

**August 16 Webinar: IMLS Answers Questions about Request for Proposal (RFP)
For Digital Inclusion Cooperator**

The following questions and answers were covered during the August 16, 2010 webinar on the IMLS Program Solicitation for a Cooperative Agreement to develop a framework for digital inclusion.

Is there a similar program that IMLS has worked on with a federal agency?

Given the unusual nature of this program solicitation, there is no directly analogous example. The *Framework of Guidance for Building Good Digital Collections*, cited in the slides, was developed by members of the IMLS Digital Library Forum in 2001. In that instance, a framework of principles and components was created for different audiences involved with digitization initiatives. More recently, IMLS had a cooperative agreement with the University of Washington to conduct the research reported on in *Opportunity for All: How the American Public Benefits from Internet Access at U.S. Libraries*.

Do you have a definition of Community-based Organization (CBO)?

IMLS has not developed its own definition of a community-based organization, instead relying on the FCC's *National Broadband Plan* for direction. The slide that lays out the deliverable of a description of stakeholders & value propositions is deliberately expansive. The current administration wants broadband adoption to be as inclusive as possible, so IMLS lists stakeholders of "policy makers, community leaders, state officials, state libraries, public library administrators, museum leaders, community-based organization leaders, city and county managers, community college administrators, community foundations." Community-based organizations must be registered as 501(c)3s with the IRS. The evaluation criteria will narrow the field of competitive applicants to those with the expertise, experience, and resources to advance digital inclusion nationally.

How many people does IMLS anticipate including in the early gathering? And will the travel costs for participants need to be included in the proposal?

Applicants may take different approaches to gathering advice, experience, and information from individual experts that represent a broad range of stakeholders. IMLS does not have a preconceived number of people to be included; the group should be sufficient to achieve results with the available budget. Estimated travel costs should be included in the proposal.

CBOs are regional and local. Any thought of regional meetings or activities?

As stated in the previous response, applicants may take different approaches. The idea of bringing people together at regional meetings or activities is very reasonable.

Do you envision more than one framework to be developed according to the stakeholder group?

By developing a framework along the lines of LEED Certification or the other examples cited, it should be possible to have a single framework consisting of multiple tiers that correspond to different levels of readiness to support digital inclusion. In conducting a self-assessment of its digital inclusion capacity,

one library or CBO might find that a basic level is appropriate, while another organization might want to reach for a higher level.

Could you please expand on how additional funding or time would be decided?

Given the novel nature of this undertaking, IMLS will take a flexible approach in order to achieve the best possible end product. A determination of additional time and/or funding will be made near the end of the initial project period based on indicators that arise during the project period.

What immigration status must a participant have? For example, can a non-resident alien who has a work permit and is part of our university payroll qualify?

Individuals are not eligible to apply to be a cooperator. IMLS relies on applicant organizations to monitor the immigration status of their employees. It is not unreasonable for a cooperator to have a non-resident alien with a work permit operating as part of the project team.