



CCE Application Guidelines – 2026

This document contains information on how to complete and submit your [CCE application](#). If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Purdy at apurdy@acce.org.

Tips before you begin:

- **We recommend that you open and save a blank copy of the CCE application to your own computer and then work from that as you fill out and complete the application. If you work on the application online, changes may not be saved.**
- The application form automatically calculates all points at the end.

A note about eligibility:

Applicants are required to have at least six years of senior-level chamber management experience and be currently employed in a senior-level chamber management position. To be considered a senior level manager, the applicant must manage a staff, a budget, programs, and have direct contact with the board.

In some cases, several of the required six years of senior-level chamber management experience may be satisfied by senior-level management experience in other membership organizations or other highly relevant professional experience. Eligibility determinations are made by the CCE Commission on a case-by-case basis. Contact [ACCE staff](#) if you believe you have professional experience that may meet these qualifications, **before** submitting your application.

In all cases, an applicant's most recent two years of eligible experience must be at a chamber, and the applicant must currently be employed in a senior-level chamber management position.

Financial Oversight Information and Documents

The audit is no longer a requirement to apply for your CCE. However we do request information about the financial oversight process at your chamber if your chamber does not complete an audit.

All candidates will receive three points for this section whether they are submitting an audit or other financial documentation.

Does your chamber complete an audit?

- Yes – Please submit your most recent audit with your application.
- No – Please submit additional documentation that answers the questions below.
 - Describe the financial oversight processes and internal controls that are implemented at your chamber.
 - Who compiles the financial statements?
 - What sorts of checks and balances does your chamber have in place to ensure separation of duties and proper use of funds?
 - Who is responsible for reviewing and approving checks?
 - How does your chamber protect against fraud and ensure compliance with legal and regulatory requirements?
 - If regular audits are not conducted, what is the rationale or reasoning behind that decision?

Documentation

Please submit the documentation listed in this section along with your online application. Files should be in pdf format.

- We prefer that all documentation relate to your current chamber. However, if it would more appropriately demonstrate your professional skills and experience to submit documentation from your former chamber, please contact [Ashley Purdy](#) to discuss and obtain approval.
- No formal cover letter for your application is required. However, if you refer to a required document by a different name (for instance, if you call your business plan by another name), or if more detailed instructions on how to interpret or understand your application package would be helpful, please include a memorandum or other short set of instructions to assist ACCE staff and the CCE Commission in understanding your application.

References

- You must list five references. Please list references whom you know well. Your references must fall in these three categories.
 - Current CCE
 - Community leader
 - Volunteer chairpersons/presidents who have served within the last four years
- You will share the contact information for your references in the online application.

The reference check is intended to assure that applicants are highly regarded by the chambers and communities they serve. References will be notified that the applicant is pursuing the certification. They will not be informed of examination results.

CCE Main Essay Topic Approval

In the essay step of the CCE process, you will write three essays – one main essay and two financial essays. Your main essay will be focused on a project you led. You will also present on this project in the final step of the CCE process.

The CCE Commission will approve this essay topic in advance to ensure that it meets the requirements. Please read about the requirements below and then submit your essay topic approval form. **THIS IS NOT YOUR FULL ESSAY.** We will discuss the essays more in our first CCE group call.

- The main essay must discuss a recent, significant project of the candidate's chamber, led by the candidate. The project must have taken place within the last three years.
- The program or initiative discussed must demonstrate the candidate's professional skill, experience, and leadership ability, and his/her knowledge of one or more of the four core chamber leadership areas: management, planning and development, membership and communication, or operations.
- The selected program or initiative should have elevated the role of the chamber in its community, and should highlight the innovation, impact, and leadership of the candidate. There must be clear demonstration of project results, using qualitative and/or quantitative measures as appropriate.
- The essay topic will also be the subject of the candidate's CCE oral presentation.
- Example essay topics from previous years can be seen [here](#).

Submit your essay topic and details on [this form](#).

Submitting your application

- All applications, including supporting documents, must be submitted by **February 6th, 2026** on the application form: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2026_CCE.
- All applicants will receive a confirmation email within 24 hours after their applications have been received. If you do not receive a confirmation email, please contact [Ashley Purdy](#) as soon as possible.
- Once we receive your application, we will also email you a link to pay your application fee. **This fee must be submitted before a review of your application can be completed.** You may also contact our team to pay the application fee over the phone (Ashley Purdy, 703-998-3572).

Congratulations on taking the next step in obtaining your CCE! If you have any questions regarding your application, please contact Ashley Purdy at apurdy@acce.org.