



FIELD REVIEWER HANDBOOK

Inspire! Grants for Small Museums

OFFICE OF MUSEUM SERVICES
FISCAL YEAR 2022

FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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WELCOME!

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a peer reviewer for this year's Inspire! Grants for Small Museums grant program. We hope you find this to be a rewarding experience and will draw satisfaction from helping small 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

INSPIRE! GRANTS FOR SMALL MUSEUMS PROGRAM

Overview

Inspire! Grants for Small Museums (Inspire) is a special initiative of the Museums for America Program. It is designed to support small museums of all disciplines in project-based efforts to serve the public through exhibitions, educational/interpretive programs, digital learning resources, professional development, community debate and dialogue, audience-focused studies, and/or collections management, curation, care, and conservation.

Projects are expected to:

- Focus on a key goal identified in the institution's strategic plan,
- Reflect a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter, and
- Generate measurable results that tie directly to the need or challenge addressed.

IMLS does not define what a "small" museum is. Rather, IMLS invited applicants to consider whether their organization is a good fit for this special initiative for small museums. Applicants were asked to think about a range of attributes that describe their organization, including, but not limited to:

- number of staff members and volunteers;
- estimate of total person-hours worked per week;
- operating budget and sources of revenue;
- number and types of objects in the collection;
- size of facility and property;
- types and numbers of audiences served; and
- size relative to other organizations of the same discipline, or within the same geographic region.

Inspire! Grants for Small Museums Project Categories

Reflecting IMLS's agency-level goals, Inspire! Grants for Small Museums has three program goals with three objectives associated with each goal. Each applicant should align their proposed project with one of these three goals and one or more of the associated objectives. Goal and objective choices should be identified clearly in the Narrative (see Section D2c). The choice of program goal also informs the choice of project category (i.e., Lifelong Learning, Institutional Capacity, and Collections Stewardship and Access), which is requested in the IMLS Museum Program Information Form.

Lifelong Learning

- Goal 1, Lifelong Learning: Empower people of all ages and backgrounds through experiential and cross-disciplinary learning and discovery.
 - Objective 1.1: Support public programs, adult programs, family programs, and early childhood programs.
 - Objective 1.2: Support exhibitions, interpretation, and digital media.
 - Objective 1.3: Support in-school and out-of-school programs.

Institutional Capacity

- Goal 2, Institutional Capacity: Build the capacity of small museums to serve their communities.
 - Objective 2.1: Support institutional planning and policy development.
 - Objective 2.2: Support recruitment, training, and development of museum staff.
 - Objective 2.3: Support technology enhancements.

Collections Stewardship and Access

- Goal 3, Collections Stewardship and Access: Advance the management and care of collections and their associated documentation.
 - Objective 3.1: Support cataloging, inventorying, and registration; collections information management; and collections planning.
 - Objective 3.2: Support conservation and environmental improvement and/or rehousing; conservation surveys; and conservation treatment.
 - Objective 3.3: Support database management, digital asset management, and digitization.

Funding Amounts

Inspire! Grants for Small Museums requests for IMLS funds may range from \$5,000 to \$50,000, including both direct and indirect costs; cost sharing is permitted, but not required.

Confidentiality

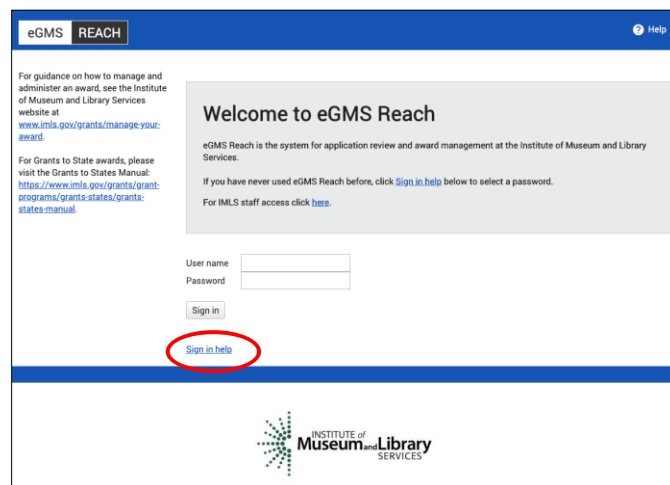
The information contained in grant applications is strictly confidential. Do not discuss or reveal names, institutions' project activities, or any other information contained in the applications.

