INSTITUTE *of* **Museum** and **Library** SERVICES

Panel Reviewer Handbook

Museum Grants for African American History and Culture

Office of Museum Services

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Welcome!

Thank you for agreeing to serve as a peer reviewer for this year's Museum Grants for African American History and Culture (AAHC) grant program. We hope you find this to be a rewarding experience and draw satisfaction from helping museums across the country create engaging learning environments, address the needs of their communities, and serve as trusted stewards of the collections they hold in trust for the public. We assure you that your contribution of time and expertise will be invaluable to IMLS and to the applicants who will receive your comments.

In this handbook, you will find the information you need to carry out panel review, including information about the program, tips for writing effective comments, and three appendices with important reference material.

Additional guidance for peer reviewers includes:

- Webinar for Potential Museum Reviewers
- Complying with Ethical Obligations and Avoiding Conflicts of Interest (PDF, 88 KB)
- How to Use Login.gov to Access eGMS Reach (PDF, 1.3 MB)
- How to Review Applications in eGMS Reach (PDF, 1.1 MB)

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.

Museum Grants for African American History and Culture Program Overview

Executive Summary

The AAHC program builds the capacity of African American museums and supports the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums. The program supports projects that nurture museum professionals, build institutional capacity, and increase access to museum and archival collections at African American museums and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Projects that build the capacity of African American museums should be designed to also meet the needs of their community. They may involve:

- ✓ increasing the number of museum professionals working at African American museums to enable the museum to expand and enhance their programming and exhibitions;

- ✓ fostering collaborations within the community, to include schools, institutions of higher education, and other cultural organizations;

- ✓ enhancing leadership and interpersonal skills, organizational operations, and professional management;

- ✓ providing for enhanced care, conservation, and expanded access to collections, including special collections housed within university libraries and archives at HBCUs; or

- ✓ creating organizational sustainability by developing emergency planning documents that address preparedness and response.

We encourage museum professionals and institutions to share and adopt best practices and innovations by creating skill-building and capacity-expanding programs that focus on investing in all levels of existing and future museum staff.

Projects that support the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums focus on enhancing the pipeline from student to museum leader by:

- ✓ hosting paid internships at African American museums that provide fair compensation for the level of work requested and the geographic locality;

- ✓ creating mentorship and/or apprenticeship opportunities for emerging and mid-career staff to connect with, learn from and engage with senior leaders and founders in the African American museum community; or

- ✓ reinvesting in current museum staff to create learning and growth opportunities that build hard and soft skills and enhance expertise in museum-related subjects and areas of need.

Program Goals and Objectives

Reflecting IMLS's agency-level goals, the AAHC program has two program goals and a set of objectives associated with each goal. You should align your proposed project with one of these three goals and one of the associated objectives, and clearly identify your choices in your project Narrative.

AAHC Program Goal 1

Build the capacity of African American museums and their ability to serve their communities.

Objective 1.1

Develop, enhance, or expand public programs, exhibitions, and/or school programs.

Objective 1.2

Enhance museum operations and professional management.

Objective 1.3
Improve and expand access to collections.

Objective 1.4
Foster partnerships and collaborations among museums and institutions of higher education,
particularly Historically Black Colleges and Universities.

AAHC Program Goal 2

Support the growth and development of museum professionals at African American museums.

Objective 2.1

Develop and implement internship, fellowship, and mentoring programs structured to support emerging museum professionals entering the museum field.

Objective 2.2

Develop and implement equitable and inclusive staff recruitment and retention programs.

Objective 2.3
Create learning and growth opportunities designed to build skills, enhance knowledge, and provide opportunities to share expertise.

Funding Amounts

There are two funding levels in the AAHC program, and they differ in cost share requirement.

Project Type	IMLS Award Amount	Cost Share Requirement
Small Project	$5,000-$100,000	No cost share required.
Large Project	$100,001 - $500,000	At least 1:1 cost share from non-federal sources is required. *Note: If you do not include at least 1:1 cost share on your IMLS Budget Form, your application may be rejected from further consideration.*
Period of Performance	1 to 3 Years	

Step-by-Step Instructions for Reviewers

At this stage, IMLS has screened applications only for institutional eligibility and application completeness. We are counting on you to determine how good a job each applicant does in:

- ✓ meeting the goals of the AAHC program,
- ✓ meeting the goal and objective that they selected, and
- ✓ presenting a clear justification for the project, detailing the project workplan, and articulating the project results.

