

MFA Narrative

1. Statement of Need

How will this project fulfill MFA goals to strengthen the ability of the museum to serve its public more effectively by supporting high-priority activities that advance the institution's mission and strategic goals?

Kentucky Folk Art Center (KFAC) is a unique institution. We are the only art museum in Appalachian Kentucky. We are located in a rural college town of less than 8,000 year round residents, which has a relatively stable economy. However, many of the counties that surround us are some of the poorest in America. Therefore, it is not always easy to attract visitors from our regional community, and the vast majority of visitors to our museum are tourists traveling the I-64 corridor. This makes outreach extremely important as we strive to engage our service region.

This project proposes a comprehensive program of educational outreach services focused primarily on students in Kentucky's elementary and middle schools. Five years ago, KFAC founded an educational outreach program funded in large part by grants from the MetLife and Steele-Reese Foundations. These initial grants allowed us to hire a museum educator and produce projects like table top exhibitions and support materials for teachers. A later grant from IMLS, allows us to develop a two sets of 30 iPods containing digital exhibitions of folk art and traditional music. The iPods remain in high demand, and they are currently our most popular offering.

In 2009, our state legislature passed Senate Bill #1 to reform public education. Effectively, this bill removed arts and humanities testing, but left school systems responsible for creating educational environments where students could experience arts and humanities content. In the wake of these changes, staff from Kentucky Folk Art Center met with the Kentucky Educational Development Corporation, whose membership includes superintendents and other school administrators from 60 eastern Kentucky districts. What the superintendents told us at this meeting was that they needed a comprehensive program that could provide students with contact with visual arts, music, dance, and drama or storytelling. Follow up discussions with teachers allowed us to fine tune our approach.

Historically, our outreach efforts have centered on working with the region's public schools and for good reason. First, provision of educational outreach services to Kentucky's K-12 public schools is a prominent part of our stated mission and one justification for our institution's founding in the mid-1990s. In essence, the Commonwealth of Kentucky believed that the creation of an art museum in the mountains would enhance cultural opportunities for the region's youth.

Secondly, in most of the counties in eastern Kentucky the school system is the central focus of community life. School systems are the largest employers in many counties, and social activity centers around ball games. In other words, to make conduct audience development in eastern Kentucky, school systems are the most viable partners.

How will this project relate to the mission statement and strategic plan as outlined in the strategic plan summary?

This project fits directly into KFAC's mission of providing cultural and educational services in Kentucky. Our mission clearly states that KFAC exists to "provide programming for a variety of educational user groups with special emphasis on P-12 students." Secondly, our recently completed three-year strategic plan includes as one of our five "strategic priorities" to "provide quality educational outreach opportunities for K-12 students in Kentucky's public schools."

How will the project serve as an investment in institutional capacity?

This project will clearly enhance KFAC's institutional capacity in the area of educational outreach. This project will allow our institution to expand our reach of services and produce materials that should have an impact far beyond the stated end date for this project. For instance, three years ago, KFAC received a grant from IMLS to develop iPod exhibitions to travel to schools across Kentucky. A full year after the end of the grant, the iPods are now one of our most popular educational offerings. They were used by more than 7,000 students during the previous school year, and both sets of iPods are making the rounds to schools across Kentucky in 2010/11. The project components proposed in this application are a similar long term investment in KFAC's capacity to provide quality arts and humanities educational opportunities to Kentucky students for several years to come.

How the institution arrived at its strategic plan, including the planning process and the participants in that process?

The Kentucky Folk Art Center's strategic planning process is part of the broader strategic planning process at Morehead State University (MSU) and within Cultural Outreach, Preservation, & Education (COPE), our home administrative unit. First, all units at Morehead State University participate in an annual planning and assessment process called "WEAVE." The goals and objectives for each unit are developed by staff and management within each unit and are approved by the university's senior administration. Data based measurements and findings are added at the end of each fiscal year. While the public is able to view this plan, the process remains largely internal to the university.

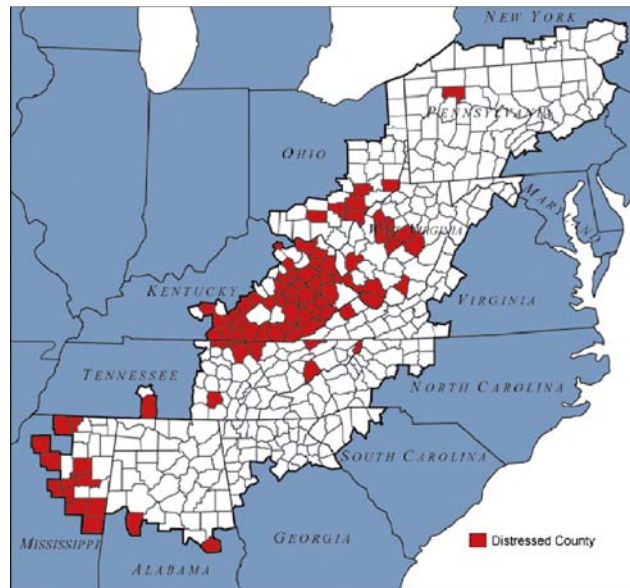
Secondly, in the spring of 2010, Kentucky Folk Art Center undertook a process that resulted in a comprehensive three year strategic plan. Much of the planning work was done by the Center's staff, and draws on their knowledge and experience. While KFAC is not governed by an administrative board, KFAC does have an advisory board, and the board was consulted during the planning process. We also relied on constituent comments from various sources, included educator surveys and visitor comments. The resulting plan includes a newly written vision statement and five strategic priorities with goals and objectives that address all aspects of KFAC's operations.

Who is the intended audience and how will the project serve this audience, including area demographics, and how this intended audience fits within the institutional strategic plan?

The audience for this project is composed of public school students, primarily those in grades 4-9, and teachers. The project will introduce students to contemporary folk art, Appalachian Music, dance, and storytelling. The photography portion of the project will involve students in digital photography, social and geographical studies, and writing. As previously stated, enhancing arts and humanities educational opportunities for K-12 user groups in Kentucky is a stated part of our mission and a top priority in our strategic plan.

Our region’s population is largely Caucasian, over 95% in most counties, and rates of poverty and unemployment far exceed the national averages. Recessions hit first and last longer in eastern Kentucky, and this one has been particularly difficult. Of the 51 counties in Appalachian Kentucky, the Appalachian Regional Commission has ranked 40 of them as “distressed.” According to the ARC, a distressed county ranks in the bottom 10% in America in terms of three-year average unemployment rates, per capita market income, and poverty rates. As the ARC map shows, eastern Kentucky has one of the highest concentrations of poverty in America.

ARC-Designated Distressed Counties, Fiscal Year 2010



Prepared by the Appalachian Regional Commission

Data Sources:
Unemployment data: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005–2007
Income data: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, 2006
Poverty data: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2000

2. Project Design

Project Activities & Overall Goals

The goals of this project are to establish a fully comprehensive arts education program for Kentucky schools using both new and existing resources and to broaden cultural opportunity for Kentucky’s public school students, particularly those in the commonwealth’s 51-county Appalachian region. Here, most schools are severely underserved in the area of arts and music education. It is one of our primary goals to support and improve arts and cultural education opportunities throughout our region. Some aspects of the program are necessarily broad-based, serving to familiarize students with state mandated core content areas. However, other program activities focus on working with smaller groups of students over extended periods of time.

Often times, several schools within a district share a single art or music teacher. As the only art museum in the region, we wish every school had the opportunity to visit here, and

school tours are always provided at no charge. However, given schools' limited resources, we understand that it is impossible for most to plan annual visits to KFAC. By offering a comprehensive arts outreach program, as recommended by the region's superintendents and school administrators, we will offer schools a viable if not ideal alternative to a museum visit. Through these programs, students will experience art and music generated by contemporary Kentuckians.

As a comprehensive program we will offer a number of at school programs combined with on-site activities at KFAC. Program costs will be kept to a minimum for participating schools. The proposed project activities include the following:

1. Traveling Tabletop Exhibitions

KFAC will offer two sets each of three different tabletop exhibitions. We developed our first tabletop exhibitions five years ago. It is now time for a redesign and a rewriting. Here is a brief description of the exhibits, all of which focus on areas of core content for Kentucky public schools.

