

**Society of American Archivists Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
April 20, 2021
Virtual Meeting**

**Consent Agenda: Ratify Board Interim Actions
(Prepared by Governance Manager Felicia Owens)**

BACKGROUND

Current parliamentary policy agrees on validating board decisions made remotely, and ratifying the Foundation Board's online and conference-call decisions via the Consent Agenda does not conflict with any existing Foundation policy.

DISCUSSION

Given the Board's use of an e-mail discussion list to function as a group and make decisions remotely, approving interim Board actions via the Consent Agenda contributes to streamlining the group's work and improves access to the interim decisions of the Foundation's governing body.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the following interim actions taken by the Foundation Board between December 14, 2020, and April 9, 2021, be ratified:

- Approved the [minutes](#) of the November 11, 2020, Board meeting. (December 14, 2020)
- Approved changing the name of the SAA Foundation "Travel Award" to the "Annual Meeting Award," to allow greater flexibility in light of future virtual and hybrid meetings. (Appendix A) (April 5, 2021)
- Agreed to contract with Schultz & Williams to provide development consulting services for a three- to four-month period needed to fulfill proposal requirements. (Appendix B) (April 9, 2021)

**Society of American Archivists Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
Interim Action
March 30, 2021**

**Rename Foundation Travel Award, Revise Review
Committee Description and Applicant Guidelines
(Prepared by Executive Director Nancy Beaumont)**

BACKGROUND

At its November 2017 meeting the SAA Foundation Board approved a one-year trial for a Foundation-funded travel scholarship to the 2018 Joint Annual Meeting in Washington, DC, and charged a small task group to recommend a structure and process for awarding the travel scholarships. Based on the group's report, in February 2018 the Board authorized expenditure of up to \$10,000 from unrestricted (Strategic Growth) funds for ten \$1,000 need-based travel awards to SAA members for travel to and registration for the 2018 Joint Annual Meeting, as well as appointment of a review committee to manage the application process and select the recipients. Seventy individuals applied. View the 2018 award announcement [here](#).

The Travel Award was offered again to support travel and registration for the 2019 Annual Meeting in Austin, Texas. Forty individuals applied and ten \$1,000 awards were made. View the 2019 award announcement [here](#).

Based on two successful cycles, the Board approved in August 2019 an FY 2020 budget that included \$12,000 in funding for travel awards to the 2020 Joint Annual Meeting and agreed that a formal review committee should be established. In June 2020, it approved the committee description as well as an application process and guidelines. With announcement that the 2020 Annual Meeting would be fully virtual, the officers determined that 1) \$6,000 would be allocated to subsidize 122 Annual Meeting registrations at the \$49 special rate (the remaining \$6,000 in the budget was reallocated to the Archival Workers Emergency Fund) and 2) given the unique demands on the Travel Award review process imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Review Committee would simply approve the first 122 applications from SAA members. In addition, the requirements for "a meeting evaluation form demonstrating attendance at sessions" and "a 400- to 600-word report assessing the value received from the travel award..." would be waived. View the 2020 award announcement [here](#).

DISCUSSION

In March 2021, former Foundation Board member Waverly Lowell proposed that the name of the Foundation “Travel Award” be changed to “Annual Meeting Award” to allow for flexibility as SAA may offer fully virtual conferences or hybrid (in-person plus virtual) events in the future. The proposed name change acknowledges that funds may be used for travel and/or registration, depending on the conference format and logistics.

Should SAA offer a hybrid event in the future, the Board will have to determine what proportion of awards will receive travel support and what proportion will be for registration only.

Lowell’s recommendations appear below.

RECOMMENDATION 1

THAT the name of the Foundation’s Travel Award be changed to the SAA Foundation Annual Meeting Award.

