

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
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Chicago, Illinois**

**Proposed Changes to the SAA Archival Consultants Directory  
(Prepared by Independent Archivists Section Co-Chairs  
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**BACKGROUND**

The members of the Independent Archivists Section have expressed to their steering committee a desire to improve their representation in SAA's Directory of Archival Consultants (*found at <https://www2.archivists.org/consultants>*). Many have expressed concerns to the IA leadership about the cost. In response to this the IA Steering Committee and Chairs submit this proposal.

The directory currently lists only 16 out of the nearly 400 members of the IA Section. Furthermore, individuals searching for archival consultants have been regularly submitting requests for consultants through a variety of listservs as opposed to using the directory. Together these facts indicate that the current directory is not serving the needs of archival consultants nor those who wish to hire them.

The leadership of the IA Section believe that by offering a discounted rate for IA members, the number of listings in the directory would be dramatically increased and render the directory a viable tool for both consultants and those who may be interested in their services. This could be accomplished with minimal investment in time and effort while increasing the revenue generated by the directory.

**DISCUSSION**

As the leadership of the Independent Archivist Section, we would like to propose that IA members receive a free listing in the directory for one year, with a subsequent annual listing at a reduced rate of 50% (\$99) and an option to continue at that rate for subsequent years. This change would be in harmony with SAA's stated commitments to provide excellent member service and advance the public standing of archivists. It will also show future leadership that the Directory is a worthwhile tool to continue supporting.

We understand that the Consultants Directory is a revenue stream for SAA and the IA Section does not wish to work counter to the Council's strategic financial goals.

As part of a continued partnership between the IA Section and SAA Council, we would like to create a subcommittee to work to improve and manage the Directory in the coming year. This group would be tasked with presenting recommendations and working with the database managers at SAA to implement changes as well as soliciting new listees and promoting the directory in general.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT members of the Independent Archivists Section receive a free listing in the directory for one year, with a subsequent annual listing at a reduced rate of 50% (\$99) and an option to continue at that rate for subsequent years.**

**Support Statement:** The current Directory of Archival Consultants lacks a large enough population to properly serve its intended function. The 16 listings currently represent roughly 5% of the IA Section membership. A recent IA Section census indicated that 79.73% of respondents are “concerned” to “very concerned” with marketing and outreach; furthermore, other discussions have indicated a desire to be listed in the Directory. By offering the incentives of a one-year free listing and a reduced rate, SAA would see an increase in listings on the Directory and thus an increase in the value for both users and consultants.

**Impact on Strategic Priorities:** The proposed changes to the Directory of Archival Consultants would further several of SAA’s strategic priorities. The increased usability of a well-populated directory would further the public standing of archivists by providing a viable resource for members of the public interested in acquiring archival services. 42% of archival consultants have worked with privately held collections; the proposed changes would increase access to these collections and thus increase the diversity of the archival record and fulfill another strategic priority of SAA. Finally, a willingness to address the needs of the membership of a new section will provide an open, inclusive, and collaborative environment.

**Fiscal Impact:** While there will be a small financial impact in the form of less money per person. This will be offset by a larger number of people willing to list than prior to the implementation of this recommendation.

The initial fiscal impact of this proposal may see a decrease in revenue due to the proposed incentive of a free listing for one year. Following the proposed one-year free listing, we believe that the revenue generated by the Directory will increase due to a massive increase in consultants listed. A recent IA Section census indicated that 79.73% of respondents are “concerned” to “very concerned” about marketing and outreach, while additional discussions have indicated a desire to be listed in the Directory. The number of consultants “very concerned” about marketing and outreach alone would be more than enough to maintain the current revenue generated by the Directory if they were to be listed at the reduced rate.