

## Program Overview - Museums Empowered

The goal of the Museums for America (MFA) program is to support projects that strengthen the ability of an individual museum to serve its public. **Museums Empowered: Professional Development Opportunities for Museum Staff** is a special MFA initiative with the goal of strengthening the ability of an individual museum to serve its public through professional development activities that cross-cut various departments to generate systemic change within the museum.

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 project categories for professional development:

- **Digital Technology:** for museum staff to fully explore, understand, adopt 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
- **Evaluation:** to expand museum staff's capacity in conducting formative and summative evaluation of programs, practices and products
- **Organizational Management:** for museum staff to learn best practices in organizational management, strategic thinking, innovation and managing change

Potential projects will address one of these four project categories and help strengthen the ability of an individual museum to better serve its public.

Successful Museums Empowered projects demonstrate the following characteristics:

- ✓ *Institutional Impact:* The project strengthens the ability of an individual museum to serve its public through professional development activities that cross-cut various departments to generate systemic change within the museum.
- ✓ *In-depth Knowledge:* The project design reflects a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter.
- ✓ *Project-based Design:* The work plan consists of a set of logical, interrelated activities tied directly to addressing the key need or challenge identified in the application.
- ✓ *Demonstrable Results:* The project generates measurable results that tie directly to the need or challenge it was designed to address.