As you begin the process, you need to set aside enough time to read each application, understand the review criteria, and write your evaluation. The amount of time it takes to complete this work may vary significantly depending on the complexity of the application and your familiarity with the review process. Reviewers may spend from 1 to 3 hours on each application and often need to reread an application before completing their review.

Step 1: Sign in to eGMS Reach

eGMS Reach is IMLS's platform that you will use to access and review applications. To access eGMS Reach, users are required to have an account through Login.gov to securely access information. You will receive an email with the subject line "eGMS Reach Account Information," that includes a link to the reviewer portal. If you do not receive such an email, please check your junk folder. If you still do not see the email, contact imls-museumreviewers@imls.gov.

Once you have the email, please visit https://grants.imls.gov/Reach/ and follow the instructions located in the How to Use Login.gov to Access eGMS Reach Job Aid to create a Login.gov account or link your email to an existing Login.gov account.

Instructions for navigating eGMS Reach are available in the How to Review Applications in eGMS Reach Job Aid, which is accessible on the IMLS website here: https://imls.gov/grants/peer-review/reviewer-resources/museum-reviewer-resources

Visit the Federal Service Desk or call 1-866-606-8220 for questions about registering or renewing your registration with Login.gov. Hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. Eastern Time.

Step 2: Read Applications

We recommend that you begin by reviewing the FY 2025 Museum Grant for African American History and Culture Notice of Funding Opportunity to which applicants have responded in creating their applications. This document is also available in the Shared Files for all Panel Participants section of the Files and Forms tab in eGMS Reach. Then, read the applications, keeping in mind the panel review criteria listed below. 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.

Panel Review Criteria

Project Justification
- How well does the proposal align with the selected AAHC program goal and associated objective?
- How well has the applicant used relevant data and other evidence to describe the need, problem, or challenge to be addressed?
- Has the applicant appropriately defined the primary audience(s) and beneficiaries, as applicable, for this work?
- Have the primary audience and other project stakeholders been appropriately involved 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 have the experience and skills necessary to successfully complete the work?
- Are the time, financial, personnel, and other identified resources appropriate for the scope and scale of the project?

- 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 allow course adjustments when necessary?
- Will the proposed methods for tracking the project's progress provide reliable and measurable information about the project results?

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 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?

Step 3: Draft 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 areas 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...

- Take all the review criteria questions for each section into consideration. It is not necessary to restate the review criteria questions in 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.

Characteristics of effective and poor panel reviewer comments

Effective Comments...	Poor Comments...
• are presented in a constructive manner.	• simply summarize or paraphrase the applicant's own words.
• are both substantive and easy to read and understand.	• make derogatory remarks.
• reflect the resources of the institution.	• penalize an applicant because you feel the institution does not need the money.
• are specific to the individual application.	• offer or ask for irrelevant or extraneous information.
• reflect the numeric score assigned.	• compare the application to others in the review group.
• highlight the application's strengths and identify areas for improvement.	• make vague or overly general statements.
• are directed to applicants—not IMLS or panel reviewers—for their use.	• question an applicant's honesty or integrity.

See Appendix C for examples of effective comments, as they appear to applicants.

What should not be considered in your reviews

Sometimes reviewers ask about or mention characteristics that are outside the scope of the AAHC review criteria. This is a list of commonly identified factors that you should NOT consider when reading proposals:

- An institution's financial or staffing needs
- Whether a project is innovative
- Whether a project is new or a resubmission
- The size or age of an organization
- An institution's indirect cost rate (IMLS honors indirect cost rate agreements that an institution has negotiated with another federal agency, or accepts the 15% rate in the absence of a negotiated agreement)

Bias in the review process

Everyone has biases, which are informed by our own experiences as well as our cultural and social environments. Recognizing this is an important step in mitigating the effects of bias in your reviews. The chart below shows different types of bias that commonly happen in the review process. Think about what may feel familiar as you review applications.

