

Timed Transcript for IMLS Office of Museum Services Webinar: Choosing a Funding Opportunity for FY2021

0:05

Welcome to the IMLS Office of Museum Services pre-recorded informational webinar, Choosing a Funding Opportunity for Fiscal Year 2021.

0:15

Our goal in this presentation is to provide basic information to help you decide which IMLS funding program is most likely to be the best fit for your project idea and your institution.

0:34

This is one of a series of pre-recorded webinars designed to help you find the information you need to create a competitive application for IMLS museum funding.

0:45

These webinars will be available in September and can be accessed at the URL above by clicking On-Demand Webinars.

0:59

In this presentation, we'll be addressing these topics. First, we will consider the IMLS vision, mission, and strategic plan.

1:07

Becoming familiar with them will help you understand why our grant programs are structured the way they are, and why we ask you as an applicant to address certain issues in your application.

1:18

Second, we'll address basic institutional eligibility criteria to help you make good preliminary decisions about which program to pursue.

1:27

Next, we'll present basic information about our funding programs and opportunities.

1:32

We'll show you where to find specific information on the IMLS website.

1:37

Then we'll talk about the three registrations you must have in place in order to apply for a grant and will stress how important it is to get this done well in advance of the grant deadline.

1:48

Finally, we'll share our contact information, and then invite you to get in touch with us with any questions you might have, or simply to talk about your project ideas.

2:01

IMLS's vision and mission statements were adopted as part of the agency's current strategic plan. Both emphasize that IMLS is here to support museums and libraries in their work of serving their communities.

2:13

IMLS's vision is a nation where museums and libraries work together to transform the lives of individuals and communities.

2:22

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

2:42

Much like your own institution's strategic plan, IMLS's identifies goals that help us achieve our vision and accomplish our mission.

2:52

There are three programmatic goals that drive our grantmaking, and you will see these concepts referenced in much we will talk about today, as well as in the guidance for preparing grant applications.

3:04

Goal One makes it clear that IMLS supports learning and literacy for people of all ages through museums and libraries.

3:11

Goal Two specifies that IMLS helps strengthen the capacity of museums to improve the well-being of their communities by exploring methods of implementing new approaches to community collaborations.

3:24

Goal Three confirms that IMLS supports the stewardship of museum collections and institutions of all types and invest in tools, technology, and training that enabled people of all backgrounds and abilities to discover and use museum collections and resources.

3:40

To learn more about our current strategic plan, please download a copy from our website.

3:49

So who is eligible to apply for an IMLS grant?

3:52

Each of our grant programs has a slightly different set of eligibility criteria.

3:57

Some of these relate to governance systems, some relate to geography, and some relate to institutional mission.

4:04

It's crucial, therefore, that you check the Notice of Funding Opportunity for each program in which you are interested. To get you started, however, we are making some very broad suggestions here.

4:15

Find your institution type in the column on the left, and then check out the grant programs corresponding to the X's and the columns on the right.

4:24

When you have identified a grant program of interest, take time to explore the eligibility criteria that are presented in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

4:41

As you saw on the previous slide, several of our grant programs specify "museum" as an eligible type of organization. To answer the question: "What types of institutions are included in the term 'museum,'" we share this list.

4:54

However, the list is not exhaustive. Even if your organization's name does not include the word "museum," you may still be eligible if you meet the requirements as set out in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

5:09

Please take note that museums, as defined here, may stand alone as independent organizations, or they may be administered by a governing bodies, such as a college, university, tribe, or a state or local government.

5:26

To explore that point just a bit further, in addition to meeting governance and geographic requirements, to qualify as a "museum," an organization must also use a professional staff; be organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes;

5:44

Own or use tangible objects, either animate or inanimate;

5:48

Care for these objects; and exhibit these objects to the general public on a regular basis, at least 120 days a year, through facilities that it owns or operates. For the fiscal year 2021 deadline, due to closures resulting from COVID-19, applicants have three ways in which to meet the 120 days open eligibility requirement.

6:10

First, you can measure the 120 days in that time period immediately before submitting your application;

6:16

Second, you can measure the 120 days in the previous calendar year; or

6:21

Third, you can measure 120 days in the year that ends the day of your shutdown.

6:26

For more details on each of these points, please take a look at the eligibility information in any given grant program's Notice of Funding Opportunity.

6:38

There are some organizations that cannot apply for IMLS grants. These include federally funded institutions, for-profit organizations, and foreign countries or foreign organizations. It also includes individuals. While these entities cannot apply for an IMLS grant, there is no rule against their participating as partners or providing services to a grant funded project.

