

Grant Applicants Program Guidelines

Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums -- FY 2011 Guidelines

Navigating the Guidelines

You are currently on: [Home page](#)

[Contents](#)

[Section One: General Information](#)

[Section Two: Preparing and Submitting an Application](#)

[Section Three: IMLS Assurances and Certification](#)

CFDA Number 45.312

Application Deadline: November 15, 2010

Applicants must apply through Grants.gov
(see www.ims.gov/grantsgov for more information).

Dear Colleagues



I am pleased to present the 2011 guidelines for the Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums. This new funding initiative provides small, targeted investments in innovative responses to the challenges and opportunities facing cultural heritage institutions today. In a rapidly changing information environment, innovation is the key to using time, money, and staff more productively. The Sparks! Ignition Grants will encourage applicants to expand and test the boundaries of library, archive, and museum services and practices.

Because innovative ideas can emerge in many different types of organizations, the Sparks! Ignition Grants intentionally are structured to encourage applications from the broadest possible spectrum of institutions within the communities IMLS serves. With a streamlined application and award process, a commitment by IMLS to share project results broadly, and an emphasis on creativity and potential impact, we believe these grants will be a valuable addition to the other funding opportunities that IMLS provides.

I invite you to read these guidelines, speak with IMLS staff, and consider applying for funding. I also encourage you to contact IMLS if you are interested in becoming a peer reviewer. The expertise you bring is invaluable to us in this process, and we are always seeking new and fresh perspectives.

Sincerely,

Marsha L. Semmel
Acting Director, IMLS

Contact Information

For more information, call or write:

Sparks! Ignition Grants Program Staff

Chuck Thomas, Senior Program Officer
Office of Library Services

Phone: 202/653-4663
E-mail: cthomas@imls.gov

Helen Wechsler, Senior Program Officer
Office of Museum Services
Phone: 202/653-4779
E-mail: hwechsler@imls.gov

Robert Trio, Program Specialist
Office of Library Services
Phone: 202/653-4798
E-mail: rtrio@imls.gov

Tim Carrigan, Program Specialist
Office of Museum Services
Phone: 202/653-4639
E-mail: tcarrigan@imls.gov

Office of Museum Services General phone: 202/653-4789

Office of Library Services General phone: 202/653-4700

Institute of Museum and Library Services

1800 M Street, NW, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20036-5802
General phone: 202/653-IMLS (4657)
General e-mail: imlsinfo@imls.gov
Web site: www.imls.gov

Teletype (TTY/TDD) (for persons with hearing difficulty): 202/653-4614

Upon request, the Institute will provide an audio recording of this or any other publication.

Office of Management and Budget Clearance Numbers

Guidelines: OMB No. 3137-0029; Expiration Date: 8/31/2013
Forms: OMB No. 3137-0071; Expiration Date: 8/31/2013

Burden Estimates and Request for Public Comments

Public reporting burden for the collection of information per the guidelines' instruction is estimated to average 30 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the Institute of Museum and Library Services at the address above; and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3137-0029), Washington, DC 20503.

Public reporting burden is estimated to average 1 hour for the Program Information Sheet, 15 hours for the proposal narrative, 5 hours each for the Detailed Budget and Summary Budget, 2 hours for the Specifications for Projects that Develop Digital Products form, and 30 minutes per response for the Partnership Statement and other supporting documentation. Send comment regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestion for reducing this burden, to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Chief Information Officer, 1800 M Street, NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036-5802; and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (3137-0071), Washington, DC 20503.

IMLS programs do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, or age. For further information, write to the Civil Rights Officer, Institute of Museum and Library Services, 1800 M Street, NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036-5802.

[back to top](#)

Grant Applicants

Program Guidelines

Sparks! Ignition Grants -- FY 2011 Guidelines

Navigating the Grant Program Guidelines

[Home page](#)

You are currently on: Contents

[Section One: General Information](#)

[Section Two: Preparing and Submitting an Application](#)

[Section Three: IMLS Assurances and Certification](#)

Contents

Section One: General Information

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

[Museums and Libraries Strengthen 21st Century Skills](#)

[Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth](#)

[Encouraging Collections Care in Museums, Libraries, and Archives](#)

[Considering the Future of Libraries, Archives, and Museums](#)

About Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums

Categories of Funding

Web Conferencing with Program Staff

Eligibility

[Eligibility for Libraries and Archives](#)

[Eligibility for Museums](#)

[Partnerships](#)

Application Review Process

[HowTo Serve as a Reviewer](#)

Award Information

[Overview](#)

[Award Announcements](#)

[Award Amount](#)

[Project Start Date](#)

[Duration of Grant](#)

[Cost Sharing](#)

[Indirect Costs](#)

[Use of Funds](#)

[Project White Paper](#)

[Copyright/Work Products](#)

Section Two: Preparing and Submitting an Application

Grants.Gov Information and Instructions

[Grants.gov Help](#)

[Tips for Working Successfully with Grants.gov](#)

Application Tips

Preparing an Application

[Application Component Formats](#)

[Application Component Naming and Sequencing](#)

[Application Components](#)

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

Abstract

Program Information Sheet

Narrative

Budget

[Detailed Budget](#)

[Summary Budget](#)

[Budget Justification](#)

Specifications for Projects That Develop Digital Products

Partnership Statement

Organizational Profile

List of Key Project Staff and Consultants and Resumes for Key Project Staff

Proof of Nonprofit Status

Supporting Documentation

Section Three: IMLS Assurances and Certification

Assurances Statement

Certifications Required of All Applicants

Certifications Required of Some Applicants

[back to top](#)

Grant Applicants

Program Guidelines

Sparks! Ignition Grants -- FY 2011 Guidelines

Navigating the Grant Program Guidelines

[Home page](#)

[Contents](#)

You are currently on: Section One: General Information

[Section Two: Preparing and Submitting an Application](#)

[Section Three: IMLS Assurances and Certification](#)

General Information

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute and its resources, please visit www.ims.gov.

The Institute supports the full range of museums, including art, history, science and technology, children's, natural history, historic houses, nature centers, botanical gardens, and zoos; and all types of libraries, including public, school, academic, research, and archival. Our robust capacity for research, evaluation, policy analysis, grantmaking, and partnerships helps make it possible for libraries and museums to be leaders in their communities.

Museums and libraries are America's leading public institutions, making knowledge available to millions at little or no cost. As public institutions they must meet a very high threshold of mission accountability and use resources wisely for public good.

Through grants and information resources, we annually reach thousands of museums and libraries in myriad ways—from providing much needed technical assistance for small institutions to establishing national and replicable models, strengthening state networks, and supporting professional development. To aid institutions in program design, we also provide tools for strategic planning and evaluation. Funding from the Institute helps museums and libraries operate effectively and give value to their communities. It also leverages additional public and private support.

Collecting and disseminating results from funded projects, engaging in research, and publishing reports enable the Institute of Museum and Library Services to make a significant contribution to library, museum, and information policy and practice in the United States.

Museums and Libraries Strengthen 21st Century Skills

In the summer of 2009, the Institute released *Museums, Libraries, and 21st Century Skills*. The report [and accompanying Web site](#) describe the role libraries and museums play in engaging their communities and contributing to workforce and education goals. Through a self-assessment tool, case studies, and policy analysis, the report establishes the essential role that libraries and museums play in creating an engaged citizenry and competitive workforce. The report highlights the ways in which these institutions support information, communications, and technology literacy; creativity and problem solving; civic literacy; global awareness; and other 21st century skills.

The report helps libraries and museums align institutional mission, infrastructure, staff, and programming to engage communities in learning. The report has also spurred an agency-wide *21st Century Skills* initiative, and a national *Making the Learning Connection* campaign to help communities assess their needs and contribute to a shared vision for 21st century learning. It includes an eight-city workshop tour, a national contest, new online tools and resources, and a series of interactive webinars. For more information, see www.ims.gov/about/21stCSkills.shtm.

