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# Exploring the Broader Impact of the Twenty-first Century Museum Professionals Grant Program

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EXPLORING THE BROADER IMPACT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MUSEUM  
PROFESSIONALS GRANT PROGRAM

by

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Bachelor of Fine Art, Southern Illinois University Carbondale, 2007

A Research Paper  
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the  
Master of Public Administration

Department of Political Science  
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RESEARCH PAPER APPROVAL

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PROFESSIONALS GRANT PROGRAM

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David J. Gugerty

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial  
Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
Master of Public Administration  
in the field of Museum Administration

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## AN ABSTRACT OF THE RESEARCH PAPER OF

David J. Gugerty, for the Master of Public Administration degree in Museum Administration, presented on November 5, 2012, at Southern Illinois University Carbondale.

TITLE: EXPLORING THE BROADER IMPACT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY MUSEUM PROFESSIONALS GRANT PROGRAM

MAJOR PROFESSOR: Dr. Dona Bachman

Twenty-first century professional development requires a new approach to administration. The Institute of Museum and Library Services began a program in 2005, to promote new knowledge skills and abilities among museum staff. Grants for dissemination of best practices made under the Twenty-first Century Museum Professionals program constitute a new approach to collaboration among administrations and institutions. Research of the program shows how IMLS implemented a new initiative, examining 21MP throughout its seven-year lifespan. This paper summarizes this research and explores federal methods for defining and disseminating best practices in museum administration through grant making.

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## Introduction

Museum administrations in search of best practices are exploring new methods and resources for cultivating professionalism in their staff. Administrators use many divergent approaches to realizing their mission of collecting and disseminating information about museum programs. Still, the knowledge and skills required in the growing information society and the changing demographics of visitors require a new approach for managing the various aspects of museums from changes in administrative processes and collection management to changes in public programs and exhibits that serve the diverse learning needs of museum visitors. Museums also vary in subject discipline and scope of operation and include community organizations and institutions controlled directly by municipalities, states, and the federal government, as well as small museums to the large-scale consortium in the private and nonprofit sector. Federal support for United States museums comes in several forms. Agencies including the National Education Association, National Endowment for the Arts, National Science Foundation and National Endowment for Humanities make grant funds available to museums for discipline specific programs. However, because these agencies target their discipline specific programs, they do not necessarily support initiatives that benefit the museum field across the board (Manjarrez, Rosentein, Colgan & Pastore, 2008). One federal agency that does provide grant support to all disciplines in the entire museum community is the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

Today, we see an effort within IMLS to create new programs for advancing the skills capacity of professionals in all types of museums, so they may better serve their audiences following accepted professional standards. Creation of the 21st Century

Museum Professionals Grant program (21MP) follows changes to congressional legislation through the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003 (MLSA 2003), which requires new action from IMLS to match the standards and best practices measures required across federally supported programs in other disciplines. As a result, the development and implementation of the 21MP grant requires IMLS to examine the process of federal policymaking and the effects it has on cultivating best practices in museums. This MPA Program research paper will focus on exploring the broader impact of the IMLS 21MP grant program.

Federal agencies, such as IMLS, develop museum grant opportunities by assessing the needs of the museum sector in response to national priorities (Manjarrez, et al., 2008, p. 32). This research paper examines IMLS grant processes so museums can understand how congressional legislation supported best practices and illustrates how these best practices disseminated through the 21MP program. This information is for the benefit of potential grant applicants seeking insight into 21MP and, how it works to enhance their museum's best practices.

Exploring the broader impact infers a connection between stated need for professional development and the potential of 21MP programming to build the professional capacity among museum staff. Grant projects funded by 21MP serve a different function than general operating support, or capital funding that may come directly from the federal level. As part of IMLS's 2012-2016 strategic plan, 21MP will be under review by the newly formed IMLS Office of Policy Research, Analysis and Data Collection (IMLS, 2012). The Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Study

section of this research paper includes possible strategies for potential evaluations in reviewing 21MP projects.

### **American Alliance for Museums**

The oldest organized advocates for museums were membership driven including such groups as the American Alliance for Museums (AAM), formerly the American Association of Museums, established in 1906, and the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) established in 1940, among the largest nation-wide organizations.

