INSTITUTE of Museum and Library SERVICES

Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

Funding Opportunity Number: AAHC-FY26
Assistance Listing Number: 45.309

OMB Control No.: 3137-0095
Expiration date: 8/31/2027

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Before You Begin

If you believe you're a good candidate for this funding opportunity, review the application deadlines, and leave plenty of time to prepare.

Set up your SAM.gov (including Unique Entity Identifier) and Grants.gov registrations now. If you're already registered, check to be sure your registrations are active, and all information is up to date.

Register in SAM.gov (registration can take several weeks):

Your organization must have an active **SAM.gov** account and a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) before you apply.

See **Registration Requirements** and **Guidance for Required Registrations**.

Register in Grants.gov (registration can take several days):

You must have an active **Grants.gov registration**. You'll need an active SAM.gov account and a Login.gov account to register and access Grants.gov.

See **Registration Requirements** and **Guidance for Required Registrations**.

Apply by 11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time on March 13, 2026.

Bookmark these resources for important information:

- → **eCFR: 2 CFR Part 200 -- Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**
- → **General Terms and Conditions for IMLS Discretionary Awards**
- → **Museum Grants for African American History and Culture Program page (IMLS.gov)**

This NOFO has internal links to help you quickly find what you need. In Adobe Reader, you can go back to where you were by pressing Alt + Left Arrow (Windows) or Command + Left Arrow (Mac) on your keyboard.

Review the Opportunity

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1. Basic Information

Opportunity Overview

Federal Awarding Agency	Institute of Museum and Library Services
Funding Opportunity Title	Museum Grants for African American History and Culture
Announcement Type	Modification of FY2025 Notice of Funding Opportunity
Funding Opportunity Number	AAHC-FY26
Assistance Listing Number	45.309
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Application Deadlines	Submit through Grants.gov by 11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time on March 13, 2026.

Award Overview

Key Dates

Anticipated date of notification of award decisions	August 2026 (subject to the availability of funds and IMLS discretion)
Anticipated start dates for new awards	Projects must begin on September 1, 2026.
Anticipated period of performance	September 1, 2026 – August 31, 2029. Project activities may be carried out for one to three years

Funding Details

Total amount of funding IMLS expects to award through this announcement	$6,000,000
Expected performance indicators, targets, baseline data, and data collection	See **Performance Measures**.
Anticipated number of awards	35
Expected amount of individual awards **– Small Projects**	$5,000 - $100,000

Funding Details

Expected amount of individual awards – **Large Projects**	$100,001 - $500,000
Average amount of funding per award in previous years	$171,429

The funding in the above Award Overview is subject to the availability of funds and IMLS discretion. We are not bound by any estimates in this announcement.

Contingent upon the availability of funds, the quality of applications, and IMLS discretion, we may make additional awards from the pool of unfunded applications from this competition.

Executive Summary

The Museum Grants for African American History and Culture (AAHC) program builds the capacity of African American museums and supports the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums. The program supports projects that nurture museum professionals, build institutional capacity, and increase access to museum and archival collections at African American museums and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

The goals of this program are to:

- Build the capacity of African American museums and HBCUs to serve their communities; and
- Support the growth and development of a professional workforce at African American museums and HBCUs.

The primary audiences for this program are museums, museum service organizations, institutions of higher education (especially Historically Black

Colleges and Universities), and museum professionals. Secondary audiences include museum visitors and future museum professionals.

Eligibility is restricted to organizations that are:

- Located in the United States or any U.S. Territories or freely associated States; AND
- A unit of state, local or Tribal government or a private, nonprofit organization; AND
- A museum whose primary purpose is the presentation and interpretation of African American life, art, history, and/or culture; an organization or association related to African American museums; or a Historically Black College or University as defined by the **Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1132.**

Agency Contact Information

IMLS staff are available by phone and email to answer programmatic and administrative questions relating to this grant program. We also host webinars to introduce potential applicants to funding opportunities. For more information, **see our list of webinars and instructions for accessing them**.

2. Eligibility

Eligible Applicants

To be eligible for an award under the AAHC program, your organization must meet **all three** of the following eligibility criteria.

Your organization must be:

- ✓ a unit of State, local, or Tribal government; or
- ✓ a private, nonprofit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended (you will need to include proof of this if applicable to your organization. **See Conditionally Required Documents** for more information);

and:

Your organization must be located in:

- ✓ one of the 50 States of the United States of America,
- ✓ the District of Columbia,
- ✓ the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico,
- ✓ the U.S. Virgin Islands,
- ✓ Guam,
- ✓ American Samoa,
- ✓ the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands,
- ✓ the Republic of the Marshall Islands,
- ✓ the Federated States of Micronesia; or

- ✓ the Republic of Palau.

and:

Your organization must qualify as one of the following:

3(a) A museum whose primary purpose, as reflected in its mission, is African American life, art, history, and/or culture, encompassing: the period of slavery; the era of Reconstruction; the Harlem renaissance; the civil rights movement; or other periods associated with African American life, art, history, and culture; and:

- ✓ uses a professional staff;
- ✓ is organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational, cultural heritage, or aesthetic purposes;
- ✓ owns or uses tangible objects, including living collections;
- ✓ cares for these objects; and
- ✓ exhibits these objects to the general public on a regular basis through facilities that it owns or operates.

What types of institutions are included in the term "museum"?

If they otherwise meet these requirements, "museums" include, but are not limited to:

- Anthropology museums
- aquariums
- arboretums
- art museums
- botanical gardens
- children's/youth museums
- general museums (those having two or more significant disciplines)
- historic houses/sites
- history museums
- natural history museums
- nature centers
- planetariums
- science/technology centers
- specialized museums (limited to a single distinct subject), and
- zoological parks.

What does it mean to "use a professional staff"?

An institution uses a professional staff if it employs at least one staff member, or the full-time equivalent, whether paid or unpaid, primarily engaged in the acquisition, care, or exhibition to the public of objects owned or used by the institution.

What does it mean to "exhibit the objects to the general public"?

An institution exhibits objects to the general public if such exhibition is a primary purpose of the institution. An institution that exhibits objects to the general public for at least 120 days a year is deemed to exhibit objects to the general public on a regular basis.

An institution that does not have the exhibition of objects as a primary purpose and/or does not exhibit objects to the public for at least 120 days a year may be determined to be eligible as a museum under certain circumstances. **For more information, please see 2 C.F.R. § 3187.3 Definition of a museum.**

3(b) A public or private nonprofit agency that is responsible for the operation of a museum that meets the eligibility criteria in 1, 2, and 3(a), applying on behalf of the museum;

3(c) A museum service organization or association whose primary purpose, as reflected in its mission, is to support museums whose primary purpose, as reflected in their mission, is African American life, art, history, and/or culture; or

3(d) A historically black college or university, as defined by the **Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended, 20 U.S.C. § 1132.**

Native American Tribal organizations may apply if they otherwise meet the above eligibility requirements.

Eligibility of Museums Located within a Parent Organization

A museum located within a parent organization that is a State, local, or Tribal government or multipurpose nonprofit entity, such as a university, historical society, foundation, or cultural center, may apply on its own behalf if the museum:

- can independently fulfill all the eligibility requirements listed in the above three criteria;
- functions as a discrete unit within the parent organization;

- has its own fully segregated and itemized operating budget; and
- has the authority to make the application on its own.

When any of the last three conditions cannot be met, a museum may only apply through its parent organization.

Eligibility of Nonprofit Organization Affiliated with a Museum

We may determine that a nonprofit organization affiliated with a museum is eligible for this program if:

- its sole mission is to support the specified museum;
- it has the ability to administer the project; and
- it can ensure compliance with the terms of this Notice of Funding Opportunity and the applicable law, including the **IMLS Assurances and Certifications**.

We require that you provide an agreement from the museum that details the activities the applicant and museum will perform and binds the museum to the statements and assurances in the application.

Other Eligibility Information

Application Limits

→ Applications for renewal or supplementation of currently active IMLS awards are not eligible to compete with applications for new awards.

→ If eligible, you may submit multiple applications for support of separate and distinct projects under this announcement, and/or through other IMLS grant programs.

Partnerships and Collaborations

- Applications involving partnerships or collaborations are welcome.
- When two or more institutions or organizations work together on a project, one of them must meet all eligibility requirements, serve as the lead applicant, and administer the award on behalf of the other(s).
- The lead applicant must meet all eligibility requirements. If we fund the project, the lead applicant will be programmatically, fiscally, and legally responsible for the award.

Ineligible Applicants

- We will not review applications from ineligible applicants. We will notify you if your application will not be reviewed because your organization is determined to be ineligible.
- We will not make awards to ineligible applicants. To receive an IMLS award, your organization must be eligible and in compliance with **applicable IMLS, administrative and national policy requirements**.

Application Completeness and Deadlines

- Applicants must submit their materials by the deadlines indicated in the **Opportunity Overview.** We won't consider late applications for funding under this notice.
- If your request for federal funding as shown on the IMLS Budget Form, including all direct and indirect costs, is outside the applicable funding level range for your selected project type, we may reject your application from consideration for funding in this program.
- Your application must be complete, and your project and budget must adhere to the program's **guidelines** and **funding restrictions**.

Cost Share Requirements

about Cost Sharing in the Budget

For the AAHC program, requirements to provide cost share from non-federal sources differ according to the requested project type's funding level. Cost share is an eligibility criterion and is not considered in the review of applications.

Cost share is the portion of project costs that is not paid by IMLS funds. Common examples of cost share include cash outlays; contribution of property and services; and in-kind contributions, such as staff or volunteer time that support project activities.

Calculate any cost share you include in your project budget carefully. If you receive an award, you will be required to meet your cost share commitments.

