

ACSAA DEVELOPMENT PLANNING COMMITTEE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

There is an undeniable desire to see ACSAA on a secure financial footing going forward and for the long term. Currently, we are just about breaking even in bringing in enough revenue to meet our existing annual expenditures. This makes any potential growth of the services provided by the organization difficult. A firm financial footing would permit ACSAA to continue to grow and support the field of South and Southeast Asian art history in this changing environment, keeping up with advancements in technology and communication as they evolve.

With this in mind, the recommendations below consider revenue streams from a number of angles. One disadvantage that has emerged in preliminary explorations is that ACSAA does not have sufficient membership or revenue to qualify for certain grants, such as from the Getty Foundation. Nonetheless, other options are available. **It should be noted that none of these are “quick fixes”. For this reason, the committee recommends that first and foremost ACSAA should create a standing development committee to meet on a regular basis in order to implement and review funding initiatives.**

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Dues

A delicate matter is our current dues structure. We have not raised dues since 2003, and there is widespread consensus that it may be time for an increase. Our dues are now as follows:

Students - \$15

Regular Member - \$40

Institutional Member - \$50

Contributing Member - \$60

Sustaining Member - \$100

Proposed Increases:

Students, Retired Members, Independent Scholars, and Scholars in South and Southeast Asia - \$20

Regular Member - \$50

Institutional Member - \$100

Contributing Member - \$100

Sustaining Member - \$250 minimum

Lifetime Patron - \$3000

The proposed increases reflect our recommendation that the student rate continue to be extended to independent scholars and, now additionally, to scholars in South and Southeast Asia.

Comparison with similar organizations (see attached spreadsheet) suggests also that ACSAA consider creating new categories on the model of the American Society for Eighteenth-Century Studies, such as Lifetime Patron, and Lifetime Sponsor. These new categories would result in larger one-time donations to ACSAA and should be put into a permanent general endowment (see below). Mechanisms to recognize these individuals would need to be developed.

Another question that needs to be addressed is that since 2011 there have been significant decreases in every membership level. This may be a temporary slump that will be corrected around the time of the symposium (as has happened before), but we need to keep an eye on this situation and try to reverse it.

Grants

A close study of other organizations fundraising successes will help ACSAA develop its own fundraising. A good model might be CAA's recent one-time Mellon publication grant (<http://www.collegeart.org/publications/pgrants>).

Endowment

The Development Planning Committee recognizes both the desirability of identifying individuals and organizations from whom ACSAA could seek funding and the possibility that soliciting such recommendations, particularly those of individuals, could raise questions of conflicts of

interest because many ACSAA members (and all members of the Development Planning Committee) are involved in fundraising at their home institutions. One way that can raise no objections is launch a fundraising campaign among our membership following the model of the American Institute of Indian Studies. There could be a stated goal, relatively modest at first, perhaps with the end of creating a permanent endowment or endowments for specific purposes (publications, travel for foreign scholars, symposia, etc.). Contributions to specific goals could easily be made on the ACSAA website after pending upgrades are completed. This goal and its means would also serve to demonstrate to any potential outside funding sources seriousness of purpose on the part of ACSAA—that we are willing to back our programs ourselves.

The establishment of an Endowment is one way of securing the long-term financial stability of ACSAA as an organization.

Advantages of an Endowment:

- a. Funds would need to be raised only once (thus not exhausting the pool of limited sources through repeated solicitations);
- b. Secure source of income even in years of low membership;
- c. Energy directed at fundraising would be used to maximum potential;
- d. One-time fundraising would avoid potential conflict of interest situations between fundraisers and their home institutions on an on-going basis.

Disadvantages of an Endowment:

- a. A considerable amount of funding is necessary to receive a relatively small income;
- b. We will need a procedure to produce tax receipts for donations, something that hasn't been established yet;
- c. Someone needs to manage the investment. This responsibility is likely too much to ask of the ACSAA Treasurer, so it may entail an annual professional management expenditure.

Even given the drawbacks, the Development Planning Committee feels it is a good idea to pursue establishing an endowment. An endowment of \$100,000 could bring in an average income of about \$4500 per year. While not a great deal of money, even \$4500 can go a long way. It can provide funds toward many of the initiatives proposed by the other

Planning Committees, including website development, travel funds for graduate students/international scholars to attend the ACSAA Symposium, publication subventions, or an online peer-review journal. These are initiatives the current ACSAA budget cannot support and will not be able to without external fundraising.

One possible way to achieve an Endowment goal could be through the NEH Challenge Grant program (<http://www.neh.gov/grants/challenge/challenge-grants>). The website reports that this grant is a capacity building grant, to establish or enhance an endowment. Scholarly associations are eligible. Successful applicants will be offered a matching grant; recipients must raise three times the amount of federal funds offered. For \$100K, we would need to raise \$75k to receive a \$25k grant, but that is still less than raising the full \$100k. Challenge grant funds are not meant merely to replace funds already being expended on the humanities, but to reflect careful strategic planning to strengthen an organization's activities. Income from endowment can be spent on salaries and benefits for humanities faculty and staff; faculty and staff development; research fellowships; lecture or exhibition series; visiting scholars or consultants; publishing subventions, and other items. Up to 10% of total funds (grant+matching) can be used to defray cost of fundraising. Based on past years, there is a 16% chance of getting a grant. Furthermore, applications that respond to NEH Bridging Cultures initiative are encouraged.

Respectfully Submitted,

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