

Strategic Plan 2022-2027



The Register
of Professional
Archaeologists

Greetings!

The Register of Professional Archaeologists (Register) is pleased to present the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan. This Plan was developed in large part by the Board of Directors during 2021 and has been finalized these first months of 2022. In keeping with tradition, the Plan covers five years and will expire on December 31, 2027.

This Plan was developed in consideration of the 2021 Needs Assessment survey conducted by the Register, in consultation with our Sponsoring Organizations, and in consideration of current trends and discussions within our profession.

It is the President's role to ensure that the Strategic Plan is implemented appropriately, tracking its progress, and adjusting the Register's organizational structure (within the parameters of the Bylaws) to this end.

Accordingly, we take this role seriously and commit to carrying it out in service to the Register. We value your input throughout the Plan's implementation and hope you will also help in its implementation in your role as Registrant or partnering entity.

In your service,



Trish Fernandez
President (2022-2023)

Lisa Westwood
President Elect (2024-2025)

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INTRODUCTION

A strategic plan identifies an organization's goals for a certain period and outlines how these goals will be achieved. It helps move the organization beyond idealistic visions so that it can focus on what it expects to accomplish, as well as what achievements can be realistically expected.

From these goals, tasks are then developed, from which assignments are made to specific entities within the organization (ex. Board, President, Treasurer, Committees, Executive Director, Support Staff) with clear expectations and timelines set to track progress or make course corrections.

The Strategic Plan is an integral part of leadership. It is the guide that is used to carry out the mission and move the organization to the future it has envisioned. At each Board of Directors meeting there should be time on the agenda to review progress, give feedback, and offer direction on outstanding items.

This Strategic Plan document includes a synopsis of the Register and its organizational structure to provide context regarding how the Register operates and how each Register sub-entity may take part in the implementation of the Strategic Plan. Next, the document presents the goals of the Strategic Plan in abbreviated form, followed by the goals and tasks required to meet those goals. Finally, an Implementing Matrix will be added after the President has met with each Committee chair to develop a plan for implementation. This Implementation Matrix will identify who is responsible for specific tasks, how completion is measured, and when they should be completed; it will be updated annually.

The Register

The Register is a non-profit organization filed as a 501c(6) with the Internal Revenue Service, incorporated on August 19, 1998. The current Register Bylaws state that the purpose of the Register is to advance professionalism in archaeology by:

- Identifying archaeology as a profession and qualified archaeologists as professionals;
- Encouraging high standards in the training of archaeologists;
- Establishing and encouraging high standards of performance for professional archaeologists by promoting conformance to a published Code of Conduct and Standards of Research Performance;
- Designating qualified individuals as Registered Professional Archaeologists (a "RPA");
- Administering grievance procedures to address questions of compliance with the Code of Conduct and Standards of Research Performance;
- Undertaking other activities that will serve to enhance the professional conduct and integrity of archaeological projects and research.



Structure

The structure of the Register begins with the Registrants, who are analogous to company shareholders. The Register ultimately answers to the Registrants, who elect Officers to govern the Board of Directors. The roles and responsibilities of each Register entity is important to understand, as the activities of all Register entities should be aligned with the Strategic Plan.

Registered Professional Archaeologists

The primary income source of the Register is from annual dues paid by professional archaeologists who meet the requirements of a Registered Professional Archaeologist. The current Register Bylaws list these requirements:

- Provision of documentation satisfactory to the Registrar that the applicant meets the eligibility requirements established by the Board of Directors of the Register (the “Board”);
- Agreement to abide by the Register Bylaws, the Code of Conduct, and the Standards of Research Performance and to be subject to the Disciplinary Procedures of the Register; and
- Payment of the applicable fees by deadlines established by the Board.

Board of Directors

The Register is managed by the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors are fiduciaries who steer the organization toward a sustainable future by adopting sound, ethical, and legal governance and financial management policies, as well as making sure the nonprofit has adequate resources to advance its mission. The Board is responsible for hiring an Executive Director to run the day-to-day management activities of the organization, thereby allowing the Board to focus on providing foresight, oversight, and insight. The Board has three primary legal duties, as follows:

- Duty of Care – ensure prudent use of all assets, including facility, people, and good will.
- Duty of Loyalty – ensure the organization’s activities and transactions are, first and foremost, advancing its mission; recognize and disclose conflicts of interest; make decisions that are in the best interest of the organization – not in the best interest of the individual.
- Duty of Obedience – ensure the organization obeys applicable laws and regulations, follows its own bylaws, and adheres to its mission.

The Board currently consists of Officers, Directors, and Members. Officers are the President, President-Elect, and Secretary-Treasurer. Directors consist of four individuals appointed from each of the Register’s Sponsoring (aka Founding) Organizations: the Society for American Archaeology; Society for Historical Archaeology; Archaeological Institute of America; and



American Anthropological Association. Additional voting members of the Board consist of the Registrar, Grievance Coordinator, and Grievance Coordinator-Elect.

