

## Timed Transcript for IMLS Webinar for Potential Peer Reviewers

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Welcome to the Webinar for Potential Peer Reviewers.

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Our goal in this presentation is to provide basic information about participating as a peer reviewer in the IMLS grant review process.

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If you are interested in learning more about the experience of peer reviewers, this video is for you.

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The Institute of Museum and Library Services is an independent federal grant making agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries, archives, and museums.

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Every year, IMLS awards tens of millions of dollars to museums, libraries, archives, and related organizations to support a wide range of services for their communities across the nation.

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All proposals submitted to IMLS's competitive grant programs are reviewed by museum, library and archives professionals who know the needs of their communities, can share promising practices, and are well versed in the issues and concerns of museums, libraries and archives today.

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We recognize the peer review process as a foundation of our agency grant making.

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The grant making process would not be possible without dedicated peer reviewers, who, by sharing their time and expertise, advance the highest professional practices in the field.

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Grant applications undergo several steps of review.

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Grant applications are received through [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov).

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Program staff review the applications for completeness and institutional eligibility.

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Program staff organize applications into groups reflecting similar project topics, institutional disciplines, and grant program categories or goals.

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They then reach out to experienced and knowledgeable museum, library, and archives professionals who submitted a peer reviewer form through the IMLS website.

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Selected peer reviewers assess grant applications by providing constructive comments and scores based on the review criteria outlined in the Notice of Funding Opportunity for each grant program. Staff members review the submitted comments and scores and present a slate of recommendations to the IMLS Director.

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By law, the IMLS Director is charged with the authority and responsibility to make the final award decisions.

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After awards are announced, all grant applicants, whether successful or unsuccessful, are provided with a copy of the anonymous comments and scores from the peer reviewers.

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There are two types of peer review at IMLS, field reviews and panel reviews.

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Some programs use only one type of review, while others use both.

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For both field and panel reviews, experienced and knowledgeable professionals in the field of museums, libraries and archives assess applications over a three- to six-week period.

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They review full proposals at home or their workplace, usually spending 10 to 15 hours to review their assigned applications.

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The exact amount of time can vary depending on whether a reviewer is experienced or a first-time reviewer.

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Both field and panel reviewers are eligible to receive honoraria for their service.

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The key difference between field and panel reviews is that field reviewers independently write comments and submit scores for their assigned applications, while panel reviewers meet with other panelists to discuss the applications before submitting their comments and scores.

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Panel review meetings can occur either virtually or in person.

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IMLS covers travel costs for panel reviewers to attend the meeting if it is held in person.

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If a reviewer's organization applies for a grant in the same fiscal year, that's OK.

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They can still serve as a reviewer but will never be asked to review their own organization's application.

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Our peer reviewers come from a variety of different educational, professional, and cultural backgrounds.

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The peer reviewer forms on our website ask potential reviewers to identify a variety of areas of expertise.

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For the museum field, it includes, but is not limited to, school or public programming, exhibitions, collections care and management, community outreach, as well as African American history and culture, American Latino history and culture, Native American and Native Hawaiian cultures, and more.

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Museum professionals who serve as reviewers come from a variety of museum disciplines, including history, art and science museums, as well as children's museums, tribal museums, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, and more.

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For the library and archives field, areas of expertise include, but is not limited to, pre-K through 12 school programs, civic literacy, digital preservation and curation, rural areas, professional development and training, community engagement, as well as Native American and Native Hawaiian cultures, and more.

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Library and archives professionals who serve as reviewers have significant experience working with libraries and archives, including public libraries, academic institutions,

school libraries and tribal libraries, as well as community-based archives, special collections, and more.

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Reviewing grant applications can be a great professional development opportunity, offering you the chance to share your personal expertise, read about a wide range of fascinating projects for museums, libraries and archives across the country, and learn about trends in the fields.

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Becoming a reviewer is also a great way to learn about the IMLS grant making process and give back to your professional community.

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Here are some quotes from previous reviewers.

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Feel free to pause your video to read about their experiences in their own words.

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If you're interested in becoming a reviewer, submit your information through the Peer Review Form, either the Museum Professional Form or the Library Professional Form, on our website.

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The address is listed on the screen. <https://www.imls.gov/about/learn-about-imls/peer-review>

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If you've been a reviewer for us in the past, please submit your form again.

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The information you provide online allows us to match applications with your area of expertise.

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You can also become familiar with IMLS grant programs by visiting our website.

<https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs>

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Once grant applications are submitted, a staff member will reach out to the reviewers whose expertise matches submitted grant applications with more information.

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Thank you for your interest in serving as a peer reviewer, and we look forward to receiving your peer review form.