



Native American / Native Hawaiian Museum Services

Sample Application MN-255398-OMS-24

Oneida Indian Nation

Amount awarded by IMLS:	\$248,212
Amount of cost share:	\$0

The Oneida Indian Nation will address recommendations from a recent preservation assessment by purchasing and installing museum-quality mobile shelving in the Nation's newly renovated Archives Room. Project activities include purchasing the new shelving, rehousing and cataloging the collections and archival materials, moving the collection to a temporary location, installing the new shelving, and re-shelving the collections in the Archives Room. The project will improve the safety and security of the collection and support the nation's efforts to reclaim, preserve, and sustain Oneida culture, heritage, and knowledge.

Attached are the following components excerpted from the original application.

- Narrative
- Schedule of Completion
- Performance Measurement Plan

When preparing an application for the next deadline, be sure to follow the instructions in the most recent Notice of Funding Opportunity for the grant program to which you are applying.

Project Justification

Introduction: The Oneida Indian Nation (“Oneida”) respectfully requests a grant of \$248,212 from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) to significantly improve its archival and collections storage practices by installing new museum-quality mobile shelving and ensuring that all items are individually labeled and stored in archival-quality packaging. Ultimately, the project will build Oneida’s capacity to preserve its historical and cultural artifacts and repatriate additional items from other institutions and collections. Improving the archives and collections storage environment is a critical component of Oneida’s long-term plan to meet the complex preservation challenges of its significant cultural holdings for future generations.

About the Oneida Indian Nation: The Oneida Indian Nation is a sovereign Indian nation (see 88, Fed. Reg. 2112, 2113 (January 12, 2023)) with many Oneida Members residing on or near their ancestral homelands. Oneida lands consist of approximately 18,038 non-contiguous acres located within a 350.6 square-mile area of central New York State, encompassing portions of Madison and Oneida Counties. The Oneida Indian Nation is governed by Council, which is composed of as many as three members from each of Oneida’s Clans: Wolf, Turtle, and Bear. Council approves one or more Nation Representative(s) to represent Oneida in governmental and business affairs. Ray Halbritter is currently the sole Nation Representative and has served in this position since 1975.

The Oneida Reservation was recognized by the 1794 Treaty of Canandaigua between the Oneida Indian Nation and the fledgling United States of America. Throughout the past four centuries, Oneida was dispossessed of much of its homelands. Oneida has worked resolutely for decades to reacquire the land and cultural patrimony of the Oneida Indian Nation lost during centuries of broken promises and forgotten treaties. In recent decades, Oneida has reacquired many of its previously alienated lands for cultural, social, agricultural, and government uses; hunting; housing; diversified businesses; and economic development.

The diverse Oneida collection reflects the depth of the culture and how far Oneida has come in reclaiming its cultural heritage. The collection features more than 10,000 items essential to Oneida cultural patrimony. These include historical documents, textiles, baskets, and artifacts made of bone, wood, stone, and metal. Some items have been found through archeological efforts, many were repatriated as a result of negotiations with various entities, while individual collectors, universities, federal repositories, museums, and Oneida Members have donated others. Examples of significant items include (1) a book by Benjamin Franklin in which he lauds the structure of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy; (2) wampum belts and strings that demonstrate the authority of the spoken word representing treaties, tribal position, and the history of the Oneida Indian Nation; and (3) the pipe of Chief Skenondoa (also spelled Shenandoah), a hero of the War for American Independence, wampum keeper of the Oneida Indian Nation, and the inaugurator of government-to-government agreements with the U.S. federal government.

The Oneida Indian Nation Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan guides the conservation and preservation of the collection. The entire collection is currently housed in a secure and stable building with a space designated as the Archives Room. A recent third-party collection and facility assessment (see “Supportingdoc1.pdf” for excerpts from the assessment report) revealed that

the Archives Room provides a stable preservation environment but requires improvements to facilitate long-term preservation or growth of the collection. The Oneida Indian Nation has a long-term plan to build capacity for collections care and management; this project is an important foundational step in achieving the plan goals.

Program Objectives: The proposed project addresses IMLS Objective 3: Support the management and care of Indigenous collections and their associated documentation. Maintenance of the Oneida Indian Nation’s cultural collection upholds Oneida sovereignty as the diverse collection is evidence of a vibrant, active civilization that values its people, its place in the world, and its independence. The artifacts and records in the collection are physical representations of Oneida culture and are, therefore, priceless and irreplaceable. The longer they can be maintained and stand as affirmation of the significance of the Oneida Indian Nation, the stronger the Oneida people will be.

