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IMLS Press Contact

202-653-4799

Giuliana Bullard, gbullard@imls.gov

AEP Press Contact

202-326-8696

Laura Johnson, lauraj@ccsso.org

Call for Existing Research on Arts Programs

IMLS Joins Arts Education Partnership to Expand Body of Evidence on the Role of Arts Education Programs in America's Museums and Libraries

Washington, D.C. – Museums and libraries across the nation stand as community anchors and gateways to learning for millions of young people each day. If their walls could talk, what would they reveal about student learning in and through the arts? To find the answers, the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) and the Arts Education Partnership (AEP) have joined forces to expand the body of knowledge on how these learning environments support youth development through their arts programs.

As part of a new cooperative effort, IMLS and AEP are encouraging organizations to submit existing studies for consideration for inclusion in AEP's ArtsEdSearch.org – the nation's first online clearinghouse of research and policy information focused entirely on the educational outcomes associated with arts learning. The project seeks formal research or evaluation of arts education programming provided by museums or libraries that investigates a question or hypothesis, rather than journalistic or descriptive accounts. Further, the study should focus on some formal or structured program, project, or component, not a single-event arts activity or experience. The program can take place in school, out-of-school, at a museum or library, or in an alternative programming area.

A full description of the criteria for inclusion is available online:

<http://www.artsedsearch.org/artsearch/submitting-to-artsedsearch>.

The research gathered through this project will contribute to the expansion of ArtsEdSearch.org as a centralized source of high-quality, user-friendly research focused on the essential role the arts play in developing students' creative thinking, problem solving, communication, and

collaboration skills – attributes many leaders identify as important in preparing young people for college and career success.

“As our nation looks for solutions in helping all students succeed, we can hardly ignore the critical role of museums and libraries. Our AEP and IMLS teams are committed to examining the body of knowledge around arts learning in these community spaces and using our findings to help leaders develop strategies and policies that increase arts education opportunities for every young person in America,” said Sandra Ruppert, AEP director.

As part of the cooperative effort, two researchers, John Bertot of the University of Maryland College Park iSchool and Marit Dewhurst of the City College of New York, will work to identify and summarize research and evaluation studies about arts education programs provided by museums and libraries in schools or out of schools. The synthesized findings of this project will be publicly available in the spring of 2013.

IMLS Director Susan Hildreth said, “The partnership will result in a valuable repository of high-quality research on arts education in libraries and museums that will be useful in a number of ways. These institutions will turn to this source for information that helps them with fundraising, new arts programs, evaluation models, and best practices in the field.”

For more information about submissions, please contact Scott Jones, AEP’s senior associate for research and policy, at AEP (artsedsearch@ccsso.org).

About the Institute of Museum and Library Services

The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the primary source of federal support for the nation's 123,000 libraries and 17,500 museums. Our mission is to inspire libraries and museums to advance innovation, lifelong learning, and cultural and civic engagement. Our grant making, policy development, and research help libraries and museums deliver valuable services that make it possible for communities and individuals to thrive. To learn more, visit <http://www.imls.gov> or follow [@US IMLS](https://twitter.com/USIMLS) on Twitter.

About the Arts Education Partnership

A national coalition of more than 100 education, arts, cultural, business, government, and philanthropic organizations. AEP gathers and analyzes relevant research and policy information, fosters dialogue about what works in arts education, and supports advocacy for improved education policy and practice. AEP was established in 1995 and is supported by the National Endowment for the Arts and the U.S. Department of Education in cooperation with the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies.