

**Society of American Archivists Foundation  
Board Meeting  
August 3, 2016  
Atlanta, Georgia**

**Grant Application Process and Guidelines**

(Prepared by Grant Review Committee Members Mark Duffy [Preparer],  
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**BACKGROUND/DISCUSSION**

The Foundation Board adopted “Grant Application Process and Guidelines” in March 2015, prior to its first round of grantmaking. Based on the questions and issues that arose during that first administration of grants, the Grant Review Committee proposes revisions.

**RECOMMENDATION**

**THAT the Society of American Archivists Foundation Grant Application Process and Guidelines be revised as follows (*strikethrough = deletion, underline = addition*):**

**Society of American Archivists  
Grant Application Process and Guidelines**

Applications for grants will be considered and decided by the SAA Foundation Board of Directors. The program is administered under the direction of the ~~Executive Director in consultation with the Board, and its designated~~ its appointed Rreview Committee, and the SAA Executive Director. The application and grant process will ~~abide by general~~ follow standard guidelines established by the SAAF Board.

**Funding Priorities**

The SAAF Board ~~will~~ awards grants that meet the mission and goals of the SAA Foundation and the strategic planning priorities of the Society of American Archivists. These statements provide a broad spectrum of possible ways to enhance the work of archivists and serve as guiding tools for the Board’s fund-raising and grant-making activities. Applicants are ~~encouraged~~ expected to make direct and substantive reference to how the way(s) in which an award of funds will advance one or more of the strategic goals of the SAA Foundation and/or the Society of American Archivists. To set reasonable expectations for applicants, the Board endeavors to publicize special concerns within the SAAF funding priorities and invite applications in those areas.

## **Funds Available**

The Board will encourage grant requests in amounts ranging from \$500 to \$3,000, although the SAAF will consider larger funding requests that could have an unusual impact on the profession. To set reasonable expectations for applicants, a range of typical grant awards will be publicized. The SAAF does not pay for indirect costs.

## **Applying for an SAA Foundation Grant**

### **Grant Application Process**

The Board will endeavor to follow a transparent, fair, and simple process of application and evaluation. No Board member will participate in consideration of a grant application in which the member has, or could be perceived as having, a personal interest, benefit, or relationship that could create a conflict of interest. The Executive Director and the Board will use the following requirements as a guide for an application format and the decision-making process standard process to consider a grant request.

### **Letter of Inquiry/Cover Letter**

The applicant will submit an initial letter of inquiry to explore the appropriateness of a proposal to the SAAF's areas of interest. The letter should provide the SAAF with the following information and any additional information requested by the Executive Director [nbeaumont@archivists.org] to clarify the request.

- Brief overall description of the proposal in terms of the program, project, or idea being explored and the intended product of the funded activity.
- Description of how the proposal fits with the SAA Foundation's funding priorities, with specific reference to the SAAF's mission and vision and SAA's strategic planning priorities.
- Biographical statement or resume of the principal applicant(s) and/or description of the sponsoring organization.
- Estimated project cost and amount of funds requested from the SAAF.

**Letter of Inquiry:** The initial Letter of Inquiry should be a brief introductory exchange. It is designed to reduce the work for an applicant by providing a quick answer to the question: Is my proposal something that fits the funding priorities of the SAA Foundation?

The applicant should begin with a brief, introductory statement of interest (maximum 750 words) to explore the appropriateness of a proposal to the SAAF. The letter should provide the SAAF with summary information on the overall purpose and goals of the proposed work as follows:

1. Identifying information on the applicants, participants, and/or sponsoring organization;
2. A short abstract of the project's goals, activities, product, and potential impact;
3. The precise connection to SAAF's priorities and/or SAA's strategic plan; and
4. Estimated total project costs and amount of funds requested from SAAF.

Each inquiry will be reviewed by a Board committee as soon as possible to determine its appropriateness within the guidelines and funding priorities for that grant period. If appropriate, the proposer will be invited to submit a formal grant application.

### **Proposal Summary Form**

The Proposal Summary is a refined version of the letter of intent after an initial exchange, but it contains more detail on the substance of the activity and the outcome. It should be no longer than three pages. It should more clearly state:

- The goals and expected products/outcomes of the project.
- Ways in which the project advances the SAAF's mission and vision, or the archival profession with reference to SAA's strategic plan, or other professional call to action.
- Benchmarks and assessment criteria that will provide a measure of the impact and performance of the activity.
- A final report is required.

### **Budget**

The total requested funds should be stated in the Summary Form and accompanied by a project budget. The project budget should indicate the specific allocation of requested funds by program activity or resource. In-kind contributions and other income sources should be identified to demonstrate the capacity for program completion. Applications should include a standard statement of income and expense and brief narrative description of account lines being funded by the proposed SAAF grant.

### **Due Diligence Attachments**

The SAAF Board may optionally require one or more of the following additional documents to evaluate an organization's ability to carry out the activities described in the proposal:

- Résumé(s) of supporting personnel.
- Financial reports or audited statements.
- Determination letter re 501(c)(3) status.
- List of trustees or directors.
- Annual report and/or Form 990 or 990EZ.
- Diversity Data Form.

