Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Program

Sample Application MN-00-17-0017-17

Koniag, Inc.

Amount awarded by IMLS:	$49,982
Amount of cost share:	$4,048

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 FY2018 Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services grant program differ from those that guided the preparation of FY2017 applications. This year, the maximum that may be requested from IMLS is $75,000. Be sure to use the instructions in the FY2018 Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program and project category to which you are applying.

IMLS FY2017 NANH Museum Services Grant – Koniag, Inc. Application

Abstract

The Kodiak Archipelago has an exceptionally rich archaeological record. For over 7,000 years, Alutiiq ancestors settled the region's shores leaving an extensive record of their lives. Kodiak has more than 1,000 known sites and many are exceptionally preserved. Archaeologists have been studying these sites for 85 years, recovering spectacular assemblages of antler, bone, ivory, wood, and fiber objects, in addition to stone tools. These objects, stored in our tribal museum and around the United States, are a priceless resource. They provide a detailed view of Alutiiq technological systems, manufacturing, trade, and artistic practice. They highlight the environmental knowledge and innovation of our ancestors, and provide inspiration for living our culture today.

Despite these extensive prehistoric collections, there is no formal Alutiiq tool classification system. Researchers have published some tool descriptions and inventories, but there is no comprehensive, referenced system for identifying our ancestors' objects or the materials used in their manufacture. As such, it remains difficult for most people to correctly identify Alutiiq objects. Other museums caring for and interpreting our artifacts often misidentify tools. Researchers use different terms for the same tools, and students, artists, and the public regularly contact our tribal museum curators for identifications. In part this reflects the complexity of Alutiiq technology, as many tools had multiple parts. It also reflects centuries of cultural suppression. Many tools are no longer used and knowledge of their manufacture, functions, and traditional names is fading from memory. Over the past twenty years, our tribal museum has developed an artifact identification system based in ethnographic research and ancestral manufacturing industries. However, this system is not documented.

To address this situation, Koniag, Inc. proposes the *Alutiiq Technological Inventory (ATI)*. We will provide IMLS funding to our tribal museum, the Alutiiq Museum (AMAR), for a two-year project that creates resources for identifying Alutiiq artifacts. These resources will include (1) an illustrated manual with standardized, referenced, written description of ca. 300 Alutiiq tools classes and ca. 60 raw materials; and (2) a raw material comparison kit. The museum's curatorial staff will develop these resources with help from Alutiiq Elders, a consulting geologist, the museum's collections and their documentation, and ethnographic references.

To insure an accessible document, two museum advisory committees will review the project at its outset. Elders will review tool types to provide insight and consider Alutiiq names. A geologist will assist with stone material descriptions. Two archaeologists will read the draft manual to insure a well-organized, readable summary. Volunteers will test the manual and the kit by using them to identify a selection of artifacts. The final manual will be printed for use in the museum laboratory, and shared freely via PDF files posted to a project page on www.alutiiqmuseum.org. AMAR will promote knowledge of the project and its resources through a press release, newsletter articles, social media posts, and posts to list serves. The manual will be stored on the museum's online server for easy updating as knowledge of ancestral Alutiiq technology grows.

The *ATI* will record and standardize AMAR's system for artifact identification, compiling the knowledge of long-time staff members and making it available for use by other staff (present and future), other museums, and the public. By promoting consistent identification of objects, the inventory will improve collections care, advance accurate interpretation of the Alutiiq world, and support heritage research. As such the *ATI* will benefit all repositories with Alutiiq collections, researchers studying collections, and people investigating the Alutiiq world. The project will also aid in documenting Alutiiq terms and concepts about ancient objects with help from the last generation of first language Alutiiq speakers. Ultimately, these accomplishments will advance community understanding of Alutiiq heritage, the museum's core mission.

To complete this work, Koniag, Inc. requests support for staff salaries, honoraria, travel, supplies, and overhead costs related to the project. The Alutiiq Museum will provide additional staff time, evaluation by volunteers, project promotion, and supplies. The *Alutiiq Technological Inventory* is a labor-intensive project that depends on the careful use of staff time. The museum will monitor progress by setting monthly writing and photography goals, and tracking progress on time sheets and at staff meetings. Meeting notes, written reviewer comments, social media responses, website traffic, and the ability of new museum staff members and volunteers to use the inventory will help to document project progress and outcomes.

