START RECORDING

Welcome to the Institute of Museum and Library Services’ webinar, “National Leadership Grants for Museums, Fiscal Year 2015 Information Session.”

My name is Helen Wechsler, and with me today are Reagan Moore and Katherine Maas. All of us work in the Office of Museum Services here at IMLS, and we’re delighted that you are interested in learning more about the National Leadership Grant for Museums program.
If you have not viewed our pre-recorded introductory webinar about IMLS’s funding opportunities, we strongly recommend that you do so at your earliest convenience. You can access it at any time by going to the Resources section of our website, then webinars, then Grant Program Webinars.
As a quick summary, in that webinar, we discussed IMLS’s vision, mission and strategic plan which are at the core of our grant-making. You would be well-served to consider these as you think about the project for which you will be seeking IMLS support.

We also talked about all of IMLS’s funding programs and opportunities, which include two technical assistance programs (CAP, MAP) and five grant programs: Museums for America, National Leadership Grants for Museums, Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Grants, Museum Grants for African American History and Culture, and Sparks! Ignition Grants for Museums.
We reviewed the eligibility requirements for each grant program and provided staff contacts and links to Notice of Funding Opportunity.

We covered registration requirements, which are critical to the application process. So critical, in fact, that we’ll address that again a little later.

And lastly, we encouraged potential applicants to view the webinar for each program to which they might want to apply.
In this presentation, we’ll be addressing the following topics:

- NLG-Museums Program goals
- Characteristics of Successful NLG-Museums Projects
- Important dates
- The questions of How much and how many?
- Project categories
- Allowable and Unallowable Costs
- Application Components
- Application Tips
- The Review Process
- IMLS Staff Contact Information
As you can see, NLG is a fairly competitive grant program. We were able to fund a little more than 21% of the applications we received. You can also see a pretty even split of funded project among our three project categories (which we will talk about more in a moment). It is important to note, however, that we do not have funds reserved for each project category – rather, we seek to fund the strongest proposals with the greatest potential to meet a field-wide need.
The goal of the NLG-Museums program is to support projects that address critical needs of the museum field and that have the potential to advance practice in the profession so that museums can improve services for the American public.

This might be through activities that increase the museum field’s abilities to: serve as active resources for lifelong learning, address community needs using their assets and resources, perhaps in concert with other community based organizations, or be good stewards of the nation’s collections.

The key concepts here that distinguish NLG from other IMLS funding programs are that the focus on a need within the museum field rather than within an individual museum and the creation of tools, resources, networks, etc. that can be used to meet that need.
I am just going to read these slides that come directly from the NLG-Museums guidelines because we worked hard to capture the essence of what makes a strong and appropriate NLG project.

**Characteristics of Successful NLG-Museums Projects**

- **Broad Impact**: show the potential for far-reaching impact beyond your institution and influencing practice across one or more disciplines or specific fields within the museum profession.
- **In-depth Knowledge**: reflect a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter and an awareness and support of current strategic initiatives and agendas in the field.
- **Innovative Approach**: employ novel approaches or techniques new to your project area to strengthen and improve museum services to benefit the audiences and communities being served.
- **Collaborative Process**: incorporate audience, stakeholders and/or other partners to demonstrate broad need, field-wide buy-in and input, access to appropriate expertise, and sharing of resources.
- **Shared Results**: generate results such as models, new tools, research findings, services, practices, and/or alliances that can be widely used, adapted, scaled, or replicated to extend and leverage the benefits of federal investment.
We want to remind you of important dates for NLG-Museums applications. They are due by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on December 1, 2014. That is non-negotiable and the time stamp is auto-generated by the Grants.gov system. We will say this over and over again, but start early and submit early. That way, if you encounter a difficulty of any kind when submitting your proposal, you’ll have some time to solve the problem.

NLG-museums awards will be announced in September, 2015.

And all NLG-museums projects must be scheduled to start October 1, November 1, or December 1, 2015. The choice is yours.
NLG applicants can request anywhere from $50,000 to $500,000. There is a 1:1 cost share requirement accept for research project, which we will address a little later. Cost share may be in the form of cash, staff or volunteer time, or third-party contributions. It may not, of course, be funds from another federal source.

The second question is how many applications you may file? There is no limited on the number of applications your museum may submit to NLG-museums.
Our next topic is project categories.

