

IMLS Office of Museum Services Funding

Request

We urge Congress to:

- provide \$54.5 million in fiscal year (FY) 2022 for the IMLS Office of Museum Services (the House-passed and Senate draft approved level), a much needed increase of \$14 million, and provide a robust funding increase for FY 2023.
- include funding for the agency to explore establishing a roadmap to strengthen the structural support for a museum Grants to States program administered by OMS, as authorized by the Museum and Library Services Act, 20 U.S.C. Section 9173(a)(4), in addition to the agency's current direct grants to museums.

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, culturally-specific museums, historic sites, history museums, military museums, natural history museums, nature centers, planetariums, railway museums, science and technology centers, zoos, and more—by awarding grants that help them educate students, preserve and digitize collections, and connect with their communities. During the COVID-19 pandemic, OMS has provided critical leadership to the museum community through its CARES Act, American Rescue Plan grants, and the agency has been providing science-based information and recommended practices to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff and visitors engaging in the delivery of museum services. Its Communities for Immunity partnership is working to boost COVID-19 vaccine confidence in communities across the country. The 2018-2022 IMLS strategic plan focuses on promoting lifelong learning, strengthening the capacity of museums to serve their communities, increasing access to information and ideas, and strategically aligning resources to maximize public value.

Status

- The Office of Museum Services within IMLS is funded through the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill. It is currently funded by a Continuing Resolution (CR) at the FY 2021 level of \$40.5 million through March 11 while Congress negotiates FY 2022 funding.
- IMLS awarded \$13.8 million through the IMLS CARES Act Grants to Museums and Libraries to 68 museums and libraries to support their response to the coronavirus pandemic. IMLS received 1085 applications from museums but was only able to fund 39 awards or 4 percent for a total of \$8.28 million.
- Out of \$200 million in American Rescue Plan funds, museums received a small fraction, \$10.5 million (5.2%), to provide direct support to address community needs created or exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and in assisting with recovery as nearly all of the funding was directed by Congress to the states for broadband expansion.

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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.
- OMS has set a strong record of congressional support during the appropriations submission process in each of the last several years, with 151 Representatives and 42 Senators signing FY 2022 appropriations letters on its behalf.
- In FY 2021, Congress provided \$257 million to IMLS, of which \$40.5 million was directed to the Office of Museum Services. With this funding, OMS provided 275 grants totaling \$40.5 million to museums and related organizations in 44 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.
- By leveraging significant private, state, and local funding, OMS grants amplify a small federal investment for maximum impact in the community.
- There is high demand for funding from the IMLS Office of Museum Services. In FY 2021 OMS received 943 applications requesting more than \$154 million, but current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of the highly rated grant applications it receives.
- \$54.5 million in FY 2022 funding would allow OMS to increase its grant capacity for museums, funds which museums will need to help recover from the pandemic and continue to serve their communities. This substantial funding increase would still be greatly shy of the high demand of \$154 million in FY 2021 in highly rated grant applications the agency received.
- A Grants to States program administered by OMS, in addition to the agency's current direct grants to museums, would merge federal priorities with state-defined needs and expand the reach of museums and increase their ability to serve their communities, address underserved populations and meet the needs of the current and future museum workforce.

IMLS Office of Museum Services Funding History

	Appropriation (in millions)
FY 12	\$30.9
FY 13 CR*	\$30.9
FY 14	\$30.1
FY 15	\$31.1
FY 16	\$31.3
FY 17	\$31.7
FY 18	\$34.7
FY 19	\$34.7
FY 20	\$38.5
FY 21	\$40.5
FY 22	TBD
FY 23 President's Request	TBD

