98th Annual NEMA Conference
Getting It Paid For:
Preparing and Submitting Successful IMLS Grant Applications

Mock Proposals

Proposal 1: I Can Draw: Museum-School Art Education Program

Proposal 2: Building Pride through Community Guides

Proposal 3: Rehousing, Digitizing, and Databasing the Addison College Museum Ceramics Collection

Proposal 4: Engaging Our Refugee Community through the Arts
Proposal 1:
I Can Draw: Museum-School Art Education Program

Project Justification
The Museum of Important Art (MIA) requests $115,000 over two years from IMLS to support a robust fieldtrip program that responds to decreasing access to arts education in local public schools. MIA’s teacher advisory council has identified the need for high quality arts education programming in our community. The program seeks to build an understanding among 5-6th grade students and their teachers of the basic elements of art: texture, form, shape, color, and line. This project supports the IMLS goal of engaging learners and MIA’s strategic plan goal of providing high quality arts education through partnerships with the school district.

Project Work Plan
During year 1, MIA’s Director of Education will spend the fall semester development the new program activities and content in consultation with the museum’s teacher advisory council. The activities will consist of a pre-visit in the classroom and a full day fieldtrip to the museum. The fieldtrip experience will include a docent-led tour of the galleries, using highlights from the museum’s collection to illustrate the elements of art, as well as an art-making activity in the studio to allow students to experiment with the elements of art and demonstrate their own creativity. Additionally, the Director of Education will identify several partner schools to participate in the program, train a team of volunteer docents to facilitate the program, and recruit a School Programs Manager to coordinate the program.

In the spring semester of the first year, the School Programs Manager will begin delivering the program to local schools, many of whom are at risk and receive free or reduced lunch. We hope to serve thirty 3-5th grade classes during that time. At the end of the semester, there will be an exhibit of outstanding student artwork created in the studio at the museum for students’ family and friends, many of whom have never visited the museum before. In year two, we hope to serve an additional thirty classes each semester. We will evaluate the success of the program by tracking the number of students who participate in the program and by surveying teacher satisfaction with the program each semester. If funded, NEA funding will allow more than 3,000 students to visit the museum and receive arts education.

Project Results
After completion of the Elements of Art project, 3,000 students and their teachers will have participated in the program and will be more enthusiastic about art and creativity. We hope to present our experiences with this program at future professional conferences, including the annual meetings for AAM and NAEA in 2017.
Proposal 2:
Building City Pride through Community Guides

1. Project Justification
The Museum of Social Responsibility will create a community guide program using teens who have served time in juvenile detention. The museum is located in a part of the city that is home to many immigrant groups that are confronted with the challenges of everyday city life. Although resilient and proud of their heritage, they have suffered economically. The unemployment rate is higher than the city’s average and so are crime rates and gang activity. Only 52% of teens, on average, complete high school. Those who do not often end up working in minimum-wage jobs, if they can be found, leave the area in search of a job or fresh start, or they end up on the wrong side of the law. Many at some point have served in juvenile detention for crimes like petty theft, drug possession, and vandalism. The Museum of Social Responsibility is looking to work with a corps of these recently released juveniles and train them to serve as community interpreters. The community has five distinct neighborhoods, each with its own fascinating history and incredible architectural elements. The teens will be trained by staff to communicate the history and architecture of their respective neighborhoods. The outcomes of this project will be to give community dwellers a better sense of place and pride in their communities, the teens a sense of self-worth, responsibility as well as a job, and possibly a career choice. The museum will gain by attracting not just a teen audience but a community-wide audience which hopefully will increase membership and solidify the Museum of Social Responsibility’s position as a community leader.

2. Project Work Plan
In year one of this project, we will contact local social service and law enforcement officials and come up with a list of names of teens incarcerated in juvenile detention scheduled for release. Social Services will have already pre-determined which teens they feel would benefit most from such a partnership with the museum as well as have a proclivity for social interaction and an interest in community history. Those with bilingual skills will also be strongly considered. The museum Director will make the final selections. Our Director of Education will be responsible for training these teens at the various neighborhood locations. She will teach them local history and architecture and how to communicate effectively by employing an array of visual materials, recordings, and public speaking exercises. Each teen guide will give three tours a day five days a week. Ten guides in all will be trained. The teen guides will be responsible for recording the number of tour participants on each tour and any questions needing further research and report back to the Director of Education. They will also be responsible for handing out membership applications and surveys.