The Institute also encourages grant proposals that promote the skills necessary to develop 21st century communities, citizens, and workers.

Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth

Museums and libraries have a rich array of resources—collections, staff, programs—that engage youth by inspiring curiosity and fostering learning. These cultural institutions also provide safe and welcoming environments for kids. Libraries and museums are essential community partners that have a significant role to play in helping youth succeed in school, work, and life. Through its *Museums and Libraries Engaging America's Youth* initiative, the Institute looked back at the youth-oriented programs it funded to examine what works and to share effective practices. A convening of practitioners, educators, and informal learning experts looked at elements of successful programs – such as positive environment, institutional support, professional development, and evaluation—and how museums and libraries can enhance their role as community partners. If your application to the Sparks! Ignition Grants program involves youth, please see these publications for tips and recommendations in designing effective programs, as well as for valuable resources and bibliography.

Youth Resources (available at www.ims.gov/youth):

- The **Final Report** shares the results of the year-long study on the impact of IMLS grants (1998-2003) through programs that served youth aged 9-19. Nearly 400 museum and library programs were surveyed about their goals, strategies, content, audience, and structure, as well as about their impact, effectiveness, and outcomes.
- The **Practitioner's Guide** provides practitioners with the information needed for planning and implementing effective youth programs. It includes a variety of resources and references to critical works that have been gathered from the fields of youth and community development, education, and informal learning.

Encouraging Collections Care in Museums, Libraries, and Archives

A 2005 study co-sponsored by IMLS, called *A Public Trust at Risk: The Heritage Health Index Report on the State of America's Collections*, found that nearly 190 million objects in U.S. library, museum, and archive collections are in immediate danger and need our help. In 2007, IMLS responded to this important problem by initiating *Connecting to Collections: A Call to Action*. This ongoing initiative has funded national meetings, conservation grants, and wide distribution of a core set of print and online resources on caring for collections. To learn more about this initiative, see www.ims.gov/collections.

Considering the Future of Libraries, Archives, and Museums

IMLS is committed to helping museums, archives, and libraries across the country better understand their roles as providers of public service to communities. The Future of Libraries and Museums in the 21st Century planning meeting, held in 2008 in Washington, D.C., was convened by the National Academy of Sciences and supported by IMLS to bring together voices across and outside the library and museum fields to debate, discuss, and question the future of museums and libraries and gain insight into how the conversation could unfold in subsequent discussions in the field at large. Leaders from across the disciplines in the library, archives, museum, research, scientific, technology, and education fields met to help define the central issues, challenges, and opportunities that libraries and museums are likely to face in the coming decades. That meeting spawned the 2009 IMLS publication, *The Future of Museums and Libraries: A Discussion Guide* (see www.ims.gov/pdf/DiscussionGuide.pdf) and a subsequent 2010 online discussion of the central themes from that meeting (see <http://imsupnext.wikispaces.com>). The agency remains committed to exploration of this topic.

About Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums

How do we lay the foundation for a more competitive America? How do we help you succeed? Now, I believe it starts with investments in innovation, in education, and a 21st century infrastructure.

President Barack Obama to the Business Roundtable,
Washington, D.C., February 24, 2010.

Innovation is driven by a commitment to excellence and continuous improvement. Innovation is based on curiosity, the willingness to take risks, and experimenting to test assumptions. Innovation is based on questioning and challenging the status quo. It is also based on recognizing opportunity and taking advantage of it.

U.S. Dept. of Education, "What Do We Mean by 'Innovation'?"
<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/oii/about/definition.html>

Innovation transforms an idea into a new, improved product, process or service. New technology is the visible expression of this, but there are intangible, organisational innovations too.

Angel Gurría, OECD Secretary-General, "Towards an Innovation Strategy,"
OECD Observer, No. 263 (October 2007).

The citizens and communities served by libraries, archives, and museums now are offered an increasing variety of choice for information sources and services. In this environment, cultural heritage organizations are challenged to respond to changing user needs and expectations, and to make more productive use of the money, staff, and other resources they are given to serve their users. Innovation will be a key determinant of their success.

The IMLS Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums are a new IMLS funding opportunity within the National Leadership Grants program. These grants encourage libraries, archives, and museums to challenge existing assumptions about how they operate and the services they provide. These small grants support the deployment, testing, and evaluation of promising and groundbreaking new tools, products, services, or organizational practices. Applicants may propose activities or approaches that involve risk, as long as the risk is balanced by significant potential for improvement in the ways cultural heritage institutions serve their communities.

Successful proposals will address problems, challenges, or needs of broad relevance to libraries, archives, and/or museums, will test innovative responses to these problems, and will make the findings of these tests widely and openly accessible. To maximize the benefit of federal investments, the Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums will fund projects with the following characteristics:

- **Broad Potential Impact**—Applicants should identify a specific problem or need that is important to many libraries, archives, and/or museums, and propose a testable and measurable solution to the problem. Proposals must demonstrate a thorough understanding of current issues and practices in the project's focus area and discuss the project's potential impact within libraries, archives, and/or museums. Proposed innovations should be widely adoptable or adaptable.
- **Significant Innovation**—The proposed solution to the identified problem must offer strong potential for non-incremental, significant advancement in the operation of libraries, archives, and/or museums. Applicants must explain how the proposed activity differs from current practices or exploits an unexplored opportunity, and the potential benefit to be gained by this innovation.

Institutions of all sizes and types are encouraged to develop projects that meet the specific needs of their counterparts across the country. Examples of projects that might be funded by this program include, but are not limited to:

- exploring the potential of highly original, experimental collaborations,
- implementing new workflows or processes with potential for substantial cost savings,
- testing new metrics or methods to measure the impact of promising tools or services,
- rapid prototyping and testing of new types of software tools, or creating useful new ways to link separate software applications used in libraries, archives, or museums,
- offering innovative new types of services or new service options to library, archive, or museum visitors, or
- enhancing institutions' abilities to interact with audiences in new ways to promote learning or improve services, such as through the deployment of innovative crowd-sourcing techniques.

Grant funding for such activities may include all activities associated with planning, deploying, and evaluating the innovation, as long as the expense is allowable under federal and IMLS regulations and

guidelines. Sparks! Ignition Grant funds may not be used for:

- evaluation of an existing program or service,
- projects that are only for planning,
- projects that are only for research (as distinguished from experimentation),
- projects that are limited to existing and traditional approaches to exhibitions, performances, or other types of public programs,
- projects that involve mainly digitization, unless the applicant is proposing an innovative method for digitization,
- activities that will produce only incremental improvements in operational or business processes,
- support of conferences or professional meetings, or
- acquisition of equipment in excess of 50 percent of the total funds requested from IMLS.

The Sparks! Ignition Grants intentionally are designed to foster broad sharing of information about project findings. Successful proposals are expected to include innovative and well-rounded communication plans that exploit multiple media and technologies to share project information with targeted audiences. Additionally, grant recipients at the end of the project will be required to submit a five- to ten-page white paper that IMLS will disseminate widely. This paper will describe the identified problem or need, original project goals, and the innovation tested, and report the findings and lessons learned through the activity. Grant recipients also will be expected to participate in a January 2012 online discussion among all the 2011 Sparks! Ignition Grants awardees.

Web Conferencing with Program Staff

IMLS offers opportunities to discuss your application or general issues about the Sparks! Ignition Grants program with the program staff. We do this through a Web conferencing system (called Adobe® Acrobat® Connecta Pro) that combines audio conferencing (like traditional teleconferencing systems) and webinar capabilities. We invite you to join the conference to see and hear presentations by IMLS program staff, ask questions, and listen to the questions and comments from other participants. The conference call schedule for Sparks! Ignition Grants this year will be:

- Thursday, September 30, at 1:00 p.m. EST
- Wednesday, October 13, at 1:00 p.m. EST
- Wednesday, November 3, at 1:00 p.m. EST

Please note that the schedule is subject to change. Confirmation of the meeting dates and times, as well as instructions for participating in these online meetings, will be posted on the Sparks! Ignition Grants Web site each of the weeks listed above.

