



Accreditation Program

Annual Statistics At-A-Glance

January 2009

- ① Please visit www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/stats.cfm to download a copy of this document and find links to statistics about museums in general.

Number of Program Participants

776 Accredited Museums¹

34 Applicant Museums²

Demographic Information³

Museum Type

Primary Museum Type ⁴	% of accredited museums that are this type
Aquarium	<1%
Nature Center	<1%
Children's/ Youth	1%
Zoological Park	1%
Arboretum/ Botanical Garden	2%
Specialized Museum (e.g. railroad, music, aviation)	3%
Science /Technology Museum/Center (includes Planetariums)	4%
Natural History/Anthropology Museum	7%
Historic House/ Site	8%
General (Multi-disciplinary)	9%
History Museum	23%
Art Museum/Center	42%

Budget Size

Budget	% of accredited museums in this budget category
\$350,000 and under	9%
\$350,000-\$499,999	7%
\$500,000- \$999,999	18%
\$1,000,000- \$2.9M	30%
\$3M - \$4.9M	12%
\$5M- \$14.9M	15%
\$15M and over	9%

¹ This number includes several museum systems and multiple site museums, each counted as one accredited entity. You will find a higher number on the List of Accredited Museums at www.aam-us.org because the associated, branch, and satellite museums in many of the systems are individually listed.

² Applicant museums are institutions that are seeking first time accreditation, but which have not completed the process yet. They are not included in the demographic statistics.

³ All demographic information for accredited museums was provided by the museums. Except where noted, the information is based on data on file as of December 31, 2008. Percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole number, therefore the total may exceed 100%.

⁴ In its accreditation paperwork a museum must select a primary museum type and may select a secondary type if applicable. Only primary type figures are provided here.

Governance Type

Governing Authority	% of accredited museums that have this type of governance structure
Other (e.g., joint governance, trust, school district)	2%
County/Regional	2%
Federal	4%
Municipal	7%
State	7%
College/University	15%
Private Non-Profit	63%

Number of Full-time Staff*(note: 19 museums not reporting)*

Number of FT Staff	% of accredited museums with this staff size
1-5	15%
6-15	30%
16-30	20%
31-50	12%
51-70	5%
71-100	7%
101-150	5%
151-200	2%
Over 200	6%

Geographic Distribution by Region

Region (Museum Association)	% of accredited museums in this region
New England (NEMA)	11%
Mountain-Plains (MPMA)	14%
Western (WMA)	15%
Mid-Atlantic (MAAM)	18%
Midwest (AMM)	19%
Southeastern (SEMC)	23%

Accreditation Commission Decisions

2008 Decisions Summary

Brief explanations of decision types are found below the chart.

	Mar 08	Jul 08	Nov 08	Total
Institutions Reviewed	47	65	39	151
Accreditation Awarded	21	47	21	89
Tabled	10	10	5	25
Denied	0	0	2	2
Other	16	8	11	35

Institutions Reviewed: Includes all institutions on a given Commission meeting agenda. Accreditation Commission meetings are held three times a year. The number of institutions reviewed includes museums seeking interim approval*, being reviewed by the Commission for the first time after a site visit, and submitting progress or final reports related to an earlier tabling decision. (*Interim Approval signifies that the museum appears eligible, its self-study submission appears complete, and it is ready for a site visit.)

Accreditation Awarded: Institutions granted accreditation for the first time or awarded reaccreditation (“subsequent” accreditation). Museums awarded accreditation pending receipt of additional documentation are included in this number (there was one such decision in 2008).

Tabled: See next page.

Denied: Institutions whose bid for accreditation (either first time or subsequent) was denied.

Other: Institutions that did not receive a final accreditation decision during the meeting (e.g., were not awarded accreditation, tabled, or denied). These include museums receiving interim approval and museums only presenting progress reports as part of a tabling action.

① For more information on the steps in the accreditation review process and the types of decisions made by the Commission, visit:
www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/AccredCommDecision.cfm

About Success Rates

The Accreditation Program has an overall success rate of 96%. About 2% are denied outright and 1% are unsuccessful after being tabled. The success rate is high in part because there are many steps built into the review process itself where the museum gets feedback and counsel from the Accreditation Program staff, Commission, and site reviewers, and has an opportunity to respond or take some type of action. Also, museums get a high level of counseling and support from the program staff, before and during the process, to ensure readiness; and most museums come into the process well prepared.

All museums must go through reaccreditation approximately every 10 years. For the current roster of accredited museums, 149 (19%) have been accredited once, 229 (29%) twice; 311 (40%) three times, and 94 (12%) four times.

Commission Tabling Decisions 2004-2008

The Accreditation Commission “tables” its decision on a museum’s accreditation status when it identifies one or more specific concerns that are barriers to the institution’s ability to meet the Characteristics of an Accreditable Museum, program requirements, eligibility, and/or Accreditation Commission Expectations, but which it anticipates can be addressed within one year or less.

Tabling provides the Commission with an alternative to denial/withdrawal of accredited status so the museum can resolve very specific operational challenges in a focused and timely manner. Tabling is relatively common. Every year, approximately 30 percent of museums of all sizes and types have their decisions tabled.

Tabling is intended as a motivating and positive tool employed by the Commission for the benefit of the museum, rather than a negative decision. The Commission views tabling as an opportunity for the museum. A tabling decision provides the impetus to immediately address weaknesses and can, where needed, provide the leverage to secure resources and support to implement changes. A tabling decision is not punitive and is not an indicator of ultimate success or failure in the accreditation review process. 96% of all museums that have had their decisions tabled are awarded accreditation at the end of the tabling period.

① For more details about a tabling decision (and how it is different from denial), read “What You Need to Know About: The Tabling Decision and Process” available on line: go to www.aam-us.org/museumresources/accred/process.cfm#ac and select “tables its decision”.

