



Prospective Applicant Webinar:

Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries

September 12, 2019

My name is Jill Connors-Joyner and I am a Senior Program Officer in the Office of Library Services at IMLS. Today I'm joined by my colleagues James Neal, and Sarah Boonie.



What We Will Cover Today

- IMLS, the Strategic Plan and its strategic priorities
- Program overview: Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries (APP)
- Eligibility requirements
- Project categories
- Application process
- Advice for applicants
- Q&A

Today we will briefly go over IMLS and its strategic priorities and provide an overview of the APP grant initiative.

We will also review eligibility criteria, the project categories, take you through the application process, and give you some tips. We'll have some time at the end of the webinar for Q&A.



IMLS Strategic Plan and Priorities



What is IMLS?

- **Who are we?** IMLS is an independent grantmaking agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. IMLS helps ensure that all Americans have access to museum, library, and information services.
- **Our vision:** A nation where museums and libraries work together to transform the lives of individuals and communities.
- **Our mission:** To advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development.

IMLS is an independent grantmaking agency and the primary source of federal support for the nation's libraries and museums. IMLS helps ensure that all Americans have access to museum, library, and information services. You can read our mission and vision on this slide.

The IMLS Strategic Plan Transforming Communities: IMLS Strategic Priorities

- Goal One: Promote Lifelong Learning
- Goal Two: Build Capacity
- Goal Three: Increase Public Access



Learn more about [Transforming Communities](#)


**Transforming
Communities**
Institute of Museum and Library Services
Strategic Plan 2018-2022

The new IMLS Strategic Plan lays out several goals for the agency's work.

In our first strategic goal, IMLS supports learning and literacy for people of all ages through museums and libraries.

In our second strategic goal, IMLS strengthens the capacity of museums and libraries to improve the well-being of their communities.

In our third strategic goal, IMLS makes strategic investments that increase access to information, ideas, and networks through libraries and museums.

You can find the Strategic Plan on our website, imls.gov.



Now we'll tell you more about the Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries (APP) special initiative



Where to find basic information about APP

- Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries (APP) on the web: <https://www.imls.gov/grant-programs-accelerating-promising-practices-small-libraries>
- Program overview
- IMLS staff contact information
- Link to Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)
- Link to webinar recordings

Information about APP is on the IMLS website. If you're on this webinar it's likely you've already found it. This page provides an overview of the APP initiative, links to the full notice of funding opportunity, or NOFO, and also relevant webinar recordings – so if you want to refer back to this applicant webinar at a later date, that's where you will find it.

In addition, on this page you can find a list of the relevant program staff you should contact with questions about this initiative and the application process. If you are unsure who to contact, please just reach out to one of us and we will make sure you get connected to the program officer whose expertise best aligns with your project idea.

Before we move on, let's talk a little more about the Notice of Funding Opportunity, or NOFO. This document serves a few different purposes:

1. It provides an extensive description of the APP initiative itself, as well as eligibility information
2. It thoroughly explains how to apply, and what must be included in the application
3. It provides important details about legal requirements for successful grantees

As an applicant, the NOFO is your guide – you should read it closely before you start to shape your project, continue to refer back to it as you write your proposal and complete your application, and if your project is funded, continue to refer back to it as you administer your grant.



Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries (APP)

Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries (APP) is a special initiative of the National Leadership Grants for Libraries Program. This initiative is designed to support projects that strengthen the ability of small and rural libraries and archives to serve their communities.

Funding request: \$10,000-\$50,000; no cost share required

Deadline: December 2, 2019

Anticipated number of awards: 30

APP is designed to support projects that strengthen the ability of small and/or rural libraries and archives to serve their communities.

The application deadline is December 2, 2019.

Project budgets may range from \$10,000-\$50,000, with no cost share required.

We anticipate making approximately 30 awards this year.



Indicators of Successful Projects

- **In-depth knowledge** – thorough understanding of the subject
- **Project-based design** – work plan articulates a set of logical, interrelated activities
- **Demonstrable outcomes** – the project generates measurable results

As you are preparing your proposal, it's important to keep in mind the indicators for successful projects in this program.

Competitive proposals should demonstrate:

In-depth knowledge: The project justification reflects a thorough understanding of the subject being addressed.

