Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
May 1 – 2, 2024
Chicago, IL (Virtual)

Honoraria, Volunteer Compensation, and Rewards Hui
Action Item on Section Funding
(Prepared by: Michelle Ganz, Alison Clemens, Lydia Tang, Tomaro Taylor)

Executive Summary

Inspired by discussions on section health and sections' ability to produce programming and initiatives, Council initiated a Hui (an informal short-term task group) to explore options for honoraria, volunteer compensation, and rewards. The Hui focused on honoraria, volunteer compensation, and rewards brings this agenda item to Council to discuss next steps for section funding opportunities and honoraria specifically.

Hui members Michelle Ganz, Alison Clemens, Lydia Tang, Tomaro Taylor, and Rana Hutchinson Salzmann began meeting in January 2024; the group has met monthly going forward.

The Hui continues to gather information on honoraria and volunteering rewards. This includes gathering market data on honoraria amounts that peer and allied institutions provide for education speakers, panel discussions, and other roles. This group is also factoring in reports and recommendations prepared by the Membership Committee and Standards Committee for funding requests for supporting volunteers who are providing exceptional and sustained service for the Society.

We see the request contained in this agenda item to expand and clarify the section funding initiative and its use of honoraria as a first phase to these broader considerations.

Contextual Information

As quoted from the November 1, 3, 2022 Council Agenda item "Strategy for Funding Standards Development," "The expectation of volunteer labor in itself is built upon a professional environment that is no longer (or was ever) a reality." Many individuals who volunteer with professional service are doing so because they have institutional support and incentive, but not all archival workers enjoy such support, and financial professional development support across the board may be dwindling as archival repository budgets tighten.

As Hui members whose membership overlaps with the Section Health Assessment Working Group, we are aware of the expectation that sections will provide benefits to

SAA members. Sections are expected to provide programming for an Annual Meeting and are encouraged to also produce programming throughout the year. These expectations are currently unaccompanied by consistent, clear funding support.

There is currently a component group funding request process, but requests are often denied. The authors of this agenda item suspect this is due to SAA's significant budgetary shortfall. Sections are also encouraged to apply for SAA Foundation funding. These requests may then be denied by the SAA Foundation; we believe that this may be due to the optics of the SAA Foundation funding SAA's work would raise concerns of an appearance of impropriety. See appendix A.

From 2018 through 2019, SAA Council piloted a section funding program that earmarked an allotted amount ($250 for each section) to be used as the section saw fit. There were some strengths and drawbacks to this approach. Strengths included providing financial support for sections to conduct their work. A pain point of this model was that some sections were unaware of the opportunity and did not utilize the funds. Representatives of this Hui are presenting a modified funding approach below in this document under "Recommendations" that would be more fully socialized for greater access and use by all sections.

Alignment with Strategic Priorities

The recommended action item would support goals 1.4, 2.2, 2.3, 3.3, and 4.4 of the SAA Strategic Plan.

Fiscal Impact

We hope to be able to determine a total amount of funding in consultation with Council and SAA Staff that would meet members' needs while not exerting an overly negative fiscal impact on the organization.

Potential Benefits
- Gives sections greater control over how they provide benefits and programming for their members;
- Allows SAA Council to pinpoint funding issues across the organization and consider ways to increase revenue streams that would decrease specific fiscal burdens or challenges;
- Facilitates cross-pollination with other professional organizations and fields;
- Expands member benefits by having guest speakers and other engagement opportunities across the organization; and
- Facilitates potentially allowing sections to move forward strategically (e.g., bringing in experts to help drive strategic directions).

Potential Drawbacks
- Requires a commitment to a certain amount of funding, and
- Requests staff and volunteer time to allocating funds

Recommendation

Request #1: SAA should earmark a budgeted allotment -- the amount of which should be transparently shared with members -- that can be allocated to sections petitioning for funding.

