

## A Guide to the New Reaccreditation Process

After several years of listening to the field through surveys, interviews, and convenings, a new, streamlined Reaccreditation process has been created—one that has been significantly changed, not just tweaked.

- Through a combination of policy, process, and technology changes, the time needed to complete a reaccreditation review has been reduced by 50% or more.
- The reaccreditation process has also been realigned to begin with a presumption of innocence and focus on what's changed at the institution, in the field, and in standards since the last review, rather than starting from zero.
- More emphasis is being put on institutional impact and less on process/policy.
- The Self-Study has gone paperless.

However, there has been no dilution of the standards, and the core architecture of a Self-Study, a site visit by peers, and review by the Accreditation Commission remains.

### *The Self-Study*

- It's about 75 percent shorter than the previous version.
- It's comprised of the following sections and completed entirely online:
  - **Organizational Data** – Simple demographic questions, such as museum type, governance, budget, and staff size.
  - **Museum Overview** – Questions that gather more detailed information about the museum's mission, collections, and other certifications; and special questions if the museum is (or part of) a museum system.
  - **Operational Data** – Questions that gather detailed data on finances, facilities, human resources, attendance, and types of collections. This section accounts for about 50% of the entire Reaccreditation Self-Study.
  - **Changes Since Last Review** – A dozen questions (a mix of essay and checkboxes) about the types of changes at the museum, and how the museum has responded, or been impacted by them.
  - **Attachments** – A list of documents to upload: 8 required; 2 if applicable; 4 optional.
  - **Help** – Definitions, resources, information on standards, and guidance on how to answer selected questions.
- There are three Self-Study submission deadlines each year (see chart below). Every accredited museum is already assigned a due date for its next reaccreditation review.
- A review fee, based on the museum's Alliance membership status, is due at the time of submission. Tier 3 Members receive a significant discount.
- A pdf reference copy of the Self-Study is available at: <http://bit.ly/16UWLQ6>.

### The Site Visit

- Site visits will happen only during three periods of the year, and will be pre-assigned based on your museum's Self-Study due date (see the chart below).
- With this approach you will now know far in advance the six-week window when your site visit will occur so you can plan accordingly. You will work with your peer reviewers to set the exact dates of the 2-3 day site visit.
- You will still have the chance to vet a list of potential peer reviewers; the Alliance staff will select both team members.

### Schedule

Self-Study submitted in:	Site visit takes place between:	Accreditation Commission reviews in:
March	July 15 - August 30	October
July	November 1- December 15	February
November	March 1- April 15	June

- The time from the Self-Study's submission to the Commission's decision will be about a year, barring any issues you need to remedy during the process. (See page 3 for a detailed timeline.)
- Accredited status will expire every ten years. Exceptions to this are:
  - In select cases the Commission may designate a shorter award period due to concerns.
  - Requests (from the museum) for extensions to the Self-Study due date or site visit period will be approved only in rare cases due to highly unusual extenuating circumstances. Any such extension time granted will be deducted from the museum's next 10-year accreditation period.

### Preparing for Your Museum's Next Reaccreditation Review

- Put the museum's Self-Study due date, and corresponding site visit dates listed above, on the calendar...and tell the staff and governing authority members. Put site visit expenses in the budget for that year. Expect a 2-3 day visit by two reviewers.
- Review your museum's last Self-Study, Visiting Committee report, and Accreditation Commission decision letter: has the museum resolved or made progress on issues cited in these materials?
- Ensure your five Core Documents (listed below) meet standards and reflect current practice. Use the free Reference Guides for each Core Document available on the Alliance website. These five Core Documents will get particular scrutiny as part of the accreditation process. (Accredited museums do not have to apply to Core Documents Verification; this document review will occur as part of the accreditation process.)
  - Mission Statement
  - Strategic Institutional Plan(s)
  - Collections Management Policy (*if the museum owns, manages or borrows collections*)
  - Institutional Code of Ethics
  - Disaster Preparedness/ Emergency Response Plan

## Reaccreditation Timeline

	<b>TIME for this phase (months)</b>	<b>CUMULATIVE TIME for the review* (months)</b>
<p><b>SELF-STUDY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Museum is assigned a due date at the time of its accreditation award; date is nine years away.</li> <li>• Museum submits all materials by assigned due date.</li> <li>• Alliance staff does thorough review of materials for completeness.</li> <li>• In 1 month, museum receives review results (Self- Study Review Checklist).</li> <li>• Museum responds to any requests for clarification or information, and/or submits any missing documents within 1 month.</li> </ul>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<p><b>SITE VISIT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Process begins when museum submits Self-Study (Site Visit and Self-Study phases run concurrent for two months).</li> <li>• Museum receives list of potential Peer Reviewers to approve; museum returns list within 1 week.</li> <li>• Accreditation Program staff makes requests to two of the approved individuals to serve as the site visit team (the Visiting Committee).</li> <li>• The Visiting Committee coordinates with museum to set visit date within the pre-assigned six-week window.</li> <li>• Museum prepares for site visit.</li> <li>• Visit occurs.</li> <li>• Visiting Committee writes and submits report to Accreditation Commission.</li> <li>• Museum placed on pre-assigned Commission meeting agenda.</li> </ul>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>6-8</b>
<p><b>ACCREDITATION COMMISSION REVIEW &amp; DECISION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accreditation Commission reviews Self-Study and Visiting Committee report.</li> <li>• Commission grants or denies accreditation, or tables its decision for up to 1 year so museum can address specific concerns.</li> <li>• Museum receives decision letter and a copy of the Visiting Committee report.</li> <li>• When accreditation is granted, the next Self-Study due date is stated in the decision letter. Accreditation is granted for 10 years (shorter terms of 5 years are sometimes applied instead).</li> </ul>	<b>2-4</b>	<b>8-12</b>

\*Times given are approximate and do not factor in additional time the museum must take to remedy incomplete items or tabling actions by the Commission at final decision stage.