

**Society of American Archivists Foundation
Board of Directors Meeting
August 15, 2018
Washington, DC**

**NDRFA Review Committee Report
(Prepared by Miriam Meislik)**

Current Committee

The National Disaster Recovery Fund for Archives had a very busy year. Current members are Rebecca Elder, Dick Cameron, Daniel McCormack, Miriam Meislik (chair), Eve Neiger (chair-elect of the SAA Preservation Section), Melissa Torres, and Julie Yamashita.

Hurricanes, particularly María and Irma, ripped through the mid-Atlantic region in fall 2017, devastating Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands. Both took an immense toll on the islands, so much so that even as late as June 2018, they were still struggling with intermittent or no power and a lack of services. We experienced significant delays while communicating with applicants to follow up on their requests, and we were not always able to get grant money paid out as quickly as we wanted them to have it for their recovery efforts.

A record 14 applications were received between September 2017 and May 2018, the majority from Puerto Rico, with three from the Virgin Islands, one from Mexico, and one from Texas. Of these applications, the committee rejected one request because the application's equipment request was out of the scope of the purpose for the fund. One application was declined, as it was from the same principal agency that had already received funding. The committee agreed in this instance that, while each requestor was a separate office, they were part of the same parent organization and that funding couldn't or shouldn't go to the same agency twice in the same cycle. Although this was our decision, if the Board feels differently, we would appreciate your thoughts.

Grants Awarded

In total, **\$38,385.28** in grants were awarded to the following institutions:

Institution	Amount Requested
University of Puerto Rico at Bayamon	\$4,939.45

La Casa del Libro Book Museum	\$5,000.00
Library Foundation Rafael Hernández Colón	\$5,000.00
Autonomous Municipality of Toa Baja	\$5,000.00
Historical Archives of the Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation (LMMF)	\$4,999.83
Department of Cultural Affairs - Autonomous Municipality of Caguas	\$1,896.00
Government of the United States Virgin Islands (GVI) Department of Planning and Natural Resources (DPNR) Division of Libraries, Archives and Museums (DLAM)	\$5,000.00
Galería 8	\$5,000.00
St. Thomas Historical Trust Museum	\$2,000.00

Pending Grants

A total of **\$15,005.20** in grants are still pending. The latest application was received in May and we are awaiting the translation so that a decision can be made. Other pending applications are delayed on the requestor's end for various reasons, including the inability to complete application details and for lack of consistent power at their location.

Institution	Amount Requested
Centro de Documentacion Oberera Santiago Iglesias Pantin	\$5,000.00
St. John's Historical Society	\$5,000.00
Biblioteca P. martin J. Berntsten, OP	\$2,000.00
Museo de la Historia de Ponce	\$3,005.20

Recipient Reports

Each applicant is required to provide a report of their accomplishments and use of funds.

The Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation included these photographs documenting their recovery efforts in their report about what was achieved with the funding received for cleaning and rehousing damaged collections.



Group of Volunteers of the Luis Muñoz Marín Foundation help in the rehousing of boxes and folders



Storage area with the new boxes

The Department of Cultural Affairs - Autonomous Municipality of Caguas also was able to successfully rehouse and clean their affected items. Their grant arrived prior to the

increase in funding, but they were still able to achieve impressive results in rehousing and adding disaster supplies, including dehumidifiers, with the nearly \$1,900 awarded.



Committee Activities

In an effort to make sure that all of the appropriate information is received and tracked, Miriam Meislik and Felicia Owens devised a spreadsheet to track applications and their status. The grant application was also revised. One of the challenges the committee faced was that the grant application did not gather as much information as the committee needed to make solid decisions. The lack of detail caused us to frequently reach out to the applicants to request additional information. The result was that the committee was inefficient with its decisions, which in turn led to a delay in fulfilling and reviewing applications. The new application now includes more questions and explanation of the type of information the committee is seeking to help them make a decision. A budget worksheet was also developed to help obtain more specific details on costs.

This streamlined application has already helped the committee make decisions more quickly and efficiently. The most recently approved request used the new application; a decision was made within three days of the application's receipt. As disaster recovery

requires a timely response, we need to make sure that we are issuing timely responses to applications. With the revised application and budget forms, the NDRFA website also was edited to reflect the new changes, including the increased funding amount, and to clarify the process, eligibility, and the types of services that will be funded.

The SAA Connect discussion board has been a godsend. We previously relied on email chains to discuss applications, which became unwieldy with little record of the discussions unless members maintained good recordkeeping practices. All discussions are now organized by application and are easily tracked and referenced at any time.

The committee would like to extend a huge thank you to Felicia Owens for her amazing support. The committee is indebted to Ana Rodriguez and Hilda Ayala Gonzalez for their assistance in translating the applications that have arrived in Spanish.