Prospective Applicant Webinar:

National Leadership Grants for Libraries

Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program

July 21, 2020

My name is Ashley Sands and I am a Senior Program Officer in the Office of Library Services at IMLS. Today I am joined by my colleagues Jill Connors-Joyner and Sarah Boonie.

What We Will Cover Today

- IMLS strategic priorities
- Program overview: National Leadership Grants for Libraries (NLG) and Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program (LB21)
- Eligibility requirements
- Project categories and funding categories
- Application process
- Advice for applicants

Today we will briefly go over IMLS and its strategic priorities and provide an overview of the NLG and LB21 grant programs.

We will also review eligibility criteria, the project and funding categories, take you through the application process, and provide you with some tips to help make your application complete and competitive.

What is IMLS?

Who are we? IMLS is an independent grantmaking agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. IMLS helps ensure that all Americans have access to museum, library, and information services.

Our vision: A nation where museums and libraries work together to transform the lives of individuals and communities.

Our mission: To advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.

IMLS is an independent grantmaking agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. IMLS helps ensure that all Americans have access to museum, library, and information services. You can read our mission and vision on this slide and on our website, imls.gov.

Transforming Communities:
IMLS Strategic Priorities

- Goal One: Promote Lifelong Learning
- Goal Two: Build Capacity
- Goal Three: Increase Public Access

Learn more about Transforming Communities

The IMLS Strategic Plan lays out several goals for the agency's work.

In our first strategic goal, IMLS supports learning and literacy for people of all ages through museums and libraries.

In our second strategic goal, IMLS strengthens the capacity of museums and libraries to improve the well-being of their communities.

In our third strategic goal, IMLS makes strategic investments that increase access to information, ideas, and networks through libraries and museums.

You can find the Strategic Plan and more information on our website, imls.gov.

National Leadership Grants for Libraries

National Leadership Grants for Libraries (NLG) supports projects that enhance the quality of library and archive services nationwide by advancing theory and practice. Successful proposals will generate results such as new tools, research findings, models, services, practices, or collaborative approaches that will be widely used, adapted, scaled, or replicated to extend the benefits of federal investment.

Characteristics of successful proposals include: national impact, current significance, strategic collaborations, and demonstrated expertise.

Preliminary proposal deadline: October 2, 2020

Today we will be talking about two of our grant programs – both of which have a deadline of October 2, 2020.

The first is our National Leadership Grants for Libraries program – otherwise known as NLG. This grant program supports projects that address significant challenges or opportunities facing the library and archives fields and that have the potential to advance theory and practice.

Successful proposals demonstrate national impact, address a critical issue facing libraries and archives, incorporate collaborations, and show relevant expertise about the topic at hand.
It is particularly important to note the importance of 'national impact' in an NLG application. Generally speaking, applications cannot only benefit a single individual or a single library or archives; competitive proposals show the potential for far-reaching impact across institutions. Note that we also do not accept applications that are strictly for digitization, and we cannot accept applications for construction.

Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program

The Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program (LB21) supports developing a diverse workforce of librarians to better meet the changing learning and information needs of the American public through enhancing the training and professional development of library and archives professionals; developing faculty and library leaders; and recruiting, educating, and retaining the next generation of library and archives professionals.

Characteristics of successful proposals include: broad impact, current significance, strategic collaborations, demonstrated expertise, and diversity and inclusion.

Preliminary proposal deadline: October 2, 2020

The other program we will be discussing today is the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program, or LB21 for short.

This program supports developing a diverse workforce of librarians to better meet the changing learning and information needs of the American public through enhancing the training and professional development of the library workforce, developing faculty and library leaders, and recruiting, educating, and retaining the next generation of library professionals.

Similar to NLG, successful proposals will include broad impact, address a critical issue facing libraries and archives, include collaborative elements, show relevant expertise about the topic at hand, and will broaden participation in the library and archives profession through the recruitment, education, and retention of a diverse workforce.

