

Toward a More Data-Driven Archives Profession: Gathering the Information We Need to Improve Our Performance and Broaden Our Inclusivity

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) seeks a \$249,500 National Leadership Project Grant from IMLS to perform a second cycle of its Archival Census and Education Needs Survey in the United States (A*CENSUS II), a comprehensive, two-part survey of U.S. archivists and archival institutions. SAA will survey 1) every self-identified archivist/archives worker in the U.S. to gather information about their demographics, educational background and needs, job placement and status, and salaries, as well as their perspectives on key issues in the field, and 2) the directors of archival organizations to gather data about institutional characteristics; resources; strategic directions; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and access issues. Data and analyses will be made publicly available to support research and use by archivists and archives workers, archival institutions, and members of other cultural heritage communities.

Statement of National Need

Archivists are vital to identifying and preserving essential aspects of a society's cultural heritage: organizing and maintaining the documentary records of institutions, groups, and individuals; assisting in the process of remembering the past through authentic and reliable primary sources; and serving a broad range of communities and people who seek to locate and use valuable evidence and information. In sum, archivists play a vital role in defining the shape and texture of our heritage for future generations.

As the U.S. population becomes increasingly diverse and technologies for recording and disseminating information evolve rapidly, it is essential to gather baseline data about archives and archivists to assess how archival institutions, the profession, and archival education must adapt so that archivists can continue to fulfill their mission to society. Given the leadership role that archivists play in defining what our cultural heritage will include, acting as leaders in the areas of diversity, equity, inclusion, and access (DEIA) is essential to the archives profession. Yet leaders of archival institutions face significant barriers in making data-driven decisions to benefit their organizations because of the paucity of recent, comprehensive national or regional data about the archives workforce and archival institutions. Further, the archives profession has not fostered a culture of routine and regular acquisition and assessment of critical data about the field, its practitioners, and the environments in which they function.

When archival institutions advocate for resources, set goals, or benchmark against their peers, they would benefit from comprehensive peer data to facilitate their analyses. When education institutions or professional organizations design new curricula or assess education offerings, they would benefit from access to more accurate information about known gaps or needs. Researchers who study trends in the changing archives workforce, challenges in responding to community needs, or the impact of archives in their communities would benefit from access to comprehensive baseline data about archivists and the institutions in which they work. A*CENSUS II would address these needs. This Community Catalysts project aligns with the IMLS goal to build the capacity of archival institutions to recruit, train, and develop their workforce and to identify trends to support more informed decision-making.

SAA is the oldest and largest archivist association in North America, serving the education and information needs of more than 6,000 individual archivists and institutions. SAA is especially interested in how workforce data might enhance efforts to increase DEIA within the profession.

Historical Context and Theoretical Framing

In 2004 IMLS funded A*CENSUS, the first comprehensive, nationwide survey of the archives profession. With a distribution list of just under 12,000 individuals and a response rate of nearly 50%, the survey gathered demographic data about archivists, including their education, career, and professional development needs. Analyses and data were made widely available via SAA's professional journal (*American Archivist*), website links to the dataset and secondary analyses housed by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR), and presentations at national, regional, state, and local conferences of cultural heritage organizations. In 2020 SAA proposes to build on and expand this survey. By collecting longitudinal data, A*CENSUS II will provide opportunities for comparative analysis. Additional questions will address emerging trends. A second survey of directors will provide valuable baseline data for their use in benchmarking their institutions with peer organizations in such areas as resource allocation, strategic goal-setting, progress toward their DEIA goals, and other measures.

The A*CENSUS questionnaire was built on a series of prior surveys of the profession, including David Bearman's 1982 survey of archivists, a 1985 census of archival organizations, and a series of salary surveys. A*CENSUS was undertaken with an eye to capturing a snapshot of the archives profession early in the new millennium and at a point in time that supposed the impending retirement of the Baby Boom generation. Fourteen years after A*CENSUS, it is again time to assess generational transitions within the archives profession, especially as delayed and deferred retirements are resulting in a deluge of senior staff turnover. By replicating those aspects of the 2004 survey that focused on demographics (age, gender, geographic locations, organizational base, etc.), we will be able to make meaningful claims about the past decade of professional employment "churning" as well as venture some reliable predictions about the near-term future.

A*CENSUS provided a snapshot of the archives profession that served as the basis for SAA's strategic planning and programming efforts beginning in 2005. Those efforts prioritized:

- Attracting individuals (to both the profession and the association) who more closely reflect the diversity of society at large;
- Rethinking and retooling our professional development and publication offerings to provide archivists with the knowledge and skills necessary to manage records created in a variety of digital forms and to use information technologies to enhance access to and use of collections;
- Understanding the nature of employment in the profession, given the extent of project work and a culture of low salaries and inadequate benefits; and
- Creating within SAA the infrastructure to support data collection and analysis.

Following are examples of the types of activities that SAA has undertaken in these high-priority areas as a direct result of information obtained from A*CENSUS.