Request #2: The deadline for sections to submit funding requests is moved to earlier in the SAA "year" (e.g., to December 1, or a similar date aligning with the Finance Committee's meeting cadence). Funding requests should still be reviewed and voted upon by the SAA Finance Committee, as is the established practice. Allocated funding should be distributed to sections by February.

Request #3: The Component Group Funding Request Form (see Appendix A) is revised, moved to a web form, and embedded in the Leader Resources website. See Appendix B for a draft new request form.

Request #4: A policy for funding requests is created by the Hui, along with a policy for the use of speaker honoraria. The Hui should draft this policy in consultation with SAA staff to determine legalities and restrictions as the Hui develops the policy for full Council review.

Request #5: A rubric for evaluating section funding requests is created, reviewed by Council, and posted transparently for applicants to see. The Hui should draft this rubric in consultation with SAA staff for full Council review.

Request #6: The updated section funding application process is promoted widely and made easily discoverable on the SAA website. Council members will work with SAA Staff to ensure wide promotion of the funding application.

Appendix A: Current Component Group Funding Request Form

Society of American Archivists
Component Group Funding Request
Fiscal Year 2024
(July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)
Deadline: March 1, 2024

[Appointed Group Name]: Funding to Support [Project/Program]
Prepared by: [TK, TK, and TK]
Submitted: [Date]

The [component group] requests that funding be included in SAA's FY 2024 budget to support [project/program name].

BACKGROUND [Should not exceed 3 paragraphs.]

Describe origin of project or program for which you are seeking funding from SAA.

§ Is the request in response to a charge from the Council?
§ How does it address a priority from the SAA Strategic Plan?
§ How does it further the purpose of SAA?
§ What makes this project relevant to your Section or to the profession currently?
§ Please indicate the time period during which the activity is expected to take place if funded, and continuing programs or projects that will imply future funding needs.

DISCUSSION [Should not exceed 1 to 2 pages.]

Describe the project or program more fully, providing a balanced discussion of the benefits to the profession and/or SAA resulting from the project or program. Be sure to indicate clearly the outcomes and/or products you expect from the activity.

§ How is this project significant to the component group(s)? How is this project significant to SAA overall? Who is the audience for this project?
§ Does the project foster collaboration between SAA component groups? Does it foster collaboration with groups outside of SAA?
§ What is special about this project? How is it innovative?
§ What or who will this project fund? Is it to bring in a consultant or outside speaker? Is it in support of a task force? *[Please note that the Council is reluctant to fund requests for annual meeting registration or related travel expenses for archivists who are in North America.]*
§ What are the expected outcomes? How will the outcomes benefit SAA? How do the outcomes support work that is fundamental to the archives' profession?

Budget

Within the Discussion section, provide an estimated budget for the project or program, including as much detail as possible. Provide background for your analysis and any alternatives that were considered. Are there other ways to accomplish this project that would reduce the budget?

FUNDING REQUEST

The [component group] requests that funding in the amount of [$TK] be included in SAA's FY 2025 budget to support [project/program name].

Support Statement: The support statement provides a very brief rationale for our summary of the recommendation. The naïve reader should be able to glean much of the intent of the request by reading the support statement, without having to read the background and discussion.

Relation to SAA Strategic Plan: Describe how the proposed project or program addresses one or more of SAA's strategic goals. Or indicate that it does not.

Fiscal Impact: Restate the total dollar amount being requested. If staff or volunteer time will be required, please address that impact here as well.

§ [Ex: "The total direct expenses for hiring a consultant to assist with development of X will be approximately $2,000."]

§ [Ex: "The estimated staff time associated with this project/program is 1 staff member @ 20 hours plus 1 staff member @ 40 hours."]

Appendix B: Sample Revised Component Group Funding Request Form

1. Section/Component Group name:
2. Primary contact name
3. Primary contact email:
4. Initiative title:
5. Initiative description:
6. Funding request amount:
7. Rationale (include alignment with the SAA Strategic Plan):
8. I have reviewed the rubric: [yes/no checkbox]