Again, similar to NLG, it is important to note the 'broad impact' in an LB21 application. Generally speaking, applications cannot only benefit a single individual or a single library or archives; competitive proposals show the potential for far-reaching impact across institutions.

For both NLG and LB21, please keep in mind that October 2nd will be the only deadline for submitting preliminary proposals in fiscal year 2021.

Where to Find Grant Information

NLG webpage:
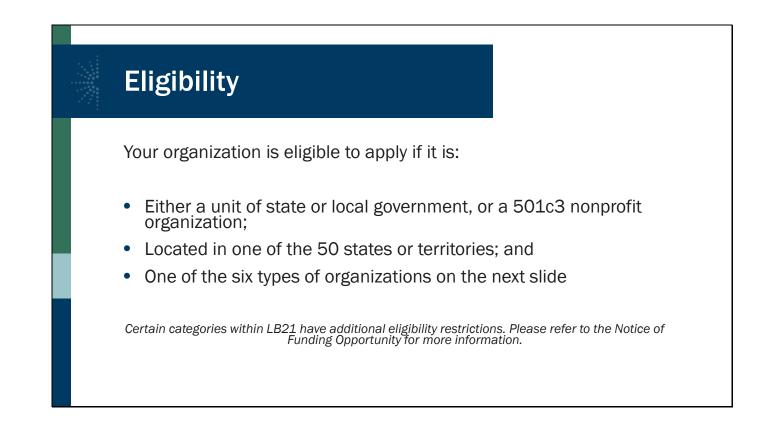www.imls.gov/grants/available/national-leadership-grants-libraries

LB21 webpage:
https://www.imls.gov/grants/available/laura-bush-21st-century-librarian-program

- Program overview
- IMLS staff contact information
- Link to Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
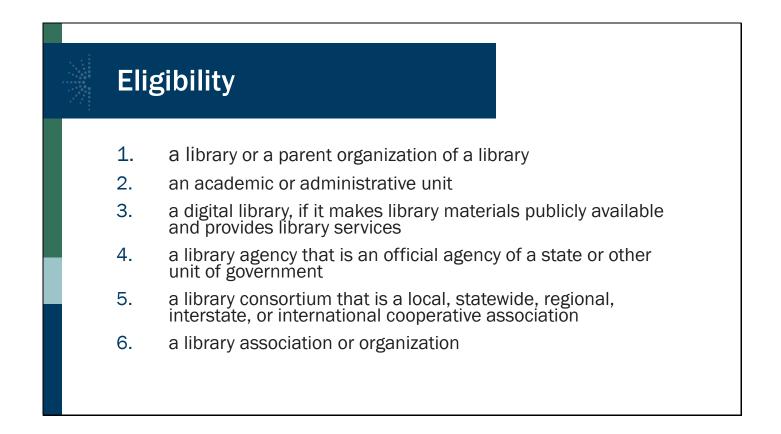- Link to webinar recordings

On the IMLS website we have landing pages for each of the two programs. If you're on this webinar it's likely you've already visited one or both of them. These pages provide an overview of the programs, links to the full notices of funding opportunity, or NOFOs, and also relevant webinar recordings – so if you want to refer back to this applicant webinar at a later date that's where you will find it.

In addition, on each page you can find a list of the relevant program staff you should contact with questions about the grant programs and the application process. If you are unsure who to contact, please just reach out to one of us and we will make sure you get connected to the program officer whose expertise best aligns with your project idea.
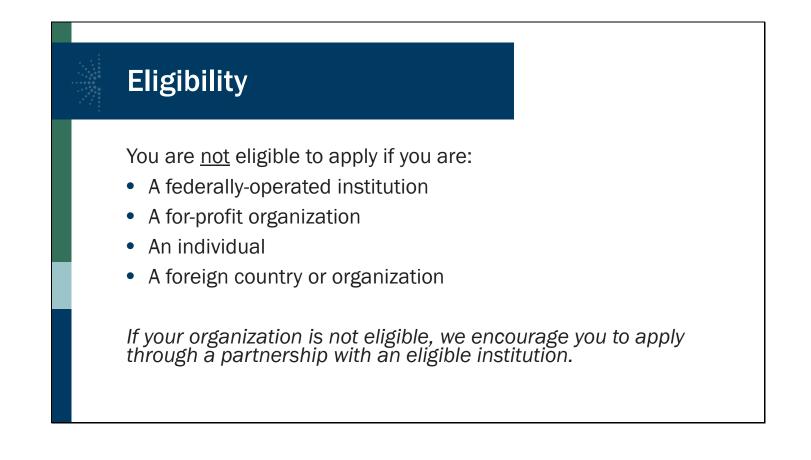
Eligibility

