



- Montana is home to more than 200 museums and cultural institutions
- For forty years the Museums Association of Montana has provided Montana's Museum community with training and professional development opportunities
- The Museums Association of Montana has a volunteer board of directors, and one employee
- The Museums Association of Montana hosts an annual conference in a different tourism region each year
- Museums are an integral part of Montana's Heritage Tourism offerings – Heritage Tourism is the fastest growing segment of the American travel demographic
- The Museums Association of Montana produces a statewide map of all museums – regardless of membership in the Association – a valuable tourism resource for all Montanans
- In 1999 Montana Museums generated 42.1 million dollars for Montana's economy\*
- Each Year Montana Museums are visited by more than 70% of the school age children in Montana\*
- Museums are an underlying component of Montana's educational infrastructure
- Montana's Lawmakers, politicians, and state administrators need to be more conscious of the benefit and impact of Montana's museums to our economy and well-being of our communities

\* Impact of Museums on Montana's Economy and Community. April 2000, Museums Association of Montana.

**FY2008-2009 Montana Cultural Trust Grant Application**  
**Operational Support – Narrative**  
**Museums Association of Montana**  
**Networking for Montana's Museums**

**1. Organization Description**

The Museums Association of Montana (MAM) is a non-profit organization incorporated in the State of Montana. MAM promotes professionalism and cooperation among the museums of Montana. MAM is an organization for all types of museums – art, history, science and general – and individuals who are interested in improving and strengthening Montana's museums. The board of directors, all who are professional individuals who work in museums around the State, are volunteers for MAM and are dedicated and aware of the need to assist the museum community. MAM does this through the annual conference of which in 2007 will be the \_\_\_\_\_ Annual MAM Conference held in Missoula, Montana. For the members of MAM, a quarterly newsletter is published that includes information on grants available and deadlines, museum news, upcoming conferences and technical leaflets. MAM also holds a Legislative luncheon during the legislative session to bolster awareness towards Montana's museums. With the help of the Cultural Trust in the past, MAM hired a half-time coordinator in 2004. The coordinator has helped MAM grow in a positive direction to serve the 200+ museums in Montana of which 80% are located in rural communities, 60% have annual budgets less than \$50,000 and over 60% have no paid staff.

**2. Purpose or Goals**

MAM seeks to assist the 200 museums and cultural sites in Montana with technical assistance and educational opportunities through the annual MAM conference which provides such for paid and non-paid staff of all museums. Increasing demand for information from these museums, the tourism industry and the general public on MAM, make it a priority for the organization to continue the half-time coordinator to assist in the efficiency and professionalism of the organization. Museums in Montana have a great demand for the technical information to learn more about managing their facilities, to properly care for our State's history by preserving our artifacts and archives and to interpret their history for future generations. This need has increased through the years as tourism and local awareness of museums arises. More and more volunteer individuals are caring for these small museums collections and are in demand for the information to do so. MAM offers education to these museum individuals through the annual conference, technical leaflets, quarterly newsletter, day to day questions directed to the coordinator and the assistance of the coordinator to accomplish all MAM has to offer. The direction and goals of the organization is to provide increased services in the areas of communication and coordination specifically, to continue to expand the web site; provide more technical assistance and educational opportunities for paid and non-paid staff in Montana's museums;

and the promotion of museums and cultural sites with an annually updated, more widely distributed map of Montana's museums.

### **3. Importance**

Operational support is needed by MAM to meet all new and increased challenges. More and more demand for technical information and assistance from Montana's museums has the MAM board working hard to keep up. The grant will promote and continue more flexibility that has been lacking in operations management in the past without the assistance of a half-time coordinator. The demands on MAM have increased every year. To be able to continue the level of professionalism and education in demand, the proposed grant will aid MAM in maintaining this for the future. The State receives a significant return on this investment in MAM for cultural tourism from this assistance and education for the museums of Montana.

### **4. Progress Assessment**

Since the purpose of this grant is assist the operations environment, the effectiveness of this grant will be reviewed at each board meeting. The board will assess membership and continue to help educate the museum population through the annual conference. The board already acknowledges that the coordinator has assisted with the growth of the

organization on a daily basis as museum staff and volunteers need and receive effective information to better care for and interpret our history through Montana's museums.

### **5. Operations Abilities**

The board of directors is made up of museum professionals from around the State of Montana that have dedicated many volunteer hours through the years to help Montana's museums be the best that they can be. Evaluations are given out at the annual conference to receive input from the membership on MAM effectiveness. The coordinator is in constant contact with the board and is enthusiastically working with the board and both are committed to MAM's mission.

### **6. Publicity and Access**

MAM has a variety of ways to promote and keep a high profile in the museum community in Montana including the quarterly newsletter, web site and informational booths at statewide conferences. If the grant is awarded, the support of the cultural trust Grant will be appropriately acknowledged in all newsletters, map of museums in Montana, the web site and the conference brochure. A press release to newspapers around the state will be issued with purpose of the grant and the granting agency identified and described.