



Certified Welcoming City

Presentation and Discussion
May 21, 2024

Dr. Danielle Walker, Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer

Agenda

- Defining the Why
- Certified Welcoming City Process Overview
- Welcoming Standards
- Timeline
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Questions

Why Now?

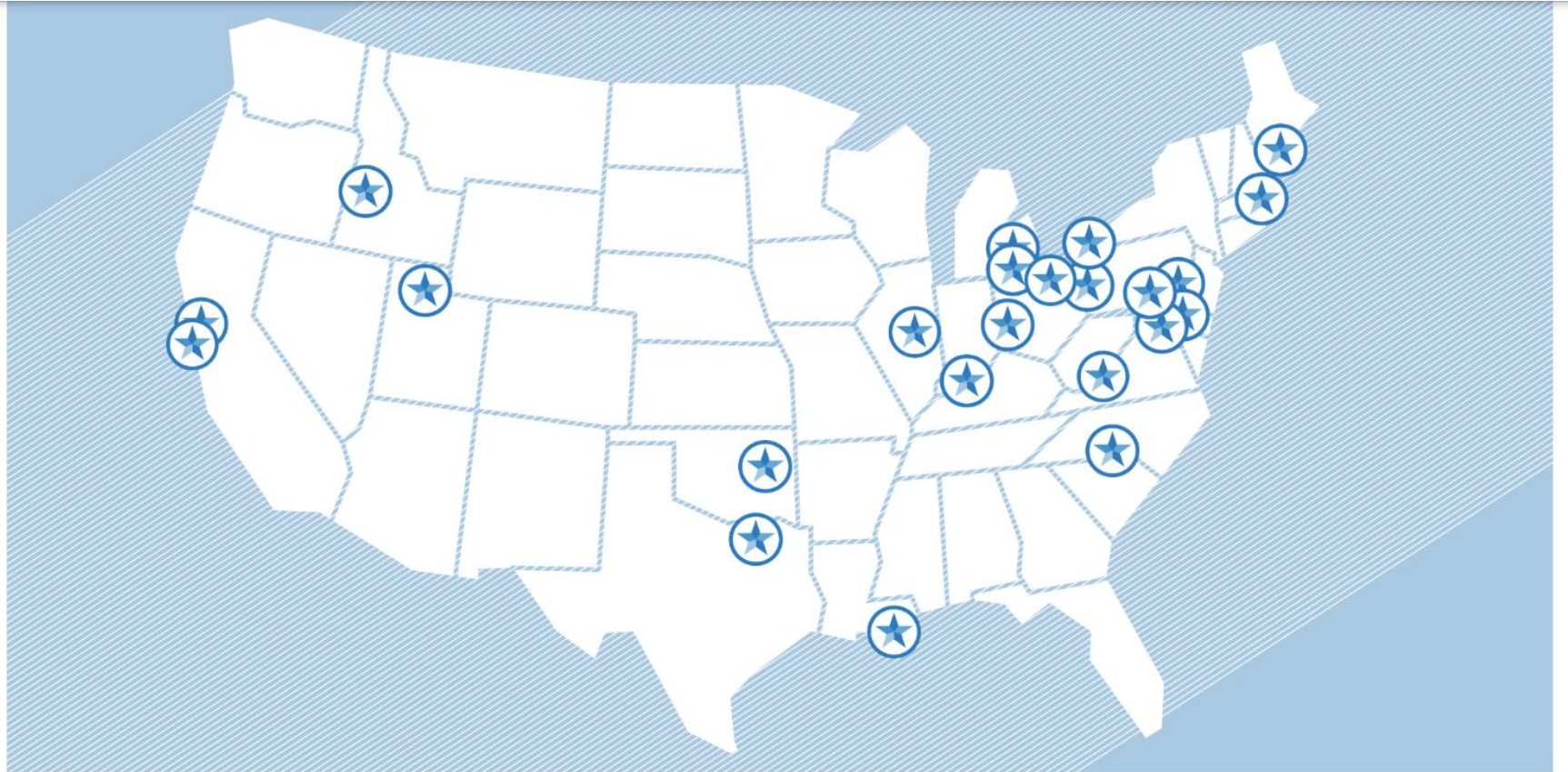
- Alignment with Board Goals on Racial Equity,
 - Specifically, Language Access and Equitable Access
- Builds on commitment of advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Robust audit process for transparency
- Community driven initiative
- Fall 2023

Defining a Certified City/Village

Certified Welcoming is a formal designation for cities and counties that have created policies and programs reflecting their values and commitment to immigrant inclusion. This innovative program assesses city and county governments on their efforts to include and welcome immigrants in all areas of civic, social, and economic life in their communities.

