



FIELD REVIEWER HANDBOOK

Museums Empowered

OFFICE OF MUSEUM SERVICES
FISCAL YEAR 2021

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WELCOME!

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a peer reviewer for this year's Museums Empowered grant program. We hope you will find this a rewarding experience and will draw satisfaction from helping museums across the country create engaging learning environments, address the needs of their communities, and serve as trusted stewards of the collections they hold in trust for the public. We assure you that your contribution of time and expertise will be invaluable to IMLS and to the applicants who will receive your comments.

In this handbook, you will find the information you need to carry out field review, including information about the program, step-by-step instructions for using eGMS Reach, and four appendices with important reference material.

If you have any questions about this material or the processes described, please do not hesitate to contact your panel chair at any time.

Once again, thank you for the service you are about to render to museums and communities throughout the nation.

IMLS Office of Museum Services Staff

FIELD REVIEWER INSTRUCTIONS

MUSEUMS EMPOWERED GRANT PROGRAM

Overview

The goal of the Museums for America (MFA) program is to support projects that strengthen the ability of an individual museum to serve its public. **Museums Empowered: Professional Development Opportunities for Museum Staff** is a special MFA initiative with the goal of strengthening the ability of an individual museum to serve its public through professional development activities that cross-cut various departments to generate systemic change within the museum.

Distinguishing features of successful Museums Empowered projects are:

- *Institutional Impact:* The project strengthens the ability of an individual museum to serve its public through professional development activities that cross-cut various departments to generate systemic change within the museum.
- *In-depth Knowledge:* The project design reflects a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter.
- *Project-based Design:* The work plan consists of a set of logical, interrelated activities tied directly to addressing the key need or challenge identified in the application.
- *Demonstrable Results:* The project generates measurable results that tie directly to the need or challenge it was designed to address.

Museums Empowered Project Categories

This MFA special initiative has four project categories for professional development:

- **Digital Technology:** for museum staff to fully explore, understand, adopt and optimize the use of digital technology in museums
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** for museum staff to develop cultural competency and support museum relevancy in their communities
- **Evaluation:** to expand museum staff's capacity in conducting formative and summative evaluation of programs, practices and products that can help the museum yield indicators and measurable outcomes
- **Organizational Management:** for museum staff to learn best practices in organizational management, strategic thinking, innovation and managing change

Potential projects will address one of these four project categories and help strengthen the ability of an individual museum to better serve its public. Projects will utilize comprehensive strategies and frameworks to support professional development. Projects should cross-cut various departments and result in systemic change within the museum.

Digital Technology

IMLS supports the work of museums in adopting and adapting the use of existing and emerging digital technology to transform audience engagement, collections care and management, communication, and general operations. IMLS welcomes applications to develop training and professional development learning opportunities for museum staff to fully explore, understand, and optimize the use of digital technology in museums.

Projects may be introductory, intermediate, or advanced in nature depending on the size and needs of the applicant institution. Projects should reference current research, incorporate best practices, and use models with proven outcomes.

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Training programs for museum staff to become more effective and efficient users of digital technology
- Developing fellowships, internships, and mentoring programs to attract and retain a tech savvy workforce and cross-train museum staff
- Developing strategies and enhancing staff capacity to use digital technology, such as social media, for audience engagement and community outreach
- Building staff capacity to enable optimal use and development of open source educational products, services, and programs
- Exploring and adopting new ways to expand digital access to collections by training staff in emerging technologies
- Developing institutional digital strategies to leverage big data and provide the training and support for staff to sustain and maintain open data resources

Diversity and Inclusion

IMLS supports the work of museums in engaging with communities and providing inclusive services to people of diverse geographic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds and to individuals with disabilities. IMLS welcomes applications for staff professional development and museum capacity building projects that increase cultural competency within a museum and support relevancy through projects that connect, engage, and strengthen the museum's ties with diverse communities.

Projects may be introductory, intermediate, or advanced in nature depending on the size and needs of the applicant institution. Projects should reference current research, incorporate best practices, and use models with proven outcomes.

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Developing and implementing recruitment and retention programs designed to attract and retain a diverse and inclusive workforce
- Building the capacity of museum staff to develop, support, and sustain inclusive fellowship, internship, and mentoring programs to attract diverse emerging professionals
- Training for museum staff in effective engagement strategies to raise early awareness of and interest in museum careers with middle and high school students from diverse backgrounds
- Enhancing the skills and ability of museum staff to develop and deliver inclusive programs and outreach activities to engage with diverse audiences
- Participating in immersive cultural competency opportunities and exchanges by actively working with local, state, national or global organizations that are advancing multi-cultural efforts

- Developing and strengthening competencies among staff to revise and implement institutional plans such as a strategic plan, interpretive plan, and/or collections plan to incorporate diversity and inclusion objectives

Evaluation

IMLS supports the use of formative and summative evaluation or developmental evaluation of museum programs, practices, and products to help museums best serve their intended audiences and demonstrate their impact to stakeholders. IMLS welcomes applications that use training and professional development to improve and enhance the ability of museum staff to augment their knowledge of the broad spectrum of evaluation methods and techniques as well as better use evaluation reports, data, and metrics in order to make improvements in their program or product design and delivery.

