

Local Museums and Libraries Rally Support for the Institute of Museum and Library Services after Recent Executive Order

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MADISON, WI—President Trump issued an executive order Friday night that would gut the only federal agency dedicated to supporting American museums and libraries. The Institute of Museum and Library Services is a

government agency that provides critical funding to museums and libraries in all 50 states.

Madison Public Library and Madison Children's Museum are issuing this joint press release to encourage public advocacy to save this essential federal agency that improves lives—locally, across Wisconsin, and nationally.

Wisconsin residents are encouraged to contact Senators Tammy Baldwin at (608) 264-5338 and Ron Johnson at (608) 240-9629 to request continued federal support for museums and libraries through the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Both MCM and Madison Public Library have long histories of grant work with IMLS.

Libraries translate IMLS funds into programs and services used in more than 1.2 billion in-person patron visits every year, and many more virtual visits, at 125,000 public, school, academic and special libraries. IMLS funds libraries at the state level, and that funding impacts service at libraries across the state.

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On my first day living in Madison, we went to the main branch library downtown. When I asked the reference librarian a question relevant to newcomers, she became the welcoming source for Madison information.

NAME: Janelle [REDACTED]

FAVORITE MADISON PUBLIC LIBRARY LOCATION: The one I am close to

Or post your story at [Facebook.com/USIMLS](https://www.facebook.com/USIMLS)

“National Leadership Grants through IMLS have allowed us to partner with libraries and museums around the country to bring innovative programs and services to Madison residents. Our nationally-recognized Bubbler arts-based learning program was launched with an IMLS grant and is now used as a model throughout the country,” says Tana Elias, Director of Madison Public Library. “And we receive services at the state and system level through IMLS funds that help fund library technology, shared online resources, and delivery of materials, making library service more efficient and cost-effective throughout the state.”

Madison Children’s Museum received a national leadership grant from IMLS to launch Caretakers of Wonder, a collaborative of museums helping children and families thrive in the face of a changing climate. MCM is currently executing a year-long IMLS grant for community engagement, evaluation, and strategic planning, which will lead to major improvements and expansions at the museum and in the community. The museum has received some, but not all, of those funds so far.

Tom Linfield, president & CEO of Madison Children’s Museum says, “The children’s museum engages with almost 200,000 visitors per year. Families value that we are a premier early-childhood destination and critical source for hands-on play, curiosity, physical and mental exploration, and multi-generational learning. Federal support has been extraordinarily important to our growth and helped us leverage additional funding. Every grant we receive is matched at least one-to-one by local donors, doubling the government’s impact.”

Both Madison Children’s Museum and Madison Public Library have been recognized by IMLS, winning the National Medal for Museum Service in 2011 and the National Medal for Library Service in 2016. The National Medal for Museum and Library Service is the nation’s highest honor for institutions that make significant and exceptional contributions to their communities.

IMLS has been central to the success not only of the Madison Public Library and Madison Children’s Museum, but to libraries, museums, zoos, and cultural centers across Wisconsin. In Madison alone, IMLS has awarded grants to beloved local institutions like the Wisconsin Historical Society,

Veterans Museum, Chazen Museum of Art, Olbrich Botanical Gardens, and MMoCA. Statewide, IMLS funding supports a diverse range of institutions from Circus World Museum and the International Crane Foundation to small town historical societies, community archives, tribal museums, and cultural centers.

Over the past 15 years, IMLS has awarded an average of 18 grants per year to Wisconsin museums, libraries, and other institutions, for a total of nearly \$70 million dollars over that span. This amount does not include millions of dollars of IMLS support for libraries provided at the state level.

Given that museums and other nonprofit cultural organizations return more than \$5 in tax revenue for every \$1 they receive in funding from all levels of government, that \$70 million in IMLS funding has generated \$350 million in tax revenue for the state over the past 15 years.

IMLS makes up only 0.0046% of the overall federal budget, while museums, in turn, generate \$50 billion dollars in economic benefits to the American economy and support more than 726,000 jobs. American museums receive bi-partisan support, and research shows that 96% of Americans want to maintain or increase federal funding for museums.

Additional Resources:

- [Full text of President Trump's Executive Order](#) 
- [List of IMLS grants awarded to Madison Children's Museum](#) 
- [Interactive search tool of IMLS grants across the country](#) 
- [Information about IMLS's mission, vision, and work](#) 
- [Statement from the American Library Association](#) 
- Video: "[The World is Better Because of Museums](#), " from the American Alliance of Museums
- "[Understanding IMLS's 'Shall' and 'May' Language](#), " from EveryLibrary Institute

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Institute of Museum and Library Services



Madison Public Library



Madison Children's Museum



Departments: [Madison Public Library](#)

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