



National Leadership Grants for Museums

Applicant Information Session

FY24 Video

August 2023

Welcome to the Institute of Museum and Library Services, Office of Museum Services informational video “National Leadership Grants for Museums: Applicant Information Session.”



Introduction

The goal of this video is to provide an overview of our National Leadership Grants for Museums program, which we call "NLG-M" for short, and the process of preparing an application for funding.



Video Chapters

- 1 Chapter 1: What is **National Leadership Grants for Museums (NLG-M)**?
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This video is organized into six chapters:

- What is National Leadership Grants for Museums? This section explains the purpose and design of the NLG-M grant program.
- What can NLG-M Grants Fund? This section explains the types of projects that can be funded in NLG-M and the amount of funds that can be requested.
- Application Components – Overview. This section describes the types of documents that are needed to create an NLG-M grant application.
- Application Components – Narrative. This section provides guidance on composing the narrative part of the application.
- Application Components – Budget. This section provides details on the information to include in your project budget and budget justification.
- Application Tips and Next Steps. The concluding section provides a few tips and next steps.

The complete set of instructions for how to prepare and submit an NLG-M grant application are found in the Notice of Funding Opportunity published on Grants.gov and also available on the IMLS website. Please refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for the most detailed information to prepare your application.



What is NLG-M?

National Leadership Grants for Museums

In this section we will answer the question, “What is NLG-M,” providing information on the purpose and intent of this grant program and who it is designed to serve.

Using This Video



- To get the most out of this video, we recommend that you watch it in its entirety,
- This will give you an understanding of the NLG-M grant program, the types of projects that can be funded, and the necessary application components.
- You may also want to review the NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity before, during and after you watch the video.
- Notices of Funding Opportunities, also known as NOFOs, are documents that detail the requirements of each of our grant programs. All of our Fiscal Year 24 NOFOs can be found at imls.gov/grants
- As you navigate the application process, you can use this video as a reference tool.
- If you'd like to skip to a specific section, please use the time bar below, or the links in the description box, to navigate the chapters

NLG-M=National Leadership Grants 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.

Emphasis is on broad impact in the field.



Museum of Science, Boston



Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden

National Leadership Grants for Museums 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.

NLG-M is all about addressing the challenges of the museum field, our institutions, and our professionals. We invest in institutions and partnerships that understand the challenges and opportunities facing the field and devise plans to move the field forward through the development of resources and tools for use by multiple institutions and/or groups of museum professionals.

Top: Arctic Adventure's sweeping Arctic vista; Credit: © 2021 Ashley McCabe

Bottom: Image of polar bear "Berit" swimming at the Cincinnati Zoo & Botanical Garden



NLG-M Supports Museums and Institutions that Advance Museums

- Museums that...
 - ✓ Have at least one full time or equivalent professional staff person, either paid or unpaid
 - ✓ Have a physical location that it owns or operates
 - ✓ Have been open to the public for at least 120 days in the year prior to November 15th, 2023
 - ✓ Own or use tangible objects
- Organizations that advance the well-being of museums and the museum profession
- Institutions of higher education

You can be one of three types of organizations to be eligible to apply to NLG-M. All applicants must be located in one of the United States' 50 States, its Territories, or the District of Columbia and your organization must be a unit of State, local, or tribal government, or a private nonprofit organization with tax-exempt status.

To be eligible for funding as a museum your organization must:

- Have at least one full-time or equivalent professional staff person, either paid or unpaid
- Have a physical location that it owns or operates
- Have been open to the public for at least 120 days in the year prior to November 15, 2023
- And own or use tangible objects

Museums may be stand-alone organizations, or they may be part of a larger institution, such as a college, university, Tribe, or a state or local government.

You can also be eligible for NLG-M if you are an organization or association that engages in activities designed to advance the well-being of museums and the museum profession or if you are a college or university.



Museum Types

- Aquariums
- Arboretums
- Art museums
- Botanical gardens
- Children's/youth museums
- General museums
- Historic houses/sites
- History museums
- Natural history/ anthropology museums
- Nature centers
- Science/technology centers
- Specialized museums
- Zoological parks

When we talk about museums we include a broad range of institution types. Here's a list of some of the types of museums that routinely apply to this grant program.



What Can NLG-M Fund?

In this section we will answer the question "What can NLG-M fund," providing details on the types of projects and associated goals within the NLG-M grant program as well as offer some summary data on the number and type of NLG-M projects that were funded last year.



What Makes an NLG-M Project Successful?

- **Shared results:** The project results in tools and resources for the museum field.
- **In-depth knowledge:** The project design reflects a thorough understanding of current practice and knowledge about the subject matter.
- **Collaborative process:** The project incorporates audiences, stakeholders, and/or other partners
- **Broad impact:** The project has the potential for far-reaching impact beyond the applicant institution.

Making sure your concept shares the characteristics of successful NLG-M projects is an important first step to preparing an application.

We are looking for projects that are designed intentionally to produce results that can be used by the field to advance and improve practice. We're looking for tangible results such as models, tools, curriculum resources, research findings, or new services that can be widely used, adapted, scaled, or replicated to extend the benefits of the federal investment across the field or a segment of the field.

