

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

**Establish Archival Repatriation Committee
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BACKGROUND

At the Council’s February 2022 meeting, the SAA Native American Archives Section (NAAS) asked the Council to take action that “(1) expresses support for archivists in both repatriating and receiving returned archival materials and (2) outlines specific actions SAA will take to support this work.”

DISCUSSION

NAAS recommended that the SAA Council create a “permanent cross-section SAA committee related to archival repatriation.”¹ The SAA Council believes that such a committee would bring expertise and knowledge to the work of repatriation that its members do not collectively have. It also believes that repatriation is an issue that requires long-range planning and action that a committee is organizationally situated to provide.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT an Archival Repatriation Committee be created and charged per the following description:

Archival Repatriation Committee

I. Purpose

The Repatriation Committee works to ensure that the organization's services, activities, policies, communications, and products support the goal of supporting archivists in repatriating and receiving archival materials. It coordinates with various SAA entities, external organizations, and

¹ <https://www2.archivists.org/sites/all/files/0222-IV-B-NAAS.pdf>

originating communities and monitors, evaluates, advocates for, and reports on matters relating to the repatriation of archival materials.

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Terms

The committee consists of six members, who are appointed by the SAA vice president/president-elect, and a committee chair. The immediate past chair of the Native American Archives Section serves as the committee chair. Other committee members serve staggered three-year terms. The vice president/president-elect shall appoint one committee member after consultation with the executive director of the Association of Tribal Archives, Libraries, and Museums.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

- Develops and disseminates guidance and training about archival repatriation.
- Serves as a point of contact for people with questions about archival repatriation.
- Work on cooperative repatriation projects with organizations with similar goals.
- Engages in reparative and reciprocal actions that lead to better community and institutional relationships.
- Make recommendations to SAA Council for necessary actions to meet these goals.

IV. Reporting Procedures

The Repatriation Committee reports to the Council and works closely with its Council liaison, the President, and the Executive Director to ensure that it is responsive to the Council's needs. The chair is responsible for submitting an annual report to the Council, and may also submit items for Council action or discussion and feedback as necessary. The chair also is responsible for ensuring that minutes of Repatriation Committee meetings are prepared and posted on the Repatriation Committee's SAA-hosted website to inform SAA members of its activities and comply with SAA's record-keeping requirements.

V. Meetings

The committee meets once per year at the Annual Meeting and may also meet mid-year when appropriate. In addition, the committee may conduct its business by e-mail, telephone, or virtual meeting during the course of the year.

Support Statement: The creation of this committee allows SAA to provide guidance and support to archivists involved in repatriating or receiving repatriated archives.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: The creation of this committee responds to Goal 3, Strategies 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 of the 2022-2025 Strategic Plan.

Fiscal Impact: The estimated staff time associated with this activity is 1 staff member @ 20 hours.