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## I. Benefits of Accreditation

When your Accreditation application is approved by the Accreditation Panel, your museum will receive a branding package that indicates that your museum has met high standards of professional practice. You will be able to showcase your Accredited status on-site as well as in your marketing materials, grant applications, etc. Your museum will be featured on the ANSM website.

## II. Eligibility for Accreditation

Accreditation is awarded to museum sites, rather than to services, collections, individuals, or umbrella groups. To be eligible to apply, museums must:

1. Meet the ICOM definition of a museum and adhere to all relevant legal and ethical standards of operation, as adopted by ANSM.
2. Be a museum member of ANSM.
3. Be registered in good standing with the Registry of Joint Stock under the Societies Act of Nova Scotia, OR be a crown corporation OR First Nations governing body OR be part of a government entity.
4. Be registered as a non-profit OR charitable organization under the Income Tax Act of Canada, OR be a crown corporation OR be part of a First Nations governing body OR government entity.
5. Have a written mission or statement of purpose that has been approved by the museum's governing authority.
6. Have been in operation and open to the public for the past five calendar years.
7. Be open a minimum of 350 hours per year, and be open by appointment in the off-season AND/OR have a demonstrated process for responding to off-season enquiries in a timely manner.
8. Operate in a physical facility/site that is owned by the museum OR governing authority, OR have a lease OR formal agreement with the owner that clearly outlines terms and responsibilities.
9. Own OR have a formal agreement with the owner of a collection that reflects the museum's mission or statement of purpose.
10. Participate in the TRACK Program every four years and be able to respond to 90% of questions, and receive a minimum overall score of 80% with no individual section scores below 70%. Museums within 5% of these scores will be considered for Conditional Accreditation, and will be given two months to address identified issues.

## III. Accreditation Process

### **Overview**

The designation of Accredited Museum is valid for four years, after which the museum must again participate in the Assessment process and reapply for Accreditation.

## 1. Application Deadline

Applications for Accreditation are due by 11:59pm, the third Friday of December of each year.

## 2. Application Assessment

Applications (see Appendix) will be peer-adjudicated by the Accreditation Panel (hereafter referred to as the Panel), using a standardized scoring matrix. The Panel will also review the museum's assessment report and briefing note. The Panel's adjudication will result in one of three scenarios:

### 2.1 The museum will be granted Accreditation

Accreditation is public acknowledgement that a museum meets high standards of professional practice. Successful applicants will receive a letter confirming their museum's accreditation.

Accredited museums will also receive a branding package of marketing tools to showcase their accredited status on-site, online, as well as in marketing efforts, grant applications, etc.

Accredited museums will be featured on the ANSM website.

### 2.2 The museum will be granted Conditional Accreditation

In the event that a museum fulfills most of the requirements for Accreditation, a designation of Conditional Accreditation may be applied. Museums in this situation will be provided with information on how they can address any shortcomings, and will be given a deadline of March 31<sup>st</sup> to address the issue(s). If the museum submits updated information prior to the deadline, the results will be reviewed and the Accreditation decision revisited.

2.2.1 If section scores and/or the overall assessment score come within 5% of the minimum scoring standard but the museum meets all other requirements, the Museum Program Manager will review the assessment results to determine if/how the museum can improve its score and achieve the minimum requirements. Findings will be promptly shared with the museum so the issue(s) can be addressed immediately.

2.2.2 If the museum met the minimum scoring standard but did not meet other eligibility requirements that could feasibly be addressed within three months, or the adjudication process revealed questions or concerns about any area of the museum's operations, these will be clearly outlined in the Panel's decision letter so that the museum has the opportunity to address them.

### 2.3 The museum will not be granted Accreditation

If the museum's application and/or assessment results do not meet the requirements of Accreditation, the Panel's decision letter will outline the reasons for Accreditation being denied. The museum will be encouraged to review and address the area(s) of concern in preparation for the next assessment cycle.

## 3. Removal of Accreditation

In the unlikely event that an accredited museum's situation changes significantly since they received their designation (e.g. governance structure has changed and/or the museum no longer meets eligibility requirements), ANSM reserves the right to revoke the museum's Accreditation status.

3.1. ANSM will contact the museum for more information, which will be shared with the Panel for review.

- 3.2. The Panel will provide the museum with written communication outlining the area(s) of concern and what needs to be addressed in order for the museum to maintain its Accreditation. A deadline for response will be included.
- 3.3. If a museum is unable to address the area(s) of concern, Accreditation will be revoked. The museum must remove all references to its Accredited status from the museum and its online presence within 30 days of receiving notice. ANSM will remove the museum from the list of Accredited museums on its website.