What is most important to you as a potential applicant is that there are three programmatic goals within IMLS’s strategic plan that drive our grant-making. Beginning in 2013 and continuing in 2015, we require applicants for both Museums for America and National Leadership Grants for Museums to align their projects with one of these goals.

Goal 1, abbreviated as “Learning Experiences,” Projects should advance the museum field’s ability to provide high-quality, inclusive educational opportunities that address particular audience needs.

Goal 2, “Community Anchors,” Projects should advance the museum field’s ability to harness the expertise, knowledge, space, and/or other resources of museums in order to address specific community needs.

And Goal 3, “Collections Stewardship,” Projects should advance the museum field’s ability to identify new solutions that address high priority and widespread collections care or conservation.

It is important to choose the right category for a couple of reasons. First, your application will be reviewed by museum professionals who have experience and expertise in these general categories. And second, your application will be competing against others who have chosen the same category. In short, the entire review process incorporates an assumption that your project aligns with the category you’ve identified.
So let’s take a look at what kinds of activities a project in each of these categories might include.

An NLG-Museums Learning Experiences project might include:

- Development, implementation, and dissemination of model programs that create engaging learning opportunities
- Development and implementation of training and professional development programs, tools, or resources that build the knowledge, skills and abilities of museum staff and/or volunteers in multiple institutions
- Research focusing on the role of museums in engaging learners

Ideally, these and related activities will help the museum field place the learner at the center and result in tools, resources, research findings, etc. that can be used by other museums to create engaging learning experiences for their targeted audiences.
An NLG-Museums Community Anchor project might include:

- Development, implementation, and dissemination of model programs that use museum resources to address community needs
- Development of new and innovative methods for addressing community challenges through partnerships, services, processes, or practices
  - Development and implementation of professional development programs, tools, or resources that build the abilities of museum staff to meet the needs of their communities
  - Research focusing on the role and value of museums as community anchors

It can sometimes be difficult to choose between this Community Anchor categories and the Learning Experiences category, so we encourage you to think about the origin of the problem you’re trying to solve or the need you’re trying to meet. Read the guidelines carefully and then ask yourself what’s the source for the impetus to do this project? If it’s because museums need a new way to fulfill their educational goals then Learning Experiences may be the best fit. If, on the other hand, there is a problem or a need common to many museums that originates in their communities, and museums, perhaps by joining with other community organizations, have the expertise, the know-how, the assets, and the ability to take it on then your project may fit better with Community Anchors.
Our third category is that of Collections Stewardship. An NLG-Museums project in Collections Stewardship might include:

• Development, implementation and dissemination of new tools or services that facilitate access, presentation, management, preservation, sharing, and use of museum collections
• Development and implementation of professional development programs, tools, or resources that impact the ability of museum staff in multiple institutions to improve the stewardship of collections
• Research focusing on any broadly relevant aspect of the management, conservation and preservation of collections.
• Building or strengthening coalitions to enhance collections care
We want to point out two places on the IMLS website to learn more about the projects we have funded in NLG-Museums.

On the right hand side of nearly every page of our website is a feature called Search Awarded Grants. This is an opportunity to search our archive of grants that we have awarded in past years by grant name, grant issue area, state, year, institution name, and keyword. Your search will return the grantee’s name, city, state, year, amount, grant name, and a brief description of the project.

We have also posted the abstract, narrative, and schedule of completion of 3 successful NLG-Museums applications from 2014, 1 in each project category. If you are conflicted over which project category to choose, looking at these exemplary proposals might help clarify your thinking. These may be found at www.imls.gov/applicants/sample_applications.aspx.
We’ll turn now to allowable and unallowable costs for your project. You want to be very careful in preparing your proposal and include only allowable costs in both your IMLS ask and your cost share, if one is required.

