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Museums for America

Sample Application MA-30-18-0256-18
Project Category: Collections Stewardship

South Carolina State Museum

Amount awarded by IMLS: $209,223
Amount of cost share: $215,847

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- ▪ Abstract
- ▪ Narrative
- ▪ Schedule of Completion

Please note that the instructions for preparing applications for the FY2019 Museums for America grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2018 applications. Be sure to use the instructions in the FY2019 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

Project Abstract

Project Activities & Timeframe
The South Carolina State Museum (SCSM) located in Columbia, SC is requesting funding for its *Collections Inventory & Digitization for a New Collections Management System,* a 2-year project, starting in October 2018 and concluding in September 2020. Project Staff will inventory the complete Art collection across 3 storage rooms, resulting in 3,500 new or revised entries for the 80,000-piece object collection. The Museum will hire a full-time Inventory Coordinator and 4 part-time dedicated project assistants who will work under the direction of the SCSM Registrar, who will serve as the Project Director.

Project Need
Over the last 3 years, SCSM Collections Department Staff conducted a comprehensive examination of the Museum's 15 collections storage rooms and 4 floors of exhibition space to identify critical concerns. The process revealed significant issues, including: outdated collections management software, integrated pest-management issues and a limited amount of storage space. The urgency of this project was brought into sharp focus during Summer 2016 when Collections Department Staff re-established an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system based on these vulnerable objects and their locations.

Benefits
This inventory project will benefit the collections of SCSM first and foremost. The project has been informed by best practices and will be guided by digitization and photography consultants to establish protocols. Collections Staff will also benefit from an inventory yielding accurate data and digital images for a new collections management software system, as this will reduce Staff time responding to research and other inquiries. Through this project, SCSM is making a long-term commitment to preserving the State of South Carolina's history.

Intended Results
The overarching goal of the *SCSM Collections Inventory & Digitization for a New Collections Management System* project is to strengthen the Museum's ability to fulfil its role as steward of the collections. The intended results of the project are to:
1.   **Conduct** an inventory of 3,500 objects in the storage areas relating to fine art, pottery, sculpture, and quilts.
2.   **Photograph** each object during the inventory process
3.   **Verify and collect** data-entry information for each of the 3,500 objects inventoried

Measuring Success
The Project Director will design an outcomes-based evaluation plan and quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools tied to intended results. The evaluation plan for this project will include an overall schedule for the inventory with timeline goals for numerical progress (objects and digitized records created). Inventory Assistants will compile monthly reports detailing progress, both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (work methods & effectiveness). SCSM Project Staff will meet weekly and at key completion points during the inventory to measure progress against the schedule of completion and intended results. This process will facilitate timely adjustments to keep project activities on schedule. These tools will help the Project Director to make necessary course corrections and adjustments, as well as to determine overall progress in achieving intended results.

Collections Inventory & Digitization for a New Collections Management System

1. Project Justification

Project Proposal

The **South Carolina State Museum** (SCSM) is located in the historic Columbia Mills textile factory on the banks of the Congaree River in downtown Columbia, S.C. The 225,000-sq.ft. facility is operated by the South Carolina State Museum Commission as the official museum of the State of South Carolina. Accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and an affiliate of the Smithsonian Institution, SCSM is the state's largest and most comprehensive museum, with approximately 80,000 objects and 200,000 natural-history specimens. SCSM requests an IMLS grant to begin populating a new Collections Management System (CMS) with updated digital accession records and images. Project Staff will inventory the SCSM's complete Art collection, contained in two storage rooms, resulting in 3,500 new or revised entries. The purchase of the new CMS software, Axiell's EMu, was funded by the state to replace the outmoded program (iO) used by the Museum since 1998.