Projects may use new tools, software, training, or consultants to develop a strong and integrated museum evaluation program. Evaluation activities should incorporate both quantitative and qualitative data, indicators, and measurable outcomes. Projects should reference current research, incorporate best practices, and use models with proven outcomes.

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Implementing training programs for museum staff on evaluation tools, strategies, and formative and summative evaluation techniques customized to address a specific institutional or audience need
- Developing and strengthening competencies among staff to establish baseline data for a museum evaluation program through audience research, needs assessment, gap analysis, and/or benchmarking
- Building staff capacity to create a robust museum evaluation program by developing logic models and frameworks to differentiate between output-focused and outcomes-based data
- Building staff capacity to access and use open source software, open data, and online tools in evaluation
- Building staff capacity to develop an institution-wide evaluation framework that integrates impact, assessment and learning strategies

Organizational Management

IMLS supports museums' efforts to develop resilient organizations with the goal of long-term sustainability and relevancy. IMLS welcomes applications to develop training and professional development opportunities for museum staff to learn best practices in organizational management, strategic thinking, embracing innovation, and managing change in order to foster continued growth, relevancy, and vitality.

Projects may use replicable models within the museum field as well as look beyond the museum field for transferrable techniques and strategies to build the capacity of the museum and support its long-term sustainability. Projects should reference current research, incorporate best practices, and use models with proven outcomes.

Projects may include, but are not limited to, the following activities:

- Creating a more resilient workforce through training programs for museum staff on topics such as project management, strategic thinking, and managing change, including succession planning
- Creating a more innovative workforce through training programs for museum staff on

- topics such as design-thinking, human-centered design, and rapid prototyping
- Supporting executive coaching opportunities in a museum context
 - Fostering a business mindset among museum staff to assess, evaluate, and adopt current business practices in order to identify areas for improvement or to respond to new opportunities
 - Building skills in data analysis using both institutionally generated and publicly available data to inform decision-making for program development and business planning

Funding Amounts

Museums Empowered requests for IMLS funds may range from \$5,000 to \$250,000, including both direct and indirect costs, and must be matched with at least a 1:1 cost share from non-federal sources.

Confidentiality

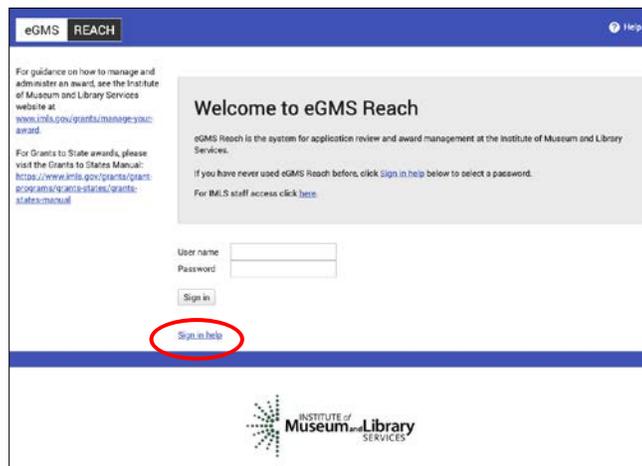
The information contained in grant applications is strictly confidential. Do not discuss or reveal names, institutions' project activities, or any other information contained in the applications.

