

A. Justification: Notice of Funding Opportunity: IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries, OMB Control Number 3137-XXXX

1. Necessity of the Information Collection

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) requests a new clearance for the IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries grant program for its grant program processes under the Paperwork Reduction Act. The information collections in this package include one Notice of Funding Opportunity and instructions necessary to apply for IMLS support as part of the agency's CARES Act grant programs.

Background:

Application Notices of Funding Opportunities: IMLS uses an iterative review process for each set of Notices of Funding Opportunities in every fiscal year. The process is defined in IMLS's *Grants Administration Manual*, and it is designed to ensure that key stakeholders and agency officials review and authorize proposed Notices of Funding Opportunities. In FY 2007, text common to all of IMLS grant program applications was rewritten to provide consistent information and language across all these program documents. Beginning in FY2013, IMLS complied with the Plain Writing Act of 2010 to provide "clear government communication that the public can understand and use." We at the Institute of Museum and Library Services are committed to writing new documents in plain language, using the [Federal Plain Language Guidelines](#).

IMLS recognizes the challenges facing museums and libraries at this time, including the adaptations and adjustments that will be necessary to rebuild staffing, reopen facilities, and address the needs of communities affected by the impact of a global crisis.

The goal of this grant program is to support the role of museums and libraries in responding to the coronavirus pandemic in ways that meet the immediate and future COVID-19 needs of the communities and audiences they serve.

The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Pub. L. 116-136 [March 27, 2020]) has provided funds to the Institute of Museum and Library Services "to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus...to expand digital network access, purchase internet accessible devices, and provide technical support services" for the benefit of communities impacted by the public health emergency.

The IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries grant program invites project proposals that focus on preserving jobs, training staff, addressing the digital divide, planning for reopening, and providing technical support and capacity building for digital inclusion and engagement while prioritizing services for high-need communities. We encourage efforts to develop programs, tools, models, partnerships, and other resources that will address immediate concerns and have the potential to inspire and benefit museums and libraries throughout the nation.

2. Purposes and Uses of the Data

The information collected by IMLS is used by the agency to carry out its grant programs. The information is used by IMLS staff to validate applicant eligibility, identify and assign peer reviewers, manage grant competitions, award discretionary and formula-based grants, and administer and monitor its grants. It is also used by the agency for strategic planning, performance analysis, and to provide information to the Administration and to Congress. Data elements subject to FOIA also provide information about IMLS's grant applications and programs to individuals outside the agency,

and may be used by applicants to validate their project ideas or application strategies, to follow trends in their fields, and to identify effective practice that can be widely adapted to improve the quality of museum and library services in the United States. IMLS intends to make final grant reports available via its website and so informs grantees.

3. Use of Information Technology

IMLS is committed to the use of improved information technology to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its programs, while reducing burden on potential applicants. Applicants can download the IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries Notice of Funding Opportunity, and application instructions online. IMLS requires all applicants to apply for IMLS awards online through Grants.gov.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

All IMLS grant application Notices of Funding Opportunities and publications are annually reviewed through an internal clearance process, which requires review by several different offices within the agency, including the program offices, the Office of General Counsel, and the Office of Grants Policy and Management. This annual review process protects against duplication.

5. Method Used to Minimize Burden on Small Businesses

Participation is entirely voluntary. No small businesses are impacted, but some applicants for IMLS funding are small non-profit organizations. Every effort has been made to streamline processes and instructions and to simplify the application and reporting processes. The agency's internal clearance process ensures that no undue burden is placed on any applicant for IMLS funding.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

This collection of information is essential to IMLS in meeting its statutory mission to award Federal financial assistance under the Museum and Library Act (20 U.S.C. Section 9101 et seq.), to identify needs and trends in museum, library, and information services, and to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus under the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act (Pub. L. 116-136 [March 27, 2020]).

7. Special Circumstances

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

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

IMLS uses several different mechanisms to consult with persons outside the agency. Contact information for program officers is widely distributed and easily accessible from the IMLS website, and grantees and potential applicants are encouraged to communicate frequently with these experts. In addition, program officers convene nationwide conference calls and webinars to answer questions and take input. IMLS program staff also travel to national, regional, and local meetings of potential applicants to discuss program requirements. Finally, agency staff consults informally with its communities throughout the year, including regular meetings with the Chiefs of State Library Administrative Agencies, semiannual information meetings hosted for representatives of key professional associations, and IMLS convenings for other purposes.

During the grant application review process, outside experts are asked to review applications and

discuss the agency's forms, instructions, and process. These experts are consulted by IMLS staff regarding the clarity and value of the Notices of Funding Opportunities and informally comment on the burden of response required by applicants.

IMLS notes and evaluates suggestions for revising Notices of Funding Opportunities and reporting forms received from applicants responding to the invitation for comments found in the burden statement contained in each information collection. Efforts are continually made to shorten and simplify application instructions and forms in response to suggestions made by respondents.

9. Payments or Gifts to Respondents

No payments or gifts are provided to any of the respondents.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

No assurance of confidentiality is provided. Grant files are subject to FOIA requests and are handled on a case-by-case basis. IMLS intends to make final grant reports available via its website and so informs grantees.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

There are no questions of a sensitive nature.

12. Estimate of Hour Burden to Respondents

The estimated number of respondents is 300. This number was estimated based on an assessment of the number of applicants for IMLS grants in FY 2020, the most recent year for which data are available. The number of annual burden hours is estimated to be 13,500, based on estimates of the average number of hours an applicant will need to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the narrative components of the application.

13. Estimate of Cost Burden to Respondents

The estimated cost to applicants is \$377,190.00. The average cost per hour is based on \$27.94, the Bureau of Labor Statistics average mean hourly wage of librarians and museum curators. The estimated burden hour cost per application is 45 hours for the IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries (45 hours x \$27.94).

Note: The cost for completion of forms associated with applications is accounted for in the ICR for clearance for the general grant program application and post-award report form clearance.

The two cost components for total capital/start-up and operation/maintenance/purchase of services are not applicable.

14. Estimate of Costs to Federal Government

The annualized cost to IMLS is estimated at \$15,684.36. The agency is estimated to receive 300 total applications. Approximately 348 hours (varies from 1 to 3.5/hour average time to process one complete application) are spent by IMLS staff reviewing and processing each response at an average wage of \$45.07.

15. Explanation of Change in Burden

This is a new submission. There are no program changes or cost adjustments.

16. Statistical Usage

Not applicable.

17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

Not applicable. The expiration date will be displayed.

18. Exception to Certification Statement

No exceptions to the certification statement apply to the IMLS CARES Act Grants for Museums and Libraries.