

I. Introduction

- a. The NovaMuse Co-operative Working Group (NMCWG) is a working committee of the Association of Nova Scotia Museums (ANSM). ASWG was previously known as the Advisory Service Working Group, Information Management and Access Committee, and Passage Steering Committee. The group provides guidance and expertise in the areas of collections management, information-sharing and community-building, and participates in special projects and site visits.
 - i. NMCWG is comprised of ANSM regional representatives (voting), the Executive Director (ex officio), Programs Manager (ex officio), Museum Services Coordinator (ex officio), a representative of the Halifax Regional Municipality (ex officio), and a representative of the Department of Communities, Culture, Tourism & Heritage (ex officio). NMCWG may recruit additional experts to advise it or address specific situations, as required.
- b. The NovaMuse Co-operative has three levels:
 - i. The introductory level includes on-site visits and support that will prepare the museum for database work. The annual membership is \$100.
 - ii. Full services include the use of the CollectiveAccess collections management database system and sharing of collections information via NovaMuse.ca. The annual membership fee is based on the museum's operating budget and aligns with ANSM's [membership fee structure](#). As such, the annual co-operative fee ranges from \$350 to \$650.
 - iii. If the museum already has a collections management system that is meeting its needs, this level will include the ability to share collections information via NovaMuse.ca. The annual membership fee is \$200.

II. Application

- a. A museum wishing to join the co-operative must have a governing organization that is incorporated and submit a written application to the ANSM, for consideration by NMCWG.
 - i. ANSM's definition of museum is that they are public institutions in the service of society and its development, with a shared responsibility to collect, preserve and communicate knowledge. They strive to be safe spaces that provide access to information and foster opportunities for critical thinking, learning, dialogue, collaboration and social action.
- b. Upon acceptance, the museum's governing organization must complete and sign the ANSM membership renewal forms and submit the annual service fee.

Note: the NovaMuse Co-op has limited capacity (60 participants) and applicants may be placed on a waiting list.

III. Participation

- a. Participants must:
 - i. Commit to co-operative work in order to better themselves and the museum community as a whole.
 - ii. Maintain communication and current contact information with the NovaMuse Co-op, including a plan for off-season communications if applicable.
 - iii. New participants will complete an introductory year for relationship-building and assessment of collections data and practices before accessing the Co-op's full services.
 - iv. Participants are expected to actively conduct collections management and database work, and to participate in special projects whenever possible.
- b. Member museums that have been inactive for two years will be subject to a review meeting to determine how the service can better meet their needs.
 - i. Member museums may be removed from the NovaMuse Co-op after five years of inactivity. This decision would be made by the NMCWG and subject to ANSM Board approval.

IV. Renewal

- a. An annual membership agreement will be made between the ANSM and the participating organization through payment of fees. A renewal letter will outline the year's objectives, services offered, and funding obligations.
 - i. Participating museums must be ANSM members.
 - ii. Museums must provide up-to-date contact information for the primary contact(s) and board of directors.
 - iii. Seasonal museums must provide off-season contact information.
- b. Services will only be delivered to organizations which are members in good standing.
 - i. ANSM membership and NovaMuse Co-op renewal notices will be sent in May of each year.
 - ii. Non-renewal by August will result in a reminder notice being sent to the museum.
 - iii. Non-renewal by September will result in a final renewal notice being sent to the museum.
 - iv. Failure to renew membership by October 30th will result in suspension of database access and removal of collection records from NovaMuse.ca.

V. Departure

- a. Participating museums can be removed from the NovaMuse Co-op if they are no longer in good standing (expectations outlined in [III.a.i - iv](#)). The *NovaMuse Co-operative Dropout Procedures* will be followed.
 - i. All decisions about removal will be made by NMCWG in consultation with the ANSM Board of Directors.
 - ii. Notice will be sent to the participating museum via registered letter.
 - iii. All collections records will be removed from NovaMuse.ca and access to the database suspended. Database files will be exported and returned to the museum.

VI. Reinstatement of Previous Participants

- a.** Organizations applying for reinstatement must:
 - i.** Be an ANSM member in good standing.
 - ii.** Submit an application for NMCWG peer-review stating their reasons for leaving and seeking return to the program.
 - iii.** Pay the annual renewal fee.
 - iv.** NMCWG reserves the right to require a “catch-up” fee to compensate for re-training, and any other costs associated with the re-integration of the organization should circumstances require a larger investment of ANSM staff time and/or resources.
- b.** The nature of the NovaMuse Co-op is to be inclusive rather than exclusive - as resources allow. Organizations seeking reinstatement should understand that the length of their absence impacts the ANSM resources required to restore the database, retrain staff/volunteers, etc. Reinstatement must not jeopardize the current year’s funding obligations or affect services to other members.
- c.** Applications for reinstatement will be dealt with on a first come, first served basis. If need be, re-entry candidates will be put on the NovaMuse Co-op waiting list until they can be accommodated.

Last updated: 6 March 2025