



PROFESSIONAL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

PROGRAM, POLICIES, and
PROCEDURES MANUAL



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- Hannah Litzenberger;
- Brenda Pichette, representing IAP2 Canada; and
- Ken Smith, representing IAP2 Southern Africa.

Amelia Shaw, executive manager of IAP2 USA, staffed the task force during the development of the program. The task force is grateful for her support.

1. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2000; 283: 2689-2696.

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Program Description

Professional certification is available to all IAP2 members in good standing who have completed IAP2's 5-day training, called the Foundations in Public Participation course between 2002 and 2022 and refreshed as the Certificate in Public Participation in 2023. Certification is achieved through a three-step process where assessors evaluate a candidate's performance in five Core Competencies and 29 corresponding criteria as defined by the membership of the organization.

The following additional documents (linked) provide more detailed information about the program and the Core Competencies:

- [Information Kit](#),
- [Frequently Asked Questions](#),
- [Core Competencies](#),
- [CP3 Application](#),
- [MCP3 Application](#)
- [MCP Quality Standards](#)

Anyone interested in the IAP2's Professional Certification Program is advised to go to the webpage [IAP2 USA Professional Certification](#) on IAP2 USA's website.

Levels of Certification

IAP2 USA recognizes two levels of certification:

- The Certified Public Participation Professional (CP3) category includes all essential Core Competencies, meaning the entire suite of skills needed for recognition as a professional in the field.
- The Master Certified Public Participation Professional (MCP3) category recognizes more experienced professionals with additional skills and enhanced competencies that may be acquired over years working in this profession.

The Professional Certification Program is designed to assess both levels of professionals.

Core Competencies

The Professional Certification Task Force identified 29 distinct criteria that are organized into five broad categories, referred to as the Core Competencies:

- public participation process planning and application,
- public participation event planning and implementation,
- appropriate use of public participation tools and techniques,
- public participation communication skills, and

- public participation people skills.

To earn the CP3 designation, candidates must demonstrate they meet every criterion at the CP3 level.

The CP3 designation is a prerequisite for application for certification at the MCP3 level. The MCP3 application is a written application designed to demonstrate how a candidate meets 10 additional mandatory criteria and at least one optional criterion. The MCP3 criteria are explained in greater detail in the MCP3 application.

The Professional Certification Task Force believes the acquisition of the Core Competencies occurs as a natural progression of professional development for people working in the profession of P2. Figure 2 depicts how a professional develops the essential skills over time.

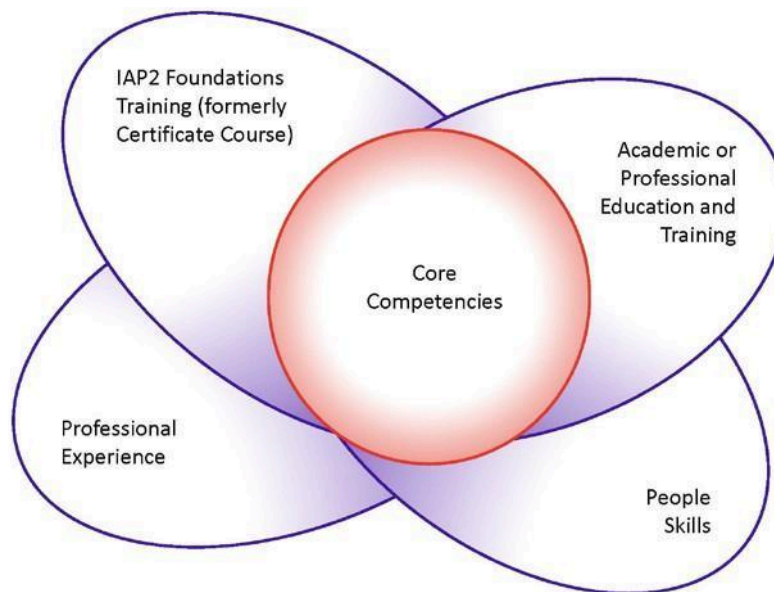


Figure 2. Contributors to the IAP2 USA Core Competencies.

CP3 Assessment Process

The assessment process is designed to assess candidates using the Core Competencies and the distinct criteria using quality standards defined for the CP3 level. Some criteria are assessed more than once, with the initial assessment focusing on identification of evidence that would predict successful completion of later steps in the process. Successful completion of any particular step in the process should not be construed as an implicit promise of follow-on successes. Unsuccessful candidates are offered strategies to mitigate deficiencies and are encouraged to repeat steps in the process.

Prerequisites

Candidates must have completed the IAP2 5-day training and be members in good standing of any affiliate of IAP2.

Step 1: Application

Candidates are welcome to submit a detailed application via the IAP2 USA website at any time. The application requires a detailed resume with job history, professional references, three project descriptions, and responses to questions that correspond to specific criteria. In addition, candidates are invited to submit a portfolio of work samples documenting prior work relevant to the Core Competencies. The portfolio, in combination with references, serves to validate prior performance and experience.

Applicants must sign the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Program Terms and Conditions document when applying. A copy of that document is included in the application.