RECOMMENDATION 2

THAT the following revised description of the Annual Meeting Award Review Committee be approved (*strikethrough = deletion; underline = addition*):

SAA Foundation Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Committee

I. Purpose

The Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Committee is responsible for receiving and evaluating Annual Meeting ~~travel~~ Award applications according to the SAA Foundation ~~Travel~~ Annual Meeting Award Application Guidelines, and for selecting the award recipients.

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Term

The Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Committee is an appointed body of the SAA Foundation Board. The Committee consists of three Class B members and one member of the SAA Council. The SAA Council member may be one of the Foundation Board Class A members. If no Class A member volunteers to serve on the Committee, the SAA President shall appoint one Committee member from among the other Council members. Appointments are made at the Board’s annual meeting; appointments are for one-year terms beginning at the close of the annual meeting. The Executive Director serves *ex officio* on the committee.

III. Reporting Procedures

The Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Committee reports to each full meeting of the Foundation Board of Directors and at other times as requested by the Board. For travel/registration award reviews, the Committee will consider applications (due May 1), conduct its review, and report its selections to SAA staff and the

Board by June 1. The committee is responsible for preparing a brief post-review report that includes recommendations for improving the application and review process as well as other useful observations that will assist the next ~~Travel~~ Annual Meeting Award Committee.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities

Solicit from the Foundation Board the annual ~~travel~~ Annual Meeting Award funding allocation. Work individually and collectively to analyze and evaluate award applications, considering (but not limited by) the applicant's statement of need and statement of how attendance at the Annual Meeting will contribute to the member's professional development and career goals. Applicants at every career level should be given equal consideration.

- Meet in real time at least once (via phone or in person) to review and reconcile all evaluation results.
- Achieve consensus on recipients of the award no later than May 31. (All committee members are required to vote, unless they have an acknowledged conflict of interest.)
- Monitor the submission of impact statements and follow-up reports from Annual Meeting Award ~~travel~~ award recipients.
- Comply with the Foundation's conflict-of-interest policy when performing ~~travel~~ award review work.
- Annually review and recommend revisions to the ~~travel~~ award application guidelines and submission form, as needed.

V. Meetings

The Committee meets via conference call periodically and may meet in person provided that 1) there is a compelling need and 2) the Board approves the necessary resources.

Adopted by the SAA Foundation Board of Directors, November 2019. Revised March 2021.

RECOMMENDATION 3

THAT the following revisions in the Annual Meeting Award Application Guidelines be approved.

SAA Foundation Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Application Guidelines

Policy

Each year the SAA Foundation may make available funds (from its income from interest and dividends from, investment gains from, and contributions to its unrestricted funds) for travel and/or registration awards to the SAA Annual Meeting. When given, funds will be awarded through a competitive application process based on demonstrated need.

The SAA Foundation Board of Directors will determine annually the number of awards to be distributed and the amount to be distributed per award. The funds available will be determined based on the payout rate and other program funding needs. The annual payout rate will be stated clearly for the benefit of Board members and donors.

Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Application Deadlines

Applications are due by May 1 unless another time is established by the Foundation Board. Final decisions are made and applicants are notified by June 1 or three weeks in advance of the early-bird registration deadline.

Funding Priorities

Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Awards may be applied only to conference registration fees and related expenses (such as travel, lodging, and food) incurred to attend the Annual Meeting. The primary criterion for selection will be financial need, including lack of institutional support, part-time employment, unemployment, education debt burden, health or health care expenses, caregiving responsibilities, or any other financial responsibilities that may affect one's ability to participate in the Annual Meeting. Applicants must complete an online form and attach a résumé or curriculum vitae.

Eligibility

Only current SAA members are eligible for this award.

Applying for an SAA Foundation Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award

The Board and its committee will endeavor to follow a transparent, fair, and simple process of application and evaluation. No current SAA Foundation Board member may be the direct or indirect recipient of Foundation ~~travel~~ award funds. No Board member will participate in consideration of an award application in which the member has, or could be perceived as having, a personal interest, benefit, or relationship that could create a conflict of interest.

