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# FIELD REVIEWER HANDBOOK

## *National Leadership Grants for Museums*

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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 National Leadership Grants for Museums program. We hope you will find this a rewarding experience and will draw satisfaction identifying projects that will help the museum field 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 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

### NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GRANTS FOR MUSEUMS PROGRAM

#### *Overview*

National Leadership Grant for Museums (NLG-M) supports projects that address critical needs of the museum field and that have the potential to advance practice in the profession so that museums can improve services for the American public.

Projects are expected to:

- propose far-reaching impact to influence practice across one or more disciplines within the museum field;
- reflect a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter and an awareness of and support for current strategic priorities in the field;
- employ novel approaches to the project area;
- use collaboration to demonstrate broad need, field-wide buy-in and input, and access to appropriate expertise; and
- generate results such as models, new tools, research findings, services, practices, and/or alliances that can be widely used, adapted, scaled, or replicated to extend the benefits of federal investment.

#### *National Leadership Grants for Museums Goals and Objectives*

Reflecting IMLS's agency-level goals, NLG-M has three program goals and 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. Applicants should clearly identify goal and objective choices in the Narrative.

- **Goal 1: Advance the museum field's ability to empower people of all ages and backgrounds through experiential and cross-disciplinary learning and discovery.**
  - Objective 1.1: Support the development, implementation, and dissemination of model programs that facilitate adoption by museums across the field.
  - Objective 1.2: Support training and professional development programs, tools, or resources that build the knowledge, skills and abilities of museum staff and/or volunteers in multiple institutions
  - Objective 1.3: Support research focusing on the role of museums in engaging learners of all types.
- **Goal 2: Advance the museum field's ability to maximize the use of museum resources to address community needs through partnerships and collaborations.**
  - Objective 2.1: Support the development of new and innovative methods for addressing community challenges through partnerships, services, processes, or practices for use across the museum field.
  - Objective 2.2: Support the development and implementation of training and professional development programs, tools, or resources that build the knowledge, skills and abilities of museum staff and/or volunteers to meet the needs of their communities.
  - Objective 2.3: Support research focusing on museums' roles in engaging diverse audiences and fostering civic discourse.

- **Goal 3: Advance the museums field’s ability to identify new solutions that address high priority and widespread collections care or conservation issues.**
  - Objective 3.1: Support the development, implementation, and dissemination of new tools or services that facilitate access, management, preservation, sharing, and use of museum collections.
  - Objective 3.2: Support the development and implementation of training and professional development programs, tools, or resources that impact the ability of museum staff and/or volunteers in multiple institutions to improve the stewardship of collections.
  - Objective 3.3: Support research focusing on any broadly relevant aspect of the management, conservation, and preservation of collections.

### *Project Types*

Applicants must select one of three project types for each application they submit.

Project Type	Period of Performance	Award Amount	Cost Share Requirement
Non-research	1 to 3 years	\$50,000-\$750,000	1:1 cost share required
Research	1 to 3 years	\$50,000-\$750,000	No cost share required
Rapid Prototyping	1 year	\$5,000-\$50,000	No cost share required

*Non-research projects* address critical needs of the museum field and have the potential to advance practice in the profession so that museums can improve services for the American public. These may test scalability or expand and enhance existing products or initiatives.

*Research projects* investigate key questions important to museum practice and result in findings that have the potential to advance the profession so that museums can improve services for the American public. Proposals should include clearly articulated research questions and feature appropriate methods, including relevant theoretical or conceptual approaches, data collection, and analysis. See Appendix 5 – Guidance for Research Applications in the FY 2022 Notice for Funding Opportunity for NLG-M, for additional information provided to organizations applying with research projects. This information is duplicated in this document in Appendix E: Guidance for Research Applications.

*Rapid prototyping projects* performing exploratory activities should rapidly prototype, pilot, and evaluate specific innovations in the ways museums operate and the services they provide. Project results, both successful and unsuccessful, should offer valuable information to the museum field and the potential for improvement in the ways museums serve their communities.

