

## Call for AERI Hosts

The Archival Education and Research Initiative (AERI) invites expressions of interest in hosting its annual Institute. Currently, AERI is seeking hosts for 2023 and beyond.

AERI is a five day residential institute typically hosted in early July. It usually attracts 150 - 200 participants. AERI began as an in person meeting; it has been held virtually during the pandemic, and in future years may be in person, virtual or hybrid.

For an informal discussion about hosting AERI, or to be connected with previous AERI hosts, or for a copy of the guide to hosting AERI, please contact the Institute Hosting Working Group through Dr. Sumayya Ahmed at [sumayya.ahmed@simmons.edu](mailto:sumayya.ahmed@simmons.edu)

Formal offers to host AERI will be submitted to the AERI Interim Board for consideration. This is an open call for hosts and there is no deadline for offers.

Read more about AERI at <http://aeri.website/>

## **Guide to Hosting AERI**

Last Updated: November 2021

Authors: Institute Hosting Working Group

Notes: This guide will need to be revised when the Emerging Archival Scholars Program re-starts.

This document was prepared by the AERI Institute Hosting Working Group and provides information for prospective hosts of the annual AERI Institute.

### **What is AERI?**

The Archival Education and Research Initiative (AERI) represents an unprecedented and exciting collaboration among the leading archival education programs in the U.S. and worldwide to train and support future archival faculty and enhance the education of archival professionals.

Our goal is to stimulate the growth of a new generation of academics in archival education who are versed in contemporary issues and knowledgeable of the work being conducted by colleagues. The initiative seeks to nurture and promote the state-of-the-art in scholarship in archival science, broadly conceived, as well as to encourage curricular and pedagogical innovation in archival education across the United States and worldwide.

The Archival Education and Research Initiative holds an annual Institute for recordkeeping researchers and educators (faculty and doctoral students of archival studies and research- or teaching-active practitioners).

Currently, AERI is co-ordinated by a Board. There are a number of working groups that report to the Board. The Institute Hosting Working Group (IHWG) is responsible for identifying prospective hosts, liaising with them and supporting their offer to the Board, which makes decisions about future hosts. The IHWG is responsible for this document and is the first point of contact for those interested in hosting AERI.

### **The AERI Calendar**

Ideally, hosts are identified two years in advance.

DECEMBER: Call for proposals goes out. See *Appendix A* for example.

LATE FEBRUARY: End date for proposals. All relevant proposals are accepted. Notifications of acceptance should go out as early as possible, so that participants can secure funding and make travel arrangements.

MID-MARCH: Applicants notified of admission / registrations open.

EARLY JUNE: Registrations close

JULY: AERI is usually held in the second week of July.

### **What is involved in hosting AERI?**

Prospective hosts on colonized land should first consider if visitors are welcomed by the land's Indigenous custodians, and if so, what protocols need to be observed when hosting a meeting on that land.

Prospective hosts should consult their Chair, Head of Department or Dean to secure support for hosting AERI. This support will need to include:

- The use of meeting rooms in the second week of July. It can be difficult to estimate how many rooms will be needed, as AERI participation has tended to range from 50 to 200 people. Room allocation may need to be kept under review as the program takes shape. All rooms must be accessible.
- The use of on-site dormitory accommodation for participants, if available. The residential nature of AERI is intended to foster cohort building. All facilities must be accessible.
- Faculty and staff time for organizing AERI.

Optionally, hosts may wish to seek financial support from their departments. AERIs tend to break even or make a small profit, but it can be useful to have a financial safety net (see *Finances*, below).

Once support has been obtained, the host should liaise with any in-house events or conference teams, facilities management, etc. to understand their availability, services, needs, etc.

Once the host has been agreed with the AERI Board, the first thing the AERI host will need to do is put together a program committee. This should represent the diversity of the AERI community, in terms of positionality, geography and career level. A call for program committee members can be issued through the AERI listserv if needed.

The first task of the program committee is to prepare the call for proposals. AERI does not have a theme, because it is a working meeting where colleagues share developments in their own work. AERI is therefore open to all recordkeeping topics. Preparing the call for proposals involves agreeing on dates and deciding how proposals will be received and managed (for example, through easychair).

Some hosts have also constituted organizing committees, comprising local people who can manage practical issues such as liaising with accommodation providers, caterers, tour guides, etc.

Once the call for proposals ends, the program committee will need to compile a draft program. It is often easiest for one person to prepare a preliminary draft. Historically, papers on similar topics are programmed in the same session, though this may not be the best way of opening new conversations and ideas.

