

PROGRAM SOLICITATION
for a Cooperative Agreement to
Build and Share Knowledge of Good Practice in America's Libraries and Museums
DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS:
March 3, 2008

Proposals in response to this solicitation will be submitted through Grants.gov, the federal government's online application system. The Grants.gov system will accept applications submitted on or before March 3, 2008.

All applicants must register with Grants.gov before submitting their applications. The multi-step registration process generally cannot be completed in a single day. Applicants who are not already registered should allow at least two weeks to complete the registration process. Step-by-step instructions for registering and submitting applications through Grants.gov are available at www.grants.gov/GetStarted. Note that extra time should be allowed for validation of applications by Grants.gov following submission. Applicants who have problems registering, or submitting their applications, should call the Grants.gov help desk at 1-800-518-4726; e-mail support@grants.gov; or consult the information posted on the Grants.gov Web site at www.grants.gov/CustomerSupport. The Grants.gov customer service hours are 7:00 AM to 9:00 PM eastern time, Monday through Friday.

Applicants will need to locate the IMLS application package at www.grants.gov.

The Funding Opportunity Number is BSK-CA-08.

For information about this solicitation, please contact Mamie Bittner, Deputy Director, Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communications, Institute of Museum and Library Services, 1800 M Street NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036-5802, (202) 653-4686 or mbittner@imls.gov

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The Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 122,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. The Institute's mission is to create strong libraries and museums that connect people to information and ideas. The Institute works at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge; enhance learning and innovation; and support professional development. To learn more about the Institute, please visit www.imls.gov.

SECTION I. FUNDING OPPORTUNITY DESCRIPTION

I.A. Overview

Award amount: up to \$1,000,000
Deadline for submission: March 3, 2008
Award announcement: April, 2008
Grant period: 24 months beginning April, 2008

I.B. Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal funds for libraries and museums in the United States. In recent years, its annual appropriation has been close to \$200 million making it the largest single funder for these cultural institutions in the United States. Museums and libraries have tremendous public value. The Institute seeks to make strategic investments that help libraries and museums contribute to the national effort to create a prepared workforce, an informed citizenry and strong communities. The agency has three strategic goals:

To sustain cultural heritage, knowledge and ideas;
To enhance learning and innovation; and
To support the professional development of people who work in libraries and museums.

Museums and libraries are among America's leading public institutions, making knowledge available to millions at little or no cost. As public institutions they must meet a very high threshold of mission accountability and use resources wisely for public good. Careful planning, implementation, evaluation, reporting, and dissemination of results and lessons learned are essential to satisfy these responsibilities at both the individual project level and the national level.

Goal

The ultimate goal of this Cooperative Agreement is to develop the capacity of the museum and library field to effectively plan and evaluate their programs and to share lessons learned so that library and museum practices in the United States continue to improve.

IMLS wishes to increase the capacity of:

- 1) Library and museum grantees and potential grantees - to design and deliver projects that preserve cultural heritage, enhance learning opportunities for the public, encourage innovation and support the professional development of library and museum workers so that lessons learned can be shared widely and improve library and museum practice in the U.S.;
- 2) The museum and library field - to access expertise and knowledge distilled from the IMLS portfolio of current and past projects; and
- 3) IMLS - to analyze the results of its grants and disseminate this information broadly.

Project Objectives

Through a variety of methods the Cooperator will work with IMLS to:

- 1) Increase knowledge sharing among grantees and potential grantees and the general library and museum community to strengthen skills in project design and evaluation and to share deliverables, practices and findings across projects (i.e. lessons learned, challenges and future issues to be addressed);
- 2) Enable others in the museum and library fields to learn from, and build upon IMLS grantees' prior work and share practices and findings based on project evaluations and other methods;
- 3) Facilitate transfer of knowledge between research findings and library and museum practice; and
- 4) Increase IMLS's ability to efficiently access and analyze project results to communicate the impact of IMLS programs to the field, Congress, the Administration, and the general public.

Scope of Work

It will be the responsibility of the Cooperator, working in consultation with IMLS, to:

- 1) Develop a strategic plan for the project;
- 2) Engage a steering committee made up of leaders in the fields of library and museum evaluation and practice;
- 3) Implement agreed-upon strategies; and
- 4) Provide a report and recommendations for future action.