Project-based design: The project work plan consists of a set of logical, interrelated activities tied directly to addressing the key opportunity or challenge identified in the application.

Demonstrable outcomes: The project generates measurable results that relate directly to the need or challenge it was designed to address.



Mentor Organizations, Communities of Practice, and Program Evaluation

- **Grantees** will
 - Participate in communities of practice based on their project category
 - Share their project findings and progress
 - Participate in periodic teleconferences, online engagement, and in-person gatherings
 - Work with mentor organizations and an external program evaluator
- **Mentor organizations** will facilitate communication, provide expert guidance, and build capacity
- The **evaluator** will work with applicants as they monitor, track, and assess progress

Grantees in this initiative will participate in communities of practice or cohorts based on their project category. IMLS will identify and support three third-party mentor organizations to lead the communities of practice or cohorts. Mentor organizations will facilitate communication between grantees, provide expert guidance, and build grantee capacity in relevant areas. They may also provide grantees with technical assistance with project management and evaluation.

Grantees will be expected to share their project findings and progress with IMLS, their mentor organization, and other grantees in their cohort. They will also be expected to participate in periodic teleconferences, online engagement, and in-person gatherings. Applicants should consider these commitments when developing their project plans. Consider these commitments when developing your project plans and be prepared to assign a core member of the project team to participate in the cohort.

Travel costs for in-person gatherings of the cohorts will be funded separately and should not be included in application budgets.

Additionally, IMLS will identify a third-party organization to evaluate this initiative. Grantees and mentor organizations will work with this evaluator as they monitor, track, and assess their progress toward meeting their individual project's performance goals.



Important Dates to Remember

- Proposals Due: December 2, 2019
- Notification of Funding: July 2020
- Projects Begin: September 1, 2020
- Project Ends: August 30, 2022

These are important dates you need to be aware of during this application cycle.

Please read through the notice of funding opportunity, the NOFO, carefully to ensure you are meeting eligibility criteria and have fulfilled all of the application requirements.

Note that the project begin and end dates are set for September 1, 2020 and August 30, 2022 – a two-year project period.



Eligibility

Your organization is eligible to apply if it is:

- Either a unit of state or local government, or a 501c3 nonprofit organization;
- Located in one of the 50 states or territories; and
- One of the following six types of organizations

Please note that the Transforming School Library Practice category has additional eligibility restrictions. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for more information.

Your organization is eligible to apply if you are: 1) a unit of state or local government or a 501c3 nonprofit organization, 2) located in one of the 50 states or territories, and 3) one of six types of organizations, which we'll list on the next slide.

Please also note that the Transforming School Library Practice category has additional eligibility restrictions, so you should pay attention to that in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, the NOFO.



Eligibility

1. a library or a parent organization of a library
2. a digital library, if it makes library materials publicly available and provides library services
3. a library agency that is an official agency of a state or other unit of government

In addition to the criteria on the previous slide, your organization is eligible to apply if you are one of the following types of organizations, including a library or parent organization, a digital library, or a library agency.

If you have any questions about your eligibility, please reach out to someone on our program staff.



Eligibility

You are not eligible to apply if you are:

- A federally operated institution
- A for-profit organization
- An individual
- A foreign country or organization

If your organization is not eligible, we encourage you to apply through a partnership with an eligible institution.

You are not eligible to apply to these programs if you are a federally-operated institution, a for-profit institution, an individual, or a foreign country or organization.

A federally-operated institution does not mean an institution that receives other federal grants. It means that if you are a federal agency, for example, the Library of Congress or Smithsonian, IMLS cannot fund you.

If you are an ineligible institution, we encourage you to partner with an eligible institution. While you cannot be the lead applicant, you can apply through a partnership with an eligible institution and may be able to receive funding in that manner.

More information about this is provided in the guidelines on the IMLS website, but the point here is that it is important to figure out early on if you are eligible to apply for the program that is of interest to you.



Are We a Good Fit for this Opportunity?

IMLS invites applicants to consider whether their organization is a good fit for this special initiative for small and/or rural libraries. Applicants should think about a range of attributes that describe their institution, including but not limited to:

- number of staff members and volunteers;
- operating budget and sources of revenue;
- size of the collection and range of services provided;
- size of facility and property;
- types and numbers of audiences served; and
- size relative to other organizations of the same discipline or within the same geographic region.

