IMLS Open Government Plan

Version 3.0
September 2016

Introduction

Transparency, participation, and collaboration form the cornerstone of an open government. We consider these principles critical to the mission of the Institute of Museum and Library Services. And we have built a strong foundation of openness policies and practices that guide our activities and are part of President Obama's government-wide initiative to promote openness in the work of federal agencies.

This plan is the third major update to our Open Government Plan, which was first published April 2010. Our Open Government Plan is a living document and will evolve. As we continue towards increased transparency, participation, and innovation, we will include updates of how these open government principles are integrated in our strategic plan and key initiatives and partnerships.

We encourage you to follow our progress and provide your input at https://www.imls.gov/open.

Open Data

We are committed to open data. We continue to take concrete steps toward making IMLS data available in open, machine-readable formats to help you conduct research, develop web and mobile applications, design data visualizations, and more.

The crucial role government data plays in our society is acknowledged in our 2012-2016 Strategic Plan:

> The use of accurate and reliable data plays a critical role in increasing the transparency and efficiency of IMLS programs and in enhancing the agency's capacity to gauge program effectiveness. Sharing data with the public and other federal agencies helps to achieve better outcomes for the American public through more accurate evaluation of policy options, improved stewardship of taxpayer dollars, reduced paperwork burdens, and more

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW ●● Suite 4000 ●● Washington, DC 20024 ●● 202-653-IMLS (4657) ●● Fax 202-653-4625 ●● www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

coordinated delivery of public services. As advances in technology enhance tools for data sharing, IMLS will seek new approaches for identifying and sharing high-value data responsibly and appropriately to inform public policy decisions and improve program effectiveness.

Visit https://www.imls.gov/data to explore our data.

Accomplishments include creating an inventory of agency data holdings and increasing the number of publicly available datasets.

Since the 2014 Open Government Plan, we have:

- Launched a data catalog and increased the number of publicly available datasets. This catalog puts IMLS data—comprising agency administrative data as well as data about museums and libraries across the United States—at the fingertips of researchers, developers, and interested members of the public who want to dig deeper.

- Hosted an Open Data Open House for 30 data wonks, librarians, curators, researchers, developers, and representatives from a wide range of organizations to help explore and share ideas on how IMLS data could be used and how the data catalog could be improved. The Open Data Open House, and the official launch of the data catalog site, were timed to coincide with International Open Data Day on February 21, 2015. We also encouraged the public to engage in the discussion on Twitter using #IMLSdata.

- Updated our grant policies to continue to ensure that data from federally funded research is made publicly available.

In the coming years, we plan to:

- Actively maintain our data catalog and identify new, high-priority datasets to add to it.

- Create opportunities for promoting and facilitating the use of our data such as contests, challenges, and hackathons.

- Review and update IMLS policies and procedures to ensure they support the open data principles of transparency, collaboration, and participation.

Digital Strategy

In September 2015, IMLS launched a website redesign. It addressed the agency's growing number of audiences and expanding role, and was designed to enhance the agency's mission, increase accessibility, and simplify the ability to manage content.

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW •• Suite 4000 •• Washington, DC 20024 •• 202-653-IMLS (4657) •• Fax 202-653-4625 •• www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

The process of redesigning the site involved multiple opportunities for input from both internal and external constituents. Through interviews and surveys, the agency gathered feedback on what was and wasn't working on the previous site, and used this input to prioritize site changes.

The new website was designed to be accessed anywhere, anytime, and from any device in an effort to be more responsive to the public and to take full advantage of the various ways IMLS stakeholders are using new technologies (including smartphones and tablets) to access news and information. The site is integrated with the data catalog to make IMLS data more useful to agency stakeholders and the general public.

IMLS's digital strategy report is located at https://www.imls.gov/digitalstrategy.

