FY 2024 Applicant Webinar - Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants

0:00
Yá'át'ééh, and welcome to the Applicant Webinar for the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant Program.

0:07
My name is Jennifer Himmelreich and I am the program officer for this grant program.

0:13
In this webinar, I'll be providing information about the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant Program for FY2024.

0:21
We will review eligibility, go over the application process, review the types of projects funded and the different application components.

0:30
We'll also offer you a few tips and suggestions.

0:33
Our goal is to help make the application process as easy as possible while helping to ensure that our application requirements are met.

0:43
The Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants are competitive grants for up to two years, and up to $150,000 cost share is not required.

0:54
The anticipated period of performance for projects begins September 1st, 2024 and must end by August 31st, 2026.

1:03
Federally recognized tribes are eligible to apply for funding and serve as the official applicant.

1:10
The Tribe must offer library services to the community.

1:13
Such services may include, but are not limited to, providing free access to books, print and electronic media, research databases, job employment and career services, help from librarians, spaces for studying, reading and meetings, and free events and activities such as programs, classes, and cultural events for people of all ages.

1:41

IMLS recognizes the potential for valuable contributions to the overall goals of the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant Program by entities that do not meet the eligibility requirements.

1:53
Although such entities may not serve as the lead applicant organization, they are encouraged to participate in projects as partners.

2:01
Such entities may, for example, assist the lead applicant with project activities.

2:06
It is important that the partner organization have an established relationship with the tribal administration before applying for the grant because the tribe is ultimately physic fiscally and legally responsible for the management of the grant.

2:21
The assumption in such a partnership is that the tribal community that applies for the grant is directly served and benefits from the grant activities that are carried out by the partner organization.

2:35
The Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants have three main goals, with objectives that correspond to each goal.

2:42
Applicants will identify which goal your project will focus on.

2:46
The first goal and objectives correspond to the Digital Services Project category on the Program Information Form, and they are to improve digital services to support needs for education, workforce development, economic and business development, health information, critical thinking skills, and digital literacy skills.

3:08
Objective 1.1 supports the establishment and refinement of digital infrastructure, platforms and technology.

3:16
Objective 1.2 supports preservation and access to information and resources through digitization.

3:26
The second goal and objectives correspond to the Educational Programming Project category on the Program Information Form and they are to improve educational programs related to specific topics and content, areas of interest to library patrons and community based users.

3:44
Objective 2.1 supports the identification of the needs and interests of learners.

3:50
Objective 2.2 supports the development and implementation of classes, events, teaching tools, resources and other educational services.

4:00
Objective 2.3 supports the valuative assessment of library based approaches to teaching and facilitation.

4:09
The third goal and objectives correspond to the Preservation and Revitalization project category, and they are to enhance the preservation and revitalization of Native American cultures and languages.

4:22
This can be done through Objective 3.1.

4:24
Support the development of efficient strategic partnerships within, across and outside Native communities.

4:31
Objective 3.2 Support the preservation of content of unique and specific value to Native communities and Objective 3.3 Support the sharing of content within and or beyond Native Communities.

4:51
You can find the Notice of Funding Opportunity, also referred to as NOFO, on our website.

4:58
Make sure to read the NOFO carefully and follow all the links.

5:04
Pages six and seven of the Notice of Funding Opportunity include a table that lists all of the application components, what kind of format they need to be submitted as, and which file name to use when you're submitting your application package.

5:18
Use this list as a checklist of all the documents you need to submit by April.

5:23
First, you'll want to make sure your application is complete so that it is not rejected simply because you missed or forgot one document.

5:32
Let's discuss and review the timeline and how our grant review process works.

5:38
First mark April 1st, 2024 at 11:59 PM Eastern as the deadline.

5:45
Make note of the time zone listed so you don't miss out once applications are received.

5:53
Grant proposals go through application checks to make sure all components are there in April before being sent out for peer review in May and June.

6:02
Reviewers will read and evaluate proposals to make sure you've responded to the NOFO and that your project your proposed project has potential for success.

6:13
In June and July we complete budget checks and present the reviewers comments and scores to the IMLS Director, who will then make funding decisions based on reviewers evaluation and overall goal goals of the program and the agency.

6:29
Announcements will be made in August for September 1st start date.

