

Which Assessment Program is Right for our Organization?

	AASLH STEPs	AAM MAP	Heritage Preservation CAP	AAM Accreditation
<i>Program Purpose</i>	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.	Provides recognition for meeting national museum standards and ethics, and commitment to continued institutional improvement.
<i>How do we participate?</i>	Sign up anytime.	Submit annual application or pay fee to participate anytime.	Submit annual application.	Submit application anytime; reviewed at designated times of the year.
<i>Must program be done in sequence with other three?</i>	No	No	No	No
<i>How does this program relate to the other two?</i>	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 Accreditation.	Uses the same standards (National Standards for U.S. Museums). Museums can use CAP to prepare for Accreditation.	Uses the same standards (National Standards for U.S. Museums).
<i>Show me the money. What does this program cost?</i>	\$150 one-time payment no matter how long it takes to complete the program. Must remain active institutional member to receive certificates.	Free for organizations with operating expenses of \$125,000 or less; prorated for other institutions. Over \$4000 worth of services provided.	At least \$3,390 worth of services are provided, but participants should budget \$400 - \$1,000 to cover potential additional costs.	\$400 one-time application fee if application is accepted, plus annual fees of \$250 for AAM members and \$575 for nonmembers.
<i>How much time is needed to complete it?</i>	Self-paced so time varies.	Completed within one year.	Completed within one year.	Average of 3 years. Must undergo reaccreditation every 10 years.
<i>How is this program structured?</i>	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.	One comprehensive study of the entire institution.
<i>Why should my institution use this program?</i>	Good starting point for smaller organizations. Offers education and awareness of standards for paid and unpaid staff, board and governing authority members, and the community.	To understand strengths and weaknesses get recommendations for improvement, learn about standards and best practices, and use report as a tool to guide strategic planning and fundraising.	To understand conservation strengths and weaknesses, get recommendations for conservation improvement, and learn about conservation standards and best practices, and use report as a tool to guide strategic planning and fundraising.	Results in: Sustainability and a Stronger Institution Credibility and Accountability A Clearer Sense of Mission National Recognition
<i>What is the program outcome?</i>	Self-completed workbook that helps with long-term planning and 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.	Award or denial of AAM Accredited Museum status
<i>How is completion of the program assessed?</i>	Self-assessment and self-reporting.	Self-assessment and consultative peer review through onsite visit and report.	Professional assessment through onsite visit and report.	Self-assessment and peer review through onsite visit and report then review by the Accreditation Commission.
<i>Where can we obtain more information?</i>	www.aaslh.org	www.aam-us.org	www.heritagepreservation.org	www.aam-us.org