- ♦ ***Folk Art in Kentucky.*** This exhibition will feature eight 24" x 18" PVC graphic text panels, accompanied by five artworks (walking stick, two wood carvings, found art, and painting).
- ♦ ***Kentucky's Traditional Music.*** This exhibition will feature six 24" x 18" PVC graphic text panels, accompanied by a loaded iPod with speakers.
- ♦ ***Traditional Craft in Kentucky.*** This exhibition will feature six 24" x 18" PVC graphic text panels, accompanied by several crafts pieces (white oak basket, pottery, quilt blocks).

A fourth exhibition about Kentucky author James Still and his great book *River of Earth* will continue to tour with 25 book copies, but it will not be redesigned.

2. iPod Exhibitions

KFAC will continue to upgrade and distribute our popular iPod exhibitions. A previous grant from IMLS allowed our museum to purchase 60 iPods and load them with content featuring folk art and traditional music from Kentucky. After three years, the iPods are still in heavy demand. This grant proposes to purchase five replacement iPods, upgrade content, and continue distribution to schools across central and eastern Kentucky.

3. In-school Performances

KFAC will use community musicians, dancers, and storytellers to provide a variety of in-school performance programs. Programs will be designed to fit the needs of teachers and students keeping with Kentucky's Core Content and Program of Studies guidelines. Programming will encourage active student participation through dancing, acting out stories and an instrument petting zoo.

4. Pictures in Place – A Narrative Photography Project for High School Students

Students will write a personal narrative essay that clearly and authentically expresses their point of view, while focusing on their current and future place within their community in Eastern Kentucky and Appalachia. Students will communicate and support their point of view and story in sequence remembering to communicate who, what, when, where and how. Students will write their essays in a personal, creative way following the grade appropriate Kentucky Academic Expectations, Program of Studies and Core Content for Assessment. Students will then use digital cameras to take photos that visually assist their narrative essay in showing their place within their community and Appalachia.

The photos can be literal or abstract. Students with the assistance of their teacher will choose three of their photographs that best depict their essay. The three photos (jpg) and essay (pdf) will be saved to a disc and returned to KFAC. Once at KFAC, each student's essay and three photos will be filed together and placed online for viewing on a specifically designed website (online project gallery).

5. Traditional Stringed Instrument Lessons

We will offer beginner string instrument (guitar, banjo, and fiddle) lessons for children provided after school at KFAC for minimal cost. Advanced students at the Kentucky Center for Traditional music will provide afterschool music lessons for teens at the local high school. This program will be administered in conjunction with the school's music program.

6. Summer Arts Studios

KFAC will offer summer arts camps in Rowan and Morgan Counties for children ages 7-10. During these weeklong, half-day camps students will make artworks from a variety of media.

7. Visits to KFAC and KCTM

KFAC and KCTM always offer free admission to educational groups. As part of this project, we will specifically develop detailed lesson plans for our changing exhibition series. However, we will work with schools to provide a tailor-made educational experience for visiting students. KFAC and KCTM will employ community musicians, dancers and storytellers to provide schools with selected programming. KFAC will work with the local artists to make sure that the programming meets and exceeds expectations from Kentucky's Core Content and Program of Studies guidelines.

Project Management

KFAC Outreach Programs Educator will serve as the primary project manager. She will be assisted by other KFAC staff. She will work with partners and schools in gauging effectiveness of programming and make changes when and if necessary.

Project Partners

KFAC's primary project partner will be the Kentucky Center for Traditional Music (KCTM). KCTM is KFAC's sister organization at Morehead State University. Whereas KFAC is focused primarily on the visual arts KCTM is focused on traditional music. KCTM teaches classes to university students, maintains a significant archive, and is preparing a new facility. When appropriate, KFAC will also form partnerships with individual schools and school districts throughout the region.

Evaluation Processes

On-line surveys will be made available to teachers and administrators from participating schools. The results of these surveys will be compiled annually, and the program will be adjusted in accordance with the survey results.

Reaching the Intended Audience

The intended audience for this project is composed of Kentucky's public school students at every level. We will promote our programs to teachers via mailings and e-mail. We also provide teachers free educational posters and other materials. After five years of successful, active service in the areas of educational outreach, KFAC has developed a network of contacts within the regional schools. We have retired educators on our advisory board. KFAC can also rely upon the broader resources of Morehead State University in developing activities such as professional development sessions for teachers.