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 "IMLS 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 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.



eGMS REACH

For guidance on how to manage and administer an award, see the Institute of Museum and Library Services website at www.imls.gov/grants/manage-your-award.

For Grants to State awards, please visit the Grants to States Manual: <https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs/grants-states/grants-states-manual>.

Welcome to eGMS Reach

eGMS Reach is the system for application review and award management at the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

If you have never used eGMS Reach before, click [Sign in help](#) below to select a password.

For IMLS staff access click [here](#).

User name

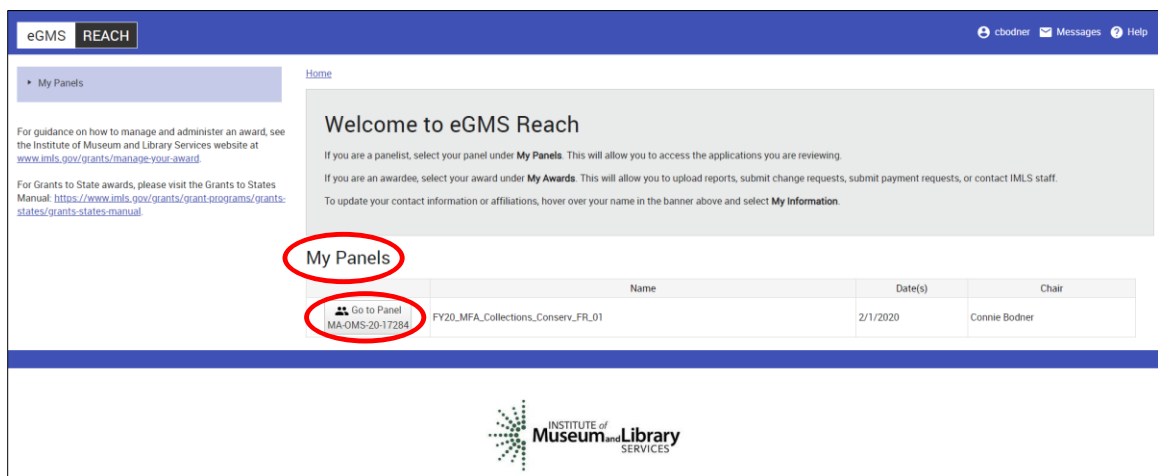
Password

[Sign in help](#)

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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.



eGMS REACH

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My Panels

For guidance on how to manage and administer an award, see the Institute of Museum and Library Services website at www.imls.gov/grants/manage-your-award.

For Grants to State awards, please visit the Grants to States Manual: <https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs/grants-states/grants-states-manual>.

Welcome to eGMS Reach

If you are a panelist, select your panel under **My Panels**. This will allow you to access the applications you are reviewing.

If you are an awardee, select your award under **My Awards**. This will allow you to upload reports, submit change requests, submit payment requests, or contact IMLS staff.

To update your contact information or affiliations, hover over your name in the banner above and select **My Information**.

	Name	Date(s)	Chair
Go to Panel	FY20_MFA_Collections_Conserv_FR_01	2/1/2020	Connie Bodner

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Panel Files include:

- Field Reviewer Handbook: Inspire! Grants for Small Museums Grant Program (this document)
- FY2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity (guidelines for applicants)
- Field Reviewer Guidance (pre-recorded webinar)

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.						
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.

[Cancel](#)
[Save Changes](#)













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 the application, 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**.

Panel Files Applications Messages

Applications

View All My Evaluations Download Applications Mark all Evaluations as Complete

Actions	Application Number	Primary Person	Primary Institution	Title	Project Type	Status	Final Grades
 						<input type="checkbox"/>	AJones:
 						<input type="checkbox"/>	AJones:
 						<input type="checkbox"/>	AJones:
 						<input type="checkbox"/>	AJones:
 						<input type="checkbox"/>	AJones:
 						<input type="checkbox"/>	AJones:

3. Read the applications.

We recommend that you begin by reviewing the [Inspire! Grants for Small Museums FY2022 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.

