

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
February 5-6, 2024  
Virtual Meeting/Chicago IL**

**Intellectual Property Working: Membership to Access to  
Knowledge Coalition (A2K)  
(Prepared by: IPWG)**

The Intellectual Property Working Group request that SAA formally apply for membership in the [Access to Knowledge Coalition](https://www.a2k-coalition.org/about/) (A2K) (<https://www.a2k-coalition.org/about/>). Joining A2K will strengthen SAA's ongoing advocacy for international action on making the copyright system more inclusive and supportive of archives and their users. A2K is an international civil society organization with broad interests in making intellectual property policy responsive to knowledge users, creators, educators, and cultural heritage professionals. There is no cost for SAA to join.

A2K membership brings major benefits including participation in development of A2K's advocacy positions and being able, when we choose, to join our voice with those of its network of civil society organizations to advocate for archival issues. Membership also will enable SAA to be associated with in-depth policy papers relevant to archives but on which we may lack the technical or legal expertise, e.g., A2K's detailed June 2023 analysis of the technical problems in the SCCR Chair's Second Revised Draft Text of for the WIPO Broadcasting Organizations Treaty (pages 2-7 of: [https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/copyright/en/scrr\\_44/scrr\\_44\\_comments\\_ngos\\_to\\_scrr\\_43\\_3.pdf](https://www.wipo.int/edocs/mdocs/copyright/en/scrr_44/scrr_44_comments_ngos_to_scrr_43_3.pdf)).

Directly related to SAA's interest in copyright exceptions and limitations, A2K has been vocal on the need to have WIPO develop international instruments (e.g., treaties) to provide globally consistency exceptions for libraries, archives, museums, educational institutions, and persons with disabilities. In addition to the prospective broadcasters treaty, A2K regularly provides briefing documents on the major issues on WIPO SCCR meeting agendas. These are important for both general public awareness and for informing WIPO Member States of policy concerns before Geneva sessions convene. For example, see last October's Public Briefing Note SCCR44: <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/Position%20Statement%20A2K%20SCCR%2044.pdf>.

Although SAA was able to sign on to the October's statement, it was only because of a late-arriving personal note to SAA's WIPO representative and exceptional action by SAA executive and elective leadership. Because we were not a formal member of A2K, we were approached only after the statement's final text had been prepared. Thus, although the text was consistent with SAA positions and values, as a non-member we did not have an opportunity to influence it when it was only a draft. Furthermore, the tight deadline for a response created a challenge for SAA's leadership to seize the opportunity. As a formal member of A2K, we would have earlier access to drafts and the time necessary for IPWG and SAA senior leadership to deliberate.

Attached is the A2K document containing a formal letter of invitation, mission statement, and principles of collaboration. These reflect a flexible framework that would allow SAA to have its name attached to positions which it has reviewed and agreed with, and to not be associated with any positions to which it has not agreed (see “Principles of Collaboration” items 3 and 5). Because applying organizations must be sponsored by an existing member, the ICA has agreed to sponsor SAA’s application and would be responsible for formal submission of the application. A blank copy of the application form is also attached.

## Appendix I

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to invite you to join a newly forming global Access to Knowledge Coalition. The Coalition is composed of organizations representing those who “learn, teach, research, create, preserve or seek to enjoy the world’s cultural heritage, and participate in cultural life more generally,” as described in the Mission Statement included below. The Coalition will be engaged in the work of the Standing Committee on Copyright and Related Rights at the World Intellectual Property Organization and potentially other multilateral forums where copyright limitations and exceptions are being discussed.

The A2K Coalition is being supported in part by the [Project on the Right to Research in](#)

[International Copyright](#) coordinated by the Program on Information Justice and Intellectual Property at American University, by Education International, the largest federation of teacher unions in the world, and by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, the leading international body representing the interests of people who rely on libraries and information professionals. We are creating regional chapters in North America, Latin America, Africa, Europe and Asia to begin.

As noted in the Principles of Collaboration below, all statements of the A2K Coalition will be drafted through an open process and open for individual organizational endorsements. The coalition will make statements on behalf of *only* those who join each statement. In other words, your joining the coalition does not require endorsement of any particular policy or position of the Coalition, past or future. Rather, membership will ensure that you are informed of and engaged in the process of drafting policies and positions and that you have the opportunity (but not requirement) to join them.

Please find enclosed the DRAFT A2K Coalition’s Mission Statement and Principles for Collaboration. To apply to join the Coalition, you must have sponsorship of at least one existing member. For the existing member list, see <https://www.a2k-coalition.org/about/>

To apply to join the Coalition, fill out the application at: <https://form.jotform.com/pijip/JoinA2K>. We will consider applications at each quarterly meeting.