Other Register Entities

The current Bylaws establish the Standards Board, Registrar, Grievance Coordinator, and Nominating Committee. The Chairs and/or key individuals of these entities are elected by the Registrants.

The Standards Board hears and decides on all appeals from decisions of the Registrar; and makes final decisions regarding disciplinary action resulting from complaints of violations of the Code of Conduct and Standards of Research Performance that are referred to the Standards Board by the Grievance Coordinator

The Registrar Committee determines whether to approve applications for registration.

The Grievance Coordinator handles allegations of the Code of Conduct and Standards of Research Performance in accordance with the Disciplinary Procedures of the Register.

The Nominating Committee nominates candidates for Officers, Registrar, Grievance Coordinator-Elect, Standards Board and Alternates, and the Nominating Committee.

The current Bylaws also allow the Board and President to create committees for specific purposes in line with the Strategic Plan. Currently, those committees consist of the Ethics Committee, Professional Development Committee, and the Registrant Services and Outreach Committee.

The Ethics Committee is responsible for advising the Board in matters of professional ethics in archaeology, and for the oversight and management of programs relating to professional ethics as tasked by the Board. Currently assigned tasks consist of operating the Ethics Bowl and managing the Register's Archaeological Ethics Database: <https://archaeologicaethics.org/>

The Professional Development Committee is responsible for developing and maintaining educational sources and resources for Registrants, and tracking professional development of Registrants. This Committee is responsible for continuing education, field school certification, and providing professional development access to underserved communities through venues alternative to those historically provided through academic institutions.

The Registrant Services and Outreach Committee is responsible for supporting registrants, sponsors, affiliates, and the public through clear, concise, and collaborative communication regarding the value of registration to professionals, the field of archeology, and cultural resources management.

The President is responsible for appointing Board liaisons to all committees, outlining the purpose and duties of the committees, and monitoring their progress.



Register Employees. The Board hires and oversees the Executive Director (ED) through direct supervision by the President. All other hired staff of the Register report to the ED. The ED is responsible for day-to-day management of the organization and reporting those day-to-day activities to the President. The ED is also responsible for implementing directives set by the Board; and staff assist the ED in implementing those directives. Staff may also support the work of committees as a non-voting member by assisting in research and documentation or in other capacities as directed by the DE.

Development of the Strategic Plan

On October 19, 2021, the Register Board and Executive Director met to begin working on this Strategic Plan. The meeting was facilitated by Terry Klein, past president of the Register, at the request of then-President Linda Stine. The first step was reviewing the recently completed Registrant Needs Assessment Survey conducted by the Registrant Services and Outreach Committee to determine the key common areas in which Registrants wanted to see the Register focus.

The next step was to review the 2017-2021 Strategic Plan to determine what items from that plan should be carried over to the new plan, considering the results of the Needs Assessment Survey. During the course of the day, the Board developed a draft list of goals and specific tasks under those goals that should be implemented by the Register to meet those goals. The Board then directed the Officers to draft a plan for review by the Board.

On December 19, 2022, the current President, Trish Fernandez, and current President-Elect Lisa Westwood, drafted the Strategic Plan goals and tasks. On January 11, 2022, the Board reviewed and approved the draft Strategic Plan goals and tasks and directed the Officers to complete the Strategic Plan, to include context and purpose of the Plan and establish priorities and scheduling for each item in the Plan. Trish Fernandez, with the assistance of Interim Administrator Brenda Kress, then drafted the Strategic Plan for Officer review. The Final Strategic Plan was completed on April 8, 2022.



Register of Professional Archaeologists

Strategic Plan Goals for 2022-2027

I. The Register will maintain a governance structure that clearly reflects the mission and goals of the Register and provides the best service to Registrants and the profession.

II. The Register will continue to be a leading presence and active partner with our sponsoring organizations and other stakeholders to promote shared values and support advances in archaeological training and practice.

III. The Register will facilitate education, resources, and professional development that grow and maintain a well-trained, diverse, and ethical archaeological workforce.

IV. The Register will advocate for a safe and welcoming discipline and advocate for people practicing archaeology.



GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND TASKS

Goal I. Develop and Maintain Effective Governance Structure

The Register will maintain a governance structure that clearly reflects the mission and goals of the Register and provides the best service to Registrants and the profession.

Objective 1.1 Governance. Review and update the Governance documents, including the Bylaws and the Procedures Manual. Establish how often and when to review and update these documents.

Objective 1.2 Roles and Responsibilities. Define and provide clarity regarding the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of the Register Board, Officers, Executive Director, Staff, and Committees.

Objective 1.3 Grievance Process. Update the Grievance Manual and reevaluate the Grievance process for transparency and accountability.