Projects should reflect a thorough understanding of current practice, knowledge about the subject matter, deep familiarity with previous work on the project topic, and an awareness of and support for current strategic priorities in the field.

We encourage collaboration that demonstrates broad need, field-wide buy-in and input, and access to appropriate expertise.



NLG-M Project Goals

Lifelong Learning: Advance the museum field's ability to empower people of all ages and backgrounds through experiential and cross-disciplinary learning and discovery.

Community Engagement: Advance the museum field's ability to maximize the use of museum resources to address community needs through partnerships and collaborations.

Collections Stewardship and Access: Advance the museum field's ability to identify new solutions that address high priority and widespread collections care or conservation issues.

Your project should align with one of these three project goals. As you can see here, you should be seeking to advance the museums field's work in either: Lifelong Learning, Community Engagement, or Collections Stewardship and Access.



NLG-M Lifelong Learning

Lifelong Learning: Advance the museum field's ability to empower people of all ages and backgrounds through experiential and cross-disciplinary learning and discovery.

1. Support the development, implementation, and dissemination of model programs that facilitate adoption by museums across the field.
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.
3. Support research focusing on the role of museums in engaging learners of all types.
4. Support forums that convene experts and stakeholders, including those from adjacent fields as appropriate, to explore current and emerging issues and inform the field.

So let's take a look at what kinds of project activities might fit within these goal areas. In this and the two slides that follow, the numbered objectives provide some of the types of projects that fit within the Goal.

A project in Lifelong Learning might include but is not limited to developing models with tools for scaling and adapting by other museums; training and professional development for museum staff, volunteers, and those seeking a museum career; social science research on museum-based learning; and forums that bring together experts to explore current and emerging issues for the field.



NLG-M Community Engagement

Community Engagement: Advance the museum field's ability to maximize the use of museum resources to address community needs through partnerships and collaborations.

1. Support equitable engagement and inclusive collaboration with diverse and/or underserved communities.
2. Support efforts to improve access and eliminate barriers to museum services for all audiences.
3. Support community-centered planning, civic engagement, and resource sharing to address community needs.
4. Support forums that convene experts and stakeholders, including those from adjacent fields as appropriate, to explore current and emerging issues and inform the field.

A Community Engagement project will need to focus on producing resources that help museums better meet community needs and be welcoming places for everyone. Projects may help museums be more inclusive of diverse or underserved parts of their communities, improve access and remove barriers to participation, better engage with community organizations and leaders for planning and civic engagement, or, support forums that bring together experts to explore current and emerging issues for the field.



NLG-M Collections Stewardship and Access

Collections Stewardship and Access: Advance the museum field's ability to identify new solutions that address high priority and widespread collections care or conservation issues.

1. Support the development, implementation, and dissemination of new tools or services that facilitate access, management, preservation, sharing, and use of museum collections.
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.
3. Support research focusing on any broadly relevant aspect of the management, conservation, and preservation of collections.
4. Support forums that convene experts and stakeholders, including those from adjacent fields as appropriate, to explore current and emerging issues and inform the field.

Under the Collections Stewardship and Access goal, projects can develop tools that help museums facilitate access, management, preservation, sharing, and use of museum collections. They can focus on professional development for museum staff and volunteers to improve collections stewardship. Projects can undertake research on management, conservation, and preservation issues. And, like for the other two goals, projects can bring together experts to explore issues and inform the field.

What Size Are NLG-M Projects?

NLG-M Projects can range in size



\$50,000 - \$750,000 in federal grants funds

- 1:1 cost share required for non-research projects
- No required cost share for research projects.

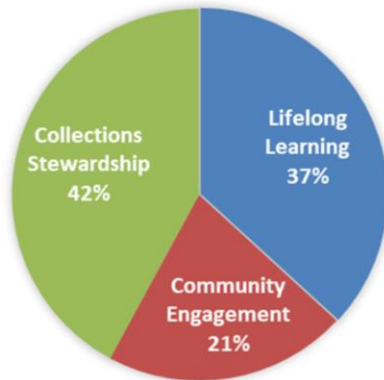
Scale your budget request to the needs of your project.

NLG-M projects can request anywhere from \$50,000 to \$750,000. Full projects that result in robust results for the field require a 1:1 cost share. Cost share may be in the form of cash, staff or volunteer time, other grantee-contributed costs, or third-party or partner contributions. It may not be funds from another federal source. Scale your budget request to the needs of your project. Your budget should include the costs of the activities needed to accomplish the results. It's important that the amount of funds requested match the scope and scale of your project.

Research projects from \$50,000 to \$750,000 do not require a cost share. We'll talk more about research projects a little later.

How Many MFA Projects Get Funded?

NLG-M AWARDS FY23



In FY23 IMLS made 48 NLG-M awards for a total of \$8.44 million.

The number of applications received and the amount of awards made can vary from year to year. Here is a snapshot of our most recent application and award cycle.

In Fiscal Year 23, IMLS made 19 NLG-M awards with a total of just over \$8.44 million in federal funds. We received 48 NLG-M applications last year, resulting in just under 40% of those applications being funded.

About 37% of the NLG-M awards were for projects supporting the Lifelong Learning goal, 42% of the projects supported the Collections Stewardship and Access goal, and 21% of the projects supported the Community Engagement goal.

The average amount of federal funds for each project was \$444,232

Where are Examples of Funded Projects?

The screenshot shows the 'Search Awarded Grants' interface. On the left, there are filters for 'Fiscal Year' (FY 2023, FY 2022, FY 2021, FY 2020, FY 2019, FY 2018) and 'Funding Office' (Grants to States Libraries, Office of Library Services, Office of Museum Services, Other Initiatives). The main area displays a table of results for 'Museums for America' in 'FY 2023'. The table has columns for Log Number, Institution, Fiscal Year, Program, Federal Funds, Funding Office, City, and State. The results are as follows:

Log Number	Institution	Fiscal Year	Program	Federal Funds	Funding Office	City	State
MA-233167-OMS-23	Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum	2023	Museums for America	\$250,000	Office of Museum Services	Springfield	IL
MA-233903-OMS-23	Historic Germantown	2023	Museums for America	\$108,812	Office of Museum Services	Philadelphia	PA
MA-232833-OMS-23	Cape Ann Museum	2023	Museums for America	\$194,130	Office of Museum Services	Gloicester	MA
MA-232967-OMS-23	Ferne Art Center and Gardens	2023	Museums for America	\$68,614	Office of Museum Services	Dekeshoh	WI
MA-233994-OMS-23	Clockshop	2023	Museums for America	\$150,000	Office of Museum Services	Los Angeles	CA
MA-233998-OMS-23	Cameron Art Museum	2023	Museums for America	\$149,000	Office of Museum	Wilmington	NC

Search Awarded Grants gives you an opportunity to explore our archive of grants.

On the IMLS website you can use the Search Awarded Grants function to explore an archive of grants that we have awarded in past years. All of the 19 Fiscal Year 23 NLG-M awards announced in August are listed here, along with those from prior years.

You can search this database using a variety of criteria such as institution name, location, and keyword. Your search will retrieve basic information about each award, including the amount of federal funds awarded and a brief description of the proposed activities and expected results for each project.



Application Components

Overview

In this section we will introduce the components of an NLG-M grant application, and provide an overview about the required, conditionally required, and supporting documents.



Application Components

The NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) includes a complete list of all the application components.

Most of these components are created and saved as a PDF for uploading as part of your application package in Grants.gov.

The NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) includes a complete list of all the application components. Most of these components are created by applicants and saved as a PDF for uploading as part of your application package in Grants.gov.

The Table of Application Components starting on page 9 (section D2a of the NOFO) lists which application components are required, as well as those that are conditionally required. For example, some components are included in the application depending on the type of applicant or the type of project.

Aside from the SF-424S and the IMLS Museum Program Information Form, which are web-forms completed in the Grants.gov Workspace, all application components must be submitted as PDF documents.



Required Documents

These components are required of all NLG-M applications.

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424S)
- IMLS Museum Program Information Form (including Abstract)
- Organizational Profile
- Narrative (10 pages max.)
- Performance Measurement Plan
- IMLS Budget Form
- Budget Justification
- List of Key Project Staff and Consultants
- Resumes

These are the **Required Documents**. All applications must include the documents listed **here**. Omission of even just one might result in your application's rejection.

Also important to note there is a 10-page limit for the narrative. If you exceed the page limit specified in the Notice of Funding Opportunity, we must remove the extra pages before your application goes out for review. That means your reviewers may have to stop reading in mid-sentence and will wonder about your organizational skills and your attentiveness to detail.

So, make sure your content fits into the page limits specified and make sure the number of pages holds when you convert your document to a PDF.



Conditionally Required Documents

These components are required of some MFA applications.

- Proof of Private, Nonprofit Status
- Final Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement
- Digital Products Plan
- Data Management Plan

The second category of application components is that of **Conditionally Required Documents**. **Some** applications must include one, two, or even all four of these, and it's your job to figure out which are required for your application.

- If you are applying as a nonprofit, then you must include your proof of nonprofit status issued by the Internal Revenue Service. We will not accept a letter of State sales tax exemption as proof of nonprofit status.
- If you are using a federally negotiated indirect cost rate in your budget, then you must include a copy of your final rate agreement.
- If you will create digital products during the course of your project, then you must complete and submit a Digital Products Plan.
- If you are proposing a research project, then you must submit a Data Management Plan

Just like the required documents, omission of even one might result in your application's rejection.

Please note that the term “digital product” includes (1) digitized and born-digital content, resources, or assets; and (2) software. If you are creating any of these types of materials, you must include the form with your application.

Application Components

In the following sections of this presentation, we will focus on two application components:

- Narrative
- Budget

The Notice of Funding Opportunity offers complete instructions on how to prepare and complete all application components.



The Lawrence Hall of Science



Center for Plant Conservation

In the following sections of this presentation, we will focus on the Narrative and Budget

Refer to the Notice of Funding Opportunity for complete instructions on how to prepare and complete all of the application components.



Supporting Documents

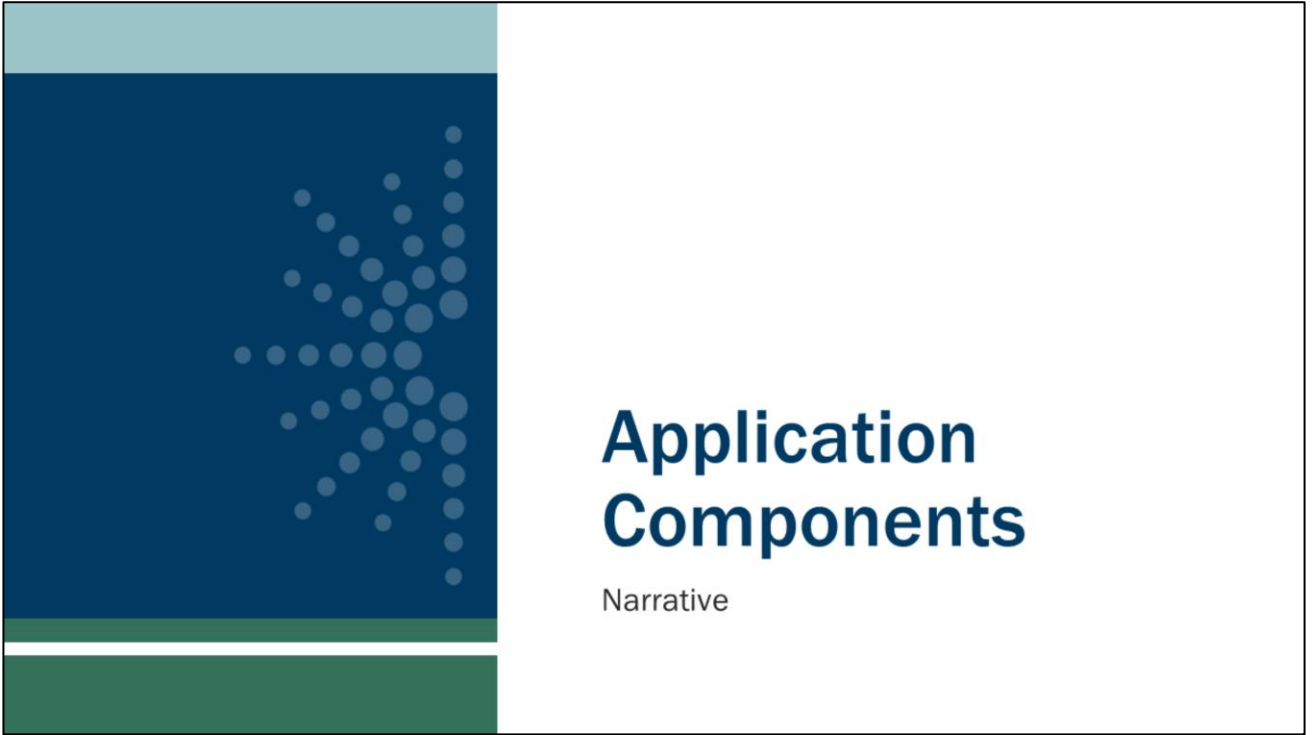
These components are optional in NLG-M applications. Include only those that supplement the Narrative and support the Project Description provided in the application.

- Letters of commitment from partners, consultants, or any third-parties you will work with on your project
- Bibliography or references relevant to your proposed project design or evaluation strategy
- Letters of support from experts and stakeholders
- Relevant images
- Reports from planning activities
- Contractor or vendor quotes
- Equipment specifications
- Products or evaluations from similar projects
- Collections, technology, or other departmental plans applicable to the proposed project
- Web links to relevant online materials
- Needs assessments

The third group of application components is Supporting Documents, and here is a partial list of examples. Supporting documents are optional. You may submit some or none. Include only those items that will supplement your proposal. This is not the place to introduce brand new information, rather, as the name suggests, they should lend support to your project justification, work plan, and intended results that you've already spelled out in your application narrative.

For example, have you identified a partner whose involvement is key to the project's success? If so, a letter of support or commitment would go a long way to reassuring reviewers that they are 'on board' and the project will succeed. Pictures can help give reviewers, who may not be familiar with your institution, programs, collections, or community, a better idea of what you're describing within your narrative. Vendor quotes or equipment specifications show you've done some of the legwork in getting appropriate estimates for project costs.

We recommend that you be respectful of your reviewers' time and avoid the temptation to include hundreds of pages of extraneous material. Being judicious really does work to your benefit, as supporting documents can make or break an application. Include what is important, helpful, and directly relevant to your project, and stop there.



In this section we will go over the questions you will need to answer in your project Narrative and offer details on the review criteria associated with each section: Project Justification, Project Work Plan and Project Results.



Narrative: Project Justification

Tell us:

- Which program goal/project category and associated objective(s) of National Leadership Grants for Museums will your project address?
- What field-wide need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified?
- Who is the target group for your project and how have they been involved in the planning?
- Who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project?
- How will the museum field benefit from your project?
- How does your project differ from or build upon existing theory or practice?

Now let's talk about the Narrative of your proposal. You have ten pages to cover three very important issues, and the Notice of Funding Opportunity provides lengthy guidance on what the Narrative should cover.

First is the PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

- Which program goal and associated objective(s) of National Leadership Grants for Museums will your project address? (See Section A2 of this Notice of Funding Opportunity.)
- What field-wide need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified? Describe the sources you have used to define the need, problem, or challenge.
- Who is the target group for your project and how have they been involved in the planning? "Target group" refers to those who will be most immediately and positively affected by your project.
- Who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project? "Beneficiaries" refers to those who are likely to be aided in the long-term by your project. They may or may not be the same as your "target group."
- How will the museum field benefit from your project?
- How does this proposed project differ from, complement, or build upon existing theory, scholarship, and/or practice?



Narrative: Project Justification

Reviewers will look for:

- How well does the proposal align with the selected National Leadership Grants for Museums goal and objective(s)? (See Section A2 of this 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?

In section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity, under Review Criteria, you will find a list of questions for each section of the narrative that reviewers are asked to consider when they review your proposal. It is a good idea to refer to these as you craft your narrative to be certain you are providing reviewers clear, solid information. You will see that they correspond fairly directly with the prompts you are given to write your narrative.



Narrative: Project Work Plan

Tell us:

- What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?
- What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them?
- Who will plan, implement, and manage your project?
- What time, financial, personnel, and other resources will you need to carry out the activities?
- How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?

PROJECT WORK PLAN

If the Project Justification section was the "why," the Project Work Plan section is where you identify the "who, what, when, and how." Who will do what activities when, and using what resources? You should explain how you will track your progress toward achieving your intended results, and what you'll do if you need to correct course. We also ask you to think about risks that are inherent in your particular project and to tell us how you've taken that into account in your planning.



Narrative: Project Work Plan

Reviewers will look for:

- 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 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?

Again, this is the list of questions in Section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity that reviewers are asked to consider when they review your proposal, so make sure your narrative is answering these effectively.



Narrative: Project Work Plan - Research

If you are proposing a research project, reviewers will also look for:

- 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?

For research projects, reviewers are asked to weigh in on another set of criteria. They'll look for appropriate research design and answers to the questions outlined in Appendix Five "Guidance for Research Applications." If you find it difficult to answer these questions for your project, you might not have a research project at all.



Narrative: Project Results

Tell us:

- What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, problem, or challenge you have identified? Be sure to address this question from the dual perspectives of advancing knowledge and understanding and ensuring that the federal investment made through this grant generates benefits to society.
- How will the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the target group change as a result of your project?
- What models, tools, research findings, and/or services will result from your project? How will you ensure that they are broadly adaptable and usable by other institutions and are widely disseminated to the field?
- How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?

PROJECT RESULTS

The third section of your Narrative should be devoted to articulating your project's intended results.

This section is your chance to convince the reviewers that your project will result in something getting better. The need or problem you identified in your Project Justification will be addressed directly; the results should relate directly to the need you identified in the museum field.

We ask you to tell us what data you will collect and report in order to measure your project's success.

If your project will generate tangible products (and most do), here's the opportunity to describe them and make the case that they will be useful. And last, but not least, we ask that you tell us how you will sustain the benefit of the project. How will this improvement that you propose to make continue once your grant is over?



Narrative: Project Results

Reviewers will look for:

- 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?

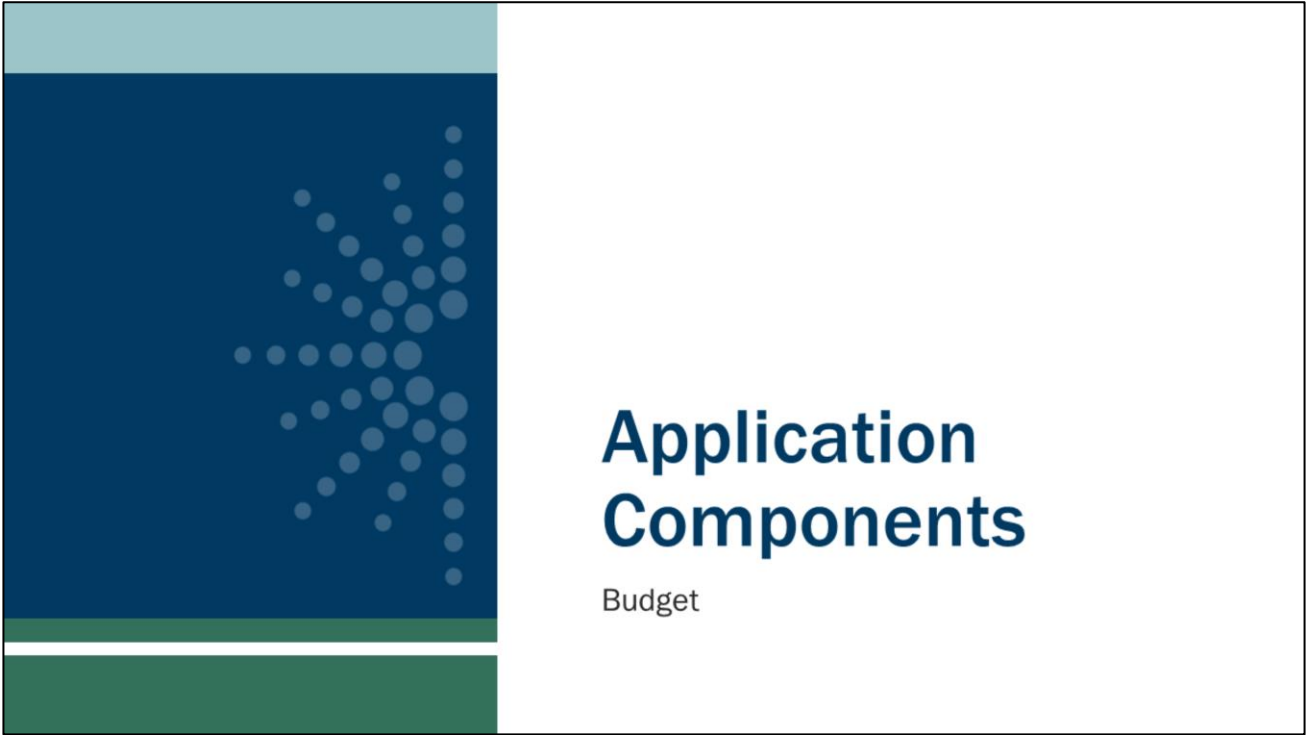
Again, here is the list of review questions that reviewers are asked to consider when they read and score the Project Results section of your narrative. These are found in Section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity.



Narrative Recap

- Your Narrative has three sections—Project Justification, Project Work Plan, and Project Results
- 10-page maximum
- Refer to the review criteria in section E of the Notice of Funding Opportunity

So, to recap: Your Narrative has three sections - Project Justification, Project Work Plan, and Project Results, and you have ten pages for it. The sections are all equally important. Write clearly, address what we ask you to address, and keep an eye on those review criteria. They tell you exactly what the reviewers will look for, so make it easy for them to find it and understand it. Finally, make sure all sections of the narrative are connected. The workplan should describe the activities required to address the fieldwide need and the results should provide a solution to the need you identified.



In this section we will provide information on what to include in your project budget and budget justification and provide some examples of allowable and unallowable costs.



Allowable Cost Examples

- personnel salaries, wages, and fringe benefits
- travel expenses for key project staff and consultants
- materials, supplies, software, and equipment related directly to project activities
- third-party costs
- publication design and printing
- program evaluation
- staff and volunteer training
- paid internships/fellowships
- indirect or overhead costs

As you develop your budget, keep in mind that there are certain costs that are either allowable or unallowable according to federal regulations. The allowability of a cost item for all federal grants are specified in the Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) sometimes referred to as "2 CFR 200" for short, but the full title is "Title 2, Subtitle A, Chapter II, Part 200 – Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards."

Using 2 CFR 200 as a basis, we've developed a short list of allowable costs that are most common to NLG-M projects. See page 19 of the NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity, which includes a partial list of the most common examples of allowable costs. This short list of allowable costs is also shown on this slide.

These costs may be part of what you ask IMLS to pay for with federal funds or what you will pay for or contribute as part of your cost share. The rules about allowability apply equally to grant funds as well as cost share.

When completing your project budget, be sure to check that all the costs you include, whether grant funds or cost share, are allowable.



Unallowable Cost Examples

- general fundraising costs
- contributions to endowments
- general operating support
- acquisition of collections
- general advertising or public relations costs
- construction or renovation of facilities
- social activities, receptions, or entertainment

There are also some costs which are unallowable according to the federal regulations in 2 CFR 200. On pages 23 and 24 of the NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity, we also provide an abbreviated list of unallowable costs. These are also listed on this slide. Unallowable costs may **not** be part of what you ask IMLS to pay for, **nor** can they be part of what you will pay for as part of your cost share. In fact, unallowable expenses can't show up anywhere in your proposal.

If, after you have reviewed 2 CFR 200, you have specific questions, please contact us and we'll be happy to help.



Budget Justification

The Budget Justification is an opportunity to provide in a more detailed narrative format, an explanation or justification for the project costs itemized in the IMLS Budget Form.

For example:

- In Salaries and Wages you should identify each person whose salary or wages will be paid with IMLS funds or by cost share. If cost share is being provided by unpaid volunteers, explain how you arrived at the dollar amount used to represent the value of their services.
- In Supplies, Materials and Equipment you should list each type of supply, material, and equipment you propose to purchase or provide as cost share for the project. Provide vendor quotes or price lists as Supporting Documents with your application.

In addition to the IMLS Budget Form, you will also prepare a Budget Justification. This is an opportunity to provide a more detailed explanation or justification for the project costs.

The Budget Justification should be written to follow the costs categories in the IMLS Budget Form. In the justification you will identify each expense and show the method of cost computation used to determine each dollar amount, including any that you may have consolidated and summarized on the IMLS Budget Form. In other words, please show your math! Don't make me try to figure out how you got to \$10,000 for travel to conferences.

For example, in the section Salaries and Wages you should identify each person whose salary or wages will be paid with IMLS funds or by cost share, provide their names, and describe their role in the project. Document the method of cost computation by including the base salary or wages for each person and the percentage of time each person is allocated to the project activities, which may be shown as a percentage of time, number of days, or number of hours. If cost share is being provided by unpaid volunteers, explain how you arrived at the dollar amount used to represent the value of their services.

In the section for Supplies, Materials and Equipment you should list each type of supply, material, and equipment you propose to purchase or provide as cost share for the project. Detail the number and unit cost for each item, and explain how you arrived at the dollar amounts. You may also provide vendor quotes or price lists as Supporting Documents with your application.



Application Tips

We can make grants only to **eligible** applicants that submit **complete** applications, including attachments, **on or before the deadline**. So...

- Start early.
- Become familiar with Grants.gov Workspace. See <https://www.grants.gov/web/grants/applicants/workspace-overview.html>
- Do your background research.
- Be sure your application is complete.
- Make sure all application components are in the proper format and follow the correct naming conventions.
- Submit to Grants.gov **early** so you can correct any errors.

We can only make grants to **eligible** applicants that submit **complete** applications, including attachments, **on or before the deadline**. So here are some tips to help you do just that.

- Start early. You've already done that by listening to this webinar.
- Become familiar with Grants.gov's Workspace. It has many good features, including upfront validation, which allows you to correct errors prior to submission, and the opportunity to collaborate with others in creating your application. Consider starting with the Workspace Overview and check out the tutorials.
- Do your background research. Make it easy for the reviewers to see that you are up to date and know what you're talking about.
- Be sure your application is complete. Check it against the Table of Application Components in the Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- Make sure all application components are in the proper format and follow the correct naming conventions.
- Submit to Grants.gov early so you can correct any errors and avoid any trauma created by technology challenges.



Application Tips and Next Steps

In this final section of our presentation, we offer some application tips and next steps.

Application Tips

Check your registrations and know your usernames and passwords.



System for Award Management (www.sam.gov)

- Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- Registration must be renewed every year!



Grants.gov (www.grants.gov)

- Passwords expire every 60 days!
- Accounts are deactivated after 365 days of inactivity.

START EARLY, DON'T DELAY

It's important to get your application submitted online through Grants.gov before the deadline. IMLS does not accept applications by mail or email.

In order to register with Grants.gov, you must have an active SAM.gov registration and Unique Entity Identifier number. So make sure your registrations for both of these sites are complete, your accounts are active, and that any necessary passwords are current. These registrations expire periodically so DO NOT WAIT until it's time to hit the 'submit' button to check on them. You should coordinate with any other staff members, such as your Authorized Organization Representative, who may hold the accounts and passwords you'll need to submit.

Both the SAM.gov and Grants.gov websites have robust help features and FAQs. If you run into technical issues with either of these sites, you should reach out to their help desks and request a tracking, case, or ticket number in order to document your issue and attempts at resolving it. Failure to have active SAM.gov or Grants.gov registrations by the application deadline is not an excuse for submitting a late application so again, start early.



Application Tips

Peer reviewers – museum professionals from all types of museums – will be selected by IMLS to read each application and provide constructive and critical comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed projects.

To help make sure your Narrative is as clear and complete as possible:

- Follow the Narrative outline in the NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- Consider the review criteria associated with section of the Narrative.
- Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections in your Narrative to make it easy for reviewers to read.
- Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon.
- Ask a colleague to review everything with fresh eyes before you submit it.

There are many components to the application and the Narrative is an essential and critical part of the package.

Peer reviewers, museum professionals from all types of museums, will be selected by IMLS to read each application and provide constructive and critical comments on the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed projects. They base their reviews only on the information contained in the application, so don't assume that a reviewer or IMLS will know something about your museum or your proposed project.

To help make sure your Narrative is as clear and complete as possible:

- Revisit the NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity and follow the Narrative outline it provides.
- Be sure to consider the review criteria associated with each section of the Narrative.
- Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections in your Narrative to make it easy for reviewers to read.
- Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon. The people who will review your application are museum professionals, but they may not all be totally familiar with your particular field's shorthand. Make it easy for them to understand what you mean.
- An advantage to starting your application early is that you can ask a colleague, friend, or family member to review everything with fresh eyes before you submit. Ask them to act like a reviewer who's seeing this for the first time.

Past Successful Applications

Home > Grants > Search Awarded Grants

Search by keywords...