Your organization is eligible to apply if it is:

- Either a unit of state or local government, or a 501c3 nonprofit organization;
- Located in one of the 50 states or territories; and
- One of the six types of organizations on the next slide

Certain categories within LB21 have additional eligibility restrictions. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for more information.

Your organization is eligible to apply if it is: 1) a unit of state or local government or a 501c3 nonprofit organization, 2) located in one of the 50 states or territories, and 3) one of six types of organizations, which we'll list on the next slide.

Please also note that the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grant program has additional eligibility restrictions for some categories, so you should pay attention to that in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

Eligibility

1. a library or a parent organization of a library
2. an academic or administrative unit
3. a digital library, if it makes library materials publicly available and provides library services
4. a library agency that is an official agency of a state or other unit of government
5. a library consortium that is a local, statewide, regional, interstate, or international cooperative association
6. a library association or organization

In addition to the criteria on the previous slide, your organization is eligible to apply if you are one of these six types of organizations, including a library or parent organization, an academic or administrative unit, a digital library, or a library agency, consortium, association, or organization.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, please reach out to someone on our program staff.

Eligibility

You are <u>not</u> eligible to apply if you are:
- A federally-operated institution
- A for-profit organization
- An individual
- A foreign country or organization

If your organization is not eligible, we encourage you to apply through a partnership with an eligible institution.

You are not eligible to apply to these programs if you are a federally operated institution, a for-profit institution, an individual, or a foreign country or organization.

A federally operated institution does not mean an institution that receives other federal grants. It means that if you are a federal agency, for example, the Library of Congress or Smithsonian, we cannot fund you.

If you are an ineligible institution, we encourage you to partner with an eligible institution. While you cannot be the lead applicant, you can apply through a partnership with an eligible institution and may be able to receive funding in that manner.

More information about this is provided in the guidelines on our website, but the point here is that it is important to figure out early if you are eligible to apply for the program that is of interest to you.

To Which Program Should We Apply?

Is the project primarily about education and training for information professionals (formal or informal)? **If yes, review the NOFO for LB21.**

Is this an early career research project for a tenure-track faculty member? **If yes, review the NOFO for LB21.**

Is the work of national significance to libraries, archives and information science? **If yes, the project probably fits in NLG, but double-check the NOFO.**

Here we have provided some guidance for those of you who are unsure whether your project idea fits into NLG or LB21.

If your project or research is primarily about education and training for information professionals – either formal or informal education – you should probably apply to LB21.

If you are a non-tenured, tenure-track faculty member interested in research funding, you will want to look at the Early Career Research category in LB21.

Otherwise, any other work of national significance to libraries, archives, and information science will likely fall under the NLG program.

To Which Program Should We Apply?

Project Purpose	Examples	Program
Pre-professional programs; professional education; research about the profession	- Workshops - Master's or Doctoral education - Residencies	LB21
Early career development of teaching professionals	- Untenured, tenure-track teaching faculty member's individual research projects	LB21
Practice-oriented, scalable work of national significance to libraries, archives, and information science	- Tools - Research - Models - Services	NLG

This table shows just a few examples of projects and activities that would fall within each program. Please make sure to read through the Notice of Funding Opportunity carefully to ensure your project is aligned with the correct grant program and that you meet eligibility criteria. If you are unsure, feel free to contact one of our program staff for guidance.

