



Museum Trustee Association

*The Network for Informing, Advising  
and Inspiring Museum Trustees*

# Museum Trustee Association:

## *Enhancing the effectiveness of museum*

No matter how popular your museum is, its future is only as strong as its governing board. Today, board education is not a luxury; it is a necessity in a fast-paced and changing world. *There is a notable difference between an orientation to a particular institution and an orientation to trusteeship.* Failure to distinguish between the two or neglecting to expose trustees to opportunities for growth can be a serious oversight on the part of any institution. Effective training gives board members a foundation on which to build their individual strengths and helps foster a strong board/staff partnership by opening up lines of communication and understanding.

The Museum Trustee Association (MTA) is the only organization dedicated to providing ongoing board education programs, services, and resources for the special needs of museum trustees. As a pioneer and sole provider of these vital services, the MTA is uniquely experienced in museum trustee education. Our thousands of satisfied members—who have gained confidence in their fiduciary and stewardship roles and contributed positively to the growth and success of their museums—are our greatest tribute. Whether your institution is a small historic site or a major metropolitan repository or whether it houses living exhibits, modern art, or ancient artifacts, its success depends on the performance of its highest-level volunteers—trustees! If your museum isn't an MTA member, it should be!

### **Museum trustees have a unique and complex job:**

- Establish the museum's vision, mission, and goals
- Approve the annual operating plan and budget, allocating resources to fulfill the vision, mission, and goals
- Develop the strategic plan
- Hire, supervise, support, and evaluate the museum director
- Adopt museum policies and set priorities
- Monitor the institution to be sure that goals are met and guidelines are followed
- Raise funds, give funds, and solicit special donations
- Promote and represent the museum in the community
- Assure public accountability

Trustees are vital museum resources. Museums depend on their professional staff to manage the facility, collections, and programs efficiently and effectively. Without informed, skilled, and motivated trustees, however, museum staff would operate in a policy vacuum, lacking the resources required for success. Effective trustees elevate museums and their staff to new heights.

### **Where do trustees get the information and training they need?**

The MTA provides **programs and services that support museum trustees** in their many roles.

Offering forums to exchange ideas and information on matters of common concern, the MTA network provides access to the best leaders in museum trusteeship and to the most innovative minds in the field.

The MTA's **Trustee-to-Trustee (T2T) workshops** offer local, state, or regional educational programming and training for trustees of member museums. They are presented by experienced trustees and tailored to address your institution's unique needs.

# governance and leadership

## When do trustees meet and network with colleagues?

The MTA's conferences and workshops bring trustees and directors together to share information and ideas. Participants return to their institution filled with new information and renewed enthusiasm!

The MTA's fall Assembly features workshops and presentations by noted experts and scholars, as well as by the best experts of all—other museum trustees! Assembly programming highlights the “hot topics” of the museum community, and presents governance issues from the perspectives of directors and trustees who have faced them. MTA members receive special registration discounts, and special rates are also available to board/staff partners. In addition to timely and topical educational programming, Assembly events include exclusive tours of local museums and the finest private collections, as well as opportunities to network and share ideas with fellow museum trustees.

## Who do trustees ask for advice on difficult issues, to share stories of triumph, and to learn the lessons of experience?

“Ask The MTA” electronic information center provides multiple sources of information and answers to frequently asked questions on museum governance. Organizational references and recommended publications are offered on the MTA Web site. In addition, MTA members may join the “Ask The MTA” electronic network to access a nationwide community of fellow trustees. Participants may share information, discuss policy, compare strategies, examine ethics issues, or ask questions about issues of concern to their institution. Have a question about museum governance and leadership? Ask The MTA!

## What resources do trustees need?

The MTA Briefings newsletter features articles, news briefings, and other vital information of special interest to trustees. Mailed quarterly to all MTA members, MTA Briefings highlights museums of distinction as well as tips for more effective boards and more productive board meetings. Other highlights include reviews of new resources and books, analysis of public policy issues, reports on international issues, and announcements of upcoming events.

The MTA's Templates for Trustees software-based tools are designed to enhance board effectiveness by applying best practices to key activities and events in the life of the board. The Templates assist with board building, recruitment, and orientation; board/director partnerships; the search for a new executive director; and strategic thinking and planning. Using familiar software, the Templates create documents, spreadsheets, reports, and presentations tailored to meet your board's specific needs.

## Membership Information

Becoming a member is easy! Simply complete and send the enclosed form, or join online with a credit card at [www.mta-hq.org](http://www.mta-hq.org). There are two types of membership: institutional and individual.

### Institutional Membership

As an institutional member, the director and all trustees are considered members of the MTA and receive the MTA Briefings newsletter, discounts on MTA conferences and publications, and access to Trustee-to-Trustee workshops and the “Ask The MTA” electronic network.

### Individual Membership

Individuals may join as members of the Patrons Society or the Friends of the MTA and are eligible for all institutional member benefits, with the exception of Trustee-to-Trustee workshops.

Patrons receive invitations to private tours and exclusive “patrons-only” receptions and dinners in the homes of North America's most distinguished collectors.

Friends receive invitations to special appreciation events and activities at the MTA Assembly.

For more information, please call (520) 322-5555 or visit the MTA Web site at [www.mta-hq.org](http://www.mta-hq.org).