Proactive Disclosures

Promoting greater transparency and accountability of IMLS operations is one the primary objectives in our Strategic Plan 2012-2016, "Creating a Nation of Learners." Our FOIA representatives, Deputy Director of Digital and Information Strategy, Chief Operating Officer, Chief Information Officer/Records Officer, and IMLS program managers routinely meet to ensure that the agency is identifying records for proactive disclosure.

FOIA representatives continually monitor the our FOIA logs for "frequently requested records" and regularly consult with program office staff to see if similarly requested agency records can or should be made available through IMLS.gov. When appropriate, we connect FOIA requesters to state library administrative agencies or other federal agencies.

We have recently proactively:

- Disclosed more information about major grant programs. For awards in the National Leadership Grants for Libraries and the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian programs, we have begun to proactively share documents from the projects' grant applications, including narratives.

- Expanded IMLS' presence on social media platforms, including by posting information on the IMLS' Facebook and Twitter pages. We also launched an Instagram profile in the spring of 2016 to share our photos and videos.

- Worked to increase public access to information regarding the Grants to States Program, including a new public-facing website that will enable the public to access information about these grants.

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW •• Suite 4000 •• Washington, DC 20024 •• 202-653-IMLS (4657) •• Fax 202-653-4625 •• www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

- Started to move Grants to State Program information from a password-protected extranet for grantees to publicly available pages on IMLS.gov.

Access to Scientific Data and Publications

We are committed to expanding public access to IMLS and IMLS-funded research. The agency has implemented policies and procedures to ensure that the results of such research are made broadly available to and useful for the public, industry, and the research community.

Although IMLS is not subject to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy's (OSTP) February 22, 2013, memorandum requiring certain Federal agencies to develop a plan to support increased public access to the results of research funded by the Federal Government, the agency fully supports the policies set out in the memorandum, and will conform its practices, as appropriate.

We have also provided support through our grant-making. For example, IMLS provided grant funding for a recent project which resulted in the publication of *The Open Data Imperative: How the Cultural Heritage Community Can Address the Federal Mandate.* The report from the Council on Library and Information Resources offers a series of recommendations to improve the open data infrastructure, engage a broad community of stakeholders to support the management of data as an asset, and expand collaboration that is vital to ensuring public access to data.

Open Source

We are committed to improving access to custom software code developed for the Federal government, including through the development of appropriate open source software policies.

Our default position when developing new projects is to:

- Use free and open source software in our projects and contribute back to the open source community.

- Develop our work in the open.

- Publish publicly all source code created or modified by IMLS, whether developed in-house by government staff or through contracts negotiated by IMLS.

The new IMLS.gov website is built on Drupal—an open source platform that can be expanded to take future advantage of third party APIs and modules, which can make IMLS information more accessible and useful for the public.

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW •• Suite 4000 •• Washington, DC 20024 •• 202-653-IMLS (4657) •• Fax 202-653-4625 •• www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

In the coming years, we plan to build out our presence on Github at
https://www.github.com/IMLS.

Most of our work falls within the U.S. public domain. IMLS also ensures that code created by IMLS or its contractors is generally made available without copyright restriction for worldwide use.

As part of our grant-making, we also expect grantees to make IMLS-funded software products to develop and release these products under an open source license to maximize access and promote reuse. Applicants are required to describe: (i) any terms or conditions of use or access; (ii) how they will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its intended users; and (iii) the location in which they will be publicly depositing source code for the software developed.

Transparency and Spending Information

Grants.gov: IMLS participates in Grants.gov with an annual Interagency Agreement with the Department of Health & Human Services. All IMLS discretionary programs are required to submit applications through Grants.gov.

Data.gov: See the Open Data section above.

CFDA.gov: IMLS maintains an accurate list of grant programs on CFDA.gov.

SAM.gov: IMLS requires all potential and current grantees and contractors to maintain an accurate and updated SAM.gov registration through the lifecycle of their award.

FSRS.gov: Where applicable, IMLS requires prime contract and grant awardees to report against sub-contracts and sub-grants. IMLS only monitors FSRS to ensure timely and accurate reporting.