Addressing High-Priority Collections-Related Needs

The Museum's current collections records contain serious discrepancies, in particular, incorrect object counts, location information and inconsistent data within records. SCSM's collection grew quickly over the past 4 decades, and the Museum's ability to capture data and images lagged behind industry standards due to a lack of funding and staff. SCSM began collecting in 1974, before the Museum actually opened, with accessions peaking between 1986 and 1995. AAM noted in its accreditation review that the acquisition of such a large number of objects in a 40-year period is unusually rapid growth. To rectify the situation and gather accurate information for the new CMS, a detailed inventory must be conducted. The first phase of this inventory, and the focus of this proposal, addresses the approximately 3,500 objects in the Art collection. This collection, the smallest of the discipline areas, is also in high demand for research and exhibition projects, and has not undergone a full-scale inventory since the Museum opened in 1988. AAM noted the absence of a full inventory of all collections as a concern in the Museum's last reaccreditation.

SCSM requests a $209,223 grant in the *Collections Stewardship* category to support this critical inventory process. The project encompasses: 1) hiring project-specific staff to verify existing records and input data into the new software under the supervision of the Project Director, 2) purchasing digitization equipment and workstations, 3) collaboration with a digitization consultant to establish firm metadata protocols to guide this project and also subsequent inventories and digitization efforts, 4) contracting with a photographer to train staff to capture a digital image of each artifact during inventory (something that does not exist for the majority of SCSM's artifacts), and 5) project evaluation.

Project Background: Identifying Need & Scope

Over the last 3 years, in preparation for updates to Museum-wide strategic and collections planning, Collections Department Staff conducted a comprehensive examination of the Museum's 15 collections storage rooms and 4 floors of exhibition space to identify critical concerns. The process revealed significant problems, including: outdated collections-management software, integrated pest-management issues (evidence of webbing clothes moths in natural history and textile uniform storage spaces), and a limited amount of storage space. The urgency of this project was brought into sharp focus during Summer 2016 when Collections Department Staff corrected the moth infestation problem and re-established an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) system based on these vulnerable objects and their locations. Staff recognized that an inventory of the collection was needed to ensure that precise object locations and conditions were known so that future threats could be quickly recognized and addressed. The South Carolina Museum Commission concurred that an inventory was a high-priority need – the completion of which would enable Staff to regain control of collections information for effective management purposes. *[See: Letter of Support]*

Staff consulted other institutions for guidance and researched best practices to design a plan to address areas of concern. Acting promptly, Staff assembled a team to correct the environment and examine all objects affected by the pest infestation. Beyond the immediate positive impact of the work completed, the process provided a template for working with a team to effectively accomplish multiple tasks and reinforced the Museum's decision to begin the complete inventory.

To identify the scope for this project, Collections Staff focused on three questions:
> 1) *Which collection areas would benefit the most from an inventory?*
> 2) *What can reasonably be accomplished in the given timeline and budget?*
> 3) *In what ways can the process provide a blueprint for future inventories of the remaining collections?*

The 3,500 objects in the Art collection were selected because of their popularity with researchers, frequent use in exhibitions, and because storage room upgrades meant **object locations in these areas are some of the most inaccurate** in iO. SCSM continues to collect heavily in this area, so future availability of storage space is an important consideration as part of this process. An inventory here would also provide clean data on an entire collection, and allow staff to refine procedures with 2-D and 3-D objects that will be useful in future years as SCSM expands the process to inventory its other collections. Finally, because SCSM plans to make its collections accessible online, but lacks images and searchable data, this project is a necessary first step.

Significance & Scope of Collections
As the official museum of the State of South Carolina, SCSM collects, preserves, researches and displays the natural history, art, science and technology, and cultural history of the Palmetto State. SCSM cares for a collection of more than 200,000 natural-history specimens and 80,000 objects: approximately 3,500 art objects; 20,000 objects related to science, technology and military history; and 56,500 objects representing cultural history and domestic life. Collections reflect eras spanning from the Cenozoic Era to the present, and concentrate on South Carolina society from 1880 to the 1970s. The Natural History collection has a growing number of both fossil and modern specimens and the Science and Technology collection includes computers, communications instruments, and space-related artifacts. Cultural History artifacts concentrate on South Carolina history and society from Paleo Indians of 8000 BCE to the 1970s and include furnishings, kitchen and cooking appliances, weapons/firearms, equipment, and uniforms from major wars of the 20th century, particularly World Wars I and II. **The focus of this project is the 3,500 objects in the Art collection.** The **Art** collection contains fine, folk, traditional and decorative arts pieces concentrated largely in stoneware pottery, works on paper, quilts, and sculpture. A significant portion of the collection and the future of collecting at the Museum is interdisciplinary. Thus, when a piece of South Carolina Upcountry stoneware is acquired, it has both cultural-history and art aspects. *[See: Selection of Sample Objects* and *Collection Management Policy]*