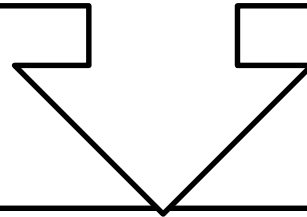
With a Certified Welcoming designation, communities distinguish their local efforts, build a competitive advantage, and gain access to opportunities to share their welcoming practices on a regional, national, and global stage.

Cities that are Currently Certified



What is the Welcoming Standard?

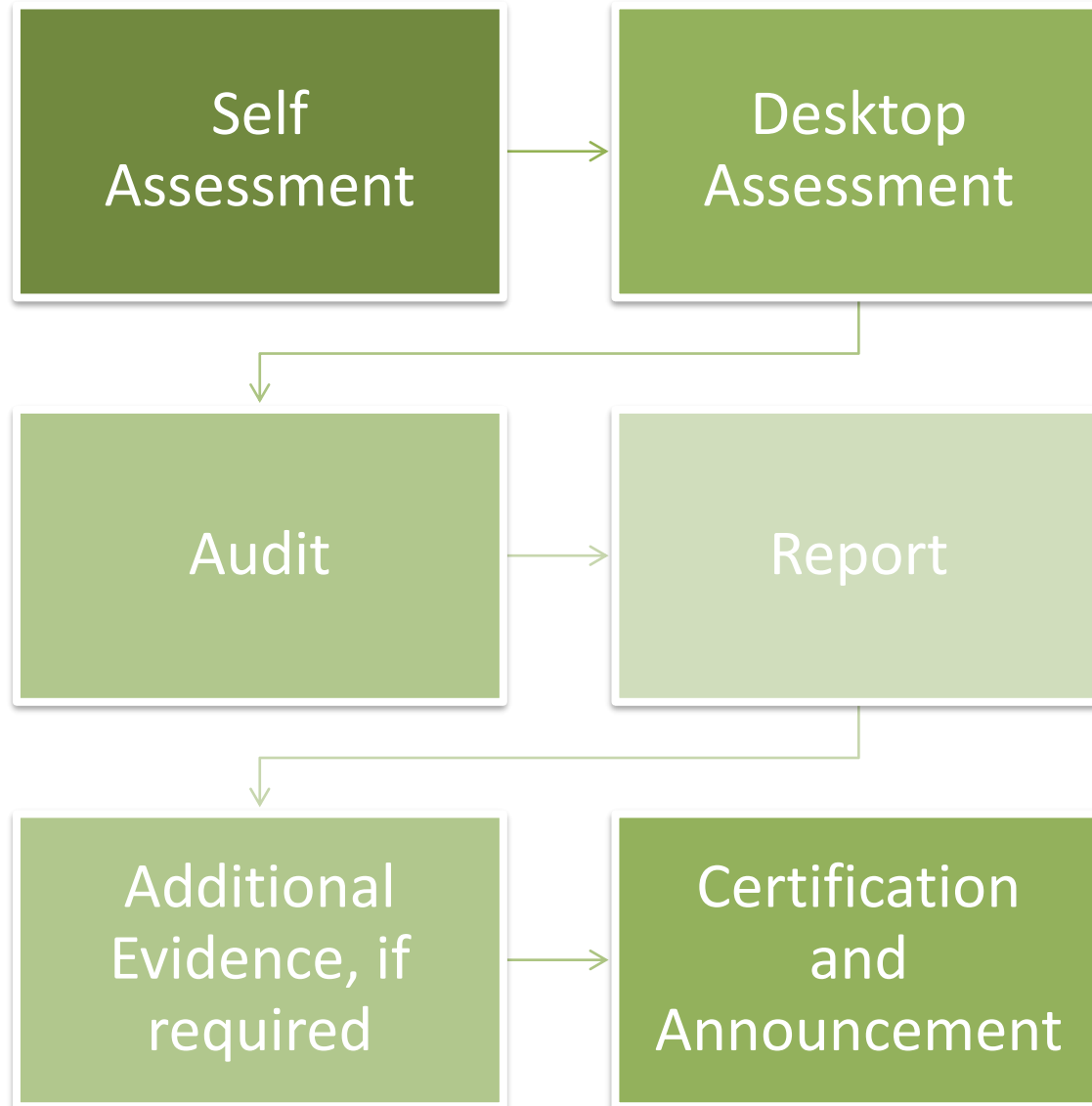
The Welcoming Standard captures the core of what it means to be an inclusive community. Developed in collaboration with local governments, advocates, and diverse experts, and with input from the public at large, the Standard provides a comprehensive roadmap for immigrant inclusion. The Welcoming Standard addresses a range of essential policies, programs, and partnerships, from language access to hiring practices.



