



UNDERSTANDING YOUR ASTC TRAVEL PASSPORT PROGRAM BENEFITS

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the ASTC Travel Passport Program?

More than 300 of ASTC's science center and museum members have agreed to waive general admission fees for each other's members. Local restrictions apply within 90 miles (150 km) based on science center/museum location and residence. Each Passport venue has its own admissions policy (denoted by "F:" on the participants list) which lets you know which and how many family members receive free admission when you visit.

The program is not:

- A *local* reciprocal program
- A reciprocal *membership* program.

How can I receive free admission?

To receive free admission benefits, you'll need to join a science center or museum in your area that participates in the Passport Program. Visit www.astc.org/passport for a list of participants. This web page also has, in most cases, direct links to the each participant's web site, where you may learn more about the costs and benefits of membership.

After you join, you will receive a membership card with the ASTC logo on it. You are required to present the card at other Passport venues to receive free general admission.

We at ASTC always recommend that you call ahead to confirm your Passport benefits.

I don't have a science center or museum in my community that participates in the Passport Program. What do I do?

Consider joining the "go-to" science center or museum that you or your family wishes to visit most frequently, and be sure the institution is a Passport participant. In addition to free admission benefits, you may also receive:

- invitations to members' nights, exhibit openings, and special events
- unlimited admission to the science center or museum all year
- discounts on science camps, education programs, activities, and field trips
- discounts at the museum store
- free subscriptions to the museum newsletter and much more.

Why can't I receive free admission to a local science center or museum?

The name *ASTC Travel Passport Program* reflects ASTC's intention to reward families that support their local science center or museum by giving them a benefit they can use while traveling or visiting out-of-state friends or relatives.

Participating science centers and museums located within 90 miles of each other are excluded from the program unless that exclusion is lifted by mutual agreement. The science centers and museums signing a local agreement are responsible for the agreement's terms and administration. ASTC does not require or participate in these agreements, or dictate their terms. This rule, put in place due to United States Free-Market rules and fair trade regulations, has been in effect since 1999.

The bottom line here? Your local museums may have a local reciprocal program, so call ahead to see whether your membership card will be honored.

What is the residency restriction?

If you live within 90 miles of a participating science center or museum, but have an out-of-area membership, there is the possibility of not receiving free admission because, essentially, you haven't traveled far enough to receive the benefit.

Restrictions based on residency were introduced in 2006 to close the following loophole: People discovered that they could search online for the ASTC member museum that offered the cheapest membership with Travel Passport benefits, then join that museum and visit their local institutions for free. Venues requesting proof of residence are marked by **(✓IDs)** on the Passport Program participants' list.

Again, it's a good idea to call ahead to confirm your Passport benefits before you travel.

How is 90 miles/150 km measured?

Geographically, or "as the crow flies." Do not use mapquest to measure distance.

How many family members will get in for free?

Each Passport venue has its own admissions policy (denoted by "F:" on the participants list) which lets you know which and how many family members receive free admission when you visit. It's a good idea to review the admission policy before visiting so you know what to expect.

Do I receive free admission to special exhibits, IMAX films, or planetarium shows?

The Passport Program provides free *general* admission. The program does not include large-screen theater presentations, planetarium shows, or admission to special exhibits or traveling exhibits unless stated otherwise in the admissions policy.

Do I receive a discount to the museum store?

Unless it is specified in the admissions policy, you do not receive discounts on museum store purchases.

Which science centers and museums participate in the program?

Be sure to visit the Passport Program web pages at www.astc.org/passport for the latest list of participants. Remember that not all ASTC members participate in the free admission program.

How often is the list of participants updated?

The list of participants is updated twice a year. Lists are active from May 1 to October 31 and November 1 to April 30 of the following year. New lists are posted every March and September in advance of the May 1 and November 1 activation dates.

What happens if I forget my membership card?

Passport venues are not required to grant free admission to visitors who forget their cards. There is no universal database with all Passport visitors' member data and expiration dates for admission staff to reference. Some venues will allow you to call the science center or museum you joined to confirm your membership, but they are under no obligation to do so.

Whom do I contact if I have yet to receive my membership card?

I lost my membership card. How can I get another one?

Please contact the science center or museum which you joined. ASTC does not issue or administer membership cards.

What is ASTC?

The Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) is an organization of science centers and museums dedicated to furthering public engagement and understanding of science among increasingly diverse audiences. ASTC's members are science centers and museums. Currently ASTC has more than 580 members in over 40 countries worldwide, of which more than 300 participate in the ASTC Travel Passport Program.