

**Society of American Archivists
Council Meeting
March 17, 2021
Virtual Meeting**

**Archival Salary Transparency Advocacy
(Prepared by Council liaison Melissa Gonzales)**

The archival profession continues to be plagued by inadequate compensation for individuals, which has negatively affected retention and diversification efforts. Many formal and informal surveys executed by archivists and archival organizations over the past decade have shown that the issue is growing worse as reflected through job postings that request vast amounts of education and skills for compensation that is not commensurate or justifiable in comparison. One serious issue to keep in mind is the number of SAA members who have opted to leave the profession for more financially stable careers, thereby affecting SAA's sustainability. It is time that we actively address this issue before it alters the future of the profession by demeaning degrees and skillsets, which in turn will adversely affect collections through inadequate care and accessibility.

Many regional organizations have already advocated on behalf of archivists and the profession by promoting salary transparency through job postings on their sites. If institutions refuse to provide the salary range in job postings, these organizations will not promote them on their websites or social media. The formation of the informal Ad-hoc Working Group on Archivist Salary Transparency resulted in a thorough report that contained data in support of a decision to require salary transparency in the hopes that SAA Council would vote in favor of doing the same. According to their survey report, they received 1311 individual survey responses, with 1012 respondents identifying themselves as SAA members. The vast majority of respondents supported the requirement of some form of salary information in job postings on the SAA Job Board, and a smaller majority supported a requirement for postings on SAA listservs or blogs and social media when notices come from SAA leaders and/or administrators acting in an official capacity.

In response, the Business Archives Section also conducted a survey of their membership, and although the results supported the creation of a compensation task force, 77% of BAS members did NOT support a resolution across all of SAA, including the SAA job board and social media accounts for all sections, that would ban the posting of jobs without salary information. The majority of their members believed the requirement would create one result: far fewer business archives job or internship postings via SAA.

Unfortunately, the majority of Council members chose not to approve this requirement when presented at the December 2019 meeting for a vote. Rather, they approved providing an

incentive to those who did provide salary/compensation information in their postings. Furthermore, Council did approve the creation of the Archival Compensation Task Force which has been working this past year to gather, disseminate, and develop solutions to improve compensation for the profession that is on par with our professional peers.

Considering COVID-19 has had a huge impact on our profession leaving many who were laid off unexpectedly on the job market, Council needs to re-evaluate this topic and vote in favor of requiring salaries and/or compensation information in job descriptions posted on our Job Board. SAA should offer the most support possible to advocate for archivists and provide resources to employers, managers, and human resources staff charged with drafting job descriptions and salary ranges for archival positions. The Archival Compensation Task Force agrees with this assessment and has written a letter of support, as follows:

March 2, 2021

Dear SAA Council members:

We are members of SAA's Archival Compensation Task Force. In our research, work, and discussions over the past year, we have become cognizant of fellow professional organizations that require compensation information in postings to their official job boards. We have included below the list of organizations of which we are aware.

Requiring compensation information in job board posts is gaining traction as a best practice for archivist and archivist-adjacent professional organizations. We strongly encourage the SAA Council to follow suit by requiring salary and/or compensation information in postings to SAA's job board. We feel it is extremely important for SAA to make this change in support of our members and the future growth of our profession.

The Archival Compensation Task Force's charge concludes January 2022, and its final report with recommendations will be submitted at that time. However, we see no reason to delay our recommendation that SAA require salary and/or compensation information in SAA job board posts.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.

Sincerely,

Greta Pittenger
Stephanie Bayless
E. Haven Hawley
Jenny Kinniff
Elena Colón-Marrero
David Kay
Mike Bullington
Melissa G. Gonzales (Council liaison)

Organizations requiring salary information in job postings

Archivists Roundtable of Metropolitan New York
Association of Moving Image Archivists
Association of College and Research Libraries/Rare Books and Manuscripts Section (RBMS)

CLIR+DLF Job Board
Maine Archives and Museums
National Association of Government Archives & Records Administrators (NAGARA)
National Council on Public History
New England Archivists
Northwest Archivists
Society of Florida Archivists
Society of Georgia Archivists
Society of Southwest Archivists
USAjobs
We Here