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     >> ALY DESROCHERS: This is Aly at IMLS. Dial the phone
number that's on the screen now and that might be a little bit
clearer.
     >> SANDRA TORO: Good afternoon. Hopefully everyone can
hear me. I see we have a few people who have joined us. My
name is Sandra Toro. And I am a senior program officer in the
Office of Library Services. And I am joined today by Aly
DesRochers who is our program specialist in the Office of
Library Services. And we both work with the Native American and
Native Hawaiian services grant programs. And I also work with
the learning research projects and the National Leadership
Grants and the Laura Bush 21st Century librarian grant program.
We would like to thank you for joining us for today's Native
American library services enhancement grant webinar. We will
have time for questions at the end, but if you have questions as
we go along feel free to type them in to the chat box and we
will do our best to answer them.
   And you may be aware that the President's fiscal year 2018
budget blueprint proposes defunding and elimination of IMLS.

With that said our fiscal year 2017 operations remain unchanged under the current continuing resolution budget. The President's budget request is the first step in a very long budget process. So the agency continues to operate as usual and will do so until a new budget is enacted in Congress.

   This is about the Native American library services enhancement grants. So today we will talk about the grant program and types of projects that have been funded as well as what the components of good proposals and logistics of applying are. You must read the Notice of Funding Opportunity or what we call the NOFO carefully so you are aware of all the required components and know how to complete all the forms and submit your application for funding.

   The Native American library services enhancement grants are competitive grants for up to two years up to $150,000. And you need to have a basic grant first in order to get an enhancement grant. Cost share is not required. And Indian tribes are eligible to apply for funding while entities like libraries, schools, travel colleges or departments of education are not eligible applicants. And they can still be involved in the administration of the program and their staff can serve as project directors in partnerships with eligible applicants. And if you have any questions about eligibility you can reach out to me or to Aly. And we will have our contact information up at the end of the webinar.

   And another point to note is that to be eligible for the program, you must have an existing library with regularly scheduled hours, staff and materials that are available for library users. And just remember the applying institution must be the tribe itself. If you can sign the Notice of Funding Opportunity on our website and it was just posted last week and make sure again to read the NOFO carefully and will take you to the links, to the place where you can do awarded grant search and where you can find information on cost sharing, if you are interested in doing that as well as all the forms that you need to complete the application. The applications are due by 11:59 p.m. on May 17th and they must be submitted through grants.gov.

   As with the basic grant the Notice of Funding Opportunity includes a table that has all of the application components, what kind of format they need to be submitted as and which file name to use when you are submitting your application package. So you should view this list as a checklist of all the documents you need to submit on May 17th. You want to make sure your application is complete so that it is not rejected simply because you missed or forgot one document. And then remember as with the basic grant IMLS has become more strict about our having to make sure each application includes all the necessary

documentation and we won't be able to make any exceptions. So the application includes the application cover form or the SF-424S abstract of one page, IMLS program information sheet, organizational profile, narrative with eight pages, schedule of completion, the IMLS budget form, budget justification, a list of key project staff and consultants and resumes for all of those staff and consultants. All of the documents starting this year must be saved and submitted in PDF format. So you will get rejected if you submit in Word or another type of format.

   Proof of non-profit status and your federal renegotiated indirect cost trade agreement if you plan to use one are conditionally required. You must submit the digital product form which is considered a conditionally required form if any funds at all are being used to create anything like a website or digital histories. Unlike the basic grants which are due today, and hopefully everyone has submitted those already, the grants are not automatic. They actually go through peer review. Peer reviewers will read your proposals and evaluate them to make sure you have responded to the Notice of Funding Opportunity and that your proposed project has potential for success. We'll present the reviewers' comments and scores to the IMLS director who will then make funding decisions based on the reviewer's evaluation and overall goals of the program and agency. This year we expect to make 10 to 12 awards for a total amount of about 1 million 800,000 dollars.

   So what types of projects are funded? Here is a list from past projects that shows types of projects that are funded. You will see that some have to do with digitizing collections or building literacy skills or educational programs for tribal members and some are more about introducing e-books or focusing on summer reading and book clubs. If you have any questions about whether or not your project idea is appropriate, you can reach out to us and we can help you determine whether it is or not.