Eligibility

Eligibility for Libraries and Archives

An eligible applicant must be:

1. either a unit of state or local government or a private nonprofit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code;
2. located in one of the 50 states of the United States of America, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau; and
3. one of the six types of organizations listed below:
 - a library or a parent organization, such as a school district, a municipality, a state agency, or an academic institution, that is responsible for the administration of a library. Eligible libraries include public libraries, elementary and secondary school libraries, college and university libraries, research libraries and archives that are not an integral part of an institution of higher education and that make publicly available library services and materials that are suitable for scholarly research and not otherwise available,¹ and private or special libraries that have been deemed eligible to participate in this program by the state in which the library is located,
 - an academic or administrative unit, such as a graduate school of library and information science that is part of an institution of higher education through which it would make

- application,
- a digital library, if it makes library materials publicly available and provides library services, including selection, organization, description, reference, and preservation, under the supervision of at least one permanent professional staff librarian,
- a library agency that is an official agency of a state or other unit of government and is charged by the law governing it with the extension and development of public library services within its jurisdiction,
- a library consortium that is a local, statewide, regional, interstate, or international cooperative association of library entities that provides for the systematic and effective coordination of the resources of eligible libraries, as defined above, and information centers that work to improve the services delivered to the clientele of these libraries, or
- a library association that exists on a permanent basis, serves libraries or library professionals on a national, regional, state, or local level, and engages in activities designed to advance the well-being of libraries and the library profession.

Eligibility for Museums

An eligible applicant must be:

- either a unit of state or local government or a private nonprofit organization that has tax-exempt status under the Internal Revenue Code,
- be located in one of the fifty states of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, or the Republic of Palau,
- and qualify as one of the following three types of organizations:
 1. a museum² that, using a professional staff,³
 - is organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes;
 - owns or uses tangible objects, either animate or inanimate;
 - cares for these objects; and
 - exhibits these objects to the general public on a regular basis through facilities that it owns or operates⁴.
 2. an organization or association that engages in activities designed to advance the well-being of museums and the museum profession,⁵ or
 3. an institution of higher education, including public and nonprofit universities.

Please note that a museum located within a parent organization that is a state or local government or multipurpose not-for-profit entity, such as a municipality, university, historical society, foundation, or cultural center, may apply on its own behalf if the museum (1) is able to independently fulfill all the eligibility requirements listed above, (2) functions as a discrete unit within the parent organization, (3) has its own fully segregated and itemized operating budget, and (4) has the authority to make the application on its own. When any of the last three conditions cannot be met, a museum may apply through its parent organization, and the parent organization may submit a single application for one or more of its museums.

¹ Research libraries must be either generally recognized as possessing unique scholarly research materials and services that are made available to the public, or able to demonstrate that such is the case when submitting an application to IMLS.

² Museums include, but are not limited to, aquariums, arboretums, art museums, botanical gardens, children/youth museums, general museums (those having two or more significant disciplines), historic houses/sites, history museums, natural history/anthropology museums, nature centers, planetariums, science/technology centers, specialized museums (limited to a single distinct subject), and zoological parks.

³ An institution uses a professional staff if it employs at least one professional 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.

⁴ 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 exhibits objects by appointment may meet the requirement to exhibit objects to the general public on a regular basis if it can establish, in light of the facts under all the relevant circumstances, that this method of exhibition does not unreasonably restrict the accessibility of the institution's exhibits to the general public.

An institution that does not have as a primary purpose the exhibition of objects to the general public but that can demonstrate that it exhibits objects to the general public on a regular basis as a significant, separate, distinct, and continuing portion of its activities, and that it otherwise meets the museum eligibility requirements, may be determined to be eligible as a museum under these guidelines. For more information, please see 45 C.F.R. Chapter XI, Subchapter E (Institute of Museum and Library Services).

⁵ A friends group associated with a single museum is not an eligible applicant.

Partnerships

While partnerships are not required for Sparks! Ignition Grants for Libraries and Museums, the Institute has found that involving carefully chosen partners with complementary competencies and resources can create powerful synergies that extend project impact. When appropriate and meaningful, partnerships stimulate a broader community perspective and extend the impact of libraries, archives, and museums by leveraging the resources and efforts of all partners.

The members of the partnership shall either designate one member of the partnership to apply for the grant, or establish a separate, eligible legal entity comprising the partnership members to apply for the grant. The lead applicant serves as the fiscal agent for the project and must be an eligible entity.

Each partner must complete a Partnership Statement form and be listed in section five of the Program Information Sheet. The Partnership Statement should describe the activities each partner organization plans to perform and the benefits it expects to receive from participating in the project. The Partnership Statement binds each member of the partnership to every statement and all assurances made by the applicant in the application.

By submitting the Partnership Statement with the application, the applicant affirms that (1) the partner is available and has agreed to participate, and (2) the Partnership Statement is true, complete, and accurate to the best of the applicant's authorized representative's knowledge.

The applicant will ensure that each partner also provides a signed original version of the Partnership Statement to the applicant, and that this form will be made available to IMLS on request.

If IMLS makes a grant to a partnership, the lead applicant for the partnership is the grantee and is responsible legally for the use of all grant funds and for ensuring that the project is carried out by the partnership in accordance with the terms of the grant and all applicable federal laws, regulations, and requirements. The lead applicant must be the fiscal agent, but may subcontract with partners for other specific activities or services. Each member of the partnership is responsible legally for carrying out the activities it agrees to perform and using the funds it receives in accordance with the terms of the grant and all applicable federal laws, regulations, and requirements.

Application Review Process

Sparks! Ignition Grants are intended for projects that are highly focused, innovative, and potentially risk taking. They are not intended to support existing organizational practices, basic operational needs, or incremental improvements.

Successful grant proposals result from careful planning, including choosing an important problem, challenge, or need in current library, archive, or museum practices; analyzing opportunities or resources lost because of this problem; identifying an original and promising potential solution; and developing a proposed work plan to test the innovation as well as a specific plan to measure the results and evaluate the proposed solution's suitability for adoption or replication in other libraries, archives, and museums. Partnerships are not required for Sparks! Ignition Grants proposals, but are permitted and encouraged if they help bring together the appropriate expertise and resources for the proposed project.

Successful proposals will demonstrate a thorough understanding of the identified problem and past or ongoing related efforts to address the problem; provide justification for testing the proposed solution; and

describe the project's potential to benefit and advance the library, archives, and/or museum fields. The most competitive projects provide creative potential solutions to significant problems and develop a solid methodology to measure and assess the test results.

The Institute uses a peer review process that includes individual field review and/or panel review to competitively evaluate all eligible and complete applications. Reviewers are professionals in the field who have relevant knowledge and expertise in the types of activities and organizations identified in the applications. Reviewers are instructed to evaluate proposed projects according to the criteria identified in the program guidelines. The Institute's director makes final funding decisions based on the reviewers' evaluations and the overall goals of the grant programs and the agency.

How To Serve as a Reviewer

All competitive awards are reviewed by library and museum professionals who know the needs of communities, can share best practices, and are well versed in the issues and concerns of museums and libraries today. There are many benefits to volunteering to review applications. If you are selected to serve, you will help the Institute and the museum and library communities and strengthen the grant review process. If you are interested in serving as a reviewer for the Institute, you can be included in our database of potential reviewers by submitting your information through our online reviewer forms at www.ims.gov/reviewers/reviewers.shtm.

Award Information

Overview

Deadline : November 15, 2010.

Cost Sharing: Cost sharing is not required .

Indirect Costs: Sparks! Ignition Grant funds from IMLS cannot support indirect costs.

Award Announcements

No information about the status of an application will be released until all applications have been reviewed and all deliberations are concluded. IMLS expects to notify both funded and unfunded applicants of final decisions by mid- May 2011, with funded projects beginning no earlier than June 1, 2011.

