



---

*February 1, 2024*

Dear Program Director,

As we described in a [recent communication](#), NAAB has identified a need to evolve its funding structure to match the accreditation industry standard with the introduction of a proposed program fee structure. The proposed program fee structure would begin January 2025, ensuring that programs have sufficient notice for planning purposes. We invite you to provide your feedback in [writing](#) during the public comment of 90 days, February 1–May 1, 2024, as well as [attend](#) a virtual live session on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 5:00pm–6:30pm EST.

### **Background**

In 1940, ACSA, AIA, and NCARB collectively recognized the need for an impartial organization to facilitate quality assurance in support of architecture programs that prepare students for professional licensure. The cost of this system has been subsidized by the profession with [external funding](#) historically provided by AIA and NCARB, matching accreditation fees collected from schools by ACSA as part of ACSA's annual member dues, and an additional contribution from AIAS.

### **Reason for New Funding Structure**

To remain relevant and responsive to the needs of the profession, NAAB and its governance and accreditation structures have continued to evolve in the years since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In the world of political, social, and financial disruptions, a stable and sustainable accrediting organization is a promise that we must make to students who enter NAAB-accredited programs to receive a quality education and in hope of becoming licensed architects.

While the financial support of the collateral organizations has enabled NAAB to maintain its steadfast commitment to quality architecture education, NAAB's accreditation program has been [operating at a deficit for several years](#), particularly in the years prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Economic realities and competing priorities contributed to reductions in financial support for accreditation from ACSA, AIA, AIAS, and NCARB. The funding to NAAB was reduced by 14% over 2018 and 2019, resulting in higher annual shortfalls than those previously experienced by NAAB in prior years.

The reduction in funding, compounded by an increase in the number of candidate and accredited programs of 11% between 2016–2019, limited NAAB's ability to provide quality professional accreditation services to its direct stakeholders as NAAB maintained an [extremely lean operating budget](#) through this increase in the number of programs.

Further, the most recent funding levels (2019–2023) do not take into account several important considerations for future sustainability including the continued growth in programs over the past seven years from 155 to 176 (projected for 2024) accredited programs and nine candidate programs, NAAB’s return to post-pandemic operations, expanded services to programs as the Conditions and Procedures evolved to incorporate contemporary field-based accreditation practices, and the challenges of the current economy. Meanwhile, it is notable that [our 2024 accreditation budget remains on par with projected contributions from ACSA, AIA, AIAS, and NCARB](#) at the 2017 funding level when adjusted for inflation. Following an assessment of these realities and the critical need for stable and sustainable delivery of accreditation services to programs, teams, and students, the NAAB Board of Directors determined that a new funding structure was necessary.

### **Description of New Funding Structure**

As NAAB continues our commitment to supporting programs, students, the field of architecture, and consumer safety in the coming years, NAAB proposes a hybrid funding structure whereby the profession helps to offset the cost of accreditation to programs through financial contributions to NAAB while architectural programs contribute the balance of the cost. This is a common practice among peer accrediting organizations. Of sixty-one professional accrediting boards, NAAB is one of the only accreditors that does not utilize a structure in which [fees](#) are charged directly to programs.

As part of the new funding structure, NAAB is in discussions with AIA and NCARB, to help identify the level of support from the profession. In addition to the ongoing discussions with AIA and NCARB, NAAB is also inviting contributions from ACSA and AIAS. Additionally, NAAB will continue to explore other funding sources, in order to reduce accreditation program fees.

### **Proposed Program Fees**

NAAB is committed to providing programs with advance and transparent notice of potential future program accreditation fees while working with the profession to identify the amount that contributing organizations will make to continue to subsidize accreditation costs. Until NAAB receives confirmation from the supporting organizations on their level of financial contributions, NAAB is notifying programs of the maximum potential accreditation fees.

NAAB is also putting forward a multi-year fee structure, because it is keenly aware of the need for transparency, fairness, and advance notice to programs. This is especially so, understanding that the budgeting process for universities is often lengthy and complex and requires predictability. Therefore, NAAB is willing to incur a deficit in 2024 rather than charge fees directly to programs without significant notice. Please refer to the [2025–2028 Highest Potential Accreditation Program Fee Structure](#):

Highest Potential\* NAAB Accreditation Program Fee Structure, 2025–2028

Fee		2025	2026	2027	2028	
<b>Eligibility Fee</b>		\$600	\$625	\$650	\$700	
<b>APR Fee</b> (Per Accredited Program)		\$3,000	\$3,150	\$3,300	\$3,475	
<b>Site Visit Fee</b> (Per Site Visitor)		\$1,200	1,250	\$1,300	\$1,375	
<b>Annual Fee</b> (Per Accredited Program)	<u>Tier</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>				
	1	1-49 Students	\$7,955	\$8,345	\$8,770	\$9,205
	2	50-99 Students	\$8,905	\$9,345	\$9,820	\$10,305
	3	100-249 Students	\$9,970	\$10,465	\$10,995	\$11,540
	4	250-499 Students	\$11,165	\$11,720	\$12,310	\$12,925
	5	500+ Students	\$12,500	\$13,125	\$13,785	\$14,475

\*NAAB will continue to explore other funding sources to reduce the fees charged to the programs.

**Seeking Your Input**

We invite you to provide your feedback in [writing](#) during the public comment period, February 1–May 1, 2024. In order to answer questions and provide additional details, NAAB will host a live discussion session for programs on Tuesday, February 6, 2024, 5:00pm–6:30pm EST. Register [here](#). NAAB is also open to scheduling additional Q & A sessions for programs as needed.

Additional background information on the proposed fee structure can be found on our [website](#).

Sincerely,



Steve Schreiber, FAIA, DPACSA, NCARB  
2023-2024 NAAB President