Using eGMS Reach: Step-by-Step Instructions

1. Sign in to eGMS Reach and create a password.

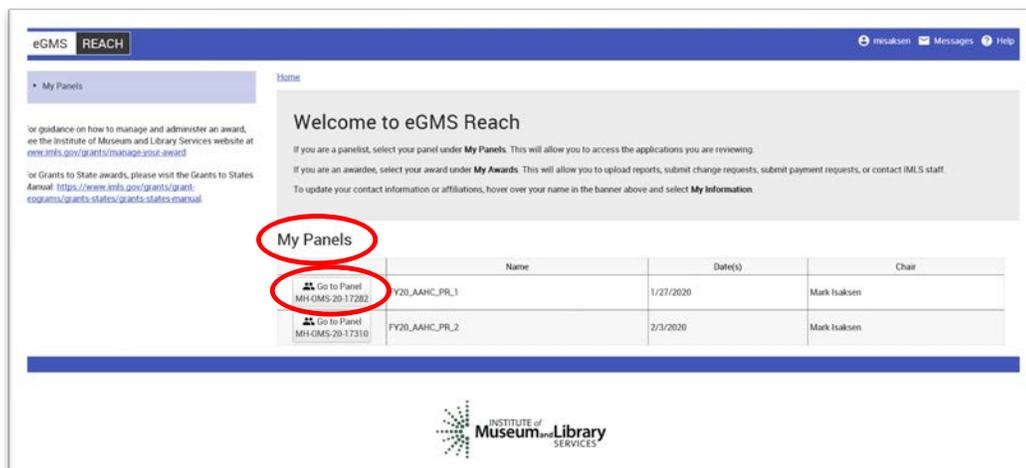
An account has been established for you in eGMS Reach. In a separate email with the subject line “eGMS Reach Account Information,” you will receive your access credentials, including a username. If you do not receive such an email, please check your junk folder. If you still do not see the email, contact imls-museumreviewers@imls.gov.

Once you have the email, please visit <https://grants.imls.gov/Reach> and follow the instructions to create a password. If you are entering the system for the first time, click the **Sign in help** button to create a password. If you are a previous IMLS grantee or reviewer, you may already have an eGMS Reach account and username. If you need to reset your password, you will have the option to do so on the sign in page by clicking the **Sign in help** button.



2. Verify access and confirm you have no conflicts of interest.

Once you have signed in successfully, go to **My Panels** and click on the **Go to Panel** button to see Panel Files and Applications assigned to you and to confirm you have no conflicts of interest.



Panel Files include:

- Field Reviewer Instructions: Museums Empowered Grant Program (this document)
- FY2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity (guidelines for applicants)

IMPORTANT: Before proceeding to the Applications Tab, you must affirm that you have reviewed and approved the conflict of interest statement located under your Personal Files and as Appendix C in this document. Click on the paper icon to review Complying with Ethical Obligations and Avoiding Conflicts of Interest. Then click on the pen icon to affirm that you have reviewed this file and approved its contents.

Personal Files							
These files are only visible to you.							
<input type="button" value="Upload Files"/>							
Actions	Name	File Type	Date	Status	Your Comments	Staff Comments	
 	Ethical_Obligations_and_Conflicts_of_Interest_20200116.pdf	Panelist Ethics and Conflict of Interest Agreement					

To electronically sign the file, check the box and click **Save Changes**.

Electronically Sign File

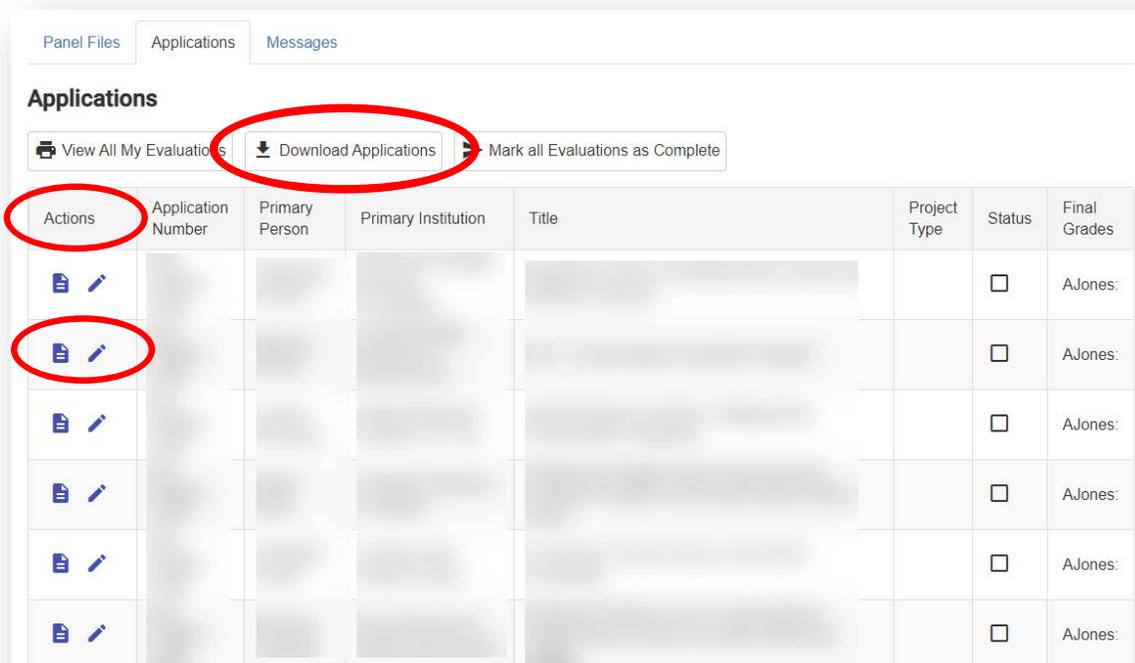
 Ethical_Obligations_and_Conflicts_of_Interest_20200116.pdf

Enter comments here and check the box below to sign the document.

