

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 18-20, 2022
Chicago, Illinois**

Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment: Revise Description
(Prepared by Erin Passehl Stoddart and Jennifer King, CODA co-chairs)

BACKGROUND

The Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment (CODA) requests that its original charge be revised to 1) reflect a request from the SAA Research Forum to transition the SAA Research Forum under the CODA umbrella; 2) that the charge is expanded to include dissemination and education responsibilities related to A*CENSUS II; and 3) add a provision to allow the outgoing co-chair the opportunity to serve as an ex officio member of the committee for up to one year after rotating off the committee.

CODA co-chairs were approached in winter/spring 2022 by Nance McGovern, founder and co-chair of the SAA Research Forum, to consider transitioning the SAA Research Forum officially under the CODA charge and umbrella. This idea builds from collaborations and conversations recently at the 2021 Annual Meeting around the convergence of research, data, and assessment in its many forms, groups, and initiatives across the profession, as well as in past communications and discussions. Nance McGovern has served as an ex-officio member of CODA since 2020, which has allowed CODA to gain a better understanding of the SAA Research Forum and has allowed for conversations and ideas on how to unite these efforts. Due to upcoming retirements and individuals wanting to rotate off the SAA Research Forum's organizing team, the SAA Research Forum is starting to plan for sustainability and continuity through succession planning. If the SAA Research Forum is officially placed under CODA's charge, planning may continue to allow for continuity of programming.

The revision to add a bullet point under Duties and Responsibilities is to acknowledge the additional scope of work taken on by CODA to help disseminate A*CENSUS II data, research, and education over the next few years. One CODA co-chair currently serves on the A*CENSUS II Working Group and the Dissemination Subcommittee and is in the planning stages for collaborative work across various SAA groups and entities including the *American Archivist*. Both the incorporation of the SAA Research Forum and work related to A*CENSUS II into CODA's charge will have a direct effect on CODA planning and strategy for the next few years due to increased responsibilities, including building appropriate capacity through rightsizing the membership.

DISCUSSION

The SAA Research Forum has built a successful program over the course of 16 years, with the original founder still at the lead. The SAA Research Forum does not currently go through the annual SAA appointments process. By placing the SAA Research Forum under CORDA's charge, it will bring new opportunities for SAA members to volunteer and contribute as part of the appointments process. By extending the outgoing co-chair as an ex officio member, CORDA will critically expand its capacity while learning the full responsibilities of the SAA Research Forum to inform committee appointment requests for the coming year.

From January through April 2022, CORDA co-chairs met with several stakeholders throughout the discovery process, including the SAA Research Forum co-chairs, the SAA Research Forum's organizing team, SAA staff Felicia Owens, SAA Council/CORDA liaison Jasmine Jones, and SAA Vice President Terry Baxter. Co-chairs received feedback from these stakeholders, and discussed questions around sustainability, capacity of the committee, and potential governance structures for CORDA for consideration. It was determined that the first step would be to revise the CORDA charge; second, to discuss governance options with the committee knowing the full charge; and third, to prepare a request for SAA Council to add additional members to CORDA based on governance decisions, in time for the 2022-2023 appointments process. This information was provided to CORDA members in April 2022, in conjunction with preparing materials for the SAA Council May agenda. CORDA members, in collaboration with the SAA Research Forum co-chairs and organizing team, will discuss potential governance and organization structures that will better the work of both groups, including analyzing needs for additional appointed members. This request for a revision to the CORDA charge is the first step towards formalizing the relationship with SAA Research Forum while maintaining progress on current and new initiatives that fall under the CORDA umbrella, ultimately creating a better-balanced experience for CORDA volunteers.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

THAT the Committee on Research, Data and Assessment (CORDA) formal charge be revised as follows (*strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition*):

Committee on Research, Data and Assessment

I. Purpose

The Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment provides access to significant and useful data and research about SAA, American archives, and their users that evidence the value of archives for society and help us improve our services to SAA members and to our consumers. The Committee will work to conduct or support relevant research and to create, gather, and preserve data by directing and engaging in several areas of activity:

- Providing SAA members with standardized tools for gathering and analyzing data;
- Providing a repository or portal for data and other research outputs;

- Providing training on gathering, analyzing, interpreting, and using data; and
- Providing up-to-date and reliable basic facts and figures about archives and archivists;
- Providing a space to discuss and share information about research initiatives with relevance for archives and records management through the SAA Research Forum.

