

**Society of American Archivists  
Council Meeting  
November 18/19, 2024  
Chicago, IL – Hybrid**

**Annual Report:**

Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment (CORDA), 2023-2024

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**OVERVIEW**

The Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment (CORDA) is currently organized into three subteams to carry out the Committee’s activities, initiatives, and contributions to the SAA strategic plan. These subteams include: Repository, Research, and Resources. The following sections outline the Committee’s overall work as it relates to each subteam, as well as work carried out by the co-chairs.

[Committee Charge](#)

**ACTIVITIES AND INITIATIVES**

Completed

Co-chairs:

- **IMLS grant awarded:** SAA has received a \$150,000 grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant program to establish a prioritized research agenda for the archival profession. Spearheaded by CORDA, SAA will convene 35 archival experts, educators, community leaders, and grantmakers—archivists from across key sectors and professional positionality as well as relevant non-archivist stakeholders—to be part of a professionally facilitated two-day forum. The participants will transform the recently adopted SAA Research and Innovation Roadmap into a research agenda and a framework for its implementation and adoption.
- **Office hours:** CORDA held office hours focused on the SAA Dataverse (February) and the Research Forum (April). Office hours were promoted on SAA listservs and *In the Loop*. These virtual events allowed CORDA members to share information related to the SAA Dataverse and Research Forum, and to answer audience questions.
- **AGM Research Meet and Greet:** The co-chairs organized an in-person “Research Meet-and-Greet” at the SAA Annual Meeting, Saturday, August 17, 2024. The event was an informal networking event to discuss research ideas and projects, connect with potential collaborators, and learn about how CORDA supports research in and about

archives. We had an icebreaker bingo activity, fliers listing CORDA resources, and CORDA members ready to answer questions. There were approximately 30 attendees.

Repository:

- **Outreach & Promotion:** The repository team continued promoting the SAA Dataverse across various channels. This included social media posts (five different graphics) via SAA’s Instagram, X, Facebook, and LinkedIn accounts during international Love Data Week (February 12-16). The team also held an office hour on February 14 during Love Data Week that focused on the SAA Dataverse and “Sharing and Reusing Data about Archives.” Topics included: data lifecycle, consent forms and privacy statements, datasets available through the SAA Dataverse, and preparing your data for the SAA Dataverse. 29 participants registered for this event. The team also set up and promoted a Calendly page to make it easier for potential depositors to book consultations. Finally, the team collaborated with the Resources team to start a spreadsheet of research projects currently in progress. This list will help identify future potential depositors to reach out to in the future, and it provides an overview of which topics are currently of interest in the field.
- **New Datasets:** One new dataset was published in the SAA Dataverse this year: Society of American Archivists- Archivists of Religious Collections Section Survey of Religious Archives, 2024 (<https://doi.org/10.15139/S3/SWMC59>). This dataset was submitted by Archivists of Religious Collections section steering committee member Mary Grace Kosta, who also submitted a dataset in 2022. CORDA members are in touch with several other researchers who plan to deposit their data in the future. Outreach & promotion is helping to build relationships with future potential depositors and raising awareness of the SAA Dataverse for archivists conducting in-progress research.

Research:

- **Research and Innovation Roadmap:** In July 2023, SAA Council approved v1.4 of the [Roadmap](#), incorporating revisions based on SAA member and Council feedback including updating themes and more clearly incorporating SAA’s strategic and DEIA plans. This Roadmap is the culmination of years of work, including work that the CORDE-TF completed prior to CORDA’s establishment in 2019. No work on the roadmap was executed this year, as we worked on submitting an IMLS grant, which we were awarded, see co-chairs section above.
- **Research Forum:** The [2024 Research Forum](#) was held on Zoom on July 17 and 24, 2024 from 12:00-4:00 pm CT. Based on last year’s audience feedback, format changes were introduced for 2024’s research forum, which included: longer platform presentation times to allow for Q&A and audience/presenter interaction, change from poster to lightning talk to better align with virtual delivery method, development and implementation of a [submission rubric](#) to aid in selection of presentations/talks for inclusion by RF team, and finally recommendations provided to presenters for optimal use of time. We received 38

platform submissions and 18 poster submissions, an increase from years prior. Using the rubric, we selected 22 panel presentations and 11 lightning talks. The two-day forum was managed and facilitated by the five members of the research team. Survey feedback from presenters and attendees of the Forum was overwhelmingly positive. Day one of the research forum, we had 126 attendees and day two we had 110 attendees.