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Narrative

Project Justification

When Collections Specialist Alex Painter joined the Alutiiq Museum's (AMAR) staff last June, she had experience. She had worked with in museums, labeled artifacts, and even participated in archaeological research. Yet, the challenge of cataloging 2,000 recently excavated stone tools was daunting. AMAR had written directions for artifact labeling, a standardized catalog sheet, and storage guidelines. However, there was no information on how to identify tool types or raw materials. To complete the cataloging process, AMAR curators had to provide these identifications. While AMAR has procedures for professional object care, it lacks resources to assist with object identification and description. Knowledge of Alutiiq tools resides in just three staff members, people with decades of research experience, but whose learning is not recorded.

This situation is common. Across Alaska, repositories with prehistoric cultural collections lack resources for systematically identifying their contents. Although some archaeologists classify the tools found in individual sites, we know of very few regional accounts of prehistoric technologies that looks beyond the site level to describe regional technological industries. As such, researchers working with ancient Alaska Native collections must consult Native Elders, historical accounts, illustrations of ethnographic objects, and previous archaeological studies to identify ancestral objects. This is time consuming research and much of the helpful information is hard to access. It is preserved in Elders' memories, obscure reports, and exhibit catalogs. This means that objects are often not identified or misidentified. Researchers call the same tool type by different names, leading to errors in cataloging and the presentation of Native traditions (e.g., exhibit labels).

For the past twenty years, AMAR curators have been studying Alutiiq technology as they care for the organization's enormous archaeological collections. Archaeological materials are the largest and most rapidly growing portion of AMAR's holdings (>158,000 objects; ca. 58% of all collections). Every year AMAR accepts additional archaeological assemblages from Kodiak area landowners and its own research projects. These collections span Alutiiq history and include many rare organic objects. As a necessary step in their care and interpretation, AMAR curators have done the research to identify Alutiiq objects. They have worked with Elders, studied ethnographic sources, written site collection summaries, taken some tool photos, and sorted like objects for storage by site. It is now essential to compile their knowledge so that it can be easily shared.

To address this need, Koniag, Inc. will provide funding to AMAR for the *Alutiiq Technological Inventory* (*ATI*) project. Working with AMAR's large, regional collections and their documentation, curators will develop an Alutiiq artifact classification manual. This document will be organized by technological industry (e.g., ground stone, weaving; Attachment 11) with tool classes determined from ethnographic research and archaeological studies. The manual will describe and illustrate every class of artifact in the museum's collections (ca. 300 classes–including both tools and manufacturing debris). It will also include descriptions of the major organic and inorganic raw materials used to make artifacts (ca. 60), developed in consultation with a professional geologist. To standardize and compile tool and material descriptions, AMAR will use forms built in Adobe Acrobat (Attachments 12 & 14). Completed forms will become the heart of the manual, supported by an introduction, descriptions of each technological industry, raw material source information, references, illustrations of multi-part tools, and Alutiiq tool terms provided by Elder speakers (Attachment 3). The result will be a ca. 700-page document printed for use in AMAR's lab, and shared via PDF on its website (Attachment 17). In addition to the inventory, AMAR will create a raw material comparison kit. This kit will hold labeled, non-artifactual examples of raw materials used in artifact manufacture (e.g., antler, red chert). The kit will be stored in AMAR's lab and will be available to staff, volunteers, and visiting researchers, educators, and artists for use on site.

The Alutiiq Museum's long-range plan identifies the needs for a well-documented Alutiiq artifact classification system. In section G. Cultural Education and Research Programming, the plan calls for publications on artifact taxonomy and raw material use (Attachment 2). AMAR now envisions a manual that combines both resources–a document that can be printed for in house use, shared for free on its website, and easily revised. The project also supports two other AMAR goals. It promotes prompt processing of incoming collections (Goal

3b) by providing a tool for staff and volunteers assigned this task. It promotes use of the Alutiiq language across communities and generations (Goal 4b), by compiling tool terms that can be used in many contexts.