Once you've determined if your organization is eligible to apply, it is worth considering if your organization is an appropriate fit for this special initiative for small libraries. For the purpose of this opportunity, IMLS has purposefully avoided a narrow definition of "small," as we realize that potential applicants may be operating in a variety of different contexts. An applicant may consider itself to be small based on a variety of factors, such as staffing, operating budget, collection, facility, service area, and relative size. Please note that in your narrative, you'll have the opportunity to address how you feel your organization is a potential good fit for this initiative.

Proposals from large organizations are unlikely to be competitive in this initiative. Also, because this initiative includes participation in a community of practice or cohort for each funded project, projects that include their own community of practice or cohort model may not be a good fit for APP.



Project Categories

Applicants must select one project category from the following:

- Transforming School Library Practice
- Community Memory
- Digital Inclusion

On every application, you will be asked to select one project category – either Transforming School Library Practice, Community Memory, or Digital Inclusion.

Regardless of category, applicants should align their proposals with appropriate standards and best practices and are encouraged to build on or make use of previous IMLS-funded work as it relates to their projects.

We will now talk a little bit about each of those project categories.



Transforming School Library Practice

- Supports cross-disciplinary and inquiry-based methods of learning
- Fosters the development of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration
- Embraces meaningful shifts in which school libraries serve as dynamic hubs for self-directed, inquiry-based learning
- Positions school library professionals as valued instructional partners to classroom teachers

IMLS recognizes the essential role of K-12 school library media centers (school libraries) in supporting cross-disciplinary and inquiry-based methods of learning and fostering the development of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration. We welcome applications that embrace meaningful shifts from transactional approaches toward ones in which school libraries serve as dynamic hubs for self-directed, inquiry-based learning and that position school library professionals as valued instructional partners to classroom teachers. Successful projects will provide high-quality, inclusive educational opportunities that equitably address particular needs of the communities served.



Transforming School Library Services: Project Examples

- Developing, implementing, and evaluating programs and services that prepare students for success in college, career, and life;
- Purposefully integrating information technology and digital resources in ways that support media creation rather than consumption
- Reconfiguring space in learner-centric ways to support the development of 21st century skills and literacies
- Deepening meaningful instructional collaborations between school librarians and classroom teachers or school administrators;
- Partnering with community organizations that create opportunities for the student body and reinforce the school library as a dynamic hub for self-directed learning; and

Projects in this category may include, but are not limited to activities such as:


- Enhancing K-12 school library services and creating resources to foster early, digital, information, health, financial, media, civic, and other types of literacies;
 - Developing, implementing, and evaluating programs and services that prepare students for success in college, career, and life;
 - Reconfiguring space in learner-centric ways to support the development of 21st century skills and literacies, informed by disciplines such as design thinking or user experience;
 - Deepening meaningful instructional collaborations between school librarians and classroom teachers or school administrators;
- and
- Providing extended library access beyond traditional school hours to support asynchronous, connected learning opportunities.



Community Memory

- Supports the role of libraries and archives as trusted stewards of our nation's knowledge and collections
- Supports the ability of libraries and archives to serve as trusted spaces for community engagement and dialogue
- Engages local communities in the collection, documentation, and preservation of their local histories, experiences, and identities

IMLS supports the role of libraries and archives as trusted stewards of our nation's knowledge and collections, as well as their ability to serve as trusted spaces for community engagement and dialogue. We are interested in projects that engage local communities in the collection, documentation, and preservation of their local histories, experiences, and identities. Applicants in the Community Memory category should follow appropriate standards and best practices for creating, describing, and preserving physical and digital collections.