Project Categories

NLG and LB21 applicants must select one project category from the following:

- Lifelong Learning
- Community Catalysts
- National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives

On every application, you will be asked to select one project category – either lifelong learning, community catalysts, or national digital infrastructures and initiatives.

Note that each category is defined slightly differently for LB21 as opposed to NLG. You should make sure to review the NOFO for the specific language about how each category applies to each program.

We will now talk a little bit about each of those project categories.

Lifelong Learning

NLG: We are interested in proposals that will have a significant national impact on the capacity of libraries and archives to support cross-disciplinary and inquiry-based methods of learning, foster attitudes of discovery, and cultivate skills such as critical thinking, innovation, creativity, communication, and collaboration.
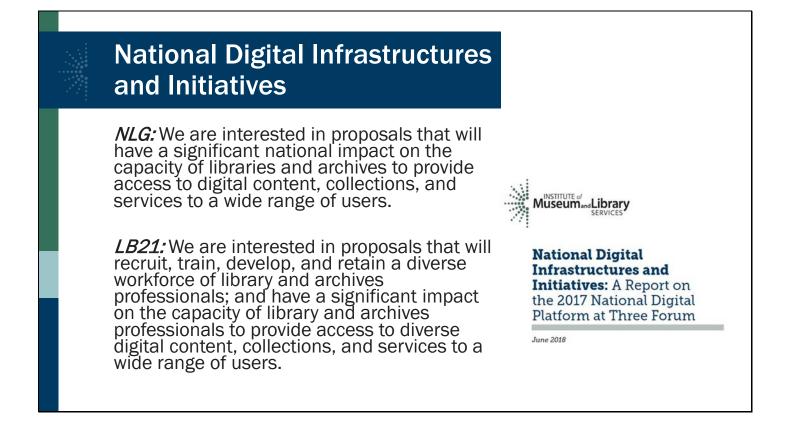
LB21: We are interested in proposals that will recruit, train, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of library and archives professionals; and have a significant impact on the capacity of library and archives professionals to support cross-disciplinary and inquiry-based methods of learning, foster attitudes of discovery, and cultivate skills such as critical thinking, innovation, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

The first project category you can apply under is Lifelong Learning. This category is for proposals that will impact libraries and archives OR library and archives professionals' ability to foster attitudes of discovery and cultivate critical thinking, innovation, creativity, communication, and collaboration.

Community Catalysts

NLG: We are interested in proposals that will have a significant national impact on the capacity of libraries and archives to serve as catalysts that contribute to the wellbeing of communities. In addition to directly providing programs and services, libraries and archives may also serve as partners or intermediaries that strengthen the work of collaborators, community members, and community networks by leveraging their expertise, relationships, networks, or infrastructures.

LB21: We are interested in proposals that will recruit, train, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of library and archives professionals, and have a significant impact on the capacity of library and archives professionals to contribute to the well-being of communities.

The second category is Community Catalysts. This category is for proposals that build the capacity of libraries and archives OR library and archives professionals to contribute to the well-being of communities.

National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives

NLG: We are interested in proposals that will have a significant national impact on the capacity of libraries and archives to provide access to digital content, collections, and services to a wide range of users.

LB21: We are interested in proposals that will recruit, train, develop, and retain a diverse workforce of library and archives professionals; and have a significant impact on the capacity of library and archives professionals to provide access to diverse digital content, collections, and services to a wide range of users.

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National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives: A Report on the 2017 National Digital Platform at Three Forum

June 2018

The third project category is National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives. This category is for proposals that will increase libraries and archives OR library and archives professionals' capacity to provide access to digital content, collections, and services. We encourage applicants in this category to review our new "National Digital Infrastructures and Initiatives" report, which can be found on the IMLS website and is linked in both programs' NOFOs.

Now my colleague Jill Connors-Joyner will tell you about the funding categories and application process.