The Welcoming Standard includes both traditional immigrant integration strategies and practices for fostering greater unity between immigrants and U.S.-born residents. The Welcoming Standard is organized into seven categories critical to building a welcoming community:

Government Leadership	Civic Engagement	Equitable Access	Education	Connected Communities	Economic Development	Safe Communities
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Certified City Process



Star Designations



Audit Process

What does the audit entail?

- The audit is a series of interviews with stakeholders, community leaders, and government employees committed to advancing immigrant inclusion in the local government and broader community. Interviews may include multiple people who are from the same or different organizations.
- Interviewees will be asked about their work in general and questions specific to the Welcoming Standard. Interviewees do not need to prepare anything in advance. They are welcome to bring materials to share with the auditors, but it is not required.

Welcoming Standards



Civic Engagement (CE)

- Welcoming communities ensure that all residents, including immigrants, can fully participate in civic life.
- Immigrant residents have access to democratic spaces, and shape community priorities and policies. Immigrants hold leadership roles in the community, and local institutions are invested in increasing access to leadership positions for immigrant residents.

Connected Communities (CC)

- Welcoming communities build connections and trust between residents. Community institutions including local government, businesses, faith communities, and nonprofits
- Create opportunities and spaces for immigrant and non-immigrant residents to have constructive interactions, develop relationships, and deepen their understanding of one another. Institutions support residents in building their personal capacity to engage with people different from themselves on equal footing and in sustained ways that reduce prejudice and strengthen diverse community relationships.

Economic Development (EC)

- In welcoming communities, all residents – including immigrants – can participate fully in the economy. Workforce and economic development infrastructure address the priorities and needs of immigrant residents and immigrant jobseekers.
- Programs that support entrepreneurship, business development, and workforce development are accessible to all residents, including immigrants. Local businesses are committed to diverse hiring and retaining employees with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.

Education (ED)

- In welcoming communities, the education system ensures all students, including immigrant students, have the support they need to thrive in school and the knowledge they need to succeed in the workforce.
- Schools and community education programs are informed by the needs and priorities of immigrant students and families, and are accessible to all residents, including immigrants. Welcoming and inclusion efforts are not siloed within a single school or program, but incorporated into the schools and school districts that serve the community.

Equitable Access (EA)

- Welcoming communities ensure local services are accessible to all residents, including immigrants.
- Immigrant residents provide feedback to local government and community-based organizations to identify and address demographic disparities and gaps in services, and to improve access to programs, particularly in the areas of housing, health, transportation, financial services, and the justice system.