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion: Nearly 90% of survey respondents were White/Caucasian, and those who identified as members of traditionally underrepresented groups entered the profession via very different paths than their colleagues (i.e., they were assigned related archival work in their

jobs or seemingly stumbled upon the profession while seeking work). In response, SAA partnered with the Association of Research Libraries to administer the IMLS grant-funded *Mosaic Fellows Program* to “promote much-needed diversification of the archives and special collections professional workforce” via financial support, practical work experience, mentoring, career placement assistance, and leadership development to emerging professionals from traditionally underrepresented racial and ethnic minority groups. To date, 34 individuals have completed the program in seven years—many of them moving into SAA leadership. Since 2008 SAA and its Foundation have funded the *Mosaic Scholarship*, which provides financial and mentoring support to students of color pursuing graduate education in archival science and encourages students to pursue a career as an archivist. As of August 2019, \$85,000 has been awarded to 17 individuals.

Professional Development: Because gaining a greater understanding of archivists’ educational background and continuing education needs was a primary focus of the 2004 survey, its data revealed much about the gaps in learning created by new technologies, specifically the transition to born-digital records and the need to digitize analog records. In response, SAA created the *Digital Archives Specialist (DAS) certificate program*, a rigorous curriculum that provides the practical knowledge that archivists need to manage the demands of new technologies. More than 500 archivists have completed the nine-course requirement and comprehensive exam to earn the certificate; many more currently are enrolled in the curriculum. In addition, to fill significant gaps in the archival literature, SAA has published 23 modules in our *Trends in Archives Practice* series.

Employment: Small-scale follow-up salary surveys conducted by SAA and its Women Archivists Section have assisted prospective employers and archivists in negotiating more effectively in the hiring process. SAA has created an Archival Compensation Task Force to explore more deeply issues associated with pay equity, benefits, project work, and other aspects of compensation.

Infrastructure to Support Data Collection and Analysis: SAA has sponsored a well-attended and growing Research Forum in conjunction with our last 14 annual meetings. In 2018 we established a Committee on Research, Data, and Analysis (CORDA) that has begun work to provide 1) a repository or portal for data and other research outputs; 2) standardized tools for gathering and analyzing data; 3) training on gathering, analyzing, interpreting, and using data; and 4) up-to-date and reliable basic facts and figures about archives and archivists. One or more members of CORDA will serve on the A*CENSUS II Working Group.

We are confident that A*CENSUS II will yield both trends data and new information that will enable SAA, regional archival organizations, individual archivists, archival institutions, and our partners in cultural heritage organizations to develop initiatives, programs, policies, and guidelines that will have a profound impact on the future of the archives profession.

Project Design

Research Questions

The profession has changed significantly in the last 16 years, particularly in terms of diversity, technology, and education. Building on the important work catalyzed by the first census, A*CENSUS II will seek new—and actionable—information about the current state of the profession, its practitioners, and its supporting organizations.

To this end, we propose to explore three research questions that span the two large-scale surveys:

- What are the current demographic characteristics of archivists and archival organizations nationally? How has this makeup shifted since the initial A*CENSUS survey of individuals?
- What are the education needs of archivists and archives workers nationally, to what extent are these needs currently met, and where are the gaps?
- What are the resource, strategic direction, and diversity and equity issues faced by the directors of archival organizations nationally?

Project Approach

The project will span approximately 31 months and include phases for project launch, development of survey instruments and contact lists, survey fieldwork, analysis, and reporting and dissemination. A*CENSUS II will include two surveys:

- A survey of every self-identified archivist/archives worker in the U.S. to gather information about their demographics, education needs, job placement and status, and salaries, as well as their perspectives on key issues in the field, and
- A survey of the directors (or equivalent) of U.S. archival organizations to gather data about institutional characteristics; facilities; resources; strategic directions; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and access issues.

To ensure the methodological rigor and capacity required for A*CENSUS II, SAA will partner with a research firm, Ithaka S+R, to develop and implement the surveys and analyze the results. Ithaka S+R, a not-for-profit research and advisory service, has extensive experience in conducting rigorous and well-designed research studies within academic and cultural communities. Included in its portfolio are highly regarded national surveys of academic library directors and art museum directors, as well as international surveys of faculty members and students. Their approach to working with partner organizations is highly collaborative while drawing on deep subject matter expertise and methodological rigor—characteristics that make them an ideal partner for the proposed work.

Questionnaire design will be led by Ithaka S+R with substantial input from, and collaboration with, a ten-person Working Group with collective expertise in archival practice, archival education, new technologies, research, and data analysis. The group will comprise archivists who represent various “specialty” areas within the profession, and will include at least one member of CODA. Following the survey development phase, the group will continue to contribute subject matter knowledge and expertise with relevant communities as results are analyzed and disseminated.

For both surveys, Ithaka S+R will conduct cognitive interviews to pilot the survey and ensure that survey questions have been written clearly and will be interpreted consistently across respondents. Cognitive interviewing is a critically important step in identifying and addressing problems with draft survey questions prior to full survey implementation. The process adds qualitative depth that helps the survey author understand questions from a variety of respondent perspectives and make adjustments as needed. A small convenience sample that represents the characteristics of each of the survey populations will be employed, resulting in seven to ten cognitive interviews for each survey (for a total of fourteen to twenty interviews).

The *survey of individuals* (self-identified archivists/archives workers) will draw on key questions from the first survey for tracking and comparison purposes, and will include new questions on key

areas of coverage. Because many archivists and archives workers are not SAA members, we will gather our list of participants, in a manner consistent with the 2004 survey, by using the combined and de-duplicated email lists of national, regional, state, and local archival organizations. Several organizations already have committed their support to ensuring the broadest possible participation in the survey (see appendix). To reach those who work within community archives or who may not be aligned with traditional organizations, we will replicate procedures outlined in recent studies (e.g., Goldman and Tansey’s “RepoData” project [SAA Foundation, 2017] and Tillman and Rodriguez’s “Collective Responsibility” project [IMLS, 2018]) and partner with such projects and collectives as Documenting the Now, Project STAND, Shift Design, and the Community Archives Collective. SAA will lead outreach efforts with external partners to obtain contacts and will then process, clean, and de-dupe all of the lists received into a single list to be used for fielding the survey. External partners that share their member lists and receive a predetermined level of response (likely a combined measure of response rate and number of responses) will receive aggregate results representing their members.

For the *survey of organizations*—represented by archives directors (or equivalents)—we will contact the institutions represented in the email lists of national, regional, state, and local archival organizations, identify the unit head, and send the survey to that individual.

Across both surveys, we will use individual invitations so that we are able to calculate response rates. However, as we did successfully with the 2004 survey, we may supplement this approach by providing an open-access survey link for those who are not affiliated with the external partner organizations to ensure the broadest possible participation.

Data analysis will be conducted using a statistical software package such as R or SPSS. At the project’s conclusion, all data will be deposited with the ICPSR to ensure their long-term preservation. SAA will negotiate a non-exclusive deposit agreement with ICPSR (as we did for the first survey) so that the data, codebook documentation, and first-generation reports may be associated with the 2004 survey data and distributed together upon request from ICPSR members. SAA will share copyright to the data and reports with Ithaka S+R so that the organization that collected and processed the survey data may continue to produce analyses and reports for wide dissemination after the original project is completed. SAA will retain the right to make the original dataset available as we deem appropriate to ensure that the data are widely available to support further research. SAA’s Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment will support members’ use and reuse of research data and ensure that key aspects of A*CENSUS II will be re-administered periodically to provide longitudinal data.

Work Plan

<p>Aug – Oct 2020 <i>Launch Project</i></p>	<p>Issue funding award announcement and begin significant outreach to national, regional, state, and local organizations (e.g., American Association for State and Local History, Association for the Study of African American Life and History, Association of Moving Image Archivists, Conference of Intermountain Archivists, Council of State Archivists, Mid-Atlantic Regional Archives Conference, Midwest Archives Conference, National Archives and Records Administration, National Association of Government Archives and Records Administrators, National Council on Public History, New England Archivists, Northwest Archivists, Oral History Association, Rare Books and Manuscripts</p>
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	Section of the American Library Association, Regional Archival Associations Consortium, SAA, Society of California Archivists, Society of Georgia Archivists, Society of Southwest Archivists); complete contractual arrangements and project timelines with Ithaka S+R; schedule Working Group (virtual) meetings and other preliminary management tasks. Deliverables: Research plan; agreement with Ithaka S+R; schedule of Working Group meetings.
Nov 2020 – July 2021 <i>Develop Instruments and Survey Contacts</i>	Survey of Individuals: Ithaka S+R and the SAA Working Group to review previous instrument and findings; identify continuing areas of interest, those that can be retired, and new areas of emphasis; revise instrument; program survey; conduct seven to ten cognitive interviews to test instrument; finalize instrument; gather and de-dupe lists of invitees. Survey of Organizations: Develop thematic areas of interest (including DEIA); draft instrument; iterate with the Working Group on revisions; program survey; conduct seven to ten cognitive interviews to test instrument; finalize instrument; gather lists of invitees. Deliverables: Survey instrument for individuals with clean invitees list; survey instrument for organizations with clean invitees list.
Aug – Nov 2021 <i>Prepare Communications and Field Survey</i>	Develop survey communications (e.g., blog posts, invitations, and reminder messages); field surveys to SAA members and other listed invitees via survey platform; field surveys to nonmembers via outreach with other organizations; close surveys. Deliverables: Dataset of individual responses; dataset of organizational responses.
Dec 2021 – May 2022 <i>Analyze Results</i>	Conduct preliminary analysis of results; share with the Working Group for input/feedback; conduct further analysis of results; draft report of findings; share with the Working Group for input/feedback. Deliverables: Preliminary data analysis; draft of final report.
Jun 2022 – Feb 2023 <i>Reporting</i>	Publish findings in conjunction with a major release event at the August 2022 SAA Annual Meeting; conduct major communications/outreach effort to ensure that findings reach broadest possible audience; present results at conferences of other cultural heritage organizations (e.g., AASLH, ASALH, NCPH); deposit dataset with ICPSR and SAA Dataverse. Deliverables: Published reports; communications plan; dataset deposit.

Risks and Risk Mitigations

Risk: The survey will see low levels of participation. **Mitigation:** Given 1) the participation rates experienced with the original A*CENSUS, 2) SAA’s community presence, and 3) Ithaka S+R’s extensive experience in fielding similar large-scale surveys (e.g., their national surveys of faculty members, library directors, and art museum directors), we are confident in our ability to generate strong participation. Both individual members and allied organizations have clamored for a second census, which increases our confidence. We will implement a robust outreach strategy that leverages our partnerships with national, regional, state, and local archival organizations as well as allied national organizations and groups and collectives that interact with community archivists. External partners that share their member lists and receive a predetermined level of response will receive aggregate results representing their members.

Risk: The dataset deposited with ICPSR will not be used as broadly as possible due to the fact that access is limited to member institutions and those who pay a fee for access. **Mitigation:** As noted above, SAA will negotiate a non-exclusive deposit agreement with ICPSR (as we did for A*CENSUS) so that the data, codebook documentation, and first-generation reports may be associated with the 2004 survey data and distributed together upon request from ICPSR members. SAA will retain the right to make the original dataset available as we deem appropriate to ensure that the data are widely available to support further research. To complement the excellent capabilities of ICPSR with regard to long-term preservation, SAA intends to deploy an open-access repository of quantitative and qualitative data about archivists, archival organizations, and the value/impact of the archives profession. Data from A*CENSUS and A*CENSUS II will form the basis for a new repository being built with open-source “Dataverse” software developed by Harvard University and deployed in more than 50 instances worldwide. The SAA Dataverse is scheduled to launch formally at the August 2020 SAA Annual Meeting.

Risk: The data will not be widely used for research and decision-making by archivists. **Mitigation:** SAA, through CORDA, is committed to a broad vision of data-oriented professional practice and is allocating the resources to support training and educating archivists in the gathering and use of data about themselves and their professional practices. That education and training will begin at two pre-conference workshops in August 2020 and will be ongoing.

Indicators of Success

Although it is tempting to suggest that an important indicator of success with this project is a survey participation level of 40% or 50%, we aspire to much more than that. We believe that “success” will be indicated by:

- Strong participation by, and ongoing engagement with, those individuals who work with community archives and in other non-traditional settings. We want to understand the full range of current archives work, the impact of this new segment of the profession, and how the needs of these individuals may be similar to or different from our traditional model of “the archivist.”
- Our ability to measure the impact of our ongoing efforts to diversify the profession and its professional organizations.
- SAA’s and others’ proactive use of compensation data to develop and implement strategies that result in more equitable employment for archivists.
- Provision of useful, actionable data to archives directors that enables them to benchmark their institutions and advocate effectively for resources.
- Creation of a culture of “analytical literacy” among archivists that shifts the profession from making subjective (albeit impassioned) arguments of value to more objective, fact-based claims for societal impact.

Archivists have awaited A*CENSUS II for more than a decade. We believe that the excitement of participating in the surveys, together with creation of a research infrastructure within SAA that will ensure education, training, and access to research data from a variety of studies (including A*CENSUS II) will go a long way in ensuring engagement with the data and stimulating a commitment by SAA members to sustaining future research efforts.

Diversity Plan

A*CENSUS II is intended to 1) capture the demographics of the “full” archival workforce, 2) understand the needs created by seminal shifts in archival practice and non-custodial archival work since 2004, and 3) conduct a basic assessment of physical repositories and resources.

SAA’s most recent Statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (2020) includes the following: “SAA centers its values on diversity and equity and is committed to building a culture of inclusion. We understand diversity to encompass 1) socio-cultural factors related to individual and community identity (including the attributes in SAA’s Equal Opportunity/Nondiscrimination Policy, and 2) professional and geographic factors reflecting the Society’s desire for broad participation from archivists working in various locations, repository types and sizes, and professional specializations.”

In support of this statement, we believe that it is critical to survey all people who identify as performing archival work to ensure the completeness of the multifaceted American record. Thus we intend to survey professional archivists/records managers, “lone arrangers” (those who work alone or with limited or no resources), archives workers, community archivists, public historians, and others) and a wide range of institutions that are responsible for identifying, preserving, and providing access to records of enduring value.

Because SAA exists at the center of the vast archives communication “hub,” we are aware of various tensions within the profession that may stem from inter-generational issues but that also may reflect differing views and attitudes based on diversity of race, gender, social and political perspectives, and worldviews. The widespread use of social media in all its forms has given greater visibility to these multiple perspectives. Extended queries via A*CENSUS II about such tensions—as well as varying communication preferences and patterns within and across demographic clusters of archivists—will allow SAA to understand more deeply how age- and status-driven differences of perspective may have evolved or emerged between censuses.

A*CENSUS II will go well beyond the previous tally of “minority” archivists in the profession by casting a much wider net made possible by our relationships with national, regional, state, and local associations and organizations as well as partnerships fostered by our members with communities, non-profit organizations, churches, families, and others to create and maintain archival materials that document their histories and community impact.

As detailed below, we believe that uncovering data on DEIA in the archives profession will provide key strategic knowledge to help guide SAA’s programmatic focus in the future. We are deeply committed to upholding our commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and access in our implementation of this project and beyond through SAA’s mission and ongoing work.

