

GAP YEAR ASSOCIATION

This letter confirms your intent to apply as an Associate GYA Gap Year Counselor, or as an Accredited Professional Gap Year Counselor by the Gap Year Association. As the governmentally recognized Standards Development Organization for gap years, we are honored to work with you as a dedicated professional, interested in advancing the field of education through gap years. This Engagement Letter lays out the expectations of the accreditation process and should answer some questions you might have.

The Gap Year Association's goal is to grow the gap year/bridge year movement by providing research, benchmarks, and standards, facilitating college credit and access to FAFSA, and improving professionalism. While we recognize that accreditation by GYA certainly provides a marketing benefit with an increase in clients for both gap programs and consultants, it is not the primary purpose and is secondary to the broader movement.

PRIMARY BENEFITS OF ACCREDITATION:

- Professionalization and benchmarking based standards that are approved by the US Department of Justice
- Free showcased listing on [GYA Counselors web page](#)
- (Accredited) Promotional use of "GYA Seal of Accreditation" on all materials
- (Associate) Promotional use of a to-be-developed "Associate Seal"
- (Accredited) Seal placed on all listings with partners where available (eg., GoOverseas, TeenLife, etc.)
- Free access to all [GYA Webinars](#)
- Discounts and listing status with GYA-partnered organizations.
 - TeenLife, GoOverseas, Verge Magazine, Go Global Expo, & more ...
- Attributed photos on brochures, articles, and promotional materials
- Discounts with health & evacuation insurance for your clients. iNext. STA & ISIC cards
- Access to exclusive resources for mental health, risk management, and more ...
- Access to gap year data, trends, and expertise (eg., critical incidents, mental health, insurance)



TIMELINES & PROCESS:

All Association staff and reviewing parties must sign a standard NDA form to ensure that proprietary materials are kept private. Inevitably, each consultant will have unique approaches that fit within the broad depth of gap year options available to their students - it is the intent of this process to focus on risk management and pedagogically sound experiences for your students, thus, the Standards have been authored to accommodate a wide variety of possible gap year options. Please note that while we hope to have a fair and speedy process for submitted applications, we cannot guarantee any outcomes or timelines: our goal is to respond to any submitted application with a complete review within two months of submission.

- 1) Review the current [Counselor Standards](#) to be sure you are ready to apply.
- 2) Sign & date this Engagement Letter and submit it prior to beginning the application.
- 3) Using the Counselor Standards, and preferably via email, share evidence and citations for each standard. We need to see:
 - 1) The Standard, linked to ...
 - 2) Evidence, or a link to the proper evidence, linked to ...
 - 3) The page number where we can find answers for each cited standard.
 - 4) Minimum number of previous students placed: We want to see no less than 30 of your most recent placements that includes placement location and activity/organization; and, no fewer than half of the required previous placements must come from your current gap year consulting organization

(Accredited): No less than 125 previous students placed;

(Associate): No less than 60 previous students placed;

- 4) Once the application is submitted, it takes around a month to receive an "Initial Assessment" which is sent back to you via email.
- 5) Your application will go through two rounds of review by GYA staff, with one review by the Executive Director.
- 6) You will then respond to any questions or issues in the initial assessment and potentially provide new evidence to support our understanding of your answers.
- 7) Applications will be handled primarily by Association staff, who must agree as a majority that the Counselor Application is approved. In the event of a disagreement, the application will be passed to an [Advisory Board](#) member for review.
- 8) Note: Gap Year Counselors must each submit for their own accreditation, note the discounted fee structure for multiple counselors in one group. Applications from the same group may use and reference the same materials, however, we must have a signature on this Engagement Letter from each applicant.

COUNSELOR MEMBERSHIP ANNUAL DUES:

- \$300 / organization + \$100 each additional counselor within the same organization. Each individual must apply separately, although shared organizational materials (eg, vetting forms, student intake processes, etc.) may be used by each applicant. Only one Engagement Letter is required per organization (signed by all gap year counselors).
- Full re-application every four (4) years thereafter.
- Annual fees are due each year regardless of whether it is an evaluation year or not.
By check: PO Box 17427, Portland, OR. 97217. USA.
Bank Information: Beneficial State Bank, 1101 SW Washington St. Portland, OR. 97205. Routing: 121182056. Account: 7350000245.

COMMITMENTS:

By signing this document, I represent that I am the stated individual applying for Gap Year Counselor/Advisor status as an (circle one):

Associate Gap Year Counselor

Accredited Professional Gap Year Counselor

If approved by the Gap Year Association, I agree to:

- Abide by the Standards even when not under Accreditation Review,
- Communicate with parents & students in a professional, timely, and respectful manner,
- In the event of a fatality or near-fatality during a gap year program, I agree to ensure the Gap Year Association is notified as soon as I am aware, and it is practicable following the event, consistent with any applicable privacy regulations and any other legal or law enforcement requirements or requests,
- Review my student application and student placement vetting process at least annually,
- Abide by the Ethics and Judicial process as outlined by the Professional Ethics Committee of GYA. This process may result in probationary status and potential expulsion from the GYA Membership without refund of any fees paid,
- Only use authorized GYA Membership, removing GYA badges, etc., immediately in the event of a lapse in membership status,

- Indemnify the Gap Year Association and its members and staff from any lawsuit arising out of negligence or willful misconduct,
- Participate in Association Research (annual State of the Field survey),
- Participate in at least every third year of the annual Gap Year Conference.

Individual & Organization Name: _____

Preferred Mailing Address: _____

My Name (printed): _____ Date: _____

My Signature: _____