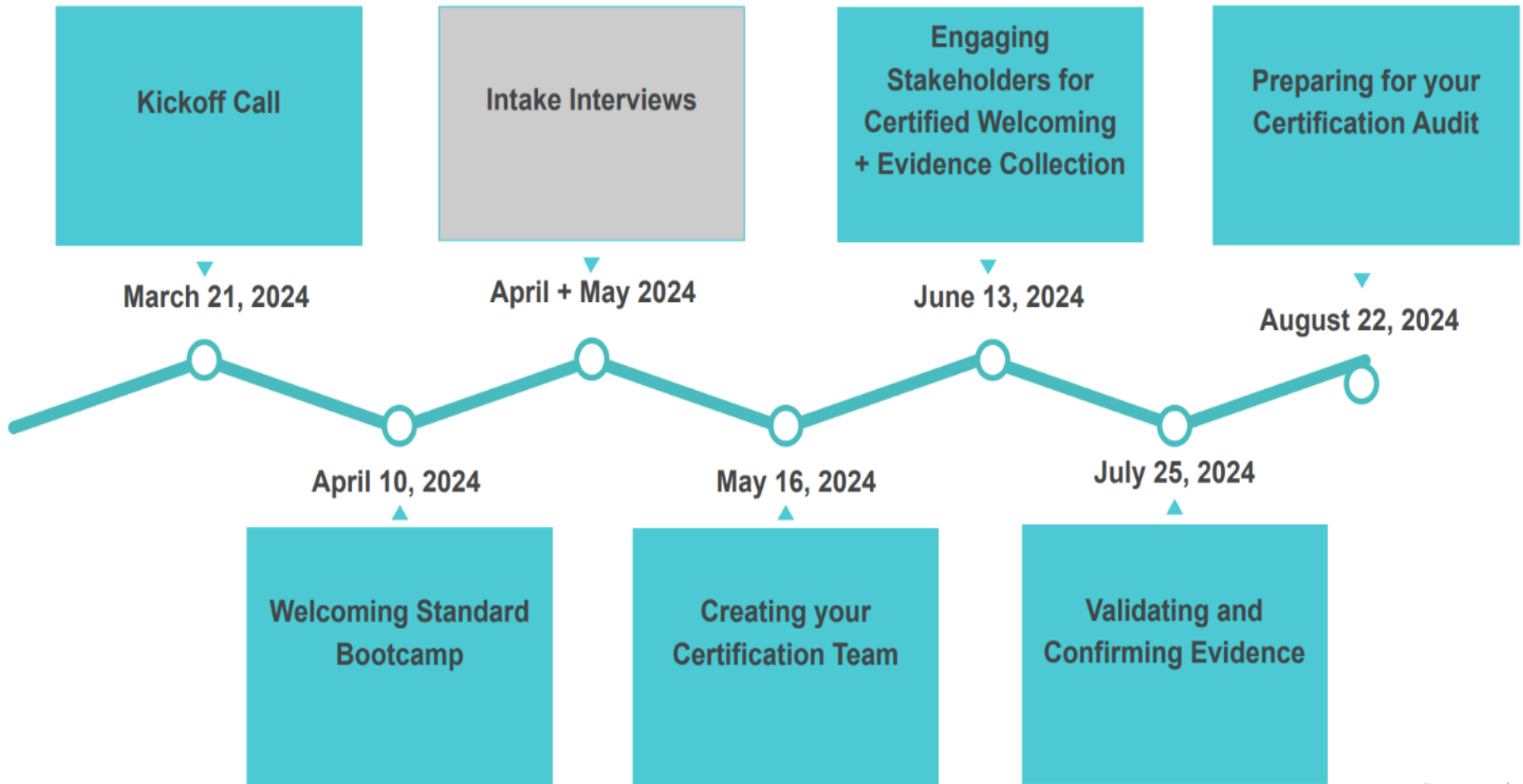
Government and Community Leadership

- Welcoming communities have infrastructure in place to support immigrant participation, inclusion, and equity.
- The local government and community-based organizations regularly seek feedback from immigrant residents to understand the challenges and priorities of immigrant residents. Institutions work closely together to prioritize and build capacity to implement immigrant participation, inclusion, and equity strategies.

Safe Communities (SC)

- Welcoming communities prioritize safety for all residents, including immigrants.
- Strong, trusting relationships are built between immigrant residents and local safety services, such as law enforcement, fire departments, code enforcement, and emergency response.
- Effective bidirectional communication between safety services and immigrant residents exists, and programs are in place to address implicit and structural bias. Community partnerships are built to identify and address needs and gaps in services.