Addressing MFA and Collections Stewardship Goals
The project addresses the goal of the ***Museums for America*** program because it will strengthen SCSM's ability to serve its public as the steward of South Carolina's art and history. The inventory process lays the groundwork for a future online portal to the collections, accessible to the public. The project is aligned with the goals of the ***Collections Stewardship*** category as an investment in database creation and digitization, and because its successful completion will improve collections-information management. Implementation of the new collections software and inventory will enable SCSM to continue advancing its mission to preserve and protect the collections by addressing erroneous location information, updating records, generating digital object images, and identifying potentially insufficient storage spaces.

Benefits to the Collection
This inventory project will benefit the collections of SCSM first and foremost. The project has been informed by best practices and will be guided by digitization and photography consultants to establish protocols. Collections Staff will also benefit from an inventory yielding accurate data and digital images for a new CMS, as this will reduce Staff time responding to research and other inquiries. This is particularly important as permanent Collections Staff is a limited resource. Staff will also be able to more easily and efficiently locate, monitor and care for objects. Harnessing the collections in this way will ultimately strengthen other aspects of the Museum's work, including education, outreach, exhibitions and strategic planning. Because this project will result in a tested model for future inventories, the remaining collections of SCSM will also benefit, thus supporting the significant role collections interpretation and access will play in the future direction of the Museum.

Advancing Strategic Plan
This project directly supports key aspects of SCSM's Strategic Plan, particularly **Goal #3** - *To be the caretaker of South Carolina's art, cultural history, science and technology, and natural history* and **Strategy #2** - *To increase the security and preservation of the collection.* Populating a new collections management system with updated digital accession records and images, and completing the related inventory, advances four of the objectives for Strategy #2:
OBJECTIVE #1: To implement Axiell's EMu, the museum's new collections management system; complete the transfer and update of information
OBJECTIVE #2: Begin wall-to-wall collections inventory to assess location and condition of storage
OBJECTIVE #3: Begin comprehensive planning for digitization of museum's collection to increase public access

OBJECTIVE #4: Identify needed improvements in collections storage in conjunction with space planner

The Museum's 50,000-square-foot *Windows to New Worlds* expansion, completed in 2014, focused on educational outreach opportunities and engaging new audiences through a planetarium, a 4D Theater, and an observatory that supports distance STEM learning in classrooms across the state. Following this successful expansion campaign, SCSM turned its attention to permanent exhibitions in older areas of the Museum, which largely had not been updated or renovated since opening in 1988. In support of SCSM's mission to "entertain, inspire imagination and creativity, and enrich the lives of visitors," the Strategic Plan outlines goals to expand educational offerings both on-site at the Museum as well as through digital outreach. To effectively plan for both, Staff must know precisely what the collections hold so information can be accessed by researchers, educators, planners and exhibition designers. Further, Objectives #2 & #4 address assessment of storage and spatial conditions. Current collections records do not provide sufficient information to support such an assessment, as the exact locations of many objects are incorrect. The information gathered through the inventory will provide accurate information about what is in the collection, where it is, and which collections require additional storage space due to overcrowding or to accommodate future acquisitions. The inventory process will also provide information about gaps and strengths in collections for exhibition planning.

2. Project Work Plan

Specific Activities and Sequence During Grant Period
The ***SCSM Collections Inventory & Digitization for a New Collections Management System*** is a 2-year project, starting in October 2018 and concluding in September 2020. The Museum will hire a full-time Inventory Coordinator who will work with **Project Director, Robyn Adams** (SCSM Registrar) to hire the necessary part-time employees for the project inventory teams. SCSM will create a team of 4 part-time employees to focus on inventory data capture, image capture and processing, and database file clean-up. Based on previous projects which involved inventorying objects, the Project Director estimates that each object will require 3 hours to process and photograph. Thus, approximately 10,500 hours of labor are needed. The 4 part-time staff will each work 1,000 hours each year of the 2-year project, resulting in 8,000 hours of labor. The Inventory Coordinator, who has 3,900 hours over the course of the 2 years, will assist in the workflow as needed to provide additional hours to the project. The Inventory Coordinator will manage the team, with oversight from the Project Director.