Award Amounts

Sparks! Ignition Grants range from \$10,000 to \$25,000. IMLS will review and negotiate budgets as necessary. IMLS may award an amount less than that requested by an applicant. **If IMLS funding is requested for salaries of permanent staff, the proposal should explain how their regular duties will be performed during the grant period.**

Please note: The Sparks! Ignition Grants program is subject to the availability of funds and decision by IMLS to proceed.

Project Start Date

Sparks! Ignition Grants projects may begin on June 1, July 1, or August 1, 2011. Projects must begin on the first day of a month and end on the last day of a month.

Duration of Grant

Sparks! Ignition Grants are restricted to a period of one year.

Cost Sharing

Because the information gained from Sparks! Ignition Grants projects is expected to benefit the library, archive, and museum communities beyond any one institution, IMLS does not require a match for these proposals. If an applicant does choose to share the total costs of a project, **federal funds may not be used to meet cost-sharing requirements.**

Indirect Costs

Proposals for Sparks! Ignition Grants may not include requests for funds to support indirect costs, which often are called “overhead” or “administrative costs.”

Use of Funds

Grant funds may not be used for construction, acquisition of collections, contributions to endowments, social activities, ceremonies, entertainment, or pre-grant costs. All revenues generated with project funds during the grant period must be reported as program income and should be applied to the grant recipient's cost sharing. All listed expenses must be incurred during the grant period. IMLS (45 C.F.R. Chapter XI and 2 C.F.R. Chapter XXXI) and government-wide administrative, cost, and audit rules and requirements apply, including appropriate OMB circulars.

Project White Paper

Sparks! Ignition Grants awardees are required at the end of their project to submit a final five- to ten-page white paper that describes the original project goals and project design and provides an analysis of the project's findings and results. This white paper should provide quantitative and qualitative data on project achievements, summarize lessons learned, document potential or realized project outcomes (changes in individual or organizational behavior, knowledge, skills, or attitudes), and evaluate the tested innovation's suitability and potential for adoption in other institutions, communities, or fields.

The white paper must be in a publicly releasable form and must not contain any personal or proprietary information. In addition to the white paper, the grantee must also include a final report on the form provided by IMLS. See the final report form at www.imls.gov/recipients/administration.shtm.

A copy of the final white paper at project's end will be disseminated by IMLS. IMLS reserves, for federal government purposes, a royalty-free, worldwide, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the white paper report and authorize others to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work.

Copyright/Work Products

IMLS requires acknowledgment of IMLS assistance in all publications and other products resulting from the project. Products produced with IMLS grant funds should be distributed free or at cost unless the recipient has received written approval from IMLS for another arrangement. The recipient may copyright, with written permission, any work that is subject to copyright and was developed, or for which ownership was purchased, under an award. IMLS reserves, for federal government purposes, a royalty-free, worldwide, nonexclusive, and irrevocable license to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work and authorize others to reproduce, publish, or otherwise use the work.

Wide dissemination of the results of IMLS-funded projects advances the body of knowledge and professional practice regarding museum, library, and information services. For this reason, IMLS encourages creators of works resulting from IMLS funding to share their work whenever possible through forums such as institutional or disciplinary repositories, open-access journals, or other mediums.

IMLS requires that at the end of projects awardees provide IMLS three copies of any printed or physical distributable products and one copy of any electronic products produced with IMLS funds. Printed or physical products include items such as learning resources, promotional materials, publications like journal articles or book manuscripts, research instruments, and reports from consultants or external evaluators. Electronic products include materials such as research datasets or software tools produced during the project. Generally, at least a beta version of any software developed on an IMLS-funded project must be provided to IMLS as a product of the grant. Consult with IMLS regarding software development projects.

Guidance for Projects That Develop Digital Products

Projects that involve the creation of new digital products such as digital collections, tools, or other digital resources must provide in the proposal narrative a detailed explanation of the need, intended uses, and audiences for these digital products. The proposal must also include a detailed work plan related to creating the digital products, and applicants must complete and submit with the application the *Specifications for Projects That Develop Digital Products* form. This form, as well as a list of potentially useful resources,

projects, and standards , is available on the IMLS Web site at www.ims.gov/applicants/forms.

[back to top](#)

Grant Applicants

Program Guidelines

Sparks! Ignition Grants -- FY 2011 Guidelines

Navigating the Grant Program Guidelines

[Home page](#)

[Contents](#)

[Section One: General Information](#)

You are currently on: Section Two: Preparing and Submitting an Application

[Section Three: IMLS Assurances and Certification](#)

Preparing and Submitting an Application

Grants.Gov information and instructions

Organizations that are applying under the November 15, 2010 deadline for the Sparks! Ignition Grants program must submit their applications through Grants.gov, the federal government's online application system. The Grants.gov system will accept applications through 11:59 p.m. eastern time on November 15, 2010.

While the deadline is November 15, 2010, IMLS recommends strongly that applicants REGISTER EARLY and COMPLETE AND SUBMIT THEIR APPLICATION EARLY. All applicants who are using Grants.gov must register with Grants.gov before submitting their application. The multistep registration process generally cannot be completed in a single day. Applicants who are not already registered should allow at least two weeks to complete this one-time process. DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE WEEK OF THE APPLICATION DEADLINE TO REGISTER.

Only applications validated by the Grants.gov system will be available to IMLS for the grant review process.

Find Grant Opportunities: www.grants.gov/applicants/find_grant_opportunities.jsp

Get Registered: www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp

Apply for Grants: www.grants.gov/applicants/apply_for_grants.jsp

**Use one of the following identifiers to locate the
Sparks! Ignition Grants package:**

CFDA No: 45.312

Funding Opportunity Number: SPARKS-FY11

Within 30 working days after the application deadline, IMLS will e-mail applicants an acknowledgment form with an application log number. Applicants who do not receive this form in the stated time should contact IMLS to ensure that their application was successfully logged.

Grants.gov Help

Help is available on the Grants.gov Web site at www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp.

For direct assistance with Grants.gov, contact the Grants.gov help desk via e-mail at support@grants.gov, or call Grants.gov at 1-800-518-4726. Grants.gov help hours are 24 hours a day, seven days a week; closed on federal holidays. Please keep this in mind when submitting an application with a Monday deadline.

The Grants.gov help desk will assign a case number to each inquiry. This number only documents the inquiry to the help desk and is in no way related to the tracking number that Grants.gov will assign to an application once it has been successfully submitted.

Tips for Working Successfully with Grants.gov:

- Start early! Go to www.grants.gov/applicants/get_registered.jsp to register. Use Grants.gov resources at www.grants.gov/applicants/applicant_faqs.jsp. The Grants.gov Web site has checklists, FAQs, and online tutorials to assist you in preparing your organization to submit applications. You should also utilize the Central Contractor Registration (CCR) user's guide at www.bpn.gov/ccr/doc/CCRUsersGuide.pdf. Please note that your CCR registration must be renewed annually.
- Consider designating more than one Authorized Organization Representative (AOR) for your organization when you register. This will help to avoid last-minute crises in the event that a single AOR is unavailable when you are ready to submit your application. This person might not be the same person that you list as the authorized representative for IMLS. Also, you should update the AOR at Grants.gov each year or when staff at your organization changes.
- Make technological choices that help you.
 - Download the most recent version of Adobe® Acrobat® Reader® onto your computer for best results. Make sure to submit all documents in Adobe® PDF format.
 - Convert your documents into PDFs, using one of the tools available here: www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs
 - Use Internet Explorer® for your browser when submitting the application to Grants.gov. Mozilla® Firefox® and Apple Safari® are not currently compatible with this process
- Contact Grants.gov help (www.grants.gov/help/help.jsp or 1-800-518-4726) for assistance with hardware and software issues, registration issues, or technical problems. Contact your program officer for assistance with guidelines, eligibility, project, or timeline (schedule of completion) questions. Grants.gov help hours are 24 hours per day, seven days per week, excepting federal holidays. Please keep this in mind when submitting an application with a Monday deadline.

