



## **Associateship of the Museums Association (AMA): Programme overview**

### **What is the AMA?**

The AMA is a formal continuing professional development (CPD) programme and aims to develop candidates into well-rounded museum professionals to agreed sector standards, best practice and current thinking.

It is open to anyone who has worked, volunteered or contributes to the sector for at least a year and continues to do so.

Supported by a clear development framework, AMA candidates develop a CPD plan to achieve their aspirations, professional development goals and career ambitions.

The AMA is formally assessed through a professional review, led by two professional reviewers, which is a structured, robust and comprehensive conversation relating to the competencies.

During this conversation, candidates can expect professional reviewers to explore their learning to date, challenge them on their reflections and encourage them to expand their responses.

The AMA should take between two-three years; although there are opportunities to place the AMA on hold to respond to changes in circumstances.

### **What are the benefits of signing up for the AMA?**

- Reflecting on your current professional practice and your aspirations.
- Access to external support and focus through your mentor.
- Expanding your network through participation in an AMA support group.
- Eligibility to apply for ring-fenced funding as part of the Benevolent Fund, to support your professional development activities.
- Discounted access to Museums Association conferences.
- Paperwork and guidance to help you plan and record your learning; take stock and look forward; and prepare for your professional review.

### **What are the benefits of completing the AMA?**

- A recognised sector standard of competence.
- An enhanced network and an established level of professional competence.
- Source materials to help you apply for a job or funding opportunities.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How do you register for the AMA?

You need to be eligible to apply, you must be an individual member of the Museums Association, have worked, volunteered or freelanced in the sector for over a year; and you must be able to demonstrate emerging level of professional competence against the AMA competencies.

## What is the development framework?

- Clear competencies and assessment standards to inform your professional development.
- A dedicated AMA mentor to support and guide you.
- AMA support groups in all regions and nations to provide a collective space for discussion, sharing, learning and support.
- Clear milestones of achievement and progress, for example 35 hours of CPD per year and an interim review.

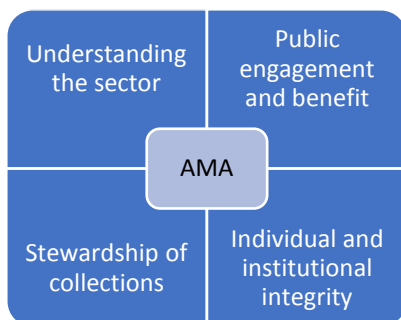
## How else will I be supported?

The AMA programme provides a development framework of support.

- Your mentor is an important part of the process and one of your first steps is to look at our mentoring list and choose a mentor that will meet your needs.
- There are a range of guidance documents, templates and resources available on the Museums Association website.
- Your AMA support group is the local group you can join - we have 15 active groups throughout the UK. They meet to discuss issues, visit museums, hear from museum speakers whilst also exploring the requirements of the AMA.
- The Benevolent Fund, is a fund that you can apply to for support of your professional development or if you are self-funding contributions to your AMA annual fees.
- If you can't find something on the website or you have a question or feedback, we are there to help, by email or through a booked conversation.

## What is the first step?

To begin your AMA, you need to demonstrate **an emerging level** of professional competence in each of the four AMA competency headings. The self review asks you to reflect on your existing professional practice in relation to the AMA competencies.



- An emerging level of professional competence means that **you have a clear awareness and understanding** of the four AMA competencies.
- Reflect and record any insights, experiences and how you have developed to demonstrate **an emerging level** of professional competence.

We will review your self review and if you demonstrate an emerging level of professional competence you will be sent the mentor list.

Look at the names, roles and organisations and create a long list of 6 potential mentors. We will send you the details of these mentors and this should provide you with enough information to create a ranked short-list. The next step is to contact the first mentor on the list to explore whether they are still available and to arrange a conversation about whether they are a good mentoring fit.

If you don't demonstrate an emerging level of professional competence, we will give you feedback about where you need to focus and signpost any resources to help you.

### **What is the last step?**

By the end of year two you should have completed 70 hours of CPD and your AMA project. At this point we suggest you complete a final review as a basis of discussion with your mentor about your readiness to participate in a professional review.

When you are ready, we recommend booking a place at least three months in advance to ensure availability for your preferred dates and venue; and to create focus to complete the final review paperwork.

### **What is the entire process?**

There are clear milestones to reach, following registration:

#### **Year 1**

- Complete your self review.
- Identify mentor and establish mentoring relationship.
- Draft CPD plan with mentor involvement.
- The draft CPD plan is reviewed by Museums Association<sup>1</sup>.
- CPD plan is approved and the AMA journey begins formally.
- Development activities undertaken to achieve professional development goals.
- Development activities recorded and reflected upon in CPD log.
- Draft interim review with AMA mentor involvement.
- The draft interim review is reviewed by Museums Association.

