

Collections Management Fund Grant Guidelines

About the Collections Management Program

Museums Alaska is currently accepting applications for the Collections Management grant program. The program responds to needs of the Alaska museum community to enhance collections management through professional expertise, training, and access to conservation materials and supplies. Grants will fund activities that allow organizations to build capacity in the area of collections management and the conservation of collections.

Eligibility is limited to 501(c)(3) nonprofit, government, tribal entities, or equivalent organizations located in the state of Alaska.

Deadlines: March 31 and September 30

Museums Alaska would like to thank Rasmuson Foundation for their support of this grant program. Opportunities for larger projects may be found in Rasmuson Foundation's Tier 1 and Tier 2 grant programs (<https://www.rasmuson.org/grants/>).

About Museums Alaska

Museums Alaska supports museums and cultural centers in Alaska and enhances public understanding of their value. Museums Alaska maintains a central office to receive and disburse information about museums, cultural centers and their activities, and to collect and share professional opportunities. Museums Alaska organizes an annual conference to focus on the needs of Alaska museum professionals, volunteers, and their institutions. Museums Alaska currently administers two grant programs funded by the Rasmuson Foundation: the Art Acquisition program and the Collections Management program. Details on these programs and other resources available to museums can be found on the Museums Alaska website at www.museumsalaska.org.

Eligibility & Criteria

The Collections Management program seeks applications for projects that will directly enhance the capacity of the applicant organization to care for collections held in the public trust. Applications are accepted from qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit, government, tribal entities or equivalent organizations that hold collections in the public trust, such as a museum or cultural center. Small, rural-based organizations are encouraged to apply. Applicants may only apply for one grant per cycle (two grants total per year). A funded grant project must be complete before a new application is submitted. Museums Alaska must receive the final report on the completed grant before a new grant application may be submitted.

A single application for collections management funds may incorporate activities in one or more of the following categories:

Collections Care Projects

Applicants may request funds for general collections management needs and specific projects. These projects can include requests for the supplies, equipment, and temporary staff needed to support inventory, labeling, rehousing, digitization, conservation, data management, or security projects, or any other work that directly improved the care of museum objects.

Projects may also involve the development of exhibits, if the proposed work is directly tied to providing a safe environment for object display (e.g. appropriate mounts, cases, security measures, conservation friendly materials, etc.). Grant funds may not be used to pay for exhibit work or items not directly related to object care (e.g. the production of exhibit panels or label). Applicants considering a request for exhibit support are encouraged to speak with the Project Administrator before applying.

Shipping costs for supplies and equipment are eligible grant expenses.

While salary costs for permanent staff members may not be charged to a CMF grant, applicants can request funding to support a collections assistant to work on a well-defined project.

Supplies for emergency conservation projects will be given priority.

Projects requiring large equipment should explore Rasmuson Foundation's Tier 1 and Tier 2 grant program (<https://www.rasmuson.org/grants/>).

Training

Applicants may request support for the training of museum staff and community participants. Tuition and workshop fees for training events are eligible for funding, as well as associated training costs for providing a local training event for staff and community participants. Travel expenses that support transportation, lodging, and food expenses for experts or for Alaska museum staff to attend collections-related trainings elsewhere are eligible grant expenses. Projects with an emphasis on training staff or community members who can then pass on knowledge (i.e., "train the trainers") are encouraged.

Professional Services

Applicants may request support for specific projects, including contract hiring of conservators, registrars, collections managers, etc. who can provide expertise or services beyond the capacity of staff. Eligible expenses for contractors are limited to short-term projects, and local hiring is encouraged where appropriate to the project. When hiring an expert from outside Alaska, institutions are encouraged to communicate to share expert services among communities. Museums Alaska reserves the right to group like requests into a coordinated tour by a visiting professional.

Projects that are collaborative or cooperative in nature, that benefit multiple Alaskan collecting organizations, are encouraged. Emergency conservation projects will be given priority (following a natural disaster, for example).

Emergency Collections Care Projects

Museums Alaska's Collection Management Fund prioritizes emergency collections care projects. Emergency conservation projects are given priority during normal grant cycles. If an emergency occurs in between cycles, applicants must contact the Program Administrator to discuss their emergency application. Applications must meet the below definition of "emergency collections care project" in addition to the Collections Management Fund guidelines. If funding is available, applicants will be given access to an online emergency application form. After an application is submitted, the Program Administrator will convene an emergency panel of 5 reviewers. Applicants will typically receive a decision on their application within 3 weeks.