3. Project Results
The museum will have 20 teen fully-trained guides over two years. They will be competent in the social and architectural history of their neighborhoods. If the results of the survey show that the teen guides are in need of further training, then our Director of Education will work one-on-one with them to improve their knowledge and/or communications skills. The teens will develop a better sense of self, identify a possible career focus, an interest in attending college, and become ambassadors for the museum which we hope will lead to an increase in membership and visitation. Finally, we hope that these teens will serve as role models for other teens looking to do something good for themselves and their communities.
Proposal 3:  
Rehousing, Digitizing, and Databasing 
The Addison College Museum Ceramics Collection

Project Justification  
The Addison College Museum (ACM) asks for $139,236 in support of a 14-month project to provide an appropriate long-term storage environment for its 19th-Century American ceramics collections. We will use IMLS funding to purchase and install museum-quality cabinets and a digital photography setup. ACM will provide staff time to train and supervise students who will fabricate storage mounts and containers, photograph the objects, and update our database.

We will focus on this ceramics collection because the vessels are featured in our exhibits, and outside researchers ask for access to them for a variety of projects. We care for more than 350 whole (or nearly so) vessels. In addition, we have thousands of sherds recovered from archaeological kiln sites in our region, some with good provenience and some without; clay samples; kiln furniture; and pottery manufacturing tools. At any given time, we have about 15% of our collection on exhibit. We use PastPerfect and practice Integrated Pest Management.

We are part of a college and important to us is providing hands-on, real life learning experiences for students. This project will meet those criteria.

Once the project is completed, the ceramics will be protected from undesirable exposure to light, dust, temperature and RH fluctuations, their lives will be extended, and arranging them logically by type will enhance and simplify access.

Project Work Plan  
The project team will consist of our collections manager as project director, a contract conservator, two project assistants, and four part-time students. They will have regular meetings to track progress and adjust course when necessary. Over 14 months, we will order cabinets and supplies; hire/train two project assistants; hold an open house for our community; take delivery of and install cabinetry; pack and move the ceramics into a secure off-site facility; make storage mounts and containers; unpack and arrange objects in new cabinets; conduct inventory, photograph, and record permanent locations in PastPerfect; and write blogs and newsletter articles about the project.

Project Results  
Staff and students will gain a deepened familiarity with our ceramics collection. Students will learn collections care and information management skills. The objects that we have time to rehouse will be better cared for. The updated database will make it easy to locate specific items, enabling us to provide better service to researchers, staff, and students.

Students will also learn how to identify ceramics as well as some of the other materials, if there’s time. Photography and updating of our collections management database will improve our collections management, and the photos will eventually be posted on our website, although not as part of this project.

We will measure our success by counting the objects photographed, rehoused, and placed in the new cabinets. We will also ask our visiting researchers to fill out a questionnaire about their satisfaction with the hopefully improved accessibility. The benefits of this project will be sustained beyond the conclusion of the grant in that the new storage conditions are permanent and the expertise that our students gain will be translatable to future rehousing projects.
Proposal 4:
Engaging Our Refugee Community through the Arts

Project Justification
The Smithton City Museum proposes to partner with the Shank County Historical Association, the Shank County Public Library, and JobsOne! to create an innovative program using art, history, literature, and language to help with the assimilation of our burgeoning refugee community.

Our city has the second highest number of refugees in our state, and last year our county had the highest ratio of refugee entrants to public assistance caseload (17.3%) of anywhere in the entire state. Budget reductions to local school systems have resulted in 50% cuts to adult classes, which were designed to serve members of the refugee community. There is now a void and a need to provide experiences that promote inclusiveness, community, and self-sufficiency as the new refugee families acclimate to American culture. We will drive refugee engagement through programs at our anchor cultural and educational institutions with programs designed specifically for their needs and priorities.

Project Work Plan
The Smithton City Museum seeks to inspire, educate, and enrich people’s lives through direct encounters with its art collections and exhibitions. It is internationally recognized for its extensive and significant collection of art glass, 20th century ceramics, and art videos. Through a structured program at local museums and libraries, and the use of Visual Thinking Strategies (VTS), we will provide a deeper community experience to shorten the traditional resettlement time. VTS is a facilitation technique that teaches critical thinking skills through discussions about art. Through this technique, students use the visual arts to help them see, understand, and describe the world around them more effectively. The critical thinking skills developed cut across all subject areas, and ultimately help students assess and communicate with others about tasks presented to them.

Through a coordinated effort we will inspire, educate, enrich, and engage refugee families through art, history, strategic marketing, museum and library visits, VTS led tours, literacy, and digital literacy. We will:
- inspire them to learn something new by inviting them to visit our museums, libraries, and other local venues;
- educate them on our community and local heritage, literacy and digital literacy, arts and culture, and the promotion of life-long learning;
- enrich them through dedicated and follow-up museum and library visits and local walking tours; and
- engage them by providing integrating experiences with the larger community through events and visits to the library, museums, and other local venues.

We will evaluate and refine this program throughout the three year grant cycle.

Project Results
Our goal is to provide a sense of community and promote self-sufficiency to increase their contributions to the vitality of the local economy. Additionally, we seek to increase awareness of the diversity and richness of our global society among our existing community. Through this program, the refugees will become self-sufficient in our community sooner than the current three-year transition timeline which will ultimately save $2.3 million annually in county social service allocations.