

NTMA®
Accredited
Education Program



Handbook

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National Terrazzo Mosaic Association Accredited Education Program Handbook

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National Terrazzo Mosaic Association Accredited Education Program

INTRODUCTION

Welcome

Thank you for your interest in the National Terrazzo Mosaic Association (NTMA) Accredited Education Program. In 2007 The NTMA conceptualized the establishment of a program that would supplement membership in the NTMA. This program is designed to assist its members in obtaining a professional designation of quality and expertise. Thus the NTMA Accredited Education Program was created.

The NTMA Accredited Education Program is available to NTMA members only. It is a voluntary program designed to assist members in achieving recognition as a company that performs to the highest standards within the terrazzo industry.

This manual will introduce you to the program and explain the goals and requirements. It will show how you and your company can benefit from participation.

Mission Statement

Provide a program for contractors to achieve a high proficiency in the business and installation of terrazzo flooring products through education and training.

NTMA Accredited Education Program Goals

1.) Provide a program of continuing education to the terrazzo contractor addressing;

- Mastery of knowledge and experience in all areas of terrazzo flooring
- Employee and job site safety
- Current trends in terrazzo applications
- Innovations in the areas of equipment and raw materials
- Artistry and design
- Business; finance/accounting, profitability, risk management

2.) Build/Maintain an industry reputation of quality installation of a versatile, sustainable, product. Thereby, increasing specified usage of terrazzo in the market.

Benefits of Participating in the NTMA Accredited Education Program

- Raise Your Level of Professional Recognition
- Market your company as an accredited contractor
- Pull ahead of your competition
- Learn to work smarter, not harder
- Generate more work
- Close more jobs
- Increase Profitability

ACCREDITED EDUCATION PROGRAM

Eligibility

- Application to the NTMA Accredited Education Program is restricted to companies who have been an NTMA member in good standing for a minimum of five contiguous years.
- All information must be of a verifiable nature. Some verification will require visits to company location and/or installation sites.
- The applicant will be required to attest to the accuracy of the information supplied.
- Applications found to contain false or fraudulent information will be categorically denied.

Procedure

In order for an NTMA member company to become accredited, the company must meet certain requirements. Successful completion of the program requirements permits a terrazzo company to use the professional designation “NTMA Accredited Terrazzo Contractor”.

Step 1 – Apply to the Program

Every applicant must submit a completed application and demonstrate they are operating a legitimate business that is conducted within legal, ethical and commonly accepted business practices.

- Request an application from the NTMA office.
- Read the application thoroughly. Complete all areas and sign where indicated.
- Submit the application with all requested documentation and \$750.00 Application fee by date designated on application.
- Note: \$250 of the application fee is a non-refundable processing fee.

Step 2 – The Process

Once application to the Accredited Education Program is approved, the applicant’s Qualifying Agent (QA) must demonstrate, through taking an exam, both business and technical knowledge of the terrazzo industry. The exam must be taken within three months of application approval. The applicant company must also complete 12 continuing education units (CEU) within a 12 month period of QA passing accreditation exam.

- Pass the Program Exam.
- Complete 12 CEU within a 12 month period after passing the exam.
- Maintain a record of completed, NTMA approved, education courses.
- Submit education records to NTMA for program recognition.

Step 3 – Maintain Accredited Status

When a company achieves the professional designation of “NTMA Accredited Terrazzo Contractor”, the company must maintain their status through a process of continuing education geared toward improving business and trade practices.

- Complete eight (8) CEU for each 12 month period following the original accredited date.
- Maintain a record of completed NTMA approved education courses.
- Submit education records to NTMA for accreditation status maintenance.

Program Entry Requirements: Information and Documentation

The following is a list of information needed to complete the Accredited Education Program Application and accompanying documentation.

1.) The company must be an established business entity with terrazzo installation as an integral business function. You will be asked to provide the following:

- Date on which the Company was incorporated (or, if not incorporated, date the company was established).
- State in which the Company was incorporated (or, if not incorporated, state in which the Company was established).
- States in which the Company presently has offices/facilities or is a licensed business entity.
- Copy of the first page of annual federal income tax returns for the previous five years (with financial information concealed).

2.) Company Identification and Compliance with Applicable Laws and Regulations

- Provide Federal EIN
- Provide Company's State ID#.
- Provide a copy of the Company's state contractor license (if required by state).
- Provide documentation attesting that the Company pays payroll taxes for its employees.