About Organization Size

Applicants were asked to consider whether their organization is a good fit for this special initiative for small museums and discuss a range of attributes that describe their organization. These could include but were not limited to: number of staff members and volunteers; operating budget and sources of revenue; number and types of objects in the collection; size of facility and property; types and numbers of audiences served; and size relative to other organizations of the same discipline, or within the same geographic region. Please look for this discussion in the Organizational Profile, the Museum Program Information Form, and Narrative sections of each application and compare it to the Program Description in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (pages 2-3). Please indicate whether the organization made the case that it is a small museum by selecting one of the following sentences in the evaluation form in eGMS Reach:

Option 1: Yes, this applicant makes a convincing case that the organization qualifies as a small museum.

Option 2: No, this applicant does not make a convincing case that the organization qualifies as a small museum.

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 complimentary 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 the project beneficiaries and have done a good job of working with the community to identify strategic goals for the future. The project identifies strong ties to the strategic plans/goals of both the museum and the neighborhood/district. The proposal does a good job of discussing how a diverse team of community members and museum staff has worked together to create a strong project. Your intended results are well reasoned, well formulated, and achievable. The proposed project is an excellent fit for an Inspire Institutional Capacity grant."</p>	<p><i>Comment is substantive, addresses the review criteria, and employs a positive tone.</i></p>

<p>“Your museum is making good strides in professionalizing and developing your Strategic Plan. The project outlined fits the collections stewardship criteria and is necessary for you to move forward. I started to read the application with great support but slowly came to wonder if there was a clear sense of direction and execution. For example, I am not clear about the role of the costume curator since she was not mentioned in the Narrative and her resume was missing from the application.”</p>	<p><i>Comment correlates with the score of 3 and makes implementable suggestions for improving the project.</i></p>
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Project Work Plan	
<p>“Your work plan is clear and outlines many of the details lacking in the project justification. Your consultants are well qualified to guide museum staff in writing the general conservation survey and designing your long-term preservation plan.</p> <p>“You might consider replacing the term ‘housekeeping’ with ‘collections maintenance.’ There are tremendous new resources available through the American Institute for Conservation’s new Collections Care Network, designed to be used by collection management teams and other non-conservators.”</p>	<p><i>Comment provides a constructive assessment of the application and suggestions likely to benefit the applicant.</i></p>
<p>“Your proposal shows that your staff has done a good job of working with the community on past projects and has an excellent relationship with your neighbors and relevant community partners. The proposed project makes good use of a community advisory committee and of using evaluations at various points throughout the run of the project.</p> <p>“Your schedule of work shows a well-thought-out list of activities suitable to the challenges identified. Your timeframe, personnel, and budget resources are appropriate for the scope and scale of the project, and you adequately discuss how you will meet the cost-sharing requirement. Today, many museums are looking for ways to increase their community engagement and boost the economics of their region. I would have liked to have seen some information on how you could/will share your results or discoveries at the end of the project. This project could serve as an excellent case study for others to emulate, and you might think about ways to share your results with your colleagues across the country—e.g. an article in a professional journal, a session at a regional or national conference, a webinar.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is evaluative, addresses the review criteria, and makes implementable suggestions in a positive tone.</i></p>
<p>“Although the plan to purchase additional licenses and catalog should be straightforward, your proposal shows some inconsistencies. The effort to catalog 6,000 objects in three</p>	<p><i>Comment correlates with score of 2 and</i></p>

