

Society of American Archivists Council Meeting Chicago, IL

Visual Materials Section: Annual Report

Prepared by: Paige Adair, Maggie McCready, Aliza Leventhal

Year: 2024- 2025

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

Paige Adair - Chair (2025 - 2027)

Maggie McCready - Vice Chair / Chair-Elect (2025 - 2028) - newly elected!

Aliza Leventhal - Immediate Past Chair (2024 - 2026)

Adrienne Pruitt - Member-at-Large (2025-2028) - newly elected!

Jacob Wolf - Member-at-Large (2025-2027) - newly elected!

Ashley Tooke - Member-at-Large (2024-2027)

Sabrina Gorse - Communications Coordinator (2024-2026)

Courtney Hopkins - Web Liaison (2025-2027)

Mari Khasmanyar - Views Editor (2024-2026)

Bryan Whittedge - Council Liaison (2024-2027)

Council Liaison:

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.)

Completed:

2024 SAA Annual Meeting - Bring your own breakfast session on description practices for visual materials

February 2025 - Virtual joint meeting with Description Section

April 2025 - Proposed Three-Year Plan check in

Ongoing:

Born Digital Visual Materials Working Group

Met monthly starting in May 2025, developing born digital artist survey, finalizing questions and structure. Survey will encompass topics such as demographics, software, online platforms, file formats and naming conventions, and storage. Intended completion date Winter 2025/2026.

New:

[Finalized the Section's 2025-2028 Three-Year Plan](#)

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 [\[CJ1\]](#) [\[CJ2\]](#) main goals.)

Goal 1: Advocating for Archives and Archivists

Goal 2: Enhancing Professional Growth

February 2025 - Virtual joint meeting with Description Section

Goal 3: Advancing the Field

2024 SAA Annual Meeting - Bring your own breakfast session on description practices for visual materials

Goal 4: Meeting Members' Needs

April 2025 - Proposed Three-Year Plan check in
Finalized 2025-2028 Three-Year Plan

SAA ANNUAL MEETING

Number of attendees: Approximately 40

Link to meeting minutes: [📄 2025-VMSAnnualMeeting](#)

Summary of meeting activities and highlights:

- Welcome & Introductions – Steering Committee/Election Results
- Views
- VMS Year in Review
- SAA Council Update
- 3-Year Plan Overview
- Interactive: What event topic should we do next?
- Digital Visual Materials Working Group Update
- Winventory Lightning Talks

SELF-ASSESSMENT

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

VMS remains a healthy section of SAA with a wide range of perspectives represented in our membership as reflected in a frequent use of the VMS listserv. While the BYO-Breakfast in-person event the section co-hosted at the SAA Annual Meeting in August 2024 had an overwhelming turnout of more than 100 attendees, there has been inconsistent success for virtual programming. For instance, there was a high turnout for the collaboration with the Description Section, a very low (2 people) turnout for the April review of the VMS 3-year plan, and a lackluster attendance at the annual meeting. Our *Views* blog remains active at a quarterly level, with a mixture of VMS members and steering committee members contributing posts.

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

The primary challenge for VMS leadership is around planning virtual events and struggling to find opportunities to facilitate meaningful connections for members. Additionally, not having clarity of the SAA Council's plans for addressing broader issues such as the federal administration's decisions impacting the archival profession (e.g., NARA, Library of Congress, and attacks on reparative and inclusive description and collecting efforts) presents a challenge for VMS leadership to effectively advocate and support our members.

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

Formal support from SAA, specifically in the form of providing physical meeting space at annual conventions would foster deeper connections between section members. Getting to meet and converse face to face may allow members to feel more connected and invested in collaborating with one another on long term projects. Meeting in person provides more opportunities for individual discussion and idea generation. We recognize there are many factors (costs, scheduling, logistics, etc.) to account for, but as well-demonstrated over the pre-pandemic years the in-person section meetings are deeply meaningful to developing communities of practice and mentorship opportunities.

Having a single email for the section's google drive would help with continuity of access to section resources and documents following leadership change. Can SAA provide a central email for each section to use?

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

1. In what ways does SAA currently attempt to facilitate spontaneous connections between early career professionals with mentors?
2. How does SAA envision the future of the archival community if we are continuously siloed into our screens instead of having cost-effective opportunities to meet in person?
3. How is SAA supporting archival professionals who are interested in producing timely publications, workshops, and professional training/courses for the benefit of the field?

4. Are there any proactive measures SAA is taking to ensure gaps in the professional literature and training are available?
5. What is the long-term sustainable plan of SAA?

[CJ1] Suggest changing to "contributed to one or more of the four main goals," clarifying that component groups don't have to contribute to all four goals necessarily.

[CJ2] Maybe also change to "how the component group has contributed or plans to contribute to" to account for activities that have not been started yet.