

FY 2025 Applicant Webinar - Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants Program Transcript

0:01

Yeah, and welcome to the applicant webinar for the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants program.

0:09

My name is Jennifer Himmelreich and I'm the Program Officer for this grant program.

0:15

In this webinar, I'll be providing information about the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant program for FY20 25.

0:25

We will review eligibility, go over the application process, review the types of projects funded, the different application components, and also offer you a few tips and suggestions.

0:39

Our goal is to help make the application process as easy as possible while helping to ensure that all application requirements are met.

0:49

The Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants Program, also called NAE, is designed to assist eligible Native communities in sustaining and improving library services with their communities.

1:03

As information needs change, Tribal libraries must be able to serve as knowledge and resource centers to benefit their users and the Wellness of their communities.

1:13

The NAE program supports Native communities across the country to address their individual information needs and priorities.

1:21

NAE projects may involve, but are not limited to, activities such as educational programming for all ages, oral history collection and documentation, digital media and technology enhancements, institutional planning and policy development, professional training, internships, and mentorships.

1:42

Supporting and engaging with cultural practitioners and scholars, Research and development of language and cultural material and tools.

1:50

Digitization and digital preservation and furnishing of library spaces for staff and public within existing constructed spaces.

1:59

Please note that IMLS funds are not allowed for construction.

2:06

The Native American Library Services Enhancement Grants are competitive grants for up to two years and up to \$150,000 cost share is not required.

2:18

The anticipated period of performance for projects begins September 1st, 2025 and must end by August 31st, 2027.

2:29

Federally recognized tribes, including any Alaska Native village, regional corporation, or village corporation, are eligible to apply for funding and serve as the official applicant.

2:41

We refer to eligible applicants as Tribe or Native Community.

2:47

The Native community must offer library and or archival services to the community.

2:52

Such services may include, but are not limited to, providing free access to books, print and electronic Media, Research databases, job and employment and career resources, help from librarians, spaces for reading, studying, and meeting, and free activities and events such as programs, classes, and cultural events for people of all ages.

3:18

IMLS recognizes the potential for valuable contributions to the overall goals of the Native American Library Services Enhancement Grant Program by entities that do not meet the eligibility requirements.

3:31

Although such entities may not serve as the lead applicant organization, they are encouraged to participate in projects as partners.

3:40

Such entities may, for example, assist lead applicant with project activities.

3:46

It is important that the partner organization have an established relationship with the tribal administration before applying for the grant because the tribe or Native entity is ultimately fiscally and legally responsible for the management of the project.

4:03

The assumption in such a partnership is that the Native community that applies for the grant is directly served and benefits from the grant activities that are carried out by the partner organization.

4:16

For FY25, we have updated the goals and objectives for this program and now have one program goal and four objectives.

4:26

The NAE program goal is to develop, enhance, or disseminate practices, programs, models, tools, or library staff training to strengthen library and archival services for Native American communities.

4:42

Object One focuses on projects that serve the learning needs and interests of the community.

4:48

Examples include, but aren't limited to, informal, STEM or other types of participatory learning, early learning, digital information, health, financial, media, civic and other types of literacies, language, and cultural education in educational programs such as classes, events, teaching tools, or resources.

5:15

The second objective focuses on improving community well-being.

5:20

Examples include, but aren't limited to, workforce and economic development, social, public health and civic services, digital services, efforts that increase equity and access, and developing strategic partnerships within, across, and outside Native communities.

5:41

The third objectives are for projects that provide access to and preservation of information and collections.

5:48

Examples include, but aren't limited to, privacy and security, digital preservation strategies, community memory collection, stewardship, and language and cultural preservation and perpetuation.

6:04

The 4th objective are for projects that provide services to effective communities in the event of an emergency or disaster.

6:11

Examples include, but aren't limited to, emergency and disaster mitigation and management plans, studying or addressing impacts of emergencies and disasters, and addressing climate resilience and adaptation.

6:27

You can find the Notice of Funding Opportunity, also referred to as NOFO, on our website.

6:34

You may notice a change from previous years.

6:36

Our teams have been working to create a NOFO that is easier to read and navigate.

6:41

Make sure to read the NOFO carefully to submit applications through grants.gov.

6:48

The NOFO includes a handy table to note.

6:51

The table lists all of the application components, what kind of format they need to be submitted as, and which file name to use when you're submitting your application package.

7:01

Use this list as a checklist of all the documents you will need to submit by April first.

7:06

You want to make sure your application is complete so that it is not rejected simply because you missed or forgot 1 document.

7:14

This timeline will share a little bit about how the process works.

7:18

Mark April 1st, 2025 at 11:59 PM as the deadline.

7:25

Make note that the time listed is for the Eastern Time Zone.

7:28

Once applications are received, grant proposals go through application checks to make sure all application components are there.

