



STEPS-IMA Application Form

A museum is a permanent institution in the service of society and its development, open to the public, which acquires, preserves, researches, communicates and exhibits the tangible and intangible heritage of humanity and its environment for the purposes of education, study and enjoyment.

The legal and ethical operation of a museum requires core documents and adherence to best practices.

The purpose of STEPS-IMA is to provide content, training, mentoring, and peer support to enable museums to work toward basic, good or better practices as defined in a national curriculum, and thus better serve their communities as stewards, educational partners, and community anchor organizations.

Through the development of processes, forms, handbooks, policies and other organizational tools, participants will check off performance indicators and standards they meet in six STEPS modules at any or all of three performance levels (Basic, Good, or Better).

Organizations that meet the standards will attain STEPS-IMA recognition and AASLH recognition at Basic, Good, or Better levels. Bronze, Silver, and Gold AASLH certificates as well as STEPS-IMA digital badges acknowledge achievements in this honor system program and do not grant or constitute a seal of approval, endorsement, certification or accreditation.



What level of standards will your organization most likely be working toward?	Basic	Good	Better
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Please note that two people are required to participate from each accepted organization.

Which of the following documents or policies are you most interested in developing or updating?

- Mission Statement
- Collections Policy
- Code of Ethics
- Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
- Strategic or Long-Range Plan
- Interpretation Plan
- Exhibit Standards
- Other _____



SPONSOR OF 2022-23 COHORT
SPONSOR OF 2024-25 COHORT

Application Form continued

Governing Body Legal Name	
Operating Name of Museum (Applicant)	
Applicant Mailing Address	
City/state/zip	
Applicant Physical location if different from mailing address	
Applicant Phone	
Applicant E-mail	
EIN/TEIN:	
County in which Applicant is located	
#1 Person Participating in STEPS-IMA	
Mailing Address	
Phone & cell phone	
Personal & work E-mails	
#2 Person Participating in STEPS-IMA	
Mailing Address	
Phone & cell phone	
Personal & work E-mails	

Submit Application and the following documents to the Iowa Museum Association, PO Box 824, Cedar Falls, Iowa 50613 or email as one pdf package to Director@iowamuseums.org.

- Most current 990 (we want to see your nonprofit status and most recent annual revenue)
- List of board members, and both mailing addresses and email addresses (this is back up so we don't lose touch with your organization during this program).
- Sign page 2 Benefits of Participation document and submit Board Resolution
- If you're not already a member of the IMA, join IMA
- You will be expected to join AASLH if chosen for the cohort so be aware of that cost.
- Tuition - \$450 per person per year, payable in January each year **UNLESS THE COHORT IS SPONSORED**. STEPS-IMA is a 2 year program, the full tuition is \$900 per person.
 - If the cohort is **not** sponsored, check if you would like to apply for a scholarship



STEPS-IMA

Benefits of Participation

Expected Commitment

As the leading authority on the museum industry in Iowa, for almost fifty years, the Iowa Museum Association (IMA) has offered a range of programs to support museums in building their organizational capacity. One such program is STEPS-IMA, a learning cohort utilizing the American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) STEPS curriculum that supports museums in meeting national museum standards.

The purpose of STEPS-IMA is to provide content, training, mentoring, and peer support to enable Iowa museums to work toward basic, good or better standards as defined in a national curriculum, and thus better serve their communities as stewards, educational partners, and community anchor organizations. STEPS-IMA is facilitated by the Iowa Museum Association and a team of qualified professionals who mentor participants.

Benefits of participation:

- **Individually impactful.** STEPS-IMA provides professional development for staff and volunteer leaders who grow in capacity to serve their organization, grow their network of colleagues and form attachments with dedicated mentors.
- **Organizationally impactful.** Each participating organization grows in six identified areas of learning, develops policies or documents based on organizational needs, and may earn AASLH STEPS certificates¹ and IMA digital badges for meeting performance indicators. Three levels of certificates acknowledge organizations have met standards in specific modules. Certificates in this honor system program do not grant or constitute a seal of approval, endorsement, certification or accreditation.

What does Recognition Mean for your Institution?

- Improved capacity to demonstrate good stewardship to donors.
- Improved capacity to demonstrate good governance to community and potential funders.
- Greater confidence in organization's ability to fulfill partnership or project requirements.
- Greater confidence in organizational sustainability with a solid foundation of core documents and policies.

¹ Enrollment in AASLH's national STEPS program provides workbook, online community, and national achievement recognition certificates.

Expected Commitment of Participating Organizations:

- The Organization will enroll two participants in the STEPS-IMA cohort, both of whom will be equally committed to learning.
- Participants will complete all six modules over a 24-month program and strive to attain at least the Basic level in each STEPS module.
- The Board will demonstrate their support of their participants with a Board Resolution that must be turned in to the Iowa Museum Association before first meeting
- Unless a sponsorship or scholarships are available, the Organization will pay the program fee of \$450 per person/per year for each person they enroll in STEPS-IMA. This is a two-year program, total fee \$900 per person.
- The Organization will maintain membership in IMA and AASLH for the duration of the program. AASLH basic institutional membership rates are listed on this page by budget level - <https://aaslh.org/membership/institutional-membership/>
- Working as a team, participants will identify and complete one project per module that advances their organizational practices within that module area.
- Participants will complete module and program related evaluations as requested by the Iowa Museum Association.
- The Organization and its participants will permit IMA to use their name in publicity around the STEPS-IMA program.

Participant #1	Organization	Date
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Participant #2	Organization	Date
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