Program Overview
Museums for America - Museums Empowered

Museums for America (MFA) grants support projects that strengthen the ability of an individual museum to serve its public. **Museums Empowered: Professional Development and Capacity Building Opportunities for Museums** is a special MFA initiative to provide professional development and capacity building opportunities for eligible museums.

IMLS encourages applicants to invest in the professional development of museum staff, volunteers, and interns to enhance their skills and ensure the highest standards in all aspects of museum operations.

To support and empower museums of all sizes and disciplines in responding to the evolving needs of the museum profession and changes in their communities, this MFA special initiative has four areas of focus for professional development and capacity building:

- **Digital Technology**: training and professional development learning opportunities for museum staff to fully explore, understand and optimize the use of digital technology in museums
- **Diversity and Inclusion**: staff professional development and museum capacity building projects that explore proactive and inclusive ways to invite, connect, engage and strengthen ties with diverse communities
- **Evaluation:** training and professional development opportunities in audience research and evaluation for museum staff to help a museum expand its evaluation capacity
- **Organizational Management**: training and professional development opportunities for museum staff to learn best practices in organizational management, strategic thinking, embracing innovation and managing change in order to foster continued growth, relevancy and vitality

Potential projects will address one of these four priority areas and help strengthen the ability of an individual museum to better serve its public, by building internal capacity of the museum through professional development for museum staff.

Successful Museums Empowered projects have the following indicators (characteristics):

- *Institutional Impact:* Projects address a key goal identified in an institution's strategic plan.
- *In-depth Knowledge:* Applications reflect a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter.
- *Project-based Design:* Work plans consist of a set of logical, interrelated activities tied directly to addressing the key need or challenge identified in the proposal.
- *Demonstrable Results:* Projects generate measurable results that tie directly to the need or challenge it was designed to address.