National Impact

We expect the national impact of A*CENSUS II to be in the following areas:

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Access: A*CENSUS II will provide the first opportunity in 16 years to get a snapshot of the diverse make-up of the field. But the survey will go well beyond the previous tally of “minority” archivists in the profession. We intend to obtain a much richer and

more nuanced understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion in archives—as well as access to archives by members of traditionally underrepresented groups—and to probe more deeply the barriers that archivists encounter in diversifying not only their organizations, but also their collections and outreach services to communities. These data will help the profession create new strategies to 1) recruit and retain individuals who represent the full diversity of our society and 2) develop and sustain projects that will ensure the completeness of the American historical record. The survey itself will be an important outreach tool in building relationships with community archivists and others in non-traditional settings. With relationships come opportunities to inform, educate, and develop critically important advocacy initiatives—all to the benefit of the record.

Professional Development and Education: SAA and other professional development providers will use the data to continue to address the education and training needs of archivists and archives workers at every stage in their careers. Based on the 2004 survey, SAA helped thousands of archivists gain the knowledge to deal effectively with born-digital records via our Digital Archives Specialist curriculum. What is the next “DAS” revolution? We don’t know, but we will be prepared to address archivists’ evolving and next-generation learning needs based on what A*CENSUS II tells us. In addition, as in 2004 we fully expect that graduate archival education programs will use A*CENSUS II data to refine and restructure their curricula.

Employment and Career Development: Archives is a distinct profession that is often confused or conflated with librarianship, resulting in a host of challenges associated with salaries, staff status, and resource allocation. We will explore this issue via specific questions within the survey. Job titles vary, too, and it will be incumbent upon us to mine the survey results to get a better sense of the range of positions that archivists and archives workers hold. Professional and hiring managers will use the data to understand gaps in skill sets and/or emerging skills that they should seek or develop in their employees and to identify the need for salary adjustments and improved work conditions to be competitive. SAA and others will make proactive use of compensation data to correct the misinformation provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and O*Net, for example, and to develop and implement strategies that result in more equitable employment for archivists.

Establishing a Research Culture and Infrastructure: The absence of a proactive strategy to place research at the heart of the archival enterprise has, we believe, caused the archives profession to lag behind others. Individual archivists need to know how to approach their functional responsibilities in part as research problems requiring systematic analysis. Archival organizations need to understand their status and positioning in larger bureaucracies and society as a whole as assessment and evaluation problems requiring locally gathered data and widely shared findings. SAA itself needs to understand advocacy responsibilities in part as a research problem requiring reliable and shareable facts and figures about the impact of archival work. A*CENSUS II is of fundamental relevance to SAA’s priority initiative to increase the “analytical literacy” of the archives profession, i.e., the capabilities of individual archivists and the capacity of archival organizations to gather data systematically, assess and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data, and report findings lucidly in publications and on the open web. The A*CENSUS II initiative will create, again, one of the most comprehensive and significant datasets in support of the wider goal of furthering professional competencies. Data use and the impact of research generally turns on an integrated approach to data acquisition, data access and, perhaps most importantly, training and support for purpose-driven data reuses. SAA, through its Committee on Research, Data, and Assessment, is committed to this broader vision of data-oriented professional practice and is

allocating the resources to support educating archivists in the gathering and use of data about themselves and their professional practices. SAA will ensure the sustainability of this effort by including, within its strategic plan and its operational budgets, more frequent censuses of the profession.

Informing Archival Institutions: The SAA office is contacted several times each month by directors (and equivalents) of archival institutions seeking information about other institutions' public services metrics, holdings counts and measures, hiring trends, and DEI policies, among many other issues. We refer them to existing standards and guidelines and, when possible, to the director of another institution whom we know—anecdotally—has faced a similar question or issue. Leaders of archival institutions face significant barriers in making data-driven decisions to benefit their organizations because of the paucity of recent, comprehensive national or regional data about the archives workforce and institutions. The A*CENSUS II survey of organizations will provide comprehensive data about institutional characteristics, resources, strategic directions, and diversity and equity issues—data that will enable institution leaders to benchmark against their peers, advocate for resources, and set goals based on the lessons learned by others. SAA will actively promote participation in the survey, work to ensure that institutional leaders are aware of the data and how to access and use them, and provide opportunities for leaders to gather (in person or virtually) to discuss the data and share their experiences.

Deliverables

SAA and Ithaka S+R will implement a robust communication campaign using the many mediums and networks available to us to promote participation in the surveys and encourage engagement with the interim and final reports and datasets. All writings will be shared on our respective websites.

Further, we will ensure the following deliverables from the A*CENSUS II project:

- Ithaka S+R will provide substantive interim and final grant reports addressing the project objectives so that SAA can comply with IMLS reporting requirements.
- With Ithaka S+R's support, SAA will deposit with ICPSR all publicly accessible data, codebook documentation, and first-generation research reports. This will be followed by deposit of the datasets, more detailed documentation, published findings, and secondary analyses with the open-access SAA Dataverse.
- Ithaka S+R will provide documentation of its methodological approaches to support replication of subsets of the survey by SAA and others.
- SAA and Ithaka S+R will coordinate communication via interim blog posts, website posts, and other mediums to promote participation in the survey.
- Ithaka S+R, in collaboration with SAA, will prepare final research reports to be presented by appropriate representatives (Principal Research Investigator, SAA Working Group members, SAA leaders and staff) to the archives and cultural heritage communities via the SAA and Ithaka S+R websites, social media, blog posts, webcast(s), and conference presentations. A major release event will be featured at the 2022 SAA Annual Meeting in Boston.
- SAA may commission from SAA members or others one or more topical reports, based on analysis of the A*CENSUS II data, for publication in *American Archivist*.