6:36
Please note that during the application review time in April and the budget reviews in June noted with purple stars on the timeline, these are the periods that our staff may reach out to grant contacts with questions about the application components or questions about the budget, form justification or indirect costs.

6:57
If you need to get a better idea of how to align your project with the three IMLS goal categories, you can search previous awardees using our awarded Grant search.

7:08
Starting on the IMLS homepage, click on Grants at the top of the page, then click on Search Awarded Grants.

7:16
From here you can select any year under the fiscal year I've chosen FY22 and the Native American Library Services Grant Program under Program and hit Submit.

7:28
This will pull up all FY22 enhancement awardees.

7:34
Under the description.

7:35
There's a PDF document that you can download which will include the proposal, narrative and schedule of completion for each funded project.

7:42
It's a great resource to access.

7:47
I will now review the questions that you should address in in your proposal.

7:53
As part of the IMLS Supplementary Information Form, you will include an abstract.

8:01
Here are some key questions to address.

8:03
First, identify the lead applicant and, if applicable, any collaborators.

8:10
Describe the need, problem, or challenge your project will address and how it was identified.

8:18
List the high level activities you will carry out and identify the associated time frame.

8:24
Identify who or what will benefit benefit from your project and specify your project's intended results.

8:35
Describe how you'll measure your performance in achieving your intended results.

8:41
If your proposed project is selected for funding, your abstract may be published online.

8:46
As such, be careful not to include any sensitive or confidential information.

8:55
Your application narrative should have three main sections, a project justification, a project work plan, and project results.

9:04
In your project justification, you'll tell the reviewers which program goal and associated objective of the Native American Library Services Enhancement Program.

9:15
Will your project address, like the abstract, what you'll go in depth on, what need, problem or challenge your project addresses and how it was identified?

9:27
You can describe how you've used demographic information, economic circumstances, condition assessments, and and other relevant data from reliable sources to define the need, problem or challenge and develop the scope of the project.

9:43
You'll also share who the target group for your project is and how they've been involved in the planning.

9:49
Target group refers to those who who will be most immediately and positively affected by your project.

9:57
Be specific by identifying particular age groups, community members with particular needs, and or other types of target audiences.

10:05
Identify the number of individuals in the target group or in each target group.

10:09
If you identify more than one, you'll want to share who the ultimate beneficiaries for this project are.

10:18
Beneficiaries refer to those who are likely to be aided in the long term by your project.

10:24
They may or not be the same person as your target group.

10:28
Identify the number of individuals who will benefit benefit from your project in the long term, if reliable and justifiable reasons are possible.

10:36
Otherwise, describe the characteristics of the beneficiaries you expect to be served eventually by your project.

10:45
Looking at the second part of the application, your Project Work Plan section will be the bulk of your narrative and should address the following questions.

10:54
What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?

10:57
What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them?

11:03
Who will plan, implement and manage your project?

11:08
What time, financial personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?

11:14
Please note that you must include $3,000 per year of your proposed budget for travel to attend an IMLS designated meeting.

11:24
What existing resources within the organization and assets within the community or or library and or potential partners will be utilized during this project to aid in its success.

11:36
Resources and assets can include both tangible and intangible potential.

11:44
Partners can also include other nonprofits, departments within colleges and universities, and or for profit organizations.

11:55
How and with whom will you share your works, general findings and lessons learned?

12:02
What data will you collect?

12:04
How often and from what sources in order to measure your performance in terms of effectiveness, quality, and timeliness?

12:12
And does your project include any digital content, resources, assets, software, or data sets?

12:22
For the third narrative component it needs to include what your project's intended results are and how will they be addressed.

12:31
The need, problem, or challenge you have identified.

12:36
How will the knowledge, skills, and or appreciation of the target group grow as a result of your project?

12:44
What products will result from your project?

12:49
How will you sustain the benefits of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?

12:54
For example, will there be ongoing institutional and or community support of project activities or products?

13:01
Do you have any demonstrated buy in from potential stakeholders?

13:05
What are your plans for sustaining any digitized collection software or supporting documentation, information systems, and or other technology tools?

13:18
The Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants program will use the following three performance measurement measurements as a basis for understanding the level of performance by the grant program as a whole and by each award supported through it for effectiveness.

13:34
Are the activities being supported by the program contributing to a improving digital services, B improving educational programs and or C enhancing the preservation and revitalization of Native American cultures and languages for quality?