Within the past year, the Office of Management and Budget has issued final guidance on Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards—or for short, Grant Reform (2 CFR 200), and this will be effective for all awards made after December 26, 2014. That includes the grants for which you will be applying this round. And this means you will be required to follow those regulations that will be in place at the time of the award.
In the NLG Notice of Funding Opportunity, we provide a partial list of the most common examples of allowable costs. These include:

- salaries, wages, and fringe benefits
- travel expenses
- materials and supplies
- consultant fees
- Publication design and printing
- services (e.g. design, technical support, printing, non-construction labor)
- staff and volunteer training
- internships/fellowships
- indirect or overhead costs

So, these costs may be part of what you ask IMLS to pay for and what you will pay for as part of your cost share, if one is required.
We also provide a partial list of the most common examples of unallowable costs. These include:

- general museum fundraising costs, such as development office staff or other staff time devoted to general fundraising
- contributions to endowments
- general museum operating support
- acquisition of collections
- general advertising or public relations costs designed solely to promote activities other than those related to the specific project
- construction and renovation of museum facilities
- exhibit fabrication that involves contract labor of the construction trades
- reconstruction or renovation of historic sites
- social activities, ceremonies, receptions, or entertainment
- pre-award costs

So, these costs may NOT be part of what you ask IMLS to pay for nor part of what you will pay for as part of your cost share, if one is required.

As you prepare your application it’s a good idea to compare your list of proposed expenses against these lists of allowable and unallowable costs and against the appropriate set of cost principles. If after that you have specific questions, please contact us and we’ll be happy to help.
Next up are application components.

Application components fall into three categories in NLG-Museums. The first is that of Required Documents. All applications must include these. Omission of even just one results in the exclusion of your application from further consideration.

The second group is that of Conditionally Required Documents. Some applications must include these. It might depend on the nature of your institution or some aspect of your project. In either case, omission of even just one results in the exclusion of your application from further consideration.

The third group of application components are Supporting Documents. These are completely optional. You may submit some or none. We strongly recommend, however, that you make good decisions here and include only those that supplement the narrative and support the project description you provide in your application. This is not the place to introduce new information. We also recommend that you be respectful of your reviewers’ time and avoid any temptation to include hundreds of pages of extraneous material that is not directly relevant to your project. Being judicious actually works to your benefit. Include what is important and helpful and stop there.
In the NLG Museums Notice of Funding Opportunity is a Table of Application Components. We recommend that you use this to keep yourself organized. It serves as a checklist of application components. It tells you what formats and naming conventions to use for each document so that you may upload your application to Grants.gov successfully.

It provides links to instructions and forms. And it tells you which documents are required, conditionally required, and supporting.
Now we’re going to look at some of the forms that are required for your application, and we’ll focus on those areas that seem to be the most challenging for applicants. The first form we’ll consider is the SF 424S, or the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance, Short Organizational Form. This is a Required Document, and the form is downloaded as part of the Grants.gov package. It is not available from the IMLS website.

There are three important things to watch for on this page:

The **Legal Name** ties to Program Information Sheet, which we’ll get to in a few minutes, and these should match. It is the name to which your DUNS number is officially tied.

The **Organizational DUNS number** is important in confirming your eligibility, identity, and tax-exempt status. It must link to the Legal Name.

And at the bottom of the page is space for a **Project Description**. This is important for at least two reasons: (1) We use this for several purposes during the review process, and if you’re funded, it can be the basis for the representation of your project that goes on our website and to the media. Write your project description to address **what you plan to do, for whom**, and for **what purpose**. You might consider making this the last piece you write so that it is as concise and accurate as possible. (2) There is a character limit that you won’t encounter until the moment you press the **SUBMIT** button. Your entire application might be rejected by Grants.gov if you exceed the limit. You’ll get an immediate message to that effect, but if you’re minutes away from the deadline, you might not have time to rewrite it. Our experience is that 150 words is close to the maximum limit.
Page 2 of the SF-424S is about the Project Director and the Primary Contact/Grants Administrator. The Project Director should be the person who is responsible for the day-to-day activities of the project—in short for making sure the project gets done. The Primary Contact might be someone in the grants office or someone whose role is more purely administrative. Important to remember here is that in many cases these two positions may be the same person. They don’t have to be, but they may be. HOWEVER...
The Authorizing Official, also known as the Authorized Representative, MUST be different from the Project Director. This is the person who has the authority and the responsibility for certifying that statements made in the application are true, complete, and accurate and that the organization will comply with all necessary certifications, assurances, and terms if an award is made. If awarded, this person also signs all reports, financial documents, and change requests. This might be the President/CEO, Director, Board President, or other position of authority within the institution. It cannot be the Project Director, however.
Let’s turn now to the Program Information Sheet, which is an IMLS form downloadable from our website. This is a five-page document that is VERY important to your application. The Notice of Funding Opportunity provides complete instructions for how to fill out this form, but we want to highlight a couple of especially important things for you here. MAKE SURE THE PROGRAM INFORMATION SHEET YOU DOWNLOAD LOOKS LIKE THIS ONE. We made a few changes made this year, and you want to be sure you aren’t using a cached version.