3.) References: Product and Performance

- Provide two (2) letters from professional design or architectural firms attesting to the competency and performance of the company.
- Provide two (2) original letters of reference attesting to competency and performance of company from project owners.

4.) Financial

- Provide a letter of surety with bonding capacity confirming the payment and performance bonding level is at least \$1 million.
- *Or* - Attest that company does not bid projects that require a bond.
- Provide letters of credit status from two (2) industry material suppliers.
- Has company filed bankruptcy in the past five (5) years?
- Has a Federal tax lien been filed against your company in the last five (5) years?
- Attest that the company does not engage contract labor for the installation of terrazzo.

5.) Employee/Human Resources

- Does the company have an employee handbook?
- Does the company have an employee complaint resolution process?
- Does the company have a craftsmanship training program?
- Does the company have a new employee orientation program?

6.) Key personnel

- Provide two original letters of personal references for the company designated qualifying agent from a source other than your company.
- Attach resume for company designated qualifying agent.

- Attach a resume of at least one employee serving as project manager.
- Attach a resume of at least one employee serving as terrazzo field supervisor.

7.) Community Presence/ Marketing/ Promotion

- List the company's memberships in trade associations, chambers of commerce, etc.
- Provide the company's current promotional materials (brochures, company website address, yellow pages advertisement) or other materials describing the services offered by the company.

8.) Provide the following information for verification of expertise, experience, credentials, and past performance in the construction community

- Has company ever had any complaints filed against it with the NTMA?
- Has company been cited by OSHA in the past twelve (12) months?
- Has company surrendered a commercial job for bond in the past five years?
- Has company lost a commercial law suit/litigation for non-performance in the past five years?
- What is the total footage of terrazzo installed during your last fiscal year?
- List types of terrazzo flooring systems provided.
- Describe and provide contact information for eight projects (any combination of public or private) completed by the Company within the previous five (5) years:

9.) Physical Facilities: Daily Business Operations and Equipment/ Raw Material Storage

- Total size of office facilities
- Total size of warehouse/storage facilities.

10.) Business and Trade Practices

- Does the company implement archival standards for record storage for state and federal business, financial and legal documents?
- Does the Company provide clients with warranties (if applicable) and information regarding maintenance requirements?
- Does company have a complaint resolution process?
- Provide certificates of insurance (or letter from agent or broker) for the following:
- General liability insurance
- Vehicle/equipment insurance
- Workers compensation insurance
- Umbrella insurance policy
- Provide proof of insurance audit within the past twelve (12) months?

11.) Signatures of Owner and Qualifying Agent will be required on the following:

- NTMA Accredited Contractor Code of Conduct
- Accredited Education Program compliance agreement
- On company letterhead, a signed statement attesting that the company currently does and will continue to conform to the current version of the NTMA Terrazzo Specifications

12.) You will be asked to respond to the following questions:

- Does the company currently enforce and plan to continue to enforce a Safety Policy?
- Does the company currently enforce and plan to continue to enforce HAZMAT/MSDS Policy / OSHA 300 Log?
- Does the company currently enforce a fork lift training program and policy?

- Has the company applied for a voluntary OSHA review within the previous 12 months OR had an actual review (voluntary or non-voluntary) and is currently in compliance?
- Does the company currently enforce a quality control inspection process/plan?
- Does the company currently prevent dry grinding without proper ventilation and personal protection equipment?
- Does the company currently enforce a drug testing?
- Which of the following systems are used regularly?
 - Change order tracking system
 - Project name and numbering system
 - Correspondence filing system
 - Project close out system

Further Information about the application:

- Most questions require the applying company to submit appendices to the application form.
- All responses required in the application form must be typed or printed, unless otherwise stated.
- Application and all supporting documentation must be submitted in English.
- An application fee (payable in U.S. dollars) is required when submitting the application.
- Failure to comply with the application instructions stated above may result in delay of application review, denial of an application, and/or forfeiture of all application fees.
- The applicant will be required to attest to the accuracy of the information supplied for application into the NTMA Accreditation Program. (Please read “Eligibility” in section 2)

Qualifying Agent Information:

- A Qualifying Agent is the designated company representative responsible for filing and maintaining accreditation records for the applicant company.
- Qualifying Agents must be the owner/principal and/or a member of the Company's senior management team who has as a responsibility in the care and control of the day to day operations.
- The Company must have one qualifying agent; however, there is no limit to the number of qualifying agents a Company may have.
- One accreditation exam is included in the initial application fee. The Company is responsible for paying the exam fee for additional exams.