Project Type	IMLS Award Amount	Cost Share Requirement
Small Project	$5,000–$100,000	No cost share required.
Large Project	$100,001–$500,000	At least 1:1 cost share from non-federal sources is required. ***Note**: If you do not include at least 1:1 cost share on your IMLS Budget Form, your application may be rejected from further consideration.*

3. Program Description

Agency Mission, Goals, and Objectives

The mission of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. Three agency-level goals, with two objectives each, guide our grantmaking.

Agency-Level Goal 1 **Champion Lifelong Learning**	**Objective 1.1** Advance shared knowledge and learning opportunities for all. **Objective 1.2** Support the training and professional development of the museum and library workforce.
Agency-Level Goal 2 **Strengthen Community Engagement**	**Objective 2.1** Promote broad public engagement. **Objective 2.2** Support community collaboration and foster civic discourse.
Agency-Level Goal 3	**Objective 3.1** Support collections care and management. **Objective 3.2**

Advance Collections Stewardship and Access	Promote access to museum and library collections.

The AAHC program supports the achievement of these agency-level goals to facilitate the delivery of significant results consistent with the IMLS federal authorizing legislation (**20 U.S.C. §9101** et seq.; in particular **§ 9173 (Museum services activities)** and **20 U.S.C. § 80r et seq. (National Museum of African American History and Culture)**, in particular **20 U.S.C. § 80r-5 (Educational and liaison programs).** Each award that we make through the AAHC Program will contribute meaningfully to the achievement of both program and agency-level goals.

AAHC Program Goals and Objectives

The AAHC program has two program goals and a set of objectives associated with each goal. You should align your proposed project with one of these three goals and one of the associated objectives, and clearly identify your choices in your **project Narrative**.

AAHC Program Goal 1

Build the capacity of African American museums and HBCUs to serve their communities.

Objective 1.1

Develop, enhance, or expand public programs, exhibitions, and/or school programs.

Objective 1.2

Strengthen museum operations by developing new or improved strategic plans, management practices or institutional policies.

Objective 1.3

Improve care and conservation of museum collections and archives and expand access to collections.

AAHC Program Goal 2

Support the growth and development of a professional workforce at African American museums and HBCUs.

Objective 2.1

Develop and implement internship, fellowship, and mentoring programs to support people entering the museum field.

Objective 2.2

Create learning and growth opportunities designed to build the knowledge, skills and abilities of museum staff and/or volunteers.

Search awards made through the AAHC program by year, award number, state, city, and/or keyword.

You can also **refer to samples of recently funded AAHC applications**.

Performance Measures

We use four performance measures as a basis for understanding how well the AAHC program is meeting its goals and how awardees are managing individual projects.

Effectiveness: The extent to which activities contribute to achieving the intended results of the AAHC program.

Efficiency: How well resources (e.g., funds, expertise, time) are used while generating maximum value for the primary audience

Quality: How well the activities meet the requirements and expectations of the primary audience

Timeliness: The extent to which each task/activity is completed within the timeframe proposed

You will need to provide a Performance Measurement Plan to describe how you will use these four performance measures to monitor and assess your performance in carrying out your project and meeting your selected **program goal and objective**.

Learn about creating a Performance Measurement Plan.

Funding Restrictions

Allowable and Unallowable Costs

You may use IMLS funds and cost share only for allowable costs as found in IMLS and Office of Management and Budget (OMB) government-wide cost-principles rules.

Please consult **2 C.F.R. part 200** and **2 C.F.R. part 3187** for additional guidance on allowable costs.

The following lists include some examples of generally allowable costs and unallowable costs, both for IMLS funds and for cost share under this announcement.

$ Allowable Costs

- ✓ personnel salaries, wages, and fringe benefits, including annual cost of living increases
- ✓ travel expenses for key project staff and consultants
- ✓ materials, supplies, software, and equipment related directly to project activities
- ✓ adaptive and/or assistive technologies and other resources and services to improve accessibility for persons with disabilities
- ✓ third-party costs
- ✓ design and publication costs
- ✓ program evaluation
- ✓ staff and volunteer training
- ✓ paid internships/fellowships
- ✓ stipends or honoraria for project advisors and participants
- ✓ indirect or overhead costs
- ✓ pre-award costs, at the discretion of and with prior written approval from the agency

Unallowable Costs

- ✘ general fundraising costs, such as development office staff or other staff time devoted to general fundraising
- ✘ contributions to endowments
- ✘ general operating support
- ✘ acquisition of collections
- ✘ general advertising or public relations costs designed solely for promotional activities other than those related to the specific project
- ✘ construction or renovation of facilities (generally, any activity involving the construction trades is not an allowable cost)
- ✘ social activities, receptions, or entertainment
- ✘ research projects.

You must **explain all proposed expenses in the Budget Justification**.

If you have questions about whether specific activities are allowable, **contact us for guidance.**

Costs for Third Parties

When a project requires the payment of federal funds to third parties (such as partners, consultants, collaborators, vendors, and/or service providers), it is your responsibility to determine whether you should characterize a third party as a subrecipient or a contractor and include that determination in your agreement with them.

IMLS grant funds may not be provided to any Federal agency serving as a third party.

Learn more:

2 C.F.R. § 200.1 for definitions of *contract, contractor, subaward,* and *subrecipient*;

2 C.F.R. § 200.331 (Subrecipient and contractor

Indirect Costs

You can choose to:

- use a rate not to exceed your current indirect cost rate already negotiated with a federal agency;
- use an indirect cost rate proposed to a federal agency for negotiation, but not yet finalized, as long as it is finalized by the time of the award;
- use a rate not to exceed 15 percent of the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) if your organization currently does not have a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and is not subject to other requirements; or
- not include any indirect costs.

See **Indirect Costs in the Budget**

Authorizing Statute and Regulations

Statute**:** **20 U.S.C. § 9101** *et seq.*; **20 U.S.C. § 80r et seq. (National Museum of African American History and Culture)**, in particular **20 U.S.C. § 80r-5 (Educational and liaison programs).**

Regulations**:** **45 C.F.R. Chapter XI, 2 C.F.R. Chapter XXXI, and 2 C.F.R. Title 2**

Award recipients must follow the IMLS regulations that are in effect at the time of the award.

You can find the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidance on Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (Uniform Guidance) at **2 C.F.R. part 200**.

.

With certain IMLS-specific additions, IMLS regulations at **2 C.F.R. part 3187** have formally adopted Uniform Guidance.

Equal Opportunity

IMLS does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age.

For further information, email **ogc@imls.gov** or write to the Office of the General Counsel, Institute of Museum and Library Services, 955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW, Suite 4000, Washington, DC, 20024-2135.

Prepare and Submit Your Application

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4. Application Contents and Format

Get Ready to Apply

Registration Requirements

Before you apply, your organization must have:

- ✓ a **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number**;
- ✓ a current and active **System for Award Management (SAM) registration**; and
- ✓ an **active Grants.gov registration** with an approved Authorized Organization Representative (AOR).

> **See Guidance for Required Registrations for detailed information and resources** to help you make sure your required registrations are

Check your materials and registrations now to ensure that they are accurate, current, and active.

We strongly recommend that you obtain a UEI number and complete registration with SAM and Grants.gov well ahead of the application deadline.

Application Package

You must apply electronically through Grants.gov Workspace or a Grants.gov system-to-system solution.

Use one of the following identifiers to locate the application package in **Grants.gov**:

- **Funding Opportunity Number**: AAHC-FY26

- **Assistance Listing Number**: 45.309

To request an audio recording of this announcement, call 202-653-4744. To request a paper copy of this announcement, call 202-653-4744 or email **imls-museumgrants@imls.gov**.

Readiness Checklist

Applying for an award takes time. Registering with SAM.gov can take several weeks. There are a few important things you'll need to do before you can apply.

Be sure to...

- ☐ Carefully read through this NOFO to get a good understanding of **how to craft your narrative**, **what documents we require**, and **how we review applications**.
- ☐ **Review the eligibility requirements for this program** and confirm that your organization is eligible.
    1. Organization type
    2. Organization location
    3. Museum eligibility criteria
- ☐ **Review the Funding Restrictions** and keep them in mind as you develop your application and budget.
- ☐ Register in SAM.gov (or make sure your organization's registration is current) as early as possible. **Remember that SAM registration can take several weeks.**

  To register, go to **SAM.gov Entity Registration** and click Get Started.

  See the **SAM.gov Entity Registration checklist** for what you'll need to register in SAM.
- ☐ Get a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number. You'll get your organization's UEI when you register in **SAM.gov**. (This is not a DUNS number. See the **DUNS to UEI transition** information.)
- ☐ **Register in Grants.gov**.
- ☐ Make sure you understand the review criteria.
- ☐ Review the **post-award requirements** to make sure you can meet them.

Prepare Your Application

This section will outline the components, format, and content requirements to help you prepare a complete application.

You must apply by **11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time on March 13, 2026.** We make awards only to eligible applicants that submit applications through Grants.gov on or before this deadline.

If your application is missing any Required Documents or Conditionally Required Documents from the list below, we will consider it to be incomplete, and may reject it from further consideration (**see 2 C.F.R. § 3187.9**.).

Application Components

Required Documents

You must include all these components for your application to be complete.

