



## FY 2010 Performance Plan



Photo courtesy of the Vermont Historical Society.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

The Institute builds the capacity of museums and libraries to serve the public in three strategic ways:

- Sustaining Heritage, Culture, and Knowledge
- Enhancing Learning and Innovation
- Building Professional Capacity

A fourth, overarching goal is to attain the highest level of excellence in federal management, operations, and service.

### Sustaining Heritage, Culture, and Knowledge

Our nation's museums and libraries serve as stewards of our cultural, scientific, and intellectual heritage. Their collections illustrate, interpret, and embody the great events, ideas, and individuals that contribute to America's history and culture. These irreplaceable resources help us understand, experience, explore, discover, and make sense of the world. Through their collections and the services they build around them, museums and libraries tell our nation's story and ensure that knowledge is passed on to future generations.

The collections in libraries and museums connect people to the full spectrum of human experience, culture, science, history, and art. The Institute helps libraries and museums to preserve and manage collections of art, books, documents, other cultural artifacts, animals, plants, and digital resources so that future generations will have a tangible link with their heritage.

Unfortunately, collections are highly vulnerable to loss due to deterioration, theft, and natural and man-made disasters. Virtual resources are susceptible not only to physical destruction, but also to loss through technological change. Accordingly, through grant programs and special initiatives such as *Connecting to Collections*, the agency focuses on the conservation and preservation of library and museum collections.

**Objective 1: Strengthen personnel capacity to manage conservation and preservation efforts in our nation's libraries and museums.**

#### Strategies:

- Expand the availability, efficiency, and effectiveness of strategies and choices for safeguarding collections.
- Build personnel skills for digital asset management, conservation, and preservation.
- Strengthen personnel skills in small- to medium-sized institutions for collections management, preservation and conservation planning, and emergency preparedness at the institutional level.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

### Objective 2: Address high-priority needs identified by the Heritage Health Index.

#### Strategies:

- Enable museums, libraries, and archives to carry out collections-wide preservation and conservation planning, to treat identified high-priority problems, and to serve as national models and sources of information.
- Enable museums, libraries, and archives to plan for and implement risk reduction, emergency response, and recovery of collections.
- Support the development and creation of statewide disaster and preservation plans.

### Objective 3: Galvanize attention and promote public-private partnerships to preserve the nation's collections.

#### Strategies:

- Convene national and regional summits to galvanize awareness of the condition of the nation's collections and the implications of their loss, and to develop plans to address the problem locally and nationally.
- Encourage and form partnerships at the federal, state, and local levels to address conservation and preservation needs.
- Build a program of public awareness activities.

### Enhancing Learning and Innovation

Learning is more important than ever for success in today's global economy. This includes in- and out-of-school learning; learning at all ages; and, in addition to basic mathematics, reading, and science, a new set of 21st century skills such as creative problem solving, ability to work in teams, information literacy, and communication skills in multiple formats.

Over the past 20 years, an explosion of research has shown how people learn, from infancy to old age. We know that children are never too young to learn, and we know that lifelong learning extends the duration and quality of life. We also know that a thriving competitive economy depends on innovation and the opportunity to learn effectively not only in the classroom, but on the job and throughout one's lifetime.

Museums and libraries are core community assets essential to larger efforts to support the development of families, individuals, and communities. They help our communities meet some of their greatest challenges, providing powerful places for civic engagement, contributing to economic development, building workforce participation, improving early literacy and school readiness, helping teens prepare for school and for life, and addressing a wide range of issues from helping our citizens keep current on health and science information to providing new immigrants resources they need to succeed in American society.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

**Objective 1: Increase the excellence, availability, and use of museum and library programs and services for learning and innovation.**

**Strategies:**

- Strengthen local programming and services and widen the adoption of effective practices to address identified national issues.
- Strengthen the ability of libraries and museums to increase their own knowledge and improve programs, and support local replication and adaptation of models that evaluation shows to be effective.
- Disseminate data on effective management and practice to strengthen learning through museum and library services.

**Objective 2: Increase the number and variety of partnerships among museums, libraries, and other community entities.**

**Strategies:**

- Support collaborations to extend the impact of libraries and museums in meeting their communities' needs.
- Create new partnerships with federal agencies and non-governmental organizations to maximize federal support and serve as models for good practice in collaboration.
- Support various types of collaborations at the state level.

**Objective 3: Increase the number of museums and libraries that use contemporary technology tools to deliver programs and services.**

**Strategies:**

- Help library and museum staff to adopt new technologies, particularly for improving management, operations, and services in small to medium-sized museums.
- Support research and demonstration to develop new tools and services to increase online access to collections.
- Develop models to allow seamless digital searching across library and museum collections.

**Objective 4: Strengthen technology competencies across and within all community segments.**

**Strategies:**

- Support research and demonstration to expand tools and services that address contemporary learning needs.
- Develop a digital readiness assessment program to help small to medium-sized libraries and museums establish or strengthen digital collection programs.
- Strengthen knowledge for effective management of Grants to State Library Agencies.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

### Building Professional Capacity

Training a 21st century library and museum workforce is a top priority for IMLS. Both the library and museum sectors face impending retirements of baby boomers and must attract and recruit new staff. In addition, the rapidly changing environment of the knowledge society, the possibilities provided by new technologies, the increasing diversity of the population, and the need to demonstrate public value and accountability require an expanding portfolio of skills for library and museum professionals at every level.