13:51
Is the program meeting user requirements and expectations and for timeliness, is each activity being completed on time?

13:59
As proposed, each applicant must identify what data they will collect, how often, and from what source in order to produce these measurements.

14:08
Consider using the Sample Performance Measurement Plan referenced in the NOFO to get started.

14:16
I will now address key components of your application package.

14:20
Make sure to include the application components listed on pages six and seven of the NOFO and that are listed here on this slide.

14:30

Conditionally required documents are your federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement if you plan to use one, and the Digital Products plan if you are creating any kind of digital product, that means it is required.

14:43
If any funds are being used to create any kind of digital product, like website or digital histories, you'll need to include an IMLS budget form and budget justification following the standard budget categories listed on this slide.

14:57
Please note that the IMLS budget form is used for all IMLS grant programs and includes areas you may not fill out as part of this grant program.

15:08
The budget justification which accompanies the completed IMLS budget form should explain the purpose and cost breakdown for each expense listed in these categories.

15:19
Note again that under the Travel category, it should include $3000 per year for IMLS directed Travel.

15:27
Also, Please note that cost share is not required as part of this program.

15:34
You may submit a reasonable number of supporting documents that supplement your narrative and support the project description.

15:42
You'll want to include material that help IMLS staff and reviewers envision your project in greater detail, but they should not be used to introduce new topics nor to continue answers to the narrative questions.

15:55
Give each document a clear, descriptive title.

15:58
At the top of the first page, you can choose to include any of the supporting documents listed.

16:04
Make sure to submit a complete application with all required documents.

16:09
Don't forget, all key personnel listed must have resumes and include any conditionally required documents.

16:17

If you're using a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, remember that the agreement must extend through September 2024.

16:27
Please note that the indirect cost rate at the time of the award stands until the end of the grant award performance, So if a new rate is negotiated, we cannot amend to the new rate during your performance period.

16:43
Last tip, supporting documents might include needs, assessments, letters of support plans, or reports that you can add on to support your narrative.

16:56
Next, we'll provide some tips to help you with the application process.

17:02
First, register early.

17:04
The UEI, SAM.gov and Grants.gov registration are sequential.

17:10
The UEI has replaced DUNS and is generated when you register with SAM.gov. You must have an active SAM.gov registration to register with Grants.gov, and you will need to have a functional Grants.gov registration to submit an enhancement grant application to IMLS.

17:30
Remember that your SAM.gov registration expires each year and you must renew it.

17:35
You can log on to SAM.gov at any time to find out your status.

17:39
I would recommend doing that today.

17:43
Here are a few application tips based on experience.

17:47
First, plan for time to gather feedback and revise.

17:51
Ask two to three people who are not involved in the grant to read the proposal and provide feedback on ideas, structure and grammar and spelling.

18:01
Consider their feedback and revise accordingly.

18:04
Proofread the final version carefully and use spell check features.

18:09
Finally, coordinate with tribal administration to submit all application components through grants.gov before the deadline.

18:18
Please note that we will consider complete applications from eligible applicants that submit on or before the deadline, which is April 1st, 2024 at 11:59 PM Eastern Time.

18:31
Save all your documents as PDF files.

18:34
grants.gov cannot convert them for you.

18:38
Upload application files to grants.gov prior to the deadline.

18:43
I would encourage you to set a date prior to the deadline in case something unforeseen comes up requiring more time.

18:50
Use the Grants.gov workspace.

18:52
It's a great way to organize the work of the application process into one work environment and with any work partners who have a role to play in the application prep and submission process.

19:03
Be sure to double check the uploaded files against the table of application components in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.

19:10
Finally, by starting early, it allows you to resubmit before the deadline if you need to.

19:15
This might be helpful if you discover that you forgot something or would like to add additional information to the Library Services Plan.

19:25
For questions about eligibility, your Library Services plan and project activities, the Digital Product Products Plan, your budget, including allowability of costs, please reach out to myself, Jennifer Himmelreich.

19:39
For questions about application requirements and deadlines, please reach out to my colleague, Sheena Afoakwa.

19:45
Our contact information is on this slide.

19:47
Thank you for listening in and we look forward to receiving your application.

19:51
As always, best wishes from IMLS.