Deliverables

- 1) A suite of products (to include existing, adapted, and newly developed products that fill identified gaps) that can be used by grantees and potential grantees to increase their knowledge about and ability to plan, capture, and share project results, including qualitative and quantitative data about outcomes, outputs, and other results, and lessons learned. This deliverable should be designed to have field-wide applicability, regardless of whether museums and libraries use it for IMLS-funded awards or for other activities that support the museum and library fields.
- 2) A Web-based clearinghouse that will provide access to IMLS-supported projects and lessons learned and to resources to improve project design and evaluation, with a data model that maximizes the usability of the information in such a clearinghouse. The goal is to create an online forum to review projects and to share experiences and best practices.
- 3) Face-to-face convenings, to begin in the Summer of 2008, that may be themed by crosscutting content areas such as professional development, research, youth and family learning, etc. These convenings will be open to IMLS grantees as well as

other interested library and museum professionals. IMLS anticipates that a portion of each meeting will be devoted to sharing knowledge of complementary projects and a portion of each meeting will be devoted to activities to strengthen planning, evaluation and disseminating results. Outreach activities may include online and audio conferences, workshops, and seminars to achieve project goals and encourage networking among grantees and the library and museum communities.

- 4) Suggestions for reducing the time required and increasing the efficiency with which IMLS program officers are able to review grant portfolios, assess evidence of project impact, and identify project highlights that IMLS can use to support the agency's Performance and Accountability Report and to communicate externally about its programs.
- 5) A report (after eighteen months) making recommendations for continued work in this area.

Expectations

This project will engage a steering committee identified by the Cooperator in consultation with IMLS to enable involvement of leaders in the fields of library and museum evaluation and practice.

The plan provided in project proposal will be further refined in consultation with IMLS staff to develop the final Cooperative Agreement.

The Cooperator should be aware of past IMLS (and other) work in this area (consult the web links below). In the context of this background IMLS wishes to expand technical assistance beyond planning and evaluation, and beyond an outcomes orientation, to support and strengthen the library and museum communities, and IMLS's ability to document and analyze a range of project results and identify issues, challenges and lessons learned.

- 1) An online tutorial for planning (see http://www.imls.gov/Project_Planning/index.asp);
- 2) Information resources (see <http://www.imls.gov/applicants/obe.shtm>);
- 3) A short course that can be used stand alone or instructor mediated for outcomes-oriented planning and evaluation planning (see <http://www.shapingoutcomes.org/>);
- 4) Grant-funded online resources for outcomes-oriented planning and measurement (see, e.g., <http://www.lstatoolkit.com/>, <http://ibec.ischool.washington.edu/ibecCat.aspx?subCat=Outcome%20Toolkit&cat=Tools%20and%20Resources>, and http://www.ii.fsu.edu/presentations/evalmod_arl2006.pdf);
- 5) Database of funded projects (<http://www.imls.gov/search.asp>, project profiles <http://www.imls.gov/profiles/profiles.shtm>, and regular project news in *Primary Source* (<http://www.imls.gov/news/source.shtm>); and
- 6) IMLS Performance and Accountability Report (PAR) as an independent federal agency (see http://www.imls.gov/pdf/IMLS_06_PAR_Final.pdf for IMLS's 2006 report).

In addition, the Cooperator will plan for the integration of resources and experiences developed with other closely related initiatives in other key organizations such as, but not limited to, the National Science Foundation, the American Library Association, The American Association of

Museums, the Association of Science and Technology Centers, Association of Research Libraries and others. The goal is to prevent redundancy and duplication of effort to the greatest extent possible and to help assure that the target audiences of this initiative know what resources exist and can access them easily.

At the end of eighteen months, IMLS may decide to extend this Cooperative Agreement and may award additional funds for the implementation of recommendations, and for the further development of activities to realize the key goals of this initiative. Such as extension of the Cooperative Agreement and award of additional funds would be predicated on the quality of products delivered and on negotiations with the Cooperator, and would be subject to the availability of funds.

To the greatest extent possible, the Cooperator will identify and adapt existing resources, tools, and structures for applicant and grantee technical assistance.

In collaboration with IMLS, the Cooperator will develop and provide program elements for face-to-face convenings to support the goals identified throughout this statement of work. IMLS will cover the costs of meeting space. The Cooperator will take responsibility for development of these meetings in close cooperation with IMLS, and for management and costs associated with, including but not limited to, meeting logistics; participant registration; speaker invitation, travel, and honorarium (if any); and evaluation. Program elements developed for these meetings may be used for additional convenings supported by IMLS. IMLS National Leadership, 21st Century Museum Professionals, and Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grantees will be able to use their grant funds to cover hotel and travel costs for up to three persons representing each grant. IMLS anticipates six two day convenings per year and seeks to include all National Leadership Grantees, 21st Century Museum Professional grantees, and Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian grantees from 2006 and later. (Note: from 2006- 2008 IMLS made a total of approximately 250 grants in these grant categories.)

