

# Society of American Archivists Statement on Diversity and Inclusion

## Proposed Revisions for Member Comment March 2020

Per the standard review cycle, the SAA Council has reviewed the SAA Statement on Diversity and Inclusion and proposes the following revisions, indicated below (underline=addition, strikethrough=deletion).

Please submit any comments or further revisions by adding a comment on the [news item webpage](#) or by emailing [saahq@archivists.org](mailto:saahq@archivists.org) no later than Thursday, March 12.

### Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

The Society of American Archivists centers its values on diversity, equity, and is committed to building a culture of inclusion.

As a professional association that benefits from the participation of people from all backgrounds, the Society of American Archivists strives to ensure that its membership, the ~~holdings~~ historical record that archivists acquire and ~~manage~~ steward, and the ~~users whom~~ communities archivists serve reflect ~~the evolving diversity of society~~ these values. To guide and clarify our work in this area, the ~~SAA Council~~ Society developed ~~this SAA~~ adheres to the following *Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion*.

~~SAA~~ We understands *diversity* to encompass:

- Socio-cultural factors. ~~These factors related~~ to individual and community identity, and include including the attributes mentioned in [SAA's Equal Opportunity/Nondiscrimination Policy](#).
- Professional and geographic factors. ~~Concern about these factors reflects~~ reflecting the Society's desire for broad participation from archivists working in various locations, repository types and sizes, and professional specializations.

We recognize *equity* as:

- Equal access to educational and leadership opportunities for individuals who are of color, who identify as LGBTQ+, and/or who have disabilities; and
- Equitable pay, benefits, and labor practices for all archival professionals.

~~SAA identifies inclusion as our commitment to ongoing and cumulative efforts (e.g., policies, principles, practices, and activities) that engage an increasingly diverse community in a welcoming, equitable, and responsive manner.~~

We identify *inclusion* as:

- ~~Commitment to ongoing and cumulative efforts (e.g. policies, principles, practices, and activities, and infrastructure) that engage and increasingly diverse community in a welcoming, equitable, and responsive manner; and~~
- Taking steps to ensure that members of our organization who have been marginalized feel seen and are cared for.

~~SAA's initiatives are focused primarily on achieving socio-cultural diversity and fostering inclusion within SAA, the profession, and archival collections and users.~~

~~By embracing diversity and encouraging inclusion, the Society speaks more effectively on behalf of the entire profession, serves a fuller range of stakeholders, increases organizational credibility, and becomes a stronger advocate for the archives profession.~~

### ***Provenance:***

The Society of American Archivists has long promoted policies of nondiscrimination, identified diversity as a value for the association and the profession and strived to foster a just and inclusive professional culture that reflects and embraces the diversity of the larger society. In 1992 SAA adopted an [Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy](#). SAA recognizes that simply pledging nondiscrimination is insufficient, and that we must make positive efforts to ~~develop~~ center diversity among our membership, our members' holdings, and our members' user communities in order to enrich the historical record and achieve professional excellence. In 2006 the SAA Council adopted "Strategic Priorities" that included the following issue statement as the basis for its strategic priority related to diversity: The relevance of archives to society and the completeness of the documentary record hinge on the profession's success in ensuring that its members, the holdings that they collect and manage, and the users that they serve reflect the diversity of society as a whole.

~~To guide and clarify our work in this area, the Council developed the "SAA Statement on Diversity" in 2010.~~ Diversity is one of the eleven Core Values of Archivists (adopted in 2011), and several SAA committees, task forces, component groups, and initiatives have focused on issues relating to diversity and inclusion. In 2010, the Council developed the "SAA Statement on Diversity." In drafting the 2014-2018 Strategic Plan, the SAA Council revised SAA's mission to include promotion of the "diversity of archives and archivists" as a core principle to guide all of the Strategic Plan's goals and activities. The Council also included "Ensuring the diversity of its membership and leaders, the profession, and the archival record" as a core organizational value, which was maintained in the 2018-2020 Strategic Plan. The 2020-2022 Strategic Plan specifically cites our "Welcoming Environment" or "WE" initiative "a reminder to all of us that SAA intends to provide an open, inclusive, and collaborative environment in which all members have the opportunity to participate fully.

For a review of SAA's many early actions, see Elizabeth Adkins's 2007 Presidential Address, "[Our Journey Toward Diversity—And a Call to \[More\] Action](#)," and see [SAA's Diversity and Inclusion resources page](#) with relevant past and current initiatives and efforts.

***Implementation and Governance:***

SAA promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion in all of its professional activities with an eye to ensuring effective representation of our members and staff, addressing the concerns of the full range of stakeholders represented within our members' holdings, and reaching out to archivists' many communities of users.

*Adopted by the SAA Council on August 9, 2010; reviewed and reaffirmed in January 2013; reviewed and revised in August 2016, reviewed and revised in [May 2020]. The Council agreed to review every three years this document, SAA's Equal Opportunity/Non-Discrimination Policy (January 2013), and SAA's Code of Conduct (July 2014).*