

Association of Professional Landscape Designers®



Standards of Practice

&

Certified Membership Application

# APLD® STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

I hereby agree to abide by APLD® (Association of Professional Landscape Designers) Standards of Practice. As stated below, I will . . .

- Utilize personal knowledge and skills for the greatest good of my clients and the environment.
- Advance landscape design by continuing my professional education and exchanging knowledge with colleagues.
- Be truthful in oral or written statements concerning the services I am qualified to offer.
- Protect the environment and discourage damage to our natural resources.
- Refrain from expressing an uninformed opinion on any issues relating to my profession.
- Be loyal to clients or to the employing organization and faithfully perform assigned tasks.
- Avoid making unfounded statements or criticizing colleagues for personal gain.
- Participate in public service activities to educate the public about good landscape design and sound horticultural practices.
- Conduct all matters relating to landscape design activities, business operation, and civic responsibilities in a manner that will further the status of landscape design as a respected profession.

---

## APPLICATION FOR CERTIFIED PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP

MR./MRS./MS. \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

HOME ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

WHEN DID YOU BECOME A MEMBER OF APLD? \_\_\_\_\_

NAME OF FIRM/EMPLOYER \_\_\_\_\_ POSITION/TITLE \_\_\_\_\_

NUMBER OF YEARS PRACTICING LANDSCAPE DESIGN: \_\_\_\_\_

WORK ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_ DATE EMPLOYED \_\_\_\_\_

SELF-EMPLOYED \_\_\_\_\_ HOW LONG? \_\_\_\_\_ NO. OF EMPLOYEES \_\_\_\_\_

FOR ALL APLD MAILINGS, USE:  BUSINESS ADDRESS -or-  HOME ADDRESS

WORK PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ HOME PHONE (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ FAX (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ WEBSITE: \_\_\_\_\_

CAN WE PUT YOUR HOME PHONE IN THE DIRECTORY? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

CURRENT PRACTICE TYPE: ACADEMIC \_\_\_\_\_ DESIGN ONLY \_\_\_\_\_ DESIGN/BUILD \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_ PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ PUBLIC INSTITUTION \_\_\_\_\_

YOUR COMPANY: DESIGN/BUILD \_\_\_\_\_ DESIGN ONLY \_\_\_\_\_

OTHER AFFILIATIONS:  ASCA  ANLA  PPA  SGD OF UK  GWA

STATE/LOCAL \_\_\_\_\_ OTHER NATIONAL AFFILIATIONS \_\_\_\_\_

AREAS OF SPECIALIZATION \_\_\_\_\_ GEOGRAPHICAL AREA SERVED \_\_\_\_\_

# EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND

APLD will file this profile to acquaint us with your skills and talents. All material, comments, and results concerning your project are kept in the strictest confidence.

HIGH SCHOOL \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR GRADUATED \_\_\_\_\_

COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/STATE \_\_\_\_\_ YEAR GRADUATED \_\_\_\_\_

MAJOR \_\_\_\_\_ DEGREE \_\_\_\_\_

(Submit all transcripts if relevant to landscape design.)

CONTINUING EDUCATION (Particularly in landscape design, horticulture, et. al. programs. Please list length of program, credits, etc. Provide transcripts when available and/or copies of supporting documents or certificates.)

DEGREE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

CERTIFICATE PROGRAM: (List length of program - Date certified or full term courses completed. Include transcript and photocopy of certificate.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

SIGNIFICANT SHORT COURSES: (Design or Graphics/Horticulture/Other -- Please describe, including length of course and sponsoring organization.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## HONORS, ACHIEVEMENTS, PUBLISHED ARTICLES, OTHER RELEVANT EXPERIENCE

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# RECORD OF PREVIOUS EMPLOYMENT

The following is confidential information for use in the certification process only. Identify those employments doing landscape design, construction and crew management.

## Former Employers

1) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Period of Employment

From: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_ to: \_\_\_\_\_

Duties: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for leaving: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## CLIENT REFERENCES

1) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

2) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

3) Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

*I hereby apply for Certified Professional membership in APLD (Association of Professional Landscape Designers). I attest to the accuracy of all information in this application and that the application materials, including plans and graphics, have been prepared by me in their entirety.*

*If accepted, I will abide by the Association's Bylaws, its Standards of Practice, support its objectives, pay established dues, and work toward maintaining and enhancing the quality and prestige of the Landscape Design profession.*

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Submission packages will be held for 5 years if certified, 7 years if denied. At the end of that time, we can return them to you, destroy them, or use them for educational purposes with names removed. Please indicate in the boxes below which resolution you desire. If you choose to have the package returned, please include an extra \$25 in your payment.

