



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION GUIDE

Thank you for your interest in the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics (NAIA). NAIA membership is available to colleges and universities that meet established criteria and adhere to the overall mission and beliefs of the close to 250 institutions from across North America.

The membership application process allows the NAIA to learn more about your institution's athletics philosophy and operations and, in turn, permits you to become familiar with the NAIA mission, structure, operating policies and legislative requirements. We believe that by completing this process, a prospective member institution can conduct a meaningful assessment of its interest in, and readiness to join, the association.

NAIA membership applications are considered once a year at the April Council of Presidents meeting held during the NAIA Annual convention in April. The annual submission deadline is October 1 for consideration at the following April's meeting. Applications and the \$10,000 application fee are submitted to NAIA, 1200 Grand Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64106.

Prior to December 1, the NAIA membership committee will review all applications to determine whether a campus visit will be granted. If approved, a campus visit will be conducted by a peer-review team of campus administrators from NAIA institutions in your region. The campus visit is an important part of the application process, affording opportunities for face-to-face discussions in advance of a membership decision. Written recommendations of the team are given significant weight by the Council of Presidents during final review of an institution's membership application.

Following is a complete guide to the application process. The NAIA is committed to helping your institution make a well-informed decision, and we look forward to talking with you further concerning NAIA membership. As questions arise, please feel free to contact us.

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APPLICATION PROCESS

Institutions that have expressed interest in NAIA membership are assigned a liaison from the National Office who works with other NAIA members in your area and maintains close contact with key conference and campus administrators. Your liaison guides you through the application process and provides easy access to the necessary forms and instructions.

Formal application for NAIA membership requires submission of the following materials to the National Office by Oct. 1:
(To submit electronically, contact jmccollum@naia.org for instructions.)

- NAIA Membership Application form
- Institutional mission statement
- Most recent regional accreditation review documentation (including self-study report, team response and agency's determination status)
- Copies of key institutional publications (catalog, student handbook, athletics policies)
- Financial documentation including current budget for athletics, by sport; independently audited financial statements including revenues and expenditures and management letter for the institution as a whole for the two most recent fiscal years
- Strategic plan for intercollegiate athletics
- Current and projected sports sponsorship information
- \$10,000 application fee, which is used to offset expenses for a required campus evaluation visit by NAIA administrators from your area.

For a complete list of documentation required, refer to the application form.

PROCESS TIMELINE

- Oct. 1 Applications due to the NAIA National Office.
- By Dec. 1 Institution is notified of the decision for a campus visit.
- January..... Orientation webinars are conducted.
- By March 1 ... Membership Evaluation Team visits campus.
- April COP meeting – Institution is notified of the decision within 10 days.
- July 1 If approved, membership becomes effective on this date in the same year. Documentation is required immediately using NAIAHelp.

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PRE-VISIT WEBINARS

In January, two pre-visit webinars will be conducted to introduce your staff to NAIA athletics administration, competition and legislative compliance. Your NAIA National Office liaison will contact you to arrange the webinar and visit dates.

CAMPUS VISIT

No later than March 1 members of an NAIA Membership Evaluation Team (MET) will visit your campus. The campus visit allows the MET and Council of Presidents to learn more about your institution and make an educated decision concerning your institution's application. More importantly, the campus visit presents a unique opportunity for your institution to learn firsthand about the NAIA structure from current NAIA administrators and faculty members.

TYPICAL CAMPUS VISIT AGENDA

9-9:45 a.m. — Campus Tour: The athletics director and representatives of the institution lead MET members on a campus tour, with emphasis on athletics facilities, student academic centers, dormitories and administrative offices.

10-11 a.m. — Opening Session: Senior campus administrators, selected faculty and athletics department staff members and coaches share information concerning the institution's application, campus operations, and current and future plans for intercollegiate athletics.

11:15-11:45 a.m. — Senior Administration: The institution's chief executive officer and MET president and chair exchange information about athletics philosophy on campus and in the NAIA, issues of institutional control, budgetary and financial issues, student-athlete experience and long-range plans for the institution and athletics.

11:15-11:45 a.m. — Administration and Competition: Members of the institution's athletics administration and coaching staff meet with the MET athletics director for a discussion of athletics (and, if applicable, conference) administration, qualification for postseason play, student-athlete experience, and selected NAIA rules.

11:15-11:45 a.m. — Legislation and Compliance: Key campus faculty and administrators involved in certifying initial and continuing eligibility meet with the evaluation team's faculty athletics representative to discuss campus responsibilities for rules compliance, internal lines of communication, legislative process, treatment of potential rules violations and eligibility appeals. Those in attendance also discuss NAIA eligibility and financial aid rules.

1:15-1:45 p.m. — Student-Athletes: All enrolled student-athletes are invited to attend an informal session with all MET members to discuss NAIA athletics and championships experiences, Champions of Character, and basic eligibility and financial aid rules.

2-2:45 p.m. — Wrap-up Session

The Membership Evaluation Team includes:

- NAIA National Office liaison
- Member of the NAIA Council of Presidents (or another CEO) from your area
- NAIA athletics director from an institution near you
- NAIA institutional faculty athletics representative or conference eligibility chair, or registrar from a nearby institution or conference

The campus visit is usually completed in one day and includes a variety of opportunities for campus staff to interact informally with MET members.

EVALUATION TEAM'S RECOMMENDATION

After the campus visit, the Membership Evaluation Team, including the Membership Committee, confers by phone conference and prepares a formal written report and team recommendation. Your institution will receive written confirmation once the team's deliberations are complete, and the team will identify any areas of concern or additional information needed. Your institution's complete application materials and the evaluation team's campus visit report recommendations are then sent to all members of the NAIA Council of Presidents for review during the April meeting. A majority vote of the Council determines membership. Institutions are notified formally of the decision within 10 days. If approved, membership is effective July 1 the same year.

PREPARING FOR ACTIVE MEMBERSHIP

If membership is approved, your NAIA National Office liaison will host a new member orientation conference call with your staff to review the next steps.

- The NAIA National Office will work with your institution to prepare press releases on the NAIA website and to selected media outlets.
- Ascension Benefits and Insurance Solutions representatives will contact you concerning enrollment in the required NAIA catastrophic insurance program.
- Your institution will receive an invoice for the first year's membership dues.
- Student-athletes who you are currently recruiting must register with the NAIA Eligibility Center to have their initial eligibility determined.
- Your institution needs to be prepared to submit a variety of eligibility and compliance documentation for the coming academic year. Some information is due immediately after membership approval and is submitted through the NAIA-Help online reporting system. Most eligibility forms are due before competition begins, but it is highly recommended they be submitted as soon as possible.
- NAIA liaisons will assist new members with obtaining NAIA-Help passwords, website orientation and reminders about the documentation and deadlines.

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