The Cooperator will identify the required technologies, technology infrastructure, and media that will best support the envisioned program of technical assistance. The Cooperator will provide the content for convenings and other resources supporting the identified goals. IMLS anticipates that this content will include (but is not limited to) graphics consistent with IMLS's visual brand, moving images, and/or recorded sound.

The Cooperator will work with IMLS information technology staff to assure that the technologies and data model proposed can be integrated with, or are interoperable with, IMLS current infrastructure, and maximize access to content. IMLS will determine the suitability for implementation and development by the agency.

Finally, the Cooperator should provide a plan of work to evaluate the use and outcomes of this initiative that will enable IMLS to identify the most-used and most successful elements of the plan, their individual costs, and their outcomes.

SECTION II. ELIGIBILITY INFORMATION

U.S. non-profit organizations with tax-exempt status are eligible to apply. IMLS strongly encourages partnerships to engage expertise in a wide range of content areas, including program management and evaluation, knowledge of library and museum operations, meeting planning, distance learning, digital communications, etc. Ineligible proposals will not be reviewed.

SECTION III. AWARD INFORMATION

III.A. IMLS anticipates awarding only one (1) Cooperative Agreement.

III.B. The award under this program will be for up to \$1,000,000. No cost sharing is required, but cost sharing will be considered as an evaluation factor.

III.C. The award will be for a maximum of twenty-four (24) months from date of award.

III.D. The estimated award date is April, 2008. IMLS will notify all applicants of final decisions. No information about the status of an application will be released until all applications have been reviewed and all negotiations are concluded.

SECTION IV. APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION INFORMATION

IV.A. The application package is downloadable from Grants.gov. Electronic application packages are obtained directly from www.grants.gov.

**Use one of the following identifiers to locate the application package:
CFDA No: 45.312
Funding Opportunity Number: BSK-CA-08**

For complete instructions about locating and downloading an application package, go to http://www.ims.gov/applicants/grants/pdf/NLG_2008.pdf, pages 23-26.

When an applicant starts to download an application, two items are needed:

- 1) Application Instructions: This package contains the grant application guidelines (which include instructions for completing the application) and the IMLS forms for budget, program information, and any others related to this specific program. Application Package: This package has the face sheet (SF-424s, "Application for Federal Domestic Assistance/Short Organizational Form") and the Attachments form. Applicants need to download both of these packages to have all of the materials and forms necessary to complete the application.
- 2) Information about completing and attaching forms and other documents in the Grants.gov application can be found in the National Leadership Grant guidelines posted on the IMLS Web site: http://www.ims.gov/applicants/grants/pdf/NLG_2008.pdf, pages 23 – 25.

IV.B. Proposals in response to this solicitation must be submitted on or before March 3, 2008.

For information about this solicitation, please contact:
Mamie Bittner, Deputy Director
Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communications
Institute of Museum and Library Services
1800 M Street NW, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20036-5802
Telephone: (202) 653-4682
E-mail: mbittner@ims.gov

IV.C. Any proposal received after the time specified for receipt will not be considered unless (1) it is the only proposal received, or (2) it offers significant cost or technical advantage, and it is received before an award determination has been made.

IV.D. In order to streamline and simplify the management of federal financial assistance, the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has directed that all federal agencies require applicants to provide a Dun and Bradstreet (D&B) Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) number when applying for federal grants or cooperative agreements on or after October 1, 2003. This number is required for registration at Grants.gov.

IV.E. Content

Proposals in response to the solicitation shall include:

- 1) Face Sheet (also referred to as SF-424S);
- 2) Program Information Sheet: the three-page form is available as a fill-in PDF form or a Word document in the Grants.gov Zip file or on the IMLS Web site;
- 3) Narrative: a project design that addresses the purposes of the Scope of Work. The narrative may be up to 12 pages. Sufficient information should be included in the body of the narrative, and in accompanying documents, for reviewers to evaluate the competitive criteria listed in Section V.B. Instructions on how to complete the Face Sheet, Program Information Sheet, and Narrative can be found in the National Leadership Grant guidelines posted on the IMLS Web site:
http://www.imls.gov/applicants/grants/pdf/NLG_2008.pdf, pages 26 –31
- 4) Detailed Budget: a three-page form available as a fill-in PDF form or Word document in the Grants.gov Zip file or on the IMLS Web site, replicated for each year of the project; and
- 5) Summary Budget: a one-page form available as a fill-in PDF form or Word document in the Grants.gov Zip file or on the IMLS Web site.