By advancing these goals, the *ATI* will benefit multiple people and organizations, and strengthen museum services. AMAR's curatorial staff will gain critical tools for cataloging incoming collections. The manual and the kit will further systematize the cataloging process, advance staff learning about technology, and provide tools for educating collections care volunteers. The inventory will also support museum interpretation. By compiling learning from two decades of collections work, it will provide a resource for answering patron questions, developing educational materials, and sharing the Alutiiq language. This is a particularly timely project for the museum's staff, which is in a period of transition. AMAR recently hired a new collections manager and collections specialist. Both need to learn artifact identification. Importantly, the manual will provide a resource for other museums with Alutiiq collections (Attachment 8), helping to improve their identifications and presentations of Alutiiq tools. Finally, the manual will be a valuable reference for those studying the Alutiiq world. It could be used as a resource for college classes and student research projects (Attachments 9&10) and to facilitate assemblage comparisons for heritage research (Attachment 7).

The *ATI* directly addresses the IMLS program goal of advancing collections stewardship. The manual and kit will support AMAR collections work for decades, and can be amended as knowledge of the Alutiiq traditions grows. Importantly, the *ATI* builds directly on previous work. With IMLS support, AMAR recently cataloged two of its largest archaeological collections–standardizing the terminology used to describe ca. 40,000 objects in both English and Alutiiq. Resources from this work will be folded into the *ATI*, sustaining learning from previous efforts. In sum, *ATI's* long-term value to AMAR, foundation in previous collections work, regional approach to tool classification, accessibility and sustainability make it a model collections stewardship project.

Project Work Plan

Koniag, Inc. will provide AMAR with IMLS funding for a two-year project. Founded in 1995, AMAR is a nationally-accredited museum that preserves Alutiiq traditions through collections care and public education. AMAR's modern facility, staffed by nine, serves 7,000 visitors annually. Thousands more benefit from programs and resources that reach far into schools and communities. AMAR has an excellent record of grant management and project completion. In 21 years of operations, it has managed many private and agency grants. As Koniag does not have a grant manager, AMAR's Director of Operations Marnie Leist will track project activities and expenditures and report to IMLS. Her work will be supported by project overhead. This model has worked well on past IMLS funded partnerships between Koniag and AMAR.

The *ATI* project will begin in October of 2017 under the direction of Chief Curator Amy Steffian. Steffian developed this proposal and will manage *ATI's* implementation by curatorial staff. Project year 1 will be devoted to identifying and describing artifact classes in the museum's prehistoric Kodiak Alutiiq holdings. The organizing principle will be technological industries. Tools made through similar manufacturing techniques will be studied and classified in groups (e.g., ground stone objects; Attachment 11), using classes identified in ethnographic and archaeological sources. In month 1, Curator of Archaeology Patrick Saltonstall will assemble a list of all tools classes organized by industry by consulting collections catalogs, lists of Alutiiq tool terms, and literature. In month 2, he will complete a drawer-to-drawer survey of the AMAR's well organized collections to identify additional classes, subclasses (e.g., styles within classes-e.g., bi-notched vs. tri-notched sinkers), and where possible, document stages of tool manufacture. Saltonstall, who has studied many of AMAR's archaeological collections, has extensive knowledge of the object classification that will facilitate this review. Over the following 12 months, Saltonstall will use an Adobe Acrobat form developed for the project to compile detailed information on each artifact class (Attachment 12). As he writes, Collections Manager Gaëlle Ettese and Collections Specialist Alex Painter will work with him to take or locate digital photos of each class (Attachment 13), as well as subclasses and manufacturing sequences. The museum has a variety of registration photos than can be used in the manual, so we will need to take less than half of the desired images (ca. 120). Painter will file

new photos in AMAR registration files and update documentation accordingly. As work progresses, Steffian will combine the class forms and photos, edit text, add references, digitally draft ca. 10 supporting illustrations (e.g., parts of a harpoon assembly), and write industry summaries. The team will complete this work by month 16.

