Memorandum to OMB: Justification for Nonsubstantive Change to the FY2024 State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) Survey (OMB #3137-0072)

Background

The State Library Administrative Agency (SLAA) Survey is a universe survey of all 51 SLAAs, from each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia (DC). The chief officer of each SLAA designates a staff person as the key holder, who has primary responsibility for completing the survey, although additional staff may assist in its completion. In many states, the key holder is the State Data Coordinator for the Public Libraries in the United States Survey (PLS). The SLAA survey is completed biennially on the internet via a computer self-administered questionnaire. The SLAA data allow for the collection and analyses of high-quality and timely policy-relevant data on the status of state library agencies that enable an ongoing evaluation of trend comparisons.

FY2024 Nonsubstantive Changes

OMB approved the FY2022-FY2024 SLAA survey collection materials in August 2022. After a successful FY2022 collection period, IMLS started preparing for the FY2024 cycle. In spring 2024, IMLS convened a Technical Review Panel (TRP) which consisted of key holders, chief officers, State Data Coordinators and other members of the Library Statistics Working Group (LSWG). The TRP met three times to review the prior (FY2022) survey materials and assess the value of potential changes for the upcoming (FY2024) survey collection, set to open in January 2025. IMLS and the survey vendor presented results from the TRP sessions to the LSWG in Summer 2024.

This memo describes minor changes to the previously approved SLAA survey data elements and data collection instructions based on recommendations from the TRP and LSWG meetings. Recommendations focus on aligning the SLAA survey with approved changes made to the Public Libraries Survey (PLS) and improving the quality and clarity of the data elements and collection instructions. Recommendations do not change the burden, nature, or intent of the information collection.

The changes to the data collection instrument and supporting materials for which IMLS requests approval are summarized below:

- Remove six data elements from the survey instrument (see **Table 1**).
- Add six data elements and revise six data elements in the survey instrument (See **Table 2**).
- Revise the SLAA Web-Based Data Collection Tool User's Guide and Instructions to match changes to the instruments and improve the clarity of instructions (**Table 3**).
- Merge the SLAA Web-Based Data Collection Tool User's Guide and Instructions into one document to eliminate redundancies and ease burden for respondents.

Included in this submission are the following components that help illustrate these changes:
  Appendix A – SLAA Survey FY 2024 Instrument (tracked changes version)
  Appendix B – SLAA Survey FY 2024 Instrument (clean version)
  Appendix C – SLAA Survey Web-Based Data Collection Tool User's Guide and Instructions (tracked changes version)
  Appendix D – SLAA Survey Web-Based Data Collection Tool User's Guide and Instructions (clean version)

Table 1: Data elements proposed for removal for the FY2024 SLAA Survey

Data Element	Description	Justification
D_SV-110	COVID-related item	Change aligns the SLAA with changes made to the PLS by removing COVID items.
D_SV-110.1	COVID-related item	Change aligns the SLAA with changes made to the PLS by removing COVID items.
E-030	Reporting "outside business hours" for main SLAA outlet (Monday – Friday after 5:00 pm)	The TRP recommended this removal to reduce respondent burden of low priority data, and being open outside of business hours is not common, particularly for state government employees.
E-040	Reporting "outside business hours" for main SLAA outlet (Saturday and Sunday)	The TRP recommended this removal to reduce respondent burden of low priority data, and being open outside of business hours is not common, particularly for state government employees.
M-084	Item related to accessing digital materials from Digital Public Library of America (DPLA) was removed	The LSWG recommended this removal to reduce respondent burden because the SLAA does not fund or facilitate access to these materials, and the information on which SLAAs participate in the DPLA programs is publicly available on DPLA's website (https://pro.dp.la/hubs/our-hubs)
M-160	Item about "statewide database licensing" expenditures	This data element is being replaced with K-M160_A-K-M160_C (see table 2) to align with changes made to the PLS.