At least two assessors independently review each application. Assessors review the candidate's application/portfolio using quality standards (outlined in the IAP2 Core Competencies). If the two assessors reach different conclusions, a third assessor will be asked to review the application. If two assessors reach the same conclusion, that determination will be communicated to the candidate. Candidates whose applications and portfolios provide adequate evidence of knowledge and experience to meet the quality standards of the criteria are invited to Step 2. If a candidate's application is missing evidence of one or a few criteria, the assessors may check with references or ask the candidate to submit additional evidence.

Candidates whose applications are unsuccessful are eligible to resubmit at a future date. They will have to pay to have their new application reviewed.

Step 2: Case Study

Candidates who are invited to Step 2 are provided a hypothetical case study. Candidates are asked to prepare a detailed P2 plan to address the situation described in the case study. The same case study is given to all candidates. Each candidate will interview (by virtual meeting, which is recorded) an individual playing the role of a representative from the hypothetical project sponsor to ask questions about the case study. All candidates interview the same project sponsor to assure consistency. This interview is considered part of the evaluation process.

Two assessors independently review and evaluate P2 plans submitted by candidates in response to the hypothetical case study.

Assessors review the candidate's case study submissions using the quality standards outlined in the IAP2 Core Competencies. If the two assessors reach different conclusions, a third assessor will be asked to review the case study submission. If two assessors reach the same conclusion,

that determination will be communicated to the candidate. Candidates whose P2 plans provide adequate evidence of capabilities that relate to quality standard criteria are invited to Step 3. If a candidate is missing evidence of one or a few criteria, the assessors may ask the candidate to revise a portion of the case study submission and resubmit it.

Candidates whose case studies are determined to be unsuccessful will be invited to respond to another case study any time they think appropriate. They will have to pay to have their new case study submission reviewed.

Candidates invited to Step 3 will be provided final instructions 3 weeks prior to the Assessment Center. The final instructions provide direction about what each candidate will be expected to present at the Assessment Center.

Step 3: Assessment Center

The Assessment Center is a full-day event plus an interview the day before. At least three assessors work together to conduct each Assessment Center, and the assessors are expected to make their final determinations by consensus. Attendance at each Assessment Center is limited to 12 participants. Elements of the Assessment Center include:

- A minimum 30-minute personal interview with at least two assessors prior to the day-long Assessment Center. The purpose of this interview is to provide the assessors with the opportunity to gather more information about the candidate.
- On the day of the Assessment Center, each candidate makes a 20-minute presentation, based on final instructions provided, to the hypothetical project sponsor, who might ask questions focused on the candidate's case study response, followed by 10 minutes of questions and answers (Q&A) by the panel of assessors.
- The candidates are then grouped into teams of two to four people, and each team is presented a challenging P2 scenario in relation to the case study. The teams have two hours to prepare a response to the challenge.
- Each candidate team provides a 20-minute presentation of its response to the challenge posed, followed by 10 to 15 minutes of Q&A by the panel of assessors.
- Each candidate participates in a final 30-minute private interview with the entire panel of assessors at the end of the day. More detailed feedback may be provided to the candidate within 2 weeks if required.
- The assessors score each candidate independently. Every effort is made to reach consensus. If two or more assessors conclude that the candidate has met the quality standard for all 29 criteria, the candidate will be certified. If two or more assessors conclude that the candidate has failed to earn scores for all 29 criteria, the assessors will work together to develop a recovery plan for the candidate

following the Assessment Center. Each recovery plan will be customized to the circumstances and candidate.

Process Summary

Figure 3 shows the CP3 certification process. Please note that since the diagram was developed, IAP2's foundational training program has been revised and it is now called IAP2's Certificate in Public Participation. Both courses are acceptable pre-requisites.

