

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

**Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment: Annual  
Report**

(Prepared by: Emily Lapworth and Jane Fiegel)

Year: 2024- 2025

Current Rosters (Include full name, position title, and term end date for each):

<b>Jane Fiegel</b>	Co-chair	2024-08-15 – 2027-09-01	Tulane University
<b>Emily Lapworth</b>	Co-chair	2023-08-01 – 2025-08-31	University of Massachusetts Boston
<b>Chris Marino</b>	Immediate Past Chair	2024-08-15 – 2025-09-01	Hoover Institution Library & Archives, Stanford University
<b>Stephanie Bredbenner</b>	Committee Member	2024-08-15 – 2027-09-01	Yale University
<b>Nick Connizzo</b>	Committee Member	2024-08-15 – 2027-09-01	Norwich University
<b>Victoria Contreras</b>	Early Career Member	2024-07-15 – 2025-09-01	Sul Ross State University
<b>Gwendolyn Higgins</b>	Committee Member	2023-07-15 – 2026-09-01	University of Alaska Anchorage

<b>Elliott Kuecker</b>	Committee Member	2024-08-15 – 2027-09-01	University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill
<b>Jordan Meyerl</b>	Committee Member	2023-07-15 – 2026-09-01	Fidelity Investments
<b>Anna Smith</b>	Committee Member	2024-08-15 – 2027-09-01	University of Rochester
<b>Michelle Sweetser</b>	Committee Member	2022-10-01 – 2025-09-01	Bowling Green State University
<b>Ashley Thomas</b>	Committee Member	2022-08-15 – 2025-09-01	Harvard Medical School
<b>Rebecca Thayer</b>	Ex Officio	2022-08-15 –	Harvard Medical School
<b>Rita Johnston</b>	Committee on Education Liaison	2024-08-17 – 2025-09-01	University of Miami

Council Liaison:

<b>Jillian Cuellar</b>	Council Liaison	2024-12-01 – 2027-09-01	Tulane University
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## PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

*(Please indicate all projects and activities that your component group has completed this year, continues to work on, or plans to implement in the following fiscal year.)*

### **Completed:**

- **International Love Data Week** outreach (February 10 to 14, 2025): Three graphics were shared on SAA's Instagram, Facebook, and LinkedIn, featuring data on the SAA

Dataverse itself and from A\*CENSUS II, as well as a fun archival word search - <https://bit.ly/WordSearchSAAD>

- **“Creating & Conducting Focus Groups for Archivist Researchers” workshop** (March 19, 2025): Prepared and taught by Elliott Kuecker, UNC-Chapel Hill, CODA offered this 90-minute, free, virtual workshop as a way to build confidence in archivists who are research-curious and want to learn more methods that might be useful for improving their jobs, or even publishing research studies. Participants learned when focus groups are useful, how to prepare for and conduct them, and had time to discuss their own projects or ask questions. The workshop was [recorded](#) with subtitles and is now offered on our microsite. More than 20 participants from across the US and Canada attended. Survey respondents all gave 5-stars, noting it was a rich experience.

### **Ongoing:**

- **[SAA Dataverse](#):** Due to UNC policy changes, the SAA Dataverse is migrating from the UNC-Chapel Hill Dataverse to the Harvard University Dataverse. The move is being completed by UNC-Chapel Hill and Harvard Dataverse staff free of charge (move completion date is TBD). In the meantime, the SAA Dataverse is still accessible to users and can accept new data deposits. CODA team members continue to promote the SAA Dataverse, and provide consultations and deposit new datasets as requested.
- **[Research Project Tracking](#):** CODA tracks active and recently completed research projects. The team also created a [submission form](#) for people to submit their own projects. Future plans include creating a page on the CODA microsite and promoting the effort among various SAA sections.
- **[Facts & Figures](#):** The team faced significant roadblocks in getting permissions to edit the CODA microsite. There is a bug in Drupal that prevents assigning permissions to individual pages. It doesn't seem like this is something that is going to get fixed anytime soon, and currently the only option is to email any additions or changes to SAA staff, which is not ideal for the amount and types of edits that the team wants to make. The team is currently looking into options to move the 'Facts & Figures' site off of SAA's Drupal website. Committee and Section blogs provide an example of component groups maintaining sites outside the SAA website, and all examples found use WordPress. The team also spoke with COPP about what data would be useful to highlight, once we are actually able to add information.
- **Educational offerings:** CODA connected with the College & University Archives section to plan new educational offerings focused on improving archivists' research skills. The team is planning for a series of free, virtual events centered around the fundamentals of research and will be applying to SAA's grant programs to secure instructor honoraria.
- **SAA Research Forum:** The team hosted the [2025 SAA Research forum](#) on July 23 and 30. The team reviewed 33 proposals for platform presentations (up from 27 last year) and 12 lightning talk proposals. The forum consisted of 22 platform presentations (10 minutes) and 7 lightning talks (5 minutes). Maximum live attendance on July 23 was 144, and 154 on July 30. Recordings of the forum will be posted on the SAA website and a call for research reports and papers went out to participants who want to publish additional information about their research. Planning for the 2026 Research Forum is underway.
- **[Research Agenda](#):** In 2024 SAA was awarded an Institute of Museum and Library Services Laura Bush 21st Century Librarian Grant to convene a “Research Agenda Advisory Collective” (archivists from key sectors and professional positionality, and