Curriculum

The NTMA Accredited Education Program Curriculum is comprised of three (3) areas of knowledge:

1.) Technical Knowledge of the Terrazzo Industry

- Products
- Installation
- Production
- Safety
- Equipment

2.) General Business Knowledge and Procedures

- Human Resources
- Finance/Accounting
- Risk Management
- Management
- Marketing

3.) General Electives

- Sales/Marketing
- Networking
- Advertising
- Artistry/Creativity

The NTMA and its Regional Affiliates will develop seminars and programs to support the education curriculum. Individual companies may attend local source seminars to receive CEU credits for topics that are approved by the NTMA education Committee. It is the responsibility of the applicant to secure and maintain “Certificates of Completion” for approved courses. When the required number of CEU credits is achieved, the applicant must submit the documentation to the NTMA for verification and approval.

The number of CEU credits required for the Accredited Education Program is twelve (12). A minimum of four (4) each CEU credits shall be obtained in; Technical Knowledge of Terrazzo and General Business Knowledge/Procedures curriculum. A minimum of one (1) CEU credit must be obtained in the General Electives curriculum.

The number of CEU credits required for Accredited Education Program maintenance/renewal is eight (8). A minimum of three (3) each CEU credits shall be obtained in; Technical Knowledge of Terrazzo and General Business Knowledge/Procedures curriculum. A minimum of one (1) CEU credit must be obtained in the general electives curriculum.

Fees

Application Fee	\$750.00	For each NTMA Member location
Renewal Fee	\$500.00	For each Accredited NTMA Member location

Exam Fee \$250.00 For each additional exam

Continuing Education Unit (CEU) fees are the responsibility of the applicant company.

Note: \$250 of the Application Fee is a non-refundable Processing Fee

Accredited Education Program Committee

The three (3) member committee shall be comprised of active NTMA members. The members shall be appointed by the NTMA president to a three (3) year term. The initial appointments shall be set on a staggered rotation. Committee members may be re-appointed to serve one (1) additional term. Each member shall have voting rights and the chairperson of the committee shall be elected from within. The NTMA president may appoint one non-contractor member to serve in an advisory capacity.

The responsibility of the Accredited Education Program Committee shall be to:

- Evaluate and make recommendations to the NTMA board of directors for updates and changes to the accredited education program.
- Evaluate and update the education curriculum.
- Approve (or deny) courses submitted for CEU credits that are provided by third-party sources.

Appeal Process

If a company's application is denied and they wish to appeal, they must submit a written request to the Accredited Education Program's Appeals Committee Chair within 30 days of notice that their application for program admittance has been denied. Upon the request for appeal, the NTMA staff will send an acknowledgement letter to the appellant company. The Appeals Committee will review the application and documentation. They will then make a recommendation to the NTMA board of directors. Decision will be made within 60 days of appeal submission.

Application Appeals Committee

The three (3) member committee shall be comprised of active NTMA members. The members shall be appointed by the NTMA president to a three (3) year term. The initial appointments shall be set on a staggered rotation. Committee members may be re-appointed to serve one (1) additional term. Each member shall have voting rights and the chairperson of the committee shall be elected from within.

The responsibility of the Application Appeals Committee shall be to:

- Review the applications and supporting documentation on all appeals submitted.
- Make a recommendation to the NTMA board of directors as to the merits of the appeal.

The NTMA Board of Directors shall have final jurisdiction on all application appeals.



NTMA ACCREDITED CONTRACTOR CODE OF CONDUCT

This Code of Conduct serves as the foundation for the NTMA Accredited Education Program. Every Accredited Contractor participant has agreed to adopt these guiding principles in all business activities.

Pledge of Accredited Contractors

- To develop through continuing education the highest degree of business and technical knowledge.
- To provide the services of the profession and industry to the fullest technological ability.
- To faithfully fulfill all contracts.
- To adhere to the NTMA Guide Specification for Terrazzo Flooring Systems.
- To adhere to federal, state & local laws and administrative regulations.
- To promote the spirit of this Code and objectives of our profession and industry.
- To establish and maintain the highest level of reciprocal respect and goodwill with all segments of the industry.
- To provide a safe working environment by establishing good safety practices in compliance with federal, state & local laws.
- To conduct individual operations according to the highest professional and industry standards.
- To conduct one's self in a professional manner at all times and in an ethical manner.
- To report to NTMA any contractor abusing the Accredited Contractor privilege.

