

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
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Hybrid Meeting - Chicago, IL**

**Cooperative Agreement Between  
SAA and the Association of Polish Archivists  
(Prepared by: Terry Baxter, President)**

**BACKGROUND**

In January 2022, Becky Tousey contacted SAA leadership about a request by the organizing committee at the 8<sup>th</sup> Polish Archivists Congress. As SAA's representative to ICA, they had asked her to present one of their international plenaries. She had a scheduling conflict and suggested that the incoming SAA president might be a good alternative. The Polish Archivists Association (<https://sap.waw.pl/>) agreed, and in September 2022, I presented a plenary titled "Contemporary and Future Challenges to Archives and Society in the United States."

I was also able to participate in a variety of formal and informal events and conversations with archivists in attendance, many of them representing leadership in the Polish Archivists Association. One recurring topic related to formal cooperation between the Polish Archivists Association (SAP) and the Society of American Archivists. There was a stated desire among their leadership to build stronger ties with other countries' archival organizations beyond what already exists via the ICA umbrella.

I have kept in contact with several of the friends made during that meeting, including Wiesław Nowosad, the Vice President for International Cooperation for SAP and an executive member of ICA's Forum for Professional Associations (FPA). We've continued to discuss how SAA and SAP could promote mutually beneficial cooperation. Appendix A is an agreement between SAP and the Ukraine Archivists Association. Appendix B is the same agreement run through Google Polish – English translate. Wiesław stresses that SAP does not want to copy this document but that it is a starting point for discussing how SAA and SAP might build a cooperative agreement based on their strengths, needs, and interests.

**DISCUSSION**

The Society of American Archivists has had an ongoing commitment to positive interaction with the international archives' community. It sends representatives to the International Council on Archives, particularly to the Forum of Professional Associations. It maintains an Intellectual Property Working Group and an International Affairs Section. It dedicates publishing space in

the *American Archivist* for international articles. Additionally, a number of component groups have international connections.

Archivists in the United States benefit in many ways from the work of and relationships with archivists and archival communities in other countries. SAA's standards work is a direct result of the collaboration of a variety of international archivists. The work of Verne Harris in connecting social justice to archival work has been a key influence on theory and practice in the United States. Kim Christen's widely used *Murkutu* platform was developed through collaborative work with the Waramungu community in what is now known as Australia. The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials has its roots in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Protocols. David Lewis' work with the Southwest Oregon Research Project was an early model for community archives collections. I'm not even going to mention that Fever book . . .

As far as I can tell, SAA does not have any cooperative agreements with any national archival organizations. In many ways, its interaction is with the international community as a whole and not with individual archival organizations. The former is an important means of cooperation and collaboration. It reinforces the inherently human nature of memory work and allows varied approaches to that work to build solutions that expand global solidarity.

The appeal of a cooperative agreement with an individual organization allows for a deeper understanding of the way a particular group of archivists thinks and how they perform their work. It builds a relationship between the two groups of archival workers, which allows both groups to learn new ways of thinking about their own work as well as envisioning how joint work could enrich both cultures in which they're situated. A cooperative agreement can acknowledge that solutions to shared problems might be addressed and resolved through joint efforts. Additionally, an agreement acknowledges that organizations may discover relevant and meaningful ideas outside of their own sphere.

This request is based on the relationships built among individuals. While that is also a valuable concern and is intertwined with organizational relationships, it is not a long-term strategy. A formal connection, based in cooperative agreement, allows the two organizations to build bonds that transcend individuality and promote mutuality. We all know people come and go in organizations – this agreement builds a stable basis for these two organizations to work together and lets them cooperatively look at how joint work gets done and how they hold each other accountable for it.

This agreement also has the potential for modeling more group to group-to-group relationships to augment the process we are already engaged in with ICA. These do not have to be separate processes. There is a natural overlap between an agreement like this and participation in ICA, one that doesn't have to be competitive but could be cooperative to the benefit of all involved.