In #1a on page 1, you’ll see “Legal Name.” This must be the same as the “Legal Name” you provided on the SF-424S, and again, it must link to the DUNS number for your organization.

In #1c, we ask about your SAM.gov registration. You MUST have a SAM.gov registration, and it MUST be active. We recommend that you check this immediately. If you haven’t registered yet, start the process now because it can take several weeks. If you need to renew, start that process now too because it also can take several weeks. Please remember: Your SAM.gov registration must be active throughout the grant review period, at the time awards are made, and throughout the lifespan of your grant. Without it, we cannot accept your application, review it, make an award, or provide you money.

In #1d, we ask you to record your organizational unit if that is different from the Legal Name of the applicant. When might that be the case? Typically, it is a matter of governing authority – a parent child relationship – such as a University and its museum or a City and its museums.

If you have questions about your own situation, spend some time with the eligibility requirements for NLG for Museums, and then call us if you need help in interpreting them.
On page 2, we ask questions about your organization’s finances—total revenue and expenses for three fiscal years; budget surplus or deficit greater than 10% of your annual operating budget; and any material weakness identified in your prior year’s audit report. If you are applying using an organizational unit designation, then these questions apply to it, rather than to the Legal Name entity.
On page 3, we ask you to select a grant program, which will be National Leadership Grants for Museums.

#3f is where you indicate which project category—Learning Experiences, Community Anchors, or Collections Stewardship—you have selected for your application. Important to know here is that the selection you make here determines the group in which your proposal will be reviewed. We won’t second-guess you on this, so you should choose wisely.

In #5a, we ask you to tell us how many dollars you are requesting from IMLS, and in #5b, we ask you to record your cost share. **Make sure these amounts reflect what’s in your budget.** Sometimes people skip these blocks because they intend to fill them in later but forget, and or they record preliminary numbers that change by the time they finish your application. Please double check them.
On page 4, we draw your attention to #8, Museum Profile. This is for Museum Applicants Only, and this applies to you if you are a museum applying to National Leadership Grants for Museums. This is where you provide the information we need to verify your eligibility. We need answers for each question, a through m, so don’t skip any. To do so could result in your institution’s being found ineligible.
On page 5, #9 is all about helping us identify the expertise and experience needed to review your project.

Begin by finding the project category that you selected in Question 3—Learning Experiences, Community Anchors, or Collections Stewardship. Once you’ve located that list of primary elements for that project category, select the ONE that you consider core to your proposed project. **To recap, you’ll check one and only one primary element for your proposal.**

In addition, if your project involves collections, then we ask you to identify the material type or types that will be affected by your project. You may select as many as you feel appropriate here.
Let’s turn now to the narrative, which could be considered the core of your application. Some basic considerations are these:

- Limit to ten single-spaced, numbered pages. (Excess will be removed and not reviewed.)
- Include your organization’s name at the top of each page.
- Use at least 0.5-inch margins and a font size of at least 12 points.
- Be clear, concise, and well-organized.
- Address the questions we ask.
- Use the sections we identify—Project Justification, Project Work Plan, and Project Results.
- Keep the review criteria in mind as you write.
Narrative: Project Justification

- What do you propose to do?
- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address and how was it identified?
- Who or what will benefit from your project?
- What are the performance goals and intended results of your project?

In this section of the narrative, you should lay out the reasoning for your project. Tell us in the clearest terms possible what you propose to do; what need, problem, or challenge you expect to address; who or what will benefit; what your performance goals and intended results will be;

Reviewers will evaluate your proposal on how well you explain your project; the narrative section of the notice of funding opportunity lists the questions reviewers are asked. They are like the answers to the test:

- Is the project clearly explained?
- Is the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence?
- Are the people who will benefit from the project clearly identified, and have they been involved in planning the project?
- Are the performance goals and intended results well formulated and achievable?
- If a research project, is the research design appropriate?
- Does the project address current needs of the museum field and/or have the potential to advance practice in the museum profession?
- Does the project align with the selected NLG for Museums category: Learning Experiences, Community Anchors, or Collections Stewardship?
Narrative: Project Work Plan

- What specific activities will you carry out?
- Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?
- When and in what sequence will your activities occur?
- What financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?
- What resources will your institution contribute to the project?
- How will you evaluate your project?
- How will you track your progress toward achieving your performance goals and intended results?
- How and with whom will you share your project’s results?