How the Project will Strengthen Museum Services: The proposed project will promote long-term institutional resilience by implementing sustainable preservation strategies recommended by two professional assessors in September 2022. The project builds on a recent Sustaining Cultural Heritage Collections implementation grant award from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) that will support efforts to carry out many of the assessors’ recommendations. (See “Supportingdoc1.pdf” for excerpts from the assessment report.) Selected recommendations from the report will be implemented over time, and the most urgent are currently being addressed using support from the NEH grant. The Oneida Indian Nation will use NEH funding to improve the envelope and environment of the Archives Room. Specifically, the grant will support installing a vapor barrier, new insulation, a new HVAC system, a high-security storage cage, and new LED lighting. IMLS funding will allow Oneida to address the final major collection storage challenges identified by the assessors: inadequate storage and obsolete storage practices. New museum-quality, state-of-the-art shelving and updated packaging will protect the items in the Oneida collection for many years to come.

The project will also further repatriation efforts. With support from a National Park Service Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Documentation grant, Oneida is currently updating its NAGPRA policies and procedures to increase its capacity to repatriate Oneida artifacts, cultural items, and human remains and collaborate with other institutions to carry out the NAGPRA process. Oneida is working with a consultant to (1) update policy documents that codify processes for identifying and repatriating items of Oneida cultural patrimony currently held outside the Oneida Indian Nation; (2) create an inventory and database of Oneida artifacts and human remains held by NAGPRA-eligible institutions; and (3) establish lines of communication between the Oneida Indian Nation and NAGPRA-eligible institutions to ensure the safe transition of Oneida artifacts.

Need: Over the last few centuries, Oneida lands were reduced, and many historical and cultural artifacts were stolen or sold and removed from Oneida possession. By the early twentieth century, the Oneida Indian Nation was dispossessed of all of its ancestral homelands except for 32 acres. Over the past few decades, reacquiring Oneida land and repatriating Oneida cultural artifacts, historical documents, funerary items, and human remains have been priorities for the

Oneida Indian Nation. Each item added to the collection represents a connection to Oneida cultural history and is a priceless artifact that must be preserved for future generations.

The Oneida artifact and historical records collection is housed in the Archives Room, a secure storage room in the basement of a larger Oneida facility. To maintain the collection's security, the exact location of this room is not made publicly known. The Oneida Indian Nation originally housed computer servers in the room but repurposed it in 2002 as the Archives Room to store, protect, and sustain Oneida cultural artifacts. The renovations to the Archives Room, funded through NEH and scheduled to begin in January 2024, mark the first significant improvements to the storage space since 2002. The Oneida Indian Nation's desire to acquire, preserve, and conserve historical and cultural articles requires that the Archives Room be updated and prepared to house more pieces safely and securely well into the future.

As noted above, a multidisciplinary team completed a professional assessment of the collection and the Archives Room facility in 2022. The team included Jeremy Linden of Linden Preservation Services as the Building Assessor, Rachel Perkins Arenstein of A.M. Art Conservation, LLC as the Collections Assessor, Oneida's Director of Nation Facilities Paul Gwilt, and Oneida's Historic Resources Specialist Jesse Bergevin. The team met on site for two days in February 2022, during which the team visually examined the Archives Room, thoroughly examined collection items, took photographs, and measured relative humidity and temperature (see "Supportingdoc1.pdf" for excerpts from the assessment report produced by Linden and Arenstein.)

The professional assessment and internal observations identified multiple long-term threats to the collection and made recommendations for appropriately addressing them. Preservation threats include the possibility of molds, fungus, or rot caused by varying temperature and humidity levels; pests, including insects and mice that find their way into the room through small cracks in the walls, floors, and ceilings; human interference, including negligence or criminal activity; and natural or manmade disasters that cause damage to the entire structure (including the Archives Room). Oneida will use the grant from the NEH to significantly improve the preservation environment and prevent damage through upgrading the envelope of the Archives Room and its HVAC systems, environmental monitoring, lighting, and security.

A list of conditions and remaining challenges related to storage is provided in the following table. IMLS funding for the proposed project will address these needs.

Project Element	Current Conditions	Challenges
Storage of artifacts and historical records	Artifacts are kept on open steel wire shelving in a variety of boxes, plastic totes, and bags or are open to the air.	Artifact bags and some boxes are archival quality, but the plastic totes and most boxes are not archival quality and do not facilitate long-term preservation. Artifacts left open to the air are not protected from environmental threats.
Storage of high-value artifacts	High-value artifacts are kept in boxes on shelves with other artifacts.	No area exists to provide additional security for high-value artifacts.
Inadequate storage	The current space and shelving are insufficient to contain the increase in artifacts expected to be added to the collection over the next five to 10 years through acquisition and repatriation efforts.	The current shelving is not conducive to reorganization or the use of current best practices in environmental stability, access, management, and storage. The shelving is open on all sides, limiting the use of the space and putting the artifacts at risk of damage.