It also has the potential to bring fun and joy into these two organizations. Connecting with other humans to perform cooperative work has many benefits – emotional, intellectual, and social – it is the way humans build community. Agreements like this could make archival workers and archival work worldwide more connected, more relatable, more secure, and more resilient.

## **QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION**

- Would this work benefit SAA members and the archival worker community at large?
- Why initiate the process with the Polish Archives Association?
- Who would be responsible for drafting a cooperative agreement?
- How would the administration of a program like this affect SAA component groups and staff workloads?
- Are the ongoing costs for a program like this worth the ongoing benefit?

## Appendix A

Porozumienie o współpracy pomiędzy Stowarzyszeniem Archiwistów Ukraińskich a Stowarzyszeniem Archiwistów Polskich Krajowa Organizacja Społeczna Stowarzyszenie Archiwistów Ukrainy działająca na podstawie Statutu i Stowarzyszenie Archiwistów Polskich, działające na podstawie Statutu, zwane dalej Stronami, działając w interesie dalszego rozwoju związków naukowych i kulturalnych, kierując się wspólnym dążeniem do wszechstronnej współpracy, mając na uwadze, że współpraca taka będzie sprzyjała pogłębieniu przyjaznych stosunków pomiędzy archiwistami Ukrainy i Polski, zawarli poniższe porozumienie.

### § I

Strony rozwijają współpracę, kierując się zasadami równoprawnej i wzajemnej korzyści oraz przestrzegania właściwego ustawodawstwa obu państw i powszechnie uznawanych pryncypiów i norm prawa międzynarodowego

### § II

Strony, mając na uwadze korzyści płynące z wymiany doświadczeń i sprawnego przepływu informacji, postanawiają, co następuje:

1. Dokonywać nieodpłatnej wymiany wszystkich swoich wydawnictw, w szczególności zaś przysyłać systematycznie drugiej Stronie swoje wydawnictwa periodyczne;
2. Publikować, w miarę możliwości systematycznie, na łamach swoich periodyków, stronach www i innych wydawnictwach informacyjnych artykuły, recenzje z publikacji i informacje o działalności drugiej Strony;
3. Zapraszać wzajemnie swoich przedstawicieli na wszystkie otwarte zjazdy, konferencje i sympozja naukowe, których organizatorem jest jedna ze Stron;
4. Udzielać pomocy, wsparcia i rekomendacji archiwistom i archiwom ubiegającym się o stypendia naukowe lub dotacje specjalne związane z realizacją programów dotyczących ochrony, konserwacji, wydawnictw źródłowych, opracowywania zespołów archiwalnych i kolekcji oraz tworzenia wspólnych baz danych o zasobach archiwalnych;
5. Współdziałać w przedstawianiu swoim członkom historii swoich narodów, zgodnej z prawdą historyczną oraz sprzyjać wzajemnemu udostępnianiu zasobów archiwalnych;
6. Współpracować na forum Międzynarodowej Rady Archiwów, a przede wszystkim w sekcji Profesjonalnych Stowarzyszeń archiwalnych i Zarządców Dokumentacji (ICA/SPA) w celu umacniania pozycji obu Stron w tych strukturach;
7. Współpracować w organizacji międzynarodowych konferencji i innych przedsięwzięć międzynarodowych z udziałem archiwistów;
8. Każdego roku do końca marca, uzgadniać pomiędzy Stronami wspólne projekty oraz wymianę archiwistów, na podstawie aneksów będących załącznikami do niniejszego Porozumienia.

