

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
November 14–16, 2016
Chicago, Illinois**

**2017 Program Committee Report
(Prepared by Terry Baxter, Chair)**

Since our August 2016 report, the Program Committee has been preparing for the January committee meeting and beginning to put together the structure for The Liberated Archives forum.

2017 Program Committee Meeting

Program Committee members and SAA staff will meet in person at the SAA office in Chicago from January 9 to 11, 2017. It is anticipated that the Committee will select educational sessions, select poster sessions, and make decisions related to the continued formation of the forum.

2017 Program Announcements

The 2017 call for proposals closes on November 18, 2016. Between then and the January meeting, the Program Committee will evaluate submissions and rank them in preparation for the Committee meeting. Cheryl Oestreicher (2016 Program Committee Co-chair), Matt Black, and I have been working to tweak the tags Committee members will use to provide schedule balance in session subjects.

A call for pop-up sessions will be made in early 2017.

The Liberated Archives Forum

The Forum Subcommittee—consisting of Natalie Baur, Jarrett Drake, Jennifer O’Neal, and me—met by conference call on October 26. The purpose of the call was to consolidate prior conversation, to answer SAA President Nance McGovern’s questions, and to continue planning for the 2017 forum. The following summarizes the meeting.

The Subcommittee discussed the relevance of the Liberated Archives forum, especially in light of several events with similar focus on the intersection of justice, liberation, and archives. The original proposals, which noted that “[i]f the archive is a site of social control, how might archivists partner with the public – especially at this critical junction for the profession – to repurpose the archive as a site of social transformation and radical

inclusion?” We believe that what really matters for this forum is that it provide local communities with tools and techniques that will enhance their ability to liberate themselves. We also believe that the forum will provide archivists with the knowledge and emotional connection necessary to assist communities in their liberation. And we believe that what is learned in the forum is extensible.

The Subcommittee discussed the basic structure of the forum. The consensus is that the forum should move from larger to smaller groups, allowing for increased interaction as the day progresses. The following provides a rough look at the way we envision the forum:

- 9:00 – 10:00 am Opening plenary
- 10:00 – 11:00 am Conversation starters **OR**
10:00 – 11:00 am Track 1: Five to seven concurrent panels; mix of presenters, 20 minutes presentation, 30 minutes discussion
- 11:00 am – 12:00 pm Track 2: Five to seven concurrent panels; mix of presenters, 20 minutes presentation, 30 minutes discussion
- 12:00 – 1:30 pm Lunch
- 1:30 – 4:00 pm Unconference
- 4:00 – 4:30 pm Debrief/Closing

The Subcommittee discussed the content for the forum. There is still not consensus on whether the content for the presentations will be invited presenters, call for proposals to both SAA members and community members, or some hybrid approach. We do agree, though, that we want the content to have relevance to and to include both SAA members and Portland community leaders as presenters. If a call for proposals is issued, it will be developed for review and approval by the January meeting and will be made public within a week or two afterward.

Unconference content will build on the morning plenary and panels. Planning for the logistics of the unconference will probably be the focus of the Program Committee as the content will emerge on that day and can't be fully predicted. Fortunately many of the Program Committee members have attended and put on unconferences.

We are in the process of recruiting a Community Steering Committee. This committee will be composed of 10-12 community members who will be involved in working with the Program Committee to ensure that forum content and participants are relevant and useful to them. When we approach these steering committee members, we will need to be specific about how this forum will help communities, what they can anticipate getting out of it, and how we can possibly raise some compensation for their time.

By the January meeting, I'd like to see the forum integrated into the full Program Committee agenda. The forum is a lot of work for three people and having more hands on board will be useful. Content development and unconference logistics would be great places to start.

We have not talked much about a communication plan, mostly because the forum content and structure didn't have sufficient clarity until recently. In addition to blog posts suggested by Nance McGovern, we would anticipate using social networking through both SAA and community networks, in-person presentations to community groups, heritage networks, and any other means necessary.

I would welcome questions about the development of the 2017 Program and am excited about the programming that will be developed, including the forum.