Current State of Intellectual and Physical Control: The Oneida Indian Nation Historic and Cultural Preservation Plan outlines the physical and intellectual control of the collections. The Oneida Indian Nation follows Department of Interior standards for artifact management as defined in 36 CFR 79. The proposed project will support efforts to further strengthen Oneida collections management practices. The collections inventory is maintained in multiple formats, including the PastPerfect collections management software, spreadsheets, and paper records. After the new collections shelving is installed, the project team will rehouse the individually labeled items following established labeling protocols. This will ensure that collection inventories match physical locations in the updated Archives Room.

Target Group and Beneficiaries: The primary target group and beneficiaries of the proposed project are the members of the Oneida Indian Nation, their children, and future generations. Oneida acknowledges the importance of the collection to preserve and sustain Oneida culture, heritage, and knowledge. See “Supportingdoc2.pdf” for an agreement signed by Ray Halbritter, Nation Representative, authorizing the project and this grant application.

Additional beneficiaries include researchers, institutions of higher education, museums, and cultural institutions, and interested members of the general public. Items from the collection are regularly displayed in the Shako:wi Cultural Center (open to the public) and other locations throughout the Oneida Indian Nation. Researchers have used the collection for scholarly work on the Indian tribes of the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) Confederacy, Haudenosaunee archaeology and systems of exchange, and Oneida folklore, myth, and history. Oneida maintains partnerships with colleagues from Cornell University, the State University of New York (SUNY) at Albany and

Binghamton, Hamilton College, Fort Drum Army Military Reservation, Colgate University, historical societies, county departments, and other Indian tribes. Through collaborative archeological preservation programs, presentations by Oneida staff, tours of the Oneida Shako:wi Cultural Center, and more, these partnerships further the understanding of Oneida history and connections to the land, other Indian nations, and the communities that developed in and around the Oneida Indian Nation. Likewise, county historians, academics, local government officials, and others involved with resources and sites regularly contact Oneida to request information, share resources, and make joint presentations, among other cooperative efforts.

Project Work Plan

Project Activities: The Oneida Indian Nation will use IMLS funding to address the aforementioned storage challenges by purchasing and installing museum-quality, state-of-the-art shelving in the Archives Room and ensuring that all items are labeled and housed according to current best practices in environmental preservation and collections storage. Oneida will carry out the project in stages while completing the renovations to the Archives Room funded by the NEH. Oneida expects the project to take three years.

While Oneida already has quotes for the new shelving (see Supportingdoc3.pdf), it will follow its Procurement Policy for Federal Grants to solicit and evaluate quotes for the shelving system from a variety of potential vendors. The Project Director will consider each vendor's capacity, experience, product quality, and cost before proposing a vendor to Oneida leadership for approval and ultimate selection for the project.

The Oneida Indian Nation will use IMLS grant funds to purchase archival-quality storage materials, including boxes, document sleeves, acid-free tissue paper, and archival pens, to improve collection storage practices and extend the lives of the items in the collection. Grant funds will also support the purchase of a HEPA vacuum cleaner, bags, and filters, as recommended by the assessors. Beginning in July 2024, the Historic Resources Specialist will clean, label, and pack all items in the collection according to best practices and guidelines specified by the assessors. He will then remove all items to a temporary secure storage location. Oneida will repurpose the existing shelving into the Archives workspace that the Historic Resources Specialist uses when actively working with items from the collection, such as cleaning, photographing, or preparing items for exhibition.

Oneida's Director of Nation Facilities will prepare the Archives Room for the renovations. Installation of the vapor barrier, lighting, security cage, and new HVAC system, funded by NEH, will take place between July 2025 and early 2026. After the HVAC system is installed and renovations are complete, Oneida's Director of Nation Facilities will supervise the installation of the new solid shelving unit system (supported through IMLS funding) by the selected vendor. The proposed shelving system will include two 8' x 42' mobile cabinet units and two freestanding cabinets that feature locks, gaskets to prevent moisture, and adjustable shelving. The system's closed, locking cabinets will improve the security of high-value items such as wampum and Skenondoah's pipe and delicate items like regalia and basketry that are sensitive to light damage. The new shelving will allow Oneida to reorganize collection materials and separate artifacts for their protection and more targeted access.

