

Accreditation Fee Information

- [Download 2025 PDF Fee Schedule](#)
- [Download 2024 PDF Fee Schedule](#)

Your investment in accreditation strengthens the land trust movement, keeps your land trust on the leading edge and pays you back by helping you raise more money, attract more volunteers and qualify for valuable discounts and [benefits](#).

Did you know that your accreditation fee is all inclusive? During your term of five years – or seven years for third renewals and beyond – your one-time fee paid at the time of application covers the application review, Progress Report (for third renewals and beyond), outreach calls, any consultations over the accredited term with Commission staff, and all other accreditation actions and activities.*

Accreditation fees are structured to provide land trusts of all sizes the opportunity to participate in the accreditation program, a program that builds strong land trusts, fosters public trust in land conservation and helps ensure the permanence of land conservation. The accreditation program is supported by accreditation fees but is also sustained each year by thousands of commissioner volunteer hours and income from an endowment from generous individuals and funders.

**The accreditation fee does not cover the appeals process. For more information, please visit the [Appeals Policy](#).*

Frequently Asked Questions

[accordion id="a1" heading="What if my organization's total expenses include programs unrelated to its land conservation work?"]

Accreditation fees are based on an applicant's "Total Expenses" as reported on the Form 990, Form 990EZ, or Form 990-N submitted by the applicant as part of its pre-application. Some organizations have diverse missions and land conservation may be only one of many programs; however, because the entire organization is being accredited, accreditation fees are based on the organization's total annual expenses – not just the programs related directly to land conservation.

You may contact the Commission to request a possible fee adjustment if a) the organization's "Total Expenses" includes the purchase of fee properties or conservation easements, b) your organization had amount(s) reported on Schedule I (Grants and Other Assistance to Organizations, Governments and Individuals), or c) accounting adjustments such as write-offs and depreciation of land (these are evaluated and approved on a case-by-case basis).

[/accordion]

[accordion id="b2" heading="Why are the fees lower for Land Trust Alliance members and what do the accreditation fees cover?"]

- The Commission, while an independent program of the Alliance, relies on the Alliance's programs and services to undertake our work. The Alliance creates and maintains *Land Trust Standards and Practices* and supporting materials and provides educational support and training. The Standards and the supporting materials are the cornerstone of accreditation and the accreditation requirements.
- While accreditation fees and an endowment raised by the Alliance cover the Commission's direct operating costs, the Alliance financially supports the Commission by providing shared resources, such as technology, human resources and financial management for our operations. Membership fees contribute to these shared resource costs.
- The Commission also relies on the commitment of volunteer commissioners who collectively donate about 3,000 hours each year reviewing applications to keep costs affordable for applicants.

The 2023 accreditation fee schedule, jointly approved by the Alliance and Commission, reflects that Alliance members receive, as a member benefit, a discount on the accreditation application fees. Land trusts who are not members of the Alliance will pay fees that reflect the full cost of providing the accreditation program and the services provided by the Alliance.

[/accordion]

[accordion id="c3" heading="What happens if our land trust decides to not renew its Alliance membership?"]

The Alliance-member fee discount approach **became effective in 2022**.

- If the land trust applied for accreditation or renewal before 2022, it will pay the non-member fee at the time of its next application.
- If the land trust applies in 2022 or later, the land trust will pay an additional fee pro-rated to the number of years the land

trust was not a member. The additional fee will need to be paid at next application or it can be paid in installments.

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[accordion id="d4" heading="What are the advantages for an accredited land trust to be an Alliance member?"]

The Commission encourages land trusts to be members of the Alliance in order to take full advantage of the many resources available. The Alliance provides its members access to critical background information on the accreditation indicator elements and sample policies and procedures. Attending conferences and trainings and reading publications will help ensure the land trust is up to date with essential best practices and legal requirements as part of achieving and maintaining the excellence represented by the accreditation seal.

Do you have questions about Alliance membership? Call 202-347-7475 or email membership@lta.org

[/accordion]

[accordion id="e5" heading="Where does the additional non-member fee go?"]

The non-member fee above that paid by members will be transferred to the Alliance at or near the time the application fee is received. The fees transferred to the Alliance are to reimburse it for accreditation services and general operational support.

[/accordion]

[accordion id="f6" heading="What additional costs should our land trust plan and budget for?"]

Some applicants get paid help to organize and scan documents; other land trusts need to secure high-speed internet for more efficient uploads to the online application. First-time and renewal materials are submitted electronically; there are no application printing/copying/shipping costs.

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[accordion id="g7" heading="How can we budget and plan for our land trust's accreditation fee in future years?"]

Accreditation fees are posted annually. An inflation rate of 3% should be used for planning purposes when applying or renewing sometime beyond the current fee schedule. Land trusts preparing for third renewal (fourth application) should budget for a seven-year-term fee pro-rated to the corresponding five-year-term fee.

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Timeline

This is a general overview of the timeline and key steps for first-time accreditation process, though the timing of these steps may vary and there may be some changes in when things are due. [Click here](#) for a downloadable copy of the first-time timeline infographic.

First-Time Accreditation Process