### § III

Realizując współpracę, Strony będą ściśle współdziałały z państwowymi organizacjami administracji archiwalnej w swoich krajach – Państwową Archiwalną Służbą Ukrainy i Naczelną Dyrekcją Archiwów Państwowych oraz Międzynarodową Radą Archiwalną, kierując się zasadami Statutu UNESCO, Statutu MRA (ICA) oraz Międzynarodowym Kodeksem Etycznym Archiwistów (Pekin, 1996)

#### § IV

Współpraca w ramach porozumienia nie stanowi przeszkody dla innych form kontaktów w dziedzinie archiwistyki, które będą prowadzone w oparciu o dodatkowe umowy między Stronami

#### § V

Niniejsze Porozumienie nabiera mocy od dnia jego podpisania na okres 5 lat. Jego działanie podlega automatycznemu przedłużeniu na kolejny okres pięciu lat, jeżeli żadna ze Stron nie powiadomi, w trybie pisemnym, drugiej Strony o swoim zamiarze jego wypowiedzenia, nie później niż 3 miesiące od upływu odpowiedniego terminu Porozumienie zawarto w Kijowie, dn. 7 grudnia 2017 r. w siedzibie krajowej Akademii Administracji Publicznej przy Prezydencie Ukrainy podczas Międzynarodowej Konferencji Naukowej „Archiwa we współczesnym świecie: wyzwania i zadania” w dwóch egzemplarzach, każdy w języku polskim i ukraińskim, przy czym oba egzemplarze mają jednakową moc prawną.

[podpisy]

## Appendix B

Agreement on cooperation between the Association of Ukrainian Archivists and the Association of Polish Archivists National Social Organization Association of Archivists of Ukraine operating upon the basis of the Statute and the Association of Polish Archivists, operating on the basis of the Statute, hereinafter referred to as the Parties, acting in the interest of further development of scientific associations and guided by a common desire for comprehensive cooperation, with a view to whereas such cooperation will be conducive to deepening friendly relations between archivists of Ukraine and Poland, have concluded the following agreement.

### § I

The parties develop cooperation, guided by the principles of equal and mutual benefit and compliance with the relevant legislation of both countries and generally recognized principles and norms of international law

### § II

Parties, bearing in mind the benefits of the exchange of experience and efficient flow information, agree as follows:

1. Make a free exchange of all your publications, in particular and send periodicals to the other Party systematically;
2. Publish, as systematically as possible, in your periodicals, websites and other information publications articles, reviews from publications and information about the other Party's activities;
3. Invite each other's representatives to all open conventions and conferences and scientific symposiums organized by one of the Parties;
4. Provide assistance, support and recommendations to archivists and applicant archives scholarships or special grants related to the implementation of programmes concerning protection, conservation, source publications, development archival units and collections, and the creation of joint databases on holdings archival;

5. Cooperate in presenting to their members the history of their nations in accordance with historical truth and foster mutual sharing of archival resources;
6. Cooperate in the forum of the International Council on Archives, and above all in section of Professional Archival Associations and Documentation Managers (ICA/SPA) in order to strengthen the position of both Parties in these structures;
7. Cooperate in the organization of international conferences and other events international with the participation of archivists;
8. Each year by the end of March, agree on joint projects between the Parties and exchange of archivists, on the basis of annexes attached to this agreements.

### § III

In implementing cooperation, the Parties will closely cooperate with state organizations archival administration in their countries - the State Archival Service of Ukraine and the Head Office of State Archives and the International Council of Archives, guided by the principles of the UNESCO Statute, the MRA (ICA) Statute and the International Code of Ethics for Archivists (Beijing, 1996)

### § IV

Cooperation within the framework of the agreement is not an obstacle to other forms of contacts in the field of archiving, which will be carried out on the basis of additional agreements between parties

### § V

This Agreement comes into force from the date of its signing for a period of 5 years. Its action is automatically renewed for a further period of five years if neither Party notifies the other Party in writing of its intention to terminate it, no later than 3 months after the relevant deadline

The agreement was concluded in Kiev on December 7, 2017 at the headquarters of the national Academy Public Administration to the President of Ukraine during the International Conference Scientific "Archives in the modern world: challenges and tasks" in two copies, each in Polish and Ukrainian, both copies having equal legal force.

[signatures]