Scholarly and/or Community Involvement

We communicate regularly with teachers and school administrators to ask them what is useful and valuable in the classroom. For scholarly expertise, we will rely on KFAC's artistic director Adrian Swain and KCTM's Archivist Jesse Wells. We will rely heavily of both internal and external sources of information as we develop and modify our program offerings.

3. Project Resources

Time

The time frame for this project encompasses three school years, and it should allow the project to reach up to 30,000 students. KFAC has five years experience managing an ongoing, successful education program; this proposal simply takes it to next level.

Personnel

Day-to-day administration of this project will be handled by Erin Moore, KFAC's Outreach Educator, who will devote an estimated 60% of her time to this single project. Erin holds a degree in textiles from Middle Tennessee State and had educational and work experience in the fields of arts education and children's programming. She has been in her current role for nearly two years.

KFAC's Director Matt Collinsworth will provide oversight and direct service for the project. Matt has been with KFAC for more than seven years. He has assisted with curating of numerous exhibitions, has significant experience in project administration and graphic design, and spearheaded the development and funding of KFAC's existing educational program. Matt will spend up to 10% of his time with this project.

KFAC's Curator Adrian Swain will consult on the project design. Adrian has 23 years experience working with folk art at Morehead State. He has curated dozens of exhibitions and is a nationally recognized authority on contemporary American folk art. He is currently authoring a book on Kentucky folk art. Adrian will spend up to 5% of his time with this project.

Budget

The proposed budget for this project has been kept to a minimum. KFAC, like many small organizations, has extensive experience working with tight budgets. To date, we have never

failed to meet any program goals within the parameters of our project budgets. In recent years we have completed several major grant funded projects often under budget.

The funds requested in this application will be used for the purchase of equipment, supplies, travel, shipping, and part time or consultant labor. All time and effort from KFAC staff will be paid for from our budget, meaning that we meet the 1:1 cost share requirement easily.

7. Impact

Formal Products

This project proposes the creation of several formal products. First, we will produce three tabletop exhibitions (2 of each) focused on folk art, traditional music, and crafts from Kentucky. These will travel to schools across the commonwealth. We will produce new content for our traveling iPod exhibitions and a website to showcase student photography and writing. Finally, we will design, print, and distribute a new educational program flyer for teachers.

Evaluation

Since the recent passage of Senate Bill #1 removed arts and humanities content from student achievement tests in Kentucky, we will rely on online teacher surveys to evaluate the success of our proposed project. We have been using these surveys for more than two years with great success and response rates of over 80%.

Long Term Impact

First, the students and teachers who participate in this project will be introduced to the idea that there is value in the culture that surrounds them. This is a particularly important concept when working in what has historically been the poorest place in America. Secondly, we expect both the products and knowledge generated by this project to have a life span that far exceeds the three-year term of the grant. For instance, our previous tabletop exhibitions have been on the road for six years, and many schools want them every year. KFAC has also gained a reputation as a leader in educational outreach in Kentucky. We are contacted regularly to consult with other institutions about their educational programming efforts. Therefore, what we learn has a broad and long-lasting impact across the Commonwealth.

BUDGET FORM: Section B, Summary Budget

	\$ IMLS	\$ Cost Share	\$ TOTAL COSTS
1. Salaries and Wages	\$21,030.00	\$35,612.00	\$56,642.00
2. Fringe Benefits		\$13,176.00	\$13,176.00
3. Consultant Fees			
4. Travel	\$1,000.00	\$500.00	\$1,500.00
5. Supplies and Materials	\$14,310.00		\$14,310.00
6. Services			
7. Student Support			
8. Other Costs			
TOTAL DIRECT COSTS (1-8)	\$36,340.00	\$49,288.00	\$85,628.00
9. Indirect Costs	\$10,410.00	\$17,628.00	\$28,038.00
TOTAL COSTS (Direct and Indirect)	\$46,750.00	\$66,916.00	\$113,666.00

Project Funding for the Entire Grant Period

1. Grant Funds Requested from IMLS	\$46,750.00
2. Cost Sharing:	
a. Applicant's Contribution	\$66,916.00
b. Kind Contribution	
c. Other Federal Agencies*	
d. TOTAL COST SHARING	\$66,916.00
3. TOTAL PROJECT FUNDING (1+2d)	\$113,666.00
Percentage of total project costs requested from IMLS	41 %

*If funding has been requested from another federal agency, indicate the agency's name: