Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 16-17, 2023
Chicago, Illinois (Hybrid Meeting)

Standards Committee: Increasing Number of Members on the Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards (TS EAS)
(Prepared by Karin Bredenberg and Mark Custer, Co-Chairs)

SUMMARY

The Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards (TS-EAS) requests a revision of its original charge to include the following changes:

- Increasing the membership count from 20 to 25 to proactively respond to the increased interest in the international community and to accommodate reappointments to the committee.
- Excluding the TS-EAS co-chairs in the total membership count
- Updating the charge to reflect how TS-EAS is carrying out its work, with adjustments made to clarify responsibility within the committee regarding community outreach.

TS-EAS is a group of dedicated members, including both SAA and international appointments, who donate their time and volunteer efforts for the maintenance of encoded archival standards. We rely heavily on our organizations to provide funding for our participation, including funding for travel to face-to-face meetings. Furthermore, during the 2022 application period, we saw a considerable increase in international applications, particularly from community members in South America and Africa. In an effort to capitalize on this moment of increased interest from currently underrepresented groups within TS-EAS, we recommend increasing the number of individual members on the Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standard to allow for a minimum of five more members to be added. An increase and a diversification in TS-EAS membership will help SAA ensure that the maintenance and relevance of encoded archival standards can be sustained now and in the future.

DISCUSSION

There are several primary motivations for revising the charge.

First, the number of international applications submitted to the group has increased after the alignment of the process for international applications with the process for SAA members to apply to avoid having two different processes. During the last appointment period, we received 25 international applications, including three (3) applications for reappointments. Among these applications, there were many candidates with the necessary background and knowledge to fit into TS-EAS, but we only had a limited number of international seats available. The same pattern occurs with SAA members, where we receive applications from many members who would fit TS-EAS, but we have too few seats to add more members.

Second, being a member of TS-EAS involves participating in the maintenance of our standards, which means that members have areas of expertise as users, practitioners, and educators in the different standards that we maintain and in areas such as tag library maintenance and development of the transformations used for creating publishable versions. Our standards follow the revision cycle set up by the Standards Committee. When the revision to a new version begins, a period of approximately five years is used to create a new version. This means that reappointments are critical to ensure stability in the working groups during the revision process, along with the need for new members to ensure long-term sustainability in the group. To ensure membership engagement, members are asked every May during a TS-EAS meeting to inform the co-chairs if they need to step down or if they want to be reappointed in the case where their term is coming to an end.

Third, we also recognize that there are periods when members may need to be less engaged in the voluntary work they provide to TS-EAS due to organizational tasks they need to carry out. This means that we need to have a sufficient number of members to continue the committee's work since some members will, understandably, need to focus their full attention on other projects from time to time. At the present time, however, the co-chairs do not feel that we have enough members to keep up with both the maintenance and redesign of the encoded archival schemas.

Fourth, removing the co-chairs from the total membership count would allow two more members to be appointed, furthering the perspectives available to the committee and providing more help. The two co-chairs are responsible for all the co-chairs' tasks stated in the charge and act as the TS-EAS liaison between the teams. The co-chairs currently participate in the different

teams as team members and act as the TS-EAS liaison between the teams. Ideally, however, the co-chairs would not need to serve in all these roles. Therefore, increasing the total number of TS-EAS members would help alleviate the co-chairs' over-committed responsibility.

And last, the motivation for making changes to the charge regarding outreach and meetings is to ensure that the charge is up to date with how TS-EAS is carrying out its work. This recommendation is based on the group's findings of the best setup for how the committee conducts its work, which has developed organically over time, after the original charge was established.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT the following revisions to the Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards formal charge be revised as follows (strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition):

I. Purpose

The Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Standards (TS-EAS) is responsible for the ongoing maintenance of EAD and EAC-CPF, including all schemas and related code, as well as the development of future companion standards, such as the proposed Encoded Archival Context for Functions. Its membership will be sufficient to encompass the necessary domain expertise for each standard and schema development, and will include broad international representation including SAA members and other professionals from the international archival community. The members of the committee will foster the thoughtful evolution of archival encoding standards on behalf of and in consultation with the global archival community and in close collaboration with the International Council on Archives Experts Group on Archival Description.

