



IMLS Office of Museum Services Funding

Request

- We urge Congress to provide \$38.6 million in Fiscal Year 2018 funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services.
- We urge members of Congress to sign letters to the Appropriations subcommittees in the Senate and House—circulated by Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and by Reps. Paul Tonko (D-NY), Leonard Lance (R-NJ), Louise Slaughter (D-NY), and David McKinley (R-WV)—in support of the IMLS Office of Museum Services.

Introduction

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is the primary federal agency responsible for helping museums connect people to information and ideas. Its Office of Museum Services (OMS) supports all types of museums—including aquariums, arboretums, art museums, botanical gardens, children’s museums, historic sites, history museums, military museums, natural history museums, nature centers, planetariums, science & technology centers, zoos, and more—by awarding grants that help them educate students, preserve and digitize collections, and connect with their communities. The IMLS strategic plan aims to help museums place the learner at the center of the museum experience, promote museums as strong community anchors, support museum stewardship of their collections, advise the president and Congress on how to sustain and increase public access to information and ideas, and to be a model independent federal agency maximizing value for the American public.

Reauthorization

IMLS has been regularly reauthorized by Congress with broad support, most recently in 2010 with a funding authorization of \$38.6 million for the Office of Museum Services. In September 2016, Sens. Jack Reed (D-RI), Thad Cochran (R-MS), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced S. 3391, legislation that would reauthorize IMLS for six years and which contains many provisions supported by the museum field. It has not yet been reintroduced in 2017.

Status

- Funding for the Office of Museum Services within IMLS is provided by the Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies.
- Congress provided \$231 million for IMLS in the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2017. Of this total, only \$31.7 million was directed to the Office of Museum Services.
- The president’s FY 2018 budget proposes to eliminate the agency, allocating no funding to OMS.

IMLS Office of Museum Services Funding History

	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13 CR*	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18 President’s Request
Appropriation <i>(in millions)</i>	\$35.2	\$31.6	\$30.9	\$30.9	\$30.1	\$30.1	\$31.3	\$31.7	\$0

*In FY 2013, across-the-board sequestration cuts reduced OMS’ effective funding to \$29.2 million.



Talking Points

- The Institute of Museum and Library Services has strong bipartisan support, and has been lauded for its peer-reviewed, highly competitive grant programs.
- In 2016, the Office of Museum Services awarded 271 grants totaling \$31.3 million to museums and related organizations in 46 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia.
- By leveraging significant private, state, and local funding, OMS grants amplify a small federal investment for maximum impact in the community.
- The most recent reauthorization—unanimously passed by Congress—called for an increase in federal support, both to strengthen existing national programs at IMLS and to support museums directly at the state level.
- There is high demand for funding from the IMLS Office of Museum Services. It received 755 applications requesting \$115.5 million in 2016, but current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of the highly rated grant applications it receives.
- Despite this funding shortfall, museum attendance has increased, collections are subject to increasing risk, and museum staff members need professional development in conservation, education, and technology.
- To learn more about grants awarded to museums in your state or district, visit: imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants

Additional Information About Museums

- Museums support jobs and the economy. They spend \$21 billion annually, employ more than 400,000 Americans, and spur tourism from around the world.
- Museums are an essential part of the nation's educational infrastructure, spending more than \$2 billion a year on education and promoting lifelong learning.
- Museums tailor educational programs and materials in coordination with state and local curriculum standards in math, science, art, literacy, economics and financial literacy, language arts, history, civics and government, geography, and social studies.
- Museums receive more than 55 million visits each year from student groups.
- Children who visited a museum during kindergarten had higher achievement scores in reading, mathematics, and science in third grade than children who did not. This benefit is also seen in the subgroup of children who are most at risk for deficits and delays in achievement.
- Museums are beloved community anchors, attracting over a million volunteer hours every week.
- Museums are part of a robust arts and cultural production sector, which the US Bureau of Economic Analysis has measured at \$730 billion annually—4.2 percent of the American economy.
- Many museums have developed innovative programs to meet the growing needs of their individual communities. For example, some museums have programs designed specifically for children with special needs and their families, some work with medical schools to teach observation and description skills, and some are helping veterans heal from their wounds, both physical and psychological.