   So just remember to read the Notice of Funding Opportunity carefully. Follow the step by step instructions in how to apply and remember that the policies and regulations that govern our grant making can't be changed. So you have to, for example, make sure all of your documents are in PDF format and that you submit through grants.gov which I'll talk about in a bit. You want to make sure that you address the criteria that the reviewers will use to evaluate proposals and any questions at all throughout the process feel free to get in touch with us and we can look at drafts and give you verbal feedback but not written feedback.

   So the first thing that you want to work on is your abstract, although some people prefer to do this at the end. And in the

abstract you want to describe the lead, any partners, what you plan to accomplish and why, what your time frame is, what your community needs are, and who your audience is and describe your activities and performance goals and outcomes and any results and any expected products. And then talk about if you have any measurable changes in knowledge, attitudes or behavior. Some people find it easier to do this at the end once they have written the entire eight pages and then summarize what's in the narrative in this one page document. For the statement of need you want to talk about your community and the role of the library in the community. So you might want to address things like the population, the location, the local economy, educational level, language use, culture or anything else that you think is important to note about the community and how the library works with community members. You should talk about what the purpose of the proposed project is in relation to any needs that the community has. And you also want to make sure that you talk about how you figured out that the -- that was the need of the community or what type of assessment you get to figure out what a local community need might be. So if you have done an assessment, you want to talk about how you did the assessment including any data that you gathered, to figure out what kind of project might be successful and what approach you would need to take to try to address that need.

   And this is a slide that shows some sample questions that you might consider in terms of coming up with a needs assessment. And you can include the needs assessment as part of your project, but in many cases reviewers like to see that you have done some kind of assessment prior to putting together the proposal.

   In terms of the project design, you want to describe the work plan that you have put together. So you want to clearly state your goals and objectives and then talk about any specific questions you are trying to address and any processes that you are going to put in to place to try to answer those questions. You also want to talk about your conceptual framework and how you are viewing any kind of theory of action, meaning if you are trying to answer a question, what are the activities that are going to help you answer that question. Or if you want to see a change in behavior what activities are you going to do to make sure that change happens. And you want to describe any data you are going to gather to track progress and outcomes towards answering that question or making those changes happen. And how you are going to analyze it or interpret it and then report it. If your project has any kind of digital content, like software or datasets, you want to be sure to fill out the digital product form that's linked to from the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

It is a very long form.

   So if you have any questions about it, you can send us a draft and we can make sure that you have answered the questions that you need to. Again examples of digital products would be web pages or digital content products or images that you might put online. Anything that would be shared digitally or electronically. And the product design you also want to talk about the activities that are going to be required to implement the project. And what the roles of the partners are going to be in terms of those activities. You also want to make sure that you list any preliminary work or planning, like if you have meetings between the partners. And then if you plan to do anything that's kind of new or different in terms of accepted or standard practice, you want to describe why you are going to be trying out that new or different approach. And then finally you want to talk about how you are going to test to see if those new or different approaches were successful.

   The next exception is impact and this is where you will talk about the bigger picture goals that you will be using to guide your project to completion. And what the results are that you are going to want to see at the end of the project. So you might think about what are the broad results that your organization is thinking about. And how that broad result influences how you came up with the idea for your project and how you made decisions about who should be involved.

   So the results you want to think about is new knowledge or skills or attitudes or behaviors of any of your community members that you want to see change over time. And how what you are doing is going to benefit any community member or group of members that you are serving through the library.

   In terms of the communication part, you want to describe your audience that you are planning to reach and how you are going to reach them. For example, if you are going to use social media or your website or if you are going to do outreach that happens in person. You want to talk about any community building or audience engagement that you are going to have and that can be again through face-to-face discussions or collaborative projects that you do or how you might get a community to adopt something that you create. For example, use a guide book or a software program. You also want to talk about how you are going to measure how the community members engage with what you have created and what the outcomes will be. So, for example, if you want your project to be around creating a language revitalization book what are the outcomes for the community members that you want to achieve if they make use of the book and the communication plan you also want to describe any staff assignments in terms of who is responsible for outreach,

promotion and dissemination and what your plans for technical documentation might be.