Community Memory: Project Examples

- Planning and implementing programs to engage community members with collections documenting local histories
- Using methods such as web archiving or oral history to engage community members in the documentation of local histories
- Supporting events and programs to involve the community in efforts to digitize or describe materials related to community histories
- Documenting important local issues or events and engaging community members with related collections
- Engaging with specific communities to capture and preserve their personal or family collections or histories

Examples of potential projects in the Community Memory category include:

- Planning and implementing events and programs to engage community members with collections documenting local histories and experiences;
- Using methods such as web archiving or oral history to engage community members in the documentation and preservation of local histories;
- Supporting events and programs to involve the community in efforts to digitize or describe materials related to community histories, including photographs, artifacts, texts, and other materials;
- Supporting community cohesion by documenting important local issues or events and engaging community members with related collections; and
- Engaging with specific communities in activities related to capturing and preserving their personal or family collections or histories and supporting the development of sustainable and accessible stewardship models.



Digital Inclusion

- Supports libraries in promoting and facilitating digital inclusion
- Enhances the role of libraries in increasing access to information, ideas, and networks
- Supports the role libraries play in promoting digital literacy, providing internet access, and enabling community engagement through civic data and civic technology
- Encourages collaborations with partners, which may include local governments, data intermediaries, educational institutions, housing authorities, community technology training centers, network providers, and other social service and civic organizations

IMLS makes strategic investments to support libraries in promoting and facilitating digital inclusion. We welcome applications for projects that enhance the role of libraries in increasing access to information, ideas, and networks. We are interested in projects that support the role libraries play in promoting digital literacy, providing internet access, and enabling community engagement through civic data and civic technology. We encourage collaborations with partners, which may include local governments, data intermediaries, educational institutions, housing authorities, community technology training centers, network providers, and other social service and civic organizations.



Digital Inclusion Project Examples

- Providing innovative and creative services that augment and expand WiFi hotspot lending services in public and school libraries
- Creating inclusive educational opportunities that address particular audience needs related to digital literacy (e.g., user privacy and security, personal computer use, and access to library collections and services)
- Capacity-building and training to actively support a range of users in building digital literacy skills
- Fostering participation in accessible telecommunications programs (e.g., E-rate)
- Supporting emergency preparedness and community resiliency through broadband access, wireless networks, and other communications infrastructures

Examples of Digital Inclusion projects include:

- Providing innovative and creative services that augment and expand Wi-Fi hotspot lending services in public and school libraries
- Creating inclusive educational opportunities that address particular audience needs related to digital literacy (e.g., user privacy and security, personal computer use, and access to library collections and services)
- Capacity-building and training to actively support a range of users in building digital literacy skills
- Fostering participation in accessible telecommunications programs (e.g. E-rate)
- Supporting emergency preparedness and community resiliency through broadband access, wireless networks, and other communications infrastructures
- There are additional project examples in the notice of funding opportunity, the NOFO, for all three project categories. Keep in mind that these examples aren't meant to be exhaustive, but rather to help you understand the type of work that could be envisioned in each category, and to inspire your own thinking. A good way to explore the types of projects that make for a competitive proposal is to look at the proposals that were funded in fiscal year 2019. The appropriate program officer will be able to provide you with this information via the IMLS "Search Awarded Grants" page.



Now that we've described this granting initiative, let's turn to what you need to know about applying for an APP grant.



Application Components

Required Documents

All applications must include these. Omission of one can result in your exclusion from further consideration.

- Application for Federal Assistance/Short Organizational Form (SF-424S)***
- IMLS Supplementary Information Form (including Abstract)***
- Narrative (6 pages max.)
- Schedule of Completion (1 page per year max.)
- IMLS Budget Form***
- Budget Justification
- List of Key Project Staff and Consultants (1 page max.)
- Resumes of Key Project Staff and Consultants (2 pages max. each)



Your application will consist of a series of individual documents, and it's very important to make sure you prepare and submit everything you should.

These application components fall into three categories in your application package. The first is that of **required documents**. **All applications must include the documents listed here**. Omission of even just one can result in the exclusion of your application from further consideration. Also important to note are page limits. If you exceed the page limit specified in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, we must remove the extras before your application goes out for review. That means your reviewer may well see a paragraph or sentence end in mid development and will wonder about your planning skills and your attentiveness to detail. Make sure your content fits into the page limits specified and make sure the same number of pages remain when you convert your document to a PDF.

Application components that are in bold and have an asterisk are forms you will complete, while non-bold components will be documents you generate and then convert to a PDF.