Funding Categories

Funding Category	Project Period	Sample Activities
Planning	One to two years	Preliminary activities, rapid prototyping, piloting
National Forum	One to two years	Convening key stakeholders and experts
Project	One to three years (or four years for doctoral-level projects)	Full-scale development or implementation
Research in Service to Practice	One to three years	Investigating key questions related to library and archival services

Thank you, Ashley,

All applicants will also have to select a funding category. These funding categories each have different limits on the length of the grant, which you can see in this table.

Planning grants are for preliminary project activities – many people think about this as planning for a larger grant, but that's not a requirement. Planning activities may include conducting preliminary research, conducting an environmental scan, rapidly prototyping a new program or service, or working on creating partnerships to support larger future activities.

National **Forum** Grants are for convening experts and stakeholders around an issue of national significance. This could be to support one large meeting, or several meetings focused on a particular area to establish a shared agenda or understanding.

Project grants and **research in service to practice** grants support implementation or development activities, as well as investigating key research questions in library and archives practice. These are limited to 1-3 years. LB21 Doctoral-level projects can be up to 4 years long.

Funding Categories

Funding Category	NLG	LB21
Planning	Up to $100,000	Up to $100,000
National Forum	Up to $150,000	Up to $150,000
Project	Up to $1,000,000	Up to $1,000,000
Research in Service to Practice	Up to $750,000	Up to $750,000

To give you a better sense of the scale, here are the maximum dollar amounts you may request, which are based on the funding category you select.

There is flexibility within the funding levels, but you should keep in mind that we have limited funding and both programs are highly competitive. We fund very few million-dollar projects. There is a value proposition that comes into play – the higher the amount you are asking for, the more compelling your case must be for how your work will impact the entire field and represent a significant return on investment.

If you've applied for IMLS funding in the past, you may note that the cap for research in service to practice grants is $750,000 in both NLG and LB21.

The Notices of Funding Opportunity also spell out these funding caps along with the corresponding cost-share requirements.

Project Types (LB21 only)

LB21 applicants must select a project type from the following:

- Pre-professional
- Master's-level
- Doctoral-level
- Early Career Development
- Continuing Education

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Positioning Library and Information Science Graduate Programs for 21st Century Practice

Meeting Report
November 2017, Columbia, SC

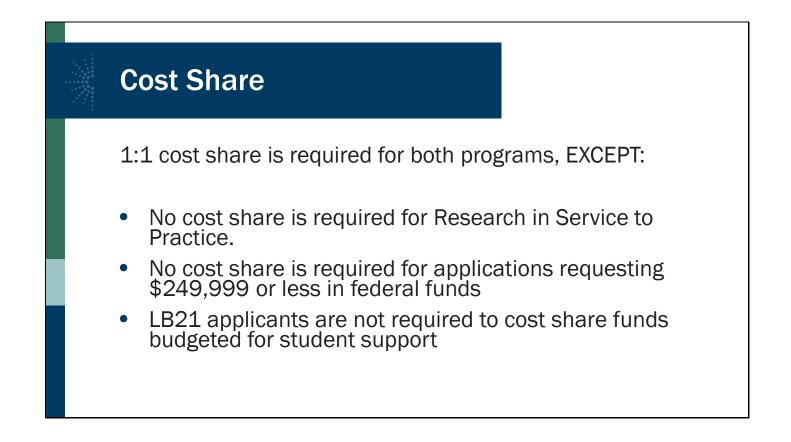Along with the project categories, the LB21 program also requires **all applicants** to select a project type.

Pre-professional is applicable to any programs that are focused on any part of the pre-library school trajectory. This could be training programs for college students or even creating opportunities for students in middle school or high school to explore careers in library and information science. Recruitment, mentorship, and service learning may all be key components of these types of projects with the caveat that any grant activities should keep the goal of developing a diverse workforce in mind.

