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Guidelines for Publishing with the Society of American Archivists (SAA)

The goal of the SAA publishing program is to provide print and electronic resources that serve the needs of its members and the archives profession, are of consistently high quality, and enrich the professional literature. When considering new publications for the SAA program, the Publications Editor, Publications Board, and Director of Publishing (aka “the publications team”) take into account:

- the needs of the archival profession
- the long-range plans and strategic priorities of SAA and the Board;
- the professional qualifications of the author(s) and/or editor(s);
- current titles and publications in progress; and
- the potential market for such works.

Project Initiation

The SAA publications team receives publication ideas and recommendations from many sources, including, but not limited to:

- SAA members,
- Individuals from allied professions,
- Publications Editor and Publications Board members,
- *American Archivist* Editorial Board, and/or
- Director of Publishing.

The Publications Board, Publications Editor, and/or Director of Publishing may identify a topic and develop a Request for Proposal, inviting SAA members and/or specific individual(s) with special expertise to submit a prospectus. The Board also welcomes informal conversations with and preliminary proposals from members who believe that SAA should undertake a particular publication project, and solicits suggestions from SAA sections, committees, roundtables, and other groups that have a special interest in a publication project.

All members of the publications team forward information to the Publications Editor, who is charged with responding to queries. Although an initial, informal discussion about a possible project is not required, it is highly recommended, since a stronger prospectus is likely to emerge from such collaboration.

Please note that publication components of grant proposals are subject to the same procedures detailed here if intended for publication by SAA, although this may lead to an adjusted timetable and order of steps.

Submitting a Prospectus

To begin the process of producing a new publication, the prospective author submits a prospectus to the Publications Editor, addressing the following:

- the theme, purpose and scope of the publication;
- the estimated format and length of the publication;
- an annotated outline or table of contents;
- the intended audience and the potential market;
- the prospective value to the archival profession;
- the relationship of the proposed publication to the literature in the field;
- the possibility of co-sponsorship with another organization;
- the possibility of outside financial support;
- graphics and illustrations;

- co-authors or contributors in the case of an edited work;
- the anticipated schedule for preparation of the publication;
- technical considerations such as format, software requirements, file size; and
- if an ongoing project, plans for updating and/or expanding the content.

The prospective author also submits a CV (two-pages maximum).

The Publications Editor reviews the prospectus and circulates it (along with the CV) to the Publications Board, Director of Publishing, and, if necessary, to selected subject specialists. Those reviewing the prospectus respond directly to the Publications Editor, who evaluates the comments and decides whether to proceed.

If the review is *not* favorable, the Publications Editor will return the proposal with feedback to the author.

If the review is favorable, a letter of intent is drafted by the Director of Publishing and sent by the Publications Editor to the prospective author. The letter of intent will affirm SAA's interest in the proposal, provide feedback, and request that the author prepare at least two sample chapters and a detailed table of contents by an agreed-upon deadline. The author signs and returns the letter of intent to the SAA office.

Multi-Author and Edited Publications

When a project involves more than one author, a general editor (who may also be one of the authors) may be needed to guide the project. She/he will:

- select authors;
- assign topics;
- review chapter outlines;
- set and keep deadlines;
- set guidelines for the publication's style and voice;
- read and edit chapters and approve them before submitting the complete manuscript;

- assign tasks and coordinate compilation of ancillary materials (i.e. table of contents, foreword, introduction, dedication, illustrations, captions, acknowledgements, and appendices); and
- work with the Director of Publishing during the production phase.

The Publications Editor reviews the prospectus submitted by the general editor and circulates it to the Publications Board, Director of Publishing, and, if necessary, to selected subject specialists for comment. Those reviewing the prospectus respond directly to the Publications Editor, who evaluates the comments and decides whether to proceed. If the review is favorable, a letter of intent is drafted by the Director of Publishing and sent by the Publications Editor to the prospective general editor. The letter of intent will affirm SAA's interest in the proposal for publication and request that the general editor prepare at least two sample chapters and a detailed table of contents by an agreed-upon deadline. The general editor signs and returns the letter of intent to the SAA office.

