



Excellence · Trust · Permanence

The Commission awards the accreditation seal to land conservation organizations that meet national standards for excellence, uphold the public trust and ensure that conservation efforts are permanent.

Registering to Apply for Accreditation

Registration is the First Step!

Registering your organization to apply for accreditation for a specific application due date (application round) is the first step in the accreditation process. Registration provides an open and fair way to select the round that works best for you. Registration also enables the Commission to plan ahead for upcoming applications. Before registering, please familiarize yourself with the program requirements listed at the end of this document and read the *Applicant Handbook*.

Online Registration System

The registration system is available on the Commission's website. The website lists the application rounds that are currently available to registrants. When an application round is fully subscribed, a limited waiting list option becomes available (see page 3). To view available rounds see <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/getting-accredited/application-registration-and-fees>.

Things to Know about Completing the Registration Form

The registration process will take about 15-30 minutes to complete, including payment of registration fees. Registration must be completed in one session and will not be complete until the registration form is submitted electronically with payment.

The \$750 registration fee is nonrefundable and nontransferable. Submitting a registration commits your organization to a specific pre-application and application due date. Failure to submit the pre-application or application on the due date you registered for will result

in the forfeiture of the registration fee. Your organization may not transfer its registration fee to a different round.

The registration fee is a portion of the full accreditation fee that is due at the time the complete application is submitted. Read the complete fee schedule online at <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/downloads/AccreditationFees.doc>.

To complete registration you must:

- Verify that your organization meets the eligibility and registration requirements;
- Complete the registration form;
- Agree to the Registration Terms of Agreement (see more on page 5);
- Commit to the pre-application and application due dates for the round you select;
- Have credit card or PayPal account information ready for registration fee payment (see more on page 3);
- Be ready to answer all questions on the registration form (see more on next page).

What Information is Requested as Part of the Registration Form?

The registration form has five sections: eligibility and registration requirements, organization information, Registration Terms of Agreement, application round selection, and payment information. The sections and the corresponding information requested are outlined below so that you can review them and be prepared when you register. Please take time to gather the required information before beginning the registration process.

1) Eligibility and Registration Requirements

This section of the registration form requires you to confirm that your organization meets the eligibility and registration requirements. Your organization must be able to answer yes to all of the following questions and provide corroborating data in order to register to apply for accreditation.

❓ Are you a U.S.-based 501(c)(3) tax-exempt or quasi-governmental organization?

❓ Have you been incorporated for at least two years? Note you will need to provide date of incorporation.

❓ Have you completed at least two direct land or easement acquisition projects? Note you will need to provide the total number of fee properties and/or number of conservation easements that you hold.

❓ Have you adopted *Land Trust Standards and Practices* (2004)? Note you will need to provide date of adoption.

❓ Have you conducted an assessment against the full *Land Trust Standards and Practices*? Note you will need to indicate when you finished your last assessment against the full *Land Trust Standards and Practices*, as well as briefly describe who was involved in the assessment, the process your organization used to complete it, the major findings and actions taken as a result. (Please be aware that the assessment must be completed by the time of registration and may not be older than 3 years from the

Land trusts considering registering for an application round should read the application for accreditation and the *Applicant Handbook* thoroughly to see if – or when – the organization will be ready to submit a complete application. Read this information before selecting an application round! Both publications are available at: <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/getting-accredited/application>.

pre-application due date of the round for which you are registering. Information on the assessment can be found in the *Applicant Handbook*, <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/downloads/ApplicantHandbook2010.pdf>.)

❓ Have you all of the policies/procedures required by the indicator practices? Note you will need to provide the dates that your organization adopted each of the following.

- 3F. Delegation of Transaction Approval Policy (if applicable)
- 4A. Conflict of Interest Policy
- 9G. Records Policy (pursuant to practice 2D)
- 11E. Conservation Easement Enforcement Policy/ Procedure
- 11I. Conservation Easement Amendment Policy/ Procedure

(Please be aware that your policies/procedures may be amended during the course of preparing the application, but your policies for each of these practices must be adopted or procedures must be in place before registering. More information can be found in the Commission's *Guidance Document* on required policies.)

2) Organization Information

This section of the registration form requires you to enter or confirm your organization's contact information as well as provide other basic information. Your responses will enable the Commission to estimate your organization's accreditation application fees and also to identify whether your organization might need additional guidance in advance of submitting its pre-application. You will need to provide the following information for your organization:

- operating budget for the current fiscal year;
- total amount in all dedicated and/or restricted funds for conservation easement and fee land stewardship and defense; and,
- if your organization has more than one corporation, governing authority or related entity that is legally linked to it (i.e. a supporting

organization or other for-profit or nonprofit entities that are directly tied to your organization), you will be required to provide the name of the other entity or entities and a brief description of your organization's relationship with the other entity or entities. You may wish to review the Commission's policy, "Application Requirements for Land Trusts with Multiple Corporate Structures," available online at <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/about-the-commission/commission-policies>.

3) Registration Terms of Agreement

To submit your organization's registration you must first agree to the Registration Terms of Agreement outlined on page 5 of this document. If your organization is not able to agree to the Registration Terms of Agreement then it is not ready to register for accreditation at this time.

4) Application Round Selection

Once you complete the preceding sections and accept the registration terms of agreement, your organization will be able to select the application round in which it would like to participate. If an application round is fully subscribed, a limited number of waiting list spaces will be listed as available. See more on the waiting list below.

5) Payment Information

Your organization will complete its registration by entering billing information and a credit card or PayPal account payment for the nonrefundable, nontransferable \$750 registration fee. Your organization must be prepared to pay the balance of the accreditation fee at the time of application. See <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/downloads/AccreditationFees.doc> for the current fee schedule. You must have a credit card or electronic check routing information to be able to register.

