



## **Institute of Museum and Library Services: Office of Museum Services Funding**

### **ACTION NEEDED**

We urge Congress to:

- Provide \$80 million in FY2022 for the IMLS Office of Museum Services (IMLS), an increase of nearly \$40 million.
- Include in this increase \$2.5 million to fund projects and to explore establishing a road map to strengthen the structural support for a museum Grants to States program to be administered by the Office of Museum Services (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.
- Include legislative report language acknowledging the authority of OMS to allow grants to be used for general operating support and provide the Director of IMLS with the statutory authority to waive OMS matching requirements for FY2022.

### **BACKGROUND**

IMLS is the primary federal agency responsible for helping museums connect people to information and ideas. Its Office of Museum Services (OMS) awards grants to museums to support educating students, preserving and digitizing collections, and engaging communities. Grants are awarded in every state, but current funding has allowed the agency to fund only a small fraction of the highly rated grant applications it receives.

OMS has provided critical leadership to the museum community through its administering of CARES Act grants for museums and by 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. In 2020, IMLS awarded \$13.8 million in CARES Act grants to 68 museums and libraries to support their response to the coronavirus pandemic.

IMLS received 1,088 applications from museums but was only able to fund 39 awards, or 4 percent, for a total of \$8.28 million — far below the \$261.5 million requested. Congress has regularly reauthorized IMLS with broad bipartisan support, most recently in 2018. OMS has set a strong record of congressional support during the appropriations submission process in each of the last eight years, with 198 representatives and 41 senators signing the FY2021 appropriations letters on its behalf. IMLS received \$257 million in FY2021 appropriations, of which \$40.5 million went to OMS.