Award Application

Award determinations will be made by a selection committee comprising three SAA Foundation Board members and one SAA Council member and will be based on applicants' responses to the following:

- How will attendance at the SAA Annual Meeting contribute to your professional development and career goals?
- Provide an explanation of your financial need.

Decisions

All Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award applications will be received and processed by the SAA Foundation's Executive Director. The Executive Director will conduct an initial administrative review of each application to determine whether the applicant is an SAA member in good standing.

The Executive Director will forward the applications to the Annual Meeting ~~Travel~~ Award Committee. The ~~Travel Award~~ Award Committee will evaluate the applications and determine the award recipients. The Executive Director will notify applicants of the committee's decision by June 1 or three weeks before the early-bird registration deadline.

Post-Project Reporting

Awardees are required to attend the entire conference from the opening plenary through the final session block. Within 30 days of the end of the Annual Meeting, awardees must submit:

- A meeting evaluation form demonstrating attendance at sessions and all-attendee events.

- [Travel expense form](#) and receipts (as applicable) totaling up to the amount of the award. If expenses total less than the award amount, the awardee must remit the balance with the receipts.
- A 400- to 600-word report assessing the value received from the ~~travel~~ award and noting any suggestions for improving the ~~travel~~ award process.

Adopted by the SAA Foundation Board of Directors, November 2019. Revised March 2021.

Support Statement for Recommendations 1-3: The Foundation supported 20 SAA members via travel awards to attend the 2018 and 2019 Annual Meetings. For the 2020 Annual Meeting, the Board adapted to the virtual conference by providing support for 122 member registrations at the deeply discounted \$49 rate. The proposed modifications ensure that the award remains flexible based on SAA's decisions about Annual Meeting format (e.g., in person, virtual, hybrid).

Fiscal Impact: The proposed revisions have no fiscal impact. Allocation of funds to support this program will be determined annually by the SAA Foundation Board.

**Society of American Archivists Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
Interim Action
March 31, 2021**

**Recommendation to Hire a Development Consultant
(Prepared by Foundation President Margery Sly)**

BACKGROUND

At its November 11, 2020, virtual meeting, the SAAF Board of Directors approved, with minor revisions, a request for proposals (RFP) to be issued to prospective development consultants. The RFP specified the following components of a consulting engagement:

1. Conduct an audit of current SAA Foundation development efforts, including a review of previous fundraising approaches and results. (No more than 20% of total effort.)
2. Explore the extent to which archivists and archival organizations are likely to give to the SAA Foundation, taking into account the needs and perspectives of multiple generations of archivists. (Approximately 30% of total effort.)
3. Propose short- and mid-term plans to increase and enhance the Foundation's development efforts, including via periodic generation-specific appeals, a planned giving program, a monthly giving program, and solicitation of funding from external agencies/organizations. (Approximately 50% of total effort.)
4. Recommend an appropriate staffing plan.

After gathering the names of consulting firms from Board members, the Association of Fundraising Professionals, and other sources, the SAA Foundation office issued the RFP to 11 development consultants on December 2, 2020, with a response deadline of December 31. One firm that was added to the list on December 21 (based on a referral from another firm) was given a deadline of January 8, 2021. Seven consulting firms responded to the RFP.

The Development Consultant Review Team, consisting of Sharmila Bhatia, Michele Hagen, Dennis Meissner, and me, with staff support from Nancy Beaumont, used a SmarterSelect form to evaluate the consultants. The team met via Zoom on February 16 to discuss our proposal rankings and agreed to interview three finalists during the week of March 1. The team agreed unanimously that the strongest proposal and interview, by far, were those of Schultz & Williams, a Philadelphia-based, women-founded firm. During the week of March 15, Hagen spoke with four references, all of whom were enthusiastic about their experiences with Schultz & Williams.

