

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
January 13, 2021
Virtual Meeting**

**Diversity Statement Guidelines
(Prepared by Ricardo Punzalan)**

BACKGROUND

At its [August 3, 2020, meeting](#), the SAA Council agreed to support and pursue the following actions:

1. Require all those applying or running for SAA positions (staff positions such as Executive Director; elected officers of the Society such as President, Vice-President, Treasurer, and Council; and appointed positions such as the *American Archivist* Editor and Publications Editor) to submit a “diversity statement” as part of their application/nomination materials;
2. Develop guidelines for writing and submitting such a document; and
3. Create opportunities for mentoring and teaching SAA leadership and membership on how to develop and evaluate a diversity statement.

As noted at that time, requiring a diversity statement helps SAA, its leaders, and its members to elect or appoint candidates who are best positioned to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) in the organization, the profession, and beyond. It also encourages candidates and applicants to articulate the diversity they bring to their respective positions.

This document provides further guidance on writing and submitting a Diversity Statement for appointed and elected positions as well as certain staff positions.

PROPOSED GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are proposed.

1. General Guidelines

- a. A diversity statement: reflects on how one’s identity and experience contribute to diversity; demonstrates awareness of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) issues and how to frame and approach them; and identifies specific DEI strategies relevant to the position they seek. It is highly recommended that the Diversity Statement incorporates answers, but are not limited, to the following questions:

- What is your own definition of diversity, equity, and inclusion?
 - How have your own personal, academic, and professional experiences and expertise prepared you to advocate for inclusive, equitable practices?
 - Are you aware of your own implicit biases? How have you come to this realization and how do you continue to grow as an advocate for DEI?
 - How do you reflect DEI in your work? How will you model a trauma-informed and inclusive practice, and mentor others who will work with you?
 - What are your specific plans and strategies for using the position you are applying for to advance DEI within your SAA unit, SAA as a whole, and beyond the organization?
- b. The Diversity Statement should refer to existing SAA statements and policies, such as Core Values of Archivists, Code of Ethics for Archivists, Code of Conduct, Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy, SAA Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion, and Strategic Plan 2020-2022 (or most recent Strategic Plan).

2. Position-Specific Guidelines

- a. Those **individuals who are elected** by the membership to serve, such as President, Vice President/President-Elect, Council members, and Nominating Committee members, are required to include a 400-word (maximum) Diversity Statement as part of the Candidate Statement. The Diversity Statement must be distinct and separate from the candidate's Biographical Statement and Response to Question Posed by the Nominating Committee. The Diversity Statement should be made available to all voting members of the Society.
- b. Those applying for **Council-appointed positions** (such as Executive Director, *American Archivist* Editor, and Publications Editor) are required to submit an 800- to 1,000-word Diversity Statement as part of their application materials. The Diversity Statements of the candidates for these positions are available to those involved in the hiring or appointment decisions, subject to confidentiality and privacy considerations. The Executive Director may require diversity statements for applicants to other staff positions, as appropriate.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the proposed Diversity Statement Guidelines be approved.

Support Statement: Requiring a diversity statement as part of the application process for elected positions and certain appointed positions (Executive Director, *American Archivist* Editor, and Publications Editor) helps SAA, its leaders, and its members to elect or appoint candidates who are best positioned to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion in SAA, the profession, and beyond. It also encourages candidates and applicants to articulate the diversity they bring to their respective positions.

Strategic Priorities: The Guidelines support all aspects of SAA's Strategic Plan related to ensuring diversity, equity, and inclusion within and beyond the organization.

Fiscal Impact: None.