The program committee will also need to identify keynote speakers for each day. The opening keynote is typically a senior archival studies faculty member from the host organization. When choosing other keynotes, it can be useful to look to adjacent fields, activists, artists, etc for speakers who will introduce new ideas, provoke conversations, etc. Activists, artists and unsalaried speakers must be paid a speaking fee at locally accepted rates. Tenured or tenure track faculty who ask for speakers fees are contributing to the neoliberalization of the academy and should be avoided.

AERI usually includes a “Best Student Paper Award” and a “Best Poster Award”. These awards are usually nominal. The program committee should identify judges for these from the AERI community. The poster award is judged at the poster session according to the criteria identified at *Appendix B*. The student paper award can be more difficult to judge, as student papers are not presented together, and all judges cannot be present at all presentations. It may be best to ask students to self nominate and submit papers in advance of AERI, so that the judges can confer before the Institute. There is not currently any criteria for this award. The awards are announced at the Friday morning plenary.

The program committee OR organizing committee will also need to:

- Prepare and publish a website.
- Identify local tours for Wednesday afternoon. There are usually between three and five options for tours, including local archives, local cultural sites, and major tourist attractions (especially appreciated by international participants). Some participants will opt out of the tours to explore on their own.
- Identify hosts and locations for the Tuesday evening networking dinners. Formerly called mentoring dinners, these dinners involve one senior and one junior faculty member “hosting” (though everyone pays for themselves) a dinner for 8 to 12 students. Between four and six dinners are usually organized, and sign up sheets are made available at the registration desk. The committee should identify hosts, ask them their dietary needs and preferences, and book appropriate local restaurants. It is usual to aim for a range of dietary options at affordably priced restaurants.
- Identify a location for the Wednesday evening faculty dinner. Historically, this has been catered.
- Identify a location for the Wednesday evening student dinner. Historically, this has been a casual local restaurant.
- Manage the poster session. This will include finding an appropriate space and liaising with poster presenters, who may seek your advice on dimensions, local printers, etc. It is helpful to assign one member of the committee as the coordinator of the poster session, and have their contact details on the Institute website.
- Plan for registration. How will registrations be recorded and how will payments be received? It is imperative that this is coordinated with the hosts conference/events team and / or finance department.

## **Finances**

AERI is an international community of colleagues. It is not a registered organization and it does not maintain bank accounts. There is no funding available from AERI as an organization.

AERI Institutes tend to break even or make small profits, but judicious decisions about expenses and registration fees are important. The following questions should help AERI hosts in their financial planning:

- Will your university charge you for the use of meeting rooms? If so, this will need to be factored into registration costs.
- It is valuable to have a group of student helpers assist with registration, room setup, liaison, etc? Often students will be recruited from the host's archival studies program, as this allows students to connect with the broader community. These student helpers should always be paid to *at least* the local minimum wage. Your department may be willing to fund this expense; otherwise, it needs to be calculated into the registration fee.
- If on-site accommodation is being offered to participants, what is the nightly rate? Be sure to check if this includes towels, linen, toiletries and breakfast. This information will help to calculate the registration rate. You may wish to offer two different registration rates, one with accommodation and one without, for those who would prefer to stay off site. Also, will participants be able to add extras at the time of registering? These extras may include towels, linen, toiletries and breakfast, which some university dormitories charge extra for, and it might also include: use of campus gyms and pools; extra nights accommodation at either of the Institute (often required by those travelling internationally). Can partners and children be accommodated, and if so, is there an extra charge?
- It is usual for refreshments to be served, so it will be necessary to seek per person quotes from in-house catering. Participants usually buy their own lunch nearby, but if this is not possible at your site, in-house quotes will be needed for this.
- Additionally, the host will need to pay for catering for the opening night reception and the faculty dinner, so this may be a factor in calculating the registration fee. An alternative is to seek sponsorship for these events.
- When booking keynotes, consider that they may need funds for travel, accommodation, and speakers fees. Obtain this information before booking keynotes, as the costs may be too high to be incorporated into registration fees.
- What charges will be incurred for the Wednesday afternoon tours? Should tour charges be optional extras at the point of registration?
- Will your university charge you for technical support or the assistance of conference or event planning teams leading up to and throughout the week of AERI?

With this information, it should be possible to calculate a registration rate. It is important to keep this rate as low as possible to enable the widest possible participation.

Previous registration rates:

2019, Liverpool, UK: Registration with 5 nights accommodation for £340;  
Registration without accommodation £120.

## **Program**

The typical AERI program follows the following format.