Return     Destroy     Use for educational purposes

Return this application with payment for \$100 (fee without submission return) or \$125 (fee and submission return) non-refundable filing fee. Make check payable to APLD or pay by:  MasterCard     Visa     Discover

Card # \_\_\_\_\_ Name on card \_\_\_\_\_

Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_ 3- Digit Code: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# APLD Eligibility and Requirements for Certification

## Eligibility

Applicants for Certified Membership in APLD must be current Associate Members and have a minimum of four years of professional landscape design experience. The education requirement generally equates to at least one year of the study of landscape design. Please see the Criteria page for more information on acceptable educational backgrounds. Course material covered should include residential landscape design, landscape drawing, plant materials and landscape construction and maintenance with an emphasis on the design process.

## Submission Requirements

Three installed projects are required, a primary project and two additional projects. **For all three a planting plan, design intent statement, plant list and before and after photographs are required.** The primary project should represent the designer's skills most completely. The two additional projects should complement the primary submission by giving the review panel a greater view of the designer's abilities. These two additional plans may be reduced in size to lessen the bulk of the submission. Fold all drawings. The whole submission packet should fit into one standard three-ring binder (11 x 12 Inches). Plastic sleeves or pockets can be used for the folded drawings.

**Include all of the following items. Please read all of the materials on certification in the "Members Only" section on the website ([www.apld.org](http://www.apld.org)) prior to preparing your submission. Use boxes to check off when complete.**

- Complete application form.
- Educational records. Include copies of transcripts and/or supporting documents and certificates showing courses and contact hours.
- Three installed projects. These may be for a residence, business or commercial establishment, industrial or governmental project or other suitable project that demonstrate the applicant's professional capabilities. This should include circulation patterns, a mixture of trees, shrubs, groundcovers and perennials and the use of hardscape materials. They may include water features and landscape lighting. Keep in mind that your projects must meet the criteria listed in the application materials and on the score sheet (available at [www.apld.org](http://www.apld.org)). A front yard in a modest sized yard may not do this.
- A planting plan drawn to scale for each project (3) along with site, concept, hardscape and lighting plans and construction drawings where needed to fully describe the project.
- A design intent statement for each project (3) that include how the designs meet the clients' functional and aesthetic needs; zoning, governmental and budget restrictions; existing site conditions and problems; off-site conditions, hardiness zones and arrangements for installation.
- A complete plant list for each project (3) (botanical name, common name, quantity, size to be installed and remarks). Include a separate plant list for each project in addition to the plant lists on the plans.
- Before and after photos of each project with no more than two photos per page. Send as many photos as you can.
- Bids for installation, if appropriate.
- Business statement. Briefly describe how you operate your business. What is your typical program with a client? How many designs do you complete in a year? What is your client base? Are you the sole owner, employee or partner?
- A nonrefundable fee of \$100 or \$125, if submission return is desired. Submissions will be held for five years if certified, seven years if denied. At the end of that time we can return your submission to you, destroy it or use it for educational purposes.

**SEND COMPLETED APPLICATION AND SUBMISSION TO:**  
**Marti Neely, APLD, Chair, Certification Committee**  
**9811 Sprague St., Omaha, NE 68134-3712**  
**Tel: 402-963-0763, [mneely@mulhalls.com](mailto:mneely@mulhalls.com)**

**The APLD Certification Review Panels convene four times a year. Deadlines are January 1, March 1, August 1 and November 1.**

# APLD Criteria for Certification

## Preparing your Submission

Candidates are expected to show knowledge of design principles and elements and of plants and their characteristics in the projects they submit for certification. Each submission is judged on its own merits and is not compared to the work of others. **Send as much documentation as you feel is necessary for the panel to fully appreciate your efforts and expertise.** Study the score sheet available on the website to check that you have met all of the score points. Below you will find additional information on the criteria to help you prepare a complete submission.

### Education

While work experience is essential for the professional landscape designers who learn through seeing projects through the design and installation phases, education is the foundation of quality design. The review panels have found that there is a strong and clear correlation between landscape design education and submission success. There is a defined landscape design curriculum including the design principles and elements, drawing and rendering and plant knowledge and composition. The education requirement generally equates to at least a full year of the study of landscape design. This is difficult to quantify. Courses in art and horticulture should be complemented by the study of landscape design. The education requirement may be accomplished through concentrated study in an accredited or certificate program, the completion of courses and workshops over a period of time, an apprenticeship with a master designer or a combination of these options. The submission should include transcripts from landscape design programs or lists of courses and workshops taken and descriptions of apprentice programs. **Be aware that the review panel will notice missing educational background through examining the submitted projects and may require further study by the applicant prior to resubmitting an application.**

### Experience

Since the requirements include three projects installed for at least two growing seasons, the years of experience need to be at least four years. It is unlikely that designers' very first projects would meet the requirements and criteria. The APLD certification program raises the bar of professionalism. A designer who passes the certification process has demonstrated a depth of knowledge and experience.

