Committee Work:
A Field Guide

Thank you for becoming an AMIA Committee Chair!

Committees have always been the core of AMIA, playing a crucial role in the strategic direction, program development, and financial health of the organization. For members, committees serve as a way of addressing issues in the field, collaborating with colleagues, and having a voice in the leadership of AMIA.

The role of a Committee Chair is easy to define, but the "how to" of leading a volunteer group of colleagues is less defined. Following is information that we hope will help you in leading your Committee. It includes general information about AMIA, where to go and who to ask when you have questions, and resources available to Committees and chairs.

One important thing to remember is that you don't have to "go it alone" as a chair or co-chair. The key purpose of the AMIA office is to support the day-to-day operations of the Association – this includes the Committees. The office can answer policy or procedure questions, offer background, provide logistics, and help with communications (e.g., email blasts, conference calls, social media). Think of the office as the Help Desk for committee chairs.

In addition, each committee is assigned a Board Liaison. This is the committee's direct line to the Board. The liaison brings issues to the committee, discusses projects and policies, reports to the board on committee issues and activities, and serves as an additional resource for the chair(s) as needed.

As a committee chair you are an essential part of AMIA's leadership - the work of the committees is central to AMIA's success. Our goal is to give you the tools, resources, and support to make the Committee thrive and your experience a good one.

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You can compare a healthy organization to a good book ...
The Board and staff provide the binding,
the mission and policies the Table of Contents.
The content – the chapters and pages -
are its Committees and volunteers.

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AMIA Vision Statement

Moving image archivists worldwide shall have the support, the protection, the education, the information, the funding, and the resources necessary to properly and effectively preserve and make accessible the world's moving image heritage for current and future generations.

AMIA Mission Statement

The Association of Moving Image Archivists (AMIA) is a nonprofit international association dedicated to the preservation and use of moving image media. AMIA supports public and professional education and fosters cooperation and communication among the individuals and organizations concerned with the acquisition, preservation, description, exhibition, and use of moving image materials.

Goals

- Provide a regular means of exchanging information, ideas and assistance.
- Promote moving image archival activities, including acquisition, description, preservation, exhibition and use of moving images in all formats, through such means as meetings, workshops, publications, and direct assistance.
- Support the education and professional development of moving image archivists.
- Represent and promote the development and recognition of the profession, of technical standards, and of principles and ethical conduct.
- Take a leadership role in informing and raising public awareness of archival issues.
- Stimulate and facilitate research on archival matters affecting moving images.

AMIA Code of Ethics

The AMIA Code of Ethics recognizes the diversity of AMIA's membership and encourages each individual who acts as a custodian of our moving image heritage to strive towards the following common goals. Read AMIA's **Code of Ethics** here.

AMIA Code of Conduct

The AMIA Code of Conduct is meant to ensure that within the Association, be it through conferences, events, meetings, committee and other volunteer work, mentoring relationships, and all online spaces including (but not limited to) social media and list serves, no person(s) will unlawfully harass or bully another for any reason. If you haven't already read it, please read the **Code of Conduct** here.

AMIA Structure

The Board. The role of the Board is to steer the organization towards a sustainable future through sound governance and financial management policies, as well as making sure the organization has adequate resources to advance its mission. The board, as a governing body, focuses on the organization's mission, strategy, resources, and goals.

Committees. Committees make use of the time, expertise and commitment of the membership to serve a crucial role in the functions of the association, as well as address issues within the field. With the Board, they make up the leadership of the AMIA that works together to fulfill AMIA's vision and mission.   There are three types of committees:

- **Committees of the Board.** AMIA Board Committees are focused on the business and service functions of the Association, and are created by the Board of Directors. Chairs and rosters of Board Committees are approved by the Board annually.

- **Committees of the Membership.** AMIA Committees of the Membership are focused on the principal activities of the profession and arise from the membership of the Association. Membership in Committees of the Membership is open to all. Chairs are elected every two years.

- **Task Force.** A Task Force is an ad hoc Committee of the Board. Task Forces are established to work on a defined task or activity with a stated term of 12 months (with extension possible). Based on the activity or tasks, a Task Force may be extended by a vote of the Board. A Task Force may have multiple projects, tasks or activities.

- **Working Group.** A Working Group is an ad hoc Committee of the Membership where a collection of members come together to achieve a single, stated objective or project. A working group might involve members from different committees or individual members collaborating on a project. Unlike a Task Force, a Working Group is formed by individual members or committees and does not need a vote of the Board to be established, but does notify the Board of its charge/mission and the intended term (e.g. one year, six months, etc).

The Office. AMIA's staff is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Association and its activities. Working with board and committee leadership, the role of the office is implementation of the association's mission and support of all of AMIA's activities and projects.

COMMITTEES
STRUCTURE

As outlined in the AMIA overview, there are two types of AMIA Committees:

- **Committees of the Board**
- **Committees of the Membership**

For those working with committees, there are a few notable differences between the two types of Committees -

Chair(s). For Committees of the Board or Task Forces, the Board is involved in the appointment of chairs and approval of rosters. For Committees of the Membership, chairs are elected every two years and any committee member may run for election.