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

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- The Inspire! Grants for Small Museums program, designed to encourage small institutions to apply for IMLS funding, generated 301 applications in FY 2021 (an increase of 23% from FY 2020). IMLS made awards to 60 museums through this program, demonstrating a continuing need for support for the nation's small museums.
- In 2014, IMLS launched Museums for All, a national access initiative. Today, more than 800 participating museums in 50 states, DC, and the US Virgin Islands offer deeply discounted admission to visitors who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The program has reached over 3.8 million visitors.
- OMS provides critical funding for professional development to improve the recruitment, preparation, and professional development of museum professionals, especially those from diverse and underrepresented backgrounds.
- In 2018, legislation reauthorizing IMLS passed Congress with overwhelming bipartisan support by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress' renewed support for the agency's programs and a renewed commitment to its funding.
- To learn more about grants awarded to museums in your state or district, visit: <http://imls.gov/grants/awarded-grants>

Additional Information About Museums

- [Museums are economic engines](#), prior to the pandemic, supporting more than 726,000 jobs and contributing \$50 billion to the US economy per year. They attract tourists, promote economic development, and make communities more desirable for employers.
- Museums' economic impact generates \$12 billion in tax revenue at all levels of government.
- Museums have strong public support: [Museums and Public Opinion](#), a 2017 national public opinion poll, showed that 95% of voters would approve of lawmakers who acted to support museums and 96% want federal funding for museums to be maintained or increased.
- Museums are an important part of the nation's educational system, spending more than \$2 billion a year on education and promoting lifelong learning. 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.
- Museums are essential community infrastructure, attracting over a million volunteer hours every week, prior to the pandemic.
- 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.

FY 2022 HOUSE appropriations letter in support of the IMLS Office of Museum Services

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

We write to thank the Subcommittee for its previous support, and to urge you to support robust funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Office of Museum Services (OMS) in the FY 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

Museums across the country are struggling with the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. [Survey data](#) shows that one out of every three museums may shutter permanently without immediate support—a loss of 12,000 museums and 124,000 jobs—and confirms the financial state of U.S. museums is moving from bad to worse. 30 percent of museums remain closed since the March 2020 lockdown and those that have reopened are operating on an average of 35 percent of their regular attendance, a reduction that is unsustainable long-term even with recent federal relief support. Like other nonprofits, museums are suffering yet continue to work to meet the needs of their communities. From accommodating spaces for remote and virtual classrooms to providing lesson plans, online learning opportunities, and drop-off learning kits to teachers and families, museums are stable oases in the midst of turmoil.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, OMS has provided critical leadership to the museum community through its CARES Act grants for museums and the REopening Archives, Libraries and Museums (REALM) project. The REALM project is a research partnership between OCLC, IMLS-OMS, and Battelle to create and distribute science-based information and recommended practices designed to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff and visitors who are engaging in the delivery or use of museum services.

Despite its small size, the IMLS Office of Museum Services is the largest dedicated source of investment in our nation's museums, which pre-COVID-19 supported over 700,000 jobs and contributed \$50 billion annually to the U.S. economy. OMS funding plays a significant role in this economic impact by helping museums reach more visitors and spur community development. In addition to their economic benefits, OMS grants also support museums' advancements in areas such as public health upgrades, technology, lifelong community learning, and conservation and preservation. These successes notwithstanding, only a small fraction of the nation's museums are currently being reached and many highly rated grant applications go unfunded.

Museums will be vital to the nation's recovery and the recovery of communities, big and small, urban and rural, all across the country. At a time when school and community resources are strained, museums are working overtime to fill the gaps. Pre-COVID-19, they welcomed annually more than 55 million schoolchildren, bringing art, science, and cultural heritage into communities, and partnered with other nonprofits to meet the specific needs of their local population. In addition, our nation's museums opened their doors to more people than ever with over 850 million visits each year—with many of these visitors offered free or reduced admission. Museums are also part of a robust nonprofit community working to address a wide range of our nation's greatest challenges, from conducting medical research and helping veterans heal physically and psychologically, to creating energy efficient public buildings and collecting food for needy families.

Congress reauthorized IMLS in late 2018 by enacting the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 (Public Law No: 115-410). This legislation was passed with widespread bipartisan support by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a vote of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress' bipartisan support for the agency's programs and a commitment to its funding. The agency is highly accountable, and its competitive, peer-reviewed grants leverage significant private resources while supporting museums in every state.