Table 2: Data elements proposed for addition or revision for the FY2024 SLAA Data Collection

Data Element	Change to Data Element	Justification	Change to Data Collection Instructions
D_PA-060.1.1	**Revised** text to read: "Children (ages 0–5 years)	To align under-18 categories with the PLS; respond to stakeholder feedback	**Revised** age category
D_PA-060.1.2	**Revised** text to read: "Children (ages 6–11 years)	To align under-18 categories with the PLS; respond to stakeholder feedback	**Revised** age category
D_PA-060.1.3	**Revised** text to read: "Young adults (ages 12–18 years)	To align under-18 categories with the PLS; respond to stakeholder feedback	**Revised** age category
E-020	**Revised** to only enter the "total hours that the	TRP members decided that there is not a need to break	N/A

Data Element	Change to Data Element	Justification	Change to Data Collection Instructions
	main or central SLAA outlet is open in a typical week..." **Included** a "not applicable" option	down hours further beyond total hours. The use of "not applicable" is necessary because some states do not have a central or main SLAA outlet, or do not provide direct services to the public or other government agencies.	
M-086	**Added** *3D printing* to the data element list	Several states included 3D printing in their write-in data in the prior administration.	**Added** a definition of 3D printing.
M-087	**Added** *Technology kits* to the data elements list	Several states included *technology kits* in their write-in data in the prior administration.	**Added** a definition for technology kits
M-085.1	**Revised** to include "recent or" to "emerging technologies." The full item now reads: "Other recent or emerging technologies or programs"	Revised to encompass a wider array of technologies and adding definition of "other recent emerging technologies or programs" for clarity to and to strengthen quality of write-in data.	**Added** a definition of "other recent or emerging technologies or programs" to the instructions.
K-M160_A	**Added** a section header to the beginning of Part K: Expenditures: "Expenditures for statewide digital resources" **Add** "(a) Research databases" to the data element list	To better align to PLS and to increase data quality by better defining where expenditures for digital resources are counted.	**Added** a definition of "research databases" to the instructions.
K-M160_B	**Added** "(b) Online learning platforms" to the data element list	To better align to PLS and to increase data quality by better defining where expenditures for digital resources are counted.	**Added** a definition of "online learning platforms" to the instructions.

Data Element	Change to Data Element	Justification	Change to Data Collection Instructions
K-M160_C	**Added** "(c) Total Expenditures for statewide research databases and online learning platforms" to the data element list	Allowed for valid skips of A and B for respondents to provide totals if the SLAA does not itemize these expenses.	**Added** a definition "If your state does not itemize the expenditures for research databases and online learning platforms, please enter the total amount for these expenditures in K-M160_C, by source."
M-170-230	**Revised** the header of the data element by adding the term "statewide research databases or online learning platforms" **Revised** survey item numbers referenced to reflect a reorganization in where statewide digital resources are reported	Need to update reference to statewide digital resources given their change in location to Part K.	**Revised** the term "statewide digital databases" to "statewide research databases or online learning platforms" and updated the reference in the instructions to where expenditures for statewide digital resources are reported.
EST-TIME	**Added** "Prior to your submission of the FY 2024 SLAA Survey data, please estimate how much time it took you to complete this survey. Please report to the nearest hour. *When estimating the time it took to complete this survey, please include the time you spent planning, gathering information, and actively responding to the survey questions. This will help us more accurately understand the overall time commitment from your perspective.*"	Self-reporting of respondent time spent to complete the survey to better understand respondent burden.	N/A

Table 3: Revisions proposed for the FY2024 SLAA Data Collection Instructions

Data Element	Justification	Change to Data Collection Instructions
D_PA-110	TRP requested developing definition with examples to standardized understanding of the term "digital object preservation."	**Added** definition for digital object preservation
F-010-050	Responsive to data collection help desk inquiry to revise instructions to clarify which counts should be limited to physical units.	**Added** a new sentence at the end of the instructions.
F-050	Responsive to data collection help desk inquiry to revise instructions to add "tribal" to the list of government examples to be inclusive of all forms of government in the U.S.	**Added** the word "tribal" in the instructions
H-010	Responsive to data collection help desk inquiry to revise instructions to describe reporting in cases where a grant program has multiple recipients.	**Added** a sentence to the instructions about what to report for multi-recipient grants
M-081-087	TRP recommended providing a definition of the term "facilitate" in the instructions for clarity.	**Added** definition of "facilitate for this set of data items.