Adams will launch the project with a meeting of the existing, full-time SCSM Project Staff and consultants to provide an overview and outline key tasks and responsibilities. Key tasks for the project include: **1)** SCSM Project Staff meets with Kate Boyd (digitization consultant) and Hunter Clarkson (photography consultant) to create protocols for digitization tasks based on standardized best practices, and SCSM Project Staff is trained on protocols; **2)** Project Director purchases needed equipment; **3)** Inventory Coordinator hired; **4)** Project Director and Inventory Coordinator design outcomes-based evaluation plan; **5)** 4 part-time Project Staff hired; **6)** Photography consultant designs photography setups and trains project photographers; **7)** Project Staff is trained to use Axiell's EMu software; **8)** Inventory Assistants physically locate and document the basic condition and location of each object in the scope of the project; **9)** Inventory Assistants record information physically and digitally according to protocols for each; **10)** Data Entry Assistant matches hard copies of accessions records to inventoried objects added to database and verify/edit records to align with new protocols, scanning in negatives and paper records as appropriate; **11)** Photography Assistant captures and edits digital images of each object as part of inventory process; **12)** Data Entry Assistant, with help from Inventory Coordinator, ensures associated metadata is linked to file, files are stored correctly, and uploads images to EMu; **13)** Project Director (Registrar), Curator of Art, and Collections Outreach Manager review newly digitized records; **14)** Project Director and Inventory Coordinator gather and analyze evaluation data for Year 1, write mid-term report and discuss findings with Project Staff and make mid-term corrections as needed; **15)** Inventory continues as above for Year 2; **16)** Gather final quantitative and qualitative data at the end of Year 2, write final report, discuss findings, act on recommendations as appropriate; and **17)** Communicate results.

Project Management & Addressing Risks
Robyn Adams, SCSM Registrar, will be the **Project Director**. She has been the Registrar at SCSM since June 2015, and earned a B.A. in History from Clemson University and an M.A. in Public History from North Carolina State University (Raleigh). Adams has a track record of successful project management. She managed SCSM's IPM remediation project during Summer 2016 and is the 2018 AAM reaccreditation coordinator for the Museum. As an Assistant Collections Manager at Mount

Vernon, Adams helped supervise the collections management system (The Museum System/TMS), oversaw training, led the implementation of a new numbering system, and coordinated with IT support staff to address problems and updates to the system. She also participated in a complete inventory, including data entry and management of TMS image files.

Together with Paul Matheny, Director of Collections, Adams will oversee the pre-grant training on the Axiell's EMu system for full-time SCSM Project Staff as well as initial planning, coordination and creation of preliminary digitization protocols. At the beginning of the grant period, Adams and Matheny will meet with project consultants to establish protocols and design training sessions for Project Staff. SCSM will hire a full-time Inventory Coordinator to manage all aspects of the project, including management of 4 part-time project staff, inventorying, data entry and digitization, and assisting with evaluation. The Inventory Coordinator will be supervised by the Project Director (Adams) with additional guidance from, and oversight by, other SCSM Project Staff (listed below) as needed. Throughout the grant period, Adams will convene meetings to monitor progress and address problems. Adams and the Inventory Coordinator will lead weekly meetings with part-time staff to discuss the status of workplans and any areas of concern. Adams will enlist SCSM Project Staff as needed to address backlogs or other issues. As a result of these meetings, protocols will be edited and adjusted, both with an eye toward this and future inventories, to reflect the nature of the project and efficient work models. Adams will lead monthly update meetings with SCSM Project Staff and oversee reporting and evaluation activities. SCSM Executive Director Willie Calloway has directed full-time Project Staff to adapt their schedules to assist with object identification, rehousing of objects, and data-entry quality control.