We urge the Subcommittee to support robust funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services for FY 2022 to support the important work museums do in our districts. This vital funding will aid museums of all types and enable them to bolster economic recovery, serve our schools and communities, and preserve our cultural heritage for future generations. Again, we appreciate the Subcommittee's prior support for OMS and request this investment to strengthen and sustain the work of our nation's museums.

Sincerely,

Paul Tonko
U.S. Representative

David B. McKinley, P.E.
U.S. Representative

Chellie Pingree
U.S. Representative

Andy Barr
U.S. Representative

For your reference, the following page lists the **151 Representatives who signed on to this letter last year**, led by Representatives Tonko (D-NY), Barr (R-KY), Pingree (D-ME), and McKinley (R-WV). This may be an indication that they will be willing to sign the FY 2023 letter this year.

Don Young (R-AK-01)
 Ruben Gallego (D-AZ-07)
 Raul Grijalva (D-AZ-03)
 Tom O'Halleran (D-AZ-01)
 Karen Bass (D-CA-37)
 Julia Brownley (D-CA-26)
 Salud Carbajal (D-CA-24)
 Tony Cardenas (D-CA-29)
 Judy Chu (D-CA-27)
 Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA-11)
 Anna G. Eshoo (D-CA-18)
 John Garamendi (D-CA-03)
 Jimmy Gomez (D-CA-34)
 Ro Khanna (D-CA-17)
 Young Kim (R-CA-39)
 Barbara Lee (D-CA-13)
 Mike Levin (D-CA-49)
 Zoe Lofgren (D-CA-19)
 Alan Lowenthal (D-CA-47)
 Doris Matsui (D-CA-06)
 Jerry McNerney (D-CA-09)
 Jimmy Panetta (D-CA-20)
 Scott Peters (D-CA-52)
 Linda T. Sánchez (D-CA-38)
 Jackie Speier (D-CA-14)
 Eric Swalwell (D-CA-15)
 Mike Thompson (D-CA-05)
 Jason Crow (D-CO-06)
 Diana DeGette (D-CO-01)
 Joe Neguse (D-CO-02)
 Joe Courtney (D-CT-02)
 Jahana Hayes (D-CT-05)
 Jim Himes (D-CT-04)
 John Larson (D-CT-01)
 Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-DC)
 Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE-01)
 Kathy Castor (D-FL-14)
 Ted Deutch (D-FL-22)
 Al Lawson (D-FL-05)
 Sanford D. Bishop (D-GA-02)
 Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr. (D-GA-04)
 Lucy McBath (D-GA-06)
 Nikema Williams (D-GA-05)
 Michael F. Q. San Nicolas (D-Guam)
 Kaiiali'i Kahele (D-HI-02)
 Cheri Bustos (D-IL-17)
 Sean Casten (D-IL-06)
 Danny K. Davis (D-IL-07)
 Rodney Davis (R-IL-13)
 Bill Foster (D-IL-11)
 Robin L. Kelly (D-IL-02)
 Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL-08)
 Darin LaHood (R-IL-18)
 Marie Newman (D-IL-03)
 Bobby L. Rush (D-IL-01)
 Jan Schakowsky (D-IL-09)
 Andre Carson (D-IN-07)
Andy Barr (R-KY-06)
 Brett Guthrie (R-KY-02)
 John Yarmuth (D-KY-03)
 Jake Auchincloss (D-MA-04)
 William R. Keating (D-MA-09)
 Stephen F. Lynch (D-MA-08)
 Jim McGovern (D-MA-02)
 Seth Moulton (D-MA-06)
 Richard E. Neal (D-MA-01)
 Ayanna Pressley (D-MA-07)
 Anthony G. Brown (D-MD-04)
 Jamie Raskin (D-MD-08)
 John Sarbanes (D-MD-03)