Component	File Requirements
The Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form (SF-424S)	**Format**: Grants.gov web form
IMLS Museum Program Information Form	**File Format:** PDF **File Name:** ProgramInfoForm.pdf
Organizational Profile	**File Format:** PDF **Page Limit**: 2 pages (recommended). **File Name**: OrganizationalProfile.pdf

Component	File Requirements
Narrative	**File Format:** PDF **Page Limit**: 7 pages max. **File Name**: Narrative.pdf
Schedule of Completion	**File Format:** PDF **Page Limit:** 1 page per year (recommended) **File Name**: Scheduleofcompletion.pdf
IMLS Budget Form	**File Format**: IMLS PDF form **File Name**: Budget.pdf
Budget Justification	**File Format**: PDF **File Name**: Budgetjustification.pdf
List of Key Project Staff and Consultants	**File Format:** PDF **Page Limit**: 1 page (recommended) **File Name**: Projectstaff.pdf
Resumes of Key Project Staff and Consultants	**File Format**: PDF **Page Limit**: 2 pages each (recommended) **File Name**: Resumes.pdf
Performance Measurement Plan	**File Format**: PDF **Page Limit**: 2 pages (recommended) **File Name**: Perfmeasurement.pdf

Conditionally Required Documents

You must include these components if they are applicable to your institution or your project. **Refer to Conditionally Required Documents** to determine which, if any, you need to include in your application.

Component	File Requirements
Proof of Private, Nonprofit Status	**File Format**: PDF **File Name**: Proofnonprofit.pdf
Final Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement	**File Format**: PDF **File Name:** Indirectcostrate.pdf
Digital Products Plan	**File Format**: PDF **Page Limit**: 2 pages (recommended) **File Name**: Digitalproduct.pdf
Detailed Condition Reports and/or Conservation Treatment Proposals	**File Format**: PDF **File Name:** Treatment.pdf

Supporting Documents

You may include additional documents to support your proposal.

Component	File Requirements
Supporting Documents (Information that supplements the Narrative and supports your project description)**D3e. Supporting Documents**	**File Format**: PDF **File Name(s):** Supportingdoc1.pdf Supportingdoc2.pdf

Component	File Requirements
	Supportingdoc3.pdf

Format, Name, and Sequence of Application Components

Document Format and File Size

Aside from the SF-424S, which is created in Grants.gov Workspace, all application components must be submitted as PDF documents.

Use standard formatting and fonts in your application components and limit individual file sizes to 200mb or less.

Page Limits

Note the page limits listed in the **tables of Application Components**. We will remove any additional pages and not send them to reviewers as part of your application.

Naming Convention

Use the naming conventions indicated in the **tables of Application Components**.

IMPORTANT: Attachment file names are limited to the following characters: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore (_), hyphen (-), space, period (.). If attachment file names use any other characters, the application may be rejected by Grants.gov.

Attachment Order

In Grants.gov, attach all application components in the sequence listed in the table above. Use all 15 fields in the "Attachments Form" first. If your application requires more than 15 attachments, select the "Other Attachments Form". Note that if you select the "Other Attachments Form," you will be required to upload the 16th attachment in the "Mandatory Other Attachment" field first; any subsequent attachments should be uploaded under the "Optional Other Attachments."

Instructions for Required Documents

Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form (SF-424S)

The SF-424S is part of the application package that you complete in Grants.gov Workspace. It collects basic information about your organization and your project.

IMLS Museum Program Information Form

Download and complete the current IMLS Museum Program Information Form (PDF, XXX MB). In it, we collect details about your project, its goals, and financial information.

Find detailed instructions to help you complete these Grants.gov forms:

→ **Detailed instructions for completing the SF424S**

Museum Program Information Form

Organizational Profile

Write a brief Organizational Profile for the lead applicant and save it as a PDF. We recommend limiting the Organizational Profile to two pages. Include the following information:

- Your organization's mission or statement of purpose, noting the source, approving body, and date of the official document in which it appears.
- Your organization's governance structure. If your museum is located within a parent organization or if your organization is a nonprofit affiliated with a museum, explain the relationship.
- Your service area (i.e., communities and/or audiences served, including size, demographic characteristics, and geographic area).
- A brief history of your organization, focusing on the organizational unit that will be directly involved in carrying out the work.

- Attributes describing how your organization's mission, or other approved governing documents, explicitly reflects its primary purpose for African American life, art, history, and/or culture. Please only include references to governing documents, rather than recent exhibitions or programming generated by your institution in addressing these criteria.

Narrative

Write a Narrative using the structure and format below and save it as a PDF. Be clear and concise with a minimum of technical jargon and acronyms. Include references throughout your Narrative to any Supporting Documents that provide supplementary material.

When writing your narrative, consider the **review criteria** and the **program goal and objective** you selected.

Narrative - Required Format

Page Limit: 7 numbered pages

We will remove any additional pages and will not send them to reviewers as part of your application.

File Name: Narrative.pdf

IMPORTANT: *Attachment file names are limited to the following characters: A-Z, a-z, 0-9, underscore (_), hyphen (-), space, period (.). If attachment file names use any other characters, the application may be rejected by Grants.gov.*

File Format: PDF

Font Size: 11-point or higher

Margins: 0.5 inches or greater

Components: Organize the Narrative using the following section headings, and respond to the question prompts in the **Guidance for Narrative Sections**:

- Project Justification
- Project Work Plan
- Project Results

Guidance for Narrative Sections

Narrative Section	Guidance
Project Justification	O Which **program goal and associated objective of AAHC** will your project address? O What need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified? O Who is the primary audience for your project and how have they been involved in the planning? "Primary audience" refers to those who will be most immediately and positively affected by your project. Identify the number of individuals in the primary audience or in each primary audience, if you identify more than one. O Who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project? "Beneficiaries" refers to those who are likely to be aided in the long-term by your project. They may or may not be the same as your "primary audience."
Project Work Plan	O What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence? O What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them? O Who will plan, implement, and manage your project? O What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities? **Note:** You must include $3,000 per year in your budget for travel to attend IMLS-designated meetings. O How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?

Narrative Section	Guidance
Project Results	O What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, problem, or challenge you have identified? O How will the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the primary audience change because of your project? O What models, tools, research findings, and/or services will result from your project, and how will you make them accessible to the primary audience? O How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?

Refer to the Evaluation Resources on the IMLS website for program planning tools, evaluation definitions, and methodologies.

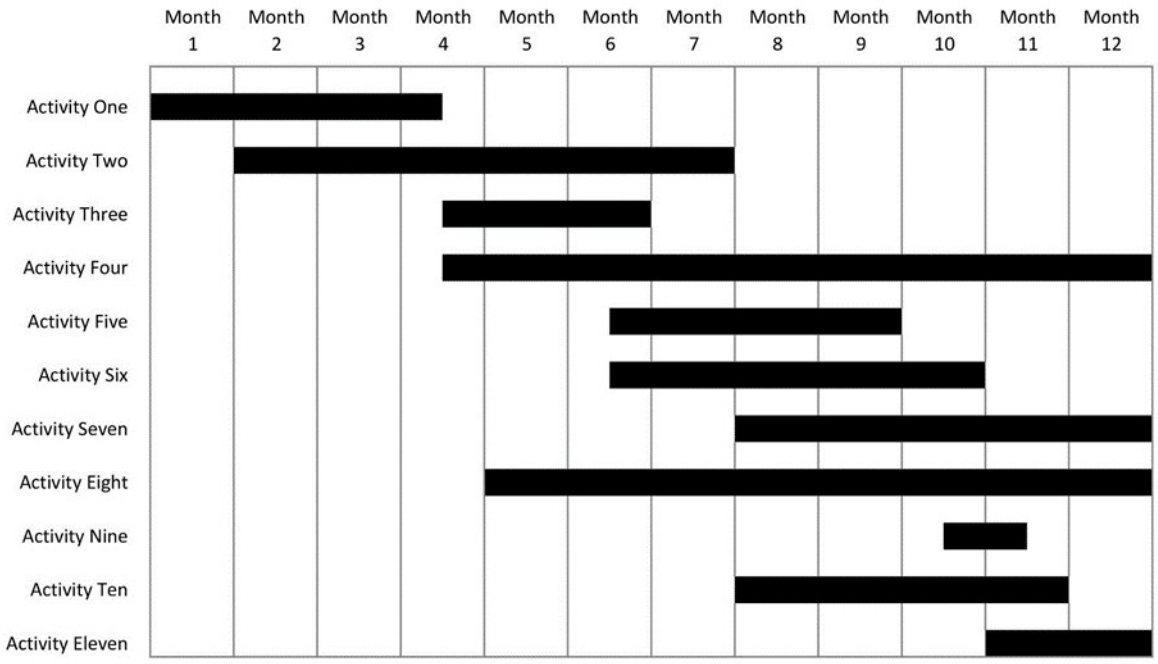
Refer to our guidance on disclosing information in your application.

Reviewers may also choose to visit your organization's website, as listed on the SF-424S form provided with your application.

Schedule of Completion

The Schedule of Completion should reflect each major activity identified in your application Narrative and the project dates identified on the SF-424S and the IMLS Budget Form. It should show when each major project activity will start and end. The schedule should be no longer than one page per project year.

See the sample Schedule of Completion below. Save your document as a PDF.



IMLS Budget Form

Download and complete the current **IMLS Budget Form (PDF, 1.7MB).**

Budget Justification

Write a Budget Justification to identify how each expense supports your proposed activities, detail how you calculated all costs, and provide supporting documentation

Find detailed instructions to help you complete an IMLS Budget Form and write a Budget Justification:

→ **Detailed instructions for completing the IMLS Budget Form**

writing a Budget Justification

including any dollar amounts that you may have consolidated and summarized on the IMLS Budget Form. We recommend that your Budget Justification have a section for each heading on the IMLS Budget Form. Save this document as a PDF.

List of Key Project Staff and Consultants

Write a list of only those staff and consultants whose expertise is essential to the success of the project and save it as a PDF. Do not list all staff involved in the project. If you cannot identify key project staff by the application deadline, then list the position title(s) instead. This list must include the Project Director listed in Item 7 of the SF-424S. We recommend limiting this list to one page.