The AAM in particular played a seminal role in defining the professional standards for American museums. Through its accreditation program, established in 1971, AAM has sought to measure the professional standards of American museums. Throughout its most recent history, the organization has sought to professionalize museum administration and disseminate best practices through a process involving AAM governance, informational resources, and standing professional committees. Formally defining national standards and best practices AAM (2008) states, "Standards are generally accepted levels of attainment that all museums are expected to achieve, and best practices are commendable actions and philosophies that demonstrate an awareness of standards" (p.6-7). In recognition of the importance of standards and best practices, AAM approved a body of publications entitled *Standards and Best Practices for US Museums* in 2006. This group of policy documents contains information aimed at specific areas of administrative functions and offers replicable models for association members to utilize in their own museums.

**AAM publishes best practice standards for:**

- Institutional Mission Statements
- Institutional Planning
- Institutional Codes of Ethics
- Governance
- Delegation of Authority
- Collections Stewardship
- Unlawful Appropriations
- Loans/Exhibiting Borrowed Objects
- Developing and Managing Business and Individual Donor Support
- Retrenchment and Downsizing
- Facilities and Risk Management (AAM, 2008, p. 87)

However important the role of AAM and other professional organizations have been in establishing best practices for museums, an equally important role of funding programs for museum best practices has fallen most significantly to IMLS. Collaboration among institutions in the field fosters mutual learning for all participants including museum administrators and the greater community of museum users. This research paper follows IMLS's codification of grant funding to sustain best practices and standards in museums, upholding not only the profession's definitions, but also the larger iteration of such standards in governmental legislation and practice.

## **Institute of Museum and Library Services**

The federally funded Institute of Museum and Library Services established in 1996, offers grant programs for America's museums that meet the IMLS initiatives determined by federal mandate, museums perceived needs and the social climate of the times. The agency formed from combination of the Office of Museum Services, in place since 1976 and the Library Services Office previously administered in the Department of Education. Former IMLS Director A. Rice writes, "The Institute is to provide libraries, museums, and policy makers with the resources they need to ensure that the American ideal of open access to information and ideas flourishes, and ensuring libraries and museums ability to hold the public trust and play important roles in creating an informed and educated citizenry in our democracy" (IMLS, 2006, p. 3). The Institute supports the full range of museums, including art, history, science and technology, children's museums, natural history, historic houses, nature centers, botanical gardens, and zoos; and all types of libraries, including public, school, academic, research, and archival (IMLS, 2010).

One major benefit of IMLS was that it created a broad understanding of what constitutes a professional museum, maintaining that "[a museum] employs at least one professional staff member, or the fulltime equivalent, whether paid or unpaid, primarily engaged in the acquisition, care, or exhibition to the public of objects owned or used by the institution" (2010, p.10). By this definition a variety of individuals qualify as professionals including volunteers and museum studies students. The aim of IMLS, through this broad definition, is to include as many museums as possible in their efforts to professionalize American museums.

## **Museum and Library Services Act 2003 Overview**

Central to the development of 21MP, is the Museum and Library Services Act of 2003 (MLSA) IMLS states that a strategic goal of their agency is achieving the highest level of management practices within museums to serve the public trust (2009c, p. 2). Since the enactment of their original Strategic Plan based upon the 2003 legislation, IMLS has embarked on a process of gathering knowledge about the needs of professionals in the museum community, and then conceived of ways to define successful best practices, illustrating them through case studies and by providing 21MP project grants.

IMLS states their grant programs intend to enhance institutional capacity among professional museum staff by promoting standards and methods to achieve best practices “in a myriad of ways from providing much needed technical assistance for small institutions to establishing national and replicable models, strengthening state networks, and supporting professional development” (IMLS, 2010, p.7). The points listed below illustrate the federal government’s support for professional development, research, evaluation, and policy analysis as applied to museums through the MLSA 2003 legislation.

### **Federal funds allocated in MLSA 2003 support museum services:**

- to encourage and support museums in carrying out their public service role of connecting the whole of society to the cultural, artistic, historical, natural, and scientific understandings that constitute our heritage;
- to encourage and support museums in carrying out their educational role as core providers of learning and in conjunction with schools, families, and communities;

- to encourage leadership, innovation, and application of the most current technologies and practices to enhance museum services;
- to assist, encourage, and support museums in carrying out their stewardship responsibilities to achieve the highest standards in conservation and care of the cultural, historic, natural, and scientific heritage of the United States to benefit future generations;
- to assist, encourage, and support museums in achieving the highest standards of management and service to the public, and to ease the financial burden borne by museums as a result of their increasing use by the public; and
- to support resource sharing and partnerships among libraries, schools, and other community organizations (MLSA 2003 sec 271).

The act defines a museum as any public or private nonprofit agency or institution organized on a permanent basis for essentially educational or aesthetic purposes, that utilizes a professional staff, owns or utilizes tangible objects, cares for the tangible objects, and exhibits the tangible objects to the public on a regular basis (MLSA, 2003). Relating the 21MP program requirements to the federal legislation shows a link between governance and administration. According to the definition above, we see why funding through 21MP projects intends to enhance capacity among professional museum staff.

### **Twenty-first Century Museum Professionals Program Overview**

IMLS distributes appropriations to eligible museums through a variety of networks, working at the national level and in coordination with state and local organizations to sustain heritage, culture, and knowledge. IMLS also has a unique

mission among government agencies of combining museum resources with foundations established in the formal education system to enhance the lifelong learning process of constituents. Pursuant to MLSA 2003 and the initiative for America's museums to attain the highest level of management practices to serve the public trust, IMLS began to offer grants for professional development activities as part of its two largest museum grant programs *National Leadership Grants* and the *Museums for America*. However, the highly competitive peer review process, and wide-ranging program scope makes applying for these grants difficult without the assistance of a professional staff. A volunteer or part-time organization is possibly unprepared to compete with well-established, prior recipients of IMLS grants.

The 21MP grant is "designed to strengthen the knowledge, skills, and abilities of museum professionals at all levels to help ensure that this workforce will be well-equipped to serve the diverse needs of its communities" (IMLS, 2010, p. 8). This research paper explores the methods for practically defining and disseminating best practices. It is not the scope of the paper to answer particular questions such as, how are museum staff members able to make better services available to the public through the array of improvements sponsored by the 21MP program? How do sponsored program activities connect to established best practices? In the future, answers to these questions will come from a formal evaluation of 21MP, performed in the IMLS office of planning research and evaluation, that focuses on the programs specific activities and success rates in achieving stated outcomes.

Under the 21MP, individual program applicants were required to design projects that somehow connect to the program directives and policy literature published by

IMLS. The 21MP *Field Reviewers Manual* suggests successful projects “must reflect an understanding of museum service needs in the communities to be served and explain how the proposed project will be effective in helping museum professionals meet those needs” (IMLS 2009b p.6). To aid institutions in program design, IMLS also provides tools for strategic planning and evaluation.

While seeking to implement MLSA 2003 requirements, IMLS must also comply to formal mandates from various branches of the federal government. IMLS must answer to the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA), which requires all government agencies to set goals through strategic planning, measure performance with planned evaluations, and report on their accomplishments. This act has an effect on all grants managed by IMLS. IMLS must also answer to the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (FFMIA), which defines the basis for collection and ongoing use of reliable financial information in program management throughout the government (OMB, 2011, 2001). Finally, IMLS must answer to the Government Accountability Office (GAO) concerns with the issue of addressing critical unanswered questions, “Gathering information on emerging, promising practices was a consideration [for agencies]. Particularly where evidence of effective practice has not yet been demonstrated, and is especially important if a research base was limited and effectiveness evaluations of promising practices were needed to expand the pool of evidence-based interventions to offer grantees” (GAO, 2011, p.17). Each of these federal issues has an effect on programs created by 21MP, and IMLS requires that their grantees respond to them just as IMLS itself does (2012, p. 33).

In their FY2010 performance plan, the agency states a growing need for accountability “IMLS will identify and develop new performance measures that provide reliable outcome data that is more closely aligned with the agency’s performance goals and better able to inform funding and management decisions and to improve the agency’s effectiveness” (2009c, p.43). According to this objective, IMLS is working towards proof of the assumption that federal grant funds can have impact on best practices in the field. Addressing disparity in museum administrators’ capability to access federal grant funding is a part of the 21MP mission. The language of the reauthorization of MLSA 2003, charging the IMLS with increased analysis of museum trends, offers an opportunity to address a need in the museum community for easily accessible and readily available data about our institutions (IMLS, 2005, p.24).

There are many ways IMLS can approach the mission of assisting museums in developing and maintaining professionally trained staff. Twenty-first Century Museum Professional grants intend to reach broad groups of museum professionals by supporting projects that have a wide-ranging impact throughout a city, county, state, region, or the nation.