Instructions on how to complete the budget forms can be found in the National Leadership Grant guidelines posted on the IMLS Web site
http://www.imls.gov/applicants/grants/pdf/NLG_2008.pdf, pages 34 - 37. Note that the line item for student support on the form will not apply to this solicitation. Applicants may create their own budget forms as long as all items of information included in the forms are included.

Other necessary forms include:

- 1) Partnership statement form, if applicable.
- 2) Text Responses documents, which will include the following:
 - a. Abstract
 - b. Schedule of Completion
 - c. Budget Justification
 - d. Organizational Profile
 - e. List of key project staff and consultants
 - f. Resumes for key project personnel
- 3) Other attachments:

- a. Proof of nonprofit status, if applicable
- b. Current, federally negotiated rate for indirect costs, if applicable
- c. Planning documents, such as needs assessments or digitization plans, if applicable
- d. Instructions on how to complete the Text Responses documents and Other Attachments can be found in the National Leadership Grant guidelines posted on the IMLS Web site http://www.imls.gov/applicants/grants/pdf/NLG_2008.pdf , pages 40 - 43.

SECTION V. APPLICATION REVIEW INFORMATION

V.A. IMLS will determine whether applicants are eligible and whether an application is complete.

V.B. All eligible and complete proposals will be competitively reviewed. The evaluation will be based on the following Evaluation Criteria:

V.B.1. Project Design

- 1) Evidence of the quality of the proposed plan to accomplish the work identified above under Scope of Work, including evidence of the applicant's expertise in education and training; knowledge of, and experience with, the full range of communities and topics this program will serve; expertise in technology-based solutions for technical assistance, education, and training; and expertise in project design, evaluation, and communications.
- 2) Evidence that the methodology and design are appropriate to the scope of the project.
- 3) Extent to which the proposal reflects an understanding of, and experience in, the design, delivery, and management of projects of similar scope and complexity.

V.B.2. Project Resources: Time, Budget, Personnel, Management Plan

- 1) Evidence of the ability and resources to develop, deliver, and manage the project in an effective and timely manner and adhere to time frames and cost projections.
- 2) Extent to which the budget is reasonable and appropriate.
- 3) Evidence that the project personnel are qualified to accomplish project goals and activities, have experience in delivering high-caliber reports of national scope, and have the ability to synthesize research findings and to communicate the findings to a lay audience.
- 4) Extent to which personnel commit adequate time to manage and implement the project activities.
- 5) Evidence of familiarity with libraries' and museums' public service role, products, and services and with the training, professional development, research, and products developed by complementary institutions to serve them.

SECTION VI. AWARD ADMINISTRATION INFORMATION

VI.A. Cooperative Agreement

The instrument that will be awarded as a result of this Program Solicitation is a Cooperative Agreement, as defined by the Federal Grant and Cooperative Agreement Act of 1977, Public Law 95-224 (see also, 31 USC sections 6301-6308). A Cooperative Agreement is a cost reimbursement instrument. No fee or profit (or other increment above allowable cost) is allowed.

VI.B. Terms and Conditions

Institute of Museum and Library Services Cooperative Agreements are subject to the General Terms and Conditions for grantees (please see <http://www.ims.gov/recipients/administration.shtm>). The Cooperator shall also comply with the applicable OMB Circulars and with the Institute of Museum and Library regulations at 45 C.F.R. Chapter XI. Such OMB Circulars and IMLS regulations will be incorporated by reference into the Cooperative Agreement.

VI.C. Assurances and Certifications

General Certification

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies that it will comply with all applicable laws, executive orders, and regulations in applying for and carrying out this project. IMLS regulations may be found at 45 C.F.R. Chapter XI.

Assurance of Compliance with Non Discrimination Requirements

By submission of a proposal, the authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, hereby agrees that the applicant, if awarded, will comply with the requirements of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, where applicable. Copies of the nondiscrimination regulations identified above may be obtained by writing to the Office of Civil Rights, Institute of Museum and Library Services, 1800 M Street NW, 9th Floor, Washington, DC 20036.