Resumes of Key Project Staff and Consultants

Provide a resume for each person whose expertise is essential to the success of the project. We recommend limiting each resume to two pages. Use standard fonts and formatting and save all the resumes in a single PDF. You must include the resume of the Project Director listed in Item 7 of the SF-424S.

If you cannot identify key project staff by the application deadline, then instead of a resume, provide position description(s) including the qualities, range of experience, and education necessary to successfully implement and complete project activities.

Performance Measurement Plan

Your Performance Measurement Plan should show how you will monitor and assess your performance as an awardee and achieve your selected **program goal and objective** from the perspectives of **Effectiveness, Efficiency, Quality, and Timeliness** for your overall project.

For each performance measure, identify what data you will collect from what source, the method you will use to collect it, and according to what schedule. The chart below provides sample statements for each measure and a space to record your own. **We've provided a fillable version of this chart** (DOCX, 25KB), which you are welcome, but not required, to use. We recommend limiting your Performance Measurement Plan to two pages. Save your document as a PDF.

Applicant Name:
Project Title:

Performance Measure	Data We Will Collect (e.g., counts, costs, weights, volumes, temperatures, percentages, hours, observations, opinions, feelings)	Source of Our Data (e.g., members of the primary audience, project staff, stakeholders, internal/ external documents, recording devices, databases)	Method We Will Use (e.g., survey, questionnaire, interview, focus group, informal discussion, observation, assessment, document analysis)	Schedule (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, beginning/end)
Effectiveness: The extent to which activities contribute to achieving the intended results	***Example:*** *At the end of each month, using a report prepared by the registrar, we will compare the cumulative count of rehoused objects against the total number proposed for the project.* ***Example:*** *At the end of each project year, our external consultant will present results of the ongoing observation-based evaluation and compare them against our intended project results.*			
Efficiency: How well resources (e.g., funds, expertise, time) are used while generating maximum value for the primary audience	***Example:*** *Twice per year, we will assess our expenditures for program supplies on a per-person-served basis.* ***Example:*** *Each quarter, we will calculate the dollar value of volunteer hours contributed to the project as recorded in our online volunteer management system.*			
Quality: How well the activities meet the requirements and expectations of the primary audience	***Example:*** *At the beginning, the mid-point, and end of the project, we will administer a satisfaction survey to staff who have participated in the training.* ***Example:*** *We will gather opinions about our online services through questionnaires provided to every 20th user.*			
Timeliness: The extent to which each task/activity is completed within the proposed timeframe	***Example:*** *Every six months, our Project Director will assess the fit between our proposed Schedule of Completion and actual activity completion dates.* ***Example:*** *Each quarter, each project partner will submit to our Project Director a templated report showing their progress on meeting project milestones.*			

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Conditionally Required Documents

These documents may be required for your application, depending upon the circumstances. Refer to the table below to determine which, if any, Conditionally Required Documents you may need to provide.

If you fail to provide a Conditionally Required Document, we will consider your application incomplete, and may reject it from further consideration.

If you are:	Then you must provide:	Notes:
Applying as a private, nonprofit institution *(as indicated by choosing "M" as the Applicant Type code in 5d of the SF-424S form).*	A copy of the IRS letter indicating your eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.	You must submit this letter with each application even if you have submitted it with other applications in the current year or in previous years. We will not accept a letter of State sales tax exemption as proof of nonprofit status.
Using a Federally negotiated indirect cost rate in your budget.	A copy of your current Final Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement.	If you do not have a current negotiated (including provisional) indirect cost rate and elect to charge a de minimis rate of up to 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (**see 2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f)**), you do not need to provide any documentation.

If you are:	Then you must provide:	Notes:
Proposing to generate any digital content, resources, assets, or software	A Digital Products Plan (two pages, recommended) Describe the types of digital content or products you will create during your project and address issues relating to availability, access, and sustainability for each type.	See **Guidance for creating a Digital Products Plan.**

If you are:	Then you must provide:	Notes:
Proposing to undertake conservation treatment as part of your project	A document that identifies your institution's conservation priorities and describes how they were established. Provide detailed condition reports and/or treatment proposals for each object, specimen, or group to be treated.	This document might be one or more of the following: • A **Conservation Assessment for Preservation (CAP)** report • A **Preservation Assistance Grant (PAG)** report • A General Conservation Survey Report (funded by a prior IMLS grant) • A similar survey report funded by local, state, regional, or private entities • A current Long-range Conservation Plan approved by the organization's administration and/or governing body.

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Supporting Documents

Applicants may submit a reasonable number of optional Supporting Documents that supplement the Narrative in support of the project description. Optional Supporting Documents should help IMLS staff and reviewers envision the project in greater detail, but they should not be used to introduce new topics nor to continue answers to the Narrative questions.

Give each document a clear, descriptive title at the top of the first page. You may wish to consider the following:

- Letters of commitment from partners, consultants, or any third party that will receive grant funds or make substantial contributions towards the completion of project activities
- Bibliography or references relevant to your proposed project design or evaluation strategy
- Letters of support from experts and stakeholders
- Relevant images that support your proposed project
- Reports from planning activities
- Contractor quotes
- Equipment specifications
- Products or evaluations from previously completed or similar ongoing projects
- Web links to relevant online materials
- Needs assessments.

Applications for projects that build organizational capacity by adding new staff may include the following types of Supporting Documents:

- Position descriptions for new grant-supported staff positions not listed on the List of Key Project Staff and Consultants, including assigned duties and required qualifications
- Estimated salary and benefits documentation for the new position that reflect industry standards and prevailing wages for the local area
- Organizational chart and/or a description of the leadership and supervisory structure of your organization, showing the new positions along with existing staff

Applications for projects that support the growth and development of museum staff or interns may include the following types of Supporting Documents:

- Position descriptions included expected duties and learning outcomes for interns
- Recruitment plans, including letters of support from HBCUs or other institutions of higher education
- Training needs assessment, identifying knowledge gaps and areas of growth for museum staff

- Curriculum and learning objectives from identified training programs or career development experiences

Applications for projects that build capacity to enhance care and increase access to museum collections may include the following types of Supporting Documents:

- Summary of the scope and scale of museum collections, including baseline information on the numbers, types, and quantities of items held by the museum
- Specific benchmarks on the quantity of collection items to be processed, cataloged, and/or digitized in the proposed project
- Description of the intended audience that will gain access to the museum collection, and how the improved access will meet the needs of that audience
- Museum collections management policy or similar type of document approved by the governing board and/or leadership of your museum.

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Application Checklist

Use this checklist to make sure you have everything you need to submit a complete proposal.

General Readiness

- ☐ Review the **Readiness Checklist** and make sure your organization has a UEI, and that your SAM.gov and Grants.gov registrations are current and active.

Forms (follow form and Grants.gov instructions)

- ☐ **SF-424S**

Files

Formatting Instructions

- ☐ **IMLS Museum Program Information Form**
- ☐ **Organizational Profile**
- ☐ **Narrative**
- ☐ **Schedule of Completion**
- ☐ **IMLS Budget Form**
- ☐ **Budget Justification**
- ☐ **List of Key Project Staff and Consultants**
- ☐ **Resumes of Key Project Staff and Consultants**
- ☐ **Performance Measurement Plan**
- ☐ Any **Conditionally Required Documents**, if applicable
- ☐ **Supporting Documents**, if any
- ☐ Double-check **format, file names, page limits, and attachment order** for all your PDF documents.

Disclosure of Information in Applications

We may share grant applications, products, and reports to further the mission of the agency and the development of museum, library, archival, and information services. As a general practice, and except for information that is privacy-protected, information contained in IMLS applications that receive funding may be made public. Please identify any information you deem confidential and/or proprietary and seek to have protected.

5. Submission Requirements and Deadlines

Submission Instructions

You must submit your applications for funding using **Grants.gov Workspace**. Do not submit through email or postal mail to IMLS.

Review the Registration Requirements and time frames. We strongly recommend that you obtain a UEI number, register with SAM.gov and Grants.gov, and complete and submit your application early. Leave plenty of time and use the contact information below to reach out to IMLS, the Federal Service Desk, or Grants.gov Help for questions and technical difficulties.

Programmatic, Administrative, and Technical Support Contacts

IMLS

IMLS staff are available by phone and email to answer programmatic and administrative questions relating to this grant program. We also host webinars to introduce potential applicants to funding opportunities. For more information, **see our list of webinars and instructions for accessing them**.

Federal Service Desk

Visit the **Federal Service Desk** or call 1-866-606-8220 for questions about registering or renewing your registration with login.gov or SAM.gov. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.

Grants.gov

Visit **Grants.gov Support**, email **support@grants.gov**, or call Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 for assistance with software issues, registration issues, and technical problems. Grants.gov Applicant Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except for federal holidays.

Be sure to obtain a case number when calling the Federal Service Desk or Grants.gov for support.

Submission Dates and Times

For the AAHC Program, Grants.gov will accept applications through **11:59 p.m. U.S. Eastern Time on March 13, 2026**.

Grants.gov will create a date and time record when it receives the application. IMLS uses this timestamp to verify on-time application submission. The system will also generate a series of emails confirming the status of each application. Applicants can check the status of their application(s) in Grants.gov by using "**Track My Application**." For further details, visit **Check Application Status** at Grants.gov.

We will not consider late applications for funding. We award grants only to eligible applicants that submit complete applications on or before the deadline

Emergency Extensions

Under certain circumstances, we allow an extension of grant application deadlines for adversely affected applicant organizations located in counties listed in

Emergency Declarations and/or Major Disaster Declarations. See **Application Deadlines** for further information.

Intergovernmental Review

This funding opportunity is not subject to intergovernmental review per Exec. Order No. 12372.