#### **Year 2**

- Interim review is approved.
- Development activities undertaken to achieve professional development goals.
- Development activities recorded and reflected upon in CPD log.

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<sup>1</sup> The draft CPD plan, the AMA project proposal and the interim review are reviewed by external assessors.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to email [cpd@museumsassociation.org](mailto:cpd@museumsassociation.org)

## Flexibility

As part of the AMA your need to carry out a three-six-month project. This is usually undertaken during year 2, however when required it can be undertaken in year 1.

- Draft project proposal with AMA mentor involvement.
- The draft project proposal is reviewed by Museums Association.
- Project proposal is approved.
- AMA project begins.

## Year 2 and beyond

At the point where you have undertaken 35 hours of CPD per year for a minimum of 2 years and completed the AMA project you are eligible to be assessed.

You must agree with your mentor that you are ready for the professional review and this is facilitated by the completion of a final review paperwork.

The professional review is a formal end-point assessment and you will be assessed against the AMA competencies to an agreed level of competence – **an established level** of professional competence which requires deeper understanding and direct experience, where applicable.

## Professional review

In advance of your professional review the following must be completed and submitted:

- CV
- Final review, this includes AMA project evaluation
- Future CPD plan
- CPD log
- Details of two referees, for us to contact.

Your submissions are drafted with mentor support and are reviewed by the Museums Association before your professional review is booked and are then sent to the professional reviewers.

The professional review is your opportunity to share your AMA experience - the challenges, the learning and its impact. As part of this you will deliver a five-minute presentation about your AMA project and prepare an ethical/topical issue for discussion.

The professional reviewers will ask questions relating to your submitted paperwork, the presentation and the discussion, in line with the AMA competencies.

At the end of the professional review, if you have demonstrated **an established level** of professional competence across all the AMA competencies you will be awarded the AMA.

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If you have not you will be given feedback to enable you to improve and you will be invited to participate in another professional review in the future, when you and your mentor feel you are ready to participate.

### **What do I do if I decide it isn't for me?**

The AMA isn't for everyone. If you are having doubts speak to your mentor or give us a call and we will be able to help. If applicable your AMA can be placed on hold until your circumstances change.

### **What paperwork do I need to submit?**

Over the course of your AMA you will need to submit the following paperwork:

1. Self review
2. Mentoring agreement
3. CPD plan
4. Interim review
5. Project proposal
6. CPD log
7. Final review
8. Future CPD plan
9. CV

The amount of time it takes to draft and complete the paperwork really depends on experience, however the next section gives some indicative timings.

### **What is the time commitment?**

We hope that you complete your AMA within two-three years.

As part of the AMA there is mentoring support – four sessions a year, this should be factored in to your time commitment, 4-8 hours per year plus any required travelling time; these count toward your CPD hours.

We know that participating in an AMA support group can be very helpful – these vary in frequency and duration based on region or nation but again should be factored in and count toward your CPD hours.

The CPD requirement is 35 hours of CPD per year and as stated above can include participation in AMA support groups and mentoring sessions.

### **A basic rule of thumb and recommendations:**

#### **Year 1**

- Complete the self review = 5 hours maximum.
- Mentor sessions = 6 hours approximately.
- Draft CPD plan with AMA mentor involvement = 5 hours approximately.
- CPD activity = 35 hours per year required, this can include mentoring sessions.
- Updating CPD log = this depends on the approach you are taking.
- Draft interim review AMA mentor involvement = 5 hours maximum.
- Draft project proposal with AMA mentor involvement = 5 hours approximately.

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## **Year 2**

- Mentor sessions = 6 hours
- CPD activity = 35 hours per year required, this can include mentoring sessions.
- Updating CPD log = this depends on the approach you are taking.

## **Year 3/professional review year when you are ready**

- Draft final review with AMA mentor involvement = 5 hours approximately.
- Future CPD plan with AMA mentor involvement = 2 hours approximately.
- Participate in professional review = 1 hour.

**Total number of hours = 126 over three years.** This may be more if you spend longer working towards your professional review.

The professional review should be booked when you and your mentor feel you demonstrate an established level of professional competence and the Museums Association have reviewed the final review paperwork.

## **Flexibility**

One of the strengths of the AMA is that it ebbs and flows with the peaks and troughs of professional and personal life so you may decide you want or need to take longer to complete it.

How long it takes also depends on your starting point.

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