Access to Knowledge Coalition

## Mission and Goals

Access to knowledge is not enjoyed equally across the world. Crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and the climate emergency, highlight the barriers that the current copyright system poses for those who learn, teach, research, create, preserve or seek to enjoy the world's cultural heritage, and participate in cultural life more generally.

The international copyright system has failed to keep pace with advancing technology and practices, including digital and cross-border activities. Consequently, we have been unable to seize the possibilities that exist to promote access to, and use of, knowledge to fulfil human rights and achieve more equitable, inclusive and sustainable societies.

The members of this coalition represent educators, researchers, students, libraries, archives, museums, other knowledge users and creative communities around the globe. Our individual missions are varied but we all share a vision of a fair and balanced copyright system that is underpinned by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights .

To achieve our shared vision, we specifically seek to

- advocate for education and research rights within the international copyright system;
- support the interests of libraries, archives and museums on whose work access to knowledge depends;
- expand and support a network of local, regional, and global organizations building support for access to, and use of, knowledge;
- promote international legal reform to mandate fair and balanced copyright policies that promote access to, and use of, knowledge for everyone;
- shape capacity building efforts by intergovernmental organizations to ensure that they contribute to a fairer copyright system and thereby improve access to, and use of, knowledge.

## Principles of Collaboration

1. Members commit to support the shared goals of the Coalition.
2. Members commit to collaborate constructively.

3. Members are free to have their own priorities, policy goals and strategies.
4. Members commit to share information about relevant advocacy efforts with all other members of the Coalition in a timely manner.
5. Proposed statements will be circulated to all members for endorsement; statements may be made on behalf of the entire Coalition only if every member has signed or agreed to the statement.

*Membership:* Any organization supporting the goals of the Coalition is eligible for membership in the Coalition. Additional members may be added at any general meeting by recommendation of any member, added to the agenda within the notice period defined below, if no opposition is raised by the end of the meeting.

*General meetings:* General meetings will occur at least once every two months.

*Notice:* A call for action items for General Meetings will be circulated at least 7 days prior to any General Meeting. The draft agenda for the General Meeting shall be circulated at least 3 days before the meeting containing any action items, including recommendations for new members. Any action item not on the agenda 3 days before the meeting must be communicated to the full membership as soon as possible before the meeting and may be added without objection. Reporting items (i.e. items not requiring action) should be added to the agenda at least 24 hours before the meeting.

*Documents:* As a general rule, any documents for Coalition sign-on shall be prepared in an inclusive way and be open for signature for at least seven days after finalization.

*Coordinator(s):* The volunteer Coordinator(s) have the responsibility of chairing meetings, preparing the agenda and shall meet the notice obligations of the larger group. The notes from meetings and briefings are shared among the larger membership. She/ he/they may delegate the responsibility to another member of the larger membership when needed.

These principles will be reviewed within six months of their agreement by members of the Coalition.

# Application to Join A2K Coalition

Please use this form to request to join the Access to Knowledge Coalition, including to list the current member recommending your admission. Membership is open to organizations who work on international copyright limitations and exceptions as a primary focus of their work and have an interest in engaging in multilateral policy on these issues. See Mission Statement and Principles for Collaboration.

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/13Xe1nRnmncGVIZZPyY42D8ox9hSrJVZohRcS9tRbaWM/edit?usp=sharing>

**Organization \***

**Full Name \***

**Organization Website \***

**E-mail \***

**Phone Number (to join chat forum and accept texts)**  -   
Area Code Phone Number

**Primary Country of Organization \***

**Other Countries of Organization**

- Regional teams (List all you would like to join)**
- North America (US + Canada)
  - Latin America (including Mexico)
  - Africa
  - Asia
  - EU
  - International
  - Other

Please describe the activities and purposes of your organization in relation to furtherance of the mission of the A2K Coalition \*

Website of organization \*

## Nominating member of the existing A2K Coalition

The Principles of Collaboration require that "Additional members may be added at any general meeting by recommendation of any member, added to the agenda within the notice period (7 days before the General Meeting), if no opposition is raised by the end of the meeting." Please identify the existing member of the Coalition who will nominate you for membership at the next A2K meeting. The member should be familiar with your work.

Name of Recommending Member (Point of contact) \*

<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
First Name	Last Name

Organization of recommending member \*

Email of recommending member \*

<input type="text"/>
example@example.com

OPTIONAL: Add any other information relevant to your application.

Type here...
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Submit