

**Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Plan
Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS)
FY 2008**

I. Background

In accordance with Executive Order 13,392 (December 14, 2005), entitled “Improving Agency Disclosure of Information,” the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to ensuring that the agency’s FOIA operation and processes are efficiently managed and responsive to its customers. Our assessment of the Institute’s FOIA operations is outlined as follows:

A. Overall Characterization of FOIA Operation: The IMLS General Counsel serves as the Chief FOIA Compliance Officer for the agency and is responsible for review, maintenance and compliance with all FOIA policy, processes and systems relating to the agency’s FOIA program. Within IMLS, the agency’s FOIA Processor is located with the Office of General Counsel (OGC) and is responsible for processing all incoming FOIA requests. As such, any staff member who receives a FOIA request or a request for agency documents not distributed in the agency’s day-to-day business from any outside entity refers the request (i.e., letter, fax or e-mail) to the OGC for processing. Once the OGC has officially recorded the request, it will be processed by IMLS FOIA personnel in the following manner:

FOIA PROCESSOR (PUBLIC LIAISON) – Records, reviews, and monitors FOIA requests to ensure completeness and compliance with applicable FOIA rules and agency guidelines. The FOIA Processor is also responsible for forwarding all correspondence and releasable documents to the FOIA requestor once signed and approved by the FOIA Officer. The OGC assigns incoming FOIA request to the appropriate action office (e.g., OLS, OMS, etc.) and directs that applicable records be made available within a designated timeframe. Once the requested records are received from the action office, they are forwarded to the FOIA Officer.

FOIA OFFICER (PUBLIC LIAISON) –The FOIA Officer reviews requests for information under FOIA and decides if information provided within a given record will be disclosed, denied or partially withheld from the requestor. The FOIA Officer also approves extensions or non-disclosures and signs notices of such determinations; consults with the General Counsel on FOIA requests; and develops and maintains an electronic reading room of FOIA materials in consultation with the Office of General Counsel.

Challenges: The agency does not have personnel solely dedicated to administering the agency FOIA operation. Each individual who is designated to jointly administer FOIA operations within the IMLS works diligently to ensure that activities associated with monitoring the FOIA process and responding to FOIA request are handled appropriately.

Additionally, the agency has limited funds by which to acquire the software or personnel resources with regard to Information Technology.

B. **Areas Selected for Review:** In light of the requirements outlined in Executive Order 13,392 (December 14, 2005), the Institute has again reviewed its overall FOIA operation in an effort to identify which processes or systems should be targeted for additional improvement.

C. **Results of Review:** A complete assessment of IMLS FOIA operations has revealed that the IMLS does not have concerns with regard to providing timely responses to FOIA requestors. In addition, IMLS has been determined that all FOIA improvement goals which were established in its 2007 FOIA Improvement Plan have already been accomplished.

D. **Improvement Areas for Agency Plan:** N/A

E. **Improvement Areas:** N/A

F. **Improvement Area Time Periods:** N/A