Adams will direct staff to think preemptively about potential challenges for the process and to monitor and report these throughout the project. The Schedule of Completion incorporates regular check points for project personnel to measure progress, confirm compliance with protocols and make course corrections as needed. The Director of Collections has identified several risks and challenges, including: efficient coordination of a team of 4 part-time staff to minimize wait time and ensure that tasks are completed in the proper sequence, potential damage to objects from improper handling, unforeseen conservation problems, and the general fragility of the portion of artifacts already in poor condition. Additionally, moving large, heavy and delicate objects (such as sculpture, large pottery, and quilts) will require detailed planning, coordination and extra staffing. Because the design of the work plan was tested in 2016 when a team of part-time staff was hired to address the pest infestation described earlier, Adams believes risks can be minimized for this project.

Conservation issues encountered will be documented in detail and discussed with the Curator of Art, Curator of History, and Director of Collections to determine if professional conservation is needed. (Conservation treatment is outside the scope of this proposal, but is supported by existing SCSM funds.) If additional pest issues are identified, staff will implement isolation procedures. The storage spaces have already been inspected for this type of problem, and no overt evidence of infestation was found. Inventory Assistants will be trained by Adams in basic stabilization of objects found in poor condition, dust management, and replacement of acidic storage materials. Additionally, Adams and the Inventory Coordinator will meet with Inventory Assistants at the completion of each inventoried row/shelf of objects to update critical condition or housing needs so that SCSM Project Staff may address them separately. In this way, issues will be discussed promptly to enable the Project Director to monitor progress.

Project Planning & Research
SCSM Staff is integrating current theory and best practices in the implementation of this project. The Project Director has researched digitization best practices, secured commitments from two consultants [listed below] to assist with protocol development and project troubleshooting and consulted with peers who have undertaken similar projects. These colleagues communicated to Adams the importance of having adequate numbers of dedicated staff and a supervisory structure to accomplish inventory projects of this scope, as well as successful workflow solutions for both digitization and inventory. *[See: Project Planning Resources and Bibliography]*

Key Staff & Consultants
SCSM Staff is highly qualified, and has a demonstrated track record that supports the successful completion of this project. The opening of the 50,000-square-foot *Windows to New Worlds* expansion demonstrates their capacity to work efficiently and effectively to accomplish a large scale project - on budget and according to schedule.

SCSM Project Staff
Willie Calloway, Executive Director, will attend project meetings at key review points to ensure work flow is being coordinated and that full-time Staff have allowed time in their schedules to conduct this project. Calloway, who has been at

SCSM since 2002, oversaw the $23 million *Windows to New Worlds* renovation and expansion project and has managed other large-scale projects in both the non-profit and for-profit sectors. He received a B.S. in electrical engineering from Georgia Tech University and an M.B.A. from the University of Houston.

Paul Matheny, Director of Collections and Programs, joined SCSM as the Curator of Art in 2001, and assumed his current role in 2015. For this project he will work closely with the Project Director to oversee pre-grant activities. At the start of the grant period he will collaborate with project consultants to establish project protocols and design training sessions for Project Staff. He will attend key meetings and give weekly updates to SCSM's Executive Director on project status. Matheny earned a B.F.A. and an M.A.A.A. from Winthrop University in South Carolina.

Lori Kornegay, Curator of Art, joined SCSM in January 2017. She is using this project to gain in-depth knowledge of the collection, and will assist the Project Director with the weekly oversight of the inventory process. She will help identify objects needing conservation or rehousing, and will make assessments on photography staging. Kornegay earned a B.A. in Microbiology from Clemson University and an M.A. in Art History from the University of South Carolina (Columbia).

JoAnn Zeise, Curator of History, joined SCSM in 2012 and will assist with the inventory of the quilt collection, as she has responsibility for this interdisciplinary collection. Zeise received a B.A. in History and English and an M.A. in the Public History Program/Historic Preservation from the University of South Carolina (Columbia).

Cassie Ward, Collections Outreach Manager, was hired in March 2017, having previously volunteered in Registration, and manages traveling exhibits, research inquiries and rights & reproductions. In this capacity, the Collections Outreach Manager will work with the Photography and Data Entry Assistants to ensure that capture standards for digital images match SCSM's new digital standards, and that copyright information is attached to the records correctly. She will also coordinate social media postings with the Marketing Department to keep the public updated on the project's progress. Ward has a B.F.A. in Theatre Design and Technology from the University of Southern Mississippi and an M.F.A. in Technical Theatre from the University of Delaware.