<p>years does not double the count of the existing 12,000 record in a total of 40,000 objects. You involve photography and request equipment, but you did not submit a digital stewardship supplementary information form. Several staff members possess the ability to work on the project and are part time; yet, your intent is to hire a temporary part-time project collections manager. You should explain why.</p> <p>“Consider simplifying and streamlining the project so it can be supported by a small staff with dedicated volunteers and interns. If your goal is to catalog, then make a first pass over ALL 40,000 objects. Determine which fields are crucial to manage the collections off site and assist with exhibitions and deaccession review. It is crucial to have a defined scope that is achievable, so that later the staff can add the layers of additional information such as condition, photography, and provenance. Your project as formatted involves too many steps in work flow and is not likely to achieve results that will make a difference. At the end of the project, the collection remains partially catalogued.”</p>	<p><i>makes specific implementable suggestions for improving the project.</i></p>
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Project Results	
<p>“The project to acquire intellectual control over the collection is sound stewardship and a necessary step before expansion. The goal to make the collections public is outside this scope but will inform the extent of cataloging and quality of the record with image file. Your collections team should review their strategy and focus on the desired outcome of the project to strengthen the application. For example, the staff is currently cataloguing the objects on hard copy, then entering the information into the object document file and digital record. Why not enter information directly into the collections database? I understand the grant request is for laptops, licenses, and hotspot access, but utilizing the existing tools now and understanding the impact will strengthen the request and provide a better measurement of success. Your current measurement of success is counted as numbers, when in fact the digital record with image provides a level of quality and improved accessibility.”</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	
"The project is justified; there is a clear need to catalogue and document this material. This collection is an important part of the permanent collection at the museum."	<i>Comment is not relevant to Inspire program goals.</i>
"The museum will hire a temporary curator to develop and fabricate an exhibition to coincide with their town's bicentennial. They will exhibit materials from their archives and private collections from community stakeholders. The project will be two years in length."	<i>Comment paraphrases the applicant's own words.</i>
Project Work Plan	
"The work plan would be improved by putting in more time onsite."	<i>Comment is very brief and has little value to the applicant.</i>
"There are some concerns in the way of materials and supplies. The use of oak shelving and related furniture and materials that were mentioned in the itemized list in the proposal, although aesthetically pleasing, have problems, as oak off-gases acids, which therefore does not make it the most suitable material for archives, for both presentation and storage. More suitable would be powder-coated stainless steel shelving, stainless steel flat files, and industry-approved laminates for the furniture, such as tables. In the proposal, there was no mention of digitizing some of the archival materials. Is this planned at all for some of the more rare and one-of-a-kind materials in the collection? Perhaps the proposal could be adjusted to consider or include this aspect, as scanners have become more affordable."	<i>Comment does not reflect the score of 7.</i>
"The design of the exhibition is boring and not even remotely relevant to the museum's mission. The staff is woefully unprepared and will fail in the execution of this project. Targeting federal funds to this museum is a mistake."	<i>Comment is derogatory and does not provide useful feedback.</i>

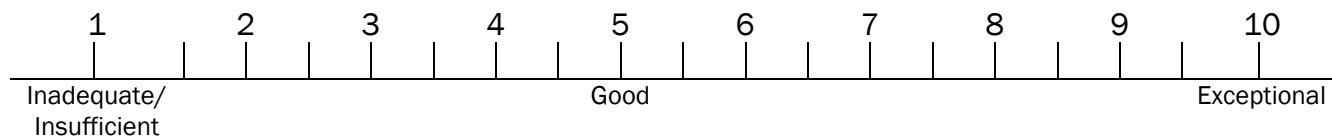
Project Results	
"Strong results with very sustainable benefits."	<i>Comment is very brief and has little worth or value to the applicant.</i>

The chart below summarizes the most frequently asked questions from Inspire 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
Whether a project is innovative		X
The size of the organizational unit/museum	X	
An institution's indirect cost rate		X
Whether the project includes cost share		X