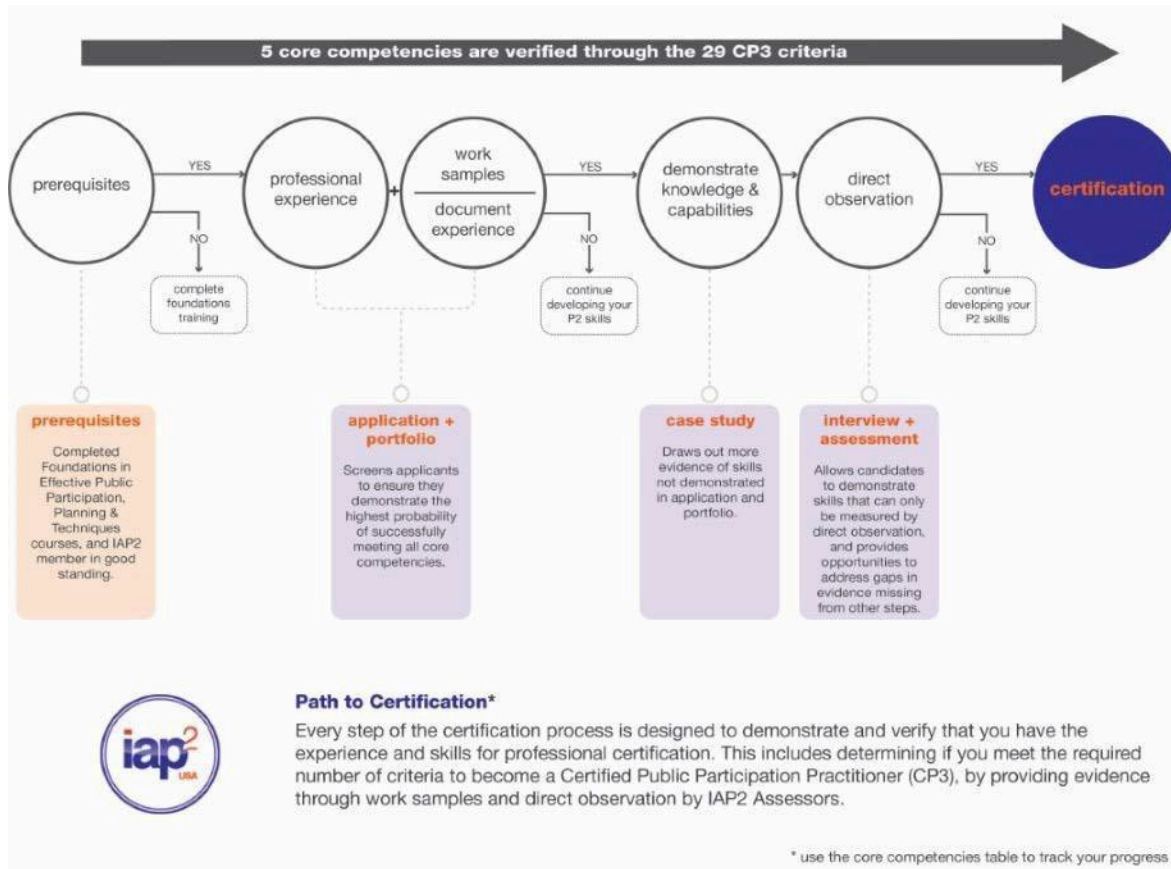


Figure 3. CP3 Certification Process.

MCP3 Assessment Process

Individuals who successfully attain the CP3 level of certification and have successfully maintained their status are eligible to apply for the master level of certification. Because they have already demonstrated their performance against the 29 criteria assessed in the CP3 program, the application for the MCP3 level is limited to a review of a written MCP3 application and associated materials.

IAP2 assessors assess the MCP3 application using 10 additional mandatory criteria and a series of optional criteria. To be eligible for certification at the master's level, candidates must meet all

10 mandatory criteria. MCP3 candidates must also be assessed on at least one optional criterion. The optional criteria reflect the many diverse directions one's career may take over the years, and represent areas of specialization common within the advanced/master P2 profession, that is, certified facilitation skills, project management skills, etc.

The timing of seeking MCP3 certification is completely up to the individual holding the CP3 status. Some may choose to pursue MCP3 status immediately following CP3 certification, while others may prefer to accumulate additional skills and experience before applying. As long as candidates have maintained their status (see the "Ongoing Requirements and Periodic Recertification" section), they may submit the MCP3 application at any time.

CP3/MCP3 Pledge

Following successful completion of the assessment process, successful candidates are required to sign a pledge. The pledge is as follows:

As an IAP2 USA certified public participation professional, I commit to:

- actively engage and support IAP2 and its mission;
- conduct public participation work that is values based, decision oriented, and goal driven;
- practice the IAP2 Core Competencies in all my work going forward;
- ensure my membership in IAP2 is in good standing;
- maintain and continuously expand my P2 knowledge and skills;
- practice self-awareness and conduct myself at all times with personal and professional integrity, informed by the IAP2 Core Values and the IAP2 Code of Ethics;
- mentor and coach other practitioners; and
- advocate for public participation as part of good governance and sound decision making.

Certificate

Upon receipt of the signed pledge by IAP2 USA, a certificate, signed by the current president of IAP2 USA, is sent to the successful candidate. The certificate includes the original date of certification. Figure 4 shows the certificate.

Recognition

Individuals who have been certified in accordance with the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Program may use CP3/MCP3, as appropriate, in portraying their credentials. Those who have been awarded the credential will be listed on the IAP2 USA website. Individuals interested in

confirming the status of anyone claiming the credential may contact IAP2 USA for confirmation. Individuals who have not completed the professional certification process may not claim to be certified by IAP2 USA, and their claims will be disputed when IAP2 USA is contacted.



Figure 4. Certificate.

Ongoing Requirements and Periodic Recertification

To maintain professional certification, CP3 and MCP3 are required to:

- maintain membership in good standing with IAP2 USA,
- provide a minimum of 20 hours (annually) of volunteer (unpaid) service to IAP2 USA, and
- participate in a minimum of 12 hours (annually) of continued professional development.

In addition, every 3 years, certified professionals are required to submit a recertification application for review by an assessor. The application includes a professional goal for the next 3 years, a self-assessment related to achievement of one's goal from the prior certification cycle, and a project description for a project completed since the prior certification cycle. If a certified professional does not meet the ongoing requirements and/or does not complete the recertification process, their credentials will expire. The individual will no longer be listed on IAP2's website as a certified professional.

If a certified professional is no longer working in the P2 field, they may request a switch to emeritus status. They may use the appropriate designation CP3 emeritus or MCP3 emeritus indefinitely without meeting requirements for maintaining certification or recertification as long as they maintain membership in IAP2. The emeritus status is not to be used in lieu of a leave of absence (see the “Leave of Absence” section).

Accommodation for Americans with Disabilities

IAP2 USA will, upon request, provide appropriate aids and services leading to effective communication for qualified persons with disabilities so they can participate equally in the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Program. Requests for reasonable accommodation are required at the time of application. Requests can be directed to IAP2 USA by email at info@iap2usa.org.

Program Administration

Program Direction

The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee provides ongoing program direction. An ad hoc task force convened periodically by the committee performs specific tasks. Terms of reference for both the committee and the task force are attached. The committee should have five to seven members, including one member of the IAP2 USA Board of Directors and, ideally, at least one person who has served on a Professional Certification Task Force (either the original task force that developed the program or an ad hoc task force convened since the inception of the program).

Program Oversight

The IAP2 USA Board of Directors oversees the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Program. The board is responsible for:

- approving the Professional Certification Committee's Annual Work Plan,
- approving the proposed annual budget and schedule, and
- entering into agreements with assessors.

Program Administration

IAP2 USA staff are responsible for implementing the program in collaboration with the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee. Staff are responsible for:

- supporting implementation of the program, including but not limited to working with the Professional Certification Committee to establish the budget and schedule for the upcoming year;
- supporting member communication and program marketing;
- performing document management, including maintenance of certified professionals' records during the certification process and long-term file maintenance;
- responding to inquiries about professional certification from prospective certification candidates;
- confirming certification status in response to inquiries from clients, customers, and employers;
- providing reminders to certified professionals for maintaining compliance with ongoing requirements and recertification requirements;
- staffing committee and task force meetings;
- making logistical arrangements for Assessment Centers;

- providing the pledge document and certificate to candidates achieving certification and adding their head shots to the IAP2 USA website;
- supporting communication between candidates and assessors;
- assessing and responding to disability accommodation requests by candidates; and
- processing payments from candidates.

Assessment

Initially, members of the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Task Force served as assessors with support from IAP2 Canada's Certification Task Force. As more people become certified, CP3s and MCP3s will be invited to apply to become assessors. CP3s are eligible to serve as assessors with the exception of reviewing MCP3 applications. Assessors who are themselves MCP3s are eligible for assignment of MCP3 applications for assessment. All assessors go through a rigorous selection and training process focused on competencies deemed essential for serving as assessors.

Assessors are responsible for conducting assessments of candidates using the Core Competencies, the respective 29 criteria, and the specific quality standards. No other information about a candidate may be used, including prior knowledge of a candidate's work or service to IAP2. Assessors are also responsible for working as a panel to develop the case study for Step 2 and the implementation (design and conduct) of the Assessment Center. Assessors must comply with all confidentiality requirements.

More information about the assessor's responsibilities is presented in a separate *Assessors Manual*.

Certification Maintenance

Maintaining certification status is essential to the sustainability of the Professional Certification Program. The Professional Certification Committee and staff will work together to encourage all who become certified to complete the ongoing certification requirements and periodic certification. In accordance with the ongoing service requirements, all certified professionals will be urged to provide ongoing support to the program through service on the Professional Certification Committee and other essential functions to sustain IAP2 USA.

Recordkeeping

IAP2 USA staff are responsible for all recordkeeping related to the Professional Certification Program. A confidential file will be maintained for each candidate throughout their tenure as a certified professional. The file will include all materials related to the person's status as a certified professional including their original application, case study submission, and final

scores. In addition, the file will include submitted documentation related to application for MCP3 certification (if applicable) and maintenance and recertification requirements.

Communications and Marketing

Other IAP2 committees and IAP2 USA staff provide marketing and communications support for the program.

Policies and Procedures

This section includes the program policies and procedures that support the implementation of the Professional Certification Program. The IAP2 USA Board of Directors periodically reviews and approves the information. The following topics are addressed by policy and procedures:

- challenges to assessor determinations;
- enforcement of ongoing certification requirements;
- investigation of complaints about certified professionals;
- reinstatement of certification after revocation; and
- recruitment, training, and selection of assessors.

Challenges to Assessor Determinations

Introduction

Some applicants may not be qualified to achieve certification. Assessors may determine that a candidate:

- is not ready to prepare a case study response based on review of their application,
- is not ready to attend an Assessment Center based on review of their case study preparation, or
- is not ready for certification based on participation in the Assessment Center.

This policy explains how assessors make their decisions.

Policy

The Professional Certification Program is designed to support successful completion of the process. To support successful outcomes, IAP2 USA will endeavor to ensure that interested candidates understand the rigor of the program, the Core Competencies and their associated criteria, and the certification process. This effort will be continuously supported by information products posted on the IAP2 USA website and periodic webinars. Program staff will also respond to inquiries from interested parties directly and, if necessary, refer questions to the Professional Certification Committee or an assessor.

IAP2 USA, with direction and support from the Professional Certification Committee, manages the assessor selection process, including but not limited to:

- entering into agreements with assessors,
- training assessors, and
- supervising assessors.

