

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
November 1, 3, 2022  
Virtual Meeting**

**Final Report: 2022 Program Committee  
(Prepared by: Sarah Quigley and Natalie Bauer, Co-chairs)**

2022 Program Committee Members: April Anderson-Zorn, Natalie Baur (Co-chair), Marci Bayer, Jolene Beiser, Emily Jones, Daria Labinsky, Kahlee Leingang, Lindy Leong, Sheila McAlister, Sarah Quigley (Co-chair), and Ashley Williams

The committee wishes to extend its thanks to Felicia Owens, Carlos Salgado, Matt Black, and Jacqueline Price Osafo. The annual meeting couldn't happen without the phenomenal staff at SAA and we recognize all the work that goes into planning the meeting and supporting this committee. You are appreciated!!

**Conference Theme and Call for Proposals**

The Program Committee held its first virtual meeting on September 13, 2021, during which we reviewed the scope of our work and the timeline for planning the program. At that time we did not know if we would be able to hold the meeting in person, though we hoped to be planning SAA's first truly hybrid conference. When we issued the call for proposals, we invited proposals for both virtual and in-person sessions.

Prior to the meeting, the committee co-chairs circulated a brainstorming document for members to suggest conference themes. During the meeting our discussion about possible themes focused on managing the change process, the experience of disruption, and the opportunity to imagine new ways of working. Ultimately, we could not arrive at a consensus for a pithy title summarizing these themes and decided to forgo that element.

The call for proposals went out in October 2021. We asked members to consider the following:

How do we plan for the future? How do we remain nimble, as individuals and organizations? How do we prepare the next generation of information professionals for the world they'll inhabit? How can we be practical while remaining free to imagine?

We are dealing with remarkable change which constantly challenges us to envision and implement new ways of working to accommodate unanticipated and uncommon constraints. We now confront a "new normal" that comes with new pressures and new expectations, both at home and in the workplace. As our communities move forward,

simultaneously grappling with an ongoing pandemic; embracing diversity, equity, and inclusivity; and trying to return to more familiar ways of being, we dare to envision opportunities for imagining new paths and reimagining old ones.

## **Education Sessions and Posters**

The committee met in February 2022 to review proposals. We received a total of 96 education session proposals and 23 poster proposals. We used a new portal to make our initial reviews and rank proposals in advance of the committee meeting. Our review focused on how well the proposals reflected the conference theme, whether the proposal was attentive to issues of diversity and inclusion, and how appealing the topic would be to a broad audience.

The committee also worked with SAA staff to ensure the overall program was balanced, presenting multiple topics of interest to different communities within the profession and scheduling sessions so that similar subjects did not overlap in any one time slot. The committee is confident that we chose useful, interesting sessions and posters that offered something valuable to all attendees. Due to the conference being a hybrid program for 2022, there were less in-person sessions in the past. This was largely due to costs for technology to provide access to virtual-only and virtual-in person hybrid sessions.

We did not issue a call for pop-up sessions this year.

## **Conference Experience**

The 86<sup>th</sup> annual meeting of the Society of American Archivists was held at the Boston Sheridan and virtually from August 20-27. Co-Chairs Natalie Bauer and Sarah Quigley wrote an article promoting the meeting for the May/June issue of *Archival Outlook*. Pre-conference activities were held virtually from mid-July to mid-August, including section and committee meetings and the Research Forum.

To support a hybrid conference, the overall number of sessions had to be vastly reduced from the standard in-person conference. Each time slot offered four potential sessions: two in person only, one virtual only, and one hybrid. Recordings of all sessions, including in person only sessions, would be available after the meeting. The usual schedule of the conference was also compressed so that members in multiple time zones could join plenaries.

810 attendees registered for the full access pass (in-person and virtual) while 895 attendees registered for a virtual-only pass.

## **Observations and Feedback**

Informal feedback received during the conference indicated that in-person attendees appreciated the lighter schedule. Having more time before the schedule began each morning enabled members to reconnect with dearly missed colleagues, or to just have a leisurely breakfast on their own. Attendees also expressed appreciation for fewer contemporaneous sessions, which allowed people to attend more sessions of interest with fewer presentations competing for their attention.

We hope the hybrid format is here to stay. Though many of us were delighted to be back in person, a hybrid meeting is far more accessible. If our profession is truly invested in inclusivity, maintaining a robust virtual option for our annual meeting is one way to ensure the profession is accessible to all.