In month 17, AMAR will share a spreadsheet of artifacts classes and potential/needed Alutiiq names with the Alutiiq Language Club (Attachment 3), a weekly gathering of Elder first language Alutiiq speakers and language learners. For a month, speakers will review classes and Alutiiq terms, suggest edits, and assist AMAR Executive Director Counceller with spellings. The results will be an updated list of Alutiiq artifact names, which will be used to edit the class forms. To facilitate this review, Saltonstall will show examples of tools.

In months 16-18, focus will shift to raw material identification. In advance, Steffian will locate, contract, and schedule a consulting geologist (month 8; Attachments 4&5). Saltonstall will work with AMAR collections, catalogs, and reports to identify the universe of raw materials represented in AMAR holdings. Based on his knowledge of Kodiak 's natural history, he will complete an Adobe Acrobat raw material form (Attachment 14) for each material and then schedule consultation with a professional geologist to review these descriptions and corresponding samples. The geologist will travel to Kodiak for a three-day meeting. Following the trip, the geologist will provide written comments on the raw material descriptions and a set of recommendations for future raw material studies. Steffian will update the raw materials description to reflect the geologist's input.

In months 19-21, Saltonstall and Painter will create a raw material comparison kit, assembling example materials from the museum's supplies (e.g., antler, spruce root), local beaches (e.g., granite, slate, clam shell), and craft stores (e.g., abalone, dentalium, graphite). Each specimen will be labeled by name with AMAR cataloging supplies, and organized in specimen boxes with labeled compartments (Attachment 15). Organic and inorganic materials will be boxed separately, and specimens organized in color-coded compartments by source locale (e.g., Kodiak general, east Kodiak, west Kodiak, neighboring region, distant region). As such, the kit will provide a visual summary of both raw materials and their geographic affiliations.

The project will end with two types of review (month 21, see evaluation), dissemination of the results, and final grant reporting. In month 22, Steffian, AMAR's webmaster, will build a project page on the museum's website (www.alutiiqmuseum.org; Attachment 17). Here, patrons will find sections of the manual organized by industry. A picture and short piece of text will introduce each section and a corresponding PDF file. As the manual will be ca. 700 pages, it will be broken into parts for easier access. To help people find the manual, Steffian will circulate the webpage link with announcements on Facebook and two statewide list servers.

Evaluation will occur in throughout the project. In month 1, AMAR staff will share project design with two of its advisory committees–one that consults on public education and another that advises collections care. At committee meetings, advisors will discuss the project with staff and provide ideas for promotion. In Year 2, consultation with a geologist will insure accurate raw material identifications. At the end of the project, two Alaskan archaeologists will read the draft manual and provide written comments. Finally, Saltonstall will invite four volunteers to try identifying a tray of artifacts using the manual and the kit. Each will try to complete catalog sheet entries for 20 objects and their materials without using the kit, then repeat the process with the manual and kit for reference. Saltonstall will observe this work and take notes on what worked well, what didn't work well, and how the resource could be improved. Steffian will address comments and findings from reviewers before printing the manual for use in the museum's lab (in three ring binders) and sharing it on line.

The biggest risk to this project is scheduling staff around competing projects. The *ATI* is labor intensive. It requires a substantial investment of AMAR staff time. To insure staff availability, AMAR spread the project over two years and developed a detailed monthly schedule of activities. Monthly tasks keyed to this schedule will assist time management. The other project risk is identifying a consulting geologist. AMAR consulted colleagues about this need and they recommend working with the University of Alaska Fairbanks Geology Department. This large department has many professionals who could provide raw material identification. When the project is funded, we will reach out to the department with our call for assistance (Attachment 4). This will be done in the middle of project year 1, to facilitate work with a geologist in year 2.

The *ATI*'s central financial need is funding for staff time. AMAR supports its staff through a combination of grants, contracts, and donations. As such, our core need is salaries and benefits for five staff members. The museum will give some staff hours, but cannot undertake this project without staff support. We are also requesting funds to hire a geologist and bring this person to Kodiak. Similarly, we need funding for IMLS required travel in both project years, as travel from Alaska is very expensive. Smaller portions of our request include honoraria for Elder Alutiiq speakers, the costs of assembling a raw material kit (lidded specimen boxes, samples of non-local materials–e.g., abalone, dentalium, graphite), and printing a manual copy. As Koniag does not have a grant manager, we ask for the allowable 10% overhead to assist AMAR with grant management.