The Project Work Plan is the part of the narrative in which you relay who will do what when and using what resources?

We ask you to tell us what specific activities you will undertake; who will plan, implement, and manage your project; when and in what sequence your activities will occur; what financial, personnel, and other resources you will need to carry out the activities; what resources your institution will contribute if this is allowed and required; how you will track progress toward achieving your performance goals and intended results; and how and with whom you will share your project’s results.

Reviewers are asked:
Are the proposed activities informed by appropriate theory and practice?
Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable?
Are the time, personnel, and financial resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
Does the institution provide evidence of its capacity to carry out the project activities and meet the cost-share requirement? Note: Cost sharing is not expected for research grants.
Is the proposed evaluation methodology appropriate for project activities? Will it result in valid, reliable, and generalizable findings?
Is a clear methodology described for tracking the project’s progress and adjusting course when necessary?
Is there an effective plan for communicating results and/or sharing discoveries?
For research projects, does the proposal answer the questions outlined in the guidance
on how to write an effective research proposal?
The third and last section of your narrative should be devoted to articulating what changes as the result of your doing this project. It should tie back directly to the need, problem, or challenge you set out in the Project Justification.

We also ask you to tell us what performance indicators you will use to measure this change and what you are proposing as targets for these performance indicators. You’ll need to tell us how you will compare the proposed targets to the actual outcomes you achieve. We want to know what tangible products will result from your project, and how you will sustain the benefits of your project beyond the lifespan of this particular project. Reviewers will ask:

- Are the proposed activities informed by appropriate theory and practice?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
- Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable?
- Are the time, personnel, and financial resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Does the institution provide evidence of its capacity to carry out the project activities and meet the cost-share requirement? Note: Cost sharing is not expected for research grants.
- Is the proposed evaluation methodology appropriate for project activities? Will it result in valid, reliable, and generalizable findings?
- Is a clear methodology described for tracking the project’s progress and adjusting course when necessary?
- Is there an effective plan for communicating results and/or sharing discoveries?
• For research projects, does the proposal answer the questions outlined in the guidance on *how to write an effective research proposal*?
Here are some basic definitions of terms used in the NLG Notice of Funding Opportunity instructions for writing your narrative.

An **outcome** is the tangible result or consequence of a series of activities that you undertake during your project. It might be an improved delivery of a museum service, or it might be a change in knowledge, skills, behaviors, or attitudes among individual(s) or group(s) of people. **In all cases, the outcome must be accomplishable by the end of the project.** An outcome answers the question, "So what?" or "What difference did our project make?"

A **target** is the specific level of achievement that you hope to reach for a particular outcome. It is expressed as a number or a percentage. A target answers the question, "How will we know our project is a success?"

A **performance indicator** is a measurable characteristic that indicates achievement of the outcome. It might be a behavior that demonstrates there has been a change in knowledge, skill, behavior, or attitude among learners, or it might be a reading of an instrument that demonstrates there has been a change in environmental conditions for collections. An indicator answers the questions, "How will we know that participants or collection objects experienced the intended outcome(s)?" and "What will we measure?"
In talking with potential applicants about their proposals, we often hear questions about what IMLS expects in terms of evaluation and measures of success. Our current approach is to empower applicants to define their intended outcomes, decide the best way to measure success in achieving them, and then of course convince reviewers that their choices are appropriate, informed, and likely to be successful. We are not prescriptive about it, but rather depend on you to make and defend your case.

For help and ideas, you might wish to visit one or all three of these webpages as you think through what is appropriate for your project:

- Evaluating Your Project
- Outcome Based Evaluation
- and Shaping Outcomes: Making a Difference in Libraries and Museums, which is a self-guided tutorial
As you probably noticed, we welcome research projects under any of the three NLG-Museums categories. To submit a competitive research proposal, your narrative should answer the following questions:

- What are the specific research questions this investigation will attempt to answer?
- What is the relevance of the proposed research for current practice?
- What research method(s) will be used to conduct the research?
- What type of data will be gathered?
- How will the data be analyzed?
- How will the information be reported?
- How will the research data be managed and made available for future use (as applicable)?