- a) Investigate strategies for improving confidence in Registrants' understanding of the Grievance process.
- b) Further education and outreach regarding the Grievance Process discipline-wide and with others outside of the discipline.

Objective 1.4 Registration. Evaluate the Registration process and workflow.

- a) Clearly define eligibility for registration.
- b) Define the applicability of foreign credentials.
- c) Evaluate the need for the addition of levels and types of registration.

Objective 1.5 Fiduciary Responsibility. Review and evaluate the financial oversight and decision-making process to ensure accountability and transparency in expenditures.

- a) Establish a Finance Committee with the specific charge to develop a financial plan.
- b) Evaluate and improve the Procedures Manual regarding financial oversight and decision making.

Objective 1.6 Advocacy. Develop a clear vision for how the Register will advocate for archaeologists and hiring of Registrants.



Objective 1.7 Transition Planning. Improve the process for transition and succession of the Board and Committees.

- a) Ensure continuity of Register files.
- b) Develop a Board handbook.
- c) Provide an initial orientation for new members.

Objective 1.8. Annual Report. Establish policy and procedure regarding dissemination of the Register’s Annual Report to Registrants and stakeholders, such as SHPOs, THPOs, federal agencies, ACHP, Sponsoring and Affiliated organizations.



Goal II. Promote Shared Values and Archaeological Training and Practice

The Register will continue to be a leading presence and active partner with our sponsoring organizations and other stakeholders to promote shared values and support advances in archaeological training and practice.

Objective 2.1 Collaboration. Explore and expand mutually beneficial relationships with partners.

- a) Continue to build and maintain relationships with international organizations.
- b) Identify and prioritize organizations with which collaboration will serve a mutual benefit.
- c) Contact those organizations to discuss potential reciprocity, common understanding of the norms of professional behavior, and exchange of information on continuing professional education.
- d) Encourage participation by all who are eligible.
- e) Engage sponsors and affiliates on advocacy issues.



Goal III. Facilitate Professional Development

The Register will facilitate education, resources, and professional development that grow and maintain a well-trained, diverse, and ethical archaeological workforce.

Objective 3.1 Pathways to Professionalism. Develop a program for assisting students and young professionals to advance their careers as professional archaeologists.

- a) Identify, certify, promote opportunities for professional growth. Examples include apprenticeships, compensated internships, webinars, field schools, and continuing education.
- b) Create a committee to identify and certify professional development, in coordination with the Certified Professional Education (CPE) and field school programs.
- c) Provide a means for Registrants to provide profiles and highlight non-traditional paths into the profession for the benefit of early-career professionals.
- d) Create a page on the website regarding how to become a professional archaeologist.
- e) Coordinate with a variety of other entities on mutually beneficial Professional Development programs.
- f) Reach out to the core curriculum committees of the various archaeological organizations to offer ideas from the Register's perspective and offer to serve as a bridge integrating these currently independent efforts.
- g) Reach out to the student committees of the sponsoring/affiliated societies to offer the Register's support for students.
- h) Identify or create a committee to study and identify appropriate models and design a mentoring program; identify mid- and late-career Registrants willing to serve as mentors; and advertise and serve as a clearinghouse on the availability of this service to students and young professionals.
- i) Establish a clearinghouse for compensated internship opportunities and sponsor and encourage internships.
 - i. Establish the parameters for what the Register will promote.
 - ii. Establish minimal standards for internships that the Register will promote.

Objective 3.2 Continued Professional Education. Provide a conduit for employing entities to engage in the development and hiring of incoming and continued professionals, including Registrants.

- a) Expand the kinds of professional activities that would qualify for Register CPE credit, such as presenting papers at professional meetings.
- b) Develop a plan for how CPE credits will articulate with registration in the future. Consider whether CPE be required for continued registration and how the Register could best make the transition to that requirement.
- c) Identify and develop innovative and accessible continued education and training



- opportunities to archaeological practitioners and make them accessible to registrants.
- d) Establish minimum standards for CPE.

Objective 3.3 Case Studies. Research existing models and prepare case studies to disseminate to industries/clients, Federal and state agencies, CRM firms, non-RPA archaeologists, educational institutions, and the public.



Goal IV. Advocate for Archaeologists

The Register will advocate for a safe and welcoming discipline and advocate for people practicing archaeology.

Objective 4.1 Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. Advocate for better wages, conditions, and working environments for Registrants.

- a) Determine how the Register can best address and promote policies and procedures regarding diversity, inclusion, bullying, sexual harassment, racism, and other social issues. Consider reviewing the Code and Standards for potential changes.
- b) Consider ways to improve information sharing as a way of helping registrants be aware of resources.
- c) Serve as a clearinghouse for information and resources.
- d) Increase exposure to future archaeologists, with additional attention to underrepresented demographics, such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs).



IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