NTMA's Obligation to Accredited Contractors

- To encourage the free exchange of ideas.
- To maintain receptivity to suggestions and the willingness to adapt to the changing needs of learners.
- To continually develop and expand the educational offerings.
- To promote all the precepts of this Code.
- To present a broad and favorable image of the terrazzo profession & industry across the Nation.
- To promote equal treatment of all learners.
- To provide fact-based, progressive education through the NTMA, its Regional Affiliates and Industry Partnerships using highly qualified instructors.

Failure to adhere to the Accredited Contractor Code of Conduct may result in suspension or revocation of Accredited Contractor status.

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What is the purpose of the NTMA Accredited Education Program?

- To provide a vehicle for achieving excellence in the terrazzo industry.
- To recognize companies demonstrating compliance with NTMA ethics and quality standards.

2. How and when did the concept of an accredited education program begin?

In October 2007 the NTMA Board of Directors heard the broad conceptual idea of an education program. At the January 2008 meeting, the board of directors approved a proposal authorizing the development of the program. The directive from the NTMA included options to consider continuing education, certification and/or accredited contractor as the vehicle to advance the image of the terrazzo industry. A one-year time frame was allocated for the completion of this project.

3. Do all NTMA members have to be accredited?

No, participation is voluntary.

4. Does my company have to be an NTMA member to apply to the accredited education program?

Yes.

5. What companies are eligible to apply for entry in the accredited education program?

Those who meet the standards as outlined in the program manual, including a minimum five year membership in the NTMA.

6. How will the accredited education program benefit my company?

Any member holding NTMA Accreditation will be recognized and referenced as a dependable, quality installer of terrazzo flooring systems.

7. What are the requirements that companies must adhere to when applying for the program?

- The applicant must be an established business entity with the installation of terrazzo flooring systems as an integral component of their business.
- The applicant must demonstrate sound business and trade performance.
- The applicant must currently operate ethically and in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.
- The applicant must ensure a safe working environment for its employees.
- The applicant must have financial resources sufficient to conduct their stated business.
- The applicant must accurately represent the expertise, experience, credentials and services of their company and their employees to the public.
- The applicant must demonstrate sound business and trade practices, including written contracts and comprehensive insurance policies.
- The applicant must honor agreed-upon warranties and educate the design community and users about maintenance requirements.

8. What is the process for a company wishing to achieve accredited contractor status?

- Apply for and complete the written application
- Supply supporting documentation
- The company's Qualifying Agent must take and pass the accredited education program exam
- Complete and obtain 12 Continuing Education Units (CEU)

9. What happens after a company submits an application to the NTMA?

- The NTMA staff will review the application and all supporting materials.
- Applications that are incomplete or not in compliance with program requirements will be rejected as such and sent back to the applicant.
- Once the application process has been successfully completed, the NTMA will schedule the written exam with the qualifying agent.

10. How will I find out if my company has received accredited contactor status?

A written report will be issued to the company's qualifying agent after each step in the accreditation process.

11. Is there a time limit for returning the application and taking the exam?

The application and supporting documentation must be returned within 90 days of request for application.

The company's Qualifying Agent must then take the exam within 90 days of company's application approval.

12. How long does the process take?

If all documents are submitted to the NTMA in a timely manner, accredited contractor status should be able to be achieved in less than 12 months. A maximum of 18 months is allowed for the complete process.

13. What is the maximum time frame for achieving the 12 Continuing Education Units?

The company has 12 months from the date the applicant's Qualifying Agent passes the exam to obtain the 12 CEU units.

14. What sources are available for obtaining the CEU credits?

- NTMA and regional affiliate seminars and conventions.
- Manufacturer/supplier approved education programs.
- Partnership approved education programs with industry organizations. (ASA, AGC, ABC)

15. What fees are associated with the accredited education program process?

There is an application/enrollment fee of \$750.00, \$250.00 of which is non-refundable. When the application fee is received and the application is approved, the NTMA will contact the applicant company to schedule the entrance exam. Application/enrollment fee includes initial Qualifying Agent exam.