### Design Intent Statement

The design intent statement should be clear, concise, and specific and include any information that enables the review panel to better understand the project and should include the reasoning behind the design. Describe all existing conditions (site analysis) and the client's wants and needs and budget restrictions. Include also your design analysis, your creative solution to working with the characteristics of the site and your client's desires. This includes how the client will use and enjoy the landscape and how you have used design elements to achieve the result. Include:

- Client wants and needs including restrictions put on designer such as directions and budget.
- Existing site conditions, problems and limitations (e.g. drainage, slopes, exposure, soil pH and soil texture, governmental restrictions, grade changes, easements and existing hardscape elements).
- Off-site conditions (e.g. adjacent views, structures or other existing situations).
- Arrangements for installing the design (designer's company or other) and consideration of general maintenance accessibility and requirements.
- The designer's creative solution working with the characteristics of the site and the client's desires.

### Plans

Submit a planting plan drawn to scale that is intended for bidding and installation. Label everything on the plan including all existing features, plants and hardscape that have been retained as 'existing'. Include construction details or guidelines where necessary. Botanical names should be used when labeling. Plant lists should be organized by the areas in the drawing (e.g. entry, front yard, etc.) and within each area by trees, shrubs, perennials and groundcovers. Within these categories list the plants alphabetically by botanical name. When using keys instead of leader lines, the plant list must appear on the drawing. Some applicants have redrawn their plans so that they include all of the required parts which designers may not use in their daily practice. You may include these additional plans: site plans of existing conditions; design concepts; perspective or elevation drawings; concept sketches; contour drawings; irrigation and lighting plans; hardscape plans and construction detail drawings. Use of color is not necessary.

# APLD Criteria for Certification

## Preparing your Submission, Cont.

### Plans, continued

Your plans should exhibit knowledge of the use of line hierarchy and weight when drawing recognizable elements. They should be drawn to scale. Use clear, understandable, consistent professional graphic conventions, including proper lettering and labeling of all hard and soft materials, title block, borders, scale, a graphic scale (so that designs are readable even if reduced) and north arrow. Indicate locations of utilities and downspouts. If you work in a group, indicate that you have drawn the plan.

### Design

- Exhibits an understanding of art principles (unity, balance, focal points, interconnection and rhythm, scale, repetition and variety) and how line, form, color and texture can be manipulated to create a unified design.
- Exhibits an understanding of space in relation to the aesthetic and functional principles of design.
- Uses appropriate pedestrian and vehicular circulation patterns.
- Shows an awareness of general maintenance accessibility and requirements in relation to a client's available time, as explained in the design intent statement.
- Meets the client's functional and aesthetic needs, as explained in the design intent statement.
- Shows site sensitivity and addresses sustainability.
- Exhibits an ability to incorporate hardscaping into the design.
- Shows your creative solution to working with the characteristics of the site and your client's desires.

### Plant Knowledge and Composition Knowledge

- Exhibits awareness of the appropriate scale and growth rate of the plants used.
- Exhibits awareness of the functional suitability of the plants used considering the climate, environmental and site limitations.
- Exhibits awareness of design principles through the essential elements of composition: layering and massing.
- Uses proper scientific nomenclature and common names where they exist.
- Provides a complete plant list (botanical name, common name, quantity, size to be installed and remarks).

### Photographs

Label all before and after photographs and include photographs of all areas of the landscape. You cannot send too many photographs. Before and after photos taken from the same angle are the most helpful. You may include a photomap. This is a copy of the planting plan showing the locations from which the photos were taken. **Photos should be taken after at least two growing seasons. Be aware that your submission may be returned to you without a score if your photos show immature landscapes. These submissions cannot be adequately reviewed and scored.**

If you wish to have photographs or perspectives returned, please include a return envelope with postage.

# Suggested Booklist

## For graphics:

Ching, Francis D. K. *Design Drawing*. New York: VanNostrand Reinhold, 1998.

Lin, Michael, ASLA. *Drawing and Designing with Confidence*. New York: VanNostrand Reinhold, 1993.

## For art principles, spatial development, and design process:

Alexander, Rosemary. *The Essential Garden Design Workbook*. Portland, Oregon: Timber Press, 2004.

Archer-Wills, Anthony. *The Water Gardener*. United Kingdom: Todtri Productions, Ltd., 2001.

Booth, Norman. *Basic Elements of Landscape Architectural Design*. Prospect Hills, IL: Waveland Press, 1990.

Booth, Norman and Hiss, James, *Residential Landscape Architecture: Design Process for the Private Residence*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2004.

Brookes, John. *The Book of Garden Design*. Out of Print.

Church, Thomas D. *Gardens Are for People*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1995.

Crowe, Sylvia. *Garden Design*. United Kingdom: Antique Collectors' Club, 2003.

Eck, Joe. *Elements of Garden Design*. New York: North Point Press, 2005.

Hannebaum, LeRoy O. *Landscape Design: A Practical Approach*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2001.

Motloch, John L. *Introduction to Landscape Design*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2000.

Leszczynski, Nancy. *Planting the Landscape: A Professional Approach to Garden Design*. New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 1998.

Nelson, William R. *Planting Design: A Manual of Theory and Practice*. Champaign, IL: Stipes Publishing, 2004.

## For graphics and design:

Pierceall, Greg, *Residential Landscapes: Graphics, Planning, and Design*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, reissued 1994.