



A NOTE ON THE IMLS GRANT TERMINATION

Dear Friends,

I write today to share some difficult news: Museum Hue has received official notice of grant termination from the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS).

While not entirely unexpected given the direction of the current administration, it is still devastating. In 2023, Museum Hue was awarded one of the most competitive federal opportunities in our field—an IMLS National Leadership Grant for HueCultures National: Northeast. This \$545,896 grant, awarded over three years, was designed to support groundbreaking research on the impact and needs of museums founded and led by Black, Indigenous, Latino, Asian, and all People of Color.

The irony is not lost on me: the very research we were conducting—about the challenges, vulnerabilities, and systemic underfunding of culturally-specific institutions—is now being interrupted by the same forces we've been naming and working to change. In a painful yet powerful full-circle moment, the termination of our grant confirms the urgency of the work we've committed ourselves to.

So far, IMLS has disbursed close to half of the promised award. Because it was a matching grant, I also raised more than \$1 million in support—a monumental effort and investment that has been five years in the making. And yet, with a single clause invoked, all of that is put in jeopardy.

Thankfully, much of the research for HueCultures Northeast has been completed or is actively underway. While we will have to cancel some of the programming planned for the third year, the development of the accompanying digital platform will move forward, supported by other funders, which we are now working to activate on an accelerated timeline.

This moment—though challenging—is not the end. If anything, it is a call to regroup, reimagine, and redouble our commitment to one another. One of the core findings from HueCultures has been how deeply funding impacts our field—who gets to survive, and who is asked to fight for every penny. The fact that this project is now affected by the very issue it aimed to illuminate only strengthens our resolve.

We know we're not alone. I've already heard from peers whose organizations are experiencing similar losses. That's why it's more important than ever to join us on June 5 for the [Museum Hue 10th Anniversary Symposium](#)—a vital gathering for cultural leaders, artists, and advocates to reflect, strategize, and build collective pathways forward. This moment demands shared insight, community, and solidarity—and we hope you'll be part of that conversation. You can register [here](#).

Though this is a difficult moment, Museum Hue's work continues. We are still here. We will still be here. We are diversifying our funding, building new partnerships, and staying rooted in the belief that our stories, our research, our leadership, and our cultural legacies matter.

Thank you for continued support of our work.

In solidarity,

Stephanie Johnson-Cunningham
Executive Director
Museum Hue