IAP2 USA stands in support of the final determinations made by the assessors. IAP2 USA will not refer challenges to any other body, including the Board of Directors, president, or Executive Committee.

Assessments are made by trained assessors based on applications and portfolios, case study submissions, interviews conducted throughout the process, and performance at the Assessment Center. Assessors may check references and/or ask for additional evidence to aid in making their determinations. No other information about the candidate is relevant to this determination. At least two assessors are assigned to each candidate. Any time an assessor concludes that a candidate is not ready to move to the next step, the relevant submission will be provided to a third assessor for an independent review. The candidate will be informed, in writing, if the assessors agree that the candidate is not ready to move on. A meeting with the assessors may be arranged upon request. The assessors will provide constructive feedback to support successful completion of certification in the future. If the candidate has already passed steps in the process, the candidate will be invited to repeat the step that is proving problematic without having to start at the beginning again.

Candidates should be aware that the burden of proof is on them to demonstrate that they meet or exceed the quality standards for all 29 criteria. No exceptions to that requirement will be made at any time, and no supplemental material or information may be used to substitute for the established criteria. The reputation of IAP2 and the CP3/MCP3 credential relies on consistent application of the process and criteria.

Some specific criteria are assessed more than one time in the three-step assessment process. In those cases, the Professional Certification Program is designed to allow accumulation of evidence throughout the assessment process. For example, some questions on the CP3 application seek to collect evidence that a candidate may be successful during later steps in the process. Successful completion of one step should not be construed as an implicit promise of follow-on success.

Scoring sheets will be used for all Core Competencies and associated criteria at each of the three stages in the certification process. The scoring sheets will be included in each candidate's file throughout the process and going forward.

Candidates whose applications are deemed unsuccessful will be invited to reapply as they think appropriate. They will have to pay the application fee again.

Candidates whose case studies are determined to be unsuccessful will be invited to respond to another case study any time they think appropriate. They will have to pay to have their case study submission reviewed.

Three assessors work together to conduct each Assessment Center. The assessors are expected to make their final determinations by consensus. If the three assessors agree that a candidate

should not be certified, they will prepare a customized written recovery plan. The recovery plan will outline the deficiencies observed against specified criteria and provide specific advice regarding how to improve performance at a future Assessment Center or other actions deemed necessary by the assessors.

Consideration will be given to minimizing costs to the candidate without compromising the rigor of the assessment process.

Procedure

Candidates whose applications have been rejected may submit a new application at any time.

Candidates who have not passed the case study step may submit a P2 plan in response to a different case for a future Assessment Center upon request.

The only determination that may be challenged is the decision made at the Assessment Center. If an individual wishes to challenge a final determination after an Assessment Center, they must file a written grievance within 10 days of the Assessment Center with IAP2 staff. The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will review the grievance in consultation with the assessors. The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee's decision will be issued within 4 weeks and will be final. The IAP2 USA executive manager and the IAP2 USA Board of Directors serve no role in this procedure.

Maintenance of Certification

Introduction

IAP2 USA's Professional Certification Program is intended to identify and affirm the knowledge and skills of the profession's most qualified professionals. It is expected that after receiving the credential, these professionals will continue to actively engage in IAP2 and continue their professional development. It is further expected that they will stay active in the profession and will be able to demonstrate their ongoing involvement by submitting one current or recent project description every 3 years.

Policy

Annual Requirements

To maintain professional certification, CP3 and MCP3 are required to:

- Maintain membership in good standing with IAP2 USA.
- Provide a minimum of 20 hours (annually) of volunteer (unpaid) service to IAP2. Eligible activities include leadership positions with IAP2 (USA, International, or chapter level), service on IAP2 committees, participation in IAP2 USA programs,

authoring of articles for newsletters, and leadership of a webinar or conference session.

- Participate in a minimum of 12 hours (annually) of continued P2-related professional development. Eligible activities include attendance at webinars, conference sessions, skills symposium sessions, other P2 training, or academic courses.

Reporting of the annual requirements commences in the calendar year after receiving certification. Completion of certification annual requirements is reported to and maintained by IAP2 USA staff. Any questions about the eligibility of activities should be directed to IAP2 USA staff.

Periodic Recertification

Every 3 years, certified professionals are required to submit a recertification application along with the required fee for review by an assessor. The contents of the recertification application must include:

- a 500- to 750-word project description and a reference for a project completed since the prior certification cycle, along with a self-reflection on what was learned from that project;
- a 200- to 250-word self-assessment of progress related to the goal set in the prior certification cycle; and
- a P2 professional goal for the next 3 years and the rationale for selection of that professional goal.

Emeritus Status

Upon retirement from actively working in the P2 profession, CP3s and MCP3s may request a change in status to emeritus status by notifying, in writing, IAP2 staff; staff will then notify the Professional Certification Committee. Those who are granted emeritus status are exempt from ongoing and periodic recertification requirements.

If a previously certified professional wants to return to active status, they should notify IAP2 staff, in writing. In addition, the certified professional must come back into compliance with service and professional development requirements within 1 year and submit the required documentation.

