



**INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE  
IN THE  
PERFORMANCE BASED ASSESSMENT PROGRAM  
FOR  
CERTIFICATION IN VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION**

As part of its professional development program, the Association for Volunteer Administration has developed a Performance Based Assessment Program for Certification in Volunteer Administration.

Persons successfully completing the program during this field test year will be certified by the Association and entitled to use the initials C.V.A. - Certified in Volunteer Administration - after their name on all professional communications.

The following set of questions and answers should help persons decide whether or not to register for participation in this field test experience.

What is the purpose of Certification with AVA?

AVA offers the field of volunteer administration its only nationally recognized professional credential, C.V.A. - Certified in Volunteer Administration.

This credential recognizes and rewards competent performance as a volunteer administrator. The unique design of the program serves to guide individual career development and to encourage well-focussed, continuing professional development activities. It promotes excellence in administration, while it provides standards for ongoing professional development of this field.

Certification by AVA can serve as a focal point for the development of one's career in volunteerism. C.V.A. - Certified in Volunteer Administration is a professional recognition which can be expected to become a meaningful indicator of sound professional practice to colleagues, employers, and clients, as the depth of its worth is increasingly understood and appreciated.

Why should I be certified?

Certification is designed for the person who regards his/her position in volunteer administration as a career, rather than a job. The performance based assessment approach will allow you to assess your past performance, consolidate what you have learned from your experience, and map out a future plan of action. Through the development of a philosophy/position statement, you will be asked to express your awareness of the issues and concerns facing the field and the role you are called upon to play in the face of constant changes.

The process of applying for certification is, itself, a growth-oriented experience. As you examine your work experiences, identify and document satisfactory professional performance in a number of areas, and chart your career development plan, you will likely find that you are developing a new or enhanced set of guidelines for your lifelong continuing professional development activities. As the number of persons entering the process grows, so will the extent and the quality of local and national conversations

concerning the nature, the development, and the maintenance of professional standards of practice in our field, allowing all who participate to contribute to the increasingly self-conscious evolution of this field.

You should be certified, if: volunteer administration is a personal career focus; you desire to examine your work experiences in a structured way and to analyze the skills you have acquired; you wish to pursue continuing professional development activities in the field of volunteer administration; and if you wish to reexamine and reflect on the philosophical and historical underpinnings that influence the issues and trends facing the field.

Certification with AVA is a professional credential -- it is not to be confused with an academic credential. An academic credential focuses on the amount and subject area of knowledge acquisition. A professional credential, on the other hand, signifies satisfactory performance on the job and serves as a guide for further development. How one acquires the learning necessary for satisfactory performance is an individual choice. While the two are complementary, it is important to remember that what they measure and the purpose they serve are not the same.

#### Who may participate in the program?

From 1 November 1982 through 31 October 1983, only AVA members or members of AVA voting affiliate organizations or members of AVA provisional voting affiliate organizations may apply for certification.

After 31 October 1983, any qualified volunteer administrator, regardless of AVA membership status, may apply for AVA certification.

Prospective participants are encouraged to have the equivalent of two years' full-time experience in volunteer administration and to have responsibility for the allocation of human, material and/or fiscal resources in the work place, as a background for application.

#### What previous pilot or field testing has been done on the new AVA certification program?

Although AVA has been certifying administrators of volunteers since 1967, the Performance Based Assessment Program represents a new and unique approach to professional credentialing. This new method of recognizing competent professional performance was piloted in 1981 in cooperation with Adelphi University, Long Island, New York. Over the course of a ten-month period, 12 persons proved the system could work.

A field test representing the first application of the findings gleaned from the experiences of the persons in the pilot was initiated in the fall of 1981 in a special program involving and sponsored by the members of VASP, Volunteer Administrators of Southwestern Pennsylvania, an affiliate organization of AVA. Because new forms were utilized and revised systems were being implemented, comments and reactions from the participants have been sought on an ongoing, structured basis in order to evaluate the working process. Even though this experience has been considered a "field test," participants successfully completing that program, as with those who participated in the pilot sponsored cooperatively with Adelphi University, will receive bona fide certification with the Association, when and if they have earned it. The field test period will continue through October 31, 1983.

### What is unique about this certification process?

Several design and development factors contribute to the unique status of this approach to professional credentialing. From the perspective of the field of volunteer administration, the certification process is premised on a series of competency statements and performance criteria. This work reflects the first such inventory of skills necessary to administer a volunteer program. This skills inventory has been validated by independent study. The inventory can serve as a guide for skill and knowledge development for someone desiring to enter the field, as well as a guide for curriculum development.