5. *Assign your scores.*

Assign a single 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.*

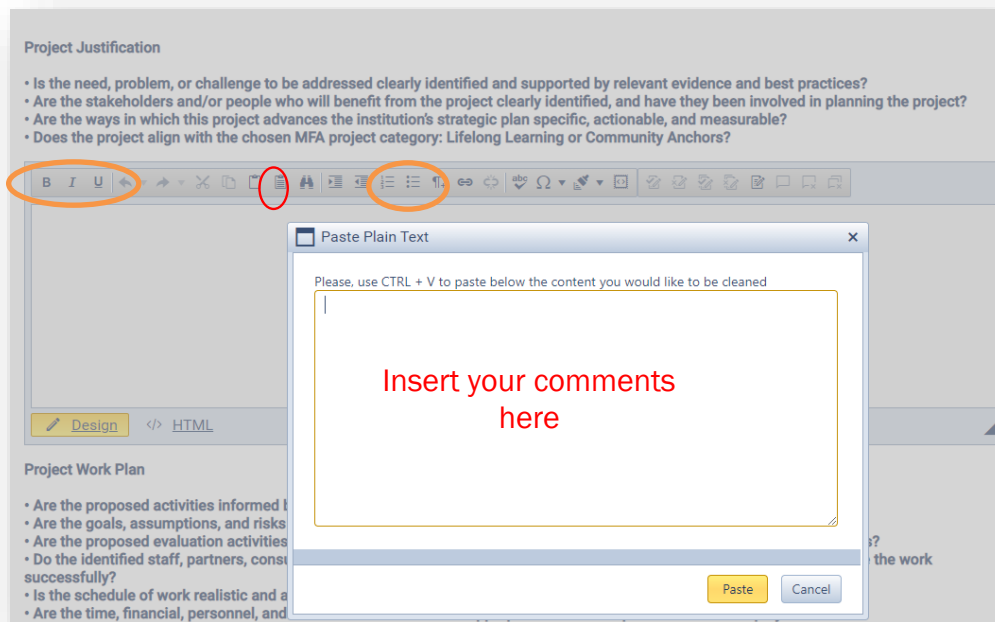
Review your draft comments and preliminary scores. Adjust your scores, if necessary, to reflect your written evaluation more accurately. Scores should support comments, and comments should justify scores.

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 below) – bold, italics, underline, bullets, numbers.



Project Justification

- Is the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence and best practices?
- 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?
- Does the project align with the chosen MFA project category: Lifelong Learning or Community Anchors?

Project Work Plan

- Are the proposed activities informed by the institution's strategic plan?
- Are the goals, assumptions, and risks clearly identified and supported by relevant evidence and best practices?
- Are the proposed evaluation activities specific, actionable, and measurable?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and volunteers have the necessary skills and resources to successfully implement the project?
- Is the schedule of work realistic and achievable?
- Are the time, financial, personnel, and other resources sufficient to implement the project?

Paste Plain Text

Please, use CTRL + V to paste below the content you would like to be cleaned

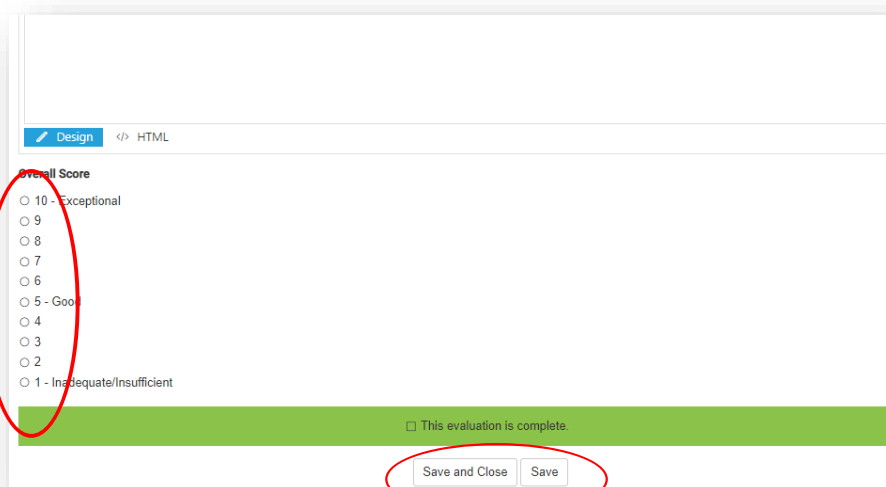
Insert your comments here

Paste Cancel

Warning: Only open one instance of an evaluation screen at once. If you have two instances of an evaluation screen open on your computer and one of them is blank, the auto-save feature will overwrite any comments you have with the blank comment box.

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.

Choose a single score for the application.



Overall Score

☐ 10 - Exceptional
☐ 9
☐ 8
☐ 7
☐ 6
☐ 5 - Good
☐ 4
☐ 3
☐ 2
☐ 1 - Inadequate/Insufficient

☐ This evaluation is complete.

Save and Close Save

Then, select one of two options concerning the museum/organizational unit size.