Leave of Absence

If a CP3 or MCP3 would like to take a leave of absence from certified professional status, they are required to notify, in writing, IAP2 staff; staff will then notify the Certification Committee. Upon return, those who have been on the leave of absence must come back into compliance

with service and professional development requirements within 1 year and submit the required documentation.

Procedure

IAP2 USA staff maintain records of membership status, service hours, and professional development hours for each certified professional.

Certified professionals are welcome to submit documentation of service hours and professional development hours on an ongoing basis. For each submission, certified professionals submit detailed information related to each reported activity.

On or before June 1 and November 1 of each year, IAP2 USA staff will remind each certified professionals to submit documentation by the end of the year.

If a certified professional fails to maintain IAP2 membership and/or fails to submit the necessary documentation by January 31, they will be notified that their certified professional status has lapsed, unless a leave of absence has been requested and granted.

Certified professionals in lapsed status will not enjoy the benefits of certification, including but not limited to:

- posting on the listing of certified professionals on IAP2 USA's website and
- verification of certification status in response to inquiries from potential clients, customers, and/or employers.

Certified professionals in lapsed status will have until March 31 to come into compliance.

If a certified professional fails to rectify the situation by March 31, they will lose certification.

Should a former certified professional want to be reinstated, they must submit a request, in writing, for reinstatement to IAP2 USA staff.

Investigation of Complaints about Certified Professionals

Introduction

It is expected that certified professionals will perform to the highest professional standards. The integrity of the Professional Certification Program and the reputation of IAP2 USA are vital to the recognition of this profession and should be of utmost importance.

Policy

As a final step in the certification process, candidates are expected to sign a pledge committing themselves to:

- actively engage and support IAP2 and its mission;
- conduct P2 work that is values based, decision oriented, and goal driven;
- practice the IAP2 Core Competencies in all work going forward;
- ensure their membership in IAP2 is in good standing;
- maintain and continuously expand P2 knowledge and skills;
- practice self-awareness and conduct themselves at all times with personal and professional integrity, informed by the IAP2 Core Values and the IAP2 Code of Ethics;
- mentor and coach other practitioners; and
- advocate for P2 as part of good governance and sustainable decision making.

The only condition under which a certified professional can be stripped of their status is one in which it can be documented that the individual has violated their signed pledge.

If complaints are filed with IAP2 USA about any certified professional, IAP2 USA will investigate the complaint and take actions to protect IAP2 USA's reputation.

Certified professionals who are determined to have violated their pledge will lose their certification.

Procedure

Anyone wishing to file a complaint against a certified professional must do so in writing to IAP2 USA. IAP2 USA's executive manager will open an investigation report and share the complaint, without naming the certified professional, with the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee and notify the IAP2 USA Board of Directors that an investigation is underway.

IAP2 USA's executive manager will contact the certified professional that a complaint has been received and explain the procedure for moving forward.

An IAP2 USA staff member will contact the individual(s) who filed the complaint to acknowledge their concern, explain IAP2 USA's professional certification complaint procedure, begin a thorough inquiry about the nature and extent of the complaint, and document specific issues. Additional sources of information may be sought and followed up with, if necessary, to obtain a full understanding of the complaint.

An IAP2 USA staff member will share the results of the investigation with the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee. The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee may take additional actions as justified by the situation to fully investigate the situation.

Upon satisfaction that the investigation is complete, the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will ask the executive manager to share the completed investigation report with the

relevant certified professional and invite a written response. The certified professional will have 21 days to submit a written response.

Based on the results of the investigation and the certified professional's response and in consultation with the executive manager, the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will make a decision. Options include:

- dismissal of the complaint,
- probationary status, or
- revocation of certification.

An IAP2 staff member will notify the certified professional of the outcome. An IAP2 staff member will also share the results and the rationale for the decision with the complainant.

Reinstatement of Certification after Revocation

Introduction

It is expected that certified professionals will perform to the highest professional standards. The integrity of the Professional Certification Program and the reputation of IAP2 USA are vital to the recognition of this profession and should be of utmost importance.

Policy

People who have had professional certification revoked may request reinstatement after 3 years. Requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

Procedure

Upon receipt of a request to be reinstated, the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will determine the appropriate course of action based on the reason why certification was revoked and the period of time that has elapsed.

If certification was revoked due to failure to meet annual certification requirements or periodic recertification requirements, the former certified professional will have to submit a completed annual requirement form for the missing years and complete the periodic recertification requirements.

If certification was revoked as a result of an investigation into a complaint about a certified professional, the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will make a final decision.

Recruitment, Training, and Selection of Assessors

Introduction

Assessors have tremendous responsibility within the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Program and are critical to the program's success and reputation. Because the program is a signature program for IAP2 USA, the recruitment, training, and selection of assessors are critically important. Initially, only IAP2 USA Professional Certification Task Force members served as assessors. As the Professional Certification Program grows, there will be a corresponding need for assessors. IAP2 USA will recruit, select, and train assessors. Only people who are themselves certified will be eligible to apply to serve as assessors. If selected, they will review and assess applications, work cooperatively to develop case studies, assess P2 plans submitted in response to case studies, and conduct Assessment Centers. Current CP3s are eligible to serve as assessors for CP3 applications. Current MCP3s are eligible to serve as assessors for CP3 and MCP3 applications. Emeritus CP3s and MCP3s are eligible to serve as assessors within 3 years of becoming emeritus.