Year 1	2020									2021		
Activity	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul
Phase 1: Launch Project												
Issue funding award announcement and begin significant outreach to national, regional, state, and local organizations.	█											
Complete contractual arrangements and project timelines with Ithaka S+R.	█	█										
Schedule Working Group (virtual) meetings and other preliminary management tasks.			█									
Phase 2: Develop Instruments and Survey Contacts												
Survey of Individuals:												
Ithaka S+R and SAA Working Group to review previous instrument and findings.				█	█							
Identify continuing areas of interest, those that can be retired, and new areas of emphasis; revise instrument; program survey.					█	█	█	█	█			
Conduct 7-10 cognitive interviews to test instrument.										█		
Finalize instrument.											█	
Gather and de-dupe lists of invitees.							█	█	█	█	█	█
Survey of Organizations:												
Develop thematic areas of interest (including DEIA); draft instrument; iterate with Working Group on revisions; program survey.						█	█	█	█			
Conduct 7-10 cognitive interviews to test instrument.										█		
Finalize instrument.											█	
Gather and de-dupe lists of invitees.							█	█	█	█	█	█

DIGITAL PRODUCT FORM

INTRODUCTION

The Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS) is committed to expanding public access to digital products that are created using federal funds. This includes (1) digitized and born-digital content, resources, or assets; (2) software; and (3) research data (see below for more specific examples). Excluded are preliminary analyses, drafts of papers, plans for future research, peer-review assessments, and communications with colleagues.

The digital products you create with IMLS funding require effective stewardship to protect and enhance their value, and they should be freely and readily available for use and reuse by libraries, archives, museums, and the public. Because technology is dynamic and because we do not want to inhibit innovation, we do not want to prescribe set standards and practices that could become quickly outdated. Instead, we ask that you answer questions that address specific aspects of creating and managing digital products. Like all components of your IMLS application, your answers will be used by IMLS staff and by expert peer reviewers to evaluate your application, and they will be important in determining whether your project will be funded.

INSTRUCTIONS

If you propose to create digital products in the course of your IMLS-funded project, you must first provide answers to the questions in **SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS**. Then consider which of the following types of digital products you will create in your project, and complete each section of the form that is applicable.

SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS

Complete this section if your project will create digital content, resources, or assets. These include both digitized and born-digital products created by individuals, project teams, or through community gatherings during your project. Examples include, but are not limited to, still images, audio files, moving images, microfilm, object inventories, object catalogs, artworks, books, posters, curricula, field books, maps, notebooks, scientific labels, metadata schema, charts, tables, drawings, workflows, and teacher toolkits. Your project may involve making these materials available through public or access-controlled websites, kiosks, or live or recorded programs.

SECTION III: SOFTWARE

Complete this section if your project will create software, including any source code, algorithms, applications, and digital tools plus the accompanying documentation created by you during your project.

SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA

Complete this section if your project will create research data, including recorded factual information and supporting documentation, commonly accepted as relevant to validating research findings and to supporting scholarly publications.

SECTION I: INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS AND PERMISSIONS

A.1 *We expect applicants seeking federal funds for developing or creating digital products to release these files under open-source licenses to maximize access and promote reuse. What will be the intellectual property status of the digital products (i.e., digital content, resources, or assets; software; research data) you intend to create? What ownership rights will your organization assert over the files you intend to create, and what conditions will you impose on their access and use? Who will hold the copyright(s)? Explain and justify your licensing selections. Identify and explain the license under which you will release the files (e.g., a non-restrictive license such as BSD, GNU, MIT, Creative Commons licenses; RightsStatements.org statements). Explain and justify any prohibitive terms or conditions of use or access, and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms and conditions.*

The Society of American Archivists (SAA) and Ithaka S+R will jointly hold the intellectual property rights in the following digital products that are deliverables for the project: 1) publicly available research reports, including summaries of the national survey findings and actionable recommendations; and 2) publicly available interim reports (in all digital formats) related to Ithaka S+R's research. The digital content created (research reports, final output publication) will be released under a Creative Commons Attribution – Noncommercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) license. The survey datasets will be deposited with ICPSR, ensuring long-term preservation, access, and reuse.

SAA will negotiate a second non-exclusive deposit agreement with ICPSR (similar to the agreement for the original A*CENSUS survey) so that the data, codebook, and first-generation reports may be associated with the 2004 data and distributed together upon request from ICPSR members.

SAA and Ithaka S+R will jointly own copyright in the dataset; SAA will retain the right to make the dataset available as it deems appropriate.