Learn About Application Review

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6. Application Review Information

Eligibility and Completeness Checks

We assess every application to make sure it meets basic requirements for eligibility and completeness. We won't consider an application that:

- does not meet **the eligibility criteria for the program**
- is submitted after the **deadline**
- requests funding outside of the **applicable range**
- does not adhere to the program's **funding restrictions** and **guidelines.**
- is missing **required or conditionally required application components**.

If your application is rejected during these initial eligibility and completeness checks, we'll notify you by email. If you believe we rejected your application in error, you can appeal the decision via email within ten business days of the date we sent the rejection notice.

Review and Selection Process

We use a peer review process to evaluate all complete applications from eligible institutions. Reviewers are professionals in the field with relevant knowledge and expertise in the types of project activities identified in the applications.

We instruct reviewers to evaluate applications according to the peer review criteria detailed in the next section. Peer reviewers must comply with IMLS's Federal ethics and conflicts of interest requirements.

The Director considers the input provided by the review process and makes final funding decisions consistent with the purposes of the agency's mission and programs.

about our peer review process

Peer Review Criteria

We instruct reviewers to evaluate applications according to the review criteria listed in this section and to consider all **Required, Conditionally Required, and Supporting Documents.**

Cost share is an eligibility criterion and is not considered in the review of applications. Learn more about **cost share requirements for the AAHC program.**

Review Criteria

Project Justification

- How well does the proposal align with the selected **AAHC program goal and associated objective**?
- How well has the applicant used relevant data and other evidence to describe the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed?
- Has the applicant appropriately defined the primary audience(s) and beneficiaries, as applicable, for this work?
- Have the primary audience and other project stakeholders been appropriately involved in planning the project?
- Does the project address current needs of the museum field and/or have the potential to advance practice in the museum profession?
- Does the applicant clearly articulate how the proposed work differs from, complements, or builds upon existing theory, scholarship, and practice?

Review Criteria

Project Work Plan

- Are the proposed activities informed by relevant theory and practice?
- Are the goals, assumptions, and risks clearly stated?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers have the experience and skills necessary to successfully complete the work?
- Are the time, financial, personnel, and other identified resources appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- If present, does the **Digital Products Plan** reflect appropriate practices and standards for creating and managing the types of digital products proposed?
- Will the proposed methods for tracking the project's progress allow course adjustments when necessary?
- Will the proposed methods for tracking the project's progress provide reliable and measurable information about the project results?

Review Criteria

Project Results

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated, realistic, meaningful, and linked to the need, problem, or challenge addressed by the project?
- Is the plan to effect meaningful change in knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes solidly grounded and appropriately structured?
- Is the plan for ensuring that the proposed models, tools, research findings and/or services will be broadly adaptable and usable by other institutions and widely disseminated to the field likely to be effective?
- Is the plan to sustain the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance reasonable and practical?

Risk Assessment

For awards with a total amount of Federal share greater than the simplified acquisition threshold, we're required to review and consider applicant information in the designated integrity and performance system.

This information is accessible through SAM. The simplified acquisition threshold is currently $350,000 but is periodically adjusted.

You may review information in the designated integrity and performance systems accessible through SAM and comment on any information about your organization that a federal awarding agency previously entered.

We will consider any comments by the applicant, in addition to the other information in the designated integrity and performance system, in considering the applicant's integrity, business ethics, and record of performance under federal awards when completing the review of risk posed by applicants.

Learn more about the laws and regulations related to suspension and debarment systems, the simplified acquisition threshold, and applicant risk review:

- → **41 U.S.C. § 2313**
- → **41 U.S.C. § 134**

7. Award Notices

We will not release information about the status of an application until we have completed the peer review process and all deliberations.

We expect to notify successful and unsuccessful applicants of final funding decisions by email in August 2026.

Funded Applicants

If your application is funded, we'll send your Authorizing Official, Project Director, and Grant Administrator an email notification with our congratulations and instructions for accessing our electronic grants management system, eGMS Reach. Once you activate your eGMS Reach account, you'll have access to your Official Award Notification, award letter, reporting schedule, IMLS-approved budget document, and anonymized reviewer feedback from your application's peer review.

! **The signed Official Award Notification is the only document obligating funds and authorizing you to begin performance on its specified dates.** Unless you've confirmed and received prior written approval from us that pre-award costs are allowed, incurring those costs before the period of performance is at your own risk.

Unfunded Applicants

If your application is not funded, we'll send your Authorizing Official, Project Director, and Grant Administrator an email notification to let you know that your application isn't being funded. We'll share the number of applications and the total amount of requested funding we received for the program this year. We'll also provide anonymized reviewer comments and scores to help you understand the decision and help you decide whether to revise the proposal and submit it again to IMLS or another funding agency in the future.

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8. Post-Award Requirements and Administration

Administrative and National Policy Requirements

There are important laws and regulations you'll need to understand and comply with if you receive an award. Awardees are subject to:

- **2 C.F.R. part 200 Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards**;
- **2 C.F.R. part 3187 (IMLS grant regulations);**
- The **IMLS General Terms and Conditions for IMLS Discretionary Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards**; and
- the **IMLS Assurances and Certifications**.

With certain IMLS-specific additions, IMLS regulations at **2 C.F.R. part 3187** have formally adopted the Uniform Guidance.

Reporting

Awardees must comply with the following reporting requirements.

Interim and final financial and performance reports are due according to the reporting schedule in your official award documents. You must submit your performance and financial reports in eGMS Reach. We may publish interim and final performance report content on the IMLS website.

You must also comply with **2 C.F.R. §§ 180** and **2 C.F.R. part 3185** with respect to providing information regarding all debarment, suspension, and related offenses, as applicable.

If the total value of your active grants, cooperative agreements, and procurement contracts from all Federal agencies exceeds $10,000,000 for any period of time during the period of performance of this Federal award, **you should refer to the reporting requirements reflected in 2 C.F.R. part 200, Appendix XII – Award Term and Condition for Recipient Integrity and Performance Matters.**

> Visit our **Manage Your Award – Grant Administration page** to learn more about reporting

See also: **2 C.F.R. §§ 200.113 (Mandatory disclosures)** and **2 C.F.R. §§ 200.211(c)(1)(iii) (Information contained in a federal award).**

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9. Other Important Information

IMLS Assurances and Certifications

Applicants for federal funds must certify that they are responsible for complying with certain nondiscrimination, debarment and suspension, drug-free workplace, and lobbying laws. These are set out in more detail, along with other requirements, in the **IMLS Assurances and Certifications**.

By submitting the application, which includes the **IMLS Assurances and Certifications**, you certify that you are in compliance with these requirements and that you will maintain records and submit any reports that are necessary to ensure compliance. Failure to comply with these statutory and regulatory requirements may result in the suspension or termination of an award and require that the recipient return funds to the government.

For information about award termination, please see the **IMLS General Terms and Conditions for IMLS Discretionary Grant and Cooperative Agreement Awards** and **2 C.F.R. § 200.340 Termination**.

Acknowledging IMLS Support

Awardees must include acknowledgement of IMLS support in all grant products, publications, websites, and presentations developed with IMLS funding.

All work products should reference IMLS and include the associated award number(s). **Our Grantee Communications Kit** provides guidance for fulfilling these requirements.

Conflict of Interest Requirements

Awardees must follow IMLS conflict of interest policies for federal awards. You must disclose in writing any potential conflict of interest to an IMLS Program Officer, or to the pass-through entity if you are a subrecipient or contractor. This disclosure must take place immediately whether you are an applicant or have an active IMLS award.

The IMLS conflict of interest policies apply to subawards as well as contracts, and are as follows:

- You you must maintain written standards of conduct covering conflicts of interest and governing the performance of your employees engaged in the selection, award, and administration of subawards and contracts.
- None of your employees may participate in the selection, award, or administration of a subaward or contract supported by a federal award if he or she has a real or apparent conflict of interest. Such a conflict of interest would arise when the employee, officer, agent, board member, or any member of his or her immediate family, his or her partner, or an organization which employs or is about to employ any of the parties indicated herein, has a financial or other interest in or a tangible personal benefit from an organization considered for a subaward or contract. The officers, employees, agents, and board members of your organization must neither solicit nor accept gratuities, favors, or anything of monetary value from subrecipients or contractors or parties to subawards or contracts.
- If you have a parent, affiliate, or subsidiary organization that is not a state, local government, or Indian tribe, you must also maintain written standards of conduct covering organizational conflicts of interest. Organizational conflicts of interest means that because of relationships with a parent company, affiliate, or subsidiary organization, you are unable or appear to be unable to be impartial in conducting a subaward or procurement action involving a related organization.

Additional Information about IMLS

Visit the **IMLS website** for additional information on IMLS and IMLS activities.

IMLS Obligations to Make Awards

This announcement does not obligate IMLS to make any federal award or commitment.

Peer Review

Any individual who is interested in serving as a peer reviewer is welcome to enter their contact information and identify their experience and expertise through the IMLS **online reviewer application portal**. IMLS staff will notify the individuals who are identified as potential reviewers by email prior to the next review period to confirm availability.

Copyright Information

Awardees may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and was developed under an award or for which ownership was acquired under a federal award. IMLS reserves a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work for federal purposes and to authorize others to do so. For additional information, **please see 2 C.F.R. § 200.315 (Intangible property).**

Application Completion Time

Complete applications include the elements listed in the **Application Components**. IMLS estimates the average amount of time needed for one applicant to complete the narrative portion of this application to be 35 hours. This

includes the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and writing and reviewing the answers.

We estimate that it will take an average of 30 minutes per response for the IMLS Museum Program Information Form and three hours per response for the IMLS Budget Form.

We welcome your suggestions for improving this collection of information and for making it as easy to use as possible. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to **our Office of Grants Management** . Please note that applicants are not required to respond to any collection of information unless it displays a currently valid Office of Management and Budget (OMB) control number.