Policy

It is essential that assessors demonstrate thorough knowledge of the program and an understanding of how and why it was developed. They are responsible for implementing the assessment process consistent with its design, make determinations objectively, and use scoring sheets and the Core Competencies as intended and controlled by the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee. In their relations with candidates, assessors are expected to adopt the attitude of a mentor or coach and provide respectful support and assistance to each candidate in supporting career development. Assessors must demonstrate professional and personal integrity, fairness, and excellent communication skills.

Procedure

At least every 2 years, the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will release a request for qualifications for assessors. Proposals submitted in response shall document responders' comprehension of the program and evidence of their ability to perform against key evaluation criteria. The Professional Certification Committee will select assessors based on assumptions about the number and frequency of Assessment Centers planned for the upcoming 2-year period. No commitment will be made about the number of assignments that will be forthcoming.

Assignments may include:

- Reviewing CP3 and MCP3 applications.
- Developing case studies.

- Reviewing P2 plans submitted in response to the case study assignment.
- Serving as an assessor for an assigned Assessment Center. These duties include:
 - development of final instructions for those invited to attend an Assessment Center and
 - work as a member of an assessment panel in preparing and conducting an Assessment Center.
- Preparing and submitting necessary documentation that relates to any of the above assignments.

Pay guidelines will be established in the Professional Certification Program budget approved by the IAP2 USA Board of Directors on an annual basis.

The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee will make assignments, and an IAP2 staff member will communicate those assignments to the assessors.

Allowable expenses associated with service at an Assessment Center will be reimbursed according to IAP2 USA guidelines.

Attachments

- Professional Certification Committee Terms of Reference
- Professional Certification Task Force Terms of Reference
- Additional information about assessors

IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee Terms of Reference

Mandate

The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee is responsible for overseeing implementation of the program. The work of the committee will use a diversity, equity, and inclusion lens in its work. Responsibilities include:

- collaborate with IAP2 USA staff to provide direction for the program as needed;
- provide periodic status reports to the IAP2 USA Board of Directors;
- conduct ongoing program evaluation to support continuous improvement;
- provide input to IAP2 staff on program budgetary needs;
- support IAP2 staff in developing the schedule and work plan for upcoming months;
- support IAP2 staff with development of a marketing plan and content for the upcoming year;
- work with IAP2 USA staff to support communication with members about the program;
- provide program materials to staff for posting on the website as needed;
- respond to inquiries from IAP2 members in support of staff about the program, as needed;
- evaluate challenges to assessor determinations, as needed; and
- convene, as needed, a task force for a specified period to complete specific task(s).

Duration

This committee has an indefinite term as long as IAP2 USA operates its Professional Certification Program.

Governance Structure

The IAP2 USA Board of Directors convenes the Professional Certification Committee and approves the recommended budget, schedule, and work plan.

The Professional Certification Committee prepares and submits the components of the work plan.

The work of the committee will be guided by the consensus of the committee members. If consensus cannot be reached, the chair will call a vote. All committee members will have a vote.

Membership

The Professional Certification Committee will have five to seven members including at least one member of the IAP2 USA Board of Directors, at least one assessor, and at least one IAP2 certified professional. For the foreseeable future, this committee will be chaired by an individual who served on the task force that created the program in order to maintain consistency in the program with the original intentions of the task force. The rest of the committee will be populated by volunteer committee members (including IAP2 USA members and representatives from other affiliates that are interested in professional certification).

Representatives from other IAP2 affiliates will be responsible for reporting back to their respective boards as needed.

Frequency of Meetings

The Professional Certification Committee will meet between four and six times a year (every 2 to 3 months) for meetings no longer than 2 hours in length. Committee members will volunteer their time and skills to complete tasks as assigned.

The Professional Certification Committee is supported by IAP2 USA staff.

IAP2 USA Professional Certification Task Force Terms of Reference

Background

In 2013, the IAP2 USA Board of Directors convened the Professional Certification Task Force to create a Professional Certification Program. The task force completed its initial work in May 2018, and the Board of Directors approved the program. Follow-on work to finalize this *Professional Certification Program, Policies, and Procedures Manual* continued through April 2023.

The Professional Certification Committee oversees routine implementation of the program. The committee has the authority to convene a task force, if deemed necessary, to conduct discrete tasks that fall outside routine implementation. The task force reports to the committee.

Mandate

An IAP2 USA Professional Certification Task Force will be convened as needed by the IAP2 Professional Certification Committee to conduct discrete tasks as dictated by the committee. Tasks could include:

- periodic review of the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Program, which could include the overall program design, Core Competencies, assessment process, program manual, or any component as needed;
- recruitment and selection of assessors (at least every 2 years) for approval by the Professional Certification Committee and then the IAP2 USA Board of Directors;
- training for assessors; and
- periodic top-to-bottom program evaluation (at least every 5 years).

Duration

This task force will be provided a defined term length when it is convened and will be disbanded upon completion of assigned tasks. Service on a task force is not indefinite.