Certification Concerning Debarment, Suspension, and Other Responsibilities

In compliance with 45 CFR Part 1185,

- 1) The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies to the best of his or her knowledge and belief that the applicant and its principals:
 - a. Are not presently excluded or disqualified;
 - b. Have not been convicted within the preceding three years of any of the offenses listed in 45 C.F.R. 1185.800(a) or had a civil judgment rendered against the applicant or its principals for one of those offenses within that time period;
 - c. Are not presently indicted for or otherwise criminally or civilly charged by a governmental entity (Federal, State, or local) with commission of any of the offenses listed in 45 C.F.R. 1185.800(a); and
 - d. Have not had one or more public transactions (Federal, State, or local) terminated within the preceding three years for cause or default.
- 2) The Cooperator further certifies that the Cooperator and its principals will comply with 45 C.F.R. Part 1185 Subpart C (Responsibilities of Participants Regarding Transactions) and will require similar compliance with Subpart C by persons at the next lower tier with whom the primary tier participant enters into covered transactions. Where the

Cooperator or any lower-tier participant is unable to certify to this statement, it shall provide an explanation to the IMLS Grants Office.

Delinquent Debt Certification

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies to the best of his or her belief that the applicant is not delinquent on any Federal debt or, if it is, will provide explanatory information. Examples of relevant debt include delinquent taxes, audit disallowances, and benefit overpayments.

Drug-Free Workplace Act Certification

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies, as a condition of the award, that the applicant will, or will continue to provide a drug-free workplace by complying with the requirements in Subpart B of 45 C.F.R. Part 1186. This includes: making a good faith effort, on a continuing basis, to maintain a drug-free workplace; publishing a drug-free workplace statement; establishing a drug-free awareness program for the applicant's employees; taking actions concerning employees who are convicted of violating drug statutes in the workplace; and identifying (either with this application, upon award, or in documents kept on file in the applicant's office) all known workplaces under the award.

Certification Regarding Lobbying Activities (Applies to Applicants Requesting Funds in Excess of \$100,000)

The authorized representative, on behalf of the applicant, certifies, to the best of his or her knowledge and belief, that:

- 1) No federal appropriated funds have been paid or will be paid by or on behalf of the authorized representative to any person for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress in connection with the awarding of a federal contract, the making of a federal grant, the making of a federal loan, the entering into of a cooperative agreement, or the extension, continuation, renewal, amendment, or modification of a federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement;
- 2) If any funds other than appropriated federal funds have been paid or will be paid to any person (other than a regularly employed officer or employee of the applicant) for influencing or attempting to influence an officer or employee of any agency, a Member of Congress, an officer or employee of Congress, or an employee of a Member of Congress, in connection with this federal contract, grant, loan, or cooperative agreement, the authorized representative shall request, complete, and submit Standard Form LLL, "Disclosure of Lobbying Activities," in accordance with its instructions; and
- 3) The authorized representative shall require that the language of this certification be included in the award documents for all subawards at all tiers (including subcontracts, subgrants, and contract under grants, loans, and cooperative agreements) and that all subrecipients shall certify and disclose accordingly.

VI.D. Reporting

It will be the responsibility of the recipient to file required reports. Interim narrative performance reports must be submitted within 30 days after the end of each six-month period for the duration of the award, except for the final six months (when final reports will be submitted within 90 days

after the end of the grant period). An annual financial status report must be submitted within 30 days after the end of the first year of the project, unless the award is for a one-year project. For one-year projects, only a final financial status report is required.

Final performance and final financial status reports must be submitted within 90 days of the close of the project period. Interim and final financial status reports must be submitted on the required forms [either SF 269, Financial Status Report (long form), or SF 269A, Financial Status Report (short form)]. Failure to comply with the reporting requirements may result in the loss of current or future funding from the IMLS.

SECTION VII. AGENCY CONTACTS

For information on this solicitation, write or call:
Mamie Bittner, Deputy Director
Office of Policy, Planning, Research and Communications
Institute of Museum and Library Services
1800 M Street NW, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20036-5802
Telephone: (202) 653-4682
E-mail: mbittner@imls.gov

SECTION VIII. OTHER INFORMATION

Rejection and Award

IMLS reserves the right to reject any or all proposals.