AFFINITY BIAS	CONFIRMATION BIAS	CONFORMITY BIAS	CONTRAST EFFECT
• Favoring those like you • Applicants who "speak the lingo" get less scrutiny • Seen as more believable/ trustworthy	• Focusing on information that aligns with preconceived notions • Rejecting ideas or actions that challenge held notions	• Tendency to be swayed by the majority or loudest voices • Can lead to false consensus and dampening of multiple perspectives	• Evaluating quality and other characteristics relative to its surroundings (e.g., other applications in review group) rather than on its own merits • Can result in unfair assessment of risk and capacity

As you review, pay attention to your preferences—for example, a project may be well conceived and ready to implement even if the narrative is poorly formatted or has spelling errors. We all have biases but staying aware of your preferences and what makes you feel comfortable can interrupt your bias and help ensure that every application is reviewed fairly.

Example Biased Comments

The following comments contain bias	Explanation
"I couldn't figure out what this project was about because the narrative was filled with spelling mistakes that were very distracting."	Comment demonstrates affinity bias.
"While it's important that museums connect with their communities, they should not be the lead for social service projects like a food bank in the museum. That type of work is not mission critical for museums."	Comment demonstrates confirmation bias.
"The project timeline seems ambitious, especially since two key partners aren't identified/confirmed. That said, [Museum Name] is one of the top museums in the US, and I'm sure they'll be able to make this happen."	Comment demonstrates conformity bias.
"The risks identified in the narrative were not as realistic and robust as those I read in other proposals."	Comment demonstrates contrast effect bias.

Step 4: Assign Scores

Assign a single preliminary score to the entire application. Use a scale of 1 to 5, as described in the Scoring Definitions chart.

Scoring Definitions

Score	Rank	Description
5	Exceptional	The application is outstanding and provides exceptional support for the proposed project.
4	Very Good	The application provides solid support for the proposed project.
3	Good	The application is adequate but could be strengthened in its support for the proposed project.
2	Some Merit	The application is flawed and does not adequately support the proposed project. The project proposal could be revised and strengthened for a future submission.
1	Poor	The application does not fit the program goals, is inadequate, or provided insufficient information to allow for a confident evaluation.

Strive to bring the same approach to all the applications you review. Evaluate each application using the criteria in the Notice of Funding Opportunity and in the Reviewer Resources—not against other proposals. It is theoretically possible for you to have been assigned all "Exceptional" proposals, or all "Poor" proposals, meaning that you could arrive at all very high scores or very low scores. You do not need to evaluate on a curve of any kind.

If the project is misaligned to the goals of the AAHC grant program or the goal and objective that the applicant selected, your comments and scores should reflect it.

Step 5: Review Your Work

IMLS is one of the few federal agencies that provides reviewers' comments to applicants, directly and in their entirety without editing. We do this to make sure our process is as transparent as possible, and to provide anonymous feedback to applicants from their peers. If an applicant is unsuccessful, then they may use these comments to improve their proposal for resubmission. If they are successful, they may use the comments to improve their funded projects.

We hear repeatedly that getting your comments is one of the most highly valued things about IMLS museum grant programs, therefore, 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.

Step 6: Enter Scores and Comments by the Evaluation Due Date

When you are ready to enter your scores and comments, visit https://reach.imls.gov/ and sign in with your Login.gov email and password. Refer to the How to Review Applications in eGMS Reach Job Aid for instructions on completing comments and selecting scores. Your reviews must be completed and entered in eGMS Reach by the **Evaluation Due Date** listed in the Panel Information tab in eGMS Reach.

Screenshot. Panel Information tab illustrating where to find the Evaluation Due Date.

Step 7: Completing Your Service as a Reviewer

Once you have completed your reviews, please hold on to any notes or digital copies of files in case there are any follow-up questions from IMLS staff. You may delete electronic files and shred paper copies of applications and notes after August 31, 2025.