Governance Structure

The IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee convenes the Professional Certification Task Force and approves recommendations of the task force before submission to the IAP2 USA Board of Directors for approval.

The work of the task force will be guided by the consensus of the task force members. If consensus cannot be reached, the chair will call a vote. All task force members will have a vote.

Approvals will be made by the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee.

Membership

The Professional Certification Task Force will have at least one member of the IAP2 USA Professional Certification Committee and at least one IAP2 certified professional. IAP2 USA assessors may serve on the task force but only if they are not seeking reappointment as an assessor (if the task force has been convened for the purpose of recruiting and selecting assessors). If possible, the task force will be chaired by an individual who served on the original task force to maintain consistency in the program with the original intentions of the task force. The task force will be populated initially by invitation from the Professional Certification Committee, and membership may be limited. Representation from other affiliates will be encouraged to help ensure international consistency in program design to the extent possible.

Representatives from other IAP2 affiliates will be responsible for reporting back to their respective boards as needed.

Frequency of Meetings

The task force will determine a meeting schedule to complete its assigned tasks within the specified time frame. Task force members will volunteer their time and skills to complete tasks as assigned.

The task force is supported by IAP2 USA staff.

Additional Information about Assessors

Assessor Job Description

IAP2 USA periodically seeks certified P2 professionals (CP3 or MCP3 or equivalent from any IAP2 affiliate) to serve as assessors for the Professional Certification Program. The Professional Certification Program is in its infancy, and assessors for the program will be expected to contribute to the promotion of and ultimate success of the program. The assessors are expected to be objective evaluators as well as mentors to candidates throughout the process.

Responsibilities

Assessors, under the guidance of the Professional Certification Committee, are responsible for planning, implementing, and evaluating candidates at all steps of each assessment process in accordance with the IAP2 USA *Assessors Manual*. Responsibilities include application review and scoring, case study development and response scoring, and service with other assessors to facilitate Assessment Centers. This position requires a high level of confidentiality. Assessors are required to maintain candidate privacy and the integrity of the Assessment Center by maintaining strict confidentiality.

Essential Duties

Assessors are actively involved in all stages of the assessment process—application review and scoring, case study development and response scoring, and Assessment Center development. Essential duties include but are not limited to:

- review and scoring of applications,
- collaboration with other assessors,
- development of case studies,
- review and scoring of case study responses,
- preparation of interview questions,
- preparation of group work at the Assessment Center,
- participation in individual interviews,
- scoring of candidate presentations,
- provision of constructive feedback to candidates,
- timely coordination and submittal of documentation to IAP2 staff for each assessment,
- processing and completion of necessary paperwork to document assessor decisions, and
- completion of all scoring materials for the certification process.

Occasional Duties

Occasional duties include:

- collaboration with the Professional Certification Committee and/or the Professional Certification Task Force as needed, and
- liaison between IAP2 staff and other assessors.

Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

Assessors must have the following credentials and qualifications:

- CP3 or MCP3 certification or equivalent from any IAP2 affiliate;
- experience performing evaluations, personal or product;
- comprehensive knowledge of the IAP2 Core Values;
- comprehensive knowledge of professional certification Core Competencies and associated criteria;
- experience serving in a coaching and/or mentoring role;
- ability to offer constructive and supportive feedback;
- demonstrated honesty and integrity;
- adherence to the IAP2 Code of Ethics;
- active involvement in professional development in the field;
- commitment to the growth of the field;
- customer service orientation;
- excellent communication skills, verbal and written;
- ability to develop processes to improve program functionality;
- ability to perform objective evaluations against established criteria;
- ability to accurately maintain records in a detail-oriented environment;
- ability to work effectively and efficiently as part of a team;
- ability to independently plan, organize, and effectively manage multiple tasks and priorities;
- ability to maintain privacy and confidentiality; and
- experience with and ability to use standard word-processing software, spreadsheet software, and other standard office equipment and personal computers.

Interested individuals are invited to apply to serve as assessors by responding to a call for proposals periodically distributed by IAP2 USA.

Assessors Training Process

Assessors selected by IAP2 USA will be provided with a copy of the IAP2 USA *Professional Certification Program, Policies, and Procedures Manual* and the *Assessors Manual*.

The training process includes a series of steps including five homework assignments and five webinars (led by experienced assessors) to be completed in the following order:

1. Homework Assignment 1: Review the manuals.
2. Synchronous Online Training Session 1: Introduction, expectations for assessors, and training in how to score an application.
3. Homework Assignment 2: Using the assessors manual, score an application.
4. Synchronous Online Training Session 2: Review the scored application homework with a goal of achieving consistency in approach.
5. Synchronous Online Training Session 3: Review past case studies assignments and training in how to develop a case study assignment.
6. Homework Assignment 3: Using the assessors manual, listen to a recording of a project sponsor interview and score a case study.
7. Synchronous Online Training Session 4: Review scored case studies with a goal of achieving consistency in approach.
8. Optional Homework Assignment 4: Observe a recording from an Assessment Center (at least one individual interview, at least one presentation, 30 minutes of group work time, and one group presentation).
9. Synchronous Online Training Session 5: Discuss the Assessment Center.

This process has not yet been conducted and may be refined later.