

July 9, 2024

**American Archivist**

**Submission Window Workflow Proposal – Final Draft**

Submitted by Amy Cooper Cary, Editor, *American Archivist*

\*\*\*\*\*

In order to maximize efficiencies for the workflow of *American Archivist*, the Editorial Board considered and developed a Submission Window workflow process. **In the Editorial Board meeting on April 25, 2024, all members of the Editorial Board unanimously recommended that we try the Submission Window approach** to improve workflow. I am suggesting a trial period of four issues, beginning with Fall/Winter 2025.

**Discussion:**

In this workflow, the Editorial Board defines a specific window for the submission and review of content for each issue and works within that time frame in order to complete the full review / acceptance / editorial / publication cycle.

The benefits to adoption of this workflow are many:

- It will clarify the process for authors, replacing a rolling submission with a defined window and timeline.
- It allows for concerted calls for peer reviewers.
- Peer reviewers and Board members will know when to expect the heaviest workloads.
- It regulates the work of the Editor, batching it to make the work easier to track.
- It allows for a more distributed copyediting process, alleviating potential bottlenecks.
  - The Editor will submit accepted and edited manuscripts directly to the Assistant Director of Publications and the Editorial and Program Specialist, allowing them to manage the copyediting workflow, and ensuring timely turn around and effective use of editorial resources.
- Timelines below will allow sufficient time for “snags” in the process without compromising the entire timeline or the content of each issue.
- It will allow for flexibility and it may encourage author feedback.
- It may motivate people to meet the window, or to workshop ideas with colleagues. It may also encourage authors to determine when they will be ready to submit their manuscripts.
- It will allow for more specific calls for content (special sections, for example)

Recognizing that there are potential concerns about how this may confuse or discourage potential authors,

- We expect to continuously communicate with authors, section leadership and membership, and other stakeholders in affiliated organizations to alleviate confusion or concern.
- We expect to be flexible – that is, we will accept manuscripts after the window, but will be clear that the manuscript will not be reviewed until the next deadline.

**Timeline:**

We will use the following as our plan for four forthcoming issues:

**Applied to Fall/Winter 2025 (88.2) – to be published November/December 2025**

- Rollout of new Submission Window
- Call for submissions publicized in September 2024 and throughout the fall
- Submissions window January 1, 2025 – February 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Peer Review Assignments (Editorial Board and Peer Reviewer Pool) by March 1
- Peer Review Decisions by April 1
- Revisions for Final Decision by May 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Final Decisions / Begin Editorial Work by June 15
- Final Revisions by July 15 (Authors get 4 weeks)
- All material ready for layout by August 1, 2025

**Applied to Spring/Summer 2026 (89.1) – To be published May/June 2026**

- Issue will include Special Section on User Experience
- Call for submissions publicized in February 2025 and throughout the spring
- Submissions window June 1 – July 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Peer Review Assignments (Editorial Board and Peer Reviewer Pool) by August 1
- Peer Review Decisions by September 1
- Revisions for Final Decision by October 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Final Decisions / Begin Editorial Work by November 15
- Final Revisions by December 15 (Authors get 4 weeks)
- All material ready for layout by January 15, 2026.

**Applied to Fall/Winter 2026 (89.2) – To be published November/December 2026**

- Call for submissions publicized in September 2025 and throughout the fall
- Submissions window January 1, 2026 – February 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Peer Review Assignments (Editorial Board and Peer Reviewer Pool) by March 1
- Peer Review Decisions by April 1
- Revisions for Final Decision by May 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Final Decisions / Begin Editorial Work by June 15
- Final Revisions by July 15 (Authors get 4 weeks)
- All material ready for layout by August 1, 2026

**Applied to Spring/Summer 2027 (90.1) – to be Published May/June 2027**

- Call for submissions publicized in February 2025 and throughout the spring
- Submissions window June 1 – July 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Peer Review Assignments (Editorial Board and Peer Reviewer Pool) by August 1
- Peer Review Decisions by September 1
- Revisions for Final Decision by October 15 (Authors get 6 weeks)
- Final Decisions / Begin Editorial Work by November 15
- Final Revisions by December 15 (Authors get 4 weeks)
- All material ready for layout by January 15, 2027.