**21MP guidelines suggest projects to build professional capacity including:**

- development and implementation of classes, seminars or workshops that deliver information on how to improve staff practices in the operation of museums;
- resources and activities to support the development of museum leaders;
- organizational support for the development of intern and fellowship programs;
- support for the enhancement of pre-professional training programs;

- collection, assessment or development of information that leads to better museum operations;
- dissemination of information to museum professionals through publications, Web sites or other means;
- activities that increase and strengthen the use of contemporary technology tools to deliver programs and services (IMLS, 2010, p. 8).

Programming developed by 21MP intends to bring the museum field to an equitable level of professionalized organization, and it is an opportunity for associated institutions to work with communities in defining and creating relationships with the public they serve. The implications of many 21MP case studies show a variety of institutions, from art museums to science centers and zoos, can benefit from adopting a 21st century skill-set.

One model type of education program where students participate in museum operations and integrate classroom skills is The Henry Ford Academy in Dearborn Michigan, begun in 1997. A curriculum developed in close consultation with the school district, the museum, and the Ford Motor Company helps students develop the skills and knowledge necessary for success in today's global, high-tech marketplace. In addition to core academic content, the program focuses on technology, communication, thinking and learning, and personal management skills for cultivating the workforce of future museum professionals (IMLS 2004 p.16). Another example of a project for building twenty-first century skills among practicing staff is the Maine Memory Network. This 21MP project focused on building collaborative research and exhibits utilizing

varied resources from regional historical societies, museums, and academic partners (IMLS, 2009a). The Maine Memory Network trains and implements several skills of twenty-first century professionals in the area of information communication and technology literacy.

IMLS (2010) states that 21MP programming is an opportunity for institutions to work with communities in defining relationships with the public they serve. There are examples of experiences museums have had with the changing conceptions of institutional authority, relationships between institution and audience, tools and modes of communication, knowledge transfer, information exchange and professional practice (2009a). The broader impact of 21 MP programs is on museum administrators' ability to use new skill-sets to enhance the longstanding mission of knowledge collection and distribution already in practice.

### **Recognized Impact of the 21MP Program**

Pastore (2009) writes that changing conceptions of institutional authority, relationships between institution and audience, tools and modes of communication, and information exchange in professional practice all have impact on the direction of museum administration today. MLSA 2003 legislation and other federally mandated regulations mentioned earlier, require trained administrators in the field to collect and share methods, models and data. As a result of this legislation, 21MP projects create pathways for museum administrators to not only develop programs to implement best practices, but it also gives them the avenue to develop and measure these program activities and their impact toward building professionalism.

Trends of the best practices approach to public management are evident in many federal government agencies. To develop their own best practices approach for program performance and management measures, IMLS examined other federal agencies that provide grant support to nonprofits and state and local government entities, to see their strategies. This method, in turn, helps IMLS to advance the current 2012-2016 IMLS strategic plan objective to “Partner with other federal agencies to leverage the resources of libraries and museums in advancing national priorities, including education, health, disaster preparedness, digital literacy and economic and workforce development.” (2012, p.15)

The best practices learning models and instruction methods defined by other agencies, in certain cases, translate directly into professional methods for museum administrators. For example, following the adoption of the Department of Education project *Partnership for 21st Century Skills* (2002) by many schools, IMLS recognized the program as an example that could be adapted by museum educators. Knowing that teaching methods, curriculum fit, and resource materials are likely to be important influences in a school’s decision to collaborate with a museum (IMLS, 2004), best practices created in 21MP programs help integrate instruction models between different types of collaborating institutions, such as schools and museums.

IMLS encourages the use of Outcomes-Based Planning and Evaluation (OBPE) when it is appropriate for an educational based project. OBPE intends to provide systematic measurements of impact at regular intervals for use in review of a projects performance. Regarding the implementation of OBPE, museum administration expert S.Weil writes that, “Museums will not only have to educate themselves as to how their

impact can be captured and described, they will also have to educate those to whom they may be accountable as to what may and may not be possible in their accounts” (IMLS, 2000, p. 25-26). Proper knowledge of OBPE, like the 21MP self-assessment tool, is necessary at the inception of a project proposal.

Twenty-first Century Museum Professionals Program grant application guidelines state that any project that identifies learning or education for any audience among its goals should plan to measure representative outcomes for that aspect of its work (2010b, 2000). This provision includes programs for the public, and learning activities designed for disseminating information among museum staff.