## **Appeal Process**

It is possible that a museum's Board of Directors, staff members, or volunteers will be disappointed in their assessment results and/or accreditation decision. This is not grounds for an appeal. However if a museum feels that mistakes were made in its Assessment Report, that it was given misinformation in preparation for or was otherwise treated unfairly during the Accreditation process, an appeal for review can be made.

The Accreditation appeal process has two stages:

### **Stage 1:**

The museum writes to the Accreditation Panel, in care of the Museum Program Manager, and addresses point-by-point the concerns relating to the Accreditation process and/or decision. The email or letter must be received or postmarked by the deadline for feedback. This date will be clearly outlined in the annual assessment timeline published on ANSM's website. The Panel will review the museum's application and respond to the museum in a timely manner.

### **Stage 2:**

If a museum was not satisfied with the response from the Accreditation Panel, it can submit a formal letter to the ANSM Board of Directors, again outlining specific concerns point-by-point, and requesting a full review of the Accreditation process. The Board will treat each appeal on a case-by-case basis, and will either stand by the existing Accreditation decision or instruct the Accreditation Panel to review the museum's application. A formal response will be sent to the museum from the ANSM Board of Directors, explaining their decision and any further actions required.

## **IV. Appendix: Accreditation Application Form**



## Application for Accreditation

### I. Applicant Contact Information

Name of Museum: \_\_\_\_\_

Governing Authority: \_\_\_\_\_

Operating Structure:

- Indigenous
- Government
  - Municipal
  - Provincial
  - Federal
- Non-profit
  - Provincially incorporated
  - Federally incorporated

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Primary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number (if different from museum phone number): \_\_\_\_\_

Email (if different from museum email): \_\_\_\_\_

Secondary Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## II. Organizational Information

1. Registry of Joint Stocks Number: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Charitable Registration Number: \_\_\_\_\_
3. Outline the organization's board and/or governing body structure. Include information on board recruitment and nomination processes, as well as terms of service.
4. Have there been any major organizational changes within the past year, such as unplanned staff and/or board member turnover? If so, explain why and outline how the situation is being handled.
5. Attach a letter of support from a community partner, noting the relationship between the partner who contributed the letter and the museum.

Tell us more about your museum. For the following questions, responses should be between 150-500 words.

6. Give an example that demonstrates the museum's community values it and sees it as a trusted resource and community partner.
7. What is the museum most proud of? Explain why.
8. Why is Accreditation important to the museum?
9. How do you envision the museum in four years?

## III. Eligibility

Accreditation is awarded to museum sites, rather than to services, collections, individuals, or umbrella groups. To be eligible to apply, museums must:

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5. Have a written mission or statement of purpose that has been approved by the museum's governing authority.
6. Have been in operation and open to the public for the past five calendar years.
7. Be open a minimum of 350 hours per year, and be open by appointment in the off-season AND/OR have a demonstrated process for responding to off-season enquiries in a timely manner.
8. Operate in a physical facility/site that is owned by the museum OR governing authority, OR have a lease OR formal agreement with the owner that clearly outlines terms and responsibilities.
9. Own OR have a formal agreement with the owner of a collection that reflects the museum's mission or statement of purpose.
10. Participate in the TRACK Program every four years and be able to respond to 90% of questions, and receive a minimum overall score of 80% with no individual section scores below 70%. Museums within 5% of these scores will be considered for Conditional Accreditation, and will be given two months to address identified issues.

**Eligibility Confirmation:**

I hereby certify that the information contained in this Application for Accreditation, submitted to the Association of Nova Scotia Museums, is complete and accurate, and a true representation of current practices at \_\_\_\_\_ (Museum Name)

In submitting this application, the museum and its governing authority:

- Have approved the content and submission of the museum's application for Accreditation to the ANSM
- Understand the basic nature of the TRACK Program and what the process involves
- Understand Accreditation will assess whether professional standards are being met

I understand that Accreditation is an ongoing process, and the \_\_\_\_\_ (Museum Name) will strive to uphold high standards of operation and work towards continuous improvements. As such, the Association of Nova Scotia Museums has the right to revoke the Accredited Museum designation in the event the organization breaches the eligibility criteria.