By checking this box, I affirm that I have reviewed the file and approve its contents.

Once you begin reading your assigned applications, you may identify a potential conflict of interest that was not obvious earlier. **Contact your panel chair immediately, and we will help resolve it.**

To see the applications that you will be reviewing, click on the Applications Tab. The paper icons in the **Actions** column allow you to view applications, and the pen icon allows you to enter your comments and scores for each application. You may also download the applications if you wish by clicking **Download Applications**.



3. *Read the applications.*

We recommend that you begin by reviewing the [Museums Empowered FY2021 Notice of Funding Opportunity](#) to which applicants have responded in creating their applications. This document is also available in your Panel Files. Then read the applications, keeping in mind the review criteria for each section of the Narrative. The review criteria are provided in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, on the evaluation forms, and in Appendix D of this document. You will not need to reference each bullet point in your comments, but these questions should guide your thinking about the strengths and weaknesses of each application.

4. *Draft your comments.*

For each application you review, we ask you to write a constructive and substantive comment for each section of the Narrative: **Project Justification**, **Project Work Plan**, and **Project Results**. All three sections of the Narrative have equal weight and are equally important in identifying the overall strengths and weaknesses of an application.

You may wish to prepare your comments in a separate document for later copying and pasting into the eGMS Reach evaluation form.

When drafting your comments ...

- Use your professional knowledge and experience to assess the information objectively.
- Judge the application on its own merits, and do not base your evaluation on any prior knowledge of an institution.

- Make sure your comments justify the scores you provide. A highly complementary comment does not remove the sting of a low score, and a negative comment does not even out a high one. Comments and scores must complement each other and make sense as a whole.

Effective comments...	Poor comments...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ are presented in a constructive manner. ▪ are both substantive and easy to read and understand. ▪ reflect the resources of the institution. ▪ are specific to the individual application. ▪ reflect the numeric score assigned. ▪ highlight the application’s strengths and identify areas for improvement. ▪ are directed to applicants—not IMLS or panel reviewers—for their use. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ simply summarize or paraphrase the applicant’s own words. ▪ make derogatory remarks. ▪ penalize an applicant because you feel the institution does not need the money. ▪ offer or ask for irrelevant or extraneous information. ▪ make vague or overly general statements. ▪ question an applicant’s honesty or integrity.

Below are some examples of **effective** field reviewer comments:

Project Justification	
<p>“You clearly identify a critical need among the staff of your museum. The professional development activities are part of a comprehensive strategy designed to generate systemic change within the institution. Your intended results are achievable within the project time period and incorporate current research and best practices. The proposed project is an excellent fit for the Museums Empowered grant program.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is substantive, addresses the review criteria, and employs a positive tone.</i></p>
<p>“You make a strong case for the need to develop new curriculum for K-12 audiences visiting the museum and have identified partnerships with the local school district. However, I could not find any supporting material about how this project would build the internal capacity of the museum through professional development of museum staff – and therefore this project does not meet the goals of the Museums Empowered grant program.</p> <p>This project more closely matches the goals of the Museums for America – Lifelong Learning grant program and you may want to consider submitting an application to the MFA program in a future year.”</p>	<p><i>Comment makes suggestions for making a more competitive application.</i></p>

Project Work Plan	
<p>“Your work plan is clear and outlines specific activities necessary for achieving your goals. The training programs for museum staff on evaluation tools, strategies and techniques are customized to address a specific audience need. You might consider adding a few iterations of each training program to explore its potential for adaptation to a variety of audiences.”</p>	<p><i>Comment provides a constructive assessment of the work plan and suggestions to improve project implementation</i></p>

<p>“While the project activities are intended to advance the DEAI goals of your museum, there is not much evidence in the work plan that key parts of the museum staff (volunteers and board members) will be involved in the activities. You should explain why.</p> <p>“Consider ways to involve staff at all levels of the museum, with the intention of creating systemic change at your institution. Some examples of how to conduct a cross-cutting cultural competency learning program can be found at the XYZ Museum and the ABC Science Center. A survey or needs assessment of your staff may help determine how best to adapt this methodology for your specific situation.”</p>	<p><i>Comment makes specific suggestions for improving the project.</i></p>
Project Results	
<p>“You program evaluation will yield specific and measurable results about the impact of the professional development and training program on museum staff. The focus on change management and succession planning supports the core issues identified in your needs assessment. The revised strategic plan, built upon a solid core of staff training and development, will result in a more resilient museum that can respond to the changing needs of your community. I would have liked to have seen more plans for sustaining your work beyond the grant period.”</p>	<p><i>Comment addresses questions from the review criteria.</i></p>

In contrast, below are some examples of **poor** field reviewer comments:

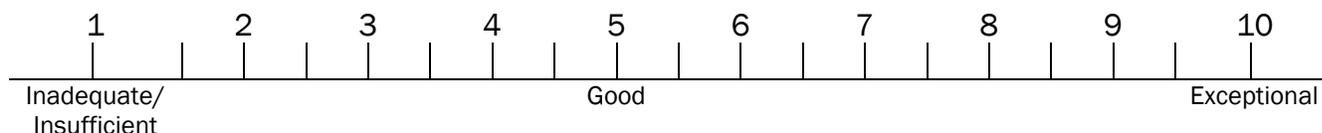
Project Justification	
<p>“The project is justified because this museum is an important and vital part of their community, has a valuable art collection and deserves to be funded.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is not relevant to Museums Empowered program goals.</i></p>
<p>“The museum will hire a consultant to develop a series of workshops and professional development activities for the museum staff and volunteers. The museum staff will be surveyed before and after the training to determine the effectiveness of the training. The project will be two years in length.”</p>	<p><i>Comment paraphrases the applicant’s own words.</i></p>
Project Work Plan	
<p>“The work plan would be improved by putting in more staff training hours.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is very brief and has little value to the applicant.</i></p>
<p>“The project design is flawed and just proves that museum leadership is out of touch with the real needs of the museum staff and volunteers. The project director is woefully unprepared and has been set up to fail. Targeting federal funds to this museum is a mistake.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is derogatory and does not provide useful feedback.</i></p>
Project Results	
<p>“Strong results with very sustainable benefits.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is very brief and has little worth or value to the applicant.</i></p>

The chart below summarizes the most frequently asked questions from ME field reviewers:

Should I consider ...?	Yes	No
Whether a project meets the high level goals of the institution's strategic plan	X	
An institution's financial or staffing needs		X
Whether the project is well planned and the organization has the appropriate resources to complete the project	X	
Whether the applicant has included the information necessary for an adequate evaluation of its merits	X	
Whether a project is new or a resubmission		X
The size or age of the organization		X
An institution's indirect cost rate		X

5. *Assign your scores.*

Assign a single preliminary score to the entire application. Use a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being Inadequate/Insufficient and 10 being Exceptional.



6. *Review your work.*

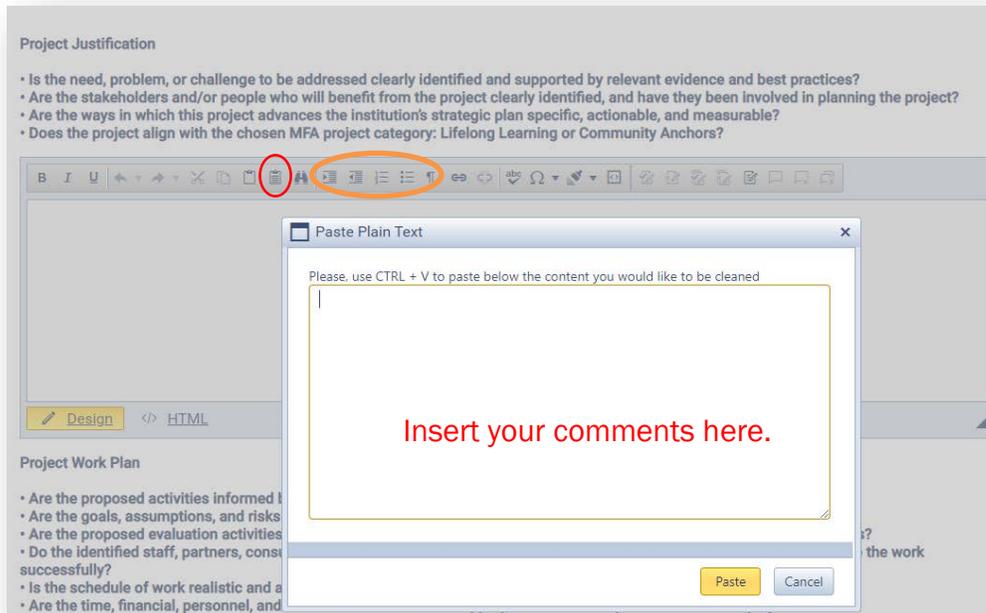
Review your draft comments and preliminary scores. Adjust your scores, if necessary, to reflect your written evaluation more accurately. Scores should support comments, and comments should justify scores.

7. *Enter your scores and comments.*

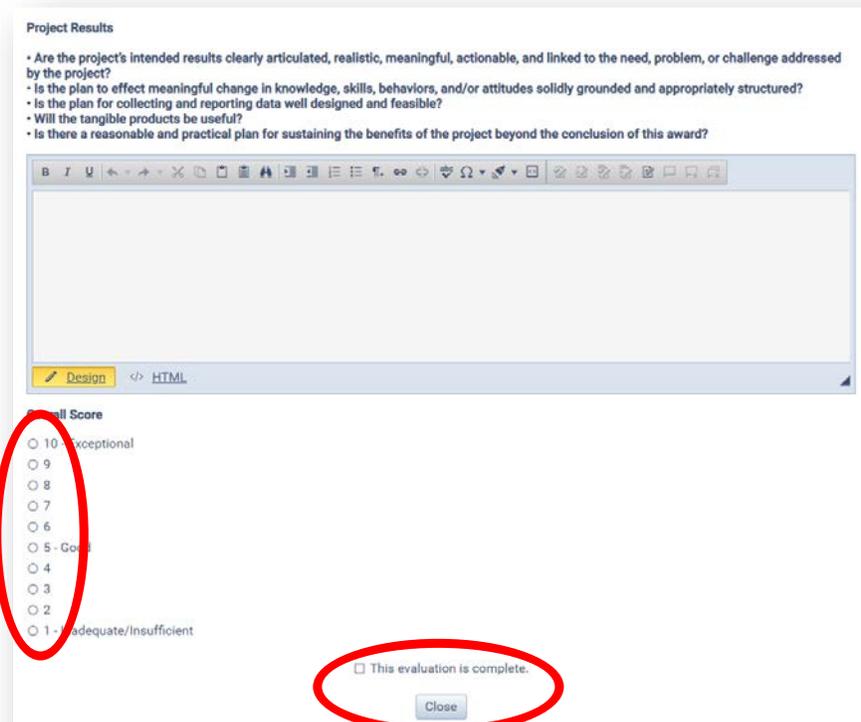
When you are ready to enter your scores and comments, visit <https://grants.imls.gov/Reach/> and sign in with the username IMLS assigned you and the password you created. Click on the **Go to Panel** button, and then click on the Applications Tab. Choose an application and click on the pen icon to open the evaluation form.

You may enter your comments directly into the form or copy and paste them from a document you may have created.

If you copy and paste your comments from another document, make sure to use plain text to avoid including any imbedded code. Click on the Paste Plain Text icon (circled in red below) to create a Paste Plain Text box. Use CTRL + V to paste your comments, and then click Paste. Do not use the formatting features circled in orange – bold, italics, underline, bullets, numbers.



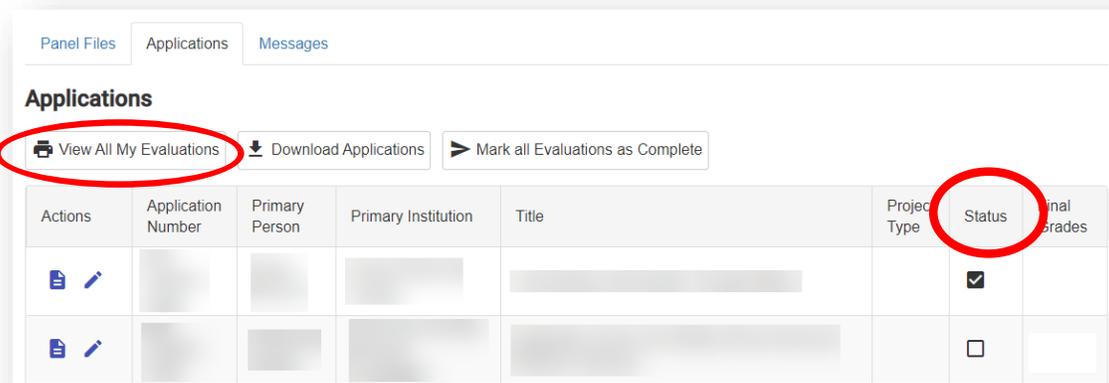
Choose a single score for the application. The evaluation form is built to autosave every five minutes. However, it is wise to click the **SAVE** button at the bottom of the form frequently.



When you have completed your comments and selected your score, check the box next to “this evaluation is complete” and close the evaluation form.

You may return to the evaluation form as frequently as you wish. You can keep track of your progress by checking the “Status” column on the Applications Tab.

You may view your work at any time by clicking the **View All My Evaluations** button.