Increased recording of professional development activity for museum staff benefits institution performance and may provide necessary data for IMLS to prove their own worth. IMLS published the *Museum Data Collection Report and Analysis* (2005), which points to the problem of statistics and professionalism. The report states “gaps in major categories of information, lack of standard definitions for data or agreement on common data sets, and lack of sustained research activity in museums continue to impede data-sharing efforts and the ability to make useful comparisons among museums” (2005, p. 9). This is an ongoing challenge that IMLS must continue to address until the museum profession attains standardized evaluation standards.

Better data collection is part of the 21MP skills-set for information, communication and technology literacy stated in program guidelines. The IMLS (2005) report on data collection, which coincides with the beginning of 21MP, states the need for “A set of protocols for non-quantitative research, such as benchmarking best practices and case studies. In the future, capturing the results of qualitative research

more systematically with more consistent terminology will enable museums to share first-hand experiences” (p. 26).

To help identify and define new issues confronting the 21st Century Skills Initiative, IMLS undertook further research in 2008. IMLS gathered experiences and results based on an assembly of researchers from several regional conferences with museum professionals and public comments on a website. Subsequently, a task force met with the 21MP project team to refine the central concepts and review key drafts of new guidelines (IMLS, 2009a). This activity shows commitment from IMLS to disseminate current information specifically related to the skills and abilities the agency promotes and the museum field needs.

*Museums and Libraries and 21st Century Skills* (IMLS, 2009a) published as compendium to research activities in 2008, provides a framework for assessing readiness to deliver 21st Century skills, case studies, and resources to help museums work with their communities to identify and integrate best practices into their programming. The 21MP call for proposals references the document directly and suggests a self-assessment tool developed for museums to gauge their readiness to participate in the lifelong learning process (IMLS, 2010). The report “encourages museums and libraries to evolve from an intuitive approach toward learning to a more targeted and deliberate one; a disciplined self-assessment of the entire institution is required. Implementing a comprehensive 21st Century skills action agenda takes dedicated planning, strategic consensus-building, and often, robust partnerships to be effective” (IMLS, 2009a, p. 28).

The Self-Assessment Tool includes four core areas for museums to consider when designing a 21st Century skills initiative: institutional assets, leadership and management, partnerships, and accountability. Institutions rate their readiness in these categories as early stage, transitional stage, or 21st Century stage (2009a, p. 19). Results of the self-assessment are in the form of percentages representing preparedness in each of the core areas. For example, after the self-assessment, a museum may have leadership and management at 75% of the capacity in providing 21st Century skills. To improve the capacity, the museum may then develop goals and objectives for a 21MP grant proposal aimed at improving this score and attaining 21st Century skill capacity in leadership and management.

IMLS initiatives, toward meeting the learning needs of their communities, evolved through the life of the 21MP program from 2005-2011. This research paper shows connections between language in the MLSA 2003, the creation of 21MP, and administrative action required in museums to reach new standards of best practice. One result of this enhanced professionalism is the increase in data collection and reporting of findings. Program grantees are providing new self-assessment and OBPE data generated by their 21MP grant activities. The next significant challenge for administrators at IMLS is interpreting and utilizing the results of individual programs that move professional standards to create a cohesive overview of 21MP based on these results.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations for Future Study**

The Institute of Museum and Library Services' 21st Century Museum Professionals grant program was set up to recognise and disseminate best practices in

the field. IMLS developed the emphasis for this program through collaboration and research with museum professionals utilizing a multi-directional approach to ensure that the program would offer the possibilities to cultivate best practices across the museum field. The creation of 21MP shows IMLS's commitment to influence the best practices of museum administrators and demonstrates responsiveness to congressional legislation including the Museum and Library Services Act (2003), mandates by the Government Performance and Results Act of (1996), the Federal Financial Management Improvement Act (1996), and the Government Accounting Office (GAO). Formulation of the 21MP in 2005 was the result of a priority to recognize best practices in the museum field and promote professionalism in all types of museums no matter the discipline or size.

IMLS was proactive in their approach to information and data collection, in order to track program activity as required by the MLSA (2003) legislation. The broader impact of the 21MP is recognition that evidence of what works is now available in OPBE reporting and other evaluations of funded programs and museum administrators are responsible for new best practices skill-set now required in serving the public trust.

Recognizing 21MP as a program that has shaped practice across institutional boundaries, this research paper found connections between legislation, planning, and professional development initiatives for museum administrators today. For example, we see current best practices defined in the literature connected to the guidelines for grant making in legislation. By studying other agencies approaches to implementation and accountability, and strategically engaging the museum community IMLS created a relevant and accessible source for advancing the knowledge skills and abilities of

museum administrators. The implementation of the 21st Century Museum Professionals Program shows how the museum field is evolving to meet challenges of operating in a changing environment and the new learning needs of visitors.