relevant non-archivist stakeholders), to establish a research agenda for the archival profession. CORDA is leading this project, and thanks SAA leadership, staff, and Council for their invaluable support. The team held an in-person convening in Chicago May 1-2, 2025, and identified six research themes as top priorities. The CORDA team provided an update on the project in August at the SAA Annual Meeting. Based on the input from the Collective, the team is now drafting the Research Agenda and a white paper, and compiling a dataset for deposit into the SAA Dataverse. The team will collect additional feedback from the Collective to finalize each of the six priority research themes via virtual focus groups scheduled in October. The deliverables of the project will be finalized by the end of the grant period, January 2026.

**New:**

## **SAA STRATEGIC PLAN**

*(Please review the current [Strategic Plan](#) and indicate below how the component group has or plans to contribute to one or more of the four main goals.)*

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

Supporting goal 1.4, “Strengthen the ability of those who manage and use archival materials to articulate the value of archives,” CORDA compiles data and research in the SAA Dataverse and on the Facts & Figures site that provide evidence of the value of archives. CORDA also supports and encourages research, data, and assessment that helps articulate the value of archives. CORDA additionally met with the Committee on Public Awareness and the Committee on Public Policy over the 2024-2025 term to discuss how data from the A\*CENSUS II dataset could be used for advocacy and awareness efforts for the field.

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

CORDA provides support, educational resources, and fosters a community around research, data, and assessment, helping archivists be successful and effective in their careers. CORDA began collaborating with SAA’s College and University Archives Section to design future educational offerings and discuss how the two groups could support the College and University Archives Section’s ongoing research-oriented Coffee Chats. CORDA’s microsite was also updated to include a new page that provides direct links to all of CORDA’s previous recorded educational sessions, making these resources easier to find.

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

CORDA’s work directly supports goal 3.2, “Foster and disseminate research in and about the field.” The virtual workshop, for example, instructed participants on how to utilize a specific qualitative research method (focus groups), and that method could be applied to archival research. Additionally, the SAA Dataverse continues to provide access to archival research datasets and promoted data from them during LoveDataWeek.

### **Goal 4: Meeting Members' Needs**

Through our educational activities and our efforts to create a welcoming and inclusive committee culture, including welcoming early career members, CORDA supports goal 4.3, “Foster an inclusive association and profession through educational and leadership opportunities.”

## SAA ANNUAL MEETING

Number of attendees: not recorded

Link to meeting minutes: <https://www2.archivists.org/groups/committee-on-research-data-and-assessment/2025-corda-annual-business-meeting-minutes>

Summary of meeting activities and highlights: CORDA shared information about the committee, updates about our work, and facilitated an open discussion using Mentimeter to gather feedback from attendees. See [slides](#) for more information.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT

*How would you describe the health or energy of the group, and how engaged are the members?*

CORDA is a very active group with all of its members engaged in specific initiatives and sub-teams during the 2024-2025 year. The entire committee met monthly, with sub-teams scheduling additional meetings as needed. Committee members volunteered for the initiatives they were most interested in and also volunteered to lead sub-teams so co-chairs were able to delegate responsibilities. The annual meeting [slides](#) show the accomplishments of each sub-team in the past year.

*Did the component group’s leadership encounter any challenges in achieving its goals for the year?*

The issue with assigning editing permissions in Drupal made it difficult for the team responsible for maintaining and updating the Facts & Figures page to accomplish its goals. There is a backlog of new research that needs to be added. Additionally, the team had hoped to add some at-a-glance statistics and graphics to make the site more user-friendly for people looking for a quick overview of the archives profession.

*What suggestions do you have for the SAA Council and staff that might help address these challenges in the coming term?*

In the long-term, we would recommend that the SAA Council and staff look into resolving the issues with the website, either by updating it to a newer version of Drupal, or moving to a different platform altogether. Recognizing that this would likely be a long process that would potentially require SAA to find additional resources, we request support in moving the Facts & Figures site to a different platform (such as WordPress) so that CORDA can continue to work on it.

*What questions or concerns do you have for the SAA Council and staff?*

