus groups with museum leadership and staff from a variety of museum budget sizes and types to vet the hypotheses and findings to date. While the individual interviews will primarily focus on foundations and other funders, the focus groups provide an opportunity to learn from museum staff members as a separate stakeholder group within the museum landscape. Each focus group session will be 90 minutes in length and will consist of at most 10 individuals. Based on PPG’s extensive experience with qualitative research, two focus groups will provide sufficient data to vet findings from the survey and to gather more detail about the capacity-building challenges that museum staff face, especially those from small and medium-sized museums. Guiding questions for focus groups will be informed by the findings developed from prior data analysis but will aim to understand museum leadership and staff perspectives on how, if at all, the findings resonate with their experiences, and ways in which the findings might be amended to gain a more nuanced understanding of participants’ experiences with capacity building (Goals 4, 5, and 6).

IMLS has proposed a combined approach with the broad survey and in-depth interviews and focus groups to gather as many perspectives on the range of approaches to capacity building as possible. Since the museum sector is very

heterogeneous with organizations representing different disciplines such as art, history, science, as well as children's museums, zoos, nature centers, botanic gardens, and historic house museums, all of different sizes, the broad survey would offer IMLS an opportunity to gather the feedback from many vs. reaching out only to a much smaller universe.

As noted above, the survey will focus on a sample of 3,000 small- and medium-sized museums, for whom capacity building may be an important but less common activity or something that is compromised due to lack of funding or resources. IMLS and PPG feel that the survey is an important initial information collection to provide a focus for the subsequent interviews and focus groups.

The focus groups permit a closer examination of the survey findings by representatives of the museum field, who will be able to see their results benchmarked to those of other non-profit sectors based on previous work by the cooperator, PPG.

The interviews are a separate but related effort, engaging a different audience who can provide an additional point of view on the issue of museum capacity building, providing a "test bed" for the ideas that emerge from the survey findings and the focus groups. Individuals who represent foundations or who fund non-profit capacity-building efforts will be key participants in the interviews. They will be able to contextualize the survey findings within the larger context of non-profit capacity building. As such, these funders will be able to comment on the similarities as well as the unique aspects of the museum field *vis à vis* capacity building. In short, they will be able to see how capacity building in other non-profit sectors might be able to "translate" to the museum sector.

We feel this combined outreach juxtaposing perspectives from various stakeholders will create more credibility for the project findings and make them more relatable for the smaller institutions.

PPG's final report will present the project findings and PPG's museum capacity-building recommendations. IMLS and PPG have engaged with Subject Matter Expert (SME) Committee in capacity building and a Steering Committee representing museum sector leadership (museums, associations, etc.) to ensure the data collection and final product take into account best practices and current trends in effective capacity building and the professional perspective and expertise of key stakeholders. PPG will meet with the Steering Committee and SME Committee to: 1) review all data analysis findings prior to developing the recommendations report, and 2) discuss the first report draft to ensure PPG's recommendations have been field-tested prior to finalization. (See Section A.8.2. for more information, such as Steering Committee affiliations.)

The planned final report will include the following sections: executive summary; introduction; methodology; summary of findings; recommendations; and appendices. Analyses of the survey data will be included in the appendices of the written report. These findings may be shared and available for future use through a

combination of conference presentations, briefing papers and publications, blogs, webinars, website postings, and firm newsletters. The museum field, IMLS, and other funders may draw from this project to inform future capacity-building offerings that will, in turn, improve museum practices and increase organizational capacity.

Implementation of this project's recommendations will position IMLS and its stakeholders and cooperators to strengthen practices across two current signature programs, MAP and CAP, which can result in increasing their penetration, perceived value and distinctiveness, accessibility to diverse organizations, new outreach strategies, program administration optimization techniques and assessment techniques on museums and their communities. Funders, including IMLS, may also draw from data generated by this project to inform future capacity-building offerings that will, in turn, improve museum practices and increase community impact. Project findings related to the gaps, unmet needs, and current landscape of the museum sector will be broadly useful to organizations involved directly in museum work, as well as other informal-learning and public-serving organizations seeking to build their capacity.

A.3. Use of Improved Information Technology

The PPG survey data will be collected online via SoGoSurvey. The survey instrument includes instructions, the questionnaire, and contact information in the event a respondent requires assistance. Key terms are defined in the survey instructions, as well as throughout the survey, as needed. (See Appendix B for the survey instrument.)

