APPLICATION FOR ACCREDITATION

PERSONAL INFORMATION

**APR Candidate:**
Thank you for your interest in the Accredited in Public Relations (APR) program. In order to apply for the program, please complete the following steps:

**STEP 1**: Please complete and send in this application form **on or before December 1st by email to** **certification@cprs.ca****.**

**STEP 2**: After you have sent in the form, please pay the accreditation fee of **$595.00 plus tax** by calling the CPRS national office with your credit card information: 416-239-7034. Our office is open between the hours of 9 AM and 5 PM EST, Monday to Friday.

**STEP 3**: On or before **December 30th**, submit a resume and work sample overview (detailed instructions follow) setting out the scope and ownership of your chosen work project. Please note that both the resume and work sample overview can be submitted via Dropbox at this link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/6rbHwRxTfYuf9Rn7QyDn> . The naming conventions for the files are as follows:

SurnameFirstnameResume

SurnameFirstnameWSO

First name:

Surname:

Business address:

Postal code:

City:

Province:

Mobile telephone number:

Other telephone number:

Email:

Number of years practicing public relations:

CPRS membership activated:

REFERENCES

Please list three references who can attest to your standards of professional conduct. **Two of the three references must be accredited Members of the Society (APR).** The third reference may be a current or former employer or client or others who have worked closely with you. Immediate subordinates from your workplace cannot serve as references, nor can members of the CPRS National Council on Accreditation.

Name:

Surname:

Email:

Name:

Surname:

Email:

Name:

Surname:

Email:

If you are awarded the APR designation, how do you wish your name to appear on your certificate?

CONFIRMATIONS

I agree to abide by the final decision of the National Council on Accreditation and its examiners in the matter of Accreditation.

YES - NO

I agree to allow the National Council on Accreditation to make inquiries of my references to ascertain my eligibility for Accreditation.

YES - NO

I confirm I am a member in good standing of the Canadian Public Relations Society Inc.

YES - NO

I consent for my name to be shared as an APR candidate to my local CPRS Society.

YES – NO

I consent for CPRS National to share with my National Society that I have applied for my APR Accreditation.

YES - NO

I am applying through the academic or educator streams (see definitions below).

YES - NO

CPRS will not contact any other individuals without your consent. If you have questions about how this information will be used, please contact the CPRS Executive Director.

NOTE: The Accreditation Chair in your Society may offer a variety of services to candidates including information sessions, coaching, mentoring, etc. Please note that due to confidentiality and privacy, you must get in touch with your own local accreditation chair to notify him or her of your application.

SIGNATURE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Guidance for Candidates**

**In preparing a**

**Work Sample Overview**

Each APR candidate must submit a Work Sample Overview (WSO) and Resume in our designated Dropbox link: <https://www.dropbox.com/request/6rbHwRxTfYuf9Rn7QyDn> on or before the deadline (**11:59 PM EDT on December 30 or the next business day if this is not a business day**). The naming convention for the Work Sample Overview is: SurnameFirstnameWSO, e.g., SmithJaneWSO

*\*Those applying via the Academic or Educator streams can submit specific major achievements in lieu of the work sample. See below for details on which projects are eligible.*

**APPLICATION AND PREQUALIFICATION PROCESS**

The accreditation process is a measure of the extent of your practical experience and competence in the field as judged by peers. You may pursue this designation once you have satisfied the following eligibility requirements:

1)         you have been employed full-time in a public relations position or have owned your own public relations business for at least five years\*;

2)         you spend at least half of your professional time involved with specific public relations activities; and

3)         you are a member in good standing of the Canadian Public Relations Society.

**Form and Content**

The Work Sample Overview describes the project you intend to submit for the work sample component of the accreditation process and is contained in a one-page (300 – 500 words) description that outlines the **scope** of the project and your **role and ownership** in it. Your resume must set out your **public relations or communication management experience** to ensure you meet the minimum experience requirement of five years of full-time public relations or communication management experience, with the **month and year** each position started and ended. Please include some detail of the public relations work carried out while engaged in each position.

Candidates are strongly advised to use the **RACE** formula to organize their Work Sample Overview. Note that each eligible Work Sample project must also include a budget component. The word count (maximum 500 words) must appear at the top of the page. A cover page is not required; it is sufficient to include the candidate’s name, member ID number, date, proposed title of the work sample project and word count at the top of the first page. The name, member ID number, date and title of the work sample do not factor into the total word count.

**Evaluation Criteria**

**SCOPE**

 **A Member of the National Accreditation Council will review the scope of the project to assess:**

1. if it is multifaceted, incorporating a variety of communication approaches (single deliverable programs, e.g., one seminar or one report, will generally not meet minimum scope guidelines).
2. the organizational and public relations goals the project was intended to serve and how these relate to the evaluation of your project, i.e., the project must clearly serve a stated public relations goal and the overview demonstrates how this links to an organizational goal. It will also make reference to the project outputs, but more importantly, what the project outcomes were and how they have been evaluated.
3. that the project was completed, including a finished evaluation, within the three years prior to the full work sample submission date of April 1st.