For the purposes of this fund, "emergency collections care project" is defined as meeting both of the below criteria:

- Collections need immediate attention, and time is a factor in the protection of the collection;
AND

- Collections are directly impacted by one of the following emergencies:
 - Federally declared disasters: <https://www.fema.gov/disasters>
 - Earthquake
 - Explosion
 - Fire
 - Hazardous spill
 - Mold or mildew
 - Nuclear disaster
 - Pests
 - Power loss
 - Storm
 - Structural failure
 - Utilities failure
 - Volcanic eruption
 - Water or flooding

All grant-supported projects must be complete within two years of receipt of grant funds. Applicants should provide a clear schedule for completing their project within this time frame. Grant amounts will be awarded up to \$15,000. Matching funds are encouraged but not required. Price quotes, estimates, and bids for contracted services and/or significant purchases are highly recommended. Supporting materials also encouraged are: letters of commitment; recruitment announcements for short-term hires; temporary position descriptions, and letters of support. Grant awards must be successfully completed and closed before applying for additional support through this program.

Individuals, for-profit, and 501(c)(4) or (c)(6) organizations and non-Alaska-based organizations are not eligible for grant funding. Ineligible uses include:

- Reimbursement of pre-award costs
- Salary of permanent staff positions
- Construction
- Pass-throughs, re-granting, or other financial assistance to nonprofits
- Indirect costs
- Fundraising projects
- Exhibit expenses not directly related to the care or management of museum objects

Applicants should be aware that many of Museums Alaska's board of directors work in the museum field. Members of the board have a duty to disclose any possible conflict of interest. It is the applicant's responsibility to be familiar with the current Museums Alaska board of directors and contact the Program Administrator if a conflict of interest may exist. A current list of the Museums Alaska board of directors can be found on our website (www.museumsalaska.org).

Application Review/Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated by a five-member committee of volunteers from Museums Alaska's membership. Volunteers will be selected by the program administrator from a list of candidates generated at the Museums Alaska annual meeting and through membership forms. To the extent possible, reviewers will not come from institutions that have submitted an application in a given grant cycle, or will recuse themselves when unavoidable. Reviewers may serve up to three years. Two reviewers will rotate off the committee each year and be replaced by two new reviewers. After a one-year hiatus, a former reviewer may volunteer to serve on the committee again. Alternate reviewers may be appointed by the Project Administrator if needed to complete a grant review.

Applications will be forwarded to the review committee by the Project Administrator only if they are:

1. From an organization eligible to apply for funding.
2. Complete – all required information and attachments are present. An incomplete application from an eligible organization will be returned to the applicant.
3. The project is an eligible activity under the grant guidelines outlined herein.

Applications will be evaluated based on the extent to which:

1. The proposal clearly states the organization's need for collections management funds;
2. The project is well-designed with clear and realistic goals, including a schedule for completion;
3. The application describes how the proposed project will enhance the applicant's ability to deliver programs or services;
4. The funding requested is appropriate for the activities proposed;
5. The proposed budget is adequately justified and supported by budget narrative;
6. The project will have benefits that last beyond the grant term.

Every applicant will be sent an official notice of the award decisions. If a grant has been approved, a Grant Agreement and associated materials are sent. The Grant Agreement

sets forth the terms and conditions of the grant. A signature obligates the grant recipient to conduct the project as described in the proposal and to accept the conditions outlined in the Agreement and these Guidelines. With the receipt of the signed agreement, the grant is “activated.”

If significant changes need to be made to a project’s grant budget and/or program plans, please be in touch with Museums Alaska to discuss prior to making changes.

Requirements and Reporting

A final report will be submitted to Museums Alaska within 30 days of grant end date. Grantees will be required to submit a signed grant agreement prior to the disbursement of funds. A new grant will not be awarded until the prior grant is closed out by submitting a final report.

Museums Alaska reserves the right to require return of funds if it deems that the grantee has not complied with the terms of the grant agreement for use of funds from Museums Alaska, or to comply with any law or regulation affecting the grantee, grant or Museums Alaska.

Acknowledgements

A museum receiving an award must acknowledge the support of Rasmuson Foundation in its records, in any printed or electronic information materials (catalogs, flyers, websites, etc.) produced to record or promote the project, and in any press released to the museum’s local news media announcing the project. **Note:** it is not necessary to issue a press release for every project.

Public acknowledgement of the support of Rasmuson Foundation should be expressed in the following standard format: “Project made possible with the support of the Rasmuson Foundation.” Note: the assistance of Museums Alaska must be acknowledged in press releases.

Proposals

The link to the online application form is located on Museums Alaska’s website: www.museumsalaska.org. **Applications and final grant reports must be filled out and submitted electronically.**

Questions?

Examples of successful applications can be found on our website at www.museumsalaska.org.
Please direct all inquiries to:

Executive Director
Museums Alaska
director@museumsalaska.org
907-474-5484