DISCUSSION

Proposal Review and Interview

The proposed Schultz & Williams (S&W) team of four development professionals brings a range of diverse and relevant knowledge and experiences to the project. The firm also has a “deep bench” of additional staff members with skill sets that they can draw on to support SAAF’s needs. It has extensive experience with local, regional, and national cultural organizations and with membership organizations and their associated foundations.

S&W provided a granular (and believable) presentation of the audit phase, comprising materials review, conversations with Board members, stakeholder interviews, and SWOT analysis. In addition, they:

- Provided a thoughtful and comprehensive analysis of past, current, and potential donors, with emphasis on growing and deepening individual and corporate donor pools as well as seeking other funding sources.
- Displayed a sound grasp of the utility of DonorSearch data and offered the option of using that system (for an additional fee) to evaluate existing donors.
- Offered a thorough and comprehensive approach to short- and mid-term strategies and tactics. They emphasized during the interview their intention to focus on "realistic" future staffing for SAAF, as well as reviewing volunteer leadership capacity—one of the many responses that is unique to their approach. They also have the capacity to provide additional consulting and staffing services as may be needed in the future.
- Were appropriately responsive to questions about data confidentiality and described the infrastructure in place to ensure security.

Because ensuring diversity, equity, inclusion, accessibility, and cultural competency is a major priority for SAA and the Foundation, we probed each of the consulting firms we interviewed to determine how they work toward DEIA both within their own organization and with their clients. The lead consultant on the S&W proposal serves as the chair of the organization’s DEI task force. She described the work they are doing to ensure sensitive and appropriate communications (via wording and images) in their work with clients and in all development messaging. From their proposal:

Commitment to Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Access (IDEA): S&W is and has been committed to supporting social and racial justice in all communities through our work with nonprofits across a wide range of sectors and sizes. S&W is actively renewing our commitment to IDEA through a firm-wide strategic planning process. Our goal is to be both a leader and learner in practicing these core values internally, with clients and within the nonprofit sector

Of the three finalists interviewed, one estimated a fee of \$31,100, one estimated a fee of \$6,400, and S&W estimated \$15,000 for the three-month project. (See the S&W proposal attached.)

Reference Checks

The information that S&W offered during the interview was confirmed during the four reference calls that Hagen conducted with Independent Education Consultants Association (IECA) Foundation, Land Trust Alliance, Shelburne Museum, and Burlington County (NJ) Historical Society.

Among the referees' comments—many of which were repeated across interviews—were that S&W has been providing interim staffing for some of these organizations. The firm reportedly displayed an understanding of membership organizations from the start (unusual based on referees' experiences with other consultants). S&W performed work identical to what SAAF would be asking them to do—including evaluating current fundraising and communication programs, current and potential prospect pools, organizational structure, and the case for support—which resulted in 1) the development of a plan of action to incrementally grow contributed revenue and 2) building a stronger culture of philanthropy within the board.

References noted that S&W displayed DEIA sensitivity; it is part of the S&W culture. Their work supports DEIA, and they have urged the organizations to improve their approach to diversity and inclusion in their marketing materials. S&W staff have been sensitive to organizations' work culture, timelines, etc., and “brought staff and board members along,” which has helped them grow capacity within their organizations. S&W staff are good communicators and provide continuous feedback. Equally important, when asked if they felt that S&W costs were reasonable, they said yes and also noted that they were “generous with their time.”

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the Foundation contract with Schultz & Williams to provide development consulting services for the three- to four-month period needed to fulfill the proposal requirements at a cost of \$15,000 (with possible addition of \$1,425 for DonorSearch services).

Support Statement: Following a thorough process to solicit and review proposals, interview prospective firms, and check references, Schultz & Williams is the best fit for the Foundation's current needs in creating a comprehensive approach to development.

Fiscal Impact: \$15,000 to fulfill the RFP requirements plus possible addition of \$1,425 for DonorSearch services. (Costs to be split across FY21 and FY22.)