Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 7–9, 2018
Chicago, Illinois

Principles and Priorities for Continuously Improving the SAA Annual Meeting
(Prepared by SAA President Tanya Zanish-Belcher)

BACKGROUND

In mid-March 2018 the Council had an online discussion of adding to the current Principles and Priorities for Continuously Improving the SAA Annual Meeting language that would explicitly encourage diversity and inclusion on session panels. One member noted: "It's too late for the 2018 program and that selection process, but I hope that we can have conversations in the next Council meeting about articulating some expectations for proposals for 2019 which are in the vein of CLIRDLF (just released its call for papers with a no "MANEL" statement) and other organizations who have indicated that all male panels will not be accepted. I'd go so far as to state that we would expect no all white panels either. It would be a way of backing up our diversity and inclusion statement and a push for folks to work harder at putting together inclusive panels."

I posted a Google document to which I invited Council member comment about how the Principles and Priorities might be updated and revised. One Council member provided suggested changes, which are included in the draft revision below. Another Council member asked if/how we would collect demographic information to ensure that requirements are being met.

DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION
[Underline = addition, strikethrough = deletion.]

[DRAFT REVISION]

Principles and Priorities for Continuously Improving the SAA Annual Meeting
(Approved by the SAA Council, August 12, 2013)

This document presents a summary of the Council's principles and priorities for ensuring the continued development of the Annual Meeting, based on the excellent work of the 2011-2013 Annual Meeting Task Force. Since adoption, the Council receives a report at each meeting on the extent to which these Principles and Priorities are put into play for the Annual Meeting. [See

the agenda for each Council meeting, typically under "Staff Reports," beginning in August 2013: http://www2.archivists.org/groups/saa-council.]

Guiding Principles

- We will make every meeting as useful, affordable, accessible, and enjoyable as possible for all attendees.
- We will explore new locations, structure, and content for the Annual Meeting on an ongoing basis.
- We will embrace a culture of experimentation and will be willing to take calculated risks with respect to the Annual Meeting. No aspect of the meeting will be off limits based on "tradition."
- We will encourage diversity among the people attending the meeting, contributing to its content, and benefiting from its results.
- We will actively pursue ways of making meeting content available online.
- We will integrate a commitment to social responsibility and sustainability into all aspects of meeting planning and execution.
- We will continuously seek feedback from both attendees and non-attendees on all aspects of the meeting.

Priorities for Site Selection and Contract Requirements

- We will experiment with meeting in cities of varying sizes using a combination of a convention center and room blocks in several hotels at varying price points.
- We will reevaluate site selection criteria based on member input.
- We will facilitate inexpensive alternative housing (such as dormitories) whenever feasible.
- We will stipulate in all Requests for Proposals (RFPs) that free wireless access in meeting spaces is a key component of our needs.
- We will stipulate in all RFPs the importance of fair labor practices, sustainable ("green") practices, and donation of excess food and beverage to worthy causes.
- Staff will actively monitor and report to the Council information about labor contracts and potential labor actions affecting the hotel sector.

Priorities for Delivery of Meeting Content

- We will deploy a mobile conference app for access to program information via smart phones and tablets.
- We will ensure that each year's conference website includes effective functionality and navigation.
- We will seek to provide free and easy access to session content from past conferences.
- We will investigate and incrementally implement online access to meeting content by various means as technology and resources permit.
- We will implement sustainable practices in our production of conference materials.

Priorities for New Approaches to Meeting Content and Structure

- We will experiment with new approaches to plenary sessions.
- We will identify and implement new approaches to structured and unstructured networking.
- We will experiment with new formats and content for education sessions.
- The Program Committee charge will be revised to encourage innovation.
- We will actively publicize to members all efforts to consider, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness of new approaches.
- We will assess and review our meeting content and structure in order to constantly improve.
- We expect panels to be diverse and inclusive. This includes bringing balance to the panels, such as *individual* diversity (gender, race, age, length of time in profession, ability), *institutional* diversity (academic, government, corporate/business, non-profit, large, small), and *geographic* diversity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Does the Council wish to make the proposed changes in this document?

2. Are there other changes that should be made?