

IMLS Funding in Jeopardy: What It Means for Libraries

On March 31, 2025, staff at the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) were placed on administrative leave for up to 90 days, following a March 14 Executive Order reducing the agency to the minimum function required by law. The loss of IMLS will have widespread consequences for libraries and museums nationwide, particularly in underserved communities.

Impact on Libraries Nationwide

IMLS funding supports essential library programs, including literacy initiatives, technology access, professional development, and preservation efforts. Without federal support, libraries may struggle to maintain these services.

Impact on New York State Library

New York State Library, which receives \$8.1 million annually from IMLS, is particularly vulnerable. Federal funding supports essential functions, including:

- **Statewide Library Aid Distribution:** Overseeing the allocation of \$104.6 million in state aid.
- **Public Library Construction Grants:** Administering \$45 million in funding for library facilities.
- **Research Library and Special Collections:** Managing 20 million items, including historical documents.
- **Digital Access and Literacy Programs:** Supporting statewide online resources and literacy initiatives.

Clarifying Local Library Funding

IMLS funding does not directly impact local library budgets or tax levies. Public libraries with dedicated local funding through tax levies or municipal budgets will continue to receive that support. However, reduced federal funding may limit grant programs and specialized state-wide services which will likely result in the need for increases in local funding.

Take Action

The American Library Association (ALA) urges advocates to contact congressional representatives and support continued IMLS funding. For more information, visit the ALA's FAQ on the Executive Order targeting IMLS and participate in their advocacy campaign.

<https://www.ala.org/faq-executive-order-targeting-impls>

<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/show-up-for-our-libraries>