7:36

Please note that this is a time that IMLS program staff might reach out to request additional information.

7:42

Responding in a timely manner will assure your application moves on to the next step.

7:48

After application checks are complete, they are sent out for peer review, which take place between April and June.

7:54

Reviewers will read your proposals and then they will evaluate them to make sure they you have

responded to the Notice of Funding opportunity and that your proposed project has potential for success.

8:07

After the peer reviews are complete in late June, we complete budget checks.

8:12

Please note that this is the second time in which IMLS program staff may reach out about your budget.

8:19

Again, responding in a timely manner will assist us in completing our review.

8:24

When all budget checks are complete, reviewers comments and score scores are presented to the IMLS.

8:29

Director will then make funding decisions based on the reviewers evaluations and the overall goals of the program and the agency.

8:37

Announcements will be made in August and all awarded projects will begin their period of performance on September 1st.

8:44

As a final reminder, during the application review time in April and budget reviews in June, noted with the Purple stars in the timeline are the periods our staff may reach out to grant contacts with questions about the application components in April or questions about the budget form and justification or indirect costs in June and July.

9:08

If you would like to learn more about what projects we have funded before, you can search previous previous awardees using our Awarded Grants database.

9:18

Starting on the IMLS home page, www.iamloss.gov, click on Grants at the top of the page, then click on Search Awarded Grants.

9:30

This page will pop up to the Awarded Grants database.

9:34

The filter to the left is to sort and pull from a variety of criteria.

9:39

From here, you can choose a fiscal year in the area indicated by the orange arrow.

9:44

Then Scroll down to Program, Filter as indicated by the yellow arrow, and choose Native American Library Services Enhancement.

9:51

Then hit Submit, which will pull up all NAE awards for that fiscal year.

9:58

If you click on a log number circled in red here, you'll reach a page like this.

10:05

It'll include the name of the awardee and a description of the project.

10:10

If you scroll to the bottom, there's APDF document that is a portion of the application for each funded project.

10:17

Please note that the narrative will be answering the notice of Funding opportunity of that fiscal year and may not align with the current year's application components.

10:29

I will now review the questions that you should address in your proposal.

10:34

As part of the IMLS Program Information form, you'll be asked to complete an abstract for your project.

10:42

Here's some quick key questions to addressed in the abstract.

10:46

Identify the lead applicant and, if applicable, any collaborators.

10:51

Describe the need, challenge or opportunity your project will address and how it was identified.

10:59

List the high level activities you will carry out and identify the associated time frame.

11:06

Identify who or what will benefit from your project.

11:11

Specify your project's intended results and describe how you will measure your performance in achieving your intended results.

11:21

If your proposed project is selected for funding, your abstract may be published online.

11:26

As such, it should not include any sensitive or confidential information.

11:33

Your application narrative should have 3 sections, a project justification, a project work plan and project results.

11:42

In your project justification, tell the reviewers what current need, challenge, or opportunity will your project address and how was it identified.

11:53

Describe how you have used reliable sources to define the need, challenge, or opportunity and develop the scope for the project.

12:03

Who is the primary audience for your project and how have they been involved in the planning?

12:08

Primary audience refers to those who will be most immediately and positively affected by your project, for example, K through 12, youth, elders, parents and caregivers, other tribals, departments and such.

12:28

Looking at the second part of your application, your project work plan section will be the bulk of your narrative and should address the following questions.

12:38

What specific activities will you carry out and in what sequence?

12:42

Please note that this includes 3000 per year for IMLS designated meetings.

12:49

The date and location will be shared with awardees.

12:52

After awards have been made, you want to answer who will execute each activity.

13:00

Please identify all key staff, both current and soon to be hired as part of the project.

13:09

How has your project team involved stakeholders in the planning and development of the project and how will you continue to incorporate their input put throughout the project?

13:20

What existing resources within the tribe assets, assets within the library community, and or potential partners will you use during this project to aid in its success?

13:30

Resources and assets can include both tangible and intangible.

13:34

Potential partners can include other nonprofits, departments within colleges and universities, and or for profit organizations.

13:45

How and with whom will you share your works, results, and lessons learned?

13:48

This can be within and or beyond your community.

13:55

For the third narrative component, project results, it needs to include what your projects intended results and or products are and how they will address the need, challenge, or opportunity you identified.

14:08

In the Project Justification section, you'll tell how your project team defines success for this project and how that will be evaluated.

14:22

How will you disseminate the results, the deliverables, lessons learned, etcetera of the project to the primary audience?

14:31

Finally, how will you sustain the benefits of your project beyond the conclusion of the period of performance?

14:39

We use three performance measures as a basis for understanding and evaluating how well the NAE program is meeting its goals and how awardees are managing individual projects.

14:50

We ask applicants to define and determine how they will measure the following aspects.

14:57

Effectiveness, which is the extent to which proposed project activities contribute to achieving the NAE program goal and and objectives you have selected.

15:08

2nd is quality, how well the project activities meet the requirements and expectations of the primary audience.

15:15

The third is timeliness, the extent to which each task or activity is completed within the time frame proposed.

15:23

Each applicant must identify what data they will collect, how often, and from what source in order to produce these measurements.

15:31

The NOFO includes a fillable performance measurement plan if needed, but use of that form is not required.

15:39

If awarded in your final performance report will ask you to rate on a scale of one to five how well you believed the project completed these measures.

15:52

I will now address key components of your application package.

15:56

Make sure to include the application components listed in the NOFO and that are listed here on this slide.

16:03

Conditionally required documents are your federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, if you plan to use one, and the Digital Products plan.

16:12

If you're creating any kind of digital product, digital content, resources, assets, or software, you'll need to include an IMLS budget form and budget justification following the standard budget categories listed on this slide.

16:29

The link to the form is in the budget area of the NOFO.

16:33

It is a four page fillable PDF form that auto calculates.

16:38

If your download is not fillable or does not auto calculate, you may need to talk with your IT staff for an update.

16:46

Please note that the IMLS Budget Form is used for all IMLS grant programs and includes areas you may not fill in as part of this grant program.

16:56

The budget justification which accompanies the completed IMLS Budget Form should explain the purpose and cost breakdown for each expense listed in these categories.

17:07

Note that under the Travel category, it should include \$3000 per year for IMLS Directed travel.

17:15

Also, cost share is not required.

17:20

You may submit a reasonable number of supporting documents that supplement your narrative and support the project description.

17:27

You'll want to include material that helps IMLS staff and reviewers envision your project in greater detail, but they should not be used to introduce new topics nor to continue answers to the narrative questions.

17:41

Give each document a clear descriptive title at the top of the first page.

17:47

You can choose to include any of the supporting documents listed.

17:54

Make sure to submit a completed application with all required documents.

17:59

Don't forget all key personnel listed must have resumes.

18:04

Include any conditionally required documents like Digital Products plan.

18:09

If you're using a federally negotiated indirect cost rate agreement, remember that the indirect cost rate agreement must extend through September 2025, and the indirect cost rate at the time of the award stands until the end of the grant award.

18:25

So if your entity or tribe negotiates a new rate, we cannot amend to the new rate.

18:32

Supporting documents might include needs assessments, letters of support, and or the other documentation that helps reviewers understand the project.

18:43

Next, we will review some tips to help you with the with applying online.

18:49

First, register early.

18:51

The UEI, sam.gov and grants.gov registrations are sequential.

18:57

The UEI has replaced DUNS and is generated when you register with sam.gov.

19:03

You must have an active sam.gov registration to register with grants.gov, and you will need to have a functional grants.gov registration to submit an enhancement grant application to IMLS.

19:16

Remember that your sam.gov registration expires each year and you must renew it.

19:22

You can log into sam.gov at any time and find out your status.

19:25

I would recommend doing that today.

19:29

Here are a few application tips based on experience.

19:33

This is a competitive grant program.

19:36

Plan time to gather feedback and revise.

19:39

Ask two to three people who are not involved in the grant to read the proposal and provide feedback on ideas, structure and or grammar and spelling.

19:49

Consider their feedback and revise accordingly.

19:53

Proofread final versions carefully and use the spell check feature.

19:58

Schedule time with me.

20:00

On the Grants overview page for this program is a link to my online meeting scheduler where you can grab a date and time that work for your team.

20:08

I will read through drafts of all application components up to a week prior to the deadline.

20:14

Coordinate any staff needing to sign off an application to submit all components through grants.gov before the deadline.

20:25

Please note that we will consider.

20:27

Complete applications from eligible applicants that submit on or before the deadline, which is April 1st, 2025 at 11:59 PM Eastern.

20:39

Remember to save all your documents as PDF files.

20:42

grants.gov cannot convert them for you.

20:47

Upload application files to grants.gov prior to the deadline.

20:51

I would encourage setting a date prior in case something unforeseen comes up requiring more time.

20:59

We recommend using grants.gov workspace.

21:01

It's a great way to organize the work of the application process in one work environment and with any work partners who have a role to play in the application prep and submission process.

21:11

Be sure to double check the uploaded files against the table of application components in the nofo.

21:17

Finally, by starting early, it allows you time to resubmit before the deadline if need be.

21:24

This might be helpful if you discover that you forgot something or would like to add additional information to the to any of your components.

21:33

For questions about eligibility, any application components or project activities, the Digital projects plan, your budget, including allowability of costs, please reach out to myself, Jennifer Himmelreich.

21:49

For questions about application requirements and deadlines, please reach out to my colleague Sheena Afakwa.

21:56

Ayeha.

21:56

And thank you for listening in and we look forward to your application.

22:00

As always, best wishes from IMLS.