Resources:

- **Education:** The Education team connected with the Reference, Access & Outreach section and the UX section regarding potential areas of collaboration on educational content around reference tracking and UX assessment, respectively. The team also explored a variety of models for the future of CORDA's educational offerings: free discussions on topics related to research, data, and assessment; low-cost workshops; and official SAA-sponsored courses. During CORDA's annual business meeting, we used Mentimeter to poll attendees and gather feedback that will help us prioritize which topic(s) and format(s) of education offerings to focus on executing next year.
- **Facts + Figures:** The resources team added new resources to the [Facts + Figures site](#), by actively searching in The American Archivist, Annual Meeting sessions, SAA component groups and other professional organizations, and granting agencies for additional research on the archives professions and other resources. The team created new at-a-glance statistics for the Evaluation and Assessment portion of the site: a slideshow of graphics highlighting A\*CENSUS II statistics that will be embedded into the page. While updating the Facts + Figures site, the team came across information about in-progress research projects that they compiled into a spreadsheet in collaboration with the repository team.

Ongoing

General:

- CORDA and its leadership is committed to enhancing SAA members' professional growth in the areas of research, data, and assessment.

Repository:

- **Outreach & Promotion:** The repository team will continue to maintain, promote, and grow the SAA Dataverse by ensuring that policies and procedures accurately document the technical requirements of the Dataverse, through presentations and targeted outreach within and outside of the Society, and by ingesting all appropriate datasets when received.

Research:

- **Research and Innovation Roadmap:** With Council’s adoption of the roadmap, the research team is dedicated to the advocacy for and maintenance of the [Research and Innovation Roadmap](#). This work will be continued with IMLS grant funding in 2024-2026.
- **Research Forum:** With consideration to the survey data gathered this year, the research team will implement improvements and maintain practices to ensure another successful Research Forum in 2025 and beyond.

Resources:

- **Education:** The resources team continues to develop free or low-cost educational programming, including webinars and workshops, as well as educational resources, for SAA members on topics related to research, data, and assessment. Survey data collected this year has provided insight into future topics and tools that are of interest to members, such as OpenRefine and qualitative data analysis.
- **Facts + Figures:** The resources team continues to monitor submissions for the Facts + Figures page and update as necessary. Improving the usability of F+F was explored with SAA’s Director of Operations, but was paused until SAA’s website is updated (project currently in process).

Future (2024-2025)

General:

- Explore developing a community of practice for SAA members to engage in conversation around research, data, and assessment; connect and collaborate on research projects; and share knowledge and best practices.
- Execute IMLS grant project, this includes the following: During the first seven months of the project, from August 2024 to February 2025, the CORDA-core project team, in collaboration with SAA leadership, will lay the foundation for the project. Efforts will include selecting and hiring a facilitator, working with facilitators to develop an application process and weighted rubric for participant selection to ensure an inclusive and diverse group of participants, establishing a communication plan to launch the application and call for participants, and determining the dates for the two-day in-person forum in Chicago. Facilitators will engage in forum pre-work from January to April 2025, and convene the forum in May 2025. From May 2025 to January 2026, facilitators, CORDA-core project team, and SAA leadership will synthesize the forum pre-work and facilitated two-day discussion in the form of a white paper published in the American Archivist; deposit the data collected from facilitated discussion/findings into the SAA Dataverse; create the Research Agenda; establish a framework for agenda maintenance; and develop a communication and outreach plan for dissemination/adoption/awareness.

Dataverse:

- Continue to conduct outreach within and outside of SAA to encourage the deposit of new datasets.
- Continue collaboration with *The American Archivist* editor and team to support submission of datasets related to published articles.

Research:

- Maintain and advocate for the Research and Innovation Roadmap to SAA leadership and members as a living document. Lead IMLS grant efforts with SAA and facilitators.
- Continue managing the Research Forum, including call for and review of submissions, scheduling, managing the microsite, and facilitation of the online forum, and consider improvements based on gathered feedback.

Resources:

- Increase functionality of the Facts + Figures. Once SAA upgrades the web platform, Drupal, we plan to increase the functionality of F+F and execute further outreach for new resources.
- Continue to expand our educational programming, supporting the research, data, and assessment needs of SAA membership; seeking joint educational opportunities with the Education Committee, Research Forum, and other component groups (e.g., the newly formed UX Section).