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Term

The Committee shall consist of a minimum of nine appointed members (including two co-chairs) serving staggered three-year terms with the possibility of reappointment. The Vice President, on behalf of the Council and with the recommendation of the Committee, appoints new members and co-chairs. Because the Committee may benefit from members who possess specialized skills and abilities that may vary from time to time, a Request for Applicant-based process may be necessary to help surface the best candidates in any particular appointment cycle. Maximum Committee size is variable, depending on the number, nature, and complexity of the projects and activities in which the Committee is engaged at any particular time.

To better facilitate the Committee's diverse work, members may be distributed among multiple project- or activity-based subcommittees, each of which is headed by a subcommittee chair appointed by the Committee co-chairs to repeatable annual terms. The Committee co-chairs may recommend that the SAA Council form (and disband) subcommittees from time to time, based on current needs.

The vice chair of the Committee on Education will serve as an *ex officio* member of the committee. The outgoing co-chair may serve as an *ex officio* member of the committee for up to one year after rotating off the committee.

III. Reporting Procedures

The Committee co-chairs shall submit a report for each Council meeting, summarizing current activities and projects and progress toward stated objectives. As directed by the Council, the Committee co-chairs may submit a written report upon the conclusion of specific projects.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities

The Committee shall enjoy a great deal of latitude in developing and engaging in research projects and data accumulation. In so doing, the Committee must maintain frequent communication with the Council, which approves and advises on the Committee's strategic directions, tactics, resources, activities, and projects. This communication is facilitated by the Committee co-chairs, who must ensure that the Council is aware of emergent planning and directional changes.

The Committee maintains responsibility for achieving its purpose by:

- Looking strategically at the organization's information needs and sharing its strategies with the SAA Council and relevant component groups;

- Proactively commissioning or directly engaging in necessary and strategic research, including dissemination, preservation, promotion, and education of survey data and research (such as A*CENSUS II);
- Incorporate the SAA Research Forum under the CODA umbrella. Manage its transition through engagement with its leaders, maintaining continuity and ensuring its ongoing success.
- Gathering quantitative and qualitative information of strategic value for SAA in the areas of advocacy, public awareness, improved audience service, and community engagement;
- Evaluating such information and surfacing it to SAA members via dashboards, reports, and constructed data sets that members can use to better understand and act on their own environments and to perform better as archivists;
- Engaging academic and other communities within SAA to perform research by helping to set research agendas and by utilizing grants, fellowships, conferences, and other tools and levers;
- Providing a repository (or repositories) and analytical tools for sharing and evaluating useful data about archivists, repositories, audiences, and the environments in which archives function; and
- Building and maintaining, in collaboration with other SAA groups, a training site for archivists ~~in the area of~~ around research, data gathering, evaluation and assessment, and business intelligence.

V. Meetings

The Committee shall conduct its business largely through email and conference calls. The Committee shall meet formally each year at the SAA Annual Meeting. Any additional in-person meetings that may be necessary shall occur only with Council approval and funding.

Approved by the SAA Council, November 2018. Revised: May 2022.

Support Statement: These changes to the charge will allow for the SAA Research Forum to officially transfer under CODA and help ensure sustainability and succession planning and will acknowledge CODA's role and collaboration on the dissemination of data and research from A*CENSUS II. These changes will allow for CODA to plan for current and future work, including adding a one-year *ex officio* option for the outgoing co-chair, while justifying the need for additional members through a future process.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: These changes support Goal 3.2 (Foster and disseminate research in and about the field), specifically Goal 3.2.C (Seek effective means to elevate information presented at Research Forum). These changes also support the SAA DEIA Work Plan 1.3 (Conduct A*CENSUS on a regular schedule).

Fiscal Impact: None.