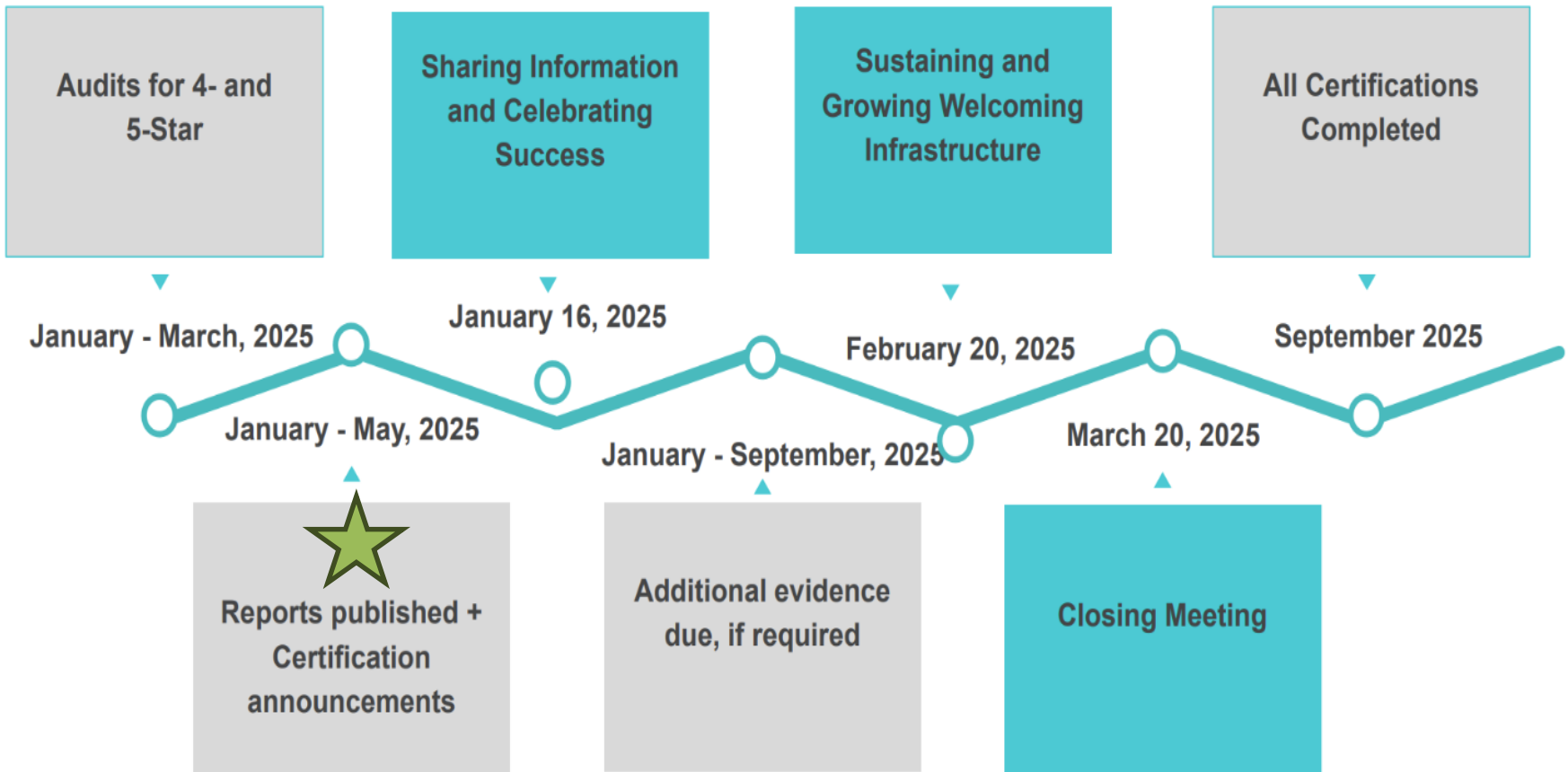
Timeline



Timeline



Timeline



Frequently Asked Questions

Why Get Certified?

- Certified Welcoming Communities benefit programmatically, economically, and culturally.
 - Having a neutral third party identify gaps in current immigrant inclusion efforts and assist with prioritizing next steps.
 - Bringing new partners to the work; using the framework to engage harder to activate partnerships; and committing partners to action.
 - Raising the profile of the city or county nationally by using Certified Welcoming as a marketing tool for attracting and retaining a global workforce and businesses.

How long will my community be certified?

- Certificates are valid for four years.

How does my community maintain certification status?

- To maintain certification, local governments will need to show continued leadership on immigrant inclusion and complete a renewal audit before the certificate expires.

Is being Certified Welcoming the same as being a “Sanctuary City”?

- No. Being a Certified Welcoming city means that your community has committed to adhering to inclusive policies and practices, as outlined in the Welcoming Standard. While there is no legal definition for a “sanctuary city,” a common thread among sanctuary policies is limiting cooperation with federal immigration officials. The Welcoming Standard emphasizes building trust and relationships between law enforcement and local community members, as well as providing education to immigrants about their rights and responsibilities under the law. Certified Welcoming communities must fulfill this criteria of the Welcoming Standard in order to receive the designation.

Questions