AMAR uses Asana, an online project scheduling software, to assign tasks to work teams, set due dates, and communicate over work flow. At the start of the *ATI*, Steffian will assign major milestones to staff members, and ask each to schedule the tasks needed to meet these milestones. She will discuss project work at weekly staff meeting and update Asana at least monthly to reflect project progress. Similarly, AMAR uses Clicktime, an online timesheet, to log staff hours by project. Steffian will track staff *ATI* work by consulting Clicktime quarterly. Finally, AMAR's accounting system allows staff to generate a spending summary for grant projects. Counceller will review these summaries bi-monthly to report project progress to AMAR's board.

In addition to internal tracking, *ATI* activities and results will be shared with the public throughout the project and acknowledge IMLS support (Attachment 16). AMAR will announce project funding with a press release to statewide media. Quarterly, over two years, AMAR will share project information (e.g., artifact and raw material pictures and facts), on its popular Facebook page (>4500 followers). AMAR will also publish two articles in its newsletter, months 8 and 23. The newsletter will be distributed to ca. 450 people and available for free download on AMAR's website. When the manual is complete, the museum will post it in manageable sections (by industry) to its website for free, non-commercial use. Manual availability will be advertised through social media and two state-wide list serves used by several hundred Alaskan heritage professionals.

Project Results

This project address the IMLS performance goal of content and collections by producing resources that will aid in the description and interpretation of many thousands of Alutiiq artifacts. As this project is designed to produce and share collections care resources, our performance indicators track the content compiled and the audiences reached through project promotion (Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of Performance Indicators

Performance Goal	Measurement	Items for Reporting
1. Compile knowledge of Alutiiq tools and technology in a centralized, systematic, referenced way.	Number of artifact classes described Number of photographs and illustrations made Number of raw materials described Number of raw material samples add to kit Number of Alutiiq language terms developed Number of Industry summaries written Number of references cited	Manual contents Images of the raw material kit List of Alutiiq language terms
2. Create a classification system that can be used effectively in the museum and by others to identify Alutiiq tools and the materials from which they were made.	Review by museum advisory committees Review by Alutiiq Elders Review by consulting geologist Review by two archaeologists Ease of manual use by novice catalogers	Minutes of review committee meetings Written comments of geologist Written comments from peer reviewers Pre / Post manual use catalog sheets completed by novice users
3. Promote the availability of the classification system.	Media stories generated Number of newsletters circulated Number of social media connections Visitors to the project webpage Number of manual download Number of list serve responses	Copies of media stories Copies of newsletter articles & circulation / download data Copies of social media statistics Website visitation & download statistics Copies of list serve responses

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The *ATI* will have multiple, valuable results. First, the project will address the difficulty new staff members and collections volunteers have in identifying Alutiiq artifacts by creating a well-documented and referenced system for prehistoric object classification. AMAR's undocumented identification system will be transformed into lasting tools that will be used in partnership with established procedures (e.g., numbering protocols, storage and handling guidelines) to improve the efficiency and accuracy of object identification. Any staff member or volunteer will be able to use these tools. Second, the *ATI* will enhance access to AMAR's long-term research on Alutiiq manufacturing, by recording and sharing the knowledge of Alutiiq Elders and the learning of its curators. Physical resources–a manual and a kit–will preserve and summarize this knowledge for use by other staff members, museum volunteers, and the public. Finally, the project will address the need for public access to information on Alutiiq technology by sharing the *ATI* manual for free on the Internet and advertising its availability. As such, the long-term result of the project will be increased learning about the Alutiiq world, the cornerstone of the Alutiiq Museum's mission.

