



# **Archives Association of British Columbia**

Application for Full Institutional Membership

Revised October 2014

## Introduction

The AABC is committed to the preservation of British Columbia's documentary heritage by promoting and strengthening a sustainable and inclusive network of archives throughout the province, and by providing a wide range of archival services and resources. The Association is committed to ensuring institutional members will be able to meet their public responsibility to preserve and provide continuing public access to the unique and valuable archival material in their care.

The AABC criteria for full institutional membership reflects the CCA Institutional Guidelines for Archives, which can be found on the following website: <http://www.cdncouncilarchives.ca/standardpub.html>. The AABC endorses the definition of an archives used by the Standards Committee of the CCA (see CCA website):

An archives is a permanent establishment dedicated to:

- appraising, selecting and acquiring the archival records of its sponsoring institution (normally its primary goal) and/or the archival records of corporate bodies, organizations or individuals relevant to its sponsoring institution or to a defined community or thematic interest;
- conserving the archival records or the information accepted;
- arranging and describing the archival records according to accepted archival principles;
- subscribing to and applying all relevant legislation governing use and access to records including the areas of privacy, access to information, and copyright;
- making the archival records available for continuing use under defined conditions by the sponsoring institution and by the public.

To this end, the Association has established standards in eight key areas of archival care. Archival institutions can achieve the standards through a process that combines self-study and advisory support provided by the AABC. Support includes advisory services, site visits, educational workshops, and an electronic toolkit. Archival institutions must meet the mandatory criteria and provide relevant documentation in each standard to obtain full institutional membership in the Association.

## Process

The institution should complete the following application and attach all requested documentation. The documentation checklist on page 4 will

assist you with this. Questions marked with an asterisk are considered to be required elements of the application and must be answered in the affirmative.

The completed application package may then be sent to [membership@aabc.ca](mailto:membership@aabc.ca), attention to the Chair of the Membership Committee. In the interest of sustainability, we request that all applications be submitted electronically.

The Membership Committee reviews all membership applications and makes recommendations to the AABC Executive Committee who makes the final decision to accept or decline the application for membership.

### **Payment**

Please do not include payment for membership until you receive confirmation from the membership committee of the acceptance of your application. Payments are not accepted electronically at this time (*please do not email credit card information*); we ask that you mail a cheque or credit card information upon confirmation.

### **Deadlines**

While there is not a deadline for applications to be accepted, the membership year runs from April 1 to March 31 so institutions may want to plan their applications accordingly.

## **DOCUMENTATION CHECKLIST**

This checklist is provided for the applicant's convenience. Please refer to the appropriate Guideline for explanation and requirements. Documents marked with an asterisk are considered to be mandatory.

<b>GUIDELINE 1. Legal authority and purpose</b>	
* Authorizing document (bylaw, charter, etc)	
* Statement of purpose	
<b>GUIDELINE 2. Designated archivist</b>	
* Job description for archivist	
Most recent annual report	
<b>GUIDELINE 3. Sustainable Funding</b>	
* Recent year-end financial report	
<b>GUIDELINE 4. Secure, designated space (floor plans <i>and/or</i> photographs are mandatory)</b>	
* Floor plans	
* Photographs of the records storage, staff and researcher space	
<b>GUIDELINE 5. Acquisition Policy and Procedures</b>	
* Acquisition Policy	
* Blank copy of the written Donor Agreement form	
<b>GUIDELINE 6. Access Policy</b>	
* Access policy	
* Copy of researcher registration form.	
<b>GUIDELINE 7. Preservation Policy</b>	
* Archives preservation policy	
Emergency/disaster plan	
Conservation documentation (e.g. treatment report)	
<b>GUIDELINE 8. Description Procedures</b>	
* Completed archival description	

## **GUIDELINE 1: LEGAL AUTHORITY AND PURPOSE**

The Archives is accountable to a clearly recognizable governing institution or sponsor who has a commitment to the preservation of and access to the Archives' mandated records, and has a statement of purpose that has been formally approved by the governing body or sponsor. Examples of governing institutions include: Alberni District Historical Society, City of Vancouver, Sisters of St. Ann, University of Northern British Columbia.

This guideline is to ensure that records placed in an Archives will be preserved permanently for the benefit of the community by a responsible institution.

### **A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**1.1\*** Is there documentation that officially authorizes the establishment and ongoing operation of the archives by a clearly recognizable governing body or sponsor, e.g.: policy, bylaw, charter, constitution, letters of incorporation, legislation?