The survey is designed to minimize respondent burden, improve timeliness and quality of the data, and require minimal follow-up for data problems. The questionnaire uses skip logic, a feature that determines the next question based on a respondent's answer to the current question, to reduce respondent burden and increase data reliability. No survey items are required items. The introduction to the "Organizational Capacity Assessment" section instructs respondents to skip survey items if they do not have enough information or if the item is "not applicable." Most survey items have fixed-choice response options, which also reduces burden on respondents. Specifically:

- Respondents will make 107 fixed choices (i.e., respondent will click a radio button or check a box);
- Ten items include an option for "Other" with space for additional detail;
- Four items ask respondents to type in numbers (e.g., number of staff and number of annual visitors); and
- Four items ask for written responses; one is short-answer (i.e., a few words or phrase), and the other three are open-ended items that permit longer responses (i.e., a few sentences).

The survey will be hosted on SoGoSurvey, which will send individual links by email with unique identifiers provided to each respondent in order to permit tracking for follow-up on non-responses or data entry questions. PPG will not share any identifying information contained in responses; data will only be shared anonymously with IMLS and reported broadly without names or attributions.

The research data analyses and report will be shared in digital format. Any blogs, webinars, or website postings will be published on the TCC website (tccgrp.com) and/or on TCC/PPG and social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, etc.), and open source options accessible via standard web browsers. Conference presentations will be made available publicly online. Firm newsletters will be distributed to the TCC/PPG mailing list, which consists of clients, peers, and other firm contacts.

A.4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

As noted in the section above, to the best of IMLS's and PPG's knowledge, no similar study examining capacity-building effectiveness in the museum sector has been conducted in the past. While the Official Museum Directory and the American Alliance of Museums (AAM) collect contact and background information quarterly from museums across the United States, no other identity has surveyed this particular population about the state of capacity building in the museum sector. Where possible, PPG will leverage existing data to minimize the burden on respondents and limit duplication of efforts.

Individual funders, such as IMLS, have evaluated the effectiveness of their own unique programs to varying degrees, but no formal data collection activities have explored such topics as the:

- Market profile and penetration of capacity building in the museum sector
- Drivers of participation
- Critical field-wide needs not being met
- Perceived values of capacity-building offerings
- Adoption and sustainability of capacity-building interventions

Two other IMLS-funded studies in the recent past surveyed and/or interviewed museum staff members but did not include the capacity-building topics that are the focus of the proposed Market Analysis and Opportunity Assessment of Museum Capacity-building Programs. IMLS' 2014 Heritage Health Information Survey (HHIS), received responses from 1,714 institutional respondents. The HHIS scope was limited to understanding the extent of collecting institutions' commitment to collections preservation at institutions including museums, historical societies, and others. The second study, initiated in 2016 by the Reinvestment Fund and the University of Pennsylvania's Social Impact of the Arts Project, included interviews

and surveys about how museums and libraries address community challenges but did not address topics about capacity building in museums.

A.5. Method Used to Minimize Burden on Small Businesses

This survey will be administered to small-and medium-sized museums (defined as those with incomes of \$4,999,999 or less). To minimize the burden on these museums, PPG has included only the instructions and survey items essential for this inquiry. PPG has also ensured the survey will be technologically accessible by using the web-based SoGoSurvey platform, which does not require specific browsers or software for survey completion.

A.6. Frequency of Data Collection

This survey will only be administered once.

A.7. Special Circumstances of Data Collection

No special circumstances require the collection to be conducted in a manner inconsistent with the guidelines in 5 CFR 1320.6.

A.8. Consultation and Feedback from Outside the Agency

A.8.1. Public comments solicited through the *Federal Register*
IMLS published a notice in the *Federal Register* with a 60-day public comment period to announce this proposed information collection on February 1, 2019 (FR 84 No 22; page 1239). No comments were received.

The 30-day Federal Register notice was published on March 4, 2020 (FR 85 No. 43; pages 12810-12811).

A.8.2. Consultants outside the Agency

The Steering Committee for this project includes representatives from Kidspace Children's Museum (Pasadena, CA), National Museum of African American History & Culture (Washington, DC), John. F. Kennedy University Museum Studies (Pleasant Hill, CA), Kentucky Science Center (Louisville, KY), Coalition of State Museum Associations (Fort Worth, TX), Ohio History Connection (Columbus, OH), Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum (Wausau, WI), and COSI's Center for Research and Evaluation (Columbus, OH).