Application Tips

To Make Your Application More Competitive:

- Start with a good idea! Identify the problem you are trying to solve and a potential solution that grant funding would support. Remember that competitive programs are often very competitive. In general, projects that benefit more than one institution and reach a broad audience will be the most competitive.
- Match your idea with the appropriate funder and program—contact the program officer to find out if your idea matches the goals of the program.
- Read the program guidelines carefully and note all instructions and deadlines. It takes time to develop a good proposal and a good project, so give yourself plenty of it.
- Assemble your project team, including external partners—your team will be your most important asset.
- Meet to discuss all aspects of the project and all of the program evaluation criteria—identify assets, weaknesses, and potential allies. Ask questions: *Who is the target audience? What are the anticipated outcomes (who will benefit and how)? How can the benefits be measured (how will you know if you succeed)? Who will know about it?*
- Generally, projects involving two or more institutions will require time and ongoing discussions to develop a strong relationship, but projects based on these kinds of collaborative relationships often will be more competitive for funding and more successful in execution. Involve potential allies as partners, members of advisory boards, or writers of support letters. They will help to disseminate results and extend the benefit.
- Develop a draft proposal—follow the recommended format and all instructions, and address all of the evaluation criteria in the order prescribed. Be sure to highlight your assets and try to resolve potential weaknesses (e.g., arrange to hire a consultant if your team lacks expertise in a specific area).
- Write in plain, understandable language. Limit your use of professional jargon and spell out any acronyms the first time they are used.
- Ask others who have not been involved in the project to read your draft—they may notice an

important omission or weakness.

- Contact your program officer for clarification of questions.
- Revise your proposal and submit it on time.
- If your proposal is not successful, do not be discouraged. Read the reviewers' comments carefully—they can provide important suggestions for improving your project. Ask your program officer to help clarify any comments that you do not understand.

Preparing an Application

Application Component Formats

An application requesting funding for a Sparks! Ignition Grant should include the following materials. Each component is in one of the following formats:

- **Grants.gov forms:** These forms are available only in the package downloaded from Grants.gov.
- **IMLS forms:** These forms are available in both Microsoft® Word document and fill-in PDF formats, and are located both in the downloaded Grants.gov file and [on the IMLS Web site](#). While the Word versions of the forms are provided for convenience, please note that **completed forms must be submitted as PDFs**.
- **PDF documents:** Applicants should create these documents using their own word processing or other software. **Again, they must be attached to the application as PDFs.**

Note: IMLS will not convert files for applicants and will not accept file formats other than PDF.

For assistance in converting documents to PDF, visit
http://www.grants.gov/help/download_software.jsp#pdf_conversion_programs

Application Component Naming and Sequencing

The IMLS forms and other components that are part of the application must each be saved as a PDF that is named according to the table below. Note: IMLS will not convert files for applicants and will not accept file formats other than PDF. Also, please do not send secured PDFs because IMLS cannot process these files.

Append all of the documents to the Attachments form in the prescribed sequence. If there are more attachments than will fit in the “Mandatory Documents for Submission” box on Grants.gov, please use the “Optional Documents for Submission” box for the remaining ones, following the same naming convention.

The table below lists the sequence in which each component should be appended to the Attachment form, the format required for each component, and the naming convention for application components. **The Face Sheet (SF- 424s) and the Abstract are Grants.gov forms that will automatically be saved as PDFs.**

NOTE ON SEQUENCING: The first column below is for sequencing purposes only. If a document is not required for your particular application, do not skip a space on the Attachments form; rather, insert the subsequent document for your application into the next numbered space. For example, a one-year project will require only a Detailed Budget for Year 1, some applications may not require a Partnership Statement (e.g., if no partners are proposed by the applicant), etc.

Application Components

Attach in this Order	Component	Format	File name to use
n/a	The Application for Federal Assistance/Short Organizational Form SF-424S	Grants.gov form	n/a
n/a	Abstract (to be uploaded through Grants.gov)	Text document that you create	n/a
1st	Program Information Sheet	IMLS form Download here	Programinfo.pdf

2nd	Narrative	PDF document	Narrative.pdf
3rd	Detailed Budget form	IMLS form Download here	Detailedbudget.pdf
4th	Summary Budget form	IMLS form Download here	Summarybudget.pdf
5th	Budget Justification	PDF document	Budgetjustification.pdf
6th	Specifications for Projects That Develop Digital Products form (if applicable)	IMLS form Download here	Specificationsdigital.pdf
7th	Partnership Statement forms (if applicable)	IMLS form Download here	Partners.pdf
8th	Organizational Profile	PDF document	Organizationalprofile.pdf
9th	List of key project staff and consultants	PDF document	Projectstaff.pdf
10th	Staff resumes (2 pages each, max)	PDF document	Resumes.pdf
11th	Proof of nonprofit status (if applicable)	PDF document	Proofnonprofit.pdf
12th 13th 14th Etc.	Supporting documentation (if applicable)	PDF Document	Supportingdoc1.pdf Supportingdoc2.pdf Supportingdoc3.pdf Etc.

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

1-4

Items 1–4 on form SF-424s are filled in automatically by Grants.gov.

5. Applicant Information

a. Legal Name: Enter the legal name of the organization that is making the application. Please see the [Eligibility section](#) for eligibility details. If the eligible entity does not have the authority to apply directly to IMLS for funding, enter the name of the parent organization that is submitting the application on behalf of the eligible entity. Enter the name of the eligible entity in the space provided for “Organizational Unit” on the Program Information Sheet, Question 1b.

b. Address: Use Street1 for the organization’s street address or post office box number, whichever is used for its U.S. Postal Service mailing address. Street2 is not a required field and should be used only when a Suite or Room Number or other similar information is part of the address.

In the Zip+4/Postal Code box, enter the **full nine-digit** Zip code assigned by the U.S. Postal Service. An organization’s full Zip code can be retrieved at www.usps.com/zip4.

c. Web Address: Enter the Web address of the legal applicant.

d. Type of Applicant: Select the one code that best characterizes the applicant organization from the menu in the first dropdown box. Leave the other boxes blank.

e. EIN/TIN: Enter the nine-digit number assigned by the IRS; do not use a Social Security number.

Note: The Taxpayer Identification Number (TIN) is an identification number used by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) in the administration of tax laws. It is issued either by the Social Security Administration (SSA) or by the IRS. A Social Security number is issued by the SSA, whereas all other TINs are issued by the IRS. An Employer Identification Number (EIN), also known as a federal tax identification number, is a nine-digit number that the IRS assigns to business entities. The IRS uses this number to identify taxpayers that are required to file various business tax returns.

f. Organizational D-U-N-S®: All organizational applicants for federal funds must have a D-U-N-S®

Number.

Note: To improve the statistical reporting of federal grants and cooperative agreements, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) directed all federal agencies to require all applicants for federal grants to provide a Dun and Bradstreet Data Universal Numbering System (D-U-N-S®) Number when applying for federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003.

Organizations should verify that they have a D-U-N-S® Number or take steps to obtain one. Organizations can receive a DUNS number at no cost by calling the dedicated toll-free D-U-N-S® Number request line at 1-866-705-5711 or by visiting www.dnb.com/us. Individuals who would personally receive a grant or cooperative agreement award from the federal government apart from any business or nonprofit organization they may operate are exempt from this requirement.

Ensure that the number entered here agrees with the number (either 9 or 13 digits) that was used with the CCR (Central Contractor Registry) as part of the Grants.gov registration.

g. Congressional District: Enter the number of the congressional district in which the applicant organization is located. Use the following format: two-letter state abbreviation, followed by a hyphen, followed by the three-digit district number. For example, if the organization is located in the 5th Congressional District of California, enter "CA-005." For the 12th 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 an 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 an organization's district, visit the House of Representatives Web site at www.house.gov and use the "Find Your Representative" tool.

