

Certified Image Master (CIM) Frequently-Asked Questions

When you achieve certification as an AICI Certified Image Master you demonstrate to clients, colleagues, corporations, retailers, manufacturers, the public, and the media that you have achieved the highest level certification in the industry, proving you are an exceptional, dedicated consultant, have a recognized brand in the industry, and own a successful image business. This certification will give you a competitive edge in the industry and also greater earning potential.

This list of Frequently-Asked Questions will help AICI Certified Image Professionals (AICI CIP) and other qualified non-members to become more familiar with the Certified Image Master application process.

1. As a current CIP, when am I eligible to apply for CIM?

You are required to be a Certified Image Professional (AICI CIP) for a minimum of 4 years before you are eligible to file your CIM pre-application form, be sponsored by an AICI CIP/CIM member, and submit your application payment of \$750 USD (\$1,100 USD for non-members) to AICI Headquarters.

2. How long do I have to submit my portfolio and all associated documentation once I have sent my pre-application form, sponsor form, and payment to AICI?

Your complete and entire portfolio must be received by AICI Headquarters within 365 days from the date AICI receives your application payment of \$750 USD (\$1,100 USD for non-members). There will be no extensions granted.

Determine if you can fulfill all requirements for each section of the application before sending your application payment to AICI, as no extensions will be granted to the 365-day candidacy period.

3. What are the critical steps I need to take to be successful with my application process?

- Participate in a CIM teleclass or listen to the recorded session posted on the AICI website
- Download a copy of the CIM application from the AICI website and read it carefully. The application is annually updated in July. Confirm that you are using the most current version of the application.
- Be in good standing with AICI and the Ethics Committee, which means your dues are up to date, your CIP certification is current, and any ethical/professional issues have been cleared.
- Be sure all education, leadership and participation, billable hours, company branding, and consulting materials are current and meet the requirement of being within the five years immediately preceding your application date.

- Organize your documentation for each section of the application. Make sure you have complied for each section. If not, determine which section/s needs your immediate attention.
- Copy all documents that will be submitted to AICI. Keep your originals in the event a package is lost or damaged.
- Identify early who you wish to provide evaluations on your behalf and make formal requests of them per suggestions in the application.
- Ask the CIM Chair for an Application Advisor to provide you with coaching if you need it.
- Write a compelling 500-word essay: "Why I should be a Certified Image Master".
- Send your portfolio to AICI Headquarters a minimum of 60 days prior to your final deadline date. This will allow time in the event you may need to make revisions to your application before the final deadline.
- If your portfolio passes the review process, be prepared to make an in-person presentation to a CIM committee at AICI's annual conference and participate in an interview by the committee.

4. Is there a specific deadline to submit my completed portfolio and all documentation if I wish to be acknowledged at AICI's annual May conference?

Yes, in order to be acknowledged at conference, the deadline is November 30 of your candidacy year.

5. In reference to Section 1 of the application (Leadership and Participation), if I served on the International board or chaired an International committee more than five years ago, does it count?

No, the CIM application requires that candidates are able to demonstrate that they are sought after, in demand, and have offered their leadership skills within AICI, the image industry, or their communities *within the five years immediately preceding the application.*

6. In reference to Section 4 (Business Record) must I use the supplied work record forms or may I use my own? Without showing my financials, how do I demonstrate the 2000 hours?

You may use the business work record forms that AICI has provided in Section 4 of the application, or you may use your own forms or spreadsheets as long as they include the listing of your client names, addresses, phone numbers and the date and number of hours of consultation you billed them for each time you provided your service.

For corporate clients, you must include the name, address and phone number of the company, the contact person who hired you, the date and topic of the presentation/s. For multiple presentations or assignments with the same client, please indicate all dates you worked with that client.

If your country has instigated privacy laws and you are not at liberty to publish names and numbers in your application, you will have to obtain their permission first or the permission of someone in the company.

7. In reference to Section 5 (Proof of Fees) do I have to submit proof of every invoice for every product and service for which I bill?

No, you don't have to provide AICI with every invoice you have created. AICI wants to see a sampling of invoices for each category of service you offer. For example, individual consultations, corporate consultations, speaking engagements, seminars, and product sales.

You can substantiate your fees by submitting photocopies of: invoices sent on letterhead, canceled checks, check stubs from organizations, official financial documents, official receipts, etc.

8. In Section 3 (Professional Service Evaluations) what are some examples of strategic alliance partners that I can use to fulfill the requirement?

Examples are: alterations, hair, makeup, retail sales persons, a co-trainer or coach that you use or consult with on behalf of your clients.

9. Who reviews and approves or denies my application?

AICI has a group of reviewers with a variety of high-level expertise and education. For example, AICI reviewers may be master-level coaches, communication and branding specialists, with entrepreneurial success or high-level corporate experience. A minimum of two reviewers will work on each application. If needed, a third reviewer will participate.

Your information must speak clearly for you to these high-level reviewers as you are not present during the review process. The CIM Chair is not part of the initial review process. These reviewers evaluate whether your submission is of master-level caliber.

10. How long does it take to know if my application has been approved once submitted?

It usually takes approximately 60-90 days depending on the workload of the reviewers.

11. If my portfolio is approved by the reviewers, when can I use AICI CIM after my name? When will AICI CIM be added to my name on the website?

You will be able to use the designation AICI CIM once you have completed the entire application process including the in-person presentation and interview to be

conducted annually at AICI's annual conference location. Once the CIM Committee has approved your application you will be notified immediately you may use the designation and it will be added to your listing in the Membership Directory on AICI's website.

12. What happens if I miss the one-year deadline to submit my AICI CIM Application Portfolio?

If you fail to submit your full application by your deadline, your application will be denied and you will remain a Certified Image Professional (CIP). You will be required to resubmit your entire application and fees should you wish to reapply for CIM at a later date.

Remember, you have one year from the date your fees are received by AICI headquarters to complete the requirements of the application.

13. Where can I find the AICI CIM Application?

You will find the application on the AICI website in the Education and Certification section.

14. Where do I send my AICI CIM Application & Portfolio?

Please send everything to AICI headquarters, ATTN: Heather Tamminga. Please clearly mark your package, "CIM Application". We encourage you to send your shipment by traceable mail or tracking for delivery confirmation purposes.

15. What happens if I do not renew my AICI CIM certification?

You will no longer be considered an AICI certified member and will be listed in the Membership Directory under non-certified members.

You will no longer be able to use the designation AICI CIM or any other AICI certification mark in any of your marketing materials, on your website, or in any correspondence.

16. Who do I contact if I have additional questions?

Anna Soo Wildermuth, AICI CIM
CIM Chair
anna@personalimagesinc.com
1-630—530-9440