PRA Clearance Number

OMB Control No.: 3137-0095 Expiration date: 8/31/2027

Additional Guidance

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Guidance for Required Registrations

Getting a Unique Entity Identifier

The Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) number is a non-proprietary alphanumeric identifier assigned to all entities (public and private companies, individuals, institutions, or organizations) who register to do business with the Federal Government. The UEI is requested in, and assigned by, the System for Award Management (SAM).

Awardees must inform any first-tier subrecipients that the awardee may not make a subaward unless the subrecipient has also obtained a UEI. First tier subrecipients, but not second-tier subrecipients nor contractors, are required to obtain a UEI. Subrecipients are not required, however, to complete full registration in SAM.gov to obtain their UEI.

If your organization has an active SAM registration, you can find your assigned UEI in your SAM record. The organization's UEI must be active at the time of application and award. If you don't yet have an active SAM registration, you will receive a UEI when you register in SAM.

Learn more about the UEI.

Registering with SAM

The System for Award Management (SAM) is a federal repository that centralizes information about grant applicants and awardees. It is always free to all users. You must register with SAM before registering with Grants.gov. **Learn how to check an organization's registration status in SAM**.

If you're registering with SAM for the first time, you must begin by creating a SAM user account through **Login.gov**. **Click here to learn how to create a secure Login.gov account**. Then **proceed to the SAM registration process**.

We recommend that you allow several weeks to complete the SAM registration.

You must always maintain an active SAM registration with current information while you have an active award or an application under consideration. We may not make an award to you until you have complied with all applicable Unique Entity Identifier and SAM registration requirements. If you have not fully complied with the requirements by the time we're ready to make a federal award, we may make an award to another applicant.

You must renew your organization's registration in SAM at least every 12 months or whenever your organization's information changes. An expired registration will prevent you from submitting applications via Grants.gov and receiving awards or payments. Award payments will be made to the bank account that is associated with your organization's SAM registration.

Registering with Grants.gov

Grants.gov is the centralized website for grant seekers to find and apply for federal funding opportunities. Grants.gov is owned and operated by the Federal Government and is always free to all users.

You must **register with Grants.gov** prior to applying. The multistep registration process cannot be completed in a single day. You should make sure your institution's SAM registration is current and active before registering with Grants.gov. If your organization is not already registered, allow several weeks before the application deadline to complete this one-time process. **Do not wait until the day of the application deadline to register.**

The Grants.gov user ID and password you obtain when you register are required to submit your application.

After your organization registers with Grants.gov and creates an Organizational Applicant Profile, the request for the organization's Grants.gov roles and access is sent to the eBiz POC. The eBiz POC will then log into Grants.gov and assign the appropriate roles to individuals within the organization. This will include the

Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) which will give permission to complete and submit applications on behalf of the organization.

TIP: Designating more than one Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) when you register in Grants.gov will help avoid last-minute crises if a single AOR is unavailable when you are ready to submit the application. It is also important to update the contact information and password in Grants.gov whenever an AOR changes.

Visit **Grants.gov/Support**, email **support@grants.gov**, or call Grants.gov Applicant Support at 1-800-518-4726 for technical assistance. Grants.gov Applicant Support is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, except for federal holidays.

Guidance for Completing Forms and Other Application Components

Grants.gov Forms

SF-424S Form

The SF-424S Form, or the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form, is part of the application package in Grants.gov.

SF-424S Item	Instructions
Items 1 - 4	Grants.gov automatically populates items 1-4.
Item 5. Applicant Information	**a** **Legal Name**: Enter your organization's legal name as it appears in your SAM registration. This is the organization with the authority to apply directly for funding in this program. If you have an organizational unit that will be carrying out the project, be sure to specify it as the organizational unit on the **IMLS Museum Program Information Form**. **b** **Address**: Enter your legal applicant's address as it appears in your SAM registration. **c** **Web Address**: Enter the URL of your organization's website. **d** **Type of Applicant**: Select the code that best characterizes your organization from the menu in the first dropdown box. Leave the other boxes blank.

SF-424S Item	Instructions
	e **Employer/Taxpayer Identification Number (EIN/TIN):** Enter the EIN or TIN assigned to your organization by the Internal Revenue Service.
	f **Organizational UEI**: Enter your organization's Unique Entity Identifier (UEI). If your organization's SAM registration is active, you can find your assigned UEI in your SAM record. If you cannot locate your UEI, contact the Federal Service Desk at **www.fsd.gov** or 1-866-606-8220.
	g **Congressional District:** Enter your organization's congressional district. Use the following format: two-letter state abbreviation, followed by a hyphen, followed by a zero, followed by the two-digit district number. For example, if the organization is located in the 5th Congressional District of California, enter "CA-005." For the 12th Congressional District of North Carolina, enter "NC-012." For states and territories with "At Large" Congressional Districts—that is, one representative or delegate represents the entire state or territory—use "001," e.g., "VT-001.If your organization does not have a congressional district (e.g., it is located in a U.S. territory that does not have districts), enter "00-000." To determine your organization's district, **visit the House of Representatives website** and use the "Find Your Representative" tool.

SF-424S Item	Instructions
Item 6. Project Information	**a** **Project Title**: Enter a brief descriptive title for your project, using no more than 200 characters, including spaces. IMLS may use this title for public information purposes. **b** **Project Description**: Enter a brief description (about 120 words) of your project. Tell us about the purpose of the project, the activities to be performed, the deliverables and expected outcomes, and the intended beneficiaries. Use clear language that can be understood by readers who might not be familiar with the discipline or subject area. **c** **Proposed Project Start Date/End Date**: Enter the start date and end date of the proposed period of performance in the format mm/dd/yyyy. The project period begins on the first day of the month in which project activities start and ends on the last day of the month in which these activities are completed. Refer to **the Award Overview** to determine when your project can begin. **NOTE**: We use **Login.gov** for user authentication in our electronic grants management system, eGMS Reach. Login.gov helps protect user identity through stronger passwords and two-factor authentication. ! Login.gov requires that the email addresses entered for the Project Director, Primary Contact/Grants Administrator, and Authorized Representatives in Items 7, 8, and 9 on the SF-424S Form be unique to those individuals. General email addresses or those used by several people in a single

SF-424S Item	Instructions
Item 7. Project Director	The Project Director will have primary responsibility for carrying out your project's activities. Enter the requested information for this individual here. We require that the Project Director be a different person than the Authorized Representative.
Item 8. Primary Contact/Grants Administrator	The Primary Contact/Grants Administrator has the core responsibility for administering the award. Enter the requested information for this individual here. Please still complete both items 8 and 9 if the Primary Contact/Grants Administrator is the same as the Authorized Representative. In some organizations this individual may be the same as the Project Director. If this is the case, check the box and skip to Item 9.

SF-424S Item	Instructions
Item 9. Authorized Representative	The Authorized Representative has the authority to legally bind your organization. Enter the requested information for this individual here. **The Authorized Representative cannot be the same person as the Project Director.** By checking the "**I Agree**" box at the top of Item 9, this individual certifies the applicant's compliance with the **IMLS Assurances and Certifications** and any other relevant federal requirements. Grants.gov automatically populates the "Signature of Authorized Representative" and "Date Signed" boxes upon submission of the application. This is the person whose name was listed as your organization's authorized representative when you registered with Grants.gov. Please note that this name might not be the same as the name and other information you entered in Item 9 above.

By submitting the electronic application, you acknowledge that your organization certifies compliance with relevant federal requirements, including but not limited to the **IMLS Assurances and Certifications**, to the same extent as a signature does on a paper application.

IMLS Museum Program Information Form (M-PIF)

Make sure that JavaScript is enabled in your web browser. Download the IMLS Museum Program Information Form (PDF, XXX MB) to your computer and work on it outside your web browser. When you've completed the form, save it as a PDF and upload it as part of your application through Grants.gov.

PIF Section	Instructions
Section 1. Grant Program	Select Museum Grants for African American History and Culture.
Project Type	Select Small Project or Large Project, based on the amount of funding you're requesting.
Grant Program Goals and Objectives	**Refer to the AAHC Program Goals and Objectives.** Select the grant program goal that best aligns with your proposed project. Once you have selected a goal, select one associated objective.

PIF Section	Instructions
Section 2. Applicant Information	Does this entity have an organizational unit that will carry out the activities described in your application? Refer to the entity listed in Item 5a of the Grants.gov SF-424S Form that you are submitting with your application and review the Helpful Definitions of **organizational unit** and **legal applicant** on the Program Information Form. Then select YES if your organization has an organizational unit and NO if it does not. Next, make selections from the choices and provide the information requested.
Section 3. Financial Information	Provide the information requested in items a-d. If you named an organizational unit in Section 2 of this form, this information must pertain to that unit. Please complete the table with figures representing the most recently completed fiscal year in the top row, followed by those for the previous year, and concluding with those for the year before that.
Section 4. Museum Profile	Select answers for items a-k. If you named an organizational unit in Section 2, this information must pertain to that unit. If your organization is eligible to apply for an IMLS grant as a museum, then make selections from among the choices that appear and provide the information requested.

PIF Section	Instructions
Section 5. Funding Request	Refer to the **Grant Fund** and **Cost Share totals** in **Section 10 of the IMLS Budget Form** (PDF, 1.7MB) that you are submitting with your application. Provide the amount in dollars that you are requesting from IMLS and the amount of non-federal funding you are providing as cost share/match. Enter "0" if your budget includes no cost share/match.
Section 6. Indirect Costs	**Refer to the IMLS Budget Form – Indirect Costs in the Budget guidance**. Select one option and provide any required information for your selection. Your selection should match the choice you make on the IMLS Budget Form that you are submitting with your application.