Payments will be processed by PayPal, a secure online payment system. Registrants may pay the \$750 registration fee as a PayPal guest (i.e. no PayPal account

? *I want to register my land trust as soon as possible but my board has not had a chance to discuss these details yet. If my land trust board later decides that another round would be more suitable, can we change our application round?*

Land trusts are not able to change their application round once their registration form and payment is submitted. We strongly encourage all land trusts interested in applying to thoroughly discuss the details of the registration and application process before registering.

is required) via credit or debit card. To pay by electronic check using a checking account, registrants will be required to have a verified PayPal account with a confirmed bank account. Please note that setting up a verified PayPal account takes several days. For more information about establishing a PayPal account please visit <http://www.PayPal.com>.

Important Information about the Waiting List

The waiting list feature offers organizations a fair and consistent method of being added to an application round in the event an applicant does not or cannot meet its application deadline. It also allows the Commission to manage a steady flow of applications by offering a limited number of waiting list spaces to organizations that are willing to commit to completing a timely pre-application and fully participating in the application round if space becomes available.

An organization on the waiting list will proceed on a parallel track with those officially in the application round: it must prepare a pre-application, Land Conservation Project List and other supporting pre-application materials and submit them on the pre-

application due date. Organizations on the waiting list must be prepared to submit a complete application on the application due date for the round.

If at any point the waitlisted organization does not meet a deadline, it will lose its waitlisted status and forfeit its fees as would any organization in the application round. In addition, if the organization submits a pre-application that is not acceptable it will lose its waitlisted status and forfeit its fees as would any organization in the application round.

The invitation for a waitlisted organization to submit a complete application becomes available when a regular applicant in the round drops out, is not eligible or did not meet the registration requirements, is not ready to proceed to the full application stage or misses a deadline. If space(s) becomes available, a waitlisted organization will be invited to submit a complete application in the order in which it was waitlisted, provided it has met all other deadlines for its round.

A waitlisted organization will know within 5 weeks before the complete application due date if it must submit a complete application. A waitlisted organization that is invited to submit a complete application must do so or forfeit all fees and the opportunity to apply in its selected round. Any organization on the waiting list that did meet all the pre-application requirements but that did not get invited to submit a complete application will be guaranteed an opportunity to apply in its choice of the next available rounds; the nonrefundable registration fee will be applied accordingly.

Frequently Asked Questions

? *What if my organization registers and later decides not to submit a pre-application or application?*

All fees are nonrefundable and nontransferable. An organization that is not able to submit documents on the dates it had registered for will forfeit its registration fee

and its slot in the application round will be granted to another organization on the waiting list.

? *What if my organization would like to register for more than one application round?*

An organization may only register for one round or one waiting list. (For example, you may not register for the round 1 waiting list and also register for round 2.) If an organization does submit registration information for more than one round, either as a regular registrant or on the waiting list, the registration that was submitted first will be the one accepted by the Commission.

? *What if all the slots are full by the time my organization is ready to register?*

The registration system is a first-come, first-served system. If the round an organization wishes to apply for is full *and* its waiting list is full, the organization should monitor Commission updates to find out when the next round becomes available and take the opportunity to continue its work to fully implement *Land Trust Standards and Practices*.

The Commission expects that the number of accredited land trusts will grow steadily over time as it accommodates all eligible and interested organizations and as land trusts make the significant commitment necessary to prepare and apply for accreditation. The Commission is committed to accepting as many applications as it can responsibly review each year. It is continually evaluating its program and capacity, and if interest in the program exceeds capacity the Commission will consider ways that it can increase the number of applications accepted each year.

REGISTRATION TERMS OF AGREEMENT

As will appear online

Registrant Agreements

1) By registering for accreditation our organization attests that the information provided in this registration form is accurate.

2) By submitting this registration form our organization agrees to the following:

a) Understanding Program Requirements

That a representative of our organization has read and is responsible for reviewing interim updates to and being familiar with:

- The *Applicant Handbook*
- The Commission's *Guidance Documents*
- The Accreditation Fee fact sheet

b) Requirements at Pre-Application

That a representative of our organization has read the requirements for the pre-application and is responsible for reviewing any updates to the materials and that our organization will be able to comply with the following requirements at time of pre-application.

- A complete pre-application and all required attachments.
- A Land Conservation Project List verifying:
 - That each conservation easement has a baseline documentation report.
 - That each conservation easement has a record of at least two years of annual monitoring.

- That each fee property has a management plan or management summary.
- That each fee property has been periodically inspected.

c) Requirements at Application

That a representative of our organization has read the requirements for the application and is responsible for reviewing any updates to the materials and that our organization will be able to comply with the following requirements at time of application.

- A complete application questionnaire.
- Evidence that our organization is meeting each of the indicator practices, including:
 - All required attachments on the Master Attachment Checklist.
 - The project documentation indicated on the Project Documentation Checklist.

Land Trust Accreditation Commission Agreements

By submitting this registration form, our organization understands that the Commission agrees to the following.

- To follow its published policies and procedures.
- To adhere to all confidentiality policies, keep all material submitted by our organization as part of the accreditation program confidential and to not disclose it to any third party without our organization's written consent or as required by court order or state and/or federal law.

For more information

For more information on the benefits of accreditation to your land trust, visit <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org/downloads/BenefitsofAccreditation.pdf>. For more information on the accreditation program or registering, visit <http://www.landtrustaccreditation.org>, e-mail info@landtrustaccreditation.org or call 518-587-3143.