Grant-Funded Project Staff to be hired: SCSM will hire the following temporary staff for the 2-year project: 1 FTE **Collections Inventory Coordinator**, 2 PTE **Collections Inventory Assistants**, 1 PTE **Collections Data Entry Assistant,** and 1 PTE **Collections Photography Assistant**. *[See: Resumes/Job Descriptions]*

Consultants
Kate Boyd, Digitization Consultant, is the Digital Initiative Coordinator at University of South Carolina Libraries and Program Director for the South Carolina Digital Library (Columbia, SC). She will work with Project Staff to create protocols for the digitization process to ensure they reflect standardized best practices, and will support a larger-scale digitization process for a future online collections portal. Boyd will meet with Project Staff at 6-month intervals to discuss new issues and offer ongoing guidance.

Hunter Clarkson, **Photography Consultant,** has worked as an outside consultant photographing for the SCSM's collections for over 30 years. He will consult with Project Staff to establish an appropriate photography digitization plan for the new database, train the part-time photographer, and will support the work of the team by helping to problem-solve and check project results at regular intervals throughout the project.

Financial & Physical Resources
SCSM has an established history of sound financial management and the resources necessary to successfully implement this major project. The Museum has a track record of successful fundraising, including securing significant state and corporate support for its programs. Examples include the completion in 2014 of the $23 million *Windows to New Worlds* expansion and renovation project. *Windows* added 50,000 square feet to the Museum's facility, including 3 new exhibition pavilions. This expansion was achieved with a combination of private, federal, and state funding, including $1 million from Boeing Corporation for a new observatory. In 2016, the South Carolina Museum Foundation received a $1,903,792 anonymous bequest for conserving and acquiring artifacts and objects for the Museum's collections. This gift was the largest individual donation in SCSM's history, and demonstrates the value of the collection to South Carolina. Additionally, after several years of budget cuts, the Museum has significantly increased its earned income revenue in the last 5 years. It now accounts for approximately 53% of the Museum's operating budget. In 2016 the State provided an additional $445,000 in annual funding to the Museum to retain and hire new Collections and Education Staff.

The State also provided a $125,000 line-item allocation in 2015 for the acquisition of new CMS software, Axiell's EMu, as well as the expansion of a wireless system into Museum storage areas to allow use of the CMS for cataloguing and research. The Museum will allocate significant Staff time and other resources (totaling $215,847 cost share) in its FY 2018 - FY 2020 operating budgets for this project.

SCSM has dedicated an 8,240 square-foot space for the duration of this long-term project. The space is located within the collections storage area and has several significant benefits: proximity to the main art collections storage rooms to be inventoried – reducing the risks associated with moving objects greater distances in the Museum – and it is temperature and humidity-controlled. Further, it is secure: SCSM underwent a $100,000 security upgrade in 2016, making all collections storage areas key-card controlled for personnel access.

IMLS Funding
SCSM requests IMLS MFA funding of $209,223 over 2 years for project-specific personnel, tools and equipment. The completion of the project will require a substantial investment in personnel hours. The budget supports this through the hiring of dedicated staff: 1 full-time manager and 4 part-time staff.

Tracking Progress
Robyn Adams, Project Director, will design an outcomes-based evaluation plan and quantitative and qualitative evaluation tools tied to intended results. Adams will oversee all evaluation activities, and will work with the Inventory Coordinator to design appropriate evaluation methods to gather and analyze data to track progress and formulate recommendations for ongoing work. Adams' experience includes her evaluation of data-entry standards for a database conversion project at Mount Vernon, as well as the assessment of SCSM's 2016 IPM remediation project, which informed the development of an all-encompassing IPM plan. The evaluation plan for this project will include an overall schedule for the inventory with timeline goals for numerical progress (objects and digitized records created). Inventory Assistants will compile monthly reports detailing progress, both quantitative (numerical) and qualitative (work methods & effectiveness). SCSM Project Staff will meet weekly and at key completion points during the inventory to measure progress against the schedule of completion and intended results. This process will facilitate timely adjustments to keep project activities on schedule. The Project Director will create a budget and activity spreadsheet to ensure the project is in compliance with projected cost and timeline. Adams will also use the evaluation process developed for the project (including the design of an outcomes-based plan and reports at the end of Year 1 and Year 2) to help track progress. These tools will help the Inventory Coordinator to make necessary course corrections and adjustments, as well as to determine overall progress in achieving intended results.