Mission v. Charge. Committees of the Membership are focused on activities of the profession. Projects and activities of the committee arise from the committee members aligned with the committee's mission. Committees of the Board and Task Forces are charged with activities of the organization as directed by the Board.

Formation. Committees of the Membership can be formed by the membership at any time. Task Forces and Committees of the Board are created by a vote of the Board.

In addition, there are two types of working groups – Task Forces and Working Groups.

Committee of the Board v. Task Force. A Task Force is a small ad hoc committee of the Board formed for a specific project or purpose, with a limited term of time.

Committee of the Membership v. Working Group. A Working Group is an ad hoc committee of the membership formed to achieve a particular task, project or activity. The Working Group notifies the Board by submitting the charge, list of members, and intended term (e.g. six months, year, etc) to the Office. This enables the Working Group to take advantage of tools and resources created for committee work.

Task Force v. Working Group. A Task Force is formed by the Board as an ad-hoc Committee of the Board. Its charge is related to a specific project or task and overseen by the Board.

Rosters

The office will help you maintain your roster and will periodically send you updates. Committee members need to be members of AMIA, so your roster will indicate if a committee member has lapsed. There is a grace period while they renew their membership and can still be listed on the roster.

For Committees of the Board, chairs typically put together the roster together for their committee and then submit to the Board for approval by April 1.

Reports

Each Committee chair is expected to provide an annual report for the committee in early August of each year. The report covers what the Committee has been working on, projects underway or in planning.

The report is used as part of AMIA's Annual Report, but more importantly it provides an overview of activities throughout the organization. The report can attract more volunteers to your project, allow chairs to see any overlaps, and sometimes encourage collaboration on similar projects.

The office can send you sample reports – they range from a half page to much longer depending on current projects. Think casual conversation report rather than formal "official document" reporting.

Basecamp

Basecamp is AMIA's official project management software and the repository for committee documents and records. It allows Committees to look back at their work over the years and allows for succession in leadership and rosters.

Committee Chairs have their own section on Basecamp. It's used for communication between chairs, the board and the office. It also has a number of resources – including a primer for new Basecamp users and admins, and a manual for working with the AMIA website.

While a number of chairs use Google, GitHub or other shared workspaces, as a chair we ask you to post minutes, documents or other work product on Basecamp so that it can be used by future committee chairs and members.

We encourage you to check out the new BaseCamp – it has a lot of new tools.

AMIA Website

All Committees have a page on the AMIA Website. As a chair, you have access to edit the page or create new pages. There is a manual for adding information to the Website in the FILES section of the Basecamp area for Committee Chairs.

The Committee can choose also to add material to the Resources section. Materials developed by the Committee can be added either for public use or restricted to members – it's up to the individual committees. Committees can also add to the front page of the site through the blog and through the video section.

Subcommittees

Committees can form subcommittees to work in a particular area or on projects. To form a subcommittee, the chair(s) agree to a roster, a short statement of purpose, and a subcommittee chair and inform the office.   Informal working groups can be formed ad hoc by the committees at any time without notifying the office or the board.

Committee Communication/Meetings

Committees are encouraged to be inclusive of those who cannot attend the annual conference. Using conference calls or electronic discussion (via Basecamp or other online platform) as a regular form of communication can encourage wider participation in committee work. There is time set aside at the conference for committee meetings, but we encourage you to be creative – meet over lunch near the hotel or for drinks at a local pub, for example. Working Groups will be given priority for meeting space at the hotel, but requests for space for committee meetings will also be accepted.

While Basecamp is the repository for documents and resources, committees can and do use a variety of communications and workspace tools: Google groups, Slack, Facebook, GitHub, and others.

Elections

For Committees of the Membership, elections are held every two years, typically in the Spring. As your term concludes, the Office notifies you to asks if the chair(s) will run for re-election. A Call for Nominations goes out to the Committee via Basecamp from the office allowing all committee members to step forward or nominate a colleague. If the chair(s) are running for reelection it is noted.

If there are candidates for the election, a ballot is prepared and goes out electronically to the committee. Candidates are notified at the end of the election. If no candidate(s) step**s** forward, the committee can be dissolved until a new chair or co-chairs run for election.

For Committees of the Board, the Board approves the chair(s) and roster annually.

COMMITTEES
TOOLS

There are a number of tools available to Committees and the board and the office are always looking for additional ways to aid Committees in their work. Below is a list of current tools available, but if there are tools that would help you in your work, please let us know!

Conference Calls: If you want to schedule a call with your committee, subcommittee, or working group members, you can schedule to use the conference call line by emailing Kristina Kersels in the office (kkersels@amianet.org).

Basecamp: As mentioned, Basecamp offers the ability to work collaboratively, store files, send messages, keep a common calendar, or make To-Do lists when working on projects. In addition, the Committee Chair project the ability to communication with other committee chairs and has manuals for the website and for Basecamp in its FILES section.

Project Funding: There is money in the AMIA budget each year set aside for Committee projects. Typically, funding is in the $500 per project range (set at 10 projects per year), but larger projects can be proposed to the Board for special funding.   The Project Funding form can be downloaded from Basecamp or requested from the office.

