

Society of American Archivists Council Meeting Chicago, IL

Group Name: Membership Committee (Prepared by: Jenifer Monger)

Year: 2024- 2025

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

Council Liaison: Alison Clemens

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.)

Ongoing:

Mentoring Program Subcommittee Report

Submitted by Subcommittee Chair, Stasia Karel

Overview

The Mentoring Program Subcommittee administers the SAA Mentoring Program. The Mentoring Program supports career development, networking, and information sharing by connecting SAA members with shared professional interests through one-on-one and cohort mentoring relationships.

The impact and effectiveness of the Subcommittee's work is entirely due to the dedication and passion of the Subcommittee members. We acknowledge with gratitude the following members rotating off the Subcommittee at the SAA Annual Meeting in August 2025: Danielle Stoulig, Greta Suiter, and Kaitlin Trainor. Thank you for your dedication and hard work. Four new members joined the Subcommittee: Liz Francis, Hannah Garrod, Kelley Klor, and Caroline Littleton.

Subcommittee activities

The Subcommittee kicked off the new year with two training sessions for its new members, which was a successful way to make sure everyone had access to the same knowledge. Stasia

Karel oversaw matching in September and October to focus on catching up with the backlog of applicants that had formed over the summer of 2024. In October she introduced the idea of holding matchmaking sessions that would serve as a more communal way to match applicants.

The first matchmaking session was held in December, with Greta Suiter hosting. She came prepared with a spreadsheet of potential matches, and then members of the subcommittee helped to make the final decisions and send out the introductory emails. Three additional sessions occurred over the next 6 months, and general feedback from Subcommittee members suggests that this format works better than relying on a different person each month to make matches without others' input.

Other business that was discussed but not fully executed included revisions to the Subcommittee's webpage, specifically to elaborate on the matching process and what applicants should expect. A recurring theme in applications is a desire to be matched with someone who is either located in the same city or region, shares a similar identity, or affinity for subject matter. This makes it more difficult to make matches, because the pool of available mentors is generally concentrated on the coasts, and we rarely have enough mentors to satisfy the demand on a basic 1:1 level without taking specific attributes into account.

We also used the funds from the component funding request to purchase a subscription to Rev.com's captioning service, but we have not yet been able to test it with members of the Accessibility & Disability Section.

Matching statistics

The 1-1 Mentoring Program continues to be a popular service, with demand outpacing supply from mentees. During months when matches were not being made consistently, a backlog of applicants builds up very quickly. As of this report we have 49 people waiting to be matched: 35 mentees and 14 mentors. Calls to SAA members to sign up as mentors have only moderately yielded new applicants, and we are looking for different ways to attract more mentors.

Mentoring Program participation statistics:

Year	Participation number (not including cohorts) ^[1]
2025	152
2024	142

2023	189
2022	290
2021	295

Suggestions for future actions:

Develop boilerplate language that demystifies the role of a mentor. This could be used by other subcommittees to help spread the word among their volunteers (for example, Key Contacts has many more interested people than available slots, and perhaps some of them would be good mentors if only they would apply).

An overall reset of the program would help ensure future success, but this will require planning and perhaps a pause in accepting applications while improvements are made to the program.

[🔗](#) The following statistics are approximate figures since occasionally mentoring records are duplicated in our system if mentors volunteer to assist more than one mentee.

Career Commons Subcommittee:

In-person career commons at SAA worked with 64 people over the 3 days of the conference.

Key Contacts Subcommittee:

Subcommittee Report Submitted by Chair Jill Severn

Program Summary

The Key Contact Subcommittee is a unit of the SAA Membership Committee that works with volunteers at the grassroots level to provide an engaging and cohesive orientation experience for new SAA members, including promoting and clarifying the scope of SAA resources and enabling members to establish relevant professional connections. It is composed of 2 or 3 co-chairs that work with 11 District Representatives and 60 Key Contacts overseeing geographic regions throughout the United States and other countries. The current subcommittee members include Jill Severn and Lindsay Sheldon.