Once the new shelving is in place, the Historic Resources Specialist will coordinate the safe transport of all items in the collection back to the renovated Archives Room and the housing of all items on the new shelving. Like items will be grouped together, making it easier for the Historic Resources Specialist to access artifacts and records and make them available upon request for research and cultural and historical studies. The Historic Resources Specialist will place items on the new shelving according to the established labeling protocol. Each enclosed unit of shelving will protect the items within from the various environmental threats that can damage delicate objects for many years to come.

Risks and Mitigation Plans: Oneida does not anticipate any serious risks to the successful implementation of the project. Given that the Archives Room is in the basement, delivery and installation of the shelving units may pose challenges. The Project Director will address this issue in the request for bids and ask bidders to provide a viable strategy for installation.

Oneida also acknowledges continuing supply chain issues that may affect the project timeline and has accounted for possible delays in the attached schedule of completion.

Project Personnel: Paul Gwilt, Director of Nation Facilities, will serve as Project Director. For more than 30 years, Gwilt has administered Oneida facilities through tremendous growth, which saw new enterprises and existing buildings repurposed. Gwilt is directly responsible for daily maintenance and repairs of Oneida government buildings, roads, parking lots, and property. His duties include internal and external care and preventive maintenance of buildings, including structural repairs, building utilities, and major systems such as heating, ventilation, and air conditioning. The facilities in Gwilt's charge are stretched across more than 18,000 acres in an area of more than 350 square miles and include health care facilities, the Children and Elders Center, thirteen convenience stores, numerous governmental, retail, and office facilities, a car care center, and the Shako:wi Cultural Center. Gwilt will coordinate all renovation activities within the Archives Room, including the installation of the new shelving.

Jesse Bergevin, Historic Resources Specialist for the Oneida Indian Nation since 1999, will support project activities related to items in the Oneida collection. Bergevin is tasked to inventory, catalog, curate, archive, display, interpret, and store the Oneida collection; maintain and ensure the appropriate use of the PastPerfect database; and manage the artifact and cultural resource displays used in education, interpretation activities, and public access. Bergevin reports directly to the Oneida Indian Nation General Counsel and works closely with the Nation Representative in performing his duties. Mr. Bergevin's level of expertise and more than 20 years of experience working in this role give him the skills and knowledge needed to implement the recommendations related to the collection included in the assessment. For the proposed project, Bergevin will clean, label, pack, and remove all items in the collection to a secure location prior to the installation of the new shelving and then reshelve them in the new shelving units after installation.

Required Resources: The Oneida Indian Nation respectfully requests \$248,212 in funding for direct and indirect project costs, including staff time for the Historic Resources Specialist, the new shelving units, vacuum and accessories, labeling supplies, packaging materials, and travel to IMLS-designated grantee meetings.

Tracking Progress, Performance Measurement, and Evaluation: The Project Director will oversee the project to assess progress according to the timeline described above and in the schedule of completion attachment, ensure completion of all tasks, and address any challenges that arise. He will provide reports to his immediate supervisor at least twice a month and updates no less frequently than quarterly to the Deputy General Counsel or his designee.

Project Results

Intended Results: The addition of museum-quality shelving to the Archives Room will significantly improve the safety and security of the precious and priceless Oneida artifacts and protect them from a variety of natural and man-made threats, including but not limited to water damage, pests, molds and fungi, and human activity. The new shelving will allow Oneida to reorganize and separate artifacts for their protection and more targeted access. Improved storage and access will make it easier for the Oneida Indian Nation to support research and cultural and historical studies. It will also ensure that future items repatriated from private collections, universities, museums, and other entities will be archived appropriately upon acquisition.

Changes in the Knowledge, Skills, Behaviors, and/or Attitudes of the Target Group: The artifacts housed in the Archives Room are the record of a people that has existed since time immemorial. For most of its long existence, the Oneida Indian Nation maintained an oral tradition with no written language. The artifacts in the Oneida archives are the tangible connection between that spoken history and the present day. The proposed project is essential for the Oneida Indian Nation to continue to reclaim, preserve, and sustain Oneida culture, heritage, and knowledge. The project will preserve priceless cultural resources for Oneida Members. The rich culture and heritage of the Oneida Indian Nation will be honored with an appropriate space to hold priceless Oneida cultural artifacts and historical documents, thus making them available for generations to come.

How Care, Condition, Management, Access to, and Use of the Collections will Improve: The proposed project will ensure that all items are labeled, packaged, and stored according to Department of Interior standards for archives management and recommendations made by the assessors. It will improve care, condition, management, access to, and use of the collection as described in “Intended Results” above.

Products: The project will not result in tangible products.