About Organization Size

Applicants were asked to consider whether their organization is a good fit for this special initiative for small museums and discuss a range of attributes that describe their organization. These could include, but were not limited to: number of staff members and volunteers; operating budget and sources of revenue; number and types of objects in the collection; size of facility and property; types and numbers of audiences served; and size relative to other organizations of the same discipline, or within the same geographic region. Please look for this discussion in the Organizational Profile and Narrative sections of each application and compare it to the Program Description in the Notice of Funding Opportunity (pages 3-4). Please indicate whether the organization made the case that it is a small museum by choosing one of the following sentences:

☒ Yes, the applicant makes a convincing case that the organization qualifies as a small museum.

☐ No, the applicant does not make a convincing case that the organization qualifies as a small museum.

Please use this space to further explain your response to the question above about museum/organizational unit size (optional).

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[Design](#) <> [HTML](#)

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

Overall Score

☐ 10 - Exceptional

☐ 9

☐ 8

☐ 7

☐ 6

☐ 5 - Good

☐ 4

☐ 3

☐ 2

☐ 1 - Inadequate/Insufficient

☐ This evaluation is complete

[Save and Close](#) [Save](#)

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.

MA-OMS-22-17896: FY22 MFA Learning FR 04

Date(s)	2/11/2022
Coordinator	
Chair	Helen Wechsler 202-653-4779 hwechsler@imls.gov
Evaluation Due Date	3/4/2022
Instructions	<p>Thank you for agreeing to serve as an IMLS peer reviewer for the FY22 Museums for America grant cycle.</p> <p>Guidance for reviewers is accessible under the Panel Files Tab below.</p> <p>Before proceeding to the Application Tab, you must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the Conflicts of Interest Statement located under your Personal Files (to review the statement, click the paper icon); and Certify that you have reviewed the Conflicts of Interest Statement and that you have no conflicts with the applications that have been assigned to you (to certify that you have statement and have no conflicts, click the pen icon to access the click-through signature function). <p>The deadline for completing your reviews is Friday, March 4 at 11:59:59 PM EST.</p>
Selected Sort Order	Application Number

Panel Files Applications Messages Readings

Applications

Applications are sorted by Application Number.

Actions	Application Number	Primary Person	Primary Institution	Title	Project Type	Status	Final Grades
						<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	AJones: 8
							AJones:

REMINDER: Your reviews must be completed and entered into eGMS Reach by the **Evaluation Due Date listed in eGMS Reach.**

8. Manage your copies.

Keep your applications and copies of any notes until **August 31, 2022**, 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, 2022, destroy the applications and any notes.

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 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 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.

Sample 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 prior to submission of the application) 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.

Pending applications are confidential. 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. 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 other 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.

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 INSPIRE! GRANTS FOR SMALL MUSEUMS

Project Justification

- Has the applicant selected an appropriate program goal/project category and one or more associated objectives of Inspire! Grants for Small Museums described in Section A2 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity?
- Are the ways in which this project advances the museum's strategic plan specific and measurable?
- How well has the applicant used relevant data and best practices to describe the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed?
- Has the applicant appropriately defined the target group(s) and beneficiaries, as applicable, for this work?
- Have the target group and other project stakeholders been involved appropriately in planning the project?
- For *Collections Stewardship and Access projects*: Are the collections and/or records that are the focus of the project and their current condition described and quantified in enough detail?

Project Work Plan

- Are the proposed activities informed by appropriate theory and practice?
- Are the goals, assumptions, and risks clearly stated?
- Do the identified staff, partners, consultants, and service providers possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully? Are the time, financial, personnel, and other resources identified appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?
- Is the proposed Performance Measurement Plan likely to generate the required measures of Effectiveness, Efficiency, Quality, and Timeliness?
- If present, does the Digital Products Plan reflect appropriate practices and standards for creating and managing the types of digital products proposed?
- Will the proposed methods for tracking the project's progress toward achieving the intended results allow course adjustments when necessary and result in reliable and measurable information about the results of the project?

Project Results

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated, realistic, meaningful, 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 it clear that the federal investment made through this grant will generate identifiable benefits to society?
- Will the products created by the project be made available and accessible to the target group?
- Is the plan to sustain the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance reasonable and practical?
- For *Collections Stewardship and Access projects*: Will the care, condition, management, access to, or use of the museum collections and/or records improve as a result of the project?