USAspending.gov: IMLS reports federal assistance and contractual data on a monthly basis, via the Data Submission and Validation Tool (DSVT), to USAspending.gov. The federal assistance data consists of all mandatory and discretionary grants and cooperative agreements. The contractual data consists of all federally awarded contracts greater than $3,000 and is retrieved from the Federal Procurement Data System (FPDS).

DATA Act: IMLS is actively working with the Department of the Treasury and OMB, as appropriate, to implement the Digital Accountability and Transparency Act of 2014 (DATA Act). Implementation of the DATA Act will expand the data available to

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW •• Suite 4000 •• Washington, DC 20024 •• 202-653-IMLS (4657) •• Fax 202-653-4625 •• www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

the public on USASpending.gov and will give IMLS access to this information for use in management and decision-making.

Records Management

IMLS continues to be committed to maintaining appropriate records, including electronic records, of agency's operations, compliance with the President's November 2011 Memorandum on Managing Government Records and the 2012 Managing Government Records Directive.

 IMLS completed its assessment of cloud services, its capabilities for storage, and archiving of IMLS emails/records. The assessment concluded and services are being acquired to first move IMLS email to the cloud ensuring we meet the Records Management directive for archiving all IMLS email before the December 2016 requirement issued by NARA. After IMLS' move to the cloud another assessment will be conducted to determine the best approach for meeting the 2019 requirement for managing all permanent electronic records electronically. Throughout these records compliance phases IMLS has identified and trained records liaisons officers (RLOs) to provide program office support of the IMLS Records Management Program and launched a [Records Management page](#) on the IMLS website. We have implemented a database to track agency records and streamline the process for records requested and stored. In 2017, the RLOs and IMLS staff will receive additional training for to ensure staff are aware and regularly assessing the IMLS records and the policies and directives that govern them.

Privacy

As a "micro agency," IMLS complies with all applicable privacy reporting requirements, including the preparation of annual Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) Reports.

Whistleblower Protection

The Director of IMLS is required by 5 U.S.C. Section 2302(c) to ensure, in consultation with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC), that employees are informed of their rights and remedies under the prohibited personnel practices and whistleblower retaliation protection provisions of Title 5. IMLS currently participates in OSC's Whistleblower Protection Act certification program. The agency has been certified through 2019.

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW ●● Suite 4000 ●● Washington, DC 20024 ●● 202-653-IMLS (4657) ●● Fax 202-653-4625 ●● www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

Freedom of Information Act

IMLS recognizes that the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) is a fundamental element of open government. By applying a presumption of openness and maintaining effective FOIA operations, IMLS seeks to expand the availability of information about the agency's programs and operations to the public. The agency has updated its FOIA regulations to reflect that the agency applies a presumption of disclosure and openness with regard to all decisions involving FOIA. See 45 C.F.R. Part 1184.

The agency does not have a backlog of pending FOIA requests. Information about our FOIA program is available on IMLS.gov, including the Chief FOIA Officer's Reports. In addition, in accordance with the FOIA, Privacy Act, and the Institute's current regulations, the agency's FOIA Officers are continuing to review other records, submitted by agency program managers and staff, to determine the appropriateness of proactive release.

Congressional Requests

The Office of Communications and Government Affairs is responsible for coordinating with program areas to ensure responses to congressional inquiries that accurately represent the agency views. The Office also coordinates with the Office of General Counsel on relevant legislative matters. The Office consults with the Office of Management and Budget during the development of the agency's proposed budget and legislative program.

Public Participation

Peer review: Participation and citizen engagement are at the core of IMLS operations. IMLS award decisions are informed by the merit-based reviews of over 600 subject matter experts each year. The IMLS staff recruits for reviewers through active participation in industry meetings and close monitoring of publications, journal articles, and increasingly blogs, social media, and IMLS.gov.