PIF Section	Instructions
Section 7. Abstract	Write an Abstract of no more than 3,000 characters (including spaces) in a concise narrative format for experts as well as a general audience. Address the following: • Identify the lead applicant and, if applicable, any collaborators. • Describe the need, problem, or challenge your project will address, and how it was identified. • List the high-level activities you will carry out and identify the associated time frame. • Identify who or what will benefit from your project. • Specify your project's intended results and how they will be disseminated. • Describe how you will measure your success in achieving your intended results. Enter or paste your text into the form.

IMLS Budget Form

Make sure that JavaScript is enabled in your web browser. Download the **IMLS Budget Form (PDF, 1.7MB)** to your computer and work on it outside your web browser. When you've completed the form, save it as a PDF and upload it as part of your application through Grants.gov.

The IMLS Budget Form accommodates up to three years of project activities and expenses. Project timelines, allowable costs, and other budget details vary by program. Be sure to review the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program/project type to which you are applying and the cost principles in 2 C.F.R. part 200 and 2 C.F.R. part 3187.

The Year 1 columns should include costs for activities that begin on the project start date (as listed on 6c of the SF-424S) and end 12 months later. If the project timeline exceeds one year, list the costs for the next 12 months in the Year 2 columns. If the project extends beyond two years, list the costs for the next 12 months in the Year 3 columns.

> Learn more about the regulations and requirements related to cost principles for federal awards:
>
> → **2 C.F.R. 200 Subpart E - Cost Principles**
>
> → **2 C.F.R. part 3187 Subpart C Allowable Costs**

Tips for completing your budget form:

- → The budget should include the project costs that will be charged to grant funds as well as those that will be supported by cost share, if any.
- → In-kind contributions to cost share may include the value of services (e.g., donated volunteer or consultant time) or equipment donated to the project between the authorized start and end dates of your project.

- All the items listed, whether supported by grant funds or cost share, must be necessary to accomplish project objectives, allowable according to the applicable federal cost principles, auditable, and incurred during the award period of performance.
- Charges to the project for items such as salaries, fringe benefits, travel, and contractual services must conform to the written policies and established practices of your organization.
- You must report all revenues generated with project funds during the award period of performance as program income.
- If you need more lines for a specific section, summarize the information in the IMLS Budget Form and explain it further in the Budget Justification.

Budget Form Section	Instructions
1. Salaries and Wages	Include both temporary and permanent staff as well as volunteers engaged in project activities. Document how you calculated salaries and wages in your Budget Justification by including the base salary or wages for each person and the percentage of time each person is allocated to the project activities, which may be shown as a percentage of time, number or days, or number of hours.
2. Fringe Benefits	Fringe benefits can be claimed as a direct cost for only those positions included in your direct cost pool and only on the portion of salaries and wages identified for this project. Indicate your organization's fringe benefit rate (in percent) and the base (in dollars) to which the rate is applied (e.g., 20% x $175,089.00).

Budget Form Section	Instructions
3. Travel	You must include $3,000 per year in award (federal) funds for travel to attend IMLS-designated meetings. No additional explanation for this cost item is required. For all other travel costs, explain how you calculated each travel cost, including subsistence, lodging, and transportation, in your Budget Justification. You must use the lowest available commercial fares for coach or equivalent accommodations, and you must use U.S. flagged air carriers for foreign travel when such services are available, in accordance with applicable U.S. legal requirements.
4. Supplies, Materials, and Equipment	List the costs of supplies, materials, and equipment purchased specifically for the proposed project. For definitions and other information, please see 2 C.F.R. part 200. Use the Budget Justification to explain or describe these items in further detail.
5. Subawards and Contracts	List each third party that will undertake project activities and their associated costs as an individual line item on your IMLS Budget Form. Designate each third party as either a subaward or a contract using the dropdown menu on each line. Itemize these third-party costs in your Budget Justification.

Budget Form Section	Instructions
6. Student Support	If your project includes Student Support costs, enter them in this section. **Refer to Student Support Costs in the Budget** for a definition and examples.
7. Other Costs	Use this section for costs that cannot be assigned to other categories. Do not use this section to list items that do not fit in the lines allotted for another section.
8. Total Direct Costs	These amounts will total automatically.
9. Indirect Costs	Indirect costs are expenses that are incurred for common or joint objectives that cannot be easily identified with a particular project. Indicate your organization's indirect cost rate (in percent) and the base (in dollars) to which the rate is applied (e.g., 34% x $123,456.78). **Refer to Indirect Costs in the Budget** for more information.
10. Total Project Costs	These amounts will total and round up to the nearest dollar automatically.

Cost Share in the Budget

Cost share is the portion of the project costs that is not paid by IMLS funds. Common examples of cost share include cash outlays; contribution of property

and services; and in-kind contributions, such as staff or volunteer time that support project activities.

All expenses, including cost share, must be incurred during the award period of performance unless otherwise specified and allowed by law. Federal funds from other federal awards may not be used for cost share. All federal, IMLS, and program requirements regarding the use of funds apply to both requested IMLS funds and to cost share.

See 2 C.F.R. § 200.306 for more information on cost share.

Indirect Costs in the Budget

Indirect costs are expenses incurred for common or joint objectives and thus cannot be readily associated with a particular project. Some examples include depreciation on buildings and equipment, the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, and general administration and general expenses, such as the salaries and expenses of executive officers, personnel administration, and accounting.

See 2 C.F.R. 200.414 for additional guidance on indirect costs.

Options for Calculating and Including Indirect Costs in a Project Budget

You can choose to:

- use a rate not to exceed your current indirect cost rate already negotiated with a federal agency;
- use an indirect cost rate proposed to a federal agency for negotiation but not yet finalized, as long as it is finalized by the time of the award;
- use a rate not to exceed 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) if the organization currently does not have a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) and is not subject to other requirements; or
- not include any indirect costs.

Using a Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement

A Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) is a document that reflects an estimate of indirect costs negotiated between the Federal Government and a non-federal organization. There are several types of indirect cost rates (e.g., Provisional, Predetermined, Fixed, Final), and some agreements identify several locations to which a particular rate applies (e.g., on-site/campus, off-site/campus), and/or program types for which a particular rate may be used (e.g., Instruction, Organized Research, All Programs, Other Sponsored Activities).

If your organization already has a NICRA in effect, you may use one of the approved rates in the calculation of your project's indirect costs and by extension, your total project costs, if you apply the appropriate rate and include a copy of the current agreement with your grant application. You may choose to use a rate lower than a rate in your agreement, but you may not choose a higher one. We will accept only those NICRAs that are current by the award date.

Carefully review your institution's negotiated indirect cost rate(s) to make sure you are using the appropriate rate for your project.

Please be aware that the indirect cost rate used in your approved IMLS budget (and that will also appear on the Official Award Notification if an award is made) will apply throughout the life of your award. You may not use a different rate for the award, even if you negotiate a new rate with your cognizant agency after the award has begun.

Using a Proposed Indirect Cost Rate

If your organization is currently negotiating a NICRA with a federal agency, you may use the indirect cost rate proposed to the federal agency to estimate indirect and total project costs. In such situations, if we issue an award, we will accept the rate only if the negotiations are final by the award date and a copy of the final agreement is submitted to us. IMLS staff will work with you to adjust your budget prior to issuing an award.

Using the 15 Percent De Minimis Indirect Cost Rate

You may choose to charge a de minimis rate of up to 15 percent of Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC), as long as you do not have a current NICRA and you meet the applicable requirements. **See 2 C.F.R. part 200**, including **2 C.F.R. §§ 200.1 (Definitions)**, **200.414(f)**, and **200.510(b)(6)**, for additional guidance.

Modified Total Direct Costs include:

- all direct salaries and wages,
- applicable fringe benefits,
- materials and supplies,
- services,
- travel, and
- up to the first $50,000 of each subaward (regardless of the period of performance of the subawards under the award).

Modified Total Direct Costs exclude:

- equipment,
- capital expenditures,
- charges for patient care,
- rental costs,
- tuition remission,
- scholarships and fellowships,
- participant support costs, and
- the portion of each subaward in excess of $50,000.

Other items may only be excluded when necessary to avoid a serious inequity in the distribution of indirect costs, and with the approval of the cognizant agency for indirect costs.

If you are using the up to 15 percent de minimis indirect cost rate, check the box indicated on the IMLS Budget Form. No additional documentation is required.

Applying an Indirect Cost Rate to the Cost Share Portion of a Budget

You may, if consistent with 2 C.F.R. part 200 (Uniform Guidance), apply your indirect cost rate to your total direct costs covered by cost share, but you must account for any costs you claim as cost share in the cost share column on the IMLS Budget Form. IMLS funds can be used for indirect costs, but only for the portion of the total direct costs for which you are requesting IMLS funds (the Grant Funds column). **See, for example, 2 C.F.R. §§ 200.412-414.**

Restrictions on Project Costs Included in Indirect Cost Calculations

If you have a current NICRA, you must follow its conditions and requirements.

As noted above, if you do not have a current NICRA and meet applicable requirements, you may elect to charge a de minimis rate of up to 15 percent of the Modified Total Direct Costs (MTDC) in your indirect cost calculations.

If you have a current NICRA with a rate of less than 15 percent, you must use it rather than the de minimis rate in your indirect cost calculations.

Please see the section above on the up to 15 percent de minimis rate as well as **2 C.F.R. § 200.414(f)** and **§ 200.1 Definitions**.