## SAA STRATEGIC PLAN

### **Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists**

CORDA addressed Goal 1.2 and 1.4 by adding to the “Facts + Figures” (F+F) page more resources in support of advocating for the value of archival work, the social and cultural values of archival organizations, and the contributions of the Society. CORDA created a slideshow of at-a-glance statistics and graphs, including data from A\*CENSUS II, to be embedded in the Evaluation and Assessment portion of the site. The Committee continues to actively solicit new resources through its feedback form.

### **Goal 2: *Enhancing Professional Growth***

CORDA addressed Goal 2.1 by planning for new educational programming that mentors and supports the career development of members to assist them in achieving their goals. CORDA connected with the Reference, Access, & Outreach section and the UX section regarding potential areas of collaboration on educational content around reference tracking and UX assessment. CORDA also gathered feedback to identify which models to prioritize for future education programming (free discussions on topics related to research, data, and assessment; low-cost workshops; or official SAA-sponsored courses).

***Goal 3: Advancing the Field***

CORDA directly addressed Goal 3.2. CORDA’s charge is central to the success of SAA’s goal to foster and disseminate research in and about the field. Nearly all CORDA’s work this year in some way advances this goal. Council adopted the Research and Innovation Roadmap in August 2023. CORDA and SAA submitted a proposal for the Institute of Museum and Library Services Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant program requesting \$150,000 to convene archivists from key sectors and professional positionality, and relevant non-archivist stakeholders, to take the roadmap and establish a research agenda for the archival profession. CORDA and SAA were notified that the grant proposal was funded July 25, 2024.

CORDA also continued to support the sharing, reuse, and preservation of archives-related data by stewarding the SAA Dataverse repository. CORDA promoted the SAA Dataverse via social media during International Love Data Week (February 12-16, 2024), held office hours on February 14, 2024, and shared a new tool for scheduling consultations.

**CORDA BUSINESS 2024 MEETING**

***Number of Attendees:*** 20 attendees total, 8 Non-CORDA.

***Summary of Meeting Activities:*** The annual business meeting took place via Zoom on July 9, 2024, 9-10:30pm PT (90 mins) and was recorded. The business meeting served three purposes: review the accomplishments of the Committee in the past year and preview the Committee’s goals for the year ahead. After the welcome and brief overview of CORDA’s charge by the co-chairs, the meeting devoted time to each of the three subteams: Repository, Resources, and Research. The leaders of each subteam summarized accomplishments and identified ongoing work.

After the team presentations, the co-chairs addressed the Committee's plan for the upcoming year to continue promotion and outreach efforts, the Annual Research Forum, facilitating SAA Dataverse deposits, maintaining the Facts & Figures webpage, offering educational events, and implementing the IMLS grant-funded project to turn the Research and Innovation Roadmap into a Research Agenda. The committee then solicited feedback from the audience using Mentimeter. Questions included:

- Would you be interested in the following courses/workshops?
  - Research instruments and design
  - Survey deployment
  - Data analysis
  - Data management plan
- What is the most you are willing to pay for a CORDA workshop?
- What other kind of CORDA events do you want to attend?
- Do you have other feedback or suggestions for CORDA?

CORDA then opened the floor up for questions.

Link to meeting minutes on microsite: <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/committee-on-research-data-and-assessment>

#### QUESTIONS FOR COUNCIL

1. Can SAA set up a new “community”/listserv that is open to anyone (not just members of CORDA) in order to foster a community of practice around research, data, and assessment in the archives profession? CORDA would administer and promote this new listserv to encourage SAA members and other archivists and researchers to use the virtual space to share resources, ask questions, seek collaborators, and discuss research, data, and assessment related to archives and the archival profession. This listserv would also allow CORDA to share information and resources more directly with interested individuals. Presently, CORDA relies mainly on SAA Announcements to share information. A dedicated listserv would allow CORDA to reach interested individuals more directly, and also allow for community discussion. At present, CORDA is not aware of any other community or listserv that serves this purpose.
  - a. Browsing the SAA Communities in SAA Connect, there is a “Professional Writing Virtual Group”- who administers this community?
2. To assist with the IMLS grant, can CORDA bring back former CORDA members in an ex-officio capacity?