Sustainability: Preserving and sustaining valuable Oneida artifacts and historical documents according to museum best practices is the primary goal of this project. The new shelving and storage practices will support preservation and sustainability well beyond the grant period. Further resources should not be necessary to sustain the materials for the foreseeable future.

**Oneida Indian Nation Collection Care Upgrade
 IMLS Native American/Native Hawaiian Museum Services Grant
 Schedule of Completion**

Year 1 Activities	July 2024	Aug. 2024	Sept. 2024	Oct. 2024	Nov. 2024	Dec. 2024	Jan. 2025	Feb. 2025	Mar. 2025	Apr. 2025	May 2025	June 2025
Project Director follows Oneida’s Procurement Policy for Federal Grants to select a vendor for the new shelving system.	X	X	X	X	X							
Historic Resources Specialist packages and labels all artifacts and historical records for relocation to temporary secure storage						X	X	X	X	X	X	
Historic Resource Specialist coordinates the safe transport of all artifacts and historical records to the temporary secure storage space.								X	X	X	X	X

Year 2 Activities	July 2025	Aug. 2025	Sept. 2025	Oct. 2025	Nov. 2025	Dec. 2025	Jan. 2026	Feb. 2026	Mar. 2026	Apr. 2026	May 2026	June 2026
Complete NEH-funded renovation work – install vapor barrier, new insulation, new HVAC system, high-security storage cage, and new LED lighting in the Archives Room.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
Vendor installs shelving system										X	X	X

Year 3 Activities	July 2026	Aug. 2026	Sept. 2026	Oct. 2026	Nov. 2026	Dec. 2027	Jan. 2027	Feb. 2027	Mar. 2027	Apr. 2027	May 2027	June 2027
Clean Archives Room to remove dust and debris prior to re-shelving the collection	X	X										
Re-shelve the collection in renovated Archives Room			X	X	X	X						
Project evaluation and planning for next steps							X	X	X	X	X	X

Applicant Name: Oneida Indian Nation

Project Title: Oneida Indian Nation Collections Care Upgrade

Performance Measure	Data We Will Collect (e.g., counts, costs, weights, volumes, temperatures, percentages, hours, observations, opinions, feelings)	Source of Our Data (e.g., members of the target group, project staff, stakeholders, internal/external documents, recording devices, databases)	Method We Will Use (e.g., survey, questionnaire, interview, focus group, informal discussion, observation, assessment, document analysis)	Schedule (e.g., daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, annually, beginning/end)
Effectiveness: The extent to which activities contribute to achieving the intended results	<p>Example: At the end of each month, using a report prepared by the registrar, we will compare the cumulative count of rehoused objects against the total number proposed for the project.</p> <p>Example: At the end of each project year, our external consultant will present results of the ongoing observation-based evaluation and compare them against our intended project results.</p> <p>At the end of the project period of performance, the Project Director will demonstrate that the new shelving units are installed correctly and working properly by providing proof of professional installation and inspection.</p>			
Efficiency: How well resources (e.g., funds, expertise, time) are used and costs are minimized while generating maximum value for the target group	<p>Example: Twice per year, we will assess our expenditures for program supplies on a per-person-served basis.</p> <p>Example: Each quarter, we will calculate the dollar value of volunteer hours contributed to the project as recorded in our online volunteer management system.</p> <p>All equipment and supplies purchases conducted as components of this project will follow the Nation's Procurement Policy for Federal Grants, which ensures a fair and cost-effective purchasing process as reflected in the final purchasing documentation packets.</p>			
Quality: How well the activities meet the requirements and expectations of the target group	<p>Example: At the beginning, the mid-point, and end of the project, we will administer a satisfaction survey to staff who have participated in the training.</p> <p>Example: We will gather opinions about our online services through questionnaires provided to every 20th user.</p> <p>At the end of the project period of performance, the Historic Resources Specialist will demonstrate that all Nation artifacts are cleaned, labeled, packaged, and rehoused in the new shelving within the Archives Room by leading the Nation Representative or designee through a guided tour of the Archives Room.</p>			
Timeliness: The extent to which each task/activity is completed within the proposed timeframe	<p>Example: Every six months, our Project Director will assess the fit between our proposed Schedule of Completion and actual activity completion dates.</p> <p>Example: Each quarter, each project partner will submit to our Project Director a templated report showing their progress on meeting project milestones.</p> <p>The Director of Facilities, Historic Resources Specialist, and Grant Administrator will meet at least quarterly to assess project progress against the proposed timeline.</p> <p>All project activities will be completed within the period of performance for the grant as demonstrated by adherence to the proposed project timeline.</p>			