The SME Committee for this project includes representatives from YMCA USA, Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, and the UJA-Federation of New York.

A.9. Provision of Payments or Gifts to Respondents

There are no payments or gifts to respondents.

A.10. Assurance of Confidentiality

PPG will limit the scope of the personally identifiable information (PII) collected (e.g., the title of the individual responding on behalf of the museum), and it will be kept secure during data collection, securely stored, and accessed only by authorized PPG staff and the data analysis contractor. Data will be shared anonymously with IMLS, and no personal data will be published (i.e., included in the final report) unless expressly approved by the respondent. Assurances of security of PII will be conveyed at the beginning of the survey instrument.

PPG's final report may include a list of participating organizations as an appendix. The proposed survey will include a concluding question to permit respondents to opt in for inclusion in such a list.

A.11. Sensitive Questions

Question sensitivity was considered when developing the survey instrument. Because the entirety of the survey addresses only organizational background questions, organizational engagement with capacity building, and individuals' professional experiences with capacity building, we do not anticipate that respondents will deem any questions as sensitive. Should individuals elect not to respond to a survey item, they will have the ability to skip to the next survey item.

A.12. Estimated Response Burden

Table 1. Estimated Survey Response Burden for Each Type of Respondent

Participant group	Sample	Expected # of Respondents	Hours per Response	Total Hours	Cost per Group ⁽⁴⁾
Survey Respondents	3,000	1,050 ⁽¹⁾	0.333 hrs.	~350 hrs.	\$9,754.50
Interviewees	22	20 ⁽²⁾	1 hr.	20 hrs.	\$557.40
Virtual Focus Group Participants	20	14 ⁽³⁾	1.5 hrs.	21 hrs.	\$585.27
TOTAL	3,042	1,084		391	\$10,897.17

Notes:

(1) Survey response rate goal is 35%. See Part B.1.2.

(2) Because of IMLS's and PPG's reputations in the museum and capacity-building sectors, and because PPG consultants may adjust their schedules to meet the needs of interviewees, we anticipate only 2 people will decline or be unavailable.

(3) Because focus groups are not one-on-one, but require a group of individuals to be available at one time, we anticipate 6 people will decline or be unavailable for focus groups.

(4) Cost is based on average of Museum and Library Professionals of \$27.87/hour

A.13. Estimates of Cost

Staff time: As shown in Table 1, based on the average salary for museum and library professionals of \$27.87 per hour and the estimated response rates, the value of the expected 1,084 participants' ~391 hours' time is \$10,897.17.

Equipment, software or services: This survey does not require respondents to purchase equipment, software, or services beyond those normally used in museums or as part of customary and usual business.

Record keeping or reporting costs: There are no record keeping or reporting costs to the survey respondents.

A.14. Annualized Cost to the Federal Government

The total cost to the federal government is \$219,829, including a cooperative agreement with PPG in the amount of \$182,975 and approximately 472 hours of labor by federal government staff equaling approximately \$36,854 in salaries.

A.15. Reasons for Changes in Response Burden and Costs

Not applicable.

A.16. Data Collection Schedule

Table 2 summarizes the proposed study timeline. Activity starts are shown as the maximum number of days after OMB approval along with the expected month(s) in which the activities will commence. (See Appendix C for sample communications.)

Table 2. Proposed Study Timeline

Activities	Activity Start (days after OMB approval)	Estimated Activity Duration
Museum Opinion Survey	Within 30 days of OMB approval	1 month
Data analysis of survey results	Within 60 days of OMB approval	1 month

Interim report of Museum Survey findings for Steering Committee and SMEs	Within 75 days of OMB approval	1 day
Interviews	Within 80 days of OMB approval	2 weeks
Virtual Focus Groups	Within 80 days of OMB approval	2 weeks
Preparation of draft report to IMLS of Survey, Interview and Focus Group Findings	100-120 days after OMB approval	3 weeks
Final report to IMLS	121-151 days after OMB approval	3 weeks

A.17. Approval for Not Displaying the Expiration Date for OMB Approval

No exemption from the requirements to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection is being requested for the PPG data collection. The OMB approval number and expiration date will be displayed at the top of the web survey instrument.

A.18. Exceptions to the Certification Statement

No exceptions to the certification statement identified in Item 19, "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions," apply to the PPG Survey.