 Jared Golden (D-ME-02)
Chellie Pingree (D-ME-01)
 Debbie Dingell (D-MI-12)
 Dan Kildee (D-MI-05)
 Andy Levin (D-MI-09)
 Elissa Slotkin (D-MI-08)
 Haley Stevens (D-MI-11)
 Angie Craig (D-MN-02)
 Ilhan Omar (D-MN-05)
 Dean Phillips (D-MN-03)
 Cori Bush (D-MO-01)
 Emanuel Cleaver (D-MO-05)
 Billy Long (R-MO-07)
 Gregorio K.C. Sablan (D-MP-01)
 Alma S. Adams, Ph.D. (D-NC-12)
 G.K. Butterfield (D-NC-01)
 Deborah Ross (D-NC-02)
 Ann McLane Kuster (D-NH-02)
 Chris Pappas (D-NH-01)
 Josh Gottheimer (D-NJ-05)
 Andy Kim (D-NJ-03)
 Tom Malinowski (D-NJ-07)
 Donald Norcross (D-NJ-01)
 Bill Pascrell Jr. (D-NJ-09)
 Donald M. Payne, JR (D-NJ-10)
 Albio Sires (D-NJ-08)
 Jeff Van Drew (R-NJ-02)
 Dina Titus (D-NV-01)
 Antonio Delgado (D-NY-19)
 Brian Higgins (D-NY-26)
 Hakeem Jeffries (D-NY-08)
 Mondaire Jones (D-NY-17)
 Carolyn B. Maloney (D-NY-12)
 Sean Patrick Maloney (D-NY-18)
 Gregory W. Meeks (D-NY-05)
 Joseph Morelle (D-NY-25)
 Jerrold Nadler (D-NY-10)
 Kathleen M. Rice (D-NY-04)
 Elise Stefanik (R-NY-21)
 Tom Suozzi (D-NY-03)
Paul Tonko (D-NY-20)
 Nydia Velazquez (D-NY-07)
 Joyce Beatty (D-OH-03)
 Anthony Gonzalez (D-OH-16)
 Mike Turner (R-OH-10)
 Earl Blumenauer (D-OR-03)
 Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR-01)
 Peter DeFazio (D-OR-04)
 Brendan Boyle (D-PA-02)
 Madeleine Dean (D-PA-04)
 Mike Doyle (D-PA-18)
 Dwight Evans (D-PA-03)
 Mary Gay Scanlon (D-PA-05)
 Glenn "GT" Thompson (R-PA-15)
 Jenniffer Gonzalez-Colon (R-PR-01)
 David N. Cicilline (D-RI-01)
 James Langevin (D-RI-02)
 Joe Wilson (R-SC-02)
 Steve Cohen (D-TN-09)
 Jim Cooper (D-TN-05)
 Colin Allred (D-TX-32)
 Lloyd Doggett (D-TX-35)
 Veronica Escobar (D-TX-16)
 Vicente Gonzalez (D-TX-15)
 Al Green (D-TX-09)
 Sheila Jackson Lee (D-TX-18)
 Marc Veasey (D-TX-33)
 Filemon Vela (D-TX-34)
 Don Beyer (D-VA-08)
 Donald McEachin (D-VA-04)
 Abigail Spanberger (D-VA-07)
 Stacey Plaskett (D-VI-01)
 Peter Welch (D-VT-01)
 Suzan K. DelBene (D-WA-01)
 Pramila Jayapal (D-WA-07)
 Rick Larsen (D-WA-02)
 Kim Schrier (D-WA-08)
 Adam Smith (D-WA-09)
 Ron Kind (D-WI-03)
 Gwen S. Moore (D-WI-04)
David McKinley (R-WV-01)

*The Alliance is also aware that some legislators send their own letter in support of the Office of Museum Services, or include OMS on a letter listing their priorities to the Appropriations Committee. Those efforts are often due directly to advocate outreach to those offices. These individual letters also help our cause and are worthy of thanks on social media.

FY 2022 SENATE appropriations letter in support of the IMLS Office of Museum Services

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

We write to thank the Subcommittee for its previous support, and to urge you to support robust funding for the Institute of Museum and Library Services' (IMLS) Office of Museum Services (OMS) in the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill.

