

Justification for Change

3137-0115

The Social Well-Being Impact (SWI) of Libraries and Museums Study

IMLS is requesting a change to a previously approved clearance in order to update the survey methodology and sampling processes. This updated information collection clearance is requesting the same expiration date of 06/33/2022.

Request abstract:

The information collection in this package includes the surveys and instructions to conduct a meta evaluation of the IMLS Social Well-being Initiative (SWI) of Libraries and Museums Study. This is a request for approval of a non-substantive change that consists of refinements to the local case study selection now that the project has begun.

Justification for the Change

This is a request to modify the case study selection criteria outlined in section B.2 of the original application. The initial criteria stipulated that we would select 24 case study counties based on the following criteria:

1. equal distribution between urban, suburban and micropolitan counties;
2. the county has library/museum presence/usage score in the top quintile among counties within the same geographic scale (urban, suburban, or micropolitan); and
3. the county had an elevated level of at least one measure of social wellbeing – that is, a social wellbeing index score in the top quintile of all counties within the same geographic scale.

This a request to adjust these criteria by removing the third condition. We believe this adjustment will strengthen the overall study for the following reasons:

1. Using these criteria resulted in a sampling frame for library case study counties that was far too narrow. In conversations with the Subject Matter Expert group, they expressed substantial concern that adopting these criteria had unduly biased the sampling frame in a way that resulted in a set of counties that did not represent a diverse range of local populations, or geographies, which would limit the utility of the findings for the broader field.
2. Removing the third condition also includes far more areas of the country in the sampling frame for the case studies. The analyses of the social wellbeing reveal discernable geographic patterns where different dimensions of wellbeing are substantially higher than others.
3. Removing the third condition provides an opportunity to examine how counties with well-developed museum and library sectors operate in different contexts – those with

elevated levels of social wellbeing, those in the middle, and those located in more challenging settings.

4. By including a broader range of counties to include those with elevated and depressed levels of wellbeing will provide more broadly applicable findings for museums and libraries across the country that are located in all types of counties.

This adjustment to the case study selection criteria will result in no substantive change in the burden of participation for case study counties. This adjustment only adjusts the process for selecting them.