For sustainability, the reviewers are going to want to see how you will continue to support the projects, the results and any new models or products that are created beyond the grant period. So how will the benefits exist through either ongoing institutional support or activities that emerge from the product development or collaborations or work that community members do to help continue the benefits. How will you get buy-in from people to make use of any products you develop. Or how will you make sure that people continue to adopt what you have done and created.

How will you think about change within your community over time and documenting that change. And order your plans for preserving and sustaining anything that you do like digitizing collections or if you develop software or if you develop an app or anything like that. The reviewers are going to want to see that you are thinking longer term and not just about those two years that you get funding for.

Something that is -- it started last year but it is actually required now because the -- kind of gave everyone a pass previously are performance measures. So on the program information sheet you will have to pick a goal that you'll try to achieve in terms of performance. So for projects that have to do with learning or community we provide a link to specific performance measures, statements and information about them. And if you can't find the link from the Notice of Funding Opportunities we have it here for you so that you can get to the information.

And the information will basically explain how you can imagine gathering the data you need to show that you are meeting those goals. For more information about the performance measures there is a video of a session we did at ATALM two years ago that is called evaluation 101 and tries to explain how to bring the performance measures in to your project design. And again if you have any questions at all about the performance measures and what you need to do, please feel free to get in touch with us. The performance measures have to be addressed in your narrative and will come in to play when you submit your interim and final reports.

So one of the most important components of your application is the budget. And this is the breakdown of the costs and the order they are in on the budget form. So you want to make sure if you haven't applied in a few years that you use the most recent budget form that's linked to from the Notice of Funding Opportunity. Because it is a little bit different than years past. You also want to include with your budget a detailed

budget justification that explains the purpose for each expense that you have listed in your budget and this is something the reviewers take very seriously, especially in terms of support for partners and making sure it is clear who is doing what and by which time. And again cost share is not required although you can include it. And if you are including it you should make sure to document how exactly you are going to be making use of cost share.

One note I will make is that sometimes people or applicants are ambitious and want to show that they are going to contribute a lot of cost share but the agency would rather you be less ambitious and meet the cost share than have a huge number that you can't meet at the end of the grant. So in addition to the required documents there are some supporting documents that you might want to make use of and these will be letters from consultants or partners or anyone that you plan to work with. You can also have letters of support from community members or maybe there are people whose models or software you are going to be working with and you plan to get their feedback throughout the course of the grant period. And they can also provide letters of support. If you have a long range plan for your tribe, you can include that. You can also include vender quotes for any equipment or furnishings or other large purchases you plan to make as well as any specs for equipment that you want to buy. And if you did put together a needs assessment prior to working on the proposal, you can include a summary of your needs assessment findings as a supporting document.

So make sure that when you are putting your application together you submit a complete application with all of the required documents and make use of the table as a checklist. Don't forget that anyone at all that you list as key personnel must have a resume included in your supporting documents or else your application will be rejected. So this is another case where sometimes people like to have a long list showing lots of people but it is better to have fewer people and make sure you have all the resumes.

Make sure that you include any condition you require documents. For example, the digital products form and we have the old name on this slide which is a typo but in most cases people think they don't need to include the digital products form but they actually do. So anything that you envision might be electronic or digital. Make sure that that's included on the digital product forms.

Also if you do want to use a federally negotiated indirect cost rate make sure you include the agreement with your application. And the rate must be active through the end of the award. If you are in negotiations to try to get a rate

agreement, you might want to talk to us first so that we have a sense of what's happening. Because the award process can get stalled if you are in negotiations and don't have agreement yet. And the agreement is not required if you are just taking the 10% de minimis or administrative fee.

   Then supporting documents might include needs assessments, letters of support, plans or reports. And it is best to try to give the reviewers a complete picture of what you are trying to do and why you think you will be successful. Before you submit your application, you definitely want to try to get some feedback and do some revisions. And you don't have to get feedback from us but it is still a great idea to get two or three people who aren't closely involved with your project to take a look at what you want to do and give you some feedback and even just check the grammar and the spelling. Minor errors can be annoying for the reviewers and you don't want them to become biassed because your application looks sloppy or is missing elements. So take their feedback very seriously and just make sure to spell check and proofread and coordinate with your tribal administration to make sure you get all the pieces that you need in to grants.gov before the deadline.