### *Confidentiality*

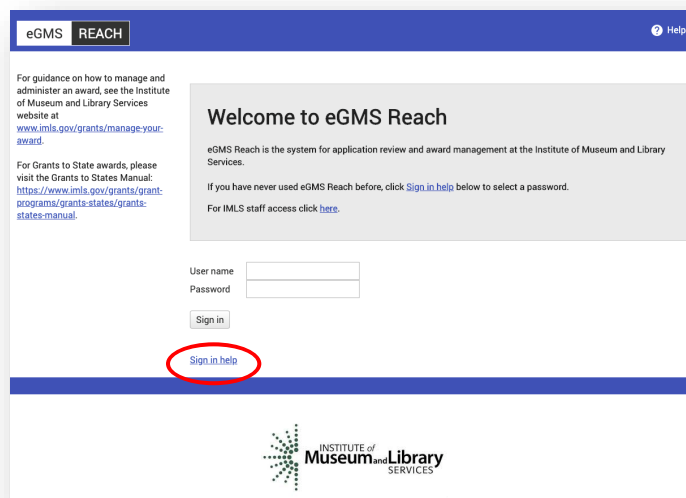
The information contained in grant applications is strictly confidential. Do not discuss or reveal names, institutions’ project activities, or any other information contained in the applications.

## Using eGMS Reach: Step-by-Step Instructions

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

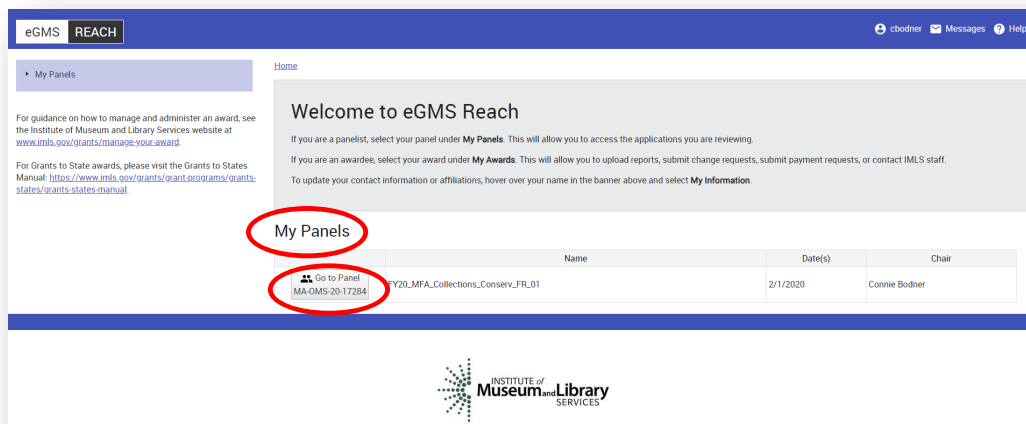
An account has been established for you in eGMS Reach. In a separate email with the subject line “eGMS Reach Account Information,” you will receive your access credentials, including a username. If you do not receive such an email, please check your junk folder. If you still do not see the email, contact [imls-museumreviewers@imls.gov](mailto: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 Handbook: National Leadership Grants for Museums (this document)
- [FY 2022 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

