

MAP: What Is It?

MAP Mission Statement

The mission of the Museum Assessment Program is to guide and direct museums and museum professionals to an understanding of the importance of continual self-study and assessment, and advise them on how to implement professional museum practices in order to sustain themselves and more effectively serve the public. MAP also helps museum professionals develop leadership skills and an increased understanding of the profession. (June 1998)

What is MAP?

- MAP is a confidential, consultative process.
- MAP is designed to help museums understand how they compare to standards and best practices in the field.
- MAP helps museums understand how other institutions deal with similar challenges.
- MAP provides suggestions for improvement.
- MAP is designed for museums, historic houses, botanic gardens and arboreta, zoos and aquaria, nature centers, and art galleries.

What are the four assessments?

MAP currently offers four assessments, focusing on different aspects of museum operations. Museums choose the assessment that best matches their needs.

- Institutional Assessment
- Collections Management Assessment
- Public Dimension Assessment
- Governance Assessment

The assessment types previously were called MAP I, II, III and IV, respectively. They were renamed to prevent the assumption that they must be done in a particular order.

Institutional Assessment

The Institutional Assessment provides the framework that allows a museum to step back and take a look at its entire operation and can be used as the basis for a strategic plan that can guide future activities. It reviews mission and planning, governance, administration, finance, collections stewardship, interpretation and presentation, marketing, public relations, membership, and community support.

Collections Management Assessment

The Collections Management Assessment helps the museum review how the collections are managed and whether the appropriate finances have been dedicated to their care. It focuses on collections policies, planning, access, documentation, and collections care within the context of the museum's total operations.

Public Dimension Assessment

Revised in spring 2004 to reflect the goals of AAM's Museums & Community initiative, the Public Dimension Assessment helps museums create open and effective two-way communication with their communities. In addition to reviewing how the museum interacts with its audiences through its marketing, public relations, audience development, and exhibition programs, it guides museums and their communities to an understanding of their mutual value.

Governance Assessment

The Governance Assessment helps the museum's governing authority examine its structure, roles, and responsibilities. It enhances the ability of the governing authority to advance the museum's mission and engage in effective planning.