



SAA COUNCIL PROJECT 2025 WORKING GROUP

SAA Diversity Committee
Annual Meeting
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WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

LYDIA TANG

Lyrasis
lydia.tang@lyrasis.org



SELENA ORTEGA-CHIOLERO

Chickaloon Village Traditional Council
seortegachiolero@chickaloon-nsn.gov



JILLIAN CUELLAR

Tulane University Libraries
Special Collections
jcuellar1@tulane.edu

CHARGE OF THE WORKING GROUP

At the November 2025 Council meeting, after the outcome of the 2024 elections, we discussed planning for the future and how archives might be affected by the upcoming changes in the US Administration.

We knew that we needed to be more proactive and less reactive. Thus, we were tasked with reviewing Project 2025 so that we could develop planned actions to enable us to respond more effectively to the changes that will affect the archival landscape. Our focus is to analyze Project 2025 in order to:

- ❖ Summarize direct and indirect impacts on archives, records, and cultural institutions
- ❖ Highlight implications for archivists, libraries, and allied professionals
- ❖ Mobilize awareness and strategic response in the archival community





WHAT IS PROJECT 2025?

A strategic policy and governance plan created by the Heritage Foundation and allied conservative think tanks

Intended to guide the next Republican administration's transition and restructure of the federal government

Covers nearly every federal agency and touches on issues of staffing, budgeting, and regulatory rollbacks

DIRECT MENTION OF ARCHIVES & LIBRARIES

"ARCHIVIST"

0 Results

"ARCHIVES"

Only appears in citations

"LIBRARIANS"

1 hit; falsely linked to criminality

"LIBRARIES"

3 hits, all negative or ideologically charged

- Libraries accused of promoting "pornography"
- Framing libraries as unaccountable public institutions

Signals a **hostile ideological framing** rather than support or policy planning

MENTIONS OF RECORDS (23 HITS)

KEY EXAMPLES:

- 01 ➤ Border Patrol record cleansing
Page 5
- 02 ➤ DoD, ICE, DOJ Targeting records for enforcement and concealment
- 03 ➤ Emphasis on overclassification reform – **automation over human oversight**
Page 223
- 04 ➤ Misuse of FERPA to increase parental surveillance over student records
Pages 334,344,358
- 05 ➤ Risk of **data manipulation, restricted access, or destruction** of public records

OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET (OMB)

- ❖ Proposed restructuring could revive attempts to sell federal repositories, like NARA Seattle
- ❖ Use of the Congressional Review Act to bundle harmful regulatory rollbacks
- ❖ Poses risk to NARA, federal records centers, and other repositories on federal land

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION IMPACTS

- ❖ Shift responsibility for Native education to BIA, bypassing existing educational archives
- ❖ Block grants to states = potential loss of funding for academic archives/libraries
- ❖ State-run institutions like universities, and state archives/museums vulnerable to drastic cuts

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR - BIE SCHOOLS

- ❖ 183 Bureau of Indian Education schools—many with libraries/archives—subject to restructuring
- ❖ Risks include loss of localized access to culturally grounded records
- ❖ Increased federal overreach in Indigenous education may restrict documentation efforts

BROADER IMPACTS ON CULTURAL HERITAGE INFRASTRUCTURE

- ❖ Defunding/redirecting federal grants (IMLS, NEH, NHPRC, etc.)
- ❖ Censorship or whitewashing of public history exhibitions, archives, and education
- ❖ Destruction of or restricted access to federal data
- ❖ Undermining of historical truth and collective memory

IMPACTS ON THE ARCHIVAL PROFESSION

- ❖ Attacks on higher education → hiring freezes, layoffs, funding loss
- ❖ Undermines climate-related archival projects
- ❖ Cuts to Public Service Loan Forgiveness → recruitment and retention issues
- ❖ Growing privatization agenda makes public service less viable

SUMMARY OF KEY RISKS



STRUCTURAL

Agency reorganization,
funding cuts



OPERATIONAL

Loss of staffing,
institutional partnerships



ETHICAL

Records manipulation,
data suppression



PROFESSIONAL

Threats to sustainability
of archival careers and
public-sector roles

CALL TO ACTION FOR ARCHIVISTS

Our profession's future—and our collective well-being—depend on united action:

STAY INFORMED

Read Project 2025 and monitor policy developments in your state, county/borough, and city

ADVOCATE

Partner, partner, partner ...with legal/higher ed allies and other organizations to protect cultural institutions

DOCUMENT

Prioritize capturing at-risk histories and records now

MOBILIZE

Work with SAA component groups and regional groups to create rapid response plan

**"Archives are not
just about memory
- they are about
power"**

If enacted fully, Project 2025 could centralize control, restrict access, and dismantle the public record. Archivists must be ready.



TSIN'AEN/THANK YOU

LET'S OPEN IT UP—WHAT'S ON
YOUR MIND?

AS A REMINDER:

SAA August Council Meeting is on Sunday,
August 24, 2025, at 9:00AM in Anaheim, CA.

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