II. Committee Selection, Size, and Length of Term

The technical subcommittee shall be composed of between fifteen and ~~twenty~~ twenty-five members (~~including~~ excluding two co-chairs) appointed by the SAA Vice President / President-Elect for staggered three-year terms so that a minimum of three individuals are appointed by the Vice President each year. The committee will reflect the international nature of the standards it develops, and will include balanced representation from its user communities. A majority of the committee members will be members of SAA unless sufficient expertise is not available within the SAA membership, in which case the composition of the committee may be adjusted at the discretion of the Council. All members shall demonstrate significant

knowledge of and experience with archival schemas generally, and with EAD and EAC-CPF specifically. The chairs and members of TS-EAS may be reappointed.

The Technical Subcommittee for Encoded Archival Standards co-chairs will be appointed by the SAA Vice President / President-Elect, and serve as the primary contact between TS-EAS, SAA, the Standards Committee, and other related organizations. At least one co-chair will be a member of SAA.

Ex officio members of TS-EAS shall include the following if they are not regular members of the subcommittee:

- Co-chairs of the Standards Committee;
- Chair or co-chairs of the EAS Section;
- Representative from International Council on Archives Experts Group on Archival Description, Committee on Best Practices and Standards, or other groups as appropriate.
- Representatives from institutions hosting technical documentation for standards maintained by TS-EAS (e.g., Library of Congress for EAD and the Staatsbibliotek zu Berlin for EAC-CPF).

III. Reporting Procedures

The co-chairs of TS-EAS shall report at least annually to the chairs of the SAA Standards Committee. They will coordinate meeting logistics at the SAA annual meeting and elsewhere, establish TS-EAS priorities and agendas, ~~coordinate dissemination of news from TS-EAS,~~ work with related SAA section ~~and roundtable~~ leaders, and oversee and support the work of various TS-EAS standard leads. If extramural funding is obtained by SAA, the co-chairs shall provide all necessary narrative reports to the SAA office in order that the reporting requirements of SAA and the funding source are met.

IV. Duties and Responsibilities

Within TS-EAS, a member will be designated by the co-chairs as the lead for each standard being maintained or developed. Each standard lead will be responsible, with the support of the co-chairs, for soliciting and compiling comments, logging bugs, leading discussion of proposed changes, articulating and justifying changes to the international community, and coordinating as necessary with other standard leads. There will also be a lead for schema design who will be responsible, with the support of the co-chairs, for coordinating work on schemas and related code and maintaining appropriate GitHub repositories. <u>A lead for outreach will coordinate dissemination of news from TS-EAS.</u> The TS-EAS co-chairs will also designate a committee member to serve as a secretary, responsible for taking and distributing meeting minutes.

Additional *ad hoc* subgroups within TS-EAS may be formed to address specific issues on a project basis (e.g., a tag library editorial team).

VI. Meetings

TS-EAS shall carry out its charge primarily via electronic mail and~~, ~~ on-line meetings ~~regular mail, and conference calls~~. To ensure the inclusion of all members, TS EAS ~~It~~ shall meet in a hybrid setting at the SAA annual meeting and as necessary with funding from SAA or from extramural sources (with prior approval by the SAA Council).

Approved by the SAA Council: November 2015 Revised May 2023

Support Statement: These changes will allow the Technical Subcommittee on Encoded Archival Standards to continue to plan for current and future work, while involving more of the user community who have previously not been represented in the development and maintenance of the encoded archival standards.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: These changes support Goal 2 (Mentor and support the career development of members to assist them in achieving their goals), specifically Goal 2.1.G (Diversify the profession by recruiting diverse archival workers, including those with diverse backgrounds/education, and recruiting diverse students into the profession following up on DEIA Work Plan - 1.5); Goal 3.1 (Identify the need for new standards, guidelines, and best practices and lead or participate in their development), specifically Goal 3.1.A (Identify need for new standards and prepare development work plan roadmap) and Goal 3.1.B (Implement standards development roadmap).

Fiscal Impact: None.