If a candidate does not meet the minimum scope standard, they can elect to proceed with the work sample, addressing the weaknesses identified, in order to increase the likelihood of success. No appeal is required for this part of the accreditation process. Alternatively, the candidate may voluntarily withdraw from the accreditation process until a suitable project is completed that meets the scope standards. In such a case, the candidate may request a refund of accreditation fees minus the administrative fee of $50 plus applicable tax.

**ROLE AND OWNERSHIP OF THE CANDIDATE IN THE PROJECT**

**A Member of the National Accreditation Council will review the scope of the project to assess:**

1. Your involvement in the decision to launch the project, or the point at which you became the lead public relations practitioner for the project. Note that your involvement must pre-date the commencement of the analysis phase of the project.
2. Your role in the research, analysis, communication, and evaluation related to the project. Note that you must have had some direct involvement in at least three of the four RACE elements of the project.
3. Whether you worked alone, as team leader, or as a member of a team. If you worked alone, that is fine. If you were the team leader, then you must have been responsible from the start of the project and ensure you meet the requirements of #2 above. If you were a member of a team, you must have been solely responsible for activities serving a specific PR objective.
4. The staff or consultant support available for the project. Note that your involvement in the project must not be limited to supervision of staff or consultant(s).

If a candidate does not meet the minimum ownership standard, the work sample project will be disqualified, at which point the candidate may request a refund of the accreditation fee, minus the administrative fee of $50 plus applicable tax. Alternatively, the candidate may remain in the accreditation program and submit a new work sample project for consideration in the following year.

**PUBLIC RELATIONS OR COMMUNICATION MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE**

**A Member of the National Accreditation Council will review the candidate’s resume to assess that** they meet the minimum experience requirement of five years of full-time work in public relations or communication management. This is strict standard will be assessed based on the **month and year** of employment in each public relations or communication management position listed in the candidate’s resume. A candidate should provide adequate detail on work duties to demonstrate that it is a full-time public relations or communication management role.

If the candidate does not meet the experience eligibility requirements (five years of experience in public relations or communication management and three positive references, of which two are APRs), the candidate is not eligible to enter the accreditation program and may request a refund of the accreditation fee, minus the administrative feel of $50 plus applicable tax. Alternatively, if the candidate is missing less than a year of relevant experience, they may request a deferral to re-enter the accreditation program the following year.

Note: A decision that the candidate is eligible to proceed, following assessment of the Work Sample Overview, does not guarantee that the full Work Sample will receive a passing grade. The full Work Sample submission is due on April 1st of each year and is graded based on the grader rubric (please see Work Sample Guidance for more information).

**Deferral before submission of the full work sample**

If the candidate has been judged eligible following the review of the Work Sample Overview, but is unable to submit the full work sample by the April 1st deadline, they should send a deferral request to the CPRS national office via certification@cprs.ca. The national office will confirm acceptance of the deferral by return email. The candidate must then contact national office once again [certification@cprs.ca] by December 1st to confirm use of the same work sample project. If the candidate wishes to use a different work sample project, the Work Sample Overview for the new project must be submitted by December 30th, along with an updated résumé.

**Withdrawal before submission of the full work sample**

If exceptional circumstances prevent a candidate from continuing and necessitate a complete withdrawal from the accreditation process, the candidate will forfeit $295 of the $595 fee and receive a refund of $300. The candidate may then begin the process again in any subsequent year, with a new application, new work sample, and payment of full fees for that year.

**\*Eligible Academic & Educator projects:**

**(i)   Academic-Stream (Linked to Master’s Degree Culminating Project)**

* Master’s students must have successfully completed a culminating project such as a thesis, capstone research project, or major research paper that applies to the practice of communications.
* The culminating project must have been evaluated by the project’s faculty advisor and at least a second reader.
* Academic-stream candidates will submit a detailed abstract/executive summary (max. 500 words) of the culminating project, with the project appended for reference.
* The submitted culminating project must have been completed within three years of its successful evaluation (i.e., for candidates going through the accreditation process in 2023, between April 1st, 2020 and April 1st, 2023).

**(ii)  Educator-Stream (Linked to Teaching)**

* Educators may submit a major career achievement of relevance to the practice of public relations or communications management for consideration in lieu of a work sample. Examples: published scholarly article; textbook; scholarly book; major peer-reviewed case study; development of a new program; development of an innovative new course or other significant pedagogical material.
* Candidates will submit a detailed abstract/executive summary (max. 500 words) of the culminating project, with the project appended for reference.
* Educator-stream candidates may consult with the CPRS Chief Examiner prior to submission to determine whether the career achievement will be admissible.
* The submitted major career achievement must have been completed within three years of its successful evaluation (i.e., for candidates going through the accreditation process in 2023, between April 1st, 2020 and April 1st, 2023).