

**Society of American Archivists
Recommendation for Council
October 2024**

**Podcast Working Group: Revising the Working Group’s
Standing Rules**

(Prepared by: SAA Podcast Working Group)

BACKGROUND

The SAA Podcast Working Group (PWG), established in November 2023, produces the *Archives in Context* podcast. *Archives in Context* (“the podcast about archives and the people behind them”), grew from three volunteers from the *American Archivist* Editorial Board and Publications Board, who hoped to create a publications-focused podcast with conversations on archival literature to promote and market SAA books and initiatives. The podcast launched in 2019, publishing seven episodes in its first season. Eventually, two volunteers from COPA joined the team, and then two more members joined in supporting roles, and the focus of the podcast broadened in scope beyond publications to explore conversations about:

- the archival literature,
- the archives profession and SAA, and
- archives and the public.

The Podcast Working Group seeks to revise its standing rules in order to better align itself with the work the group has been doing for years, while also clarifying the appointments process. This revision will support the group because:

- (1) We desire to establish the Project Coordinator position and remove the words “Vice President” and “Chair” to create a naming convention that aligns most closely with group positions; and
- (2) our work requires a high level of commitment and thus we desire a larger range of episodes to be published per season as the current number of 6 to 9 is too limited.

DISCUSSION

This is the first action item PWG has submitted since becoming a working group in 2023. While the standing rules on the website made sense for the working group at the time of its inception, they no longer clearly define the current operations of the group. In October 2024, members of the group met to discuss how the current podcast season (Season 8) is only projected to be five episodes, which is less than the range of episodes listed on the current standing rules. We also met to discuss how we have so many ideas for Season 9, which will most likely exceed the range of the current standing rules. We also discussed

our current Project Coordinator's role and how using the term "Vice President" in our standing rules is not reflective of the work the Project Coordinator does.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

That Council approve the following revisions to the Podcast Working Group standing rules:

The Podcast Working Group produces and publishes one season annually of Archives in Context, an open-access podcast exploring significant conversations around archival practice in SAA, the profession, and beyond.

I. Purpose:

The Working Group's purpose is to host via podcast dynamic and professional conversations with archivists contributing to the archival literature, to SAA and the profession, and public access and awareness of archives.

II. Working Group Selection, Size, and Length of Term

The Working Group consists of ten members. Working Group members serve staggered two-year terms with the possibility of reappointment. The ~~Vice President, or project coordinator~~ **Chair**, on behalf of the Council and with the recommendation of the Working Group, makes new appointments ~~and appoints the chair~~.

III. Duties and Responsibilities:

The Working Group has the following duties and responsibilities:

- Plan an annual season, ranging from ~~6 to 9~~ **5 to 12** episodes, and set an editorial calendar that aligns with SAA's Strategic Goals and promotes to some extent the work of SAA and its members.
- Schedule and interview guest speakers, review and edit drafts of episodes, publish episodes to podcast platforms, and maintain the podcast's website as needed.
- Periodically review and update workflows as appropriate and meet on a regular basis to ensure timely delivery and support of episodes.

IV. Reporting:

The Working Group reports to the Council annually and upon request.

Support Statement: Revising the Podcast Working Group's standing rules will help define the group's mission and goals and strengthen its sustainability.

Impact on Strategic Priorities:

The podcast has clear goals to advance the public awareness of archives by discussing archival topics of broad interest (see the ["Finding Aid to My Soul"](#) archival storytelling episodes or [Margot Note](#) on creating family archives) and in helping archivists to share why archives are important (see ["Elevator Going Up!"](#) for archivists' "elevator pitch" on archives, or the discussion with [Kathleen D. Roe](#) on her book *Advocacy and Awareness*

for Archivists, or see the discussion with [Maryna Paliienko](#) on the preservation of archives in Ukraine). (1.1). As a format, the free podcast “delivers information and education via methods that are accessible, affordable, and keeps pace with technological change” (2.3), “facilitates effective communication among members” (4.1) as an additional marketing and content channel, and “creates opportunities for members to participate fully in the association” (4.2) through work on the podcast team and as episode guests. By updating the standing rules, the working group is more accurately accounted for and represented. It will help the group continue to advance public awareness of archives by providing more flexibility regarding number of episodes per season.

Fiscal Impact: The Podcast Working Group expects no fiscal impact as a result of revising its standing rules. This revision is just to provide clarity and become more consistent with the actual work of the group.