6. Project Information

a. Project Title: Provide a brief descriptive title.

b. Project Description: Briefly describe the specific project, not the applicant organization. Use clear language that can be understood readily by readers who may not be familiar with the discipline or subject area.

c. Proposed Project Start Date/End Date: Enter the beginning and ending dates for the requested period of support, that is, the span of time necessary to plan, execute, and close out the proposed project. [See Project Start and End Dates for Sparks! Ignition Grants projects.](#)

7. Project Director

Provide the requested information for the project director, who will be responsible for carrying out the project and who will serve as the key contact person with IMLS regarding the progress achieved under the grant. Leave the Social Security number blank. Select a prefix (even though this field is not required on Grants.gov).

8. Primary Contact/Grants Administrator

Provide the requested information for the individual who should be contacted on all matters involving this application and the administration of any grant that may be awarded. For colleges and universities, this person is often a sponsored research, sponsored programs, or contracts and grants officer. In some museums, the person could be the development director. Leave the Social Security number blank. Select a prefix (even though this field is not required on Grants.gov). In some organizations, particularly smaller ones, this individual may be the same as the project director. If this is the case, check the "Same as Project Director" box. (If the primary contact/grants administrator is the same as the authorized representative, please complete all items under both 8 and 9 even though there will be some repetition.)

9. Authorized Representative

Enter the name and contact information of the person who has the authority to apply for federal support of the applicant's activities and enter into legal agreements in the name of the applicant. The authorized representative should not 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 relevant federal requirements (see IMLS Assurances and Certifications). All written correspondence will be addressed to the authorized representative.

For Grants.gov applications, the "Signature of Authorized Representative" and "Date Signed" boxes will be populated on submission of the application. Submission of the application by the authorized representative certifies compliance with relevant federal requirements, as the signature would on a paper application.

Abstract

A project abstract that does not exceed one single-spaced page (600-word maximum) must be provided. Insert the text into the Abstract form provided in the package downloaded from Grants.gov.

Information in the abstract should briefly cover the following areas as related to the proposed project:

- Who is the lead applicant and who are the formal partners (if applicable)?
- What is the time frame for the project?
- What community need(s) or problem(s) will the project address?
- What is the innovation being tested to address the identified problem or need?
- How will the innovation's effectiveness and potential be evaluated?

This abstract may be used by IMLS for public information purposes, so it should be informative to other persons working in the same or related fields and insofar as possible understandable to a technically literate lay reader. The abstract must not include any proprietary or confidential information.

Program Information Sheet

[Download the Program Information Sheet in PDF and Word formats here.](#)

1. Applicant Information

a. Legal Name: Enter the legal name of the applicant.

b. and c. Organizational Unit and Address:

If the eligible entity cannot apply for grants on its own behalf, then enter the name and address of the parent entity in these spaces. For example, if a library that is part of an organization such as a university is applying, the university would be the legal applicant, and the library would be entered as the organizational unit. Be sure to include the four-digit extension on the Zip code (Zip+4).

d. Web Address: If an organizational unit is listed, enter its Web address here. If not, enter the Web address of the entity listed at Legal Name .

e. Type of Institution: Select the one type that most accurately describes the applicant.

2. Grant Program or Grant Category

Select the appropriate designations listed under " I. Sparks! Ignition Grants ":

1. Select the appropriate funding office:
 - Museum
 - Library
2. Select "Sparks! Ignition Grants" as the grant category.

3. Request Information

a. IMLS Funds Requested: Enter the amount sought from IMLS.

b. Cost Share Amount: Though cost sharing is not required for the Sparks! Ignition Grants, applicants who choose to share the total costs of the proposed project should enter the amount of cost sharing indicated in the project budget, if any.

4. Museum Profile (Museum Applicants only)

Museum applicants seeking Sparks! Ignition Grants must answer all questions in this section. Library applicants should skip this section.

5. Project Partner Names

In the space provided, list all organizations that are official partners of the project. Each partner listed in this section is required to complete and submit a Partnership Statement form to the lead applicant institution for submission with the application.

6–8

Applicants for Sparks! Ignition Grants should skip these sections.

Narrative

Limit the narrative to six single-spaced, sequentially numbered pages. The applicant's name must appear at the top of each page. All pages should be printable on 8.5 x 11-inch paper. All pages should have at least 0.5-inch margins, and the font size should be no smaller than twelve points. The proposal narrative section should consist of five main sections:

- Assessment of Need
- Project Design
- Innovation and Impact
- Evaluation Plan
- Project Resources: Budget, Personnel, and Management

Each of these sections is explained in the following pages. Applicants must address each section separately and in the same order in which they are listed above. Review criteria also are provided after the description of each section. These criteria describe what proposal reviewers are instructed to consider as they evaluate the proposal. A well-designed proposal narrative is thorough and succinct while addressing all listed aspects of each section's description and review criteria. IMLS reviewers base their evaluations only on the information presented in the application. This makes it very important for applicants to prepare a clear, concise, well-organized document.

Assessment of Need

Using available quantitative and/or qualitative supporting evidence, describe the problem, challenge, or need to be addressed by the proposed activity. Explain the significance of the problem to libraries, archives, or museums. Describe the primary stakeholders, audiences, or groups affected by this problem. Explain how the proposed project relates to other activities, projects, and/or research related to the identified problem or need.

Review Criteria

- Proposal provides evidence that the identified problem, need, or challenge is real and is significant for libraries, archives, and/or museums.
- Proposal demonstrates thorough knowledge of current library, archive, or museum practice related to the identified problem or need.
- Proposal identifies the primary stakeholders, audiences, or groups affected by the identified problem, challenge, or need.
- Proposal demonstrates thorough knowledge of other activities, projects, and/or published literature related to the identified problem or need.

Project Design

Describe the proposed project as an innovative and appropriate response to the problem, need, or challenge described in the Assessment of Need section. Explain what innovation will be tested and why it was selected as a promising solution. Provide details on the project's scope, focus, goals, and activities. Include specifics of project implementation, including the testing methodology for the identified innovation. List the key staff and organizations participating in the project and their project roles and responsibilities. Describe how information will be shared and decisions will be made between all organizations and staff involved in the project. Describe a communication plan to share project news with targeted audiences.

Review Criteria

- Proposal clearly explains how the project will attempt to address the identified problem or need, and why the proposed activity is an appropriate and innovative response to that need.
- The project proposes approaches that are efficient, effective, and reasonable to accomplish its clear goals and objectives.
- The proposal adequately explains the roles and responsibilities of all organizations and staff participating in the project.
- The proposal explains a well-rounded communication plan that will reach targeted audiences effectively.

Innovation and Impact

Innovation: Explain how the proposed activity differs from current practice.

Impact: Describe the potential benefits to be gained by applying the proposed solution. Discuss the innovation's potential for or adoption or adaptation in other organizations.

Review Criteria

- Originality of the proposed activity.
- Potential for significant change in the field that could result from the project.
- For projects that involve building digital content, software, or other technology products, in addition to the above criteria, evidence that the project's products support interoperability and accessibility in its broadest context, and potential for wider adoption in other libraries, archives, or museums.

Evaluation Plan

How will the success of the project be determined? Describe the indicators that will be used to determine the project's outcomes. Note that these indicators are expected to be reported and discussed in the project white paper that results from an award.

Review Criteria

- The project evaluation will provide reliable information on which to judge the relative success of the project.

Project Resources: Budget, Personnel, and Management

Describe institutional responsibilities for the project's implementation and management. Explain what facilities, equipment, personnel, and other resources are required to complete the project. List key staff that will complete project activities and discuss their qualifications and commitment to the project activities, particularly if they have other ongoing duties. Discuss the budget allocated to accomplish project activities, including cost sharing if it is shown in the budget. If the project includes a partnership, discuss contributions to and benefits from the project for both the applicant and partner organizations, and explain how information will be shared and decisions will be made. Provide a timeline of major activities.