YES NO

**1.2\*** Does the Archives have a statement of purpose clearly specifying that the Archives is responsible for basic archival functions of acquisition, arrangement, description, preservation, and providing public access to records of enduring value?

YES NO

### **B. Documentation:**

Please attach copy of authorizing document (bylaw, charter, etc) and statement of purpose.

### **C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:

## **GUIDELINE 2: DESIGNATED ARCHIVIST**

The Archives has a designated archivist (paid or volunteer) who is accountable to the governing institution or sponsor for managing the Archives and its archival holdings, and who has or is pursuing training and education in archival principles and practice.

This guideline is to ensure that responsibility for the management of the Archives is clearly defined.

### **A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**2.1\*** Has the sponsoring organization formally designated an archivist to be responsible for the management of the Archives?

YES NO

**2.2\*** Please provide the name and contact information of the designated archivist, and describe their archival education and/or training

Name:

Contact info:

Education/training:

**2.3\*** In what way does the archivist report the activities of the archives to your governing body or the public? Do such reports describe the archives operation, major acquisitions, facility improvement, and use of holdings, including statistics and plans for development?

Please describe:

**2.4** Does the archivist prepare a multi-year strategic plan, setting out the Archives' long-term goals and activities?

YES NO

### **B. Documentation:**

Please attach job description for the archivist, and most recent annual report (if applicable).

### **C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:

**GUIDELINE 3: SUSTAINABLE FUNDING**

The Archives has sustainable funding from the governing institution or sponsor that is sufficient to carry out the Archives' mandate on a continuous and regular basis.

**A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**3.1\*** Does the archives have sustainable or core funding from the governing institution or sponsor that is sufficient to carry out the Archives' mandate on a continuous and regular basis?

YES NO

**3.2\*** Please indicate your archives' annual operating budget in the ranges below (includes labour costs):

\$0 – \$75,000

\$75,001 – \$150,000

\$150,001 – \$300,000

\$300,001 – \$500,000

\$500,001 +

Note: The purpose of this question is to determine the amount of membership dues which will be levied by the Association.

**3.3** Is the Archives aware of grant opportunities and does it apply for archival grant programs for which it is eligible?

YES \_\_\_\_ NO \_\_\_\_

**B. Documentation:**

Please attach most recent year-end financial report, final budget, or equivalent document.

**C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:

**GUIDELINE 4: SECURE, DESIGNATED SPACE**

The Archives has a secure, designated space for storage and handling of archival material that is maintained regularly, and is reasonably protected from theft, water, fire, light, and extremes of temperature and humidity.

**A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**4.1\*** Does the Archives have a secure building, or part of a building, for ongoing use that restricts access to authorized staff, researchers and other visitors?

YES NO

**4.2\*** Is the facility reasonably protected from theft, water, fire, light, and extremes of temperature and humidity?

YES NO

Please describe:

**4.3\*** Is the storage area for the records reasonably protected from dangers such as overhead pipes, boilers, water heaters, sewer drains, condensation, and flooding?

YES NO

**4.4\*** Does the Archives consult with local fire authorities, implement their recommendations and comply with the fire code (including detectors, alarms and extinguishing systems)?

YES NO

Please describe:

**4.5\*** Does the Archives have adequate shelving and a clean storage area that is of sufficient size to store the records?

YES NO

**4.6** Is the building structure (including foundation, insulation, windows, door and roof) inspected and maintained regularly?

YES NO

**4.7** Is the plumbing and heating system of the building inspected and maintained regularly?

YES NO

**4.8** Is the storage area for the records separate and secure from public access?

YES NO

**4.9** Does the Archives have adequate space for staff and researchers to



work that is separate from the holdings?  
YES NO

**B. Documentation:**

Please attach floor plans and/or photographs of the records storage, staff and researcher space.

**C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:

## **GUIDELINE 5: ACQUISITION POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The Archives has a written Acquisition Policy that has been formally approved by the governing institution or sponsor. The Policy should define the focus of the records that will be acquired and the institutional, geographic and subject concentration of its acquisition activity. This will help avoid conflict with neighbouring repositories and will contribute to a joint acquisition strategy for the region.

### **A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**5.1\*** Is there a written Acquisition Policy that has been formally approved by the governing institution or sponsor that articulates the focus of the records that will be acquired and the institutional, geographic and subject concentration of its acquisition activity?

YES NO

**5.2\*** Does the Archives appraise all material offered or received, to determine whether the records are of enduring value, and within its acquisition jurisdiction?