REMINDER: Your reviews must be completed and entered into eGMS Reach by **Friday, March 5, 2021, 11:59 pm Eastern Time.**

8. *Manage your copies.*

Keep your applications and copies of your review sheets until **August 31, 2021**, in case there are questions from IMLS staff. Continue to maintain confidentiality of all applications that you review by keeping electronic and paper copies in a secure place. After August 31, 2021, destroy the applications and all review sheets, notes, and note templates.

APPENDIX A: APPLICATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The mission of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is to advance, support, and empower America's museums, libraries, and related organizations through grantmaking, research, and policy development. The success of IMLS grant programs depends upon the quality of its peer review process, through which hundreds of reviewers consider thousands of eligible applications fairly, candidly, and impartially in order to make recommendations for funding each year. Below is a summary of the process from application submission through award announcements.

1. Organizations submit their applications electronically using [Grants.gov](https://www.grants.gov), the central portal of the United States government for receipt of electronic applications.
2. IMLS receives the applications, and staff members check them for organizational eligibility and application completeness.
3. IMLS staff members identify a pool of available peer reviewers with appropriate expertise. Peer review takes place in one or two tiers, depending on the grant program: field review, panel review, or both. Each complete application submitted by an eligible organization typically receives between three and six reviews.
4. For the applications ranked most highly by peer reviewers, IMLS staff members carefully assess the budgets and past organizational performance.
5. IMLS staff members provide a list of applications recommended for funding to the IMLS Director.
6. The IMLS Director makes all final funding decisions.
7. IMLS notifies all applicants whether or not they have received an award. With their notification, all applicants receive anonymous copies of the field and/or panel reviews. IMLS also sends notification of the awards to each participating reviewer.

APPENDIX B: PROTECTING SENSITIVE DATA AT IMLS

IMLS is committed to protecting your private, sensitive information and employs the following physical and technical safeguards when collecting museum program reviewer and panelist information:

1. **Email Security.** IMLS email is hosted on a cloud computing infrastructure which has been reviewed and approved as meeting the security requirements of the Federal Risk and Authorization Management Program (FedRAMP). FedRAMP is a government-wide standardized program for security assessment, authorization, and monitoring of cloud products and services. FedRAMP requirements are based on (and surpass) the Security and Privacy Controls for Federal Information Systems and Organizations developed by the National Institute of Standards and Technology. FedRAMP's additional security controls address the unique elements of cloud computing to ensure all federal data is secure in cloud environments.
2. **Secure File Transmission.** IMLS Secure File Upload uses Hypertext Transfer Protocol Secure (HTTPS), a transmission protocol that verifies the identity of a website or web service for a connecting client, and encrypts nearly all information sent between the website or service and the user. HTTPS is designed to prevent this information from being read or changed while in transit. HTTPS is a combination of HTTP and Transport Layer Security (TLS). TLS is a network protocol that establishes an encrypted connection to an authenticated peer over an untrusted network.
3. **Secure File Storage.** IMLS will only store secure files and any related passwords as long as necessary to complete the relevant transaction or process. A physical copy of personally identifiable information (PII) may be printed at IMLS for business use, after which the copy is secured in a locked location and destroyed after the business use ceases.
4. **Access Controls.** IMLS employs access controls to restrict access to sensitive information that is stored electronically. Access to IMLS files is restricted to authorized IMLS staff, and sensitive data is stored in folders that can only be accessed by a restricted set of authorized users. Files containing sensitive information are password-protected, providing an additional layer of security.
5. **Records Policies.** IMLS financial transaction records are subject to the agency's record retention policy and disposed of in accordance with the General Services Administration's General Records Schedule.

APPENDIX C: COMPLYING WITH ETHICAL OBLIGATIONS AND AVOIDING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

As a reviewer for IMLS, you perform a vital role in ensuring the integrity of the IMLS's peer review process and must carry out your duties in accordance with government ethics rules. Before you evaluate applications, we ask that you review the following *General Principles of Ethical Conduct* and *Summary of the Conflict of Interest Laws*. You will be asked to certify compliance with the IMLS Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement and Certification. IMLS allocates up to one hour of your reviewer time for you to consider these materials.

If, at any time in the course of performing your duties at IMLS, you believe you may have a conflict of interest, please contact the IMLS program officer coordinating your review process. Other questions about the ethics rules and responsibilities may be directed to IMLS's Designated Agency Ethics Official at ethics@imls.gov; (202) 653-4787; 955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW, Suite 4000, Washington, DC 20024-2135.

