

A. Justification: IMLS Library and Museum Reviewer Forms, OMB Control Number 3137-0099

1. Necessity of the Information Collection

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) requests a renewal clearance for the online IMLS Library and Museum Reviewer Forms for its identification of subject-matter experts to serve as peer reviewers under the Paperwork Reduction Act. The current clearance expires June 30, 2021. The information collections in this package include instructions necessary to apply for engagement with IMLS as part of the agency's grant review and technical assistance programs.

Background:

All proposals submitted for IMLS discretionary awards are reviewed by library and museum professionals who know the needs of communities, can share promising practices, and are versed in the issues and concerns of museums and libraries today. Peer reviewers dedicate their time and expertise to advance the highest professional practices in the field. The IMLS review process is respected, and the success of our grant programs is largely due to the expertise of our reviewers. These reviewer forms, accessed through the IMLS website, allow library and museum professionals to indicate their interest in being considered for selection as IMLS peer reviewers and to share information about their professional backgrounds, experience, and expertise as well as their basic professional contact information. There are two forms, one for library professionals and one for museum professionals.

2. Purposes and Uses of the Data

The information collected by IMLS is used by the agency to carry out its grant and technical assistance programs. The information is used by IMLS staff to identify qualified subject-matter experts to serve as peer reviewers and to make appropriate assignments to review groups for its discretionary grant programs. Every effort is made to ensure that peer reviewers represent the range of the nation's museum and library types (e.g., organization size, discipline, geographic location), as well as diversity in educational backgrounds, professional experience, and subject-matter expertise.

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 reviewer forms online. Detailed information will be available at <https://www.imls.gov/grants/peer-review>.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

All IMLS externally facing documents 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. IMLS complies with the Plain Writing Act of 2010 to provide "clear government communication that the public can understand and use." We are committed to writing new documents in plain language, using the [Federal Plain Language Guidelines](#).

5. Method Used to Minimize Burden on Small Businesses

Participation is entirely voluntary. No small businesses are impacted, but some applicants for IMLS

peer reviewer assignments are from small non-profit organizations. Every effort has been made to streamline processes and instructions and to simplify applying to serve as a peer reviewer.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Data Collection

These collections of information are 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.*), and its obligation to identify needs and trends in museum, library, and information services. Our funding programs and thus our need for qualified peer reviewers are on an annual cycle, so it is necessary to collect current information on an annual basis.

7. Special Circumstances

None of the listed conditions applies.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

The 60-day notice for the 2022-2024 IMLS Library and Museum Reviewer Forms (3137-0099) was published in the Federal Register January 8, 2021 (86 FR 1538). A 30-day notice requesting comment for the generic clearances was published in the Federal Register May 3, 2021 (86 FR 23436).

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, potential grant applicants, and potential reviewer applicants are encouraged to communicate with these experts. In addition, program officers convene nationwide conference calls to answer questions and take input about grant-making and reviewing processes. IMLS program staff also travel, when possible, to national, regional, and local meetings of potential applicants to discuss program features and 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, the level of burden on potential applicants, and the peer review process. It is this group of experts that these forms are designed to solicit.

IMLS notes and evaluates all suggestions made in response 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 request 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 1,778. This number was estimated based on an assessment of the number of peer reviewer applicants in previous years using the two forms. The number of annual burden hours is estimated to be 889, based on estimates of the average number of 30 minutes that an applicant will need to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather, and maintain the data needed, and complete and review the components of the forms.

13. Estimate of Cost Burden to Respondents

The estimated cost to applicants is \$26,510.96. The cost per hour is based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics average mean hourly wage of \$30.56 for library staff and \$29.64 for museum staff. The estimated burden hour cost per application is 30 minutes.

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 total cost to the federal government is \$77,503.02 for the two forms.

15. Explanation of Change in Burden

Slightly increased costs result from increases in relevant average pay rates.

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

Not applicable.