IMLS began 21MP in 2005, to help institutions to engage in information sharing, communications and technology literacy, critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, civic literacy, and global awareness. To work towards these goals, museums determine their needs by self-assessment, which in turn helps identify areas of weakness that would be the focus of a project funded by 21MP. This self-assessment process rates a museum's progress before, during and after a 21MP project in order to quantify program goals activities and outcomes for further review as required by legislation.

In *The Future of Museums* (2009) planning discussion guide, Pastore writes that, "The metrics, both quantitative and qualitative, currently used to evaluate the impact of museums and libraries in society today may not be applicable to the kinds of services that these institutions will provide in the coming decades" (p. 21). For 21MP, there are still unanswered questions that should be recommended for future further study including: how to track program outcomes that fulfill a program's purpose; measures of planning and efforts to achieve long-term and strategic goals; and efficiency measures, to identify program costs relative to outputs or outcomes produced.

The US Government Accountability Office provides a model for agencies in the process of planning evaluations, "An effective evaluation agenda aims to provide credible, timely answers to important policy and program management questions" (2011, p.24). In setting such agenda, GAO (2011) suggests agencies may want to consider four general criteria identified by their examination of evaluation planning:

strategic priorities, program concerns, critical unanswered questions, and the feasibility of conducting a valid study. Likewise, the American Evaluation Association has addressed the issue stating, “Effectiveness of Federal programs depends on accurate feedback and analysis assessing what works, how it works, and why” (AEA, 2009, p. 2). This research paper infers a connection between stated need for evaluation capability and the potential of 21MP programming to build that capacity among museum staff. This connection is evident in the methodology of the 21MP application and review process, and is under review as part of the mission of the newly formed IMLS Office of Research Analysis and Data Collection (IMLS, 2009c, p. 42).

IMLS seeks to identify and develop new performance measures that provide reliable outcome data more closely aligned with the agency’s performance goals and are therefore better able to inform funding and management decisions and to improve effectiveness (2009c, p. 43). The organizations receiving 21MP grants, in the past, exhibit trends in type and scope of grant activity that are becoming these new performance measures. Here, we see another effort from IMLS toward addressing the need for standardized data. Following the suggested process for surveying community needs and institutional self-assessment, museums know where their needs are when creating a project designed to reach a desired outcome among participants. The list below shows three simple types of project models that could be used to categorize grant activities.

**IMLS suggested models for designing 21MP grant programs:**

- A smaller organization designs a larger regional project to disseminate successful practices

- A larger organization creates a formal partnership with many agencies to expose and disseminate successful practices
- A project that demonstrates knowledge of current and best practices in the field to enhance a museum studies program (IMLS, 2010)

Museums were not required to implement a specific model, however the agency repeatedly uses case studies and demonstration projects to define best practice. The three models listed here are one way IMLS could enter into an evaluation testing assumptions about a best practice theory and various implementation structures. There are many case studies in the literature (IMLS, 2004, 2005, 2009a) to exemplify each of these program models and methods for implementation. Again, with evaluation built into 21MP from the onset, there is more opportunity to collect reliable pre and post impact data to help gauge effectiveness.

IMLS has undertaken a mission to summarize grant-funding categories of past programs in order to provide current information regarding the nature of policy impact (2009c, p.30). Going forward, the measurement of dissemination hinges on 21MP participants' ability to measure learning outcomes and to show how 21MP funding can create replicable models. One result of collaboration among institutions is an increased reliance on the quality of information moving in the field. GAO reports, "When working with community-based organizations, agencies [such as IMLS] find grantee evaluation capacity can be very important to ensure that the selected grantee is implementing the program faithfully" (2011, p. 18).

There are implications that 21MP programming has had an effect on the core functions of museum administration, showing how the federal granting process seeks to align museum activities for professional development with legislative guidelines. These implications, however, need support from further evaluation and study. Understanding of new best practices will continue to evolve as professionals in the field move through the process of implementing and reviewing funded 21MP programs. These reviews will be the post-script of 21MP as a standalone program. Going forward IMLS (2012) is exploring new program options for including 21MP projects in the larger National Leadership Grants pool.

The broader impact of the Twenty-first Century Museum Professionals Program continues to expand throughout the community, requiring a new approach to program design and accountability with awareness toward new definitions of professionalism created by legislation and a changing administrative environment in museums.

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