YES NO

**5.3\*** Does the Archives maintain a record of each accession prepared soon after the records are received, including: accession number, date of receipt, donor or office of origin, extent, access restrictions, physical condition and format of material?

YES NO

**5.4\*** Does the Archives have a written Donor Agreement that is signed for each accession received from outside the governing institution, specifying the transfer of ownership of the records, and any other specific terms agreed to by the two parties?

YES NO

### **B. Documentation:**

Please attach a copy of your Acquisition Policy and a blank copy of the written Donor Agreement form used by your institution.

### **C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:



## **GUIDELINE 6: ACCESS POLICY**

The Archives has a written Access Policy specifying guidelines for access and use of records to ensure security of the records and enhance access, including: researcher registration, finding aids system, access and privacy restrictions, warnings of copyright restrictions, reference services, copying facilities and regular public hours.

### **A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**6.1\*** Does the Archives have a written Access Policy specifying guidelines for public access and use of records?

YES NO

**6.2\*** The AABC requires regular hours of opening equivalent to at least one day or seven hours per week. Does your archives meet this requirement?

YES NO

Please describe your public hours of access:

**6.3\*** Does the Archives provide access to records free of charge to all researchers equally?

YES NO

**6.4\*** Does the Archives have a researcher registration process that records the names and addresses of each researcher and material used?

YES NO

**6.5\*** When the Archives is open to the public, is staff available to supervise researchers, and retrieve records?

YES NO

**6.6\*** Does the Archives uphold legislated and donor specified access, privacy, and copyright restrictions?

YES NO

**6.8** Does the Archives provide basic reference service to people who send long-distance requests?

YES NO

**6.9** Does the Archives provide copying services to researchers?

YES NO

### **B. Documentation:**

Please provide a copy of your access policy covering privacy, copyright, etc, and a (blank) copy of your researcher registration form.

**C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:

## **GUIDELINE 7: PRESERVATION POLICY**

The Archives has a written Preservation Policy specifying preventative preservation guidelines for storage and care and handling of archival material that are followed from the moment of accession onwards.

### **A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**7.1\*** Does the Archives have a written Preservation Policy that has been formally approved by the governing institution or sponsor?

YES NO

**7.2\*** Are staff and researchers given instructions on handling archival records, including careful handling, use of pencils, and white gloves when appropriate?

YES NO

**7.3\*** Are smoking, eating and drinking prohibited in areas in which records are stored, used, or worked on?

YES NO

**7.4** Does the Archives have a written emergency/disaster plan that has been formally approved by the governing institution or sponsor to protect and recover records in the event of a disaster (such as fire, flood, theft)?

YES NO

**7.5** Does the Archives regularly monitor and track temperature and relative humidity in the records storage area?

YES NO

**7.6** Are the shelves, containers and supplies chosen to provide appropriate and effective protection for the records and are they of archival quality?

YES NO

**7.7** Has daylight been eliminated from the records storage area?

YES NO

**7.8** Have electrical lights in the storage and research area been tested for light levels, and equipped with ultra-violet filters or dimmers if necessary?

YES NO

**7.9** Are lights turned off in the storage area when the room is unoccupied?

YES NO

7.10 Are researchers given a limited number of documents/boxes at a time?

YES NO

**B. Documentation:**

Please attach a copy of the Archives preservation policy, emergency/disaster plan if applicable, and examples of conservation documentation, such as treatment reports, if applicable.

**C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here:



## **GUIDELINE 8: DESCRIPTION PROCEDURES**

The Archives has established procedures for arranging and describing archival records according to accepted archival principles of provenance, original order and archival description.

### **A. Questions to help you assess if you meet the standard:**

**8.1\*** Does the Archives arrange and describe its holdings according to the principles of provenance, original order, and archival description?

YES NO

8.2 Are easily accessible and searchable finding aids produced and made available to researchers?

YES NO

8.3 Does the Archives prepare an inventory to the series and file level for each fonds that requires it?

YES NO

8.4 Does the Archives use the CCA's Rules for Archival Description (RAD) as a standard for description?

YES NO

If not, does the Archives use another nationally or internationally accepted archival standard for description? Please specify:

8.5 Does the Archives prepare a RAD (or other as above) description for each fonds in its custody?

YES NO

8.6 Does the Archives plan to upload its completed RAD descriptions to MemoryBC?

ALL SOME NONE

### **B. Documentation:**

Please attach an example of a completed archival description.

### **C. Future development:**

If you have plans for development or review in the next five-year period, please include them here: