



# 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum Professionals Grant Program

## Applicant Information Session





# Introduction



# Video Chapters

1 **Chapter 1:** What is the 21MP Grant Program?

2 **Chapter 2:** What can 21MP Grants Fund?

3 **Chapter 3:** Application Components - Overview

4 **Chapter 4:** Application Components - Narrative

5 **Chapter 5:** Application Components – Budget

6 **Chapter 6:** Application Tips and Next Steps



# Using This Video

## Watch

Watch this video in its entirety

## Review

Review the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) at [www.imls.gov/grants](http://www.imls.gov/grants)

## Refer

Refer to this video as needed

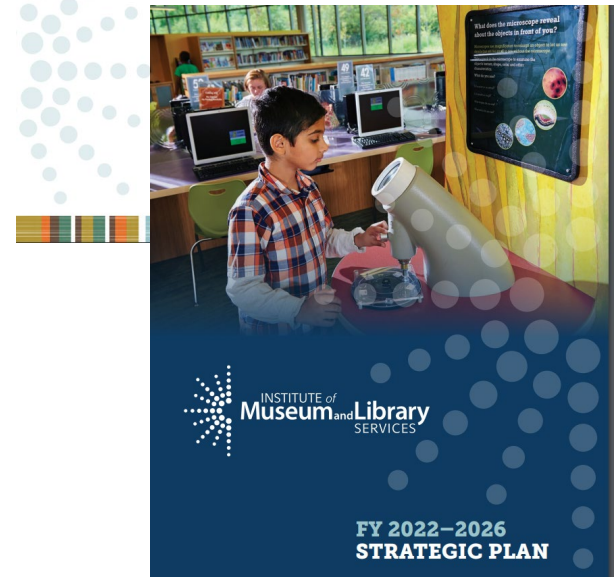
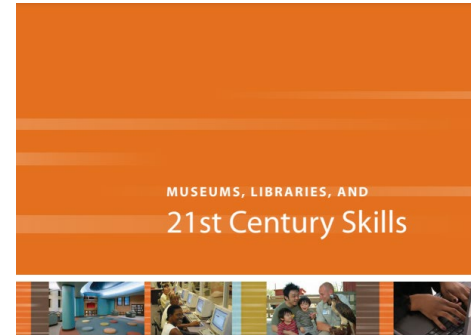


# What is the 21MP Grant Program?

# 21MP Program

The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum Professionals (21MP) grant program supports projects that:

- offer professional development to the current museum workforce,
- train and recruit future museum professionals, and
- identify and share effective practices in museum workforce education and training.





# 21MP Program Institutions

The 21MP program encourages applications from:

- museum associations,
- museum studies programs at institutions of higher education, and
- museums that serve as key parts of the professional learning and training environment.

# 21MP is for Museums

- Museums 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 the application deadline.
  - ✓ 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.

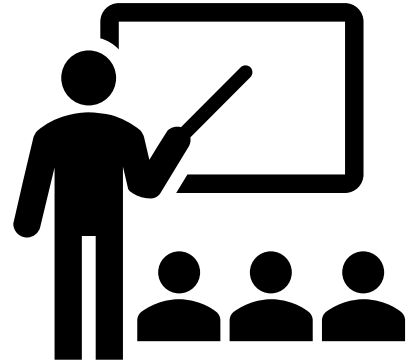




# 21MP is for Museum Associations

An organization or association that engages in activities designed to advance the well-being of museums and the museum profession;

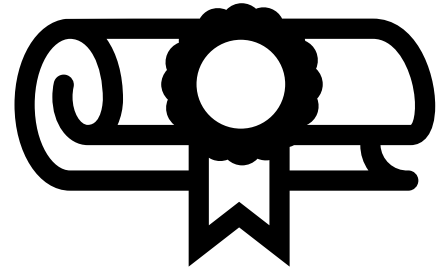
Applicants in this eligibility category may be national, regional, state, or discipline-based associations or related organizations that primarily serve the museum field.



# 21MP is for Higher Education

Institutions of Higher Education, including public and private non-profit universities or colleges.

- Museum Studies and related programs that support the training of museum professionals.
- Offering undergraduate, graduate, or professional and continuing education.





# What Can 21MP Grants Fund?



# 21MP Funds Projects

What is a “project”? A temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result.

- A project is **temporary** in that it has a defined beginning and end in time, and therefore defined scope and resources.
- And a project is **unique** in that it is not a routine operation, but a specific set of operations designed to accomplish a singular goal.

# What Makes a 21MP Project Successful?



STRATEGIC  
PARTNERSHIPS



IN-DEPTH  
KNOWLEDGE



INCLUSIVE  
APPROACH



CAREER FOCUS



# 21MP Program Goal 1



Goal 1: Support the professional development of the museum workforce



Objective 1.1: develop new or enhanced professional development and training programs for the museum workforce.



Objective 1.2: support assessment and evaluation of training and professional development programs to identify and share effective practices.



# 21MP Program Goal 2



Goal 2: Recruit and train future museum professionals



Objective 2.1: Expand pathways into the museum field by adapting higher education programs to be more responsive to the needs of the 21st century museum workforce.



Objective 2.3: Recruit future museum professionals from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds through paid internships, mentoring, and fellowship opportunities.



Objective 2.3: Support assessment and evaluation of recruitment, training and higher education programs to identify and share effective practices.

# What Size Are 21MP Projects?

21MP project budgets can range in size.



\$100,000 - \$500,000 in federal grant funds with **1:1 cost share** required.

Scale your budget request to the needs of your project.





# Sample Application

## Science Museum of Minnesota

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Log Number: **21MP-256421-OMS-24**

The Science Museum of Minnesota will support transformative change toward inclusion, diversity, equity, and access among Upper Midwest museums by creating a durable community of practice. Using a field-tested model of professional development, the museum will collaborate with 20 small, underserved museums, across Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, to bring together 48 staff and researchers, virtually and in-person, over a period of two years to learn about theories, methods, and tools related to equity and find ways to adapt these ideas to their museums and professional networks. Through ongoing communication and consultation, the project will generate a leadership cohort of individuals with a solid grounding in complex equity issues. The project will not only develop resources, skills, tools, and mindsets to create more inclusive staff and institutions, but also more inclusive local and regional communities of professionals.

Sample Application Available



# Sample Application Continued

## Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts

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Log Number: **21MP-256445-OMS-24**

The Conservation Center for Art and Historic Artifacts (CCAHA) will develop a pilot workforce training program for conservation technicians. The project responds to an identified need to expand career pathways in conservation for professionals without a graduate degree. CCAHA will partner with Drexel University's Lenfest Center for Cultural Partnerships to connect undergraduate students with experiential training opportunities working on Drexel collections as conservation technicians. Under the direction of CCAHA staff, students will learn key competencies related to the handling, treatment and care of museum objects, as well as specific skills related to the digitization of museum collections. The project will result in a toolkit for implementing similar initiatives between higher education institutions and conservation laboratories, so that undergraduates at other colleges may also benefit.

Sample Application Available

# How Many 21MP Projects Get Funded?

Home > Grants > Search Awarded Grants

Search by Keywords...

21st Century Museum Professionals Program FY 2024

Table DOWNLOAD THE DATA

Note: (a) denotes an amendment made outside of the original award Page 1 of 8 results

Log Number	Institution	Fiscal Year	Program	Federal Funds	Funding Office	City	State
21MP-256421-OMS-24	Science Museum of Minnesota	2024	21st Century Museum Professionals Program	\$344,157	Office of Museum Services	St. Paul	MN
21MP-256386-OMS-24	Vermont Historical Society	2024	21st Century Museum Professionals Program	\$175,029	Office of Museum Services	Barre	VT
21MP-256481-OMS-24	Historic New England	2024	21st Century Museum Professionals Program	\$249,595	Office of Museum Services	Boston	MA
21MP-256380-OMS-24	Children's Museum of Pittsburgh	2024	21st Century Museum Professionals Program	\$369,159	Office of Museum Services	Pittsburgh	PA
21MP-256445-OMS-24	Conservation Center	2024	21st Century	\$116,770	Office of	Philadelphia	PA

You can find a list of awards on the IMLS website under “Search Awarded Grants”



# Application Components

Overview



# Application Components

The 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](https://www.Grants.gov).



# Required Documents

These components are required of all applications.

- Application for Federal Assistance (SF-424S)
- IMLS Supplementary Information Form
- Organizational Profile
- Narrative (7 pages max.)
- Schedule of Completion
- Performance Measurement Plan
- IMLS Budget Form
- Budget Justification
- List of Key Project Staff and Consultants
- Resumes



# Conditionally Required Documents

These components are required of some applications.

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



# Supporting Documents

**These components are optional.** 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
- Needs assessments identifying knowledge gaps and areas of growth for the primary audience
- Recruitment plans showing proposed outreach strategies for the primary audience
- Learning objectives and/or curriculum for a proposed training program.
- Logic models, assessment strategies or evaluation frameworks.
- Reports from planning activities
- Products or evaluations from similar projects
- Web links to relevant online materials





# Application Components Continued

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.



# Application Components

Narrative



# Narrative: Project Justification

- Which 21MP program goal and associated objective will your project address?
- What need, problem, or challenge will your project address, and how was it identified?
- Who is the primary audience for your project and how have they been involved in the planning?
- Who are the ultimate beneficiaries for this project?
- How will the museum workforce and any associated professional networks benefit from your project?

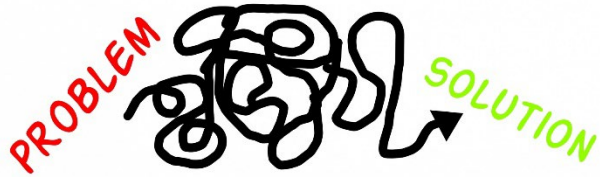


# Narrative: Project Justification Review

## *Reviewers will look for:*

- How well does the proposal align with the selected 21MP program goal and objective?
- How well has the applicant used relevant data and other evidence to describe the need, problem, or challenge?
- Has the applicant appropriately defined the primary audience and beneficiaries for this work and have they been involved in planning the project?
- Does the project address current needs of the museum workforce and have the potential to build career pathways and strengthen professional networks beyond a single institution?

# Defining a Need, Problem, or Challenge



- Remember that the federal government wants its investment to result in something getting better.
- Articulate what will get better as a result of your project as precisely as possible.
- Identify why it is important that this change happens.
- Hone your problem definition carefully.
- Present data that support your problem definition.



# Narrative: Project Work Plan

- What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?
- 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 recruit and select participants from the primary audience?
- What are the risks to the project and how will you mitigate them?
- How will you track your progress toward achieving your intended results?



# Narrative: Project Work Plan Review

## *Reviewers will look for:*

- Are the proposed activities informed by relevant theory and effective practice in workforce training and professional development?
- 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?
- Will the recruitment and selection process employ inclusive and equitable strategies to reach the primary audience?
- Are the goals, assumptions, and risks clearly stated?
- 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?



# Defining Risks

- Every project has potential risks.
- Show that you are aware of the risks and have a plan for dealing with them.
- Answer the question, “What if?”

## Examples of Risk

- What if cost-share funding is unavailable by the time the project starts?
- What if a needs assessment suggests alternative priorities for training?
- What if one or more key staff are not available during the project period?
- What if a key project partner or consultant drops out mid-project?





# Narrative: Project Results

- What are your project's intended results and how will they address the need, problem, or challenge you have identified?
- How will the knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes of the primary audience change as a result of your project?
- What products will result from your project and how will you make them accessible to the primary audience?
- How will you sustain the benefit(s) of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?



# Narrative: Project Results Continued

## *Reviewers will look for:*

- Are the project's intended results clearly articulated, realistic, 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?
- Will the products created by the project be made available and accessible to the primary audience?
- Is the plan to sustain the benefits of the project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance reasonable and practical?

# Defining Intended Results



- Answer the question, “What will be better as the result of this work?”
- Know how you will recognize success and how you will measure it for each of your high-level activities.
- Tie everything back to your need, problem, or challenge.
- Consider constructing a logic model or an outcomes-based evaluation tool to explain your intended results and your plan for achieving them.



# Narrative Recap

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



# Application Components

Budget





# 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



# 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





# 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.

- In Salaries and Wages you should identify each person whose salary or wages will be paid with IMLS funds or included as 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.



# Application Tips and Next Steps



# 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.
- ✓ 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.

# Application Tips - Registrations

Check your registrations and know your usernames and passwords.



System for Award Management ([www.sam.gov](http://www.sam.gov))

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

Grants.gov ([www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov))

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



**START EARLY, DON'T DELAY**



# Application Tips Continued

Peer reviewers will be selected by IMLS to read each application and provide constructive 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 Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- ✓ Use headings, subheadings, or numbered sections in your Narrative.
- ✓ Consider the review criteria associated with each section of the Narrative.
- ✓ Avoid generalities, acronyms, and jargon.
- ✓ Ask a colleague to review everything with fresh eyes before you submit it.



# Important Dates and Times

Applications are due by **11:59 pm EST** on **November 15, 2024**.

- Awards will be announced in **June 2025**.
- Projects must start **July 1, 2025**.



## Next Steps

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

- 21MP grant program
- Application Components
- Review Process

<https://www.imls.gov/grants/grant-programs>

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