Communicating Results
SCSM will engage the public with updates about the project through bi-weekly Facebook/social media "object highlight" postings. On an internal level, Project Staff will share results quarterly with the SC Museum Commission, SC State Museum Foundation, and the Director of Collections will update other SCSM Directors at weekly meetings. On a professional level, SCSM is active in the Southeastern Museum Conference and the South Carolina Federation of Museums, and will submit presentation proposals about this project for conferences. After the conclusion of this 2-year project, SCSM will be ready to begin sharing the inventoried collections through an online exhibit portal.

3. Project Results

Intended Results
The overarching goal of the ***SCSM Collections Inventory & Digitization for a New Collections Management System*** project is to strengthen the Museum's ability to fulfil its role as steward of the collections.

This project addresses 4% of the 80,000-piece object collection. The **intended results** of the project are to:

1. **Conduct** an inventory of 3,500 objects in the storage areas relating to art. SCSM estimates that 3 hours will be required to inventory and photograph each object. 3,500 objects will require approximately 10,500 hours of labor over two years.
2. **Photograph** each object during the inventory process (handling the object one time for both inventory and photography).
3. **Verify and collect** data-entry information for each of the 3,500 objects to populate the new CMS.

Improvement to Care, Condition and Management of Collections

Current Problem	How the Project Will Correct/Improve Problem
Complete inventory of the collection has not occurred since SCSM opened in 1988.	Inventory will be completed for 4% of 80,000-piece object collection, providing a tested template for future phases.
Current collection management system dates to the 1990s & does not easily accommodate digital images. Some records are incomplete or inaccurate. Technological advances have rendered it outmoded & unstable for SCSM needs.	Implementation of state-of-the-art collection management system will feature images & contain updated & verified information for each object. Data migration specialists will transfer existing records. Searching & data management will be optimized.
Do not have accurate locations of some objects.	Can access objects easily with minimal handling of other objects; can make visual checks more easily; can locate objects needed for exhibition, loan or acquisitions process.
Difficult to conduct regular visual &/or physical inspections of objects.	Inventory process & correction of object location information will assist Staff in rehousing objects where necessary & detecting/addressing threats to be addressed independently.
Less than 1% of the objects in the collection have a digital image associated with them.	As part of the inventory process, a digital image will be captured for each object. A visual representation of the object reduces the need for handling the object. Digital images will feed into eventual online collections portal.
Inventory cards in individual storage areas are incomplete & difficult to keep up to date.	Laptops/tablets connected to the CMS can be used in storage areas to aid in object location, movement & identification.
Locating objects for exhibition & research inquiries requires that Staff go into storage to find the object & associated paper file each time the object is requested.	Object information will be included in detail in CMS, location will be verified, & image will be available for exhibit planning & research requests, saving Staff time.
Objects are often stored in original acidic containers within archival boxes & are overcrowded in the spaces. This makes it difficult for Staff to locate objects, & to determine where additional storage space is needed.	Acidic housing will be removed as part of the inventory process. Objects will be more safely housed in their current locations, & SCSM will have the necessary data on storage needs to use in long-term upgrades with a space planner.

Resulting Tangible Products

This project will result in the following tangible products: the development of inventory and photography protocols for digitization of collection objects & implementation of the new CMS, an outcomes-based evaluation plan, acquisition of needed equipment for in-house data capture and digital photography, inventory of and creation of digital images for 3,500 objects, descriptive reports on object storage per square foot to be used in future planning, and annual evaluation reports.

Investment in Capacity & Sustaining Benefits of Project

In order to maintain the highest level of collections stewardship, SCSM must bring its collections management system up to date. This will allow Collections Staff to care for collections in a timely and efficient way, and to prepare for new acquisitions. The investment in a new collections management system to track, manage, and digitally capture objects in the collection is critical to several strategic goals. The establishment of inventory and digitization protocols will lay the groundwork for future inventories and for SCSM's digitization program. The successful completion of this project is an investment in institutional capacity, as it will allow SCSM to maximize the potential of the collections through exhibition and educational outreach.

SCSM is confident of its ability to sustain this project after IMLS funding ends. Over the last 9 years, SCSM has proven its ability to overcome budget challenges by cultivating new earned revenue streams, such as a new admissions fee structure, the growth of public program fees (including the Planetarium and 4-D Theater offerings), an increased membership base, expanded café options, and facility rentals. The SC Museum Commission and Foundation have demonstrated fiscal prudence over this period of time, and have projected that sustaining the new database and collections inventory project is within SCSM's means. Through this project, SCSM is making a long-term commitment to preserving the State's culture and history.

SCSM – IMLS MFA 2018 - Schedule of Completion: *Collections Inventory & Digitization for a New Collections Management System*

Activities & Tasks	Prior to Grant Period	Year 1 Oct. 2018 – March 2019	Year 1 April 2019 – Sept. 2019	Year 2 Oct. 2019– March 2020	Year 2 April 2020 – Sept. 2020
SCSM Project Staff assembled & active throughout grant period. Set up method for tracking tasks and expenses, continue throughout grant period.	███ (blue)	███ (blue)	███ (blue)	███ (blue)	███ (blue)
Purchase CMS software, Axiell's EMu; purchase and install wireless connectivity upgrades.	███ (green)				
Project Director designs preliminary data entry protocols for new EMu system.	███ (blue)				
Project Director leads project orientation meeting for SCSM Project Staff.		■			
Project Director & Director of Collections work with Digitization Consultant to develop digitization and metadata guidelines for data entry protocols and to design staff training.		███ (green)			
Project Director & Director of Collections work with Photography Consultant to design photography setups, develop procedural standards and to design staff training.		███ (blue)			
Purchase photography equipment, editing software, laptops & workstations.		███ (green)			
Purchase object rehousing materials (additional purchases made throughout grant period as needs dictate).		███ (blue)		███ (blue)	
SCSM hires full-time Inventory Coordinator.		███ (green)			
Project Director trains Inventory Coordinator and develops outcome-based evaluation plan.		███ (blue)			
SCSM & Inventory Coordinator hires part-time Project Staff (2 PTE Inventory		███ (green)			

Activities & Tasks	Prior to Grant Period	Year 1 Oct. 2018 – March 2019	Year 1 April 2019 – Sept. 2019	Year 2 Oct. 2019– March 2020	Year 2 April 2020 – Sept. 2020
Assistants, 1 PTE Photography Assistant, and 1 PTE Data Entry Assistant).		▓ (green)			
Part-time Project Staff (4) is trained on EMu system and protocols for inventory, data entry and photography.		▓ (blue)			
Regular meetings and review points begin for Part-Time Project Staff, SCSM Project Staff, and with Consultants. These continue throughout grant period.		▓ (green)	▓ (green)	▓ (green)	▓ (green)
Inventory begins in Fine Art & Print storage.		▓ (blue)	▓ (blue)		
Photography Assistant capture images of each object inventoried.		▓ (green)	▓ (green)		
Data Entry Assistants pull files for each object & upload revised data into database; new images uploaded to database.		▓ (blue)	▓ (blue)		
Evaluation data gathered; Year 1 report.		▓ (green)	▓ (green)		
Year 2: Inventory continues in Sculpture, Basketry, and Pottery/Quilt Storage				▓ (blue)	▓ (blue)
Photography Assistant capture images of each object inventoried.				▓ (green)	▓ (green)
Data Entry Assistants pull files for each object & upload revised data into database; new images uploaded to database.				▓ (blue)	▓ (blue)
Gather final evaluation data, write final report, discuss findings with Part-Time Project Staff, SCSM Project Staff, and with Consultants. Act on findings as appropriate.					▓ (green)
Share project results throughout grant period; continues after grant period.			▓ (blue)	▓ (blue)	▓ (blue)