Master's-level programs educate the next generation of librarians and archivists in graduate library programs to meet the evolving needs of the profession and society. We encourage applicants in the Master's-level category to address themes or gaps described in the recently released report "Positioning Library and Information Science Graduate Programs for 21st Century Practice" in their proposals. The report is available is available on the IMLS website

Doctoral-level programs develop faculty to educate the next generation of library and archives professionals. These programs should develop library and archives leaders to assume positions as managers, administrators, researchers, and faculty.

Early Career Development proposals provide funding to untenured, tenure-track library and information science faculty to conduct research.

The last project type is **Continuing Education**. These projects improve the knowledge, skills, and abilities of library and archives professionals in the field through formal and informal education opportunities. This could include post-master's programs, residencies, internships, enhanced work experiences, and blended learning opportunities including mentorships, online learning modules, and other training programs for professional staff.

Cost Share

1:1 cost share is required for both programs, EXCEPT:

- No cost share is required for Research in Service to Practice.
- No cost share is required for applications requesting $249,999 or less in federal funds
- LB21 applicants are not required to cost share funds budgeted for student support

Cost sharing is not considered in the review of applications but is an eligibility criterion. Again, this is spelled out in the notices of funding opportunity.

Generally, a one to one cost share is required for both programs, with a few exceptions. Applicants in the Research in Service to Practice funding category and those requesting less than $249,999 are exempt from this requirement. Additionally, LB21 applicants are not required to cost share the funds budgeted for student support.

Please remember that if a cost is unallowable for IMLS funds, it is also unallowable for cost share.

Phase One Application Components

Preliminary Proposals must be submitted via grants.gov by 11:59 pm ET, October 2, 2020, and must include:
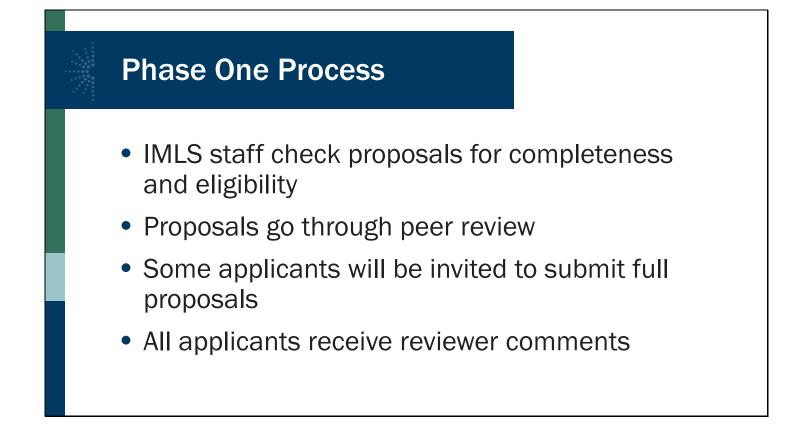
- SF-424 (generated in Grants.gov)
- Preliminary Proposal Narrative (PDF, two-page limit)
- IMLS Supplementary Information Form-Including Abstract (Grants.gov form)
- IMLS Library - Discretionary Program Information Form (IMLS PDF form)
- **No other attachments**

PLEASE NOTE: <u>Only</u> attachments in PDF form will be accepted by our grants management system.

Each application must include an SF-424, which is generated in grants.gov, an IMLS Supplementary Information Form (including Abstract), which can be found on Grants.gov, an IMLS Library - Discretionary Program Information Form, which can be found on the IMLS website, and a two page preliminary proposal narrative. No other documents will be accepted. Applications must be submitted through grants.gov before midnight Eastern time on October 2, 2020.

Please note that Grants.gov has adopted a new "workspace" feature, which you may be required to use to submit your proposal. We recommend you give yourself ample time to familiarize yourself with the system.

IMLS has a new internal system for receiving applications from grants.gov. While this will not alter your experience applying, it is <u>crucial</u> that you submit all documents in pdf form. Any applications that include a non-pdf document will be bounced back by our system and will not be considered submitted. We recommend ensuring all documents are in pdf format prior to submittal and SUBMIT EARLY. Do not wait until 11pm on the night of the deadline to submit.