A.2 *What ownership rights will your organization assert over the new digital products and what conditions will you impose on access and use? Explain and justify any terms of access and conditions of use and detail how you will notify potential users about relevant terms or conditions.*

All publications issued jointly by SAA and Ithaka S+R will carry notice of attribution rights and prohibition of use for commercial purposes per <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>.

A.3 *If you will create any products that may involve privacy concerns, require obtaining permissions or rights, or raise any cultural sensitivities, describe the issues and how you plan to address them.*

For data collected by Ithaka S+R in the course of research, no data that would allow participants to be identified individually or collectively will be released in any of the datasets. No intellectual property belonging to others will be distributed in the process of conducting Ithaka S+R's research or via its outputs.

SECTION II: DIGITAL CONTENT, RESOURCES, OR ASSETS

A.1 *Describe the digital content, resources, or assets you will create or collect, the quantities of each type, and the format(s) you will use.*

Per the proposal narrative, deliverables jointly held by SAA and Ithaka S+R will include a public report for each survey, interim blogging, and social media engagement:

- Publicly available research reports, including summaries of the national survey findings and actionable recommendations;
- Dataset deposit. The survey dataset will be deposited with ICPSR to ensure long-term preservation and access and use by ICPSR members, and will also be deposited in a fully open-access repository designated by SAA; and
- Public interim reporting, such as project updates via regular blogging and social media engagement;

Jointly held reports will be available as digital downloads in pdf format, with summaries presented in HTML.

A.2 *List the equipment, software, and supplies that you will use to create the digital content, resources, or assets, or the name of the service provider that will perform the work.*

For the surveys, Ithaka S+R will employ Qualtrics, a highly configurable and flexible survey software application. Additional deliverables produced by Ithaka S+R will be created using widely available applications, such as Microsoft Office, Google Docs, and Adobe Acrobat.

A.3 *List all the digital file formats (e.g., XML, TIFF, MPEG, OBJ, DOC, PDF) you plan to use. If digitizing content, describe the quality standards (e.g., resolution, sampling rate, pixel dimensions) you will use for the files you will create.*

Reports held jointly by SAA and Ithaka S+R will be available as digital downloads in .pdf format, with summaries presented in HTML. Datasets created by Ithaka S+R will be deposited with ICPSR in .pdf and .xls formats and will be further available in multiple formats from ICSPR. In addition, the full A*CENSUS dataset will be available to SAA for deposit in a digital repository ("SAA Dataverse," to be launched in August 2020) utilizing the open-source Dataverse software platform, in partnership with the Odum Institute at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill.

Workflow and Asset Maintenance/Preservation

B.1 Describe your quality control plan. How will you monitor and evaluate your workflow and products?

During the award period, survey data will be stored within the survey platform (Qualtrics) and on a private protected drive, both of which will be accessible only to the Ithaca S+R project team and ITHAKA network domain administrators. Data from the survey will later be processed by and deposited with ICPSR for preservation and access, along with the associated questionnaire and codebook, and will also be deposited with the SAA Dataverse.

B.2 Describe your plan for preserving and maintaining digital assets during and after the award period. Your plan should address storage systems, shared repositories, technical documentation, migration planning, and commitment of organizational funding for these purposes. Please note: You may charge the federal award before closeout for the costs of publication or sharing of research results if the costs are not incurred during the period of performance of the federal award (see 2 C.F.R. § 200.461).

Per the grant narrative, data from the surveys, as well as the associated questionnaire and codebook, will be processed by and deposited with ICPSR for long-term preservation and access by ICPSR members, and the full dataset will be deposited with the SAA Dataverse for fully open access.

Metadata

C.1 Describe how you will produce any and all technical, descriptive, administrative, or preservation metadata or linked data. Specify which standards or data models you will use for the metadata structure (e.g., RDF, BIBFRAME, Dublin Core, Encoded Archival Description, PBCore, PREMIS) and metadata content (e.g., thesauri).

C.2 Explain your strategy for preserving and maintaining metadata created or collected during and after the award period of performance.

C.3 Explain what metadata sharing and/or other strategies you will use to facilitate widespread discovery and use of the digital content, resources, or assets created during your project (e.g., an API [Application Programming Interface], contributions to a digital platform, or other ways you might enable batch queries and retrieval of metadata).

Access and Use

D.1 Describe how you will make the digital content, resources, or assets available to the public. Include details such as the delivery strategy (e.g., openly available online, available to specified audiences) and underlying hardware/software platforms and infrastructure (e.g., specific digital repository software or leased services, accessibility via standard web browsers, requirements for special software tools in order to use the content, delivery enabled by IIIF specifications).

Per the grant narrative, data from the surveys, as well as the associated questionnaire and codebook, will be processed by and deposited with ICPSR for long-term preservation and access by ICPSR members, and the full dataset will be deposited with the SAA Dataverse for fully open access.

D.2. *Provide the name(s) and URL(s) (Universal Resource Locator), DOI (Digital Object Identifier), or other persistent identifier for any examples of previous digital content, resources, or assets your organization has created.*

ICPSR: <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/4265>

SECTION III: SOFTWARE

General Information

A.1 Describe the software you intend to create, including a summary of the major functions it will perform and the intended primary audience(s) it will serve.

