

Society of American Archivists
Interim Action
**May 2026 Council Meeting
Online**

Establish the AI Task Force (AITF)
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BACKGROUND

AI (“artificial intelligence”) technologies have serious implications on archival records and collections, professional practice, and SAA as an organization. Data, records, and digitized collections in archives often serve as training sets for AI development and evaluation. Some archival institutions have adopted AI tools into their work. Archival scholars have called attention to how archives are implicated in AI. As the leading professional organization for archivists, SAA must establish guidelines that reflect our collective values on the use of AI into archival labor and professional responsibilities, and repository functions, from selection and acquisition, to processing and description, to access, accessibility, use, public programming, advocacy, and preservation. As an organization, SAA must also establish guidance and policies in place around the use of AI technologies in its own work of organizing, communicating, advocating, and providing membership services.

DISCUSSION

Providing expert advice on AI and archives requires convening a diverse group of experts who can bring informed perspectives to bear regarding the various ethical, accessibility, technical, organizational, and social dimensions of AI technologies. The creation of this Task Force would bring deep knowledge and expertise that SAA Council members do not collectively have. SAA’s approach to AI requires active and sustained planning and demands ethical response that a Task Force will be situated to provide.

RECOMMENDATION

THAT an AI Task Force be created and charged per the following description:

AI Task Force (AITF)

I. Purpose

The **AI Task Force (AITF)** (herein “**Task Force**”) works to ensure that the Society can support archives and archivists who must make a determination on how to adopt and implement AI technologies. The **Task Force** reports to Council and is expected to coordinate with various SAA component groups, external organizations, and communities represented in archival

collections. In addition, the **Task Force** will keep pace with relevant scholarship, technical development, ethical perspectives, and accessibility concerns and benefits, so they can advise on issues and advocate for the intersection between records, archives, and archivists and AI, and will report on matters relating to AI.

II. Task Force Selection, Size, and Length of Terms

The **AI Task Force (AITF)** composition shall be as follows:

- Co-Chairs (2)
- Members (11)
- Council Liaison (1)
- SAA Staff (1)

The **Task Force** consists of fifteen members representing diverse expertise necessary to tackle the ethical, technical, and accessibility aspects of AI and archives. The co-chairs and members of the Task Force shall serve for two years. Members of this Task Force are appointed by the SAA vice president/president-elect, in consultation with the Task Force co-chairs. One member shall serve as liaison to the Intellectual Property Working Group; another will serve as liaison to the Trust in Archives initiative, and another will serve as the liaison to AI4LAM.

III. Duties and Responsibilities

The Task Force serves as Council's point of contact for questions about AI, collaborates with organizations with similar expertise and interests, engages with diverse communities (not just institutional partners), and closely considers accessibility benefits of relevant AI-generated or -assisted technologies. Members of the Task Force are appointed for a 24-month term. Specifically, they are expected to produce the following deliverables:

- Issue a statement of values to guide archival work and partnerships (first 6 months)
- Create an AI resource page (first 18 months), which includes the following:
 - Identify a set of AI competencies for the profession (first 12 months)
 - Recommend relevant training for archivists (first 12 months)
 - Develop “best practice” guidance for archives and archivists (specifically the following aspects of archival work: donor relations, access and reference, description and metadata, etc.) (first 22 months)
 - Promote the AI resource page (months 22 to 24)
- Provide guidance for SAA's use of AI as a professional association (first 15 months)
- Make recommendations to SAA Council for necessary actions to meet the duties and responsibilities specified above, and to meet SAA's mission, Core Values, and Code of Ethics (all 24 months)

IV. Reporting Procedures

The **AI Task Force** reports to the Council and works closely with its Council liaison, the President, and the CEO to ensure that it is responsive to the Council's needs. The co-chairs, or their designee, are responsible for submitting an annual report, providing updates—which may include recommending items for action, discussion, feedback—at Council's quarterly meetings, and engaging in educational programming with related stakeholders. The co-chairs are also responsible for ensuring that minutes of **Task Force** meetings are prepared and posted on the **Task Force's** SAA-hosted website to inform SAA members of its activities and comply with SAA's record-keeping requirements.

V. Meetings

The **Task Force** is expected to meet once per year at the Annual Meeting and may also meet mid-year when appropriate. In addition, the **Task Force** may conduct its business by e-mail, telephone, or virtual meeting during the course of the year. The members of the **Task Force** may agree on the frequency it deems appropriate to conduct its business meetings.

Support Statement: The creation of this **Task Force** allows SAA to provide guidance and support to archivists and archival institutions and SAA staff on ethical approaches to AI technologies.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: The creation of this **Task Force** responds to Goals 3.1. (Identify the need for new standards, guidelines, and best practices and lead or participate in their development) and 2.2 (Provide content, via education and publications, that reflects the latest thinking and best practices in the field.) of the Strategic Plan.

Fiscal Impact: The estimated staff time associated with this activity is 1 staff member @ 20 hours per year.