Sample Chapters and Detailed Table of Contents

The sample chapters and detailed table of contents should be submitted to the Publications Editor by the agreed-upon date. These materials will be circulated to the Publications Board, along with the original proposal, for review. The Publications Editor will evaluate the comments received and decide whether to proceed.

If the review is *not* favorable, the Publications Editor will return the content with feedback, but no publishing agreement will be offered.

If the review is favorable, a publishing agreement will be issued by the Director of Publishing.

The SAA Publishing Agreement

- SAA publications are usually completed on a work-for-hire basis, with SAA retaining the copyright and all rights to publish the manuscript or to license others to use it.

- An honorarium or royalty contract is executed.
- A signed agreement must be returned to the SAA office in order for production to proceed.

Producing the Manuscript

A “Shepherd” who is a member of the Publications Board will be assigned to each publication project to be in touch with the author (or general editor of multi-author or edited works) until the finished manuscript is submitted to the Publications Editor. The role of the Shepherd is to

- work with the author (or general editor of multi-author or edited works) to set and keep interim deadlines and to meet the final deadline (usually 12 months);
- address any questions about the publication process;
- act as liaison to the Publications Editor, Director of Publishing, and Publications Board;
- track and report on progress to the Publications Editor and Director of Publishing; and
- encourage the author (or general editor of multi-author or edited works) throughout the writing process.

Manuscript Specifications

- Author (or general editor of multi-author or edited works) should submit the final manuscript as a Word document (or agreed-upon alternative), double-spaced, with footnotes inserted, and the location of all illustrations, sidebars, and ancillary materials indicated in the file. Provide a table of contents, acknowledgements, and appendices as needed. An index will be created as part of the publication process.
- Author (or general editor of multi-author or edited works) must secure all illustrations or graphics and clear copyright for images and textual materials that are not in the public domain. Submit images as high-resolution TIF files, accompanied by a photo log that indicates the placement in the text.

Manuscript Review and Revision

Upon completion, the author or general editor of multi-author or edited works submits the manuscript to the Director of Publishing, who works with the Publications Editor to coordinate the review process. Reviewers may include subject specialist(s), Publications Board member(s), and the Publications Editor, all of whom complete an assessment form within 30 to 60 days, addressing the author's

- interpretation;
- treatment of the subject matter;
- accuracy;
- completeness of sources; and
- originality.

Reviewers provide comments, recommendations for revisions, if needed, and an assessment of the manuscript as a whole. Without revealing the reviewers' identities, the Publications Editor provides these comments verbatim to the author (or general editor), discusses the reviewers' suggestions and how to incorporate them, and works out a timetable for revisions, usually within six months. The revised manuscript will again be read and reviewed, with particular attention given to assessing the agreed-upon changes. The selection and number of reviewers for the final review is left to the discretion of the Publications Editor.

The commitment of SAA to publish the manuscript is reserved until the completed manuscript is approved. Criteria considered before final approval include:

- the quality of the scholarship and writing; and
- whether or not the needs of the projected audience are likely to be met by the publication.

The Publication Process

The Director of Publishing uses the most current edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style* for specifications for the format of manuscripts. The Director of Publishing also

determines the publication's size, format, appearance, price and other features, and may consult the author and others (including the Publications Board) as necessary.

The SAA office will arrange for copyediting, design and layout, indexing, proofreading, and production. The author (or general editor) performs a final reading of the page proofs before publication.

The SAA office is also responsible for promotion, sales, and distribution of the publication, although authors/general editors (and the Publications Board) are strongly encouraged to assist with this process, provide quotations for promotional literature, be available for interviews, suggest outlets for review copies, and otherwise to assist in the marketing of the publication.