A.2 List other existing software that wholly or partially performs the same or similar functions, and explain how the software you intend to create is different, and justify why those differences are significant and necessary.

Technical Information

B.1 List the programming languages, platforms, frameworks, software, or other applications you will use to create your software and explain why you chose them.

B.2 Describe how the software you intend to create will extend or interoperate with relevant existing software.

B.3 Describe any underlying additional software or system dependencies necessary to run the software you intend to create.

B.4 Describe the processes you will use for development, documentation, and for maintaining and updating documentation for users of the software.

B.5 Provide the name(s), URL(s), and/or code repository locations for examples of any previous software your organization has created.

Access and Use

C.1 Describe how you will make the software and source code available to the public and/or its

intended users.

C.2 Identify where you will deposit the source code for the software you intend to develop:

Name of publicly accessible source code repository:

URL:

SECTION IV: RESEARCH DATA

As part of the federal government's commitment to increase access to federally funded research data, Section IV represents the Data Management Plan (DMP) for research proposals and should reflect data management, dissemination, and preservation best practices in the applicant's area of research appropriate to the data that the project will generate.

A.1 *Identify the type(s) of data you plan to collect or generate, and the purpose or intended use(s) to which you expect them to be put. Describe the method(s) you will use, the proposed scope and scale, and the approximate dates or intervals at which you will collect or generate data.*

The project will span approximately 31 months and include phases for project launch, development of survey instruments and contact lists, survey fieldwork, analysis, and reporting and dissemination. A*CENSUS II will include two surveys:

- A survey of every self-identified archivist/archives worker in the U.S. to gather information about their demographics, education needs, job placement and status, and salaries, as well as their perspectives on key issues in the field, and
- A survey of the directors (or equivalent) of U.S. archival organizations to gather data about institutional characteristics; facilities; resources; strategic directions; and diversity, equity, inclusion, and access issues.

Questionnaire design will be led by Ithaka S+R with substantial input from, and collaboration with, a ten-person Working Group with collective expertise in archival practice, archival education, new technologies, research, and data analysis. For both surveys, Ithaka S+R will conduct cognitive interviews to pilot the survey and ensure that survey questions have been written clearly and will be interpreted consistently across respondents.

Across both surveys, we will use individual invitations so that we are able to calculate response rates. However, as we did successfully with the 2004 A*CENSUS survey, we may supplement this approach by providing an open-access survey link for those who are not affiliated with the external partner organizations to ensure the broadest possible participation.

Data analysis will be conducted using a statistical software package such as R or SPSS. At the project's conclusion, all data will be deposited with the ICPSR to ensure their long-term preservation. SAA will negotiate a non-exclusive deposit agreement with ICPSR (as we did for

the first survey) so that the data, codebook documentation, and first-generation reports may be associated with the 2004 survey data and distributed together upon request from ICPSR members.

A.2 *Does the proposed data collection or research activity require approval by any internal review panel or institutional review board (IRB)? If so, has the proposed research activity been approved? If not, what is your plan for securing approval?*

No.

A.3 *Will you collect any sensitive information? This may include personally identifiable information (PII), confidential information (e.g., trade secrets), or proprietary information. If so, detail the specific steps you will take to protect the information while you prepare it for public release (e.g., anonymizing individual identifiers, data aggregation). If the data will not be released publicly, explain why the data cannot be shared due to the protection of privacy, confidentiality, security, intellectual property, and other rights or requirements.*

As related only to Ithaca S+R's research, personally identifiable information may be collected during the interviews, with an option to remain anonymous or to provide consent to be identified in released reports. Survey data will be collected with either anonymous responses enabled (to ensure separation of individually identifying information, such as email addresses) from collected data, or will be anonymized prior to release.

A.4 *What technical (hardware and/or software) requirements or dependencies would be necessary for understanding retrieving, displaying, processing, or otherwise reusing the data?*

None. Excel or a statistical program (e.g., SPSS, Stata, R, etc.) will be used to enable analysis of the data.

A.5 *What documentation (e.g., consent agreements, data documentation, codebooks, metadata, and analytical and procedural information) will you capture or create along with the data? Where will the documentation be stored and in what format(s)? How will you permanently associate and manage the documentation with the data it describes to enable future reuse?*

During the award period, survey data will be stored within the survey platform (Qualtrics) and on a private protected drive, both of which will be accessible only by the Ithaca S+R project team and ITHAKA network domain administrators. Data from the project's survey will later be deposited with ICPSR for long-term preservation and access by ICPSR members (including the associated questionnaire and codebook) and with the SAA Dataverse for fully open access.

A.6 *What is your plan for managing, disseminating, and preserving data after the completion of the award-funded project?*

Per the grant narrative, the project's datasets will be submitted to ICPSR for long-term

preservation and access and to the SAA Dataverse for fully open access.

A.7 *Identify where you will deposit the data:*

Name of repository: ICPSR

URL: <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/>

Name of repository: SAA Dataverse

URL: To be determined.

A.8 *When and how frequently will you review this data management plan? How will the implementation be monitored?*

The data management plan will be periodically reviewed during the course of the project. In the event that any changes are necessitated prior to project completion, IMLS will be informed and consulted prior to implementation.