If you requested an honorarium when you submitted the Peer Reviewer Services Agreement, you may expect to receive the electronic payment 4-6 weeks after completing your service. Please email IMLS-museumreviewers@imls.gov with any questions.

If you would like to be notified when final award decisions are announced by IMLS go to the Subscribe link to be sure you receive these updates.

Appendix A: Confidentiality and Application and Review Process

Confidentiality and Use of Artificial Intelligence

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. Because Artificial Intelligence (AI) generative tools rely upon the submission of substantial information, and because AI users are unable to control where the information they have submitted will be sent, saved, viewed, or used in the future, IMLS explicitly prohibits its peer reviewers from using AI tools to analyze and critique IMLS grant applications.

While funded applications become a matter of record, IMLS does not release information about applications that are not funded through our programs, nor do we share peer reviewers' names or other identifiable information. You may share that you have served as an IMLS peer reviewer, but do not share details about the program on which you are working or the applications you are considering. This applies to communications that are in person, in email, and through all forms of social media.

Application and Review Process

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, the central portal of the United States government for receipt of electronic applications.
2. IMLS receives the applications, and staff members check them for organizational eligibility and application completeness.
3. IMLS staff members identify a pool of available peer reviewers with appropriate expertise. Peer review takes place in one or two tiers, depending on the grant program: field review, panel review, or both. Each complete application submitted by an eligible organization typically receives between three and six reviews.
4. For the applications ranked most highly by peer reviewers, IMLS staff members carefully assess the budgets and past organizational performance.
5. IMLS staff members provide a list of applications recommended for funding to the IMLS Director.
6. The IMLS Director makes all final funding decisions.
7. IMLS notifies all applicants whether they have received an award. With their 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: Complying with Ethical Obligations and Avoiding Conflicts of Interest

As a Reviewer for IMLS, you perform a vital role in ensuring the integrity of the IMLS's peer review process and must carry out your duties in accordance with government ethics rules. Before you evaluate applications, we ask that you review the following General Principles of Ethical Conduct and Summary of the Conflict of Interest Laws. You will be asked to certify compliance with the IMLS Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement and Certification. IMLS allocates up to one hour of your reviewer time for you to consider these materials.

If, at any time in the course of performing your duties at IMLS, you believe you may have a conflict of interest, please contact the IMLS program officer coordinating your review process. Other questions about the ethics rules and responsibilities may be directed to IMLS's Designated Agency Ethics Official at ethics@imls.gov; (202) 653-4787; 955 L'Enfant Plaza North, SW, Suite 4000, Washington, DC 20024-2135.

General Principles of Ethical Conduct

1. Public service is a public trust, requiring you to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws, and ethical principles above private gain.
2. You shall not hold financial interests that conflict with the conscientious performance of duty.
3. You shall not engage in financial transactions using nonpublic Government information or allow the improper use of such information to further any private interest.
4. You shall not, except pursuant to such reasonable exceptions as are provided by regulation, solicit or accept any gift or other item of monetary value from any person or entity seeking official action from, doing business with, or conducting activities regulated by IMLS, or whose interests may be substantially affected by the performance or nonperformance of your duties.
5. You shall put forth honest effort in the performance of your duties.
6. You shall make no unauthorized commitments or promises of any kind purporting to bind the Government.
7. You shall not use public office for private gain.
8. You shall act impartially and not give preferential treatment to any private organization or individual.
9. You shall protect and conserve Federal property and shall not use it for other than authorized activities.
10. You shall not engage in outside employment or activities, including seeking or negotiating for employment, that conflict with official Government duties and responsibilities.

11. You shall disclose waste, fraud, abuse, and corruption to appropriate authorities.
12. You shall satisfy in good faith your obligations as citizens, including all just financial obligations, especially those – such as Federal, State, or local taxes – that are imposed by law.
13. You shall adhere to all laws and regulations that provide equal opportunity for all Americans regardless of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap.
14. You shall endeavor to avoid any actions creating the appearance that you are violating the law or the ethical standards.

Summary of Conflict of Interest Laws

18 U.S.C. § 201 – Prohibits you from acceptance of bribes or gratuities to influence Government actions.

18 U.S.C. § 203 – Prohibits you from accepting compensation for representational activities involving certain matters in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest.