**Objective 1: Strengthen skills and knowledge of museum and library personnel for management, program design, partnership, planning, and leadership.**

#### Strategies:

- Strengthen skills of existing library and museum personnel at all levels.
- Expand the leadership pool of library and museum personnel.
- Increase collaboration and build collaboration skills.
- Develop educational programs to meet the specific needs of Native American, Native Hawaiian, and African American culture through eligible museums, libraries, and cultural centers.

**Objective 2: Increase the number of people who undertake formal education and internships in libraries and museums.**

#### Strategies:

- Support recruitment and education at the library and information science master's and doctoral levels.
- Support the recruitment and professional development of museum personnel.
- Support innovative learning programs, such as internships and exchanges to increase the availability of skilled museum and library staff.

**Objective 3: Increase the diversity of staff in the library and museum fields.**

#### Strategies:

- Partner with national museums, federal agencies, and national professional organizations to support recruitment and professional development efforts to increase diversity in museum and library employment.
- Build leadership and skills necessary to address the current and future needs of museums and libraries to reflect and serve the increasing diversity of the nation. Through internships, support historically black colleges and universities to develop knowledge and skills to preserve and share African American history and culture.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

### Attaining Excellence in Federal Management, Operations, and Service

As the Institute accepts increasing responsibilities and federal agencies are called on to demonstrate accountability, the Institute must continue to strive for excellence in management, operations and service. IMLS will constantly work to meet the needs of museums and libraries and their users.

**Objective 1: Achieve the highest level of excellence in federal financial management, operations, and service.**

#### Strategies:

- Continue to build IMLS staff expertise and provide excellent service to the museum, library, and related communities.
- Make full use of the knowledge and expertise of the members of the National Museum and Library Services Board.
- Maintain and improve the Institute's peer review process for competitive grant programs.
- Maintain and improve the Institute's oversight of Grants to State Library Agencies through increased online assistance, site visits, and conferences.
- Streamline application and award management through transition to the Grants Management Line of Business; develop human capital to maximize use of these systems and to assist applicants and grantees in their use.
- Continue to improve information technology operations.
- Continue to improve financial management, including identifying and implementing additional efficiencies to reduce administrative expenses.
- Maintain and improve internal management and financial controls throughout the Institute; this will lead to continued clean audit opinions with no material weaknesses.
- Finalize implementation of cost accounting methodology.
- Expand resources and technical assistance that support high-quality planning and evaluation for grantee organizations.
- Evaluate IMLS programs on a regular basis; apply findings to program improvements, and share models to improve practice.

**Objective 2: Become the key source of information for and about museum and library service to support strong policy decision making at all levels.**

#### Strategies:

- Assess the effectiveness of programs set forth in the Museum and Library Services Act.
- Finalize the consolidation of information policy and library statistics into IMLS.
- Explore desirability, feasibility, and structures needed for a museum statistics program.
- Gather, analyze, and broadly disseminate data about key museum and library needs, trends, and developments.
- Disseminate models of best practice and analysis of library and museum services.
- Develop resources to strengthen museum and library practice and project management.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

### Measurement Challenges

These four goal areas provide important guidance for the entire agency. IMLS is working to develop these goals into operational performance measures.

In the coming year, the agency plans to identify appropriate baselines for all new performance measures and assure that proposed new measures are consistent with the agency's strategic plans, annual performance plans, and budget justifications. The agency will develop long-term measures to track program outcomes that fulfill the program's purpose; annual measures to implement plans and efforts to achieve long-term and strategic goals; and efficiency measures, to identify program costs relative to outputs or outcomes produced.

### Improving Data Quality

In developing a new set of performance indicators, IMLS looked to other federal agencies that provide grant support to nonprofits and state and local government entities. IMLS will use the lessons learned from these agencies, like the National Science Foundation, to develop its own program performance and management measures.

In the coming year the agency staff in the Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communication will work with the agency's Information Technology division to highlight the specific data elements that will be used to monitor and report progress in achieving the quantitative management goals. For these goals, performance results will be assessed and reviewed by our administrative staff and managers, and the agency will explore the possibility of audits of measures by external third parties. All performance results will be developed in such a way as to make them easily verified and validated. The assessment process for the quantitative goals will be straightforward. The agency will collect relevant data using internal data systems to establish baselines for performance measures from FY 2009 forward. These baseline measures will provide the agency with comparable data to track progress on agency performance goals over time. Progress toward achievement of most quantitative goals will be reviewed by senior management on a quarterly basis. In FY 2009 IMLS will develop, an agency-wide data tracking tool to collect data relevant to the quantitative goals to allow staff to track progress throughout the year.

### Monitoring Quantitative Goals

In FY 2009 IMLS will develop a detailed plan to document the processes used to collect, process, maintain, and report data for approved quantitative performance measures. Currently, IMLS is planning to contract with an independent, external firm to assess the validity of the data and reported results of the agency's performance goals and to verify the reliability of the methods used to collect, process, maintain, and report data for these performance measurement goals.

## FY 2010 PERFORMANCE PLAN

In FY 2008 the agency created the Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communication with the responsibility for creating agency-wide performance measurement efforts. The office will coordinate the development of a revised performance monitoring plan. Measures used by other grant-making agencies will be reviewed to determine whether and how they might be adapted to monitor IMLS performance. Some of the measures already reviewed include

- analysis of the characteristics of grant applicant pool to monitor participation across grant programs;
- time-to-decision measures on funding recommendations to track efficiency of grant-making process; and
- automated measures of grantee reporting compliance to ensure effective management of public funds.

In the coming year, IMLS will identify and develop new performance measures that provide reliable outcome data that is more closely aligned with the agency's performance goals and better able to inform funding and management decisions and to improve the agency's effectiveness.