### **MONDAY:**

- Land acknowledgements; welcome from host
- Opening keynote (typically senior archival studies from the host department)
- Working plenary (reports from the Board and Working Groups, election of Board and Working Groups)
- Parallel sessions
- Opening reception in the evening. At the opening reception, a senior colleague will read out the community's achievements of the previous year (completed PhDs, appointments, promotions and tenure, major publications and grants). The program committee compiles this in advance.

### **TUESDAY:**

- Keynote
- Parallel sessions
- Networking dinners (see below)

### **WEDNESDAY:**

- Keynote
- Parallel sessions (half day)
- Local tours
- Faculty / student dinners

### **THURSDAY:**

- Keynote
- Parallel sessions
- Plenary poster session (see below)
- Evening is free (traditionally students organize AERloke)

### **FRIDAY:**

- Award announcements and Keynote
- Parallel sessions

### **Further Help**

The IHWG can put you in touch with former hosts if that would be useful.

## APPENDIX A: Example call for proposals

2019 Archival Education and Research Institute (AERI 2019)

Call for contributions

The Liverpool University Centre for Archive Studies ([LUCAS](#)), together with the UK and Republic of Ireland's Forum for Archives and Records Management Education and Research ([FARMER](#)) is proud to host the eleventh annual Archival Education and Research Institute ([AERI](#)), and the first to be held outside of North America.

AERI will be held from 8 – 12 July 2019 in Liverpool, UK.

Applications for AERI are now being accepted via  
<https://easychair.org/conferences/?conf=aeri2019>

Previous institutes were held at UCLA (2009, 2012), the University of Michigan Ann Arbor (2010), Simmons College (2011), the University of Texas at Austin (2013), the University of Pittsburgh (2014), the University of Maryland, College Park (2015), Kent State University (2016), the University of Toronto ([2017](#)) and the University of Alabama at Tuscaloosa ([2018](#)).

These week-long annual working institutes are designed to strengthen education and research and support academic cohort-building and mentoring. Institutes are open to all academic staff and students at all levels working in archival studies, as well as archival professionals and others engaged in archival education, research and scholarship, broadly conceived.

AERI seeks to advance the field of archival studies by:

- Creating a dynamic community of researchers, teachers and students to help mentor doctoral students and academic staff in areas such as thesis preparation, grant writing, publishing, and career development.
- Advancing curriculum development in archival studies at all levels—undergraduate, graduate/postgraduate and continuing education.
- Furthering current research development inside the academy and in practice through paper presentations, posters and workshop activities.
- Fostering interest in future collaborations intra- and internationally.

We invite proposals for contributions that fit within AERI's goals. These could include short papers (15 minutes), panels (1.5 hours, with 3 or more speakers), pedagogical, curricular, methodological and technological workshops (half day or full day), performances, posters, works in progress or plenary sessions. Since this is a working institute, all participants, with the exception of students who are about to commence their studies, are expected to contribute in some way to the working meeting. This might be in a variety of roles including, but not limited to presenters, instructors, mentors, moderators, and AERI initiative leaders.

### Timeline for Applications

28 February 2019 - Deadline for submission of proposals

15 March 2019 - Applicants notified of admission / registrations open

1 June 2019 - Registrations close

8 - 12 July 2019 - AERI

Additional tours are being planned for before and after AERI. These will include visits to community archives and sites connected with labour and industrial history in Manchester and post-conflict archives and heritage initiatives in Northern Ireland. More information about the tours will be published in due course.

Following AERI, participants will be invited to submit full papers for publication in a special issue of a refereed journal.

Additional information about the meeting will be available soon and watch #aeri2019 for news and discussion.

We look forward to welcoming you to Liverpool in 2019.

**Appendix B**  
**Poster Award Criteria**

In each category, judges should assign a mark between 1 and 5.

1	2	3	4	5
No Evidence/ Element missing	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent

Category	Mark (1-5)
Quality of Research - Is the project description clear? Is a research question or hypothesis clearly defined? Has an appropriate methodology been identified and followed? Do thoughts and ideas flow in a logical manner?	
Originality - Is the project innovative? Does the project build theory? Are its methods novel? Are the findings a new contribution to knowledge in the archival studies field?	
Social Value / Technical Contribution - Does the project respond to real-world needs? Does it contribute to the solution of a societal or technical problem or challenge?	
Presentation - The aesthetic qualities of the poster. Do the choices of font, layout, colour scheme, graphics, etc. effectively communicate the content? Are components of the poster organized logically? Is there a good flow of information?	
Verbal Presentation - Does the presenter clearly explain the research and answer questions? Does the presenter demonstrate a knowledge of the subject matter and project?	