18 U.S.C. § 205 – Prohibits you from certain involvement in claims against the United States or representing another before the Government in matters in which the United States is a party or has a direct and substantial interest.

18 U.S.C. § 207 – Imposes certain restrictions on you related to your activities after Government service.

18 U.S.C. § 208 – Prohibits you from participating in certain Government matters affecting your own financial interests or the interests of your spouse, minor child, general partner, or organization in which you are serving as an officer, director, trustee, general partner, or employee.

18 U.S.C. § 209 – Prohibits you from being paid by someone other than the United States for doing their official Government duties.

Sample Reviewer Conflict of Interest Statement

As a Reviewer or panelist for the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), you may receive a grant application for review that could present a conflict of interest. Such a conflict could arise if you are involved with the applicant institution, or in the project described in the application, as a paid consultant or through other financial involvement. The same restrictions apply if your spouse or minor child is involved with the applicant institution or if the application is presented on behalf of an institution with which you, your spouse or minor child is negotiating for future employment.

A present financial interest is not the only basis for conflict of interest. Through prior association as an employee or officer, you may have gained knowledge of the applicant that would preclude objective review of its application. Past employment (generally more than

five years prior to submission of the application) does not by itself disqualify a Reviewer so long as the circumstances of your association permit you to perform an objective review of the application.

If you believe you may have a conflict of interest with any application assigned to you for review, please notify us immediately.

You may still serve as a Reviewer even if your institution is an applicant in this grant cycle or you were involved in an application submitted in this grant cycle, as long as you do not review any application submitted by your own institution or any application in which you were involved.

However, if you believe that these or any other existing circumstances may compromise your objectivity as a Reviewer, please notify us immediately.

If an application presents no conflict of interest at the time you review it, a conflict of interest may still develop later on. Once you have reviewed an application, you should never represent the applicant in dealings with IMLS or another Federal agency concerning the application, or any grant that may result from it.

Pending applications are confidential. It is not appropriate, for your purposes or for the purposes of the institutions or organizations you represent, for you to make specific use of confidential information derived from individual applications that you read while you were serving as an IMLS Reviewer. Accordingly, you must obtain approval from IMLS before sharing any proposal information with anyone, whether for the purpose of obtaining expert advice on technical aspects of an application or for any other reason.

If you have any questions regarding conflict of interest, either in relation to a specific application or in general, please contact the IMLS program officer who is coordinating the review process.

Certification

I acknowledge that I have reviewed the ethics training materials and the Conflict of Interest Statement above. To the best of my knowledge, I have no conflict of interest that would preclude my service to the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

> **Note**: Once you have reviewed this document, return to eGMS Reach to affirm that you have approved its contents.

Appendix C: Example Peer Reviewer Comments

The following samples are the anonymized comments made available to both successful and unsuccessful applicants after funding decisions are announced.

MH-123456-OMS - Name of Applicant Museum

Panel Reviewer 1

Project Justification:
Appropriate program goals have been selected for the project. Relevant data for the project are provided and are in alignment with current industry best practices. Target group (general population) and beneficiaries are well defined for the project. Applicant provided evidence of stakeholder involvement through inclusion of letters of support from collaborators. A detailed plan for collections and/or records use is not required for this project.

Project Work Plan:
The project is in alignment with current industry practices. Goals, assumptions, and risks are clearly stated. The identified staff and partners possess the experience and skills necessary to complete the work successfully. The scope and scale of the project can be met by the proposed time, financial, personnel, and other resources identified. Effectiveness, Efficiency, Quality, and Timeliness are sufficient for the project. No Digital Products Plan required for this project. Tracking plan and methods is sufficient to facilitate course-correction if required in the project.

Project Results:
The project's intended results are clearly articulated, realistic, meaningful, and linked to the need, problem, and challenges addressed by the project, fulfilling a critical need. The plan to effect meaningful change in knowledge, skills, behaviors, and/or attitudes are solidly grounded and appropriately structured in this project. Condition and access of the collections will be improved by this project through the development of an exhibition. The federal investment made through this grant will generate identifiable benefits to society. Products created by the project will be made available and accessible to the target group of visitors, scholars, K-20 teachers and students, and other cultural institutions.