7:04

Let's turn now to the funding programs and opportunities that we offer.

7:08

These include two assessment programs: the Museum Assessment Program and the Collections Assessment for Preservation program, and six grant programs: Museums for America, Museums Empowered, Inspire! Grants for Small Museums, National Leadership Grants for Museums, Museum Grants for African American History and Culture, and the Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program.

7:39

The Museum Assessment Program, or MAP, is funded by IMLS and managed by the American Alliance of Museums in Washington, DC.

7:47

It is available to small and mid-sized museums of all types, and its purpose is to help organizations to strengthen their operations, plan for the future, and need professional standards through self study and an on-site consultation from an expert peer reviewer.

8:04

MAP participants can choose from five assessment types.

8:08

This basic strategic and holistic Organizational Assessment helps the Museum look at its operations primarily from the perspective of how well activities, resources, and mission align with each other, and with professional ethics, practices, and standards.

8:23

The Collections Stewardship Assessment focuses on practical, ethical, and strategic collections issues and activities related to the care and management of a museum's collections per professional practices and standards.

8:37

The Education and Interpretation Assessment helps a museum evaluate how well it is carrying out its educational role and mission, meeting core standards for education and interpretation.

8:48

This assessment also looks at the museum's educational content creation and delivery from the perspective of diversity, equity, accessibility, and inclusion.

9:00

The Community and Audience Engagement Assessment focuses on the museum's awareness and understanding of, and relationship with, its various communities and audiences, and their perception of, and experience with the museum.

9:15

The advanced Board Leadership Assessment is for private non-profit museums with policy-making boards and paid staff, which are looking for guidance on how to strengthen their institution and ensure its long-term success through more effective, leadership-oriented governance.

9:31

To learn more, please visit [WWW dot AAM hyphen US dot org backslash map](http://WWW.DOT.AAM.HYPHEN.US.DOT.ORG/BACKSLASH/MAP), or call 202-289-9118. Applications will be available in September 2020, and will be due on February 1, 2021. To be notified when the application and full program details are released, please send your contact information to [map at AAM hyphen USdot org](mailto:map@AAM.HYPHEN.USDOT.ORG).

10:06

Also funded by IMLS and administered by the Foundation for Advancement in Conservation in Washington, DC,

10:12

The Collections Assessment for Preservation, or CAP, program provides small and mid-sized museums with support for general conservation assessments. Through self-study and an on-site visit by a collections conservation specialist, as well as a building specialist,

10:28

CAP can assist your institution by helping you decide how to invest limited funding and staff time, facilitating the development of a long-term preservation plan, and serving as a fundraising tool for conservation projects.

10:42

Applications should be available this fall, and the anticipated deadline is to be announced.

10:48

For detailed information about the application process and what happens during and after the CAP process, please visit [WWW dot cultural heritage dot org backslash cap](http://WWW.DOT.CULTURAL.HERITAGE.DOT.ORG/BACKSLASH/CAP), call 202-452-9545, or e-mail [cap at cultural heritage dot org](mailto:cap@culturalheritage.org).

11:15

There are six IMLS museum grant programs, and we'll touch briefly on each of them.

11:20

Again, our goal today is to get you on your way in choosing the right program for your needs.

11:25

Museums for America, or MFA, is our largest grant program, receiving the largest number of applications each year, and the one through which we make the largest number of awards.

11:36

The overall goal of the program is to support activities that strengthen the abilities of museums to serve the public.

11:43

As an applicant, you must align your project with one of the agency's goals by choosing a project category.

11:49

Your options are Lifelong Learning, Community Anchors, and Collections Stewardship and Access, reflected in the programmatic goals of IMLS's strategic plan.

12:00

The deadline for fiscal year 2021 applications is November 16th, 2020. Grant requests may range from \$5,000 to \$250,000 for projects scheduled to last 1 to 3 years. Projects must begin on September 1, 2021.

12:18

MFA requires a 1 to 1 cost share.

12:21

This means that for every dollar you request from IMLS, you must plan to provide an additional dollar in cash from a non-federal source, staff or volunteer time, or third-party in-kind contributions.

12:35

We highly recommend going to the IMLS website at [WWW dot IMLS dot gov](http://WWW.DOT.IMLS.DOT.GOV), and accessing the MFA pre-recorded webinar, which will be available in September 2020.

12:48

Once you have listened to the webinar, should you have any additional questions, feel free to contact one of the Senior Program Officers assigned to this program.