   We have seen many cases where one or two pieces are missing and then an application has to be rejected. In terms of grants.gov we can only consider proposals that are submitted through grants.gov. Sometimes we get applications through e-mail and we have to reject that. We can't even reject them because they are not considered submitted. So make sure you go through grants.gov. Make sure your application is complete. Grants.gov will actually not accept applications with any missing required documents. Double check that you have the correct DUNS number and SAM.gov registration in place. And you must have a current grants.gov registration. I think because the deadline is coming up pretty soon and you have to have a basic grant in place, you should all be in good shape but usually registrations can take months for approval. So you want to plan ahead. And please remember that the federal requirements can't be waived by IMLS. And we don't have any control over outside systems like SAM.gov or grants.gov. Again make sure all of your documents are PDFs because we won't be able to accept any Word documents or Excel spreadsheets. So again register early. Make sure you have your DUNS number, your SAM.gov and grants.gov registrations intact.

   And in the past we had a possible security issue when people were trying to upload their PDFs. Make sure you give yourselves plenty of time to go through that process and get your documents uploaded. And you will get a link to this powerpoint so you don't have to write all of this down. So in terms of review

process, once you submit your application on May 17th we'll do an eligibility and completeness check. And then the proposal will go to field review. So typically the applications are grouped in terms of content. So maybe all the digital collections ones will go together and all the language revitalization proposal will also go together. And they will be reviewed by three reviewers at a minimum. Those reviewers will light up comments and assign numerical scores and then we will bring those back together and sort them in terms of the ranking.

   Once the review comments and the scores are processed and analyzed we'll have a meeting with the IMLS director and she will make final decisions about what gets funded. And we hope to make announcements by August but sometimes it can go in to September. And your project should start October 1st or no earlier than October 1st. So to reiterate we make grants only to eligible applicants that submit complete applications on or before the deadline. (Lost audio)

   Thank you.

   (Recording stopped).

      >> SANDRA TORO: Okay. Anne has a question. What do you consider the definition of key project staff? Wondering what the threshold is for who we should include. I would definitely include the project director and if you have any partners, for example, if you are starting a digitizing project and you are working with Wiktu, you would want to include someone from Wiktu as a partner and include their name on the list and include their resume. If you are working with someone in another tribe on like an educational program, we want to include that person as a partner and have their resume.

   If you are hiring students to help you with data entry, you wouldn't want to include them. And if you have a key position like an archivist or a web designer that you are planning to hire with grant funds but you don't know who that is yet, you should include -- put the name of the position on the list and then have a sample job description. So we know that that's a key job that you don't have that person in place quite yet. Does that answer your question?

   Okay. That answers her question. But Patricia is asking if we we'd like IMLS staff to look at a draft, how soon would you need to see it. I usually can have time on Fridays to have phone calls to talk about drafts. So I would say any week if you could get me a draft by Tuesday or Wednesday, I can talk about it on Friday. So you can just send me an e-mail and it will take me a couple of days. But the challenge is finding time during the week to schedule a phone call. So just keep in mind that I'll probably want to schedule the time on a Friday. You are welcome. And I think you are the only one left. So if

you have any other questions, please let us know and we'll hang out for a few more minutes. You are welcome. I see Anne joined us again. So Anne, if you have any questions, please let us know. We can still hang out for a few more minutes. No worries, Anne. We often have technical difficulties on our end, too.

   Okay. Thanks, Patricia. Good luck. And Anne, one other thing was that because of my schedule usually it is easier for me to talk -- to schedule a call to talk on a Friday. So if you can get me a draft by Tuesday or Wednesday of that week, that would give me enough time to look at and give you verbal feedback on a Friday. It is possible I can schedule other days but usually it is -- I would say Fridays are best.

   Okay. So I think we are going to end the webinar there. So thank you for joining us. And we look forward to seeing a draft and getting your application. Take care. Bye.

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