If an electronic dataset will be created as a result of the proposed research, you must complete section 3 of the Digital Content Supplementary Information Form (which I will talk about a little later) and include this form as part of your application.

A link within the guidelines will take you to a page with guidance for research proposals.
At this point, we move on to the IMLS Budget Form. This is a single fillable PDF document that is four pages long and that you download from our website. You’ll use it whether your project is 1, 2, or 3 years in duration. The form adds for you automatically, although there are still some calculations you'll need to do on your own to get the numbers you need to plug into the form. We urge you to check your figures very carefully, making sure that expenses that will be paid from IMLS funds as well as those that you will cover as part of your cost share are in the right categories, are justifiable in the context of your project, and, of course, represent allowable costs.

It’s very important to make sure you have this version of the form, and not a cached one, as there are some important changes over previous years. The easiest way to make sure you’ve got the new form is to download it directly from our website and to make sure it has TEN numbered items, not ELEVEN.
One aspect of budget preparation that we get lots of questions about is that of Indirect Costs. Please notice that you have four options for calculating Indirect Costs, which are explained in detail in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. You may:

1. Use a current indirect cost rate that you have negotiated with a federal agency.
2. Use an indirect cost proposal that has been submitted to a federal agency but is not yet approved.
3. Use a rate not to exceed 10% of modified total direct costs if you have never had a federally negotiated indirect cost rate and you are not subject to other requirements, such as those in place for states, local governments, and Indian tribes.
4. Not include indirect costs at all in your budget.

For more information on indirect costs, see www.imls.gov/applicants/indirect_cost.aspx.
**Modified Total Direct Costs**

**MTDC includes:**
- Direct Salaries and Wages
- Applicable Fringe Benefits
- Supplies and Materials
- Travel
- Contracts and subawards up to the first $25,000 of each contract or subaward

**MTDC does not include:**
- Equipment
- Rental Costs
- Tuition Remission, Scholarships, Fellowships
- Participant Support Costs
- The portion of each contract and subaward in excess of $25,000
- Indirect-cost-type items (e.g. general telephone service, postage, office supplies and office space expenses, and administrative or financial operations for your entire organization)

For more information on MTDC, see [www.imls.gov/applicants/indirect_cost.aspx](http://www.imls.gov/applicants/indirect_cost.aspx) ("How do I use the 10% indirect cost rate?")
The Budget Justification is a very important part of your application and is a Required Document. Peer reviewers will use it to evaluate the appropriateness of the financial resources you have identified as necessary for your project, and IMLS staff will use it to check your calculations and to make determinations regarding the allowability of specific expenses according to the appropriate set of cost principles.

Your Budget Justification should coordinate closely with your IMLS Budget Form in format and content. It should identify the purpose for each expense and explain how you arrived at each cost, including any that you may have consolidated and summarized on the budget form.

Because there is no page limit on this document, take as much space as you need and make it easy to follow. DO NOT, however, use the Budget Justification to list qualifications of staff or to justify your project.

We strongly recommend that you consult the Guidance for Writing a Budget Justification, which you can access at www.imls.gov/applicants/budget_justification.aspx. It makes solid recommendations for how to structure your Budget Justification and what content should be included.
If your project includes creating a digital product of any kind—digital collections, web resources, metadata, software, or a digital dataset—you should complete and submit the Digital Stewardship Supplementary Information Form as a Supporting Document. It is available on our website as both a fillable PDF and a Word document. This five-part form makes it easy for reviewers and for IMLS to understand how you will create your digital products and how you will make them available for use and re-use by others.

Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, IMLS does not prescribe standards and best practices. Instead, IMLS asks a series of questions about your digital stewardship project, and your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by peer reviewers to evaluate your proposal. You need to complete the sections that align best with your project.

You may find the Federal Agencies Digitization Guidelines helpful at www.digitizationguidelines.gov.
At this point, we’d like to share a few tips gleaned from our collective experience in working with applications submitted to the NLG for Museums program each year.

First on the list, and by this time coming as no surprise, is “Register early!” You must have a DUNS number, an active SAM.gov registration, and a current and functional Grants.gov registration, and you’ll need them in this order. In other words, you must have a DUNS number to register with SAM.gov. You must have an active SAM.gov registration to register with Grants.gov. And you must have a functional Grants.gov registration to submit an application to IMLS.