AMIA Website: Each committee has a page on the AMIA website that can be updated by the Committee. In addition, Committees can add material to other pages of the site (e.g. video, resources, blog posts). A manual for adding information to the site is available in Basecamp, in the FILES section of the area for Committee Chairs.

Social Media: AMIA currently has a Facebook and LinkedIn page as well as Instagram and Twitter accounts. Committees can work through the office or can ask that a committee member be made an admin so that committees can post committee activities via the AMIA account or through hashtags.

Committees can create their own social media presence as well (e.g. @AMIACopyright). And let the office know so the Committee's presence (account, page, etc) can be promoted with other AMIA and committee information. Please consider submitting the account information to the office – it won't be used, but could be helpful as committee chairs and volunteers change.

Committee Blog/Website: AMIA has a hosting account where individual committee websites or blogs can be posted. If the Committee chooses to host an independent website, we ask that you consider hosting it on that account so that it is available to successive chairs and committee members. Similarly, new domain names should be requested through the AMIA office so that they can be part of AMIA's overall web strategy.

If you're interested in creating a blog or website, contact the office about how to host it on the AMIA account.

COMMITTEES
FAQ

If I have questions, who do I ask?

Start with the office. The office is there to support the work of the association including committee work and projects. The office is also a communication hub, talking to a lot of other members and committees, so it's a good place to start with any questions.

- Beverly is the membership manager and will work with you on keeping rosters up to date and Basecamp current.
- Kristina is the operations manager and can work with you on scheduling calls, elections, Basecamp and the website. Kristina also works closely with the Conference Committee.
- Laura is the managing director and can work with you on any questions about projects, funding, or general information. Laura also works closely with the Board.

You can also work with your Board liaison, who can offer information about what the Board is discussing and how committee work could align. In addition, the liaison can discuss project ideas, what overlap might be possible with other projects underway, and offer ideas for resources.

Is there an advantage for creating a Working Group instead of a Subcommittee for committee projects?

Yes, there can be benefits if it is for a single project. From a chair standpoint, it allows a group to be formed that is focused specifically on a single project. If the project includes work of more than one committee, or includes members currently on the committee, a Working Group may be a good solution.

The Committee has a lot of ideas – how do I get volunteers to bring them to life?

The most important first step in getting someone to join a project is to just ask them. Many people aren't comfortable with stepping forward, especially to lead. If there is someone on the committee who has advocated for a project, ask them to help bring it to life.

Ask while the iron is hot – at the end of the conversation where the idea has been discussed (in a meeting, via email, or on a call) invite anyone interested to become a volunteer.

Once the idea has a volunteer (or two or three), break down the project (or task or activity) into its parts. Where can you use help, what kind of help, and what that help should do. Asking others to do specific tasks within the project and letting them know the time commitment is far more successful than a broad "can you help me."

How often should I hold committee meetings?

That depends on the work of the committee. If your Committee is focused on multiple projects (ranging from developing conference sessions to creating resources) you may only need a few full committee meetings with project groups meeting more frequently.

What are common committee activities?

Each committee has a different focus and so activities vary widely: developing resources for the membership and for the field; forming proposals for the annual conference; initiating new programs to benefit members; producing activities or events.

How could I raise outside funds for a specific project or event?

This will vary by the type of project or event. A suggestion was made to create a toolkit that could be used by committee chairs – including letter templates and types of organizations to approach. This is something we can work to provide as part of the information for chairs. Until then, contact your board liaison or the office who can work with you and knows who has already committed funding to AMIA's events and programs, and what types of organizations might fit with your project or event.

My committee is interested in developing webinars. How can we make this happen?

Until there is a mechanism in place (and the Online Education Task Force is working on that!), the best way is to submit a proposal to the office or your board liaison. It should include a budget, an outline of the curriculum, and who will be producing the webinars (project coordinator(s).

What about training? Is there a way I can get information on using basecamp/website hosting/updating the AMIA website?

Yes. The office can work with you on the basics of Basecamp, updating the website, and adding a blog or website for your committee.   A suggestion was made to provide appointment times at the conference for interested committee chairs and we're looking at ways we might be able to make that happen.

Participating in the Board/Committee conference calls can give you an idea of what other committees are working on.

Using BaseCamp 3 (BC3)

How can I add members to our committee TEAM?

Unlike the earlier version of Basecamp (Classic), BC3 doesn't offer individual administrative rights, so until they resolve that, just send a quick email to the office and either Beverly or Kristina can add that for you (amia@amianet.org).

Can I add other projects for the Committee? Or Subcommittees?

If you are working on a project or have a subcommittee that wants a section on BC3, the office can set it up for you – just an email away. You can set up as many projects as needed.

Do I have to use BC3?

Not for your committee work (though we do suggest giving it a try!), but please post minutes, documents or other work product on Basecamp so that it can be used by future committee chairs and members.

Is there other information you think should be added?
Send the question to your Board liaison or to the office at amia@amianet.org.
This Guide should continue to grow and change as needed!