### **Eligibility**

Individuals, groups, and organizations are eligible to apply for an SAAF grant. Among the categories of applicants who are encouraged to apply are practicing archivists, SAA component groups, other organizations of archivists, and allied professionals.

### **Grant Timing**

The SAAF follows a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year cycle. The Board normally will adopt the budget by June 1 of the preceding year. To be fairly considered by the Board, all grant proposals should be submitted by February 1. The Board reserves the right to consider a proposal at any time for unusual or special circumstances, and for similar reasons may streamline the grant request process to address an urgent need.

### **Decisions**

All grant applications will be received and processed by the SAA Foundation's Executive Director. The Executive Director will conduct an initial review of the Letter of Inquiry to determine if the application: (a) warrants consideration for funding according to the Board's guidelines, or (b) does not fall within the mission, resources, or granting priorities of the SAA

Foundation. The Executive Director, in consultation with the Finance Committee or other appointed committee of the Board, will advise the applicant of the need for additional information in the form of a Proposal Summary Form. The review committee will present grant requests to the Board with or without recommendation. All grant awards will be decided by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The deadline for applications is February 1. The review committee will review and consider applications and conduct internal discussions between February 2 and March 30. The Board will deliberate based on review committee recommendations between April 1 and May 1. The SAAF President will notify applicants of the Board's decision by May 15 in any budgetary year. An annual report on the disposition of all inquiries and proposals will be made to the Board, and all awarded grants will be reported to the SAA Foundation's donors and SAA members. The Board will make itself available to advise the Executive Director as questions or special circumstances arise about specific proposals.

### **Post-Project Report**

A final report is required.

### **Grant Application**

The Grant Application is a refinement of the initial letter of inquiry. It includes a narrative proposal and budget statement that should not exceed three pages in total length. The proposer is asked to elaborate on the five points of information from the initial letter of inquiry as follows:

- Ways in which the project advances the SAAF's mission and vision, or the archival profession with reference to SAA's strategic plan, or other professional call to action.
- The goals, methods, work plan, and expected products/outcomes of the project.
- Benchmarks and assessment criteria that will provide a measure of the impact and performance of the activity.
- A timetable and expected delivery date for a final report on outcome to SAAF (required).
- The roles performed by the principals and credentials and résumés, and/or a description of the sponsoring body.
- A copy of the determination letter regarding 501(c)(3) status.
- An endorsement from an officer of the sponsoring organization (if the applicant is not an independent agent).
- A copy of the Institutional Review Board statement of approval for any research sponsored by institutions that require approval when utilizing human subjects.

**Budget.** The total requested funds should be stated under separate heading in the proposal. A project budget should indicate the specific allocation of requested funds by program activity or resource. In-kind contributions and other income sources are encouraged and should be identified. Applicants are expected to produce a standard statement of income and expense and brief narrative description of account lines being funded by the proposed SAAF grant.

**Due Diligence Attachments.** The SAAF Board may optionally require one or more of the following additional documents to evaluate an organization's ability to carry out the activities described in the proposal.

- Financial reports or audited statements.

- List of trustees or directors.
- Annual report and/or Form 990 or 990EZ.
- Diversity data report.

### **Eligibility**

Individuals, groups, and organizations are eligible to apply for an SAAF grant. Among the categories of applicants who are encouraged to apply are practicing archivists, SAA component groups, other organizations of archivists, and allied professionals.

### **Grant Timing**

The SAAF follows a July 1 to June 30 fiscal year cycle. To be fairly considered by the Board, initial Letters of Inquiry should be received between July 1 and January 15. All formal Grant Applications must be submitted by February 1. The Board reserves the right to consider a proposal at any time for unusual or special circumstances, and for similar reasons may streamline the grant request process to address an urgent need.

### **Decisions**

All grant applications will be received and processed by the SAA Foundation's Executive Director. The Executive Director will conduct an initial review of the proposal to determine if it:

- Meets baseline requirements for funding according to the Board's criteria and guidelines, and
- Conforms to the mission, resources, and granting priorities of the SAA Foundation.

The Executive Director will forward the request with recommendation to the Review Committee. The committee will act to accept or decline the Executive Director's recommendation. If a formal Grant Application is invited from a proposer, the Grant Review Committee will review the proposal according to standards established by the Board. The Executive Director, in consultation with members of the Review Committee, will advise the applicant if additional information or due diligence documents are needed. The Review Committee will present grant requests to the Board with or without recommendation. All grant awards will be decided by majority vote of the Board of Directors.

The deadline for Grant Applications is February 1. The SAAF President will notify applicants of the Board's decision by May 15.

The Review Committee will deliver an annual report to the Board on the disposition of all inquiries and proposals. Decisions on awarded grants will be reported to the SAA Foundation's donors and SAA members. The Board will make itself available to advise the Review Committee and the Executive Director as questions or special circumstances arise about specific proposals.

### **Post-Project Report**

A final report is required to be filed with the SAAF by a date agreed upon in the award letter.

*Originally Aadopted by the SAA Foundation Board of Directors, March 14, 2015. Revision adopted on August 3, 2016.*

**Support Statement:** The proposed revisions in the Grant Application Process and Guidelines are offered by the Grant Review Committee based on lessons learned during the first grant-making cycle in FY2016.

**Fiscal Impact:** None.