Museums across the country are struggling with the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. [Survey data](#) shows that one out of every three museums may shutter permanently without immediate support. This would amount to the loss of 12,000 museums and 124,000 jobs. 30 percent of museums remain closed since the March 2020 lockdown and those that have reopened are operating on an average of 35 percent of their regular attendance—a reduction that is unsustainable. Despite these challenges, museums continue to meet the needs of their communities—from providing spaces for remote classrooms to providing lesson plans, online learning opportunities, and learning kits for teachers and families. OMS has provided critical leadership to the museum community through administering CARES Act grants and providing science-based information and recommended practices to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 to staff and visitors engaging in the delivery of museum services.

Despite its small size, the IMLS Office of Museum Services is the largest dedicated source of investment in our nation's museums, which typically support more than 700,000 jobs and contribute \$50 billion annually to the U.S. economy. OMS funding plays a significant role in this economic impact by helping museums reach more visitors and spur community development. In addition to their economic benefits, OMS grants support museums' advancements in areas such as public health upgrades, technology, lifelong community learning, and conservation and preservation. These successes notwithstanding, only a small fraction of the nation's museums are currently being reached and many highly rated grant applications go unfunded.

Museums will be vital to the recovery of communities, big and small, urban and rural, all across the country. The demand for museum services will be greater than ever. At a time when school and community resources are strained, museums are working overtime to fill the gaps. In normal times, museums welcome annually more than 55 million schoolchildren, bring art, science and cultural heritage into communities, and partner with other nonprofits to meet the specific needs of their local population. Prior to the pandemic, museums opened their doors to more people than ever with over 850 million visits each year – with many of these visitors offered free or reduced admission. Museums are also working to address a wide range of our nation's greatest challenges. For example, some museums are conducting medical research and creating energy efficient public buildings, while others are helping veterans heal physically and psychologically and collecting food for needy families.

Congress reauthorized IMLS in late 2018 by enacting the Museum and Library Services Act of 2018 (P.L. 115-410). This legislation passed by unanimous consent in the Senate and by a wide margin of 331 to 28 in the House, showing Congress' renewed bipartisan support for the agency's programs and its commitment to providing funding. The agency is highly accountable, and its competitive, peer-reviewed grants leverage significant private resources while supporting museums in every state.

We urge the Subcommittee to support robust funding for the IMLS Office of Museum Services for FY 2022 to support the important work museums do in our districts. This vital funding will aid museums of all types and enable them to bolster economic recovery and continue to serve our schools and communities, and preserve our cultural heritage for future generations.

Again, we appreciate the Subcommittee's prior support for OMS and request this investment to strengthen and sustain the work of our nation's museums.

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Susan M. Collins
United States Senator

For your reference, here is the list of the **42 Senators who signed on to this letter last year**, led by Senators Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) and Susan Collins (R-ME). This may be an indication that they will be willing to sign the FY 2023 letter this year.

Mark Kelly (D-AZ)
Kyrsten Sinema (D-AZ)
Diane Feinstein (D-CA)
Alejandro Padilla (D-CA)
Richard Blumenthal (D-CT)
Chris Murphy (D-CT)
Thomas R. Carper (D-DE)
Raphael Warnock (D-GA)
Brian Schatz (D-HI)
Mazie Hirono (D-HI)
Tammy Duckworth (D-IL)
Richard J. Durbin (D-IL)
Ed Markey (D-MA)
Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)
Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)
Susan M. Collins (R-ME)
Angus S. King, Jr. (I-ME)
Gary C. Peters (D-MI)
Debbie Stabenow (D-MI)
Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
Tina Smith (D-MN)
John Tester (D-MT)
Margaret Wood Hassan (D-NH)
Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH)
Cory A. Booker (D-NJ)
Bob Menendez (D-NJ)
Martin Heinrich (D-NM)
Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV)
Jacky Rosen (D-NV)
Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY)
Sherrod Brown (D-OH)
Jeff Merkley (D-OR)
Ron Wyden (D-OR)
Robert P. Casey, Jr. (D-PA)
Jack Reed (D-RI)
Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI)
Tim Kaine (D-VA)
Bernard Sanders (I-VT)
Maria Cantwell (D-WA)
Tammy Baldwin (D-WI)
Joe Manchin III (D-WV)