



## General Information

Please complete the following Annual Report form by September 1. Questions?

Contact [governance@archivists.org](mailto:governance@archivists.org).

### \* 1. Name of Section

User Experience

### \* 2. Council Liaison ([check here](#))

Alison Clemens

### \* 3. Chair (Report Submitter) Information

Name Faith Charlton

Email [faithc@princeton.edu](mailto:faithc@princeton.edu)

### \* 4. Roster Updates: Please list all newly elected or appointed steering committee members.

Include full name, position title, and term end date for each.

Chair: Faith Charlton, 2023-2026

Vice Chair/Chair Elect: Theresa Berger, 2024-2027

Immediate Past Chair: Betts Coup, 2023-2025

Member-at-Large: Shaun Ellis, 2023-2025

Member-at-Large: Laura Bell, 2024-2026

## PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

SAA's sections are integral to SAA's work on behalf of our members and the profession. For many members, sections represent their primary experience with SAA. Please indicate all projects and activities that your section has completed this year, continues to work on, or plans to implement in the next year.

**\* 5. Completed:**

This past year the UX Section Steering Committee hosted an interactive workshop, "A UX Journey: Identifying Problems and Solutions and Improving User Experience in Increments" led by Shelby Kroske and Sruthin Gaddam from Michigan State University Libraries that was especially geared towards beginner UX practitioners. Instructors introduced participants, who numbered around 30 folks, to basic UX testing techniques, adaptive models for conducting UX studies with limited resources, and reviewed next steps after testing to identify high impact solutions that improve user experience. The recording and supplementary materials are currently up on the UX Section's microsite under a new group page "[Programming and Presentations](#)." Addition of this programming prompted other changes to the microsite, including two new group pages, one for "Subcommittees and Working Groups" (discussed below) and "UX Resources," which includes our previously completed Shared UX Bibliography and the aforementioned Programming and Presentations page. We look forward to building out this last page especially, as more programming opportunities emerge within the section.

To provide space and encourage opportunities for participation in the Section, we also published, at the beginning of the 2025-2026 year, and later made revisions to, [guidelines](#) for how to form working groups or subcommittees. These guidelines, along with a shared spreadsheet to encourage collaboration among section members interested in forming a working group or subcommittee, can be found on our new microsite page for Subcommittees and Working Groups. We established one working group, the UX Principles Working Group, led by Steering Committee at-large member Laura Bell, and facilitated the formation of another subgroup, the Institutional Archives group, initiated and led by UX Section member Anna Reznik.

The focus of the UX Principles Working Group is to author a set of User Experience research and design principles specific to work in archives. Building on existing user experience principles, the working group will adapt current UX industry knowledge to identify key fundamentals of user experience research in archives work. These principles will articulate the importance and value of UX research and design in archives in various aspects of our work, identify stakeholders for UX in archives work, and define key fundamentals and practices of UX research and design as they relate to our goals and values as archivists.

The idea for the Institutional Archives Working Group is to evaluate UX's applicability with institutional records, defined as records created and primarily used by the entity that created them and assess the current use of UX with institutional records throughout the records

lifecycle. To help facilitate the formation of this subgroup, the Steering Committee facilitated a coffee chat hosted by Anna Reznik for those interested in joining the group.

The UX Section held its annual business meeting on July 11 with 43 attendees. Faith Charlton shared the year's updates with the group, followed by several discussions and two presentations on UX work for archival discovery platforms. Laura Bell and Anna Reznik provided information and updates about the UX Principles and Institutional Archives Working Groups. The presentations included "Collections Explorer: UX Research for AI-Enhanced Archival Search" by Meg McMahon (Harvard) and "Creating Space in ASpace for New Perspectives: Brief Notes From A Year-Long UX Assessment of the ArchivesSpace PUI" by Benn Joseph, Frank Sweis, Dana Lamparello, Kelsey O'Connell (Northwestern). Theresa Berger led the last part of the meeting which involved an interactive brainstorming session with attendees to share opportunities they would like the Section to provide its members.

Lastly, as a way to continue to offer spaces for Section members to participate and build community, we held a casual meetup in Anaheim during the SAA Annual Meeting for folks attending the meeting in person.

