



Advocacy Policy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to define the principles, commitments, and roles and responsibilities of the ACA in its advocacy activities. It outlines the framework for the Association's relationships with advocacy partners, such as the provincial and territorial councils and associations, the Canadian Council of Archives, the Council of Provincial and Territorial Archivists, international archival organizations, and allied organizations in the cultural and heritage sectors. The policy aims to create a unified approach to advocacy initiatives, clarify roles and degrees of involvement within the Canadian archival community, encourage the regular exchange of information, and foster cooperation to achieve the Association's advocacy goals.

DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE OF POLICY

This policy applies to the advocacy activities of the ACA through its Board of Directors, officers, staff, and volunteers. Advocacy includes activities that:

- seek support for or against a particular proposal or action;
- make recommendations concerning archival matters to governments or organizations;
- voice the needs and interests of members, partners, researchers, and the general public in archival matters;
- establish and maintain relationships with appropriate partners; and
- monitor legislation, regulations, policies, and practices that affect archives or the archival profession.

POLICY STATEMENT

The mission of the Association includes advocating in the interests and needs of its membership before government, professional partner groups, related archival and heritage institutions, potential sponsors and supporters, and Canadian society.

However, the Association does not and cannot act alone on advocacy issues. Almost every issue for which advocacy action is required calls for a cooperative effort if success is to be achieved. Provincial and territorial councils and associations as well as other allied national and international heritage associations have advocacy responsibilities and concerns. Most advocacy activities are seldom within the scope of a single association but embrace common issues that require the assistance and cooperation of numerous parties. This is particularly true of the Canadian archival community with its network of local, provincial, territorial and national archival institutions, councils, and associations. Within this network, the Association will endeavor to ensure that the voice of its members is heard, and the Association is committed to creating partnerships to affect change for the benefit of its members and society as a whole.



In any advocacy partnership, the Association will speak with the provincial/territorial councils and associations or similar organization for guidance, direction and leadership on issues affecting their territory or province prior to the Association's involvement in a given advocacy issue.

The Association is committed to:

- promoting the archival profession and the interests of its members by acting as the voice of Canadian archivists at the national and international level;
- acting as a national leader in advocacy efforts in co-operation with the provincial and territorial councils and associations as well as other partners in the archival and heritage communities;
- speaking for the Canadian archival profession on issues of national significance relating to archives, recordkeeping, and cultural heritage;
- assuming a lead role in relations with the Government of Canada on issues within the Association's mandate;
- providing support, upon request, to partners where other levels of government and non-government entities take actions that affect archivists and archives.
- monitoring activities affecting archivists, archival operations and the profession and share pertinent information on a timely basis with ACA members, the provincial and territorial councils and associations, the Canadian Council of Archives, as well as other partners in the archival and heritage communities;
- working with local and provincial/territorial groups to create partnerships on matters impacting regional archives or of concern to specific areas of our membership;
- working with the International Council of Archives and other relevant bodies to represent the causes of archivists around the world.

POLICY REQUIREMENTS

In order to achieve the goals of this policy, the Association will:

- monitor issues of concern to the Canadian archival profession;
- maintain connections with provincial and territorial councils, allied heritage organizations in Canada, and the International Council on Archives regarding issues of concern;
- take part in advocacy campaigns pertaining to issues of concern to the Association, either as the leader or as a partner with a defined role within a partnership of organizations;
- designate the President as the official spokesperson of the Association with regard to advocacy.



ACCOUNTABILITIES

General Principles

Association members are bound by the Volunteer Code of Conduct when participating in Association business, declaring conflicts of interest, and maintaining confidentiality of information. Employees and contractors of the Association are bound by the terms of their job descriptions or contracts regarding the handling of communications duties; in the absence of any specific terms, this policy and the Volunteer Code of Conduct will apply as best practices documents.

Board of Directors

As the official spokesperson of the Board and the Association, the President of the Association is responsible for advocacy and its resulting communications. In matters related to specific advocacy issues, some Presidential duties as spokesperson may be delegated, with the agreement of the Board, to specific subject matter experts or other individuals representing the Association under the direction of the Board.

With a specific advocacy campaign, the President or designate will:

- identify partners and negotiate the respective degrees of involvement;
- exchange mutually helpful information for advocacy activities on a regular basis;
- establish cooperative agreements, including lead and support roles, with appropriate partners;
- assess and respond to requests of partners for support and cooperation in advocacy activities;
- provide a regular evaluation to the Board of Directors and members regarding the progress of the advocacy activities;
- conclude the partnership with a summary to the Board of Directors and members of the results of the advocacy initiatives

Secretariat

The Secretariat will provide advice, assistance and administrative support to the advocacy initiative at the direction of the President or designate.

Advocacy Partners

All archival associations, councils and institutions in Canada are partners of the Association. Several cultural and heritage associations and institutions across the country are also potential partners. It is up to each provincial/territorial association or council or other potential partner to decide their own level of involvement in advocacy efforts. Although the partners are likely to be provincial / territorial associations or councils, the principles outlined in this section apply to any advocacy partner.



It is hoped, but not assumed, that each partner will:

- promote the archival profession and the interests of its members by acting as the voice of archivists at the appropriate level;
- act as a leader in advocacy efforts in co-operation with partners in the archival and heritage communities;
- speak for the archival profession on issues of significance;
- when provincial/territorial issues are at stake, assume a lead role in advocacy matters;
- provide support, upon request, to partners where other levels of government and non-government entities take actions that affect archivists and archives; and
- monitor activities affecting archivists, archival operations and the profession and share pertinent information on a timely basis with relevant partners.

Upon request, and where appropriate, the Association will support the advocacy partner or enter into a partnership with the partner in a mutually-acceptable role appropriate to the circumstance. In instances where the Association is not the lead, or in an equal partnership role, it will prepare itself to offer assistance to another partner or assess and respond to requests for assistance and support from a partner.

The following procedures should guide interactions between the ACA and its partners with respect to advocacy activities:

1. The parties will share information with respect to advocacy matters on as free and timely basis as possible.
2. The lead partner on the advocacy issue at hand may request support and cooperation from the supporting partners.
3. The supporting partner may or may not act upon the lead partner's requests for support in a particular advocacy initiative.
4. In the event that the supporting partner chooses not to act, it will inform the lead partner of its decision.
5. In the event that the lead partner does not take action on an advocacy matter, but the supporting partner chooses to act, the supporting partner will inform the lead partner of its decision.

Any party may terminate the partnership immediately upon giving written notice to the others.

Members

As the primary stakeholders of the Association, members are encouraged to contact the President or any member of the Board of Directors at any point regarding the advocacy activities and initiatives undertaken by the Association, whether to express support or disagreement with the initiative. The opinions of members will be taken into account as part of the Board of Directors' regular evaluation of the advocacy activity.