13:00

Museums Empowered is a special initiative of Museums for America. Its goal is to support staff capacity-building projects that use professional development to generate systemic change within a museum.

13:13

Potential projects should address 1 of 4 project categories: Digital Technology for museum staff to fully explore, understand, and optimize the use of digital technology in museums; Diversity and Inclusion for museum staff to develop cultural competency and support museum relevancy in their communities;

13:33

Evaluation to expand museum staff, evaluation, capacity and audience research and program evaluation; and Organizational Management for museum staff to learn best practices in organizational management, strategic thinking, innovation, and managing change.

13:51

The deadline for applications to Museums Empowered this year is November 16th, 2020.

13:57

Grant requests may range from \$5,000 to \$250,000 for projects scheduled to last 1 to 3 years. Projects must begin on September 1, 2021.

14:08

Museums Empowered requires a 1 to 1 cost share. This means that for every dollar you request from IMLS, you must plan to provide an additional dollar with cash from a non-federal source, staff or volunteer time, or third-party in-kind contributions.

14:25

We highly recommend going to the IMLS website and accessing the Museums Empowered pre-recorded webinar, which will be available in September 2020.

14:34

Once you have listened to the webinar, should you have any additional questions, feel free to contact the Senior Program Officer assigned to this program.

14:47

Inspire! Grants for Small Museums is designed specifically to help small museums address the priorities identified in their strategic plans.

14:56

As an applicant, you must align your project with 1 of 3 project categories: Lifelong Learning, Community Anchors, or Collections Stewardship and Access.

15:06

The deadline is November 16th, 2020. Grant requests may range from \$5,000 to \$50,000 for projects scheduled to last from 1 to 2 years, and no cost share is required.

15:19

Projects must begin September 1, 2020.

15:23

We highly recommend going to the IMLS website and accessing the Inspire! Grants for Small Museums pre-recorded webinar, which will be available in September 2020.

15:34

Once you've listened to the webinar, should you have any additional questions, feel free to contact one of the IMLS staff assigned to this program.

15:47

National Leadership Grants for Museums support projects that address critical needs of the museum field and have the potential to advance practice in the profession so that museums can improve services for the American public.

15:59

We invest in leaders, institutions, and partnerships that understand the challenges and opportunities facing the field and devise plans to move the new, move the field forward by producing and making available new tools, resources, research findings, and models.

16:17

You can choose to submit applications under 1 of 5 project categories: Collections Stewardship and Access, Data and Evaluation, Digital Platforms and Applications, Diversity and Inclusion, and Professional Development.

16:33

Each is described fully in the National Leadership Grants for Museums Notice of Funding Opportunity.

16:39

You will also pick 1 of 3 funding levels. As the slide shows, each has its own funding request range, cost share requirement, and grant period duration.

16:49

Rapid prototyping projects allow you to try an innovative solution to a field-wide challenge that requires funding to rapidly develop, test, iterate, and retest. Research projects pose questions of importance to the field and use accepted research methodologies to collect, analyze, and share the data that answers those questions.

17:12

Non- research projects support larger scale efforts that result in tools and resources for the field.

17:20

The deadline for National Leadership Grants museum applications is November 16, 2020, and projects must begin September 1, 2021.

17:30

We highly recommend going to the IMLS website and accessing the National Leadership Grants for Museums pre-recorded webinar, which will be available in September 2020.

17:40

Once you listen to the webinar, should you have any additional questions, feel free to contact the Senior Program Officer assigned to this program.

17:52

The goal of the Museum Grants for African American History and Culture is to build the capacity of African American museums and to support the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums and Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

18:08

The deadline this year for fiscal year 2021 applications is November 16, 2020, and projects must begin September 1, 2021.

18:19

There are two funding levels in AAHC, and each has its own cost share requirement.

18:25

For projects requesting \$5,000 to \$50,000, no cost share is required. For projects requesting \$50,001 to \$250,000, a 1 to 1 cost share is required. This means that for every dollar you request from IMLS, you must plan to provide an additional dollar cash from a non-federal source, staff or volunteer time, or third-party in-kind contributions. Projects may be scheduled to last from 1 to 3 years.

18:58

We highly recommend going to the IMLS website and accessing the AAHC pre-recorded webinar, which will be available in September 2020.

19:07

Once you've listened to the webinar, should you have any additional questions, feel free to contact the Senior Program Officer assigned to this program.

19:20

The goal of Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program is to enhance museum services in order to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge among Indian tribes and organizations serving Native Hawaiians.

19:33

This program has very specific eligibility criteria, so make sure you review the details if you are interested in applying.