The competency assessment approach is consistent with other developments in the field of volunteerism. A great deal of attention has been focused upon the skills acquired through volunteering. This process is the first to examine and document in great detail the skills of administering a volunteer program and to recognize satisfactory performance.

From an educational perspective, the performance-based assessment program recognizes and applies principles of adult learning. Ivan Scheier, a national leader, trainer and author in the field, said of the program,

"...(it) is the first in the leadership education area to align solidly with modern concepts of adult education: self-directed, performance-based, and with the kinds of opportunities for distance learning which will be essential in the 1980's....I have seen no more promising project in the educational area."

This program is the first time the process of portfolio development has been utilized to assess work experiences for the purposes of awarding a professional credential.

The partnership relationship forged between institutions of higher education and a professional association is also a "first." Through a joint system of academic advisement and advisement by field-based professionals, the worlds of knowing and doing are brought together to enhance professional practice.

The entire performance-based assessment process opens the door to continuous evolution of the profession. Through the requirement to identify an additional competency and to identify the appropriate criteria for a skill area unique to the applicant's job setting, the AVA Certification Assessment Committee will monitor changes and progression within the field and update the process as required.

Finally, Landrum Bolling, former president of Earlham College, the Lilly Endowment, and Chair of Council on Foundations, Inc., has expressed his thoughts on the program. His response is worth sharing in detail:

"I had mixed feelings about the central enterprise you are preparing: a Certification Program for Volunteer Administrators. The qualifier, 'performance-based,' was reassuring, for that obviously describes what is most important in judging the competencies of such people. I react appreciatively to the sensitive and insightful way you are trying to avoid conventional, formalistic approaches to credentialing....Recognition of outstanding achievement is highly desirable in establishing goals, in expressing appreciation, in inspiring good work and in calling public attention to the importance of the field and the particular work done. That kind of certification as 'awards of distinction' I can get enthusiastic about."

#### What is involved?

An eight-stage process is involved in the certification program. It is outlined below.

1. Prospective applicants will attend a one-day workshop on certification. They will receive a detailed self-assessment questionnaire for completion and the new I CAN materials for personal career exploration.
2. Persons with continued interest in certification may request an application form. The completed application form, along with the self-assessment questionnaire, will be mailed to AVA administrative headquarters in Boulder, Colorado. The Certification Assessment Committee will review these materials. If the materials indicate promise, the applicant will be accepted as a candidate for certification. The Board will then authorize the appropriate region to assign academic and field advisors to the candidate.
3. Each candidate will attend a half-day workshop on portfolio development. A portfolio is a dossier of information that will be assembled by the participant, describing his/her work experiences in a manageable form for assessment. The portfolio is a written product which represents a painstaking process through which experiences are translated into statements of competency, outcomes that can be verified, demonstrated, and subsequently evaluated for professional recognition.\*
4. As the portfolio is developed, participants will work in concert with their academic and field advisors. In addition, participants are encouraged to join a peer network/study circle for mutual support and learning. Participants will receive a formal evaluation of their progress midway through the process, from each of their two advisors.

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\*Knapp, J. and Gardiner, M. Assessment of prior learning: As a model and in practice. In J. Knapp (ed.), directions for experiential learning: Financing and implementing prior learning assessment, (no. 14). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1981.

5. When the portfolio is completed, it will receive a final written evaluation from the academic and field advisors. Together with the original self-assessment form, formal evaluations and any other requested documentation, the portfolio will be returned to the Board of Assessment.
6. Each applicant will receive, from the Board of Assessment, a case study for analysis and response. The completed work then will be returned to the Board of Assessment for their review.
7. The Board of Assessment will review all submitted materials and retains the right to request additional information, or supporting documentation. The Board will notify applicants as to whether or not they have received certification.
8. Applicants attaining certification will receive an analysis of their portfolio. This analysis, along with their personal career development plan, will serve as a tool to guide future professional development effort. It will also serve as a point of departure for recertification review, five years from the date of certification, for those who wish to renew their CVA credential.

Applicants denied certification will receive a written explanation and instructions pertaining to eligibility for subsequent review. If an applicant wishes to contest the decision of the Board of Assessment, he/she may do so through channels provided by AVA's Ethics and Standards Committee.

#### How much time is involved?

The question of time needs to be answered in two ways.

Because this is a new program and because the results of the participants' experiences will help shape future national applications of the certification process, the certification experience during the first year will be monitored carefully and time limits and allowances studied. Generally applicants are expected to complete the process in nine to twelve months from the date of acceptance of the application by the Board of Assessment. Extensions beyond one year will be considered by the Board on a case-by-case basis.