When preparing your budget, please note that given the initiative's focus is on capacity-building and project-based design. **Expenses for supplies, materials, and equipment may not exceed 30% of the total funds requested.**



Application Components

Conditionally Required Documents

Some applications must include these. Omission of one results in exclusion from further consideration.

- Proof of Private, Nonprofit Status
- Final Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Digital Product Form***



The second category of application components is that of **conditionally required documents**. **Some** applications must include one or both of these, and it's incumbent upon the applicant to determine which are required for a particular application.

- If you are applying as a private, nonprofit institution, as indicated by choosing "M" as the Applicant Type code in 5d of the SF-424s form, then you must provide a copy of the IRS letter indicating your eligibility for nonprofit status under the applicable provision of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, as amended.
- If you are using a federally negotiated indirect cost in your budget, then you must include a copy of your final approved rate agreement.
- If you are creating digital products, you must complete the digital product form.

Just like the required documents, omission of even one of these conditionally required documents can result in the exclusion of your application from further consideration.



Application Components

Supporting Documents

These documents are completely optional.

- Letters of commitment
- Bibliography or references
- Letters of support from experts and stakeholders
- Position descriptions for project staff to be supported by grant or cost share funds
- Reports from planning activities
- Contractor quotes
- Equipment specifications
- Products or evaluations from previously completed or ongoing projects of a similar nature
- Relevant collections, technology, or other departmental plans
- Web links to relevant online materials
- Needs assessments



The third group of application components is **supporting documents, and here is a partial list of examples**. Supporting documents are completely optional. You may submit some or none. We urge you to make good decisions here and include only those that supplement the narrative and support the project description you provide in your application. This is not the place to introduce new information. We also recommend that you be respectful of your reviewers' time and avoid any temptation to include hundreds of pages of extraneous material that is not directly relevant to your project. Being judicious really does work to your benefit. **Include what is important and helpful ... and stop there.**

Narrative: Project Justification

Tell us:

- What need, problem, challenge, or opportunity will your project address, and how was it identified?
- Which of the three Project Categories (Transforming School Library Practice; Community Memory; or Digital Inclusion) does your project address?
- What best practices will inform your approach?
- How would you qualify your library as small and/or rural)?
- Who will benefit from your project? How have you engaged them in your planning?
- How will your project address the goals of APP, your selected project category, and the agency-wide goal you selected on the IMLS Supplementary Information Form ?

Review criteria:

- Is the problem, challenge, or opportunity to be addressed clearly identified?
- Does the proposed approach demonstrate knowledge of current best practices?
- Does the proposal sufficiently identify the institution as small or rural?
- Have beneficiaries of the project been clearly identified? Have they been involved in planning the project?
- Does the project align with the goals of the program, the selected project category, and the selected agency-wide goal?

Now we'll spend a little more time focusing on the application narrative. In this section of the narrative – the Project Justification - you should lay out the reasoning for your project. Tell us in the clearest terms possible what need, problem, or challenge you expect to address; which of the three Project Categories (Transforming School Library Practice; Community Memory; or Digital Inclusion) does your project address? what best practices you will adopt or adapt in your project; what characteristics or aspects of your institution qualifies your library as small and/or rural; who will benefit and what will the impact be for that community; and how your project will address the goals of this initiative and the project category.

Reviewers will evaluate your proposal on how well you've identified the need, problem, or challenge you hope to address and how well you've supported that with relevant evidence; whether your proposal demonstrates knowledge of current best practices, particularly any prior work funded by IMLS; how well the proposal identifies the institution as small or rural; whether you've clearly identified who or what will benefit from the project, and if this engages a particular community or communities, whether these communities have been appropriately involved in the planning; and how well the project aligns with the goals of the initiative, the project category, and the agency-wide goal you've selected in your application.



Narrative: Project Work Plan

Tell us:

- What specific activities will you carry out?
- Who will plan, implement, and manage your project? Which member of the project team will participate in the community of practice? Will partners be engaged and, if so, for what purpose?
- What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?
- What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them?
- How will you measure your progress and evaluate project performance?

Review criteria:

- Are project activities clearly articulated and appropriate for achieving project goals?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
- Has the applicant identified an appropriate member of the team to participate in the community of practice?
- Are the time, financial, personnel, and other resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Are the proposed evaluation activities and performance measurements appropriate for the project?