Phase One Process

- IMLS staff check proposals for completeness and eligibility

- Proposals go through peer review

- Some applicants will be invited to submit full proposals

- All applicants receive reviewer comments

After proposals are submitted through Grants.gov, IMLS staff screens them for completeness and eligibility. After that, proposals undergo peer review. After peer review, all applicants will receive reviewer comments and feedback. The most competitive applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal for further consideration.

Phase Two (Invitation Only)

- Full proposals due March 26, 2021
- Required components listed in the NOFO
- Submitted via grants.gov
- IMLS staff check proposals for completeness and eligibility
- Proposals go through peer review
- All applicants receive reviewer comments
- Funding decisions announced July 2021 (pending fund availability and at the discretion of the Director)

Please note: an invitation to submit a full proposal is not a guarantee of funding.

Applicants who are invited to submit full proposals will need to submit those by March 26, 2021.

The required components for full proposals are much more extensive and are also listed in the Notices of Funding Opportunity. These applications are also submitted through grants.gov and will similarly undergo a peer review process. Full proposal applicants will be provided reviewer comments and feedback regardless of whether the project is selected for funding or not. The IMLS director makes final funding decisions, which will be announced in July 2021, pending fund availability and at the discretion of the Director.

Key Dates

- Preliminary Proposals Due: October 2, 2020
- Notification of Status: February 2021
- Full Proposals Due: March 26, 2021
- Notification of Funding: July 2021
- Projects Must Begin on:
  August 1 or September 1

These are important dates you need to be aware of during this application cycle.

Please read through the notices of funding opportunity carefully to ensure you are meeting eligibility criteria and have fulfilled all of the application requirements.

Other Requirements

- Acquire a **D-U-N-S® Number** for your institution http://fedgov.dnb.com/webform
- Register your institution with the **System of Award Management (SAM),** or ensure your existing SAM registration is active http://www.sam.gov/
- Create a **Grants.gov** account for your institution, or ensure your existing Grants.gov account is active http://www.grants.gov/

There are three places where you must register your organization in order to be able to submit a proposal—DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov. We strongly recommend immediately checking that all of these registrations are active, as it can take some time to update or renew them.

First, your organization will need a DUNS number. The URL for acquiring a DUNS number is on the slide.

Next, your institution must be registered with the System of Award Management, or SAM. It's important to keep in mind that your SAM registration is good for one year and must be renewed. That's something you don't want to be doing right before the deadline, so we recommend checking your status early on. If it's not your job to track your SAM registration, we recommend you contact the person at your organization whose job it is, so you can make sure this is in place.

Finally, you'll need an account at Grants.gov, which is the portal through which you will submit your application. Allow at least two weeks for the registration process here, and even if you know you're registered, make sure you know who is authorized for your institution and make sure they know their login information. In fact, if you don't absolutely know for sure that this is all in place now, I'd recommend checking on it as soon as we get done today. Again, it's not something you want to be trying to accomplish anywhere close to the deadline.

Writing the Preliminary Proposal Narrative

- Identify project director and partners
- Contextualize in current research and practice
- Outline proposed work plan
- Demonstrate relevance to project category
- Articulate potential impact and projected outcomes
- Provide a budget summary **(required)**
- Use the Search Awarded Grants function on the IMLS website to review successful preliminary proposals

For the final part of this webinar, we'll go over some tips for preparing a competitive application.

You should think about the preliminary proposal narrative as a movie trailer, providing the highlights of what a full proposal would include. We recognize that it is quite a challenge fitting all of the information about your project into two pages so you will want to be as succinct and specific as possible. The preliminary proposal should follow the general sections of a full proposal narrative and address the statement of need, project design, and impact. For LB21, it must also include a diversity plan.

Some elements you will want to address in your preliminary proposal include clearly identifying the project director and any project partners – this can easily and quickly be done in the first sentence: Institution X and Institution Y will partner together to make A or accomplish B. They request $Z from IMLS. We recommend foregoing lengthy introductions and getting directly into the meat of what your project is all about in the first sentence or two.