19:41

The deadline for fiscal year 2021 applications is November 16th, 2020. Projects must begin September 1, 2021.

19:50

Grant requests may range from \$5,000 to \$100,000 for projects scheduled to last from 1 to 2 years, and no cost share is required.

20:01

We highly recommend going to the IMLS website and accessing the NANH pre-recorded webinar, which will be available in September 2020.

20:10

Once you have listened to the webinar, should you have any additional questions, feel free to contact the Senior Program Officer assigned to this program.

20:22

To find more information relevant to create a competitive proposal, your first stop should be our website, [WWW dot IMLS dot gov](http://WWW.dot.IMLS.dot.gov).

20:37

Here you'll be able to explore eligibility criteria, access the Notices of Funding Opportunities, which provide full instructions for preparing an application, and download sample applications. Please note that the samples you see here will be replaced with more current samples from the 2020 grant awardees. You'll also be able to access required application forms, search our database of previously awarded grants, and find out how to apply to become an IMLS peer reviewer.

21:11

At this juncture, we want to draw your attention to the free registration requirements: DUNS, [SAM dot gov](http://SAM.dot.gov), and [grants dot gov](http://grants.dot.gov).

21:20

Your registrations must be complete and up to date in order for you to submit an application to IMLS or to receive an award.

21:27

If you're starting from scratch, it's important to note that you must complete these registrations in sequence. First, you must have a DUNS number.

21:36

Dun and Bradstreet provides this unique nine-digit identification number free for all businesses required to register with the federal government for contracts or grants.

21:46

If you have a DUNS number, be sure you know it. If you don't have one, please visit WWW.DNB.COM to learn how to get one.

21:59

Second is SAM, which stands for System for Award Management.

22:04

Registering with SAM is also free.

22:06

It can be time-consuming, and it is different from DUNS, in that you must renew your registration each year to keep it active.

22:14

Because SAM dot gov registrations vary in their expiration dates, check your status early on and take action to ensure you are registered and your registration is active.

22:25

Begin with the website and use the FAQs to answer questions. If you have further SAM issues, call the Federal Service Desk at 866-606-8220, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM to 8:00 PM Eastern Time.

22:46

The third place you must be registered is the grants dot gov, the portal through which all applications for IMLS grants must be submitted.

22:54

To register, you must have an active SAM dot gov status, and, of course, a DUNS number.

22:59

The grants dot gov website is extensive, and their help capabilities are numerous and well-staffed.

23:05

Begin with the website and its FAQs, but if you need additional help, you may call their helpline at (800) 518-4726, which is available 24/7 except on federal holidays. Visit their support page at the website listed here, or e-mail them at support at grants dot gov.

23:31

Finally, here's a list of the names, e-mail addresses, and direct phone numbers for program staff in the Office of Museum Services.

23:39

We encourage you to contact us with any questions you might have about choosing a funding opportunity, or any other aspect of the grant application process. We'll be very happy to help.

23:53

This brings us to the end of the information we set out to share with you in this webinar, but let's take a minute to summarize what we hope you will take away.

24:02

First, IMLS's vision, mission, and strategic plan are at the core of its grantmaking.

24:09

You will be well-served to consider these when thinking about your project for which you will be seeking IMLS support.

24:15

Funding opportunities in fiscal year 2021 include two technical assessment programs, and six grant programs.

24:25

Each grant program has its own set of eligibility requirements, and you should consider these early on in the process of selecting a grant program.

24:33

Each grant program supports particular types of projects aligning with programmatic goals. Be sure that you choose the grant program with goals that match your project's intent.

24:45

Applications to all IMLS museum grant programs are due November 16th, 2020, and all projects supported through the fiscal year 2021 funding opportunities must have a start date of September 1, 2021.

25:01

Our website, [WWW dot IMLS dot gov](http://WWW.IMLS.GOV), provides a wealth of information to help you create a competitive grant application. Start your explorations there.

25:12

It is very important to get a DUNS number and to register early with [SAM dot gov](http://SAM.GOV) and [grants dot gov](http://GRANTS.GOV).

25:19

If you're already registered, be sure you know the usernames and passwords you'll need well in advance of the day you submit your application.

25:26

Lastly, you should listen to the pre-recorded versions and transcripts of all our webinars on our website at [HTTPS colon, double backslash, WWW dot IMLS dot gov backslash webinars](https://WWW.IMLS.GOV/WEBINARS). Thank you for your interest in IMLS funding programs and opportunities, and for checking out this webinar. Good luck, and we look forward to seeing your application this November.