Daily and weekly time a participant may expect to spend on the process is more difficult to estimate. It is fair to say, however, that the process will be a time-consuming one! In addition to the two scheduled workshops, the candidate will need to budget time for meetings with advisors and, especially in sponsored programs, time for attendance at the peer support sessions. As with any project of this magnitude, the energy put into it correlates with the degree of positive outcome. Since the largest part of the project will be self-directed, candidates are free to allocate their own time according to personal and business requirements or preferences.

#### What are the costs of the program?

The fee schedule reflects preferential rates for individual active members of AVA, both in the initial program year and in the future. Somewhat higher fees will apply to applicants who are members of AVA affiliate or provisional affiliate organizations. After

31 October 1983, when the certification process opens to volunteer administrators without regard to AVA-related membership, a third pricing category will apply to this group, at a still higher level. For current rates, see AVA certification fee schedule.

Should you select in the course of the certification experience to join AVA as an individual active member, your fees for all future portions of the process will reflect your membership status; however, you will not receive a refund on any higher portion paid prior to your active membership status.

#### What if I select not to finish the process?

The certification process has intentionally been developed in a sequence of stages. This allows a person to "step in" and "step out" as personal, professional and educational needs demand.

A potential candidate may attend the Certification Workshop and elect not to continue with the process at the present time. Should this be your decision, AVA cannot guarantee that at the point of your reentry the process will remain the same, nor that you may not need to attend an introductory workshop again, when you select to reenter. Should you begin your portfolio and make reasonable progress on it, but not be able to complete the project for legitimate reasons, AVA will attempt to negotiate an alternate completion date for you. The Board of Assessment will rule on any alternate plan for completion on a case-by-case basis.

The self-assessment instrument has been designed to allow for self-scoring. Participants should achieve a score of 70% or higher to apply to enter the portfolio process. This assures a reasonable chance of success. Persons scoring less than 70% on the scale may use the instrument to guide their professional development efforts and enter the portfolio stage after they have brought their score up to the 70% level.

#### What if I was certified under the previous AVA system?

Your certification will remain in effect provided you maintain your AVA membership and pay your annual certification fee. You will be expected to validate your certification on a five-year basis through documentation of continuing education. You will continue to use the initials CAVS - Certified Administrator of Volunteer Services - to signify your status. However, because the new CVA credential represents an upgrading of the certification status, CAVS candidates for recertification are encouraged to seek it, rather than renewing at the CAVS level, if at all possible.

CAVS administrators should keep in mind that their certification was open only to AVA members, while the CVA credential will be made available to all qualified volunteer administrators, without regard to any AVA-related membership, effective after 1 November 1983. This will insure the full value of this certification program to the whole field of volunteer administration.

For further information contact:

Your AVA Regional Certification Liaison or Certification Coordinator  
Association for Volunteer Administration  
P.O. Box 4584  
Boulder, CO 80306

Guidelines effective:

1 November 1982  
through  
31 October 1983



### Certification Fee Schedule

Effective for all sponsored and self-initiated candidates for the period 1 November 1982 through 31 October 1983, with the exception of the Pittsburgh Field Test participants:

	<u>AVA Members</u>	<u>Members of Voting or Provisional Voting AVA Affiliates</u>
Entry workshop including materials	\$ 35.00	\$ 50.00
Formal application (entitles candidate to two written evaluations from academic and field advisors)	\$160.00*	\$180.00*
Final review and case analysis fee	\$ 30.00**	\$ 45.00**
Certificate fee	No charge	\$ 10.00
Total:	<u>\$225.00</u>	<u>\$305.00</u>

\*If the applicant is deemed by the Board of Assessment to be not qualified to enter the certification process, a \$140 refund will accompany the letter of refusal. (The applicant may reapply at a later date if qualifications are met. The full fee will be charged for reapplication.)

\*\*No refund will be granted for unsuccessful completion.

#### Additional Fees

Second final review and/or case analysis fee if candidate's portfolio is not approved by the Board of Assessment, upon first submission for certification:

\$30.00      \$ 45.00

Recertification fee (5 years from date of certification):

\$30.00\*\*\*      \$ 45.00\*\*\*

\*\*\*Estimated fee, subject to change.

