

LSTA Five-Year Evaluation 2013 - 2017

IMLS LSTA State Programs



Purpose of the evaluation



IMLS' authorizing legislation

- Directs State Libraries to "independently evaluate, and report to IMLS regarding, the activities assisted, prior to the end of the 5-year plan."
- Provides an opportunity to measure progress in meeting the targets set in the approved five-year plan and is designed to help states make effective resource allocation decisions in their upcoming five year plans.



IMLS' guidance

- Provides a core set of research questions that are designed to:
 - Highlight effective past practices;
 - Identify processes at work in implementing the activities in the plan, including the use of performance-based measurements in planning, policy making and administration, and;
 - Develop key findings and recommendations from evaluating the past five years for inclusion in the next five year planning cycle. Provides an opportunity to measure progress in meeting the targets set in the approved five-year plan and is designed to help states make effective resource allocation decisions in their upcoming five year plans.



Research questions



IMLS' guidance

- Research questions are divided into three main areas:
 - Retrospective assessments
 - Did the activities undertaken through the state's LSTA plan achieve results related to priorities identified in the Act?
 - To what extent did programs and services benefit targeted individuals and groups?
 - Process assessments
 - How have performance metrics been used to guide policy and managerial decisions affecting SLAA's LSTA supported programs and services?
 - What have been important challenges to using outcome-based data to guide policy and managerial decisions over the past five years? and;



IMLS' guidance

- Research questions are divided into three main areas:
 - Prospective analysis
 - How will lessons learned about improving the use of outcome-based evaluation inform the state's next five year plan?
 - How does the SLAA plan to share performance metrics and other evaluation-related information within and outside of the SLAA to inform policy and administrative decisions during the next five years?
 - How can the performance data collected and analyzed to date be used to identify benchmarks in the upcoming five-year plan?
 - What key lessons has the SLAA learned about using outcome-based evaluation that other States could benefit from learning? Include what worked and what should be changed.



IMLS' guidance

- Research questions are divided into three main areas:
 - Prospective analysis - optional
 - What are the major challenges and opportunities that the SLAA and its partners can address to make outcome-based data more useful to federal and state policy makers as well as other stakeholders?
 - Based on the findings from the evaluation, include:
 - Recommendations for justifying the continuation, expansion and/or adoption of promising programs in the next five-year plan.
 - Recommendations for justifying the potential cuts and/or elimination of programs in the next five-year plan.



IMLS' guidance

- Evaluation methodology:
 - Identify how the SLAA implemented the selection of an independent evaluation using the criteria in the guidance document.
 - Explain who was involved in conducting the state's evaluation. What stakeholders contributed to providing and interpreting evaluation data?
 - Describe the types of statistical and qualitative methods used in conducting the evaluation. Include administrative information as well.
 - Document any tradeoffs made in the selection and implementation of the selected evaluation methods.
 - Discuss strategies used for disseminating and communicating the key findings and recommendations.
 - Assess the validity and reliability of the data used for conducting this evaluation study.



Evaluator selection



Evaluation Process and evaluator selection

- Effective evaluation is both rigorous and objective, and carried out free from outside influence.
- Be able to demonstrate that the evaluator does not have a role in carrying out the LSTA-funded activities and is independent of those who are being evaluated or who might be favorably or adversely affected by the evaluation results.
- The evaluator must be able to demonstrate professional competency to rigorously conduct the evaluation, including demonstrated expertise in statistical and qualitative research methods.



Report format



Format of Report

- Cover Page (1 page)
- Evaluation Summary (2-5 pages)
- Body of the Evaluation Report (not to exceed 25 pages)
 - Background of the study
 - Description of the methodology employed
 - Evaluation Findings
 - Be organized around each specific priority in the IMLS authorization addressed under the State's 5-year plan.
- Annexes
 - List of acronyms;
 - List of people interviewed (with full coordinates if appropriate and not in breach of confidentiality);
 - Bibliography of all documents reviewed;
 - Optional output of statistical findings
 - Optional summaries of coding used in any qualitative analyses.
 - Copies of any research instruments used for surveying, interviewing and/or use of focus groups.



Submission to IMLS



Submission

- Deadline for submission: March 30, 2017
- IMLS acceptance of the report: On or before September 30, 2017



Your thoughts? Questions?

