

ASOR STRATEGIC PLAN

(For FY 2011-2015)

MISSION STATEMENT

ASOR's mission is to initiate, encourage and support research into, and public understanding of, the cultures and history of the Near East from the earliest times:

- By fostering original research, archaeological excavations, and explorations.
- By encouraging scholarship in the basic languages, cultural histories and traditions of the Near Eastern world.
- By maintaining an active program of timely dissemination of research results and conclusions.
- By maintaining the highest ethical standards of scholarship and public discourse.
- By promoting and advocating the highest academic standards in teaching about the Near East and in interdisciplinary research.
- By offering educational opportunities in Near Eastern history and archaeology to undergraduates and graduates in North American colleges and universities, and through outreach to the general public.

A VISION FOR ASOR IN THE 21ST CENTURY

ASOR affirms its historic mission and the priorities that have guided it as an organization since its inception in 1900. Central to these priorities have been ASOR's emerging identity as a knowledge-based organization, or 'learned society' (ASOR only became a member of the ACLS in 1998), and a constituency with a shared interest in and deep commitment to the study and public understanding of the cultures and history of the Near East. These core values unite ASOR, and they will serve to guide the organization as it looks to the future and develops new strategies and initiatives to better achieve its core mission as the leading organization committed to the dissemination of knowledge and understanding of the Near Eastern world.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

As the leading organization committed to the dissemination of knowledge and understanding of the cultures and history of the Near East, ASOR will seek to:

- Foster scholarship about any and all aspects of Near Eastern culture and history, by

- Actively supporting and encouraging Near Eastern archaeological fieldwork in all of its forms;
- Maintaining strong collaborative ties with the affiliated research centers in the region;
- Producing scholarly publications on any/all aspects of the cultures and history of the Near East, reflecting the highest academic standards and employing the latest information technologies;
- Convening a vibrant annual meeting devoted to the dissemination of knowledge about any/all aspects of the cultures and history of the Near East.
- Maintain the highest ethical standards of academic scholarship, by
 - Promoting the best practices in its collective disciplines;
 - Participating actively in the discussion of ethical issues and public policy that concern the study and preservation of the cultures and history of the Near East.
- Become a vital resource about the cultures and history of the Near East for the general public and popular media, by
 - Engaging actively in public outreach and education;
 - Providing support for student training and educational opportunities.

ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGIES

To achieve this vision, ASOR will implement the following organizational strategies:

Governance Structure

- Establish an **Officers Coordinating Council** responsible for coordinating organizational priorities and initiatives and the activities and programs of ASOR's standing committees, particularly as they concern the allocation of resources, jurisdictional issues, governance and the application of ethical policies and professional standards. The OCC will consist of the officers of the organization and the chairs of its standing committees and will report to the Executive Committee and the Board of Trustees.
- Reduce the size of the **Board of Trustees** to reflect the creation of the OCC, and establish an even balance of professional and lay representation to reflect current best practices in board governance.
- Create a new **President-Elect** position to provide leadership support to the President and facilitate a smooth transition of leadership between presidential terms.

Annual Meeting and Programs

- Reorganize CAMP as the **Program Committee** responsible solely for the annual meeting program. The PC will work directly with the Director of Meetings and Events to ensure the continued high quality and vitality of the annual meeting as a core mission priority.
- Establish a new standing **Committee on Public Outreach** (to replace the existing Outreach Sub-Committee). The CPO will be charged with expanding ASOR's educational outreach programs, including the lecture program, and will explore the feasibility of creating an ASOR Archaeological Tours program.
 - A primary responsibility of the CPO will be to develop a more active engagement with the popular media and to raise ASOR's profile as a primary resource on the cultures and history of the Near East for the public and popular media.
 - The CPO will also be responsible for convening workshops and training programs for educators and for developing resources designed to communicate archaeological knowledge more effectively to the broader public.
- The **Regional Affiliations Committee** will be elevated to a full standing committee, charged with strengthening ASOR's relations with its affiliated regional societies and with building local awareness, lay membership, and 'grass-roots' support for ASOR and its programs.

Publications

- The continued vitality of ASOR's publications, as core assets central to its mission, will be a top strategic priority. ASOR will continue to retain control of the production of its publications under the oversight of the **Committee on Publications**, with primary staff support provided by a Publications Coordinator.
- COP will conduct a thorough review of its operational structure and produce an up-to-date Guidelines and Procedures Manual, to ensure the smooth and efficient operation of ASOR's publication program.
- COP will explore new and alternative publication formats, venues, and products, including the role of digital technology and online publication, to ensure that ASOR's publications remain relevant and vibrant in the rapidly changing world of academic print media.
- COP, together with the Executive Director and Publications Coordinator, will identify and develop strategies designed to expand the readership and subscription base of its periodicals and publication series to ensure a stable and sustainable financial plan.

Archaeological Research and Policy

- The **Committee on Archaeological Research and Policy** will continue to be charged with the review process for ASOR project affiliation and will work to refine the procedures and develop guidelines that reflect disciplinary best practices.
- CAP will be responsible for awarding research grants (the Harris Fund) and student travel fellowships (the Heritage and Platt Fellowships). The growth of these grant programs will be a top funding priority.
- The CAP tours will be reactivated as a means of fostering collegial interaction, facilitating networking and the exchange of information between projects, and for providing technical resource support.
- CAP will be charged with developing and expanding access to online archaeological resources, especially repositories of Near Eastern archaeological data. Developing ASOR's website as a primary portal for online resources on the history and archaeology of the Near East will be a top priority.

Membership

- The **Membership Committee** will be charged with creating a plan to expand the lay membership of ASOR and it will work closely with the CPO and RAC committees, and the Membership Coordinator, to develop and implement the plan.
- The MC will also work closely with the Membership Coordinator to continue improving and enhancing the attractiveness of ASOR's various membership categories and the quality of the services ASOR provides to its membership.
- With the restructuring of CAMP, the MC will assume responsibility for the selection and presentation of ASOR's Honors and Awards.

RESOURCES REQUIRED

Staffing Priorities

- A full-time Executive Director responsible for oversight and management of all of ASOR operations and programs; the ED will work closely with the President on development and fund raising.
- A full-time staff position responsible for management of the annual meeting and programs (i.e., a Director of Meetings and Events).
- A full-time staff position responsible for support of ASOR's publications and online resources (i.e., a Publications Coordinator and Webmaster).

- A full-time staff position responsible for membership services and outreach (i.e., a Membership and Outreach Coordinator).
- A full-time staff position responsible for accounts and payroll (i.e., a Financial Administrator).

Funding Priorities (not ranked in order of priority)

- Annual Meeting Travel Fellowships (for students and international scholars to participate in the annual meetings).
- Lectureship and Outreach Program Funding.
- Funds to support publication of excavation reports (i.e., grow the Opportunity Fund).
- Archaeological Fieldwork Research Grants (i.e., funds to supplement the Harris grants).
- Student Fieldwork Travel Fellowships (e.g., Heritage and Platt Fellowships).
- ASOR's General Endowment.