Participation Opportunities for Grant Applicants: IMLS also seeks to engage the broadest possible range of eligible applicants. In addition to the web resources listed in the transparency section, IMLS engages participation of potential grantees through moderated conference calls and webinars.

Using New Media to Engage Broader Participation: IMLS uses its website and social media platforms to provide information about grant opportunities and promote and share project outcomes. Through its blog, feature stories on successful

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW ●● Suite 4000 ●● Washington, DC 20024 ●● 202-653-IMLS (4657) ●● Fax 202-653-4625 ●● www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

grantees and active Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram accounts, IMLS engages thousands of museum and library professionals.

Convenings: In 2015, IMLS held three convenings with the goals of engaging its constituencies about how best libraries could work with their communities to maximize educational and economic opportunities. The first meeting examined the "National Digital Platform." The second meeting focused on "Learning in Libraries" and the last meeting looked at "Engaging Communities." To ensure the greatest possible participation, IMLS livestreamed the meetings on the Internet, fostering discussion through in-person attendance and through social media such as Twitter.

Collaboration

IMLS collaborates with federal and non-federal partners in a number of initiatives and partnerships, including:

Community Catalysts Initiative: A new IMLS initiative to help libraries and museums develop a deeper understanding of their role as enablers of community vitality and co-creators of positive community change. Through the Community Catalysts initiative, IMLS will gather input from the library, museum and community revitalization fields to develop frameworks, tools, and resources to support staff skill-building needed to help transform the connections libraries and museums have with their communities.

Open eBooks: Open eBooks is an app containing thousands of popular and award-winning titles that are free for children from low-income households. These eBooks can be read without checkouts or holds. A coalition of literacy, library, and publishing partners joined the White House to make the Open eBooks program possible. The Initiative partners, Digital Public Library of America (DPLA), First Book, and The New York Public Library (NYPL), created the app, curated the eBook collection, and developed a system for distribution and use. They received financial support from IMLS, assistance from Baker & Taylor, and contributions from major publishers.

ConnectED Library Challenge: The ConnectED Library Challenge is a way for communities throughout the country to create or strengthen partnerships so that every child enrolled in school can receive a library card and have access to the books and learning resources of America's public libraries. The initiative calls upon library directors to work with their mayors or county executives, school leaders, and school librarians.

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW •• Suite 4000 •• Washington, DC 20024 •• 202-653-IMLS (4657) •• Fax 202-653-4625 •• www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.

Museums for All: [Museums for All](#) is a cooperative initiative between IMLS and the Association of Children's Museums to offer a signature access program that encourages families of all backgrounds to visit museums regularly and build lifelong museum habits.

Let's Move! Museums and Gardens: [Let's Move! Museums and Gardens](#) is a national initiative that provides opportunities for museum and garden visitors to learn about healthy food choices and promote physical activity through interactive exhibits and programs.

Flagship Initiative and Open Innovation

As an information society agency, at IMLS, we're working to merge our technology and information strategy. In December 2015, to carry out this work, IMLS established a new office, the Office of Digital and Information Strategy (ODIS).

ODIS merges the Office of the Chief Information Officer (OCIO) and the Office of Impact Assessment and Learning (OIAL). Under ODIS, the Office of the CIO will continue to deliver information technology services to support staff and the Institute's mission. OCIO will also continue to ensure IMLS' IT investments are aligned with the agency's priorities. OIAL will continue to conduct research, evaluate programs, and collect data.

Work is underway to hire a Data Analyst to lead the open data and innovation projects. Once hired, ODIS will provide guidance for IMLS program staff to plan open innovation practices, including prizes and challenges as well as citizen science and crowdsourcing.

955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW ●● Suite 4000 ●● Washington, DC 20024 ●● 202-653-IMLS (4657) ●● Fax 202-653-4625 ●● www.imls.gov

A federal agency building the capacity of libraries and museums to create a nation of learners.