Review Criteria

- A clear description of how the applicant will effectively complete the project activities through the deployment and management of resources including money, facilities, equipment, and supplies.
- A cost-efficient, complete, and accurate budget that uses appropriate resources for the proposed activity.
- Evidence that project personnel demonstrate appropriate experience and expertise and will commit adequate time to accomplish project goals and activities.
- Note: Reviewers will also consider staff resumes, budget forms, and the Budget Justification as they evaluate the Project Resources section of the narrative.

Budget

The application requires three elements to describe the costs of a proposed project:

- Detailed Budget ([Download in PDF and Word formats here.](#))
- Summary Budget ([Download in PDF and Word formats here.](#))
- Budget Justification

The Detailed Budget and Summary Budget forms for the project are both available as fill-in PDF forms in the Grants.gov Zip file or on the IMLS Web site. The third element is the Budget Justification, which is referenced and explained below.

Detailed Budget

Because Sparks! Ignition Grants projects may last a maximum of one year, only one Detailed Budget form is required. Applicants will notice that the columns total automatically.

The budget should include the project costs that will be charged to grant funds as well as those that will be supported by applicant or third-party in-kind contributions (cost sharing). In-kind contributions include the value of services or equipment that is donated to the project free of charge. All of the items listed, whether supported by grant funds or cost-sharing contributions, must be reasonably necessary to accomplish project objectives, allowable in terms of the applicable federal cost principles, auditable, and incurred during the grant period. 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 the applicant organization. Evaluation costs may be included in the project budget.

“Method of Cost Computation” can refer to a percentage of a person’s time devoted to the project, a number of days, a quantity of items, and so on. This column should clarify how the applicant arrived at the costs indicated.

1. Salaries and Wages: Indicate both temporary and permanent staff by noting “temp” or “perm” in parentheses after each staff member listed. If the number of staff exceeds the number of rows allotted in this section, attach a complete itemization of all salaries and wages as part of the Budget Justification. Note that salaries of permanent staff should normally be contributed as cost-sharing (see information provided under Budget Justification).
2. Fringe Benefits: Fringe benefits may include contributions for Social Security, employee insurance, pension plans, and so on. Only those benefits not included in an organization’s indirect cost pool may be shown as direct costs. In the Budget Justification, please provide details explaining how fringe rates are applied and totals are calculated. Like salaries, fringe benefits for permanent staff should normally be contributed as cost-sharing (see information provided under Budget Justification).
3. Consultant Fees: List any consultants hired for this project. Identify the costs for each consultant’s services by the daily fees charged.
4. Travel: The lowest available commercial fares for coach or equivalent accommodations must be used, and foreign travel must be undertaken on U.S. flag carriers when such services are available.
5. Supplies and Materials: In general, list the costs of materials purchased specifically for the proposed project. Attach a complete itemization of these costs as part of the Budget Justification.
6. Services: List the costs of project activities to be undertaken by a third-party contractor, including a partner, under this budget category as a single line item that shows the amount that will be charged to IMLS grant funds and the cost sharing that will be contributed by the third party. Attach a complete itemization of these costs as part of the Budget Justification. If there is more than one contractor, list the cost of each contract separately on the IMLS budget form and attach a separate itemization to the Budget Justification for each contractor.
7. Student Support: This **does not apply** to Sparks! Ignition Grants. Applicants should skip this section.
8. Other Costs: Please do not use the “Other Costs” section to list items that did not fit in the number of lines allotted for another section. If more lines are needed to list additional items, this information should be summarized in the Detailed Budget form and a complete, itemized list of costs should be included and explained in the Budget Justification.
9. Total Direct Costs: The subtotal amounts from the previous eight sections will automatically fill in
10. Indirect Costs: Indirect costs are project costs that an organization incurs that cannot be easily assigned to an individual project. They are also called “overhead” or “administrative costs.” **Sparks! Ignition Grant proposals may not contain budget requests for funds to support indirect costs.**

These instructions also apply to all organizations that function as partners in the grant’s activities.

Summary Budget

The Summary Budget form should clearly identify the amount requested from IMLS and the amount provided as in-kind contributions by the applicant, by any partners, and from any other sources.

Budget Justification

The Budget Justification is a narrative document that explains and gives further detail about all Detailed Budget line items. For example, the Budget Justification should explain the role that each person listed in the project budget will play. It should also provide justification for all proposed equipment, supplies, travel, services, and other expenses. The application should provide specifications for all hardware and software for which IMLS funding is requested. Any costs that were consolidated and summarized in the Detailed Budget form should be itemized and explained within the appropriate section of the Budget Justification. The format of the justification should follow the ten section headings of the detailed budget form.

Though cost sharing is not required for Sparks! Ignition Grants, IMLS encourages applicants to contribute as cost share the salaries of permanent staff to be employed on a project in proportion to the amount of time they will spend on the project. If IMLS funding is requested for salaries of permanent staff, the proposal should explain why funds are requested for this purpose and how the regular duties of these individuals will be performed during the grant period. The Budget Justification should explain the role of any outside consultants and third-party vendors to be employed on the project and how each was identified and selected. Costs for third-party service providers should be documented by bids or otherwise

justified.

The cost of project activities to be undertaken by a third-party contractor or a partner should be listed under "Services" on the Detailed Budget as a single line item that shows the amount that will be charged to IMLS grant funds and the cost sharing that will be provided by the third party. A complete itemization of these costs should be included as part of the Budget Justification. If there is more than one contractor, the cost of each contract must be listed separately on the IMLS Detailed Budget form and an itemization must be included as part of the Budget Justification.

Specifications for Projects That Develop Digital Products

This form, instructions for completing the form, and a list of useful related resources are downloadable [from the IMLS Web site](#). Once completed, this form should be saved as a PDF file and added to other application documents to be submitted through Grants.gov.

Partnership Statement

Partnerships are not required but are permissible and encouraged for Sparks! Ignition Grants projects where appropriate. Complete a Partnership Statement form for each formal partner involved in the proposed project and listed in section 5 of the Program Information Sheet. At the top of each Partnership Statement form, enter the legal name of the applicant organization. This information should match that provided on the SF- 424s and the Program Information Sheet. Applicants should save any and all Partnership Statements into a single PDF file entitled "Partners," and then attach the document to the application following the sequence indicated in [Application Component Naming and Sequencing](#).

1–5 (if applicable)

Provide all of the information requested for the partner organization. If the partner organization does not have a D-U-N-S® number, refer the partner to <http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform/displayHomePage.do> for information and instructions on how to secure one. To obtain a full Zip+4 postal code, visit www.usps.com/zip4.

6. Governing Control of Partner (if applicable)

Check one box to indicate the partner's governing control.

7–9.

Provide the information requested for each of these items. The limits on the amount of text allowed are given in the item statement on the form.

The applicant must ensure that each partner also provides a signed original version of the Partnership Statement to the applicant, and that this form can and will be made available to IMLS on request.

Organizational Profile

Provide an organizational profile of no more than one page. Include the following information: (1) the organization's mission, and (2) the organization's service area (audience served, including size, demographic characteristics, and geographic area). This information will give the reviewers an understanding of the applicant organization.

List of Key Project Staff, Consultants, and Resumes of Key Project Staff

Provide a list of the key project staff and the consultants who will be directly involved in the program.

Add resumes or curriculum vitae of no more than two pages each for all key personnel (both staff and consultants). Add a page break at the end of the list of personnel, and then add page breaks at the end of each of the resumes/vitae.

If the key project personnel have not been selected by the application deadline date, then submit position descriptions in lieu of resumes. But note: Because application reviewers rely on resumes to determine the project's potential for success, if the personnel have not been chosen, the application may be at a competitive disadvantage.

Proof of Nonprofit Status

If the applicant organization is a private, nonprofit organization (for those who selected “Private Nonprofit” or “Other” in item 5d of the SF-424s), the applicant must submit a copy of the IRS letter indicating the organization’s eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.

IMLS will not accept a letter of state sales tax exemption as proof of nonprofit status.

Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation comprises documents that specifically relate to the justification for the project. IMLS recommends including relevant supporting documentation (e.g., needs assessments , digitization plans , letters of support) for the specific project applied for, being careful to ensure that the included material is directly relevant to the proposed project.

Do not overburden the reviewers with unnecessary materials.

Where possible, within the application narrative provide Web links to relevant online materials in lieu of attaching supporting documentation.

When attaching these documents, give each one a specific title that clearly identifies what type of document it is. Applicants are encouraged to create multipage documents that include multiple attachments, when possible (e.g., combine all letters of support into one, single PDF document).

All supporting documentation should include authorship and dates of creation.

[back to top](#)

Grant Applicants

Program Guidelines

Sparks! Ignition Grants -- FY 2011 Guidelines

Navigating the Grant Program Guidelines

[Home page](#)

[Contents](#)

[Section One: General Information](#)

[Section Two: Preparing and Submitting an Application](#)

You are currently on: Section Three: IMLS Assurances and Certification

IMLS Assurances and Certifications

IMLS is required to obtain from all applicants certifications regarding federal debt status, debarment and suspension, nondiscrimination, and a drug-free workplace. Applicants requesting more than \$100,000 in grant funds must also certify regarding lobbying activities and may be required to submit a "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities" form (Standard Form LLL). Some applicants will be required to certify that they will comply with other federal statutes that pertain to their particular situation. These requirements are incorporated in the Assurances Statement below. The authorized representative must review the statement and provide the certification in item 9 on the Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form (SF-424s).

Assurances Statement

By signing the application form, the authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, assures and certifies that, should a grant be awarded, the applicant will comply with the statutes outlined below and all related IMLS regulations (see 45 CFR Chapter XI and 2 CFR Chapter XXXI). These assurances are given in connection with any and all financial assistance from IMLS after the date this form is signed, but may include payments after this date for financial assistance approved prior to this date. These assurances shall obligate the applicant for the period during which the federal financial assistance is extended. The applicant recognizes and agrees that any such assistance will be extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in these assurances, and that the United States government has the right to seek judicial enforcement of these assurances, which are binding on the applicant, its successors, transferees, and assignees, and on the authorized official whose signature appears on the application form.

Certifications Required of All Applicants

Financial, Administrative, and Legal Accountability

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant has legal authority to apply for federal assistance and the institutional, managerial, and financial capability (including funds sufficient to pay the nonfederal share of project costs) to ensure proper planning, management, and completion of the project described in this application.

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will cause to be performed the required financial and compliance audits in accordance with the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 U.S.C. § 7501 et seq.) and OMB Circular No. A-133, "Audits of States, Local Governments, and Non-Profit Organizations."

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will comply with the provisions of applicable OMB Circulars.

Federal Debt Status

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that the applicant is not delinquent in the repayment of any federal debt.

Debarment and Suspension

The applicant shall comply with 2 C.F.R. Part 3185. The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that neither the applicant nor any of its principals:

1. are presently excluded or disqualified;
2. have been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against it or them for one of those offenses within that time period;
3. are presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (federal, state, or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in 2 C.F.R. § 180.800(a); or
4. have had one or more public transactions (federal, state, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.

Where the applicant is unable to certify to any of the statements in this certification, he or she shall attach an explanation to this application.

The applicant, as a primary tier participant, is required to comply with 2 C.F.R. Part 180 Subpart C (Responsibilities of Participants Regarding Transactions Doing Business with Other Persons) as a condition of participation in the award. The applicant is also required to communicate the requirement to comply with 2 C.F.R. Part 180 Subpart C (Responsibilities of Participants Regarding Transactions Doing Business with Other Persons) to persons at the next lower tier with whom the applicant enters into covered transactions.

Nondiscrimination

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will comply with the following nondiscrimination statutes and their implementing regulations:

1. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 2000 et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin;
2. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (29 U.S.C. § 701 et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability;
3. Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended (20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–83, 1685–86), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in education programs; and
4. the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1975, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of age.

Drug-Free Workplace

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies, as a condition of the award, that the applicant will or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by complying with the requirements in Subpart B of 45 C.F.R. Part 1186.

This includes: making a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace; publishing a drug-free workplace statement; establishing a drug-free awareness program for its employees; taking actions concerning employees who are convicted of violating drug statutes in the workplace; and identifying (either with this application or upon award, or in documents kept on file in the applicant's office) all known workplaces under the award.

Note: IMLS Drug-Free Workplace regulations will shortly be relocated from 45 C.F.R. Part 1186 to 2 C.F.R. Part 3186 .

Certification Regarding Lobbying Activities (Applies to Applicants Requesting Funds in Excess of \$100,000)

The authorized representative certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- (a) no federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid by or on behalf of the authorized representative to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with the awarding of a federal contract, the making of a federal grant, the making of a federal loan, the entering into of a cooperative agreement, or the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of a federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative

agreement;

(b) if any funds other than appropriated federal funds have been paid or will be paid to any person (other than a regularly employed officer or employee of the applicant) for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a member of Congress in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the authorized representative shall request, complete, and submit Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions; and

(c) the authorized representative shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contracts under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

General Certification

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will comply with all applicable requirements of all other federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and policies governing the program. IMLS grant regulations may be found at 45 C.F.R. Chapter XI and 2 C.F.R. Chapter XXXI.

Certifications Required of Some Applicants

The following certifications are required if applicable to the project for which an application is being submitted. Applicants should be aware that additional federal certifications, not listed below, might apply to a particular project.

Subcontracts

A grantee may generally not make a subgrant (for more details, see 45 C.F.R. Chapter XI, Subchapter E [Institute of Museum and Library Services]). Applicants who plan to use awards to fund contracts and subcontracts should be aware that they must comply with the communication and verification requirements set forth in the above Debarment and Suspension provisions.

Native American Human Remains and Associated Funerary Objects

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will comply with the provisions of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990 (25 U.S.C. § 3001 et seq.), which applies to any organization that controls or possesses Native American human remains and associated funerary objects, and which receives federal funding, even for a purpose unrelated to the Act.

Historic Properties

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will assist the awarding agency in ensuring compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 470f), Executive Order (E.O.) 11593, and the Archaeological and Historic Preservation Act of 1974 (16 U.S.C. § 469 et seq.).

Environmental Protections

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the project will comply with environmental standards, including the following:

- (a) institution of environmental quality control measures under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) and E.O. 11514;
- (b) notification of violating facilities pursuant to E.O. 11738;
- (c) protection of wetlands pursuant to E.O. 11990, as amended by E.O. 12608;
- (d) evaluation of flood hazards in floodplains in accordance with E.O. 11988, as amended;
- (e) assurance of project consistency with the approved state management program developed under the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1451 et seq.);
- (f) conformity of federal actions to State (Clean Air) Implementation Plans under section 176(c) of the Clean Air Act of 1955, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 7401 et seq.);
- (g) protection of underground sources of drinking water under the Safe Drinking Water Act of 1974, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 300f et seq.); and
- (h) protection of endangered species under the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. §§ 1531–1543).

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the project will comply with the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968, as amended (16 U.S.C. § 1271 et seq.), related to protecting components or potential components of the national wild and scenic rivers system.

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the applicant will comply with the flood insurance requirements of the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973, as amended (42 U.S.C. § 4001

et seq.), which requires recipients in a special flood hazard area to participate in the program and to purchase flood insurance if the total cost of insurable construction and acquisition is \$10,000 or more.

Research on Human and Animal Subjects

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the project will comply with 45 C.F.R. Part 46 regarding the protection of human subjects involved in research, development, and related activities supported by this award of assistance.

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that the project will comply with the Laboratory Animal Welfare Act of 1966, as amended (7 U.S.C. § 2131 et seq.) pertaining to the care, handling, and treatment of warm-blooded animals held for research, teaching, or other activities supported by this award of assistance.

• • •

For further information on these certifications, contact IMLS, 1800 M Street, NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036. Or call 202/653-IMLS (4657).

[back to top](#)