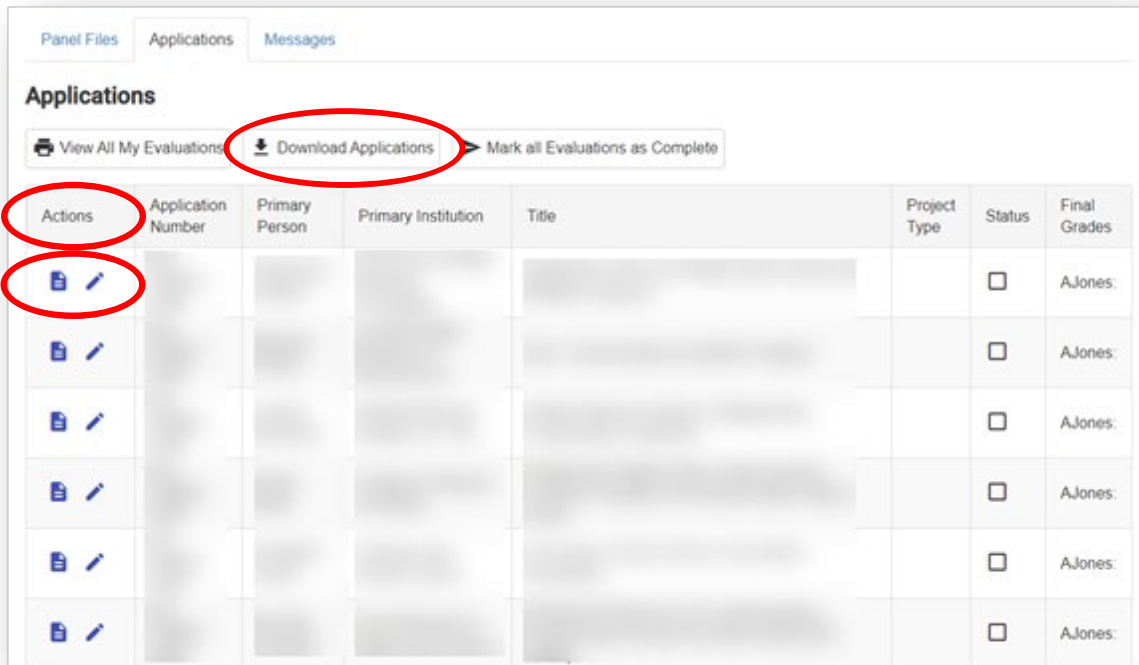
Enter comments here and check the box below to sign the document.

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 applications, and the pen icons allow 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 [National Leadership Grants for 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.

Note that you may come across well thought out and sound projects that do not meet the goals of NLG-M, or projects submitted under the research funding level that do not respond to the Guidance for Research Applications (available in Appendix E of this document and in Appendix Five – Guidance for Research Applications in the FY 2022 Notice of Funding Opportunity for NLG-M). Please address any mismatch between proposed projects and grant program goals, or lack of understanding of what constitutes a research project under NLG-M in your comments and scores.

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

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

Project Justification	
<p>“You clearly identify the need within the museum field that this project addresses. The project partners add needed expertise and have been involved in the development of the project. Your intended results are well reasoned, well formulated, achievable, and will go a long way toward addressing the identified need. The proposed project is an excellent fit for an NLG grant.”</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 museum to develop educational technology for the exhibit floor. However, I believe that the problem you identify is one based on a need in your museum rather than in the museum field, and therefore does not fit well within the National Leadership Grant program. Perhaps you should consider resubmitting your proposal to the Museums for America grant program.”</p>	<p><i>Comment correlates with the score of 1 and makes implementable suggestions for securing funding.</i></p>



Project Work Plan	
<p>“Your work plan is clear and outlines specific activities necessary for achieving your goals. Your consultants are well qualified to assist the project team with the complex data collection involved. I like the clearly described points at which you track the progress of your project and allow for course corrections.</p> <p>You might consider building in more time to develop and test your survey questions since the success of the project hinges on obtaining valuable feedback.”</p>	<p><i>Comment provides a constructive assessment of the application and suggestions likely to benefit the applicant.</i></p>
Project Results	
<p>“Your evaluation plan is very thorough and well thought out. The database and resources resulting from this project could be invaluable to the science museum field and, as you note, could be easily adapted for use by other disciplines. I would have liked to see more robust plans for continuing the dissemination of your work beyond the conferences you will attend during 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:

