

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 28 – 30, 2015
Chicago, Illinois**

**Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and
Museums (CALALM): Post-Meeting Report and
Annual Report**

(Prepared by SAA Lead Representative Donna McCrea)

The Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums (CALALM, aka “the Coalition”) is made up of a wide variety of museum, archives, library and related associations and organizations. A [roster of current members](#) is available on the [Coalition’s website](#). The Coalition held its third in-person convening in Washington, D.C., March 11-12, 2015. Nineteen Coalition members had representatives at the meeting, which I attended as SAA’s lead representative. SAA’s other two representatives are Danna Bell and Helen Wong Smith. This report is a summary of the March meeting and a brief description of Coalition activities from fall of 2014, when we were appointed to CALALM, to mid-April 2015.

BACKGROUND

“The purpose of the Coalition is to work in deliberate coordination across organizational boundaries to devise and strengthen sustainable continuing education and professional programs that will transform the archives, library, and museum workforces in ways that lead to measurable impact on our nation’s communities.”¹ The Coalition was established in 2013 and is currently supported by grants from the [Institute of Museum and Library Services](#) and the [Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation](#), with administration provided by [OCLC](#) and facilitation provided by [BERK](#) (a consulting firm).

Detailed background information about the Coalition and its activities to September 2014 is provided in SAA’s Council Interim Action 0914, which resulted in the appointment of three individuals to replace Kathleen Roe, who represented SAA on the Coalition until fall 2014. We three representatives were attached to the three work groups within the Coalition in existence at that time: Developing a Prototype (Danna Bell), Assessing the Field (Helen Wong Smith), and Governance (Donna McCrea). It is worth noting that SAA is the only association with more than one Coalition representative. Archives and archivists had initially been underrepresented within the Coalition; SAA has since been

¹ “Welcome.” Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums. Accessed April 8, 2015. <http://coalitiontoadvancedlearning.org/>.

joined by representatives from RAAC (Regional Archival Associations Consortium) and the Council of State Archivists.

DISCUSSION

The following is a brief overview of activities from September 2014 to March 2015. As lead representative I have tried to maintain regular communication with the other two representatives, with SAA leadership (Kathleen Roe and Dennis Meissner) and with SAA staff (Nancy Beaumont and Solveig De Sutter.)

The Coalition held an in-person convening for all members in October of 2014; no SAA representative was in attendance (this convening happened just a few weeks before the appointment of McCrea, Bell and Wong Smith to CALALM) but convening activities were followed by Roe. After the October convening, the three Coalition work groups held individual web conferences about every 4-6 weeks. About once per quarter there was a “virtual convening” web conference bringing together all of the work groups. Work group activities were coordinated by BERK.

The Prototype Work Group developed and presented a “proof of concept” two-part webinar about Project Management. SAA put announcements about this Project Management webinar in *In the Loop* and I posted notice to the Archives and Archivists Listserv. Over 800 people registered from across the three sectors. (28% of registrants indicated they were from archives, 50% libraries, 10% museums; the affiliation cited most frequently by registrants was SAA.) The development and delivery of this webinar was intended to determine if there would be cross-sector interest in the same continuing education / professional development (CE/PD) topic, to test a delivery method, etc. Lessons learned will likely be applied to future projects to be developed by Coalition members.

The Assessing the Field Work Group undertook data-gathering activities. One “Assessing” member, Educopia, incorporated other Assessing members, including SAA, into an Advisory Board in a grant proposal they submitted to IMLS on behalf of the Coalition called “Mapping the Landscape.” This grant (which was funded) “seeks to document training needs and potential cross-germination opportunities within and across LAM fields. A resulting methodological framework for collecting, accessing, and analyzing CE/PD demand data will also lay the groundwork for the ongoing evaluation of professionals’ needs both within and across these three sectors.”² [Note: Educopia previously received an IMLS grant for NEXUS II, a project focused on leadership training across the three sectors; SAA is represented on NEXUS II by Committee on Education Vice Chair Jennifer Pelose and Education Director Solveig De Sutter.]

The Governance Work Group developed a website, blog, and Twitter accounts and drafted communication procedures.

² Educopia. “Mapping the Landscapes: Abstract.” 2014.

Along with the BERK consultants, a handful of Coalition members drafted a Joint Strategy document intended to communicate to an external audience about what the Coalition does and why. The four components of the Joint Strategy were summarized at the March convening as: 1) Expand our desire and ability to collaborate, 2) advocate for ongoing investment in CE/PD, 3) increase visibility and awareness of current CE/PD offerings and emerging needs, and 4) leverage our capacity through collective action. BERK and OCLC continue to refine this document. At this point (April 2015) the external audience is considered to be broad, including other potential Coalition partners, potential resource allocators, and stakeholders within existing Coalition member organizations.

The March 2015 meeting was an occasion to meet colleagues from other associations and disciplines in person and to share interests both formally and informally. Some representatives who attended that meeting are members (like me). Some are member leaders, some are education directors within their associations, some are executive directors, and some are paid staff with other roles. Interest inventories and breakout sessions at the meeting resulted in what is shaping up to be a shift away from the three work groups described above to several project-specific groups.

Wong Smith will continue to represent SAA on work done for the Coalition’s “Mapping the Landscape” grant. Bell has joined what is being called the Community Building and Communication Group and I am a part of a group exploring the development of a “Foundations 101 Series” of webinars suitable for use across the three sectors. Coalition members have been “encouraged to submit collaborative out-of-cycle grant proposals for the Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Program”³ and on behalf of SAA I have indicated an interest in developing a “Train the Trainer” webinar; this topic may be folded in to the Foundations 101 series.

The Coalition’s funding currently runs through October 2015. Members are being encouraged to “incrementally and increasingly assume greater responsibility for administration and facilitation of project work.”⁴

³ Ibid.

⁴ Coalition to Advance Learning in Archives, Libraries and Museums. “Coalition Update and Workplan: The Path Ahead.” April 3, 2015.