You also will want to ground your project in current and relevant research and practice. You will want to give an outline of your proposed work plan – what will it look like and how will it be accomplished. If it's a research proposal, you'll want to articulate specific research questions and describe methodologies. You should make clear the relevance of your project to the selected project category and also demonstrate the potential national impact and projected outcomes of your work.

Please note a budget summary is required and must include the total anticipated costs of the project, including cost share (if required), and a breakdown of how funds would be allocated into different cost categories. Proposals that do not include this information will be rejected without review.

We have posted the full and preliminary proposals associated with the LB21 and NLG projects that have been funded over the past few years, which can be helpful to review as you start to work on your proposal.

IMLS Program Officers are available to talk with you about your draft preliminary proposal. If you'd like a Program Officer to take a look at a draft, please email it to one of us by September 14, 2020. Sending it even earlier is preferred, but September 14th will be the last day we are able to accept drafts. One of us will take a look at it and then we can schedule a phone call with you to discuss your draft answer any questions you might have. Please refer to our contact sheet at the end of this PowerPoint to identify the Program Officer whose expertise best aligns with the subject matter in your proposal.

Guidance for Research in Service to Practice Proposals

- What are your research questions?
- What is your theoretical framing?
- What is the relevance of your proposed research for current practice?
- What research methods will you use?
- What type of data will you gather?
- How will you analyze and use the data?
- How will results be communicated?
- How will you manage research data and make it available?

For more, refer to the "Guidance for Research Applications" section of each NOFO

The Notices of Funding Opportunity have specific guidance for applications in the research in service to practice category. This slide lists some of the questions we ask you to consider, including thinking about the research questions, theoretical framing, research methods, and other aspects of your proposed project.

Putting Your Best Foot Forward

- Participate in a webinar
- Choose a grant program that aligns with your project
- Review two-page proposals from projects funded last year
- Articulate the project goals and/or research questions up front
- Consider your project's title
- Include a budget paragraph in your preliminary proposal
- Have an unfamiliar reader offer feedback
- Submit a draft to a Program Officer by <u>September 14th</u> and schedule a phone call
- Submit all required documents in **<u>pdf format</u>**

Finally, here are some things that you can do to ensure you are submitting your most competitive proposal.

The first you've already accomplished by attending this webinar. Next, you want to choose the grant program and categories that best align with your proposal idea.

Some other tips – read through the preliminary proposals from last year to get some ideas of what was successful; articulate your project goals as quickly as possible in the preliminary proposal; include a budget paragraph; and be sure you are submitting all of the completed and required documents in pdf format.

Program staff are available to discuss your project ideas with you and to look over a draft of your preliminary proposal. To take advantage of this opportunity, you must email a draft of your proposal no later than end of day on Monday, September 14th. You are more than welcome and even encouraged to email or contact us well in advance.

I highly recommend having a colleague unfamiliar with your project read through your proposal prior to submission – we all get too close to our work and this will ensure that the proposal you are submitting clearly communicates your project idea.

Contact a Program Officer

Jill Connors-Joyner Jconnors-joyner@imls.gov • Early learning • Young adult services • Informal STEM learning • Making	**Sarah Fuller** sfuller@imls.gov • Community development • Workforce development • Services for new Americans • Public health
James Neal jneal@imls.gov • Broadband • Digital inclusion • Open educational resources • Data privacy and security • Archives and special collections • Community archives	**Dr. Ashley Sands** asands@imls.gov • Research data management • Scholarly communications • Open infrastructures • Digital collections • Digital preservation

Most important of all, please communicate with us! Our program staff are more than happy to chat with you about your project ideas prior to the deadline – our job is to help applicants put together the most competitive applications they can. We are here to help all applicants so please be in touch.

You can see our contact information here: each of us works on specific content areas and the division of labor is provided here. If you are not sure who to contact, please contact any one of us and we will steer you to the right person.