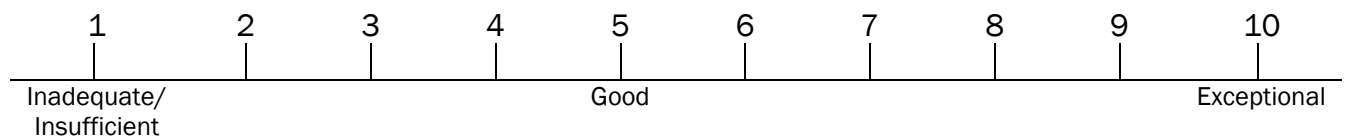
Project Justification	
<p>“The museum plans to organize a symposium on the topic of after-school programs in art museums for at-risk students that will bring together museums professionals to discuss best practices. They will partner with the Parks and Recreations Department, the Boys and Girls Club, and other after school providers.”</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 time onsite.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is very brief and has little value to the applicant.</i></p>
Project Results	
<p>“The design of this research study is wrong-headed and will not yield any useful data. The staff is woefully unprepared and will fail in the execution of this project. Targeting federal funds to this museum is a mistake.”</p>	<p><i>Comment is derogatory and does not provide useful feedback.</i></p>
<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 some frequently asked questions from NLG-M field reviewers:

Should I consider...?	Yes	No
Whether a project meets the high priority need in the museum field	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.

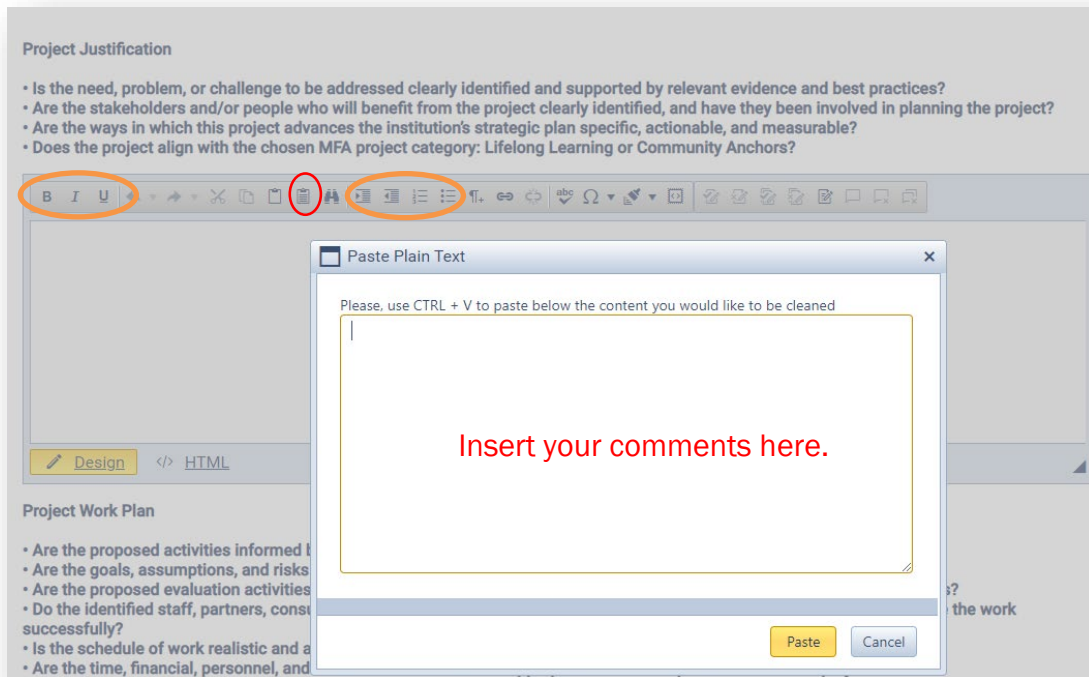
**7. Enter your scores and comments.**

When you are ready to enter your scores and comments, visit <https://grants.ims.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.

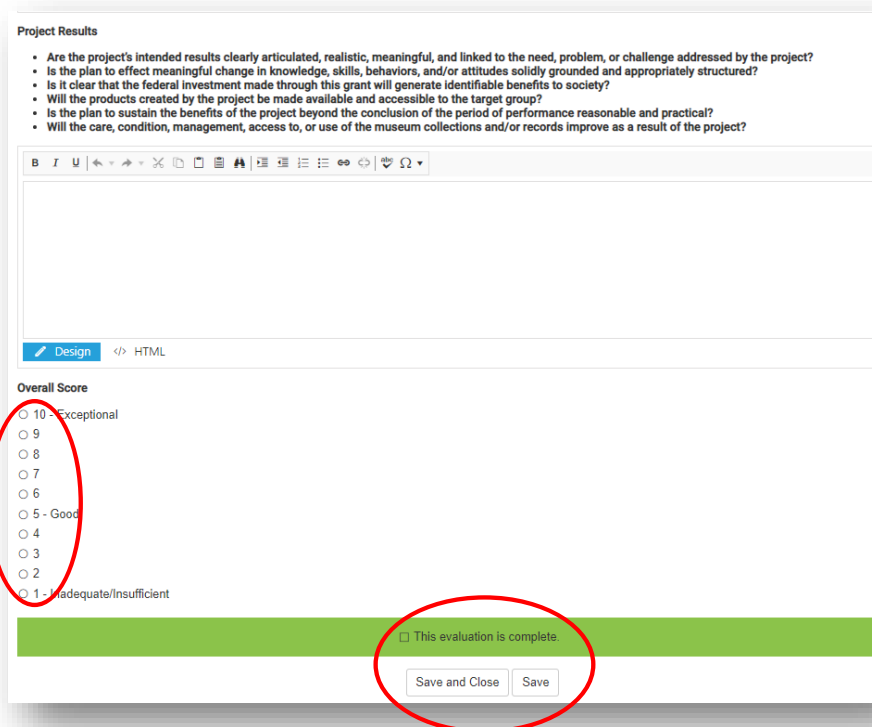
You may enter your comments directly into the form or copy and paste them from a document you may have created.

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.

**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.



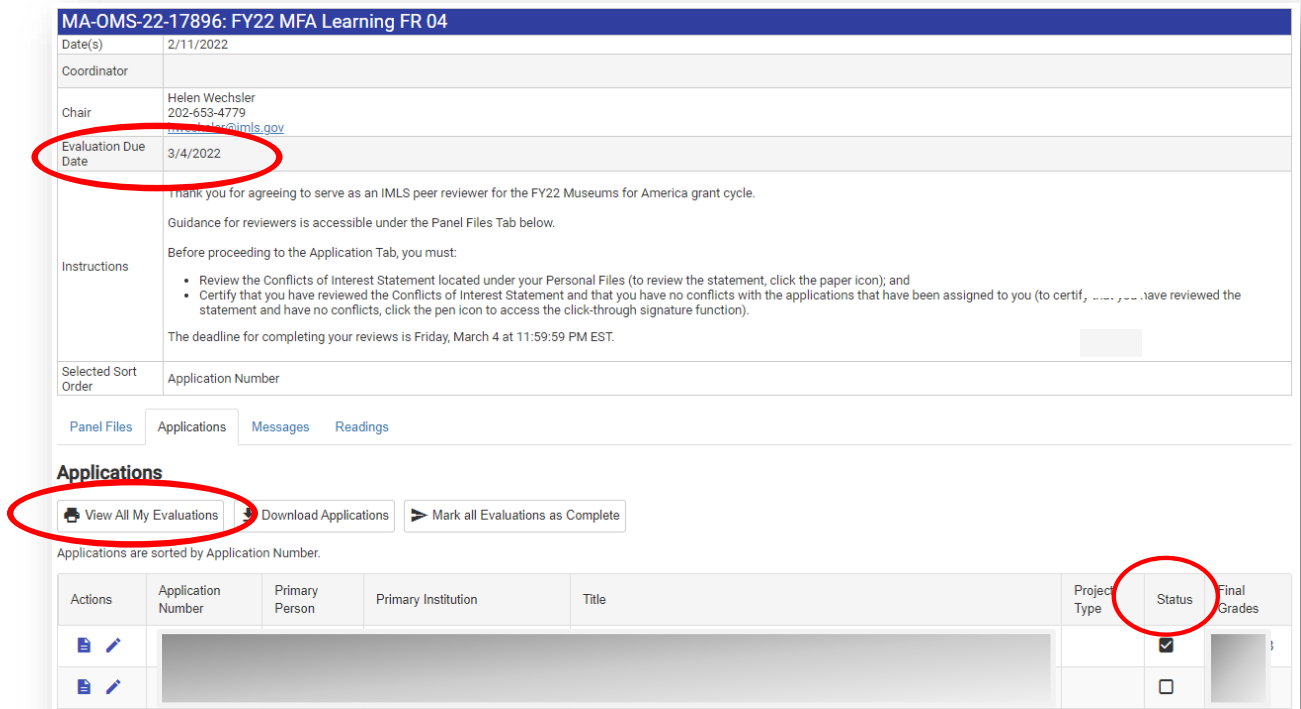
Choose a single score for the application. The evaluation form is built to autosave every five minutes. However, it is wise to click the **SAVE** button at the bottom of the form frequently.



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.



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

Date(s)	2/11/2022
Coordinator	
Chair	Helen Wechsler 202-653-4779 <a href="mailto:hwechsler@imls.gov">hwechsler@imls.gov</a>
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"> <li>Review the Conflicts of Interest Statement located under your Personal Files (to review the statement, click the paper icon); and</li> <li>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, click the pen icon to access the click-through signature function).</li> </ul> <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**

[View All My Evaluations](#) [Download Applications](#) [Mark all Evaluations as Complete](#)

Applications are sorted by Application Number.

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

**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 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 notifications, 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](mailto: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 NATIONAL LEADERSHIP GRANTS FOR MUSEUMS

### *Project Justification*

- Has the applicant selected an appropriate program goal and one or more associated objectives of National Leadership Grants for Museums described in Section A2 of the Notice of Funding Opportunity?
- 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?
- Does the project address current needs of the museum field and/or have the potential to advance practice in the museum profession?
- Does the applicant clearly articulate how the proposed work differs from, complements, or builds upon existing theory, scholarship, and practice?

### *Project Work Plan*

- Are the proposed activities informed by relevant 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 realistic 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 an adequate understanding of 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?

#### *Additional questions for Research project proposals only:*

- Are the proposed research questions, methods, and theoretical framing appropriate for addressing the identified need, problem, or challenge?
- Is the research informed by current practice and does it have the potential to produce generalizable results that could advance professional practice?
- Are the selected methods for data collection, analysis, and use appropriate for the project?
- Is the approach to securing Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval appropriate?
- Is the Data Management Plan for managing, sharing, preserving, documenting, and enabling reuse of the information and research products created during this project appropriate?
- Is the dissemination and communication plan comprehensive in terms of broad reach to practitioners and other communities of interest?

### *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?
- Is the plan for ensuring that the proposed models, tools, research findings and/or services will be broadly adaptable and usable by other institutions and widely disseminated to the field likely to be effective?
- Is the plan to sustain the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance reasonable and practical?

## APPENDIX E: GUIDANCE FOR RESEARCH APPLICATIONS

### **Narrative**

A research application should answer the following questions in the project Narrative.

#### **What are your research questions, methods, and theoretical framing?**

List the question(s) that will drive your proposed activities. Research questions should be clear and concise to help reviewers understand what you wish to learn.

Detail the methods you will use to collect and analyze data. Say why they are the most appropriate for addressing the question(s) at hand. Your methods must be replicable and based on current practices.