It’s also crucial to remember that your SAM.gov registration expires each year and you must renew it. You can log into SAM.gov at any time and find out your status. I would recommend doing that today.
Separate and apart from registration matters, we have these suggestions to offer.

• Be certain your project goals relate to the goals of NLG and the project category to which you are applying.
• Take time to carefully research and articulate the need for your project.
• Prepare your budget form and budget justification carefully and make sure that numbers match narrative statements.
• Identify consultants and other key personnel by name, where possible.
• Provide a job description and outline the selection process for positions you will fill through grant funding.
Application Tips

- Follow the narrative outline provided in the NLG Notice of Funding Opportunity. Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections to make it easy to read.
- Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon.
- Ask a colleague to review everything before you submit.
- Contact IMLS program staff with questions.

• Follow the narrative outline provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections to make it easy for reviewers to read.

• Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon. The people who will review your application are experts, but they may not be totally familiar with your particular field’s shorthand. Make it easy for them to understand what you mean.

• Ask a colleague to review everything with fresh eyes before you submit. Ask them to act like a reviewer who’s seeing this for the first time.

• Contact IMLS program staff for assistance at any time during the process. We’ll be happy to help wherever we can.
Please be aware that by law, IMLS can make grants only to eligible applicants that submit complete applications, including attachments, on or before the deadline. So...

- Start early.
- Upload to Grants.gov prior to December 1, 2014.
- Check uploaded components against the Table of Application Components in Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- Resubmit if you need to do so.

Our best advice, then, is to start everything early; upload your application to Grants.gov WELL before December 1, 2014; and check what you’ve uploaded against the Table of Application Components in the Notice of Funding Opportunity. If you need to add or change something, you can resubmit as many times as you need to up to 11:59 pm on December 1. We’ll process the last one you put in.
Once you’ve submitted your proposal, you may wonder what happens next.

- Shortly after you submit your application to Grants.gov, you will receive e-mail message verifying its receipt.

- Ranging between a few minutes and a few hours later, you MAY receive an e-mail message indicating that your application has been “rejected with errors.” The message will specify the error, and as long as the deadline has not passed, you may correct it and resubmit your application.

- Several days later, you will receive another e-mail verifying that your application has been downloaded by IMLS.
By mid-January, you will receive an e-mail message from IMLS-MuseumGrants confirming the names of the project director and authorizing official, the amount of the request, and providing you with the IMLS log number assigned to your application.

IMLS staff check each application for eligibility and completeness. If your institution is found to be ineligible or your application is not complete, you will receive a notice from IMLS detailing the problem.

• By mid-January, you will receive an e-mail message from IMLS-MuseumGrants confirming the names of the project director and authorizing official, the amount of the request, and providing you with the IMLS log number assigned to your application.

• Next, IMLS staff check each application for eligibility and completeness. If your institution is found to be ineligible or your application is not complete, you will receive a notice from IMLS detailing the problem.
• Experienced and knowledgeable peer reviewers score your eligible and complete applications and provide comments based on the criteria outlined in the program Notice of Funding Opportunity. Reviews may take place in one or two tiers.

• Reviewers use the review criteria provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and the NLG-Museums reviewer materials posted on our website.

• By law, the IMLS director is charged with the authority and responsibility to make final award decisions.

• You will be notified by e-mail of the award decision in September 2015. You will receive the scores and comments provided by each reviewer.

• Experienced and knowledgeable peer reviewers score all eligible and complete applications and provide comments based on the criteria outlined in the program Notice of Funding Opportunity. Reviews may take place in one or two tiers.

• Reviewers use the review criteria provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and the NLG-Museums reviewer materials posted on our website.

• By law, the IMLS director is charged with the authority and responsibility to make final award decisions and does so in August.

• All applicants will be notified by e-mail of the award decision in September 2015. Each applicant will receive the scores and comments provided by each reviewer.
We hope you have found the information in this webinar helpful. Here is a listing of the names, email addresses, and direct phones for program staff in the Office of Museum Services, and we encourage you to contact us with any questions you might have. We’ll be very happy to help. This information is also on the landing page for NLG-Museums.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Contacts</th>
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<tbody>
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