

Society of American Archivists
Membership Meeting
Agenda item
August 07, 2012
San Diego, California

Membership Meeting Agenda Item
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Proposal: Develop a “Benefits of Membership” on demand presentation

Concept: Prepare a presentation focusing on what SAA membership has to offer and how to utilize these resources. The presentation could be located on the Continuing Education list of on-demand classes and offered for free to members.

The presentation could be as short and simple as a series of power-point slides with audio, or it could be more complex and elaborate – including video interviews for example. It could be developed into a series that provides an overview of benefits with follow up presentations on specific topics.

Potential uses: Key contacts could include a link to the presentation in any emails they send to new members. SAA staff could use the presentation as a tool when reaching out to non-renewing members. Members at large could access the presentation when they are looking for ways to contribute or better utilize their member benefits in their professional lives.

It is my belief that the membership committee is ideally suited to develop this presentation as it is our mission to support the needs all members: student, individual, institutional; new, long term, retired and fellows alike. Each of these constituencies has unique needs and reasons for being part of SAA, together we form a rich tapestry of professionals.

Background: SAA has a growing membership that includes a broad range of specializations. SAA continues to add new roundtables and groups to meet the needs of our members. Although growing, we still have a number of non-renewing members each year. Periodically there are instances where roundtables, sections or other groups have developed ideas for programs that they then put into development only to find out later that their efforts duplicate programs already in place and supported by SAA. Sometimes this duplicated effort becomes missed opportunities for collaboration.

Support: Developing a “Benefits of Membership” on demand presentation would provide a way to summarize and highlight key benefits of being a member in SAA. It would serve multiple purposes, most directly as an orientation tool accessible to key contacts for distribution to new members and accessible to all constituencies interested in a refresher or reminder of what membership can do for them throughout their professional lives.

Impact on Strategic Priorities: The proposed project would support Desired Outcome #3 of Strategic Priority #1, Technology. The proposed project is also directly in line with the Membership committee responsibility for Keeping Membership Informed as outlined in the SAA committee guidelines.

Fiscal Impact: The project can be executed with few outright expenses. The largest expense will be in the need for staff time to assist with timely completion of the presentation and to ensure continuity with the message and brand of SAA. Depending on the actual project outline agreed upon, it may be useful to draw upon the SAA Oral History Task Force if the committee wants to explore including a “welcome message” or individual interviews.

Recommendation: I recommend that the membership committee create a work group of 2-3 committee members that will meet during the SAA annual meeting to prepare a project outline that will include suggestions for: 1. Media and format 2. Length 3. Content concentration 4. Project timeline 5. List of resources needed.