The Project Work Plan is the part of the narrative in which you relay who will do what, when, and using what resources.

We ask you to tell us what specific activities you will undertake; who will plan, implement, and manage your project; Which member of the project team will participate in the community of practice? when and in what sequence your activities will occur; what financial, personnel, and other resources you will need to carry out the activities; any potential risks to the project and how they will be mitigated; and how you will measure progress and evaluate your project's performance.

Reviewers will evaluate your proposal on whether project activities are clearly articulated and appropriate for achieving your project goals; whether the team you've put together has the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully; whether the applicant identified an appropriate member of the team to participate in the community of practice; and whether the time, personnel, and financial resources identified are appropriate for the scope and scale of the project. They will also assess whether the evaluation activities and performance measures you've outlined are appropriate for the project.



Narrative: Project Outcomes

Tell us:

- What are the intended outcomes and outputs of your project? How do they address the need articulated in your Project Justification?
- How do you define success for your project?
- What is your plan for collecting and reporting data on your performance goals and outcomes?
- How will you sustain the benefits of your project beyond the funding period? How will you sustain the lessons learned and knowledge gained through the community of practice?

Review criteria:

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated, realistic, meaningful, and linked to the need addressed by the project?
- Does the applicant effectively define what success means for the project?
- Is the plan for collecting and reporting data on performance goals and outcomes well-designed and feasible?
- Is there a reasonable and practical plan for sustaining the benefits of the project and lessons learned and knowledge gained through the community of practice participation beyond the funding period?

The third section of your narrative - Project Outcomes - should be devoted to articulating your project's intended outcomes and outputs. This is your chance to convince the reviewers that your project will result in tangible benefits for the intended community or communities.

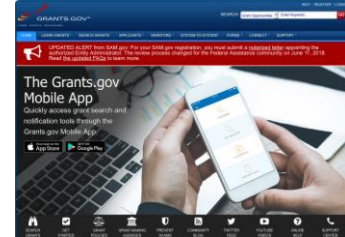
This is also the place where you will explain how you define success for your project, describe how you will collect and report the data on your performance goals and outcomes, and discuss how you will sustain the benefits of your project and lessons learned and knowledge gained through participation of the cohort after the funding period has ended. Reviewers will be evaluating whether you've effectively defined success for the project, developed well-designed and feasible methods for collecting and reporting data on performance goals and outcomes, and created a practical plan for sustaining the benefits of the project and the lessons learned and knowledge gained through the participation in the cohort.

So, to recap: Your narrative has three sections—Project Justification, Project Work Plan, and Project Outcomes. They're all equally important. Please write clearly, address what IMLS has asked you to address, and pay attention to the review criteria.

Required Registrations

Register early!

1. D-U-N-S® Number: www.dnb.com/us
2. SAM Registration: www.sam.gov
3. Grants.gov Registration: www.grants.gov



There are three places where you must register your organization in order to be able to submit any Federal grant proposal—DUNS, SAM, and Grants.gov. There is no cost to register for any of these, but they do take time, so please begin that process immediately if you have not done so already. We strongly recommend immediately checking to see if your organization has already registered, and if so, that its registrations are active through the IMLS deadlines.

First, your organization will need a DUNS number. The **DUNS** number is a unique nine-character number used to identify your organization. The federal government uses the **DUNS** number to track how federal money is allocated. The URL for acquiring a DUNS number is on the slide. DUNS stands for Data Universal Numbering System.

Next, your institution must be registered with the System of Award Management, or SAM. It's important to keep in mind that your SAM registration is good for one year and must be renewed. Please don't wait until the last minute before the deadline to register for a SAM number. We advise checking your organization's status with SAM now. If it's not your job to track your SAM registration, we recommend you contact the person at your organization whose job it is, to be sure that your registration is current and up-to-date.

Finally, you'll need an account at Grants.gov, which is the portal through which you will submit your application. You should allow several weeks for the registration process at Grants.gov. If you know that your organization is registered, please be sure you are aware who is exactly authorized for your institution and make sure they know their login information and authentication credentials. Please don't wait until the last minute before the deadline to register for Grants.gov. We advise checking your organization's status with Grants.gov immediately.