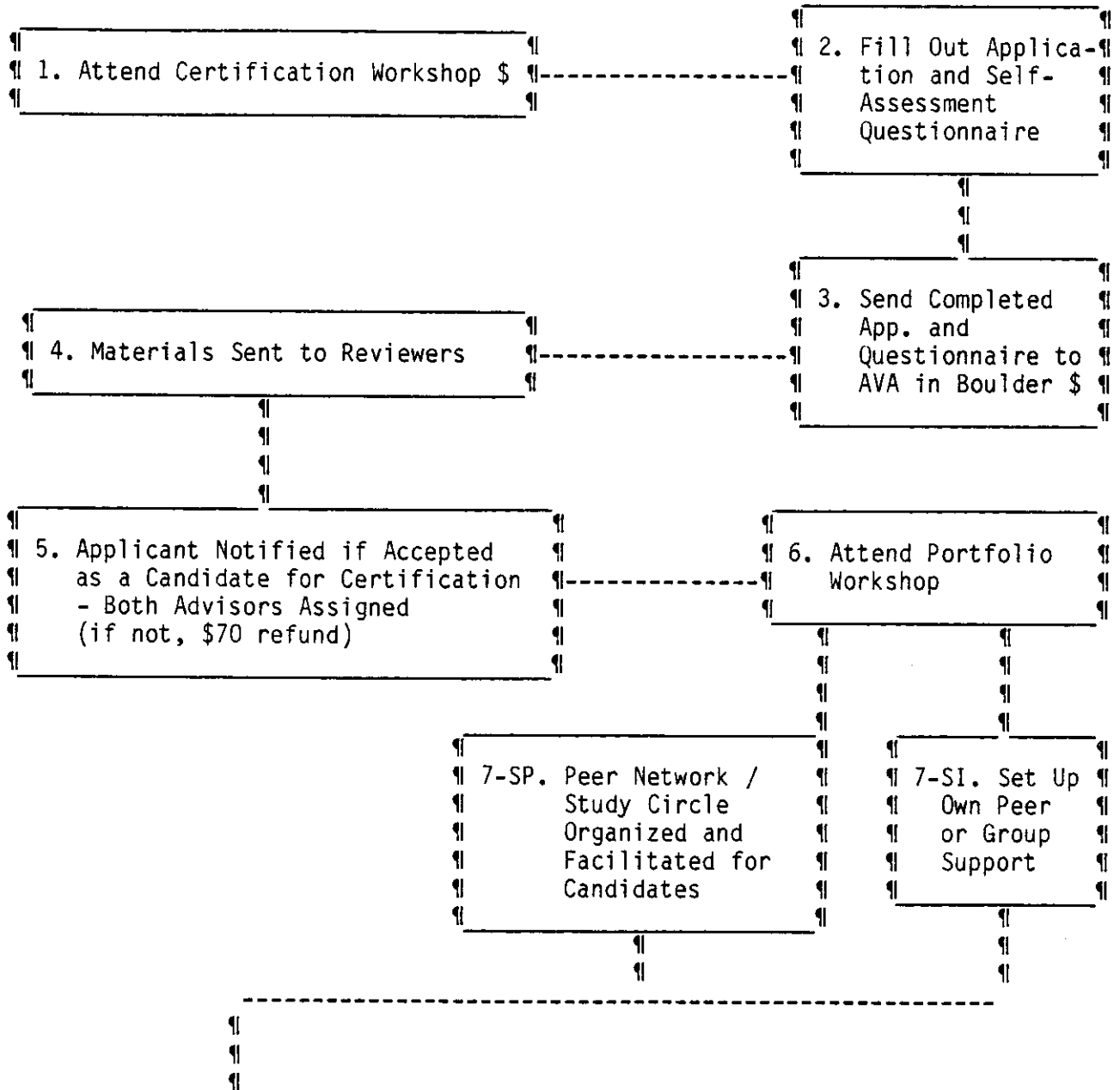
**NOTE:** Membership in AVA or in voting or provisional voting affiliate organizations will determine fees for certification components. Certification fees paid prior to AVA membership will not be reduced, but all subsequent charges will be reduced according to the schedule above.



ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION

PERFORMANCE BASED CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

Steps Followed by Applicants  
in the  
Sponsored and Self-Initiated Paths to Certification



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¶ 8. Develop Portfolio ¶  
¶ With Support From ¶  
¶ Advisors and Peers ¶  
¶ ..... ¶  
¶ May Also Undertake ¶  
¶ Activities to ¶  
¶ Demonstrate & Doc. ¶  
¶ Performance in ¶  
¶ New Areas ¶

¶ 9. Midway, Submit Portfolio ¶  
¶ Including Career Plan to ¶  
¶ Both Advisors for Review ¶  
¶ & Constructive Feedback ¶

¶ ¶  
¶ ¶  
¶ ¶  
¶ 10. Continue Portfolio ¶  
¶ Development ¶

¶ 12. Candidates Receive Case Study ¶  
¶ and Write Analysis and ¶  
¶ Response; Send to Ass. Bd. ¶

¶ 11. Send Completed ¶  
¶ Portfolios to Advisors ¶  
¶ for Final Review and ¶  
¶ Recommendation to ¶  
¶ Assessment Board ¶

¶ 13. Assessment Board Reviews ¶  
¶ All Materials (may request ¶  
¶ additional materials or ¶  
¶ documentation) and Awards ¶  
¶ or Denies Certification ¶  
¶ ----- ¶  
¶ Those Certified Receive an ¶  
¶ Analysis of Their Portfolios ¶

¶ 14. Analysis & Career Plan ¶  
¶ Guide Contin. Prof. ¶  
¶ Development & Provide ¶  
¶ A Benchmark for Five ¶  
¶ Year Recertification ¶

ASSOCIATION FOR VOLUNTEER ADMINISTRATION  
**Performance Based Certification Program**  
**STEPS FOR CERTIFICATION**

1. Attend a workshop on certification (small fee required to register which covers all costs for the workshop).

At the workshop:

- Receive general information about the AVA Certification process.
- Receive and go through some career exploration material.
- Receive the self-assessment questionnaire designed to help the individual decide whether or not it makes sense for them to pursue AVA Certification. Receive detailed instructions on its use and get answers to any questions about the questionnaire.
- If decide to pursue application for AVA Certification, request an application.

2. After the workshop, fill out the application.

3. Send the application and self-assessment form to Boulder, including an application fee.

4. Applications are sent by Martha to two people. Both of these people are to be practitioner experts and members of the Certification Assessment Board or their designees. The Certification Assessment Board will function as a screening board and ultimately, as a final passing board.

5. The two application reviewers will send the applications and their review comments and formal recommendations to the Certification Assessment Board Chair.

6. The certification Assessment Board Chair will send an application on to a third reviewer only when the two previous reviewers disagree as to whether an applicant should be accorded the status of "Candidate for Certification."

7. Applicants are notified whether or not they have been accepted as Candidates for Certification. (\$70 refund if not accepted as a Candidate for Certification.)

8. Those accepted as "Candidates" are sent the portfolio workbook. They are also sent information concerning the assignment to them of a field advisor and an academic advisor. These two individuals provide both formative feedback to the candidate and a final evaluation to the Certification Assessment Board.

9. A peer network/study circle will be organized by the program sponsor\* or the field based advisor (or possibly by a designated applicant) to encourage professional peers to learn from and support each other in their progress through the application process (both portfolio development and any new learning and performance).

\* A "Sponsor" is an organization which, if approved, underwrites and organizes an AVA certification cycle in a given community, at a given time.

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10. Applicants attend a workshop on portfolio development. (Cost for this workshop is part of the Certification Process fee.)

11. Applicants work on developing their individual portfolios and seek help from their Advisors and peers, as necessary. Applicants meet, correspond, or talk by phone with their assigned Academic and Field Advisors to clarify mutual expectations and establish a timeline for checkpoints. Advisors provide ongoing formative coaching and evaluation and final evaluation of the portfolio at completion. Ordinarily, Advisors will write written reviews of the portfolio twice, once to serve as a midpoint formative review and again upon completion to serve as a final review.

12. After review and endorsement by the Academic and Field Advisors, the portfolio is sent to the Assessment Board along with the detailed evaluations and recommendations from the Advisors.

13. The Assessment Board reviews the portfolio and requests additional information/support/preparation, if necessary, from the applicant.

14. The Assessment Board sends all applicants a case study for analysis and response.

15. These applicants/candidates send in their "Analysis and Response" write-ups.

16. Completed write-ups are sent to the Assessment Board for evaluation and review along with complete copies of Candidates' portfolios. (The responsibility for an initial assessment of these write-ups may be delegated by the Assessment Board to qualified experts.)

17. The Assessment Board makes the final decision on each applicant.

18. Applicants are notified as to whether or not they have received certification. They also receive at this time, an analysis of their portfolio with some suggestions of areas they may want to consider for further development.

Comment: Personal career development plans, developed during and soon after the certification workshop and refined during the latter part of the portfolio development process, will serve newly certified practitioners as a tool to guide their ongoing development efforts. These should also provide useful benchmarks for the recertification process.