

StEPs Enrollment Fee Grant

American Association for State and Local History Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations

Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area is pleased to announce that grants are now available to assist its partner organizations cover the cost of enrollment in the **American Association for State and Local History (AASLH) Standards and Excellence Program for History Organizations (StEPs)**.

StEPs is a voluntary self-assessment program for small- and mid-sized history organizations. The program, created by AASLH with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services, encourages awareness and achievement of national standards. Organizations that enroll in this self-paced, self-study program use assessment questions and performance indicators (Basic, Good, Better) to rate their policies and practices in six standards sections:

- Mission, Vision, Governance
- Audience
- Interpretation
- Stewardship of Collection
- Stewardship of Historic Structures and Landscapes
- Management

How will this program benefit my organization?

StEPs offers:

- **Increased credibility** with funders, your community, and stakeholders
- **Education and awareness of standards** for staff, volunteers, members of your governing authority and your community
- **A valuable opportunity to show your stakeholders the need for improvements** in staffing, training, materials, and equipment
- **Improved policies and practices** based on national standards
- **Clear direction** for future improvement
- **Meaningful progress**—identify, articulate, and measure your organization's accomplishments
- Easier and more meaningful **long-range and budget planning**
- **Preparation for participation in other programs** including the American Association of Museums' Museum Assessment and Accreditation programs



How much does StEPs cost and what does the grant cover?

Enrollment is \$175 for AASLH institutional members or \$290 for non-members. The enrollment fee is a **one-time payment** no matter if it takes your organization two years or ten years to earn the certificates (all organizations must maintain an active AASLH institutional membership to be eligible for the Bronze, Silver and Gold certificates).

Successful applicants for this grant will receive reimbursement for the StEPs enrollment of \$175. Applicants are expected to become and/or maintain membership in AASLH for the duration of participation in StEPS. AASLH membership rates are available online at: <http://www.aaslh.org/rates.htm>.

Who can apply?

A small museum's characteristics are varied, but they typically have an annual budget of less than \$250,000, operate with a small staff with multiple responsibilities, and employ volunteers to perform key staff functions. Other characteristics such as the physical size of the museum, collections size and scope, etc. may further classify a museum as small.

Grant information:

StEPS assessment can begin after membership confirmation from AASLH and you have received StEPs materials.

The maximum grant award is: **\$175**

The FFNHA will provide grant funds on a reimbursement basis.

For more information about FFNHA's StEPs scholarship grant, contact:

Elizabeth Hobson, Education & Interpretation Manager
785.856.2333 ehobson@freedomfrontier.org

What do we receive for the fee?

- **StEPs workbook** to help your organization assess operations, policies, and procedures and track progress
- **Active enrollment status** for as long as it takes your organization to complete the six sections (whether it takes two or ten years to work your way through the six sections you pay the enrollment fee only once)
- **Certificates** for each of the six self-study sections your organization successfully passes
- **National recognition** on AASLH's website for certificates earned
- **Notification of your organization's enrollment** to service providers in your area (i.e., state and regional museum associations and field service offices) so they may offer assistance, workshop invitations, mentoring groups, etc., depending on their schedule of programs and services
- **Discounts on AASLH workshops and technical leaflets** to help staff and volunteers of your organization gain skills and knowledge
- **Window decal** indicating your organization's participation in the program
- **Access to the password-protected StEPs Web site** for news, additional resources, and discussion forums

For more information about AASLH membership and benefits or **StEPs**, contact **Cherie Cook**, AASLH Senior Program Manager, at **573.893.5164** or at cook@aaslh.org.



Application

Applicant (name of organization):

Applicant's Federal Employer Identification Number:

Project manager:

Title:

PO Box or street address:

City:

State:

Zip Code:

Phone Number:

E-Mail Address:

The application must be signed by two authorized officials of the applicant organization.

Statement of Assurances

The information provided in this application is correct and complete. By signing below, we affirm that we are authorized representatives and have the authority to act on behalf of the organization applying for this Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area StEPs Scholarship Grant.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Title: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed Name: _____ Title: _____



If selected for a grant, your organization will need to be a member in good standing of the American Association for State and Local History. Is your organization a current member of the AASLH?

If no, have you been a member in the past?

Your membership number, if known:

Describe your reasons for wanting to begin the StEPs process:

Please prioritize the six areas covered in StEPs by their importance to the success of your organization (1 is the most critical and is the area you will begin with when working on the self-assessment; 6 is the least important):

Mission, Vision, Governance

Audience

Interpretation

Stewardship of Collection

Stewardship of Historic Structures and Landscapes

Management

Describe who will be involved in the self-assessment project, and what each person's role will be (include staff, volunteers and any partnering organizations):

Provide a basic timeline for completing the self-assessment for the area you listed above as most critical to your organization's success:

How do you plan to evaluate the success of your participation in the StEPs process?

Other Required Documentation



Please submit the following with your application:

1. The project manager's resume and a cover letter showing commitment to working through StEPs.
2. A copy of your organization's annual budget.
3. A letter providing evidence of board support for participation in StEPs.
4. A copy of the letter from the Internal Revenue Service confirming your organization's tax exempt status.

Submitting Your Application

Submit a copy of your completed application and all supporting documents.

The deadline for grant applications is ongoing.

Send completed application to: Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area
P O Box 526
Lawrence, KS 66044

If delivering, bring to: Freedom's Frontier National Heritage Area
The Carnegie Building, 200 W. 9th St.
Lawrence, KS

e-mail to: ehobson@freedomfrontier.org