16. What happens to the application/enrollment fee if a company is not accepted?

The application/enrollment fee, less the \$250.00 non refundable application processing fee, will be refunded.

17. What is the subject matter of the exam?

The exam consists of knowledge of industry specifications and technical standards of terrazzo systems.

18. How will the exam be administered?

The exam will be an open book, hard copy format.

19. Where is the source for the exam questions?

NTMA Terrazzo Specification
Installation knowledge

Maintenance knowledge
Job site and safety knowledge
NTMA Shop Talk Bulletins

20. Why is there such a wide array of information covered on the exam?

A qualifying agent is responsible for knowing how and where to find the answers related to relevant terrazzo industry subjects.

21. If a Qualifying Agent takes the exam and fails, can he/she take it again?

Yes, a Qualifying Agent can retake the exam. The fee associated with a retake of the exam is \$250.00.

22. How many people from a company can take the exam?

At least one person from the company must take the exam and the fee for the initial exam for the qualifying agent is included the application fee. If you wish to have multiple people take the exam, a \$250.00 fee is assessed per additional exam. There is no limit to the number of qualifying agents your company may have.

23. If a company has multiple locations, is each location required to become accredited?

If the company has multiple NTMA memberships, each membership location will be viewed as an individual entity and must apply for the accredited education program.

24. When a company is accredited, is it for life?

No, each year an accredited company's qualifying agent will be required to fill out an annual renewal form indicating any and all significant changes that have occurred within the company that would impact program status. In addition, for annual accredited contractor maintenance/renewal the company must within a 12-month period obtain 8 CEU.

25. Is the accredited contractor status transferable with a transfer of ownership?

No. The new owner must submit a new application.

26. What if there are critical changes in the company profile or a qualifying agent leaves the accredited company?

The accredited company is required to notify the NTMA within 30 business days of critical changes to their business model (name change, bankruptcy, qualifying agent departure or other situations which may bring the company into nonconformance. The company may be placed on probationary suspended status until the nonconformities are resolved. In the case of qualifying agent departure, a new qualifying agent must be designated.

27. What is a Qualifying Agent?

A Qualifying Agent is the designated company representative responsible for filing and maintaining accreditation records for the company.

28. Can the Qualifying Agent be anyone at my company?

No, qualifying agents must be the owner/principal and or a member of the company's senior management team who has a responsibility for the care and control of the day to day operations.

29. After our qualifying agent passes the exam, is our company fully accredited?

No. Your company has 12 months to obtain the 12 CEU credits required to become accredited.

30. Who is responsible for the cost associated with the CEU requirements.

Your company will be responsible for the cost of obtaining the CEU credits.

31. If my company is not accepted into the Accredited Education Program, can I appeal the decision?

Yes, there is an appeals process.

32. What is the appeals process?

A company must submit a written request to the Accredited Education Programs Appeals Committee Chair within 30 days of notice that their application for entry into the program has been denied. Upon the request for appeal, the NTMA staff will send an acknowledgement letter to the appellant company. The Appeals Committee will review the application and supporting documentation. They will then make a recommendation to the NTMA board of directors. The board of directors will render a decision within 60 days of the date appeal was submitted. The NTMA board of directors shall have final jurisdiction on all application appeals.

33. What is the difference between a certification program and the accredited education program?

A certification program refers to the formal (professional) designation of an individual. The NTMA accredited education program refers to the formal recognition of a company.

34. What is the long-range NTMA strategy for the Accredited Education Program?

The long range plan is to gain critical mass participation in the program, allowing for a designation in the NTMA specification calling for the utilization of an "NTMA Accredited Terrazzo Contractor".

35. Will NTMA accredited contractors have a special designation?

Accredited terrazzo contractors will have the use of a special "NTMA Accredited Terrazzo Contractor" logo to use on their company website, stationary, business cards and for any branding process (approved by the NTMA) that assists in the professional designation of their company.

36. What types of changes in an accredited company's business model could jeopardize their NTMA Accredited Contractor status?

In order to maintain its status, the qualifying agent of an accredited terrazzo company must notify the NTMA in writing within thirty (30) business days of any changes of information as stated in the original documentation provided to the NTMA at time of application. The failure to timely provide the NTMA with the requisite notice of change may result in the company being placed on probationary or suspended status until the issues are resolved to the complete satisfaction of the NTMA.