What are the concepts, assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and/or theories that support and inform your research and guide your approach to data collection and analysis? If you are proposing to conduct research that will build theory, explain why.

#### **What is the relevance of your proposed research for current practice?**

Discuss how your proposed work builds on existing projects or efforts, including those funded by IMLS. Provide information about how your research can lead to improved museum or library practice and demonstrate you are familiar with current scholarship, including empirical work, in your area of interest.

#### **What type of data will you gather for your research (separate from that identified in your Performance Measurement Plan)?**

Describe the type of data you will collect and any measures you will take to ensure its validity and reliability. Detail the methods for collecting information along with any potential privacy or human subjects concerns that may arise. List potential challenges in gathering data and explain how you will address them. As noted above, research and information collection are subject to applicable law, including but not limited to privacy requirements and 45 C.F.R. part 46 (Protection of Human Subjects), see also the [IMLS Assurances and Certifications](#).

#### **How will you collect, analyze, and use the data?**

Describe how you will analyze the results of your research and relate them to your research questions. If applicable, outline an analysis plan that links a set of testable hypotheses to the proposed research question(s). Identify the variables of interest that are key to the investigation and explain how you will deal with alternative explanations for the observed phenomena.

#### **Does your study require Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval? If so, what steps have you taken to secure IRB approval?**

Describe your plan for the IRB approval process. If IRB approval is required, it is not necessary that you secure approval before submitting your application, but you must receive approval prior to initiating your study.

#### **How will you report and disseminate your findings?**

Address how you will communicate the results to a variety of target groups with different levels of expertise, especially practitioners.

## Data Management Plan

Data sharing is an essential component of research and expedites the translation of research results into new knowledge and practices. Applications for projects that involve the collection and analysis of research data must include a Data Management Plan that provides for long-term preservation of and access to the project research data.

IMLS expects awardees to deposit data resulting from IMLS-funded research in a broadly accessible repository that allows the public to use the data without charge no later than the date upon which an awardee submits the final performance report to IMLS. The data should be deposited in a machine-readable, non-proprietary digital format to maximize search, retrieval, and analysis.

Project budgets may include the costs of preparing the data for public release and for making the data publicly available. In their final performance reports, awardees are required to identify where the data has been deposited and can be accessed by the public.

IMLS recognizes that in some cases data sharing may be complicated or limited by institutional policies; local Institutional Review Board (IRB) rules; and local, state, and federal laws and regulations, including those protecting confidentiality and personal privacy. The rights and privacy of people who participate in IMLS-supported research must be protected at all times. Thus, data intended for broader use should be free of anything that could lead to disclosure of the identity of individual participants. Each applicant should identify and explain the reasons for any limitations in their Data Management Plan.

### **Explain how you will manage, share, preserve, document, and enable reuse of the data you will collect or generate during the project by addressing the following.**

- Identify the type(s) and estimated amount of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use(s) to which you expect them to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use, the proposed scope and scale, and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate data.
- Will you collect any sensitive information? This may include personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information. If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect the information while you prepare it for public release (e.g., anonymizing individual identifiers, data aggregation). If the data will not be released publicly, explain why the data cannot be shared due to the protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, and other rights or requirements.
- What technical (hardware and/or software) requirements or dependencies would be necessary for understanding retrieving, displaying, processing, or otherwise reusing the data? How can these tools be accessed (e.g., open-source and freely available, commercially available, available from your research team)?
- What documentation (e.g., consent agreements, data documentation, codebooks, metadata, and analytical and procedural information) will you capture or create along with the data? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the data it describes to enable future reuse?
- What is your plan for managing, disseminating, and preserving data after the completion of the award-funded project? If relevant, identify the repository where you will deposit your data. When and for how long will data be made available to other users?
- When and how frequently will you review your Data Management Plan? How will the implementation be monitored?

A valid Data Management Plan may include only the statement that no detailed plan is needed if the statement is accompanied by a clear justification.