General Principles of Ethical Conduct

1. Public service is a public trust, requiring you to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.
2. You shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
3. You shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.
4. You shall not, except pursuant to such reasonable exceptions as are provided by regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by IMLS, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of the your duties.
5. You shall put forth honest effort in the performance of your duties.
6. You shall make no unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.
7. You shall not use public office for private gain.
8. You shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
9. You shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.
10. You shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.
11. You shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.
12. You shall satisfy in good faith your obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those – such as Federal, State, or local taxes – that are imposed by law.
13. You shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.
14. You shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that you are violating the law or the ethical standards.

Summary of Conflict of Interest Laws

18 U.S.C. § 201 – Prohibits you from acceptance of bribes or gratuities to influence Government actions.

18 U.S.C. § 203 – Prohibits you from accepting compensation for representational activities involving certain matters in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest.

18 U.S.C. § 205 – Prohibits you from certain involvement in claims against the United States or representing another before the Government in matters in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest.

18 U.S.C. § 207 – Imposes certain restrictions on you related to your activities after Government service.

18 U.S.C. § 208 – Prohibits you from participating in certain Government matters affecting your own financial interests or the interests of your spouse, minor child, general partner, or organization in which you are serving as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee.

18 U.S.C. § 209 – Prohibits you from being paid by someone other than the United States for doing their official Government duties.

Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement

As a reviewer or panelist for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), you may receive a grant application for review that could present a conflict of interest. Such a conflict could arise if you are involved with the applicant institution, or in the project described in the application, as a paid consultant or through other financial involvement. The same restrictions apply if your spouse or minor child is involved with the applicant institution or if the application is presented on behalf of an institution with which you, your spouse or minor child is negotiating for future employment.

A present financial interest is not the only basis for conflict of interest. Through prior association as an employee or officer, you may have gained knowledge of the applicant that would preclude objective review of its application. Past employment (generally more than five years) does not by itself disqualify a reviewer so long as the circumstances of your association permit you to perform an objective review of the application. If you believe you may have a conflict of interest with any application assigned to you for review, please notify us immediately.

You may still serve as a reviewer even if your institution is an applicant in this grant cycle or you were involved in an application submitted in this grant cycle, as long as you do not review any application submitted by your own institution or any application in which you were involved.

However, if you believe that these or any other existing circumstances may compromise your objectivity as a reviewer, please notify us immediately.

If an application presents no conflict of interest at the time you review it, a conflict of interest may still develop later on. Once you have reviewed an application, you should never represent the applicant in dealings with IMLS or another Federal agency concerning the application, or any grant that may result from it.

It is not appropriate, for your purposes or for the purposes of the institutions or organizations you represent, for you to make specific use of confidential information derived from individual applications that you read while you were serving as an IMLS reviewer. In addition, pending applications are confidential. Accordingly, you must obtain approval from IMLS before sharing any



proposal information with anyone, whether for the purpose of obtaining expert advice on technical aspects of an application or for any reason.

If you have any questions regarding conflict of interest, either in relation to a specific application or in general, please contact the IMLS program officer who is coordinating the review process.

Certification

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the ethics training materials and the Conflict of Interest Statement above. To the best of my knowledge, I have no conflict of interest that would preclude my service to the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Name (Printed)

Signature

Date

Note: Once you have reviewed this document, return to eGMS Reach to affirm that you have approved its contents.

APPENDIX D: FIELD REVIEW CRITERIA FOR MUSEUMS EMPOWERED

Project Justification

- Is the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence?
- Have appropriate studies, plans, or best practices been considered in developing the project?
- Are the stakeholders and/or people who will benefit from the project clearly identified, and have they been involved in planning the project?
- Are the ways in which this project advances the institution's strategic plan specific, actionable, and measurable?
- Will the project activities cross-cut various departments to generate systemic change within the museum?
- Will the project align with one of the four Museums Empowered project categories: Digital Technology, Diversity and Inclusion, Evaluation, or Organizational Management?

Project Work Plan

- Are the proposed activities informed by appropriate theory and practice?
- Are the goals, assumptions, and risks clearly stated?
- Are the proposed evaluation activities appropriate for the project? Will they result in valid, reliable, and generalizable findings?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully?
- Is the proposed project team structured in a way that is equitable and mutually beneficial to those involved?
- Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable?
- Are the time, financial, personnel, and other resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Is a clear methodology described for tracking the project's progress and adjusting course when necessary?
- Is there an effective plan for communicating results and/or sharing discoveries?

Project Results

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated, realistic, meaningful, actionable, and linked to the need, problem, or challenge addressed by the project?
- Is the plan to effect meaningful change in knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes solidly grounded and appropriately structured?
- Is the plan for collecting and reporting data well designed and feasible?
- Will the tangible products be useful?
- Is there a reasonable and practical plan for sustaining the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of this award?