To achieve these results, AMAR will produce the following tangible products; (1) A written manual summarizing the major Kodiak Alutiiq artifact classes and raw material types. This ca. 700-page document will include: 300 illustrated artifact class descriptions compiled on a two-page standardized form (600 pages; Attachment 12); 60 one-page raw material descriptions compiled on a one page form (Attachment 14); and 40 pages of introductory and supplemental materials (Attachment 11); (2) a raw material comparison kits with ca. 60 labeled and organized specimens stored in acrylic specimen boxes; (3) ca. 120 digital artifacts photos taken for class descriptions; and (4) a project webpage (Attachment 17). AMAR will also create promotional materials (Attachment 16): 1 press release; 2 newsletter articles; 8 Facebook posts; and 2 list serve posts.

The *ATI* manual and kit will be immediately useful to AMAR's curatorial staff. These resources will enhance new staff member's learning about Alutiiq technology, advance their identification skills, enhance their ability to write interpretive labels for collections on display, and help them to answer requests for information from the public. The resources will also reduce the need for AMAR curators to assist with artifact cataloging, thus increasing cataloging efficiency. More broadly, the resources will advance learning about Alutiiq technology among researchers, educators, artists, and students–the museum's core collections users. Each artifact class sheet and raw material sheet will be an educational resource. If a patron wants to know about Alutiiq slate knives, a staff members can share the two-page summary of this tool class. Similarly, the manual will help other repositories that care for Alutiiq material culture in identifying and interpreting Alutiiq objects. Technicians preparing artifacts for curation at AMAR will be able to identify objects using AMAR's system, reducing AMAR's needed to extensively revise incoming collections catalogs. This is very important. AMAR continues to work with federal agencies to bring large regional artifact collections back to Kodiak for curation, and these collections often arrive poorly inventoried. In 2016, we accepted 14,000 objects from the US Fish & Wildlife Service that need to be re-cataloged.

Importantly, the *ATI*'s written summary of Alutiiq technology will be easily shared and modified. AMAR specifically chosen to collect artifact and raw material information on Adobe Acrobat forms, as these forms can be easily added to or changed. This means that the manual can be updated as knowledge of Alutiiq tools accumulates. AMAR (or any researcher) will be able to insert new industries, artifact descriptions, and/or raw material descriptions as archaeological finds occur and existing collections are studied more fully. Importantly, because the manual summarizes information on forms, it standardizes the way information is recorded, so that future editors can summarize at the same level of specificity. Moreover, PDF files make it easy to replace pages in printed versions of the manual, and to upload updated forms to the museum's website. Finally, PDF is a robust file type that most computers can read even as browsers and software change. These features will sustain the use of the *ATI* manual and insure its long-term relevancy.

Alutiiq Technological Inventory – Schedule of Completion

		MONTH																							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Activity	**Personnel**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**	**Oct**	**Nov**	**Dec**	**Jan**	**Feb**	**Mar**	**Apr**	**May**	**Jun**	**Jul**	**Aug**	**Sep**
Broadcast Press Release	CC, ED																								
Hold PPAC review	PM, Volunteers																								
Post to Facebook	CC																								
Compile List of Known Classes	CA																								
Hold Collections Committee Review	CA																								
Review Collections for Classes, Subclasses	CA																								
Write Class Summaries	CA																								
Photograph Objects	CEM, CES, CA																								
Edit Forms, Write Supplemental Info.	CC																								
Newsletter Article #1	CC																								
Contract Geologist	CC																								
Write Interim Grant Report	CC, DO																								
Review & Develop Alutiiq Names	ED, PM, Lang. Club																								
Compile Raw Material List	CA																								
Write Raw Material Descriptions	CA, Geologist																								
Consult with Geologist	CA, Geologist																								
Edit Raw Material Descriptions	CC																								
Assemble Raw Material Kit	CES, CA																								
Review Manual & Kit	CC, Volunteers																								
Edit & Assemble Manual	CC, CA																								
Develop Project Web Page	CC																								
Newsletter Article #2	CC																								
Share Manual	CC																								
Write Final Grant Report	CC, DO																								

Personnel:

CC = Chief Curator; CA = Curator of Archaeology; ED = Executive Director; PM = Project Manager

CEM = Collections & Exhibits Manager; CES = Collections & Exhibits Specialist; DO = Director of Operations