



INSTITUTE OF MUSEUM AND LIBRARY SERVICES **IMPROVING GRANTS MANAGEMENT**

PROJECT OBJECTIVES

We worked with the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), a federal grant-making agency, in a variety of ways to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of its processes for managing a wide variety of grant programs and to achieve results that support its mission to create and sustain a nation of learners.

OUR APPROACH

We helped IMLS' state grant recipients improve their ability to administer programs, achieve better outcome-based results, and communicate about them in a compelling way through the design and delivery of five annual training conferences. These conferences bring together grant administrators in an environment of creative learning opportunities and active sharing of ideas. The cornerstone of one of these conferences was a comprehensive resource manual that we created to enable the states to develop more complete, accurate and useful strategic plans.

We developed a print-based project-planning resource manual and a correlating training program that helped applicants to IMLS' competitive grant programs improve the quality of their submissions as well as improve the results of their projects. We also played a substantial role in the development of a web-based project planning tool to improve the quality of individual grant applications from museums and libraries and to enable grant recipients and IMLS staff to track measurable performance targets, schedules, and budgets. We completed a set of content and technical requirements documents for a second, more comprehensive and sophisticated web-based tutorial on grants project planning and evaluation.

In all of these engagements, we rigorously applied Instructional Systems Design (ISD) methods and our project management methodology, based on the Project Management Institute's PMBOK (Project Management Body of Knowledge). We were committed to transferring our skills and knowledge to IMLS through the delivery of Train-the-Trainer workshops for staff.

SERVICES RENDERED

- Grants Management
- Project Management
- Process Improvement
- Training

INNOVATION AND ACHIEVEMENT

The IMLS training conferences have consistently received superior evaluations in every respect. IMLS staff members report that state grant recipients are providing better and more compelling information about their program results for IMLS to present to Congress and that turnaround time for processing reports has been considerably reduced. IMLS staff also noted a substantial improvement in the quality of the state grant recipients' strategic plans in comparison to the previous submissions.

Our efforts to link strategic planning, project planning and evaluation through the highly-rated conference activities and development of print- and web-based materials represent a substantial contribution to IMLS' key initiatives in the area of outcomes-based planning and evaluation and to the field of grants management.