So to recap, you must have a DUNS number, an active SAM.gov registration, and a current and functional Grants.gov registration. You must have a DUNS number to register with SAM.gov. You must have an active SAM.gov registration to register with Grants.gov. And you must have a functional Grants.gov registration to submit an application to IMLS. We recommend you initiate this process immediately if you plan to apply for a grant this fiscal year.



Application Tips

IMPORTANT TO KNOW: We can make grants only to **eligible** applicants that submit **complete** applications, including attachments, **on or before the deadline**. So...

- Start early.
- Become familiar with the Grants.gov Workspace.
- Do your background research.
- Revisit the Notice of Funding Opportunity frequently, and follow the narrative outline it provides. Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections to make it easy for reviewers to read.
- Schedule a counseling call with your program officer
- Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon.
- Check your spelling, grammar, and math.
- Ask a colleague to review everything with fresh eyes before you submit it.
- Be sure your application is complete.
- Submit to Grants.gov **early** so you can correct any errors.

Here are some important application tips:

IMLS legislation states that we can make grants only to **eligible** applicants that submit **complete** applications, including attachments, **on or before the deadline**. So...

- Start early.
- Become familiar with Grants.gov's Workspace. This is the method you will use to submit your application package to IMLS through Grants.gov. Explore the tutorials on www.grants.gov.
- Do some background research and provide evidence in your application that you are up to date and understand current practice
- Revisit the Notice of Funding Opportunity, the NOFO frequently, and follow the narrative outline it provides. Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections to make it easy for reviewers to read.
- Schedule a call with one of our program officers to discuss your proposal and ask questions. We want to see you succeed and we are glad to help.
- Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon. The people who will review your application are experts, but they may not be totally familiar with your particular field's shorthand. Make it easy for them to understand what you mean.
- Check your spelling, grammar, and math. Attention to the smallest detail is extremely important.
- Ask a colleague to review your application with fresh eyes before you submit. Ask them to act like a reviewer who's seeing this for the first time.
- Be sure your application is complete. Check it against the Table of Application Components and then review it once more.
- Submit to Grants.gov early so that any potential errors or technical issues can be addressed immediately.



Review Process



Date	Review Activity
December 2, 2019	Applicants submit packets through Grants.gov
January-February 2020	IMLS staff review applications for completeness and eligibility
March-May 2020	Peer review period
June 2020	IMLS staff synthesize peer review feedback; IMLS Director makes final funding decisions
July 2020	IMLS notifies all applicants of funding decisions; provides reviewer comments
September 1, 2020	Awarded projects begin

This is the general schedule of events to show what happens to your application once we receive it. In December, you'll receive email acknowledgments that your application has been received by Grants.gov (either successfully or unsuccessfully) and that it has been forwarded to IMLS; In January, you'll receive an email from IMLS providing you with basic information and an application log number, which is what we will use to track your application. If your application is found to be incomplete or your institution is ineligible, you'll also hear from us in January or February .

From March through May, experienced and knowledgeable peer reviewers will provide scores and comments based on the criteria outlined in the Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries Notice of Funding Opportunity, and IMLS staff will examine budgets, financials, and your track record with past and current grants. We then prepare materials for the IMLS Deputy Director for Libraries and the Director. By law, the IMLS Director is charged with the authority and responsibility to make final award decisions, and this happens in June.

In July, we notify all applicants by email of the award decisions and provide the scores and comments created by the reviewers. Project Directors and Authorizing Officials of funded applications receive award packets.

And on September 1 the projects begin.



Contact Us

Transforming School Library Practice	Community Memory	Digital Inclusion
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Most important of all, get in touch with us! We are more than happy to chat with you about your project ideas prior to the deadline – our job is to help people put together the most competitive applications possible. If you have **any** questions, issues or concerns. IMLS program officers are here to make the application process as seamless as possible and offer you our expertise.

Thank you very much for your interest in IMLS and in the Accelerating Promising Practices for Small Libraries funding opportunity, and we hope you have found the information in this webinar helpful. We are happy to answer any questions about the program or discuss your project ideas.

Good luck and we look forward to talking with you about your project, and seeing your application in December.