Recruitment of Key Contacts and District Representatives for 2024/2025

The Subcommittee filled 16 vacancies for District Representatives and for Key Contacts from September 2024-August 2025. Several key contacts completed their third term in 2024/2025 and therefore were due for replacement. The subcommittee also identified a temporary Key Contact to serve during the absence of the Tennessee Key Contact who will be away on

medical leave September 1-December 31, 2025. We have provided all new key contacts and district representatives with an individual orientation to their roles and responsibilities prior to commencing service. Carlos Salgado has been of great assistance in recruiting for the vacant positions. He provided custom membership reports for each state or district where we were recruiting for new representatives or contacts. This targeted approach yielded a robust response from members.

State of Affairs in 2025

The subcommittee welcomed Lindsay Sheldon to the team in November/December 2025. She has quickly made herself indispensable. When we began receiving a robust response to our call for key contacts or district representatives we began encouraging members who volunteered after the position was filled to consider serving as mentors or to explore other volunteer opportunities with SAA. Most just really only wanted to be key contacts. This warrants additional consideration as this interest in low-level local activity might be tapped for some other purpose. At the annual meeting of the membership committee an attendee proposed that the Key Contacts play a role in supporting federal workers who are impacted by layoffs and firings by the current administration. This proposal warrants further discussion by the Membership Committee as a whole.

Navigator Subcommittee: Submitted by Subcommittee Chair Danielle Sangalang

In 2025, The Navigator Program matched experienced conference attendees with attendees interested in guidance or advice about the 2025 SAA Hybrid Conference. Navigators shared their experience, advised archivists on sessions and special events that fit their interests, and facilitated networking with other conference attendees.

1. Application Process

- a. This year's program continued with issuing a single application form to recruit both mentors and mentees.
 - i. The application was launched on May 20, 2025. The application was distributed later because SAA 2025 was scheduled later this year.
 - ii. The application closed on August 8th due to the need for additional in person navigators.
 - iii. The Navigator Program was advertised through multiple venues between June and August, including the Announcements list, Section lists and SAA In the Loop.
 - iv. Subcommittee members matched volunteers in early August and distributed matches in the first week of August.

This application form continued to ask Navigator volunteers whether they would be willing to be matched with two navigators this year.

2. Navigator gmail account

- a. Due to technical complications, the SAA Navigator gmail account was abandoned. The subcommittee co-chairs utilized their own email addresses to communicate with navigators and navigates this year.

3. Applicants overview

- a. Navigator applications: 34
 - i. Navigators accepting two navigates: 17
 - ii. Navigators accepting one navigate: 17
 - iii. Navigators recruited after the application closure: 11
 - iv. Navigators participating virtually only: 5
- b. Navigate applications:
 - i. Total navigate applications: 45
 - ii. Navigates that applied after the application closure: 4
 - iii. Navigates participating virtually only: 3
- c. Additional navigator recruitment:
 - i. After the initial application period, there was not a sufficient number of in person navigator volunteers to match all eligible in person navigates.
 - ii. Subcommittee members reached out separately to attempt to recruit additional navigators. As a result, 11 additional navigators were recruited and all eligible in person navigates were successfully matched.
- d. **Total navigator/navigate matches: 45**

Navigator recruitment continues to be a challenge and demand for Navigators significantly outpaces the number of Navigator volunteers. Half of navigates relied on a navigator who was willing to take on two navigates. This could be a challenge for program sustainability moving forward.

Membership Committee Blog:

New:

SAA Council approved the expansion of the subcommittee to take effect in year 2025-2026. To help fill some gaps, SAA Council approved a mid-term appointment one of these new members to be filled in January 2026.

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

Goal 2: Enhancing Professional Growth

Goal 3: Advancing the Field

Goal 4: Meeting Members' Needs

SAA ANNUAL MEETING

Number of attendees: 30

Link to meeting minutes:

Summary of meeting activities and highlights:

The Membership Committee allowed attendees to talk about the future of SAA and membership. Great concern was brought up over potential increased dues and the lack of affordability for several archivists (new and seasoned) to maintain membership.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

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

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

Yes, what is being asked of the Membership Committee by Council is not possible because there weren't enough members to fulfill all of the needs and requests in the strategic plan.

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

Council needs a more realistic approach to volunteer labor and lower those expectations. Folks who serve have fulltime (plus) jobs and families. While we all happily serve for the good of the profession, the level of burnout is atrocious. This doesn't mean we don't feel appreciated, but there needs to be a better balance and level of care.

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