

JULY 23, 2019

CALL FOR CHEA OBSERVATION VISITORS

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) reviews U.S. institutional and programmatic accreditation organizations for their effectiveness and quality based on the standards and requirements of the CHEA 2019 [Recognition Policy](#). CHEA recognition affirms that the standards, structures and practices of the accrediting organization promote academic quality, improvement, accountability and needed flexibility and innovation in the institutions and programs they accredit. CHEA is the only private sector organization in the United States that reviews accrediting organizations.

CHEA is pleased to announce that it is seeking qualified individuals to serve as observation visitors to assist in the CHEA recognition process. An individual who serves as an observation visitor is considered a “CHEA Representative” and is subject to the conflict of interest, personal gain and communications and confidentiality provisions of the *Recognition Policy* (Paragraphs 41, 42 and 43). Observation visitors are asked to direct attention to the tasks detailed in Paragraph 23 of the CHEA 2019 *Recognition Policy* (see below).

Paragraph 23:

During a recognition review, CHEA conducts an observation visit to a decision-making meeting of the accrediting organization. The purposes of the visit are (1) to review the accrediting organization’s application of its standards and policies, including those related to institution or program performance, and of its decision-making activities related to the recognition standards, and (2) to report relevant information to the Committee. The observation visit includes attention to deliberations concerning policies, procedures and standards and to decisions on accreditation status. The visit may include experts in areas where additional focus is needed, as determined by CHEA, with such experts’ findings included as part of the observation visit report. CHEA may elect to survey a sample of accredited institutions or programs and may request to observe an on-site evaluation. Observation visitors and experts are chosen by CHEA in consultation with the accrediting organization. The accrediting organization has the opportunity to review the visit report and provide comments. The full report of any visit, with comments from the accrediting organization, is distributed to the Committee. CHEA deems reports of observation visits confidential to CHEA and the accrediting organization unless otherwise, in CHEA’s judgment, required by law.

In addition to adhering to provisions in the *Recognition Policy* specific to conflict of interest, personal gain and communications and confidentiality, CHEA observers are expected to:

- Attend a decision-making meeting of the accreditor seeking recognition to confirm that the accreditor is meeting the CHEA 2019 *Recognition Policy and Procedures*.
- Prepare for the meeting, in advance, by reviewing the initial application narrative submitted by the accreditor. The initial application narrative is a detailed report submitted by the accreditor to demonstrate it is meeting the CHEA 2019 *Recognition Policy and Procedures*.
- Submit a written observation report to CHEA. The purpose of the observation report is to describe what has been observed at the decision-making meeting.
- Consult with the CHEA staff as appropriate.

- Attend the CHEA Committee on Recognition meeting to answer questions and or present information as needed.
- Be available to serve as a CHEA volunteer observer at least once per calendar year, when invited.
- Be available to travel where needed. Each observation visit is approximately 2-3 days.

Expectations:

- Experience in the field of programmatic or institutional accreditation (e.g., former accreditation organization leader, current or former member of an accreditation board, commission, committee, etc.).
- Represent CHEA at the accreditor's decision-making meeting and at the CHEA Committee on Recognition meeting (as needed)
- Participate in CHEA sponsored observation visitor training
- Review, write and edit professional reports (report format provided)
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the recognition process
- Travel (actual expenses reimbursed)

If you are interested in serving as a CHEA observer, have prior experience in programmatic or institutional accreditation, and are not currently on the staff of an accreditation organization, please send a letter of interest, detailing your qualifications and experience to the attention of Lori Schroeder, Vice President for Recognition Services, at schroeder@chea.org, by no later than August 21, 2019.

If chosen as a CHEA observation visitor, orientation and training will be provided. A modest honorarium is provided to observation visitors for their work related to the observation visit.

Please note: CHEA is grateful for your recommendations and suggestions for individuals who can participate in the CHEA recognition process as an expert observation visitor. Please be advised that due to concerns related to conflict of interest, CHEA is not accepting letters of interest from individuals who are currently on the staff of an accreditation organization. CHEA is pleased to accept letters of interest from individuals who are currently serving on the boards, commissions, and committees of accrediting organizations.