SELECT ALL FILTERS

Fiscal Year
 Select All
 FY 2022 FY 2021 FY 2020
 FY 2019 FY 2018 FY 2017
 Previous Next

Show more

Funding Office
 Grants to States Libraries
 Office of Library Services
 Office of Museum Services
 Other Initiatives

State
 Any

City

Institution

Program
 National Leadership Grant

Table DOWNLOAD THE DATA

Note: All awards are awarded made outside of the original award year. Page 1 of 33 results

Log Number	Institution	Fiscal Year	Program	Federal Funds	Funding Office	City	State
MD-201848-0465-22	Museum of Modern Art	2022	National Leadership Grants - Museums	\$100,000	Office of Museum Services	Madison	WI
MD-201947-0465-22	University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point	2022	National Leadership Grants - Museums	\$40,000	Office of Museum Services	Stevens Point	WI
MD-201849-0465-22	Association of African American Museums	2022	National Leadership Grants - Museums	\$100,000	Office of Museum Services	Washington	DC
MD-201987-0465-22	International Garden of Arts of Conscience	2022	National Leadership Grants - Museums	\$40,000	Office of Museum Services	New York	NY
MD-201843-0465-22	Foundation for Advancement in Conservation	2022	National Leadership Grants - Museums	\$175,000	Office of Museum Services	Washington	DC
MD-201979-0465-22	University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point	2022	National Leadership Grants - Museums	\$100,000	Office of Museum Services	Stevens Point	WI

Search Awarded Grants

Sample Applications

Grant Programs >

Apply for a Grant >

Eligibility Criteria >

Sample Applications >

Notices of Funding Opportunities >

Outcome Based Evaluations >

Manage Your Award >

Search Awarded Grants >

Peer Review >

Inspire! Grants for Small Museums

Lifelong Learning

- Ball State University (Charles W. Broom Planetarium) (PDF, 716KB)
- Muncie Children's Museum (PDF, 703KB)
- Watkins Museum of History (PDF, 615KB)

Institutional Capacity

- Brattleboro Museum and Art Center (PDF, 734KB)
- Eric Canal Museum (PDF, 709KB)

Collections Stewardship and Access

- La Jolla Historical Society (PDF, 925KB)
- Richard M. Ross Art Museum (PDF, 748KB)
- Vermont Valley Archaeology Center (PDF, 685KB)
- Yeshiva University Museum (PDF, 713KB)

Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

- Amistad Research Center (PDF, 431KB)
- Haitian American Museum of Chicago (PDF, 329KB)
- National Civil Rights Museum (PDF, 319KB)
- Chalmers University (Anna Knight Museum) (PDF, 369KB)
- SEEC Museum (PDF, 239KB)
- Whitney Plantation Museum (PDF, 249KB)

Museums Empowered

- Bolton Art Museum (PDF, 640KB)
- Chinese Culture Center of San Francisco (PDF, 275KB)
- Denver Museum of Nature and Science (PDF, 158B)
- Fairchild Tropical Botanic Garden (PDF, 258KB)
- Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago (PDF, 407KB)

OMS Sample Applications

IMLS offers a few ways to find examples of funded projects. We already talked about the Search Awarded Grants function on our website. You can see the filters I selected on the left, the last three years at the top, and National Leadership Grants for Museums at the bottom. We have also posted the abstract, narrative, and schedule of completion for a cross-section of successful NLG for Museums applications. The proposals posted present a variety of project types, meet the overarching goal of the NLG for museums program, and were considered to be clear and well-written by reviewers. Looking at these exemplary proposals might help clarify your thinking about your own application. The image on the right shows the Sample Application page; you will scroll down to find National Leadership Program for Museums examples.



Next Steps

Connect with IMLS Program Staff in the Office of Museum Services to ask questions about the:

- NLG-M grant program
- Application Components
- Review Process

<https://www.ims.gov/grants/available/national-leadership-grants-museums>

●As you read through the NOFO and prepare your application, additional questions may arise before the application deadline. We can answer questions about the NLG-M grant program or other grant programs at IMLS, address specific concerns with the various application components, or help you understand the review process.

●Contact information for program staff is listed on the grant program landing page on the IMLS website.

●You may also schedule a counseling call to talk directly with program staff. Use the links found on the grant program landing page to find an available time slot on our calendar. You will then receive an email with a calendar invite and a Microsoft Teams meeting link.

●Thank you for listening and good luck!



Important Dates and Times

Applications are due by **11:59 pm EST** on **November 15, 2023**.

- Awards will be announced in **August 2024**.
- Projects must start **September 1, 2024**.

Here are a few important dates relating to NLG-M applications.

Applications must be received through Grants.gov by 11:59 pm Eastern Time on November 15, 2023. The date is non-negotiable. The time stamp is auto-generated by the Grants.gov system, and we have no ability to override it. So, again, start early and submit your application early. That way, if you encounter a difficulty of any kind when submitting your proposal, you'll have some time to resolve the problem and resubmit.

After the application deadline, IMLS staff will review your application for completeness and eligibility, and you will hear from us via email if there are any problems. Next, we will select experienced and knowledgeable peer reviewers to read your applications and provide scores and comments based on the criteria outlined in the NLG-M Notice of Funding Opportunity. IMLS staff will examine your budget, your financials, and your track record with past and current grants. We then prepare materials for the IMLS Director, who, by law, is charged with the authority and responsibility to make final award decisions. This typically happens in July.

In early August 2024, we will notify you by email of the award decisions and provide the scores and comments created by the reviewers.

NLG-M projects must be scheduled to start on the first day of September 2024.

Credit

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