

Society of American Archivists
Awards Committee 2025 Annual Report
Prepared by Committee Co-Chairs Alexander Duryee and Audra Yun

ROSTER UPDATES: (Please list all newly elected or appointed steering committee members. Include full name, position title, and term end date for each.)

The [roster](#) for the 2025-2026 awards cycle has been updated online. Sasha Kim will be the incoming junior co-chair, and Alex Duryee will be cycling off as senior co-chair. As of August 22nd, not all positions on the roster have been updated, as external appointments that serve on awards subcommittees (such as section chairs) have not yet been made.

The co-chairs again request that they be notified when appointments to the Awards Committee are made by the Appointments Committee. We found that Sasha was appointed entirely by accident when we checked the roster for unrelated information, and scrambled to invite her to the annual meeting and set up handoffs. There are also appointments with unusual terms, such as the Pinkett Award's appointed member, which are entered into the roster incorrectly. The co-chairs would appreciate knowing when these appointments are made so they can verify that all appointments meet the Committee's specifications.

COMPLETED PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

General awards work:

The Awards Committee is proud to announce that 2025 saw an all-time record number of nominations. This awards cycle resulted in 221 nominations, which continued our trend of post-pandemic increases.

- 2024: 181 nominations
- 2023: 177 nominations
- 2022: 126 nominations
- 2021: 140 nominations
- 2020: 215 nominations

Only one award, the Distinguished Service Award, attracted zero nominations this year. This award has historically attracted very few nominations, averaging 1.5 nominations annually since 2009. Examining why this particular award struggles to attract nominees, despite loosening requirements this cycle, would be a good future project for the Committee.

The sole applicant for the Franklin Jameson Archival Advocacy Award did not meet its minimal requirements, so no award was issued this year.

There were two awards in 2024 that had zero applications: Preservation Publication Award and Mark A. Greene Emerging Leader Award. The co-chairs worked with the subcommittees last summer to identify barriers to application, and recommended changes to SAA Council, which

were approved in August 2024. We were pleased to see both awards receive above-average numbers of nominations this cycle, and look forward to building on this success in future years.

The previous co-chair, Jane LaBarbara, published updates to the microsite to enhance Tip and FAQ pages. While these changes were written during the previous cycle, they were not published until autumn 2024.

Notable changes to awards criteria and committee procedures:

This cycle, the Committee co-chairs created a roster spreadsheet via Google Sheets. This roster included up-to-date contact information for members (which is sometimes missing from SAA Connect), their role on their respective subcommittee, and notes regarding their participation (e.g. “mid-term appointment”). This spreadsheet allowed the co-chairs to identify gaps in subcommittees, track where each member was in their cycle, and update contact information as needed.

Along with the roster, the co-chairs contacted each member of the subcommittees directly to confirm their participation for the cycle. Historically, a handful of members would be unaware that they were listed as members of the Awards Committee (due to e.g. their membership being linked to a section appointment, or having resigned from the Committee). This would lead to confusion as awards activity ramped up, or scrambles to fill mid-term appointments for members that resigned the year before. By contacting members directly at the beginning of the cycle, we ensured that everyone was aware of their participation, and caught membership issues before any committee work began. Coupled with the new roster, these changes markedly decreased membership issues over the year.

Awardee recognition at the 2025 Annual Meeting:

Awardees were recognized during Plenary 1 on August 25.

ONGOING PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

- Co-chairs will continue to contact each member of the subcommittees directly to confirm their participation for the cycle and fill vacancies as needed.
- Co-chairs will continue to conduct a summer assessment survey to solicit feedback from subcommittees.

NEW PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES:

- The incoming co-chairs will begin meeting regularly with SAA staff for a drop-in office hour open to subcommittee chairs, to help answer questions and stay on top of the calendar.
- SAA staff were able to create a spreadsheet version of the full committee roster, facilitating co-chair communication with subcommittees.

INITIATIVES ASSOCIATED WITH THE [STRATEGIC PLAN](#)

The mission of the Awards Committee, to recognize leaders and achievers in the archives field via professional recognition and financial assistance, supports the following goals of SAA's Strategic Plan:

GOAL 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists

- 1.1 Provide leadership in promoting the value of archives and archivists to institutions, communities, and society.
- 1.2 Educate and influence decision makers in any setting about the importance of archives and archivists.

By publicly recognizing leaders and achievers in the archives profession and highlighting their work, SAA's Awards Committee promotes the work of archivists in our society.

GOAL 2: Enhancing Professional Growth

- 2.1 Mentor and support the career development of members to assist them in achieving their goals.

In giving financial awards such as scholarships, cash awards, and conference registration and travel reimbursement, the Awards Committee provides opportunities for members to participate in professional development and complete their educational goals.

GOAL 3: Advancing the Field

- 3.2. Foster and disseminate research in and about the field.

In awarding publications, the committee is supporting quality research and its dissemination.

GOAL 4: Meeting Members' Needs

- 4.2 Create opportunities for members to participate fully in the association.

As SAA's largest committee, the Awards Committee offers opportunities for participation and leadership to a large group of members. Serving on one of its subcommittees is a common first step into SAA leadership.

SAA ANNUAL MEETING: COMMITTEE MEETING

Attendees: [not counted, but we did have fairly good attendance]

Summary: (activities and highlights)

The co-chairs introduced Sasha Kim as the incoming co-chair. The Committee discussed how subcommittees are using SmarterSelect, and how many subcommittees prefer to use it as little as possible. The co-chairs gave an overview of suggested changes to individual awards, and went over changes to processes for the 2024-2025 cycle. Specifically, the co-chairs went over early roster check-ins and changes to the Tips page.

Link to minutes on microsite (optional): we've asked that these be posted

SELF-ASSESSMENT:

How would you describe the health or energy of your section? How engaged are your members?

Checking in with the full Committee roster helped us identify inactive members and introduced external members to their Committee roles. At least two members were inactive due to having the incorrect contact information on SAA Connect; the early check-in gave the Committee time to resolve this before subcommittee activity started up. One subcommittee chair and co-chair were unresponsive after initially checking in, which put the full committee work on their junior member. The Committee co-chairs worked with SAA Awards to support them, but would prefer to avoid this happening in the future.

Our summer assessment had five responses (out of twenty subcommittees), all of which were positive. We identified no areas of improvement/change from the survey, and plan to continue on our successes.

Overall, subcommittee members completed their major activities (advertising, review, communication with co-chairs) and contacted the co-chairs and SAA Awards as needed. Attendance at the annual meeting could have been higher, but we had active discussion, particularly around SmarterSelect.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

The Awards Committee has no questions for Council discussion.