Student Support Costs in the Budget

Students are:

- Individuals enrolled in a community college, undergraduate, or graduate program of study
- Individuals participating in post-master's or post-doctoral programs that are focused on supporting their careers or professional development
- Library, archives, and museum staff participating in education and training activities focused on their careers or professional development

Examples of Student Support include:

- Tuition support for students participating in the project
- Salaries or stipends for graduate assistant work, if their work is focused on research and teaching activities (therefore contributing to their education)
- Pay and benefits for a resident or fellow to work in a position that is intended to support their learning outcomes or professional development
- Costs for travel and conference registration provided to support a student or participant's learning outcomes or professional development
- Costs of supplies and equipment provided to students to support a student's learning outcomes or professional development

Activities not considered Student Support include:

- Students employed in roles that are primarily administrative or clerical, doing work that is not primarily focused on their career or professional development. These costs should be listed in the Salaries and Wages section of the budget, and tuition paid on behalf of these students would not be considered Student Support.

See **2 C.F.R. § 200.466 (Scholarships and student aid costs)**; see also **2 C.F.R. § 200.430 (Compensation – personal services)**.

Budget Justification

To write your Budget Justification, follow the format of the IMLS Budget Form's section headings and save it as a PDF. Address both grant funds and cost share, if included. Do not use your Budget Justification to expand your narrative.

Budget Section	Instructions
1. Salaries and Wages	• Identify each person whose salary or wages will be paid with IMLS funds or by cost share, provide their names, and describe their role in the project. • Document how you calculated salaries and wages by including the base salary or wages for each person and the percentage of time each person is allocated to the project activities, which may be shown as a percentage of time, number of days, or number of hours. • If cost share is being provided by unpaid volunteers, explain how you arrived at the dollar amount used to represent the value of their services. • For new staff positions included in this project, provide information on how the estimated salary and wages align with industry standards and prevailing wages for your local area.
2. Fringe Benefits	• Identify your organization's fringe benefit rate (in percent) and the base (in dollars) to which the rate is applied for each person. • If you have consolidated several persons' fringe benefits into a single line on the IMLS Budget Form, break out the detail here.

Budget Section	Instructions
3. Travel	• For each trip, explain the purpose of the trip and specify the points of origin and destination, the name of the traveler, and break out the costs of transportation, lodging, per diem, and any other expenses associated with the travel. Explain how you arrived at these dollar amounts. • **Note:** You must include $3,000 per year in award funds for travel to attend IMLS-designated meetings. No additional explanation for this cost item is required.
4. Supplies, Materials, and Equipment	• List each type of supply, material, and equipment you propose to purchase or provide as cost share for the project. • Detail the number and unit cost for each item and explain how you arrived at the dollar amounts. • Provide vendor quotes or price lists as Supporting Documents with your application.

Budget Section	Instructions
5. Subawards and Contracts	• List the costs of project activities to be undertaken by third parties for the project (familiar terms for third parties can include partners, consultants, subgrantees, contractors, collaborators, vendors, and service providers). • Identify each third party by name, describe their role in the project, the activities they will carry out, and the cost. • For each entry, designate the third party as either a subrecipient (who receives a subaward) or a contractor (who receives a contract). • Explain costs for third parties and provide relevant Supporting Documents with your application. IMLS grant funds generally may not be provided to other U.S. government agencies. You are responsible for making a case-by-case determination as to whether the agreement you make with a third party should be a subaward or a contract. That determination will depend upon the nature of your relationship with the third party with respect to the activities to be carried out. **See 2 C.F.R. § 200.331 (Subrecipient and contractor determinations).**
6. Student Support	Explain your method for calculating the costs listed in this section. **See the definition and examples of Student Support**.

Budget Section	Instructions
7. Other Costs	Use this section for costs that cannot be assigned to other categories.
8. Total Direct Costs	Indicate the total direct costs and specify how much you are asking from IMLS and how much you intend to provide as cost share, if any
9. Indirect Costs	If you include indirect costs in your project budget, identify the indirect cost rate (in percent) and the base (in dollars) to which the rate is applied. **Read about indirect costs in the Budget.**.
10. Total Project Costs	Indicate the total project costs here and specify how much you are asking from IMLS and how much you intend to provide as cost share, if any.

Proof of Private, Nonprofit Status

An organization applying as a private, nonprofit institution must submit a copy of the letter from the Internal Revenue Service indicating its eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended. (**See 2 C.F.R. § 3187.7(b)**.) IMLS will not accept a letter of State sales tax exemption as proof of nonprofit status.

Digital Products Plan

We are committed to expanding public access to digital products created using federal funds. We ask each applicant to create and submit a Digital Products Plan

describing how you will address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products, employing practices and standards that are most appropriate for their specific project. IMLS staff and peer reviewers will assess your plan, and it will be important in determining whether your project will be funded. Organize your plan to address the following:

- Type
- Availability
- Access
- Sustainability.

We participate in the Federal Agencies Digital Guidelines Initiative (FADGI), a collaborative effort by federal agencies to define common standards, guidelines, methods, and best practices for creating digital collections. **Visit the FADGI website** for a growing list of links to relevant standards, recommendations, and other resources. While this list is not exhaustive—nor do we endorse any specific resource—applicants considering digital projects may find the information useful.

Use the guidance below to help you create and organize your Digital Products Plan.

Type

What digital products will you create?

Most projects are likely to generate digital content, resources, or assets. They may be digitized or born-digital products created by individuals, project teams, or through community gatherings.

Examples include, but are not limited to, still images, audio files, moving images, microfilm, object inventories, object catalogs, artworks, books, posters, curricula, field books, maps, notebooks, scientific labels, metadata schema, charts, tables, drawings, workflows, teacher resources, and software, including source code, algorithms, applications, and digital tools, plus accompanying documentation.

In your Digital Products Plan,

- describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect,
- the quantities of each type,
- the digital file format(s),
- the accompanying metadata, and,
- any relevant standards you will use.
- If you are developing software, you should also specify the programming languages, platforms, frameworks, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

Availability

How will you make your digital products openly available (as appropriate)?

We encourage grant recipients to make works produced with IMLS support widely available, and to share their work products (including publications, datasets, educational resources, software, and digital content) whenever possible through free and open-access journals and repositories. Your project may involve making digital products available through public or access-controlled websites, kiosks, or live or recorded programs.

We expect you to ensure that publications produced under an award (including but not limited to peer-reviewed manuscripts resulting from research conducted under an award) are made available in a manner that permits the public to access, read, download, and analyze the work without charge.

In your Digital Products Plan,

- describe how you will make the digital content, resources, assets, software, and metadata available to the public;
- include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools to use the content, delivery enabled by IIIF specifications); and
- identify and explain the reasons for any limitations in your Digital Products Plan.
-

Access

What rights will you assert over your digital products, and what limitations, if any, will you place on their use?

Will your products implicate privacy concerns or cultural sensitivities, and if so, how will you address them?

Award recipients may copyright any work that is subject to copyright and that was developed under an award or for which ownership was purchased. However, IMLS reserves, for Federal Government purposes, a royalty-free, nonexclusive, and irrevocable right to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work and authorize others to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work.

We expect applicants receiving federal funds for developing or creating digital products to release these files under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. All work products resulting from IMLS funding should be distributed for free or at cost unless IMLS has provided written approval for another arrangement.

In your Digital Products Plan,

- identify any licenses under which digital products will be shared (e.g., Creative Commons licenses, RightsStatements.org statements);
- describe what intellectual property rights you will assert over your digital products and explain any limitations or conditions you will place on their use, and;
- if your products implicate privacy concerns or cultural sensitivities, describe these issues and how you plan to address them.

Sustainability

How will you address the sustainability of your digital products?

To the maximum extent possible, the digital products created with IMLS funding should be freely and readily available for use and reuse by libraries, archives, museums, and the public.

Some digital products that are generated during a project should be long-lived, requiring permanent preservation, and others (e.g., preliminary analyses, drafts of papers, plans for future work, peer-review assessments, most social media communications, and communications with colleagues) should be retained and shared in the medium- or short-term.

In your Digital Products Plan,

- describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital products during and after the period of performance;
- identify the appropriate length of time different digital products should be curated;
- address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes.

Guidance for Conservation Surveys

The following guidance applies if you're requesting support for general conservation surveys, detailed conservation surveys, and environmental surveys.

General Conservation Survey

A general conservation survey is a broad assessment of all an organization's collections and environmental conditions. Its purpose is to describe conditions, identify conservation problems, and suggest future conservation activities in

general terms. For most institutions, it is the logical first step in collections conservation.

The general conservation survey report should include the following:

- an executive summary;
- general information about your museum;
- the goals of the survey;
- an overview of the collections, their condition, and policies governing their care;
- descriptions of the condition of your building, facilities, and all exhibition and storage areas;
- descriptions of climate control and environmental conditions;
- information about staffing, including training needs; and
- recommendations for future conservation care in order of priority (to be used as the basis of a long-range conservation plan).

Detailed Conservation Survey

A detailed conservation survey is a systematic, item-by-item examination of all or part of a museum's collections by a conservation professional. The product of a detailed conservation survey should be a set of condition reports that identifies the condition of each object or specimen, its treatment priority, and the cost and method of treatment. A detailed conservation survey should precede any request for an IMLS grant to fund treatment.

This type of survey can help your museum identify conservation problems specific to a particular collection, object, or specimen, including the need for treatment; establish priorities for treatment; and determine the resources and time necessary to address any issues.

Environmental Survey

An environmental survey is an assessment of your museum's environmental conditions, including but not limited to temperature, relative humidity, and light. It is conducted by a conservation professional with input from other types of consultants as needed. You may use funds to survey environmental conditions in exhibition areas, storage areas, and other places where collections are housed.

An environmental survey can help a museum:

- identify specific environmental problems,
- set priorities for making environmental improvements,
- design specific solutions for correcting environmental problems,
- develop a monitoring program to better determine existing environmental conditions, and
- map collections (for living plants).