

## Which Excellence Program is Right for My Organization?

	Pledge of Excellence	StEPs	Museum Assessment Program (MAP)	Conservation Assessment Program (CAP)	Core Documents Verification	Accreditation
<b>Program Purpose</b>	Show your commitment to ethics, national standards and best practices.	Starting point for small- and mid-sized history organizations that are not ready for other programs. Self-paced, self-study.	Consultative program helps museums to assess their strengths and weaknesses, meet museum standards, and build capacity by planning for the future.	Provides consultative report that museums can use to develop strategies for improved conservation care and provide a tool for long-range planning and fund-raising for conservation.	Receive recognition validating your museum's mission and core policies meet national standards for professional museums.	Provides recognition for meeting national museum standards and ethics, and commitment to continued institutional improvement.
<b>How do I participate?</b>	Check a box.	Sign up anytime.	Submit Dec. 1 or July 1 application or pay fee to participate anytime.	Submit annual application.	Apply anytime.	Submit application anytime; reviewed at designated times of the year.
<b>How does this program relate to the others?</b>	Pledge to follow National Standards for U.S. Museums that are used in all the excellence programs. Required before doing Core Documents Verification.	Uses the same standards (National Standards for U.S. Museums). A good precursor to MAP.	Uses the same standards (National Standards for U.S. Museums). Museums can use MAP to prepare for re/accreditation	Uses the same standards (National Standards for U.S. Museums). Museums can use CAP to prepare for re/accreditation.	A required step before Accreditation. An opportunity to receive recognition for the plans you've created in StEPs, MAP or CAP.	Uses the same standards (National Standards for U.S. Museums).
<b>Show me the money. What does this program cost?</b>	It's free.	\$175 one-time payment plus non-members purchase an institutional membership. Must maintain institutional membership to receive certificates.	Free for organizations with operating expenses of \$125,000 or less; prorated for other institutions. Over \$4000 worth of services provided.	Participants should budget \$400 - \$1,000 to cover potential additional costs. At least \$3,390 worth of services are provided.	Between \$150-\$500 depending on membership level with the American Alliance of Museums. (Membership not required)	Annual participation fee : \$250-\$575 Every ten years: review fee and costs for site visit.
<b>How much time does it take?</b>	A few minutes.	Self-paced so time varies.	Completed within one year.	Completed within one year.	A few months.	12-18 months. Must undergo reaccreditation every 10 years.
<b>How is this program structured?</b>	Discuss the pledge with staff and board and then take it.	Six separate sections can be undertaken in any order.	Four possible assessments offer a comprehensive self-study, peer site visit, report & implementation.	Two day site visit followed by assessor's report.	A review of the required elements in the five core documents.	One comprehensive study of the entire institution via a Self-Study, a site visit, and review by the Accreditation Commission.
<b>Why should my institution use this program?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It's an easy step to commit to museum standards.</li> <li>A precursor for participating in other standards assessment and recognition programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Education and awareness of standards for paid and unpaid staff, governing authority and community</li> <li>Understand strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>Use as a tool for daily management and planning</li> <li>Build credibility and support</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>Get recommendations for improvement</li> <li>Learn about standards and best practices</li> <li>Use report as a tool to guide strategic planning and fundraising.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understand conservation strengths and weaknesses,</li> <li>Get recommendations for improvement,</li> <li>Learn about conservation standards and best practices,</li> <li>Use report to guide conservation planning and fundraising.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distinguishes the museum as a professional member of the field and an educational entity.</li> <li>Acts as an accountability tool for keeping policies up to date.</li> </ul>	Results in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sustainability and a Stronger Institution</li> <li>Credibility and Accountability</li> <li>A Clearer Sense of Mission</li> <li>National Recognition</li> </ul>
<b>What is the program outcome?</b>	A public commitment to standards and best practices.	Self-completed workbook helps with planning; certificates for meeting performance indicators.	Self-completed workbook and report from surveyor that helps museums prioritize need and improve operations.	Report from assessor that helps museums prioritize conservation need and improve conservation.	National recognition	Award or denial of Accredited Museum status.
<b>Where can I obtain more information?</b>	American Alliance of Museums <a href="http://www.aam-us.org">www.aam-us.org</a>	American Association for State and Local History <a href="http://www.aaslh.org">www.aaslh.org</a>	American Alliance of Museums <a href="http://www.aam-us.org">www.aam-us.org</a>	Heritage Preservation <a href="http://www.heritagepreservation.org">www.heritagepreservation.org</a>	American Alliance of Museums <a href="http://www.aam-us.org">www.aam-us.org</a>	American Alliance of Museums <a href="http://www.aam-us.org">www.aam-us.org</a>

# The Continuum of Excellence

Supporting and celebrating your museum's commitment to standards

