

Accreditation: Who Is Involved?

Accreditation Staff

The Accreditation staff's key roles are to:

- guide participating museums through the accreditation process
- identify peer reviewers with the appropriate background for each museum
- arrange for a Visiting Committee to visit each museum in the program
- support the Visiting Committee through the review process
- review the Visiting Committee's report according to the Peer Reviewer Evaluation Rubric (see page E12)
- create and revise program materials, policies, and procedures as needed, with the ongoing input of the museum field.
- prepare materials for the Accreditation Commission meetings

All communication regarding the Accreditation Program should be directed to the Accreditation Program staff.

Accreditation Commission

The Accreditation Commission, an autonomous body appointed by the AAM Board of Directors, is composed of museum professionals who voluntarily serve up to a maximum of two 6-year terms. The commissioners are senior museum professionals who have experience and expertise in all areas of museum management and operation and represent the diversity of the museum field. Each commissioner, at some point in his/her museum career, has taken his/her museum through the accreditation process at least once.

The commission's roles are to:

- monitor evolving standards and best practices in the museum field to maintain the high standards of operations evident in the Characteristics of an

Accreditable Museum (see "Conducting an Accreditation Visit")

- review and render decisions regarding the accredited status of museums participating in the Accreditation Program
- support the development and administration of the Accreditation Program

Museums

Museums participate in the Accreditation Program for a variety of reasons, including:

- enhanced credibility and positive public image
- source of pride for all associated with museum
- opportunity for overall institutional evaluation
- a clearer sense of mission and institutional goals and priorities
- sustained organizational development and improvement
- tool for benchmarking against current standards and best practices and past and future operations
- education process for trustees

Accreditation is a rigorous and challenging, yet highly rewarding process. It requires not only an ongoing commitment to change, but a significant investment of time and resources from all departments and levels of the institution's staff and leadership.

Visiting Committee Members

Those of you who work with the Accreditation Program are called Visiting Committee Members. More than 400 museum professionals serve on visiting committees on AAM's behalf, representing museums of all disciplines and governance types. While your backgrounds are varied, you all have demonstrated a certain level of knowledge and experience. You serve as the "eyes and ears" of the



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Accreditation Commission by conducting site visits and writing reports that describe and analyze the conditions and operations of the participating museums.

When you conduct an Accreditation visit, remember that the museum's staff have already devoted a great deal of resources and passion to the process. They may analyze your every comment, question, note, or joke for indications of your opinions. You should be candid and probing, but also professional and diplomatic throughout the review process.