Overall Score	5

MH-123457-OMS - Name of Applicant Museum

Panel Reviewer 2

Project Justification:

This is a strong application and project justification. Their art collection is iconic, and their staff is steeped in the best practices in the field. They've done impressive work making the collection more accessible to the general public and to researchers, and this project expands that work by enabling another staff member to come on board, digitizing more collections, and making their processes internally more digital, and their focus will be on the 2nd most requested collection for researchers. The work is also nicely tied to their strategic plan, and they clearly lay out the collections and work to be focused on.

They've done a good job laying out the demographic that they serve, but it is a little hard to tell that anyone outside the current staff was involved in this planning. I would like to know a little bit more about the number and type of researchers who use the collections.

They don't specifically tie the work to one or more IMLS objectives, but that's just a minor issue. The work is definitely tied to those objectives.

Project Work Plan:

The project work plan focuses on hiring the staff to do the work. There isn't a lot of description of the actual work to be done, but they do lay out what they hope to accomplish. Year 3 is especially vague in the work plan, and I'm interested in the virtual exhibits they say they'll develop. There's not much here about those. The Performance Measurement Plan is similarly vague.

I don't see any risks that they are considering, but their goals are clear and informed by best practices in the field. The staff definitely has the capacity to get this work done.

The budget essentially pays for the one new staff member and indirect costs. They have a ton of cost share here. In all, the financial resources are absolutely aligned with what they want to get done.

Project Results:

This is a very utilitarian application. They want to hire a new staff member to do this work, and that's what they're funding. It's simple and straightforward. Will the project bring meaningful change? I don't know. It doesn't feel that way, but it will be important for the museum and their operations. The care, management, and access to collections will definitely improve with this project, and, while there doesn't seem to be a lot of obvious benefit to the public, the project will benefit the field simply by helping the museum do this important work. I think the museum will certainly be able to sustain this work into the foreseeable future. In fact, it will be the basis for their future operations.

Overall Score	3

MH-123458-OMS - Name of Applicant Museum

Panel Reviewer 3

Project Justification:

The applicant establishes a clear need for the project and creates a potential framework for advancing the capacity of the institution. The community outreach role that the project funding prioritizes will support the growth and development of museum professionals by equipping the identified candidate with skills critical to museum practice, particularly as it relates to community outreach and volunteer management.

Inclusion of a position description for the community outreach role, as well as training procedures and performance evaluation tools, would have strengthened this application.

Project Work Plan:

While the applicant has identified clear priority areas and activities for the project, the work plan outlines an immense number of deliverables to be completed on an ambitious project timeline.

The proposed outcomes for the role would require a significant investment in skill-building within a number of areas based on the current experience of the identified candidate. The applicant should narrow the scope and proposed outcomes of the role, particularly given its limited time allocation. This may require clarifying institutional priorities. Furthermore, the applicant should be prepared to outline and implement a clear strategy for training, coaching and performance review for this new role.

The financial resources identified are not ideal for the scope of this project, particularly as funds are allocated for staff without clear project roles. The core project staff needs to be clarified. To this end, a list of core project staff, as well as a description of their duties, expectation of time worked, and salaries and wages would have strengthened the argument for funding one (or multiple) staff positions.

Overall, the applicant might consider connecting to a diversity of resources to help clarify institutional priorities and develop strong staff roles and project/staff budgets in alignment with this. Consider a Museum Assessment Program (American Alliance of Museums); webinars and technical leaflets created by the American Association for State and Local History; or the Small Museums Toolkit (Catlin-Legutko and Klingler).

Project Results:

The project's proposed products, if narrowed, will be of great use to the institution. The project also identifies a series of evaluative measures. If the project scope is narrowed, and therefore strengthened, the internal performance measures that the applicant identifies will create a foundation for sustaining the role. The applicant is thoughtful in that their evaluative measures, as identified, will be used to shape future work.

Overall Score   **2**