#### **\* 6. Ongoing:**

The UX Section will continue to organize collaborative events on topics related to user experience and the archival field. The Steering Committee will also continue to support members in the formation of subcommittees and working groups. It will continue to be involved in promoting projects related to UX in archives, including the *American Archivist* special section on UX. The Section will also continue to formalize how it's administered as it continues in its nascent stage of development.

The UX Principles Working Group will continue to draft User Experience research and design principles specific to work in archives with the goal of having a completed draft by the end of 2025.

#### **\* 7. New:**

To continue formalizing the Section's governance structure, Steering Committee members will author roles and responsibilities for steering committee members. This year, the Steering Committee will also, for the first time, include 2 Members-at-Large as it looks to expand its capacity to manage the Section.

The Institutional Archives Working Group will formalize its charge and in the near term, focus on compiling and assessing resources applicable to UX in an institutional setting; determine use of UX with institutional records; and identify pain points, gaps in resources, and opportunities.

## **SAA STRATEGIC PLAN**

SAA's Strategic Plan is the guiding document for the association. Please review the current [Strategic Plan](#) and indicate below how your section has contributed to each of the 4 main goals.

### **\* 8. Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists**

The Section serves as a place to develop and maintain a user experience community of practice and standards, which the profession currently lacks. Building a community of practice in this area will assure that usability work is carried out in a way that is supported by peer-to-peer and professional organizational conversations and resources and informed by standards and guidelines.

### **\* 9. Goal 2: Enhancing Professional Growth**

The Section is supporting the needs of professionals who would like to expand their knowledge of and engage in user experience work and providing space for those already engaged in this work to share their knowledge and expertise.

### **\* 10. Goal 3: Advancing the Field**

The User Experience Section is filling an unmet need in the profession around familiarity and implementation of user experience initiatives in order to better center the needs of the various users of archives. Creating a community of practice around this work will enable a wide range of archivists to explore how to engage in user experience and usability testing and advance practices in their own institutions and across the field. The creation of this section has already resulted in additional SAA membership due to information professionals' particular interest in this area of work.

### **\* 11. Goal 4: Meeting Members' Needs**

Most archivists do not know how to engage in user experience work in order to center the needs of their users. The community of practice this Section develops will provide much needed resources for SAA members. Thus far, the Section has provided educational programming, created a community-informed bibliography, and established two working groups with the infrastructure in place to allow for the development of additional groups, among other initiatives. The subgroups will be major contributors to the development of archival-specific guidelines and principles. This work is part of the Section's overall goal to create a scalable toolkit for archivists engaging in UX work to employ. We have had regular turnout at both our annual meetings and across special programming and events.

## **2024 SAA ANNUAL MEETING - SECTION MEETING**

### **\* 12. Number of Attendees**

43

### **\* 13. Provide a summary of meeting activities and highlights. (No minutes, please, just notes.)**

Our meeting included updates and announcements from the Steering Committee, our Council Liaison, Alison Clemens, and the chairs of the Section's working groups, Laura Bell (UX Principles Working Group) and Anna Reznik (Institutional Archives Working Group). It also included two presentations on the topic of UX work for archival discovery platforms by Meg McMahon (Harvard) and Benn Joseph, Frank Sweis, Dana Lamparello, Kelsey O'Connell (Northwestern). Lastly, the Steering Committee led the last part of the meeting which involved an interactive brainstorming session with attendees to share opportunities they would like the Section to provide its members.

## **Question Title**

### **14. Link to meeting minutes on the section's microsite (optional):**

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT**

### **\* 15. How would you describe the health or energy of your section? How engaged are your members?**

Though this is only our second year as a Section, we're pleased to note that the Section already has 149 members and are encouraged by the fact that members have already been active and engaged, including in our working groups, at our programming events, the Annual Meeting, in our election for Steering Committee members, our casual meet-ups at SAA's Annual Meeting, as well as on our member email list. We are looking forward to continuing to build this section and the community of practice around user experience.

## **Questions for council**

### **\* 16. Does your section have questions or concerns for the SAA Council?**

We would like to ask about Section business meetings. In our experience of hosting several such meetings now, it seems that SAA's current format of scheduling these throughout a several week time span and as separate from the Annual Meeting makes it challenging for folks to attend. While we have had a respectable attendance at our meetings, we think that how and when these meetings are scheduled could be reassessed. We would also like to ask about using Zoom as opposed to WebEx to host these meetings as we have experienced significant

technical issues with WebEx every time, including the host of the meeting losing all of the platform's functionality.

Done

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