

ASOR STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

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This proposal seeks to identify the key funding initiatives that will form the core of a Development Plan designed to marshal the resource support needed to achieve the long-term vision and priorities outlined in ASOR's Strategic Plan. As such, it is intended as a working document to solicit feedback and thereby help guide the creation of a Development Plan that accurately reflects ASOR's mission, its stated priorities, and the concerns of its membership, but also a plan with reasonable prospects of implementation and ultimately of success. The proposal draws directly from the Strategic Plan, and has relied on previous planning documents, background papers and proposals. A brief fundraising timeline is proposed at the end.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

ASOR's strategic priorities, as articulated in the Strategic Plan adopted by the ASOR Board on April 24, 2010, can be grouped into the following three key areas: (1) Research and Training, (2) Knowledge Dissemination, and (3) Public Outreach.

Research and Training. The encouragement and support of excavations and related project research in the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean regions has always been, and will continue to be, a core mission priority of ASOR. This should include funding in the form of competitively awarded grants to support the field research and data analysis of ASOR-affiliated projects. The development of online archaeological resources, especially repositories of Near Eastern archaeological data and online digital analytical tools, will be a central goal of this priority area. Student fieldwork and travel fellowships to facilitate training opportunities in archaeological research methods will also be a top priority.

Knowledge Dissemination. The interpretation and dissemination of the results of archaeological research to the North American and global scholarly community, and to the public-at-large, has been, and will continue to be, one of ASOR's central goals and most prominent achievements. In light of the rapidly changing world of academic publication, ASOR has begun exploring new and alternative publication formats, venues, and products, including the role of digital technology and online publication, to ensure that its publications remain relevant and accessible to the academic community and the broader public.

Public Outreach. At a time when the public at large is showing ever increasing interest in archaeology and cultural heritage, it will be a top priority that ASOR become a vital resource about the cultures and history of the Near East for the general public. ASOR is planning an expanded public outreach program which will involve and engage all of ASOR's existing programs, and through use of the internet and public media. ASOR, in its revitalized outreach, will also focus increased attention on the urgent need for greater resources being applied to cultural heritage preservation, and the need for responsible expansion of archaeological research.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AND FUNDRAISING TARGETS

ASOR seeks **\$8.1 million** to support these strategic priorities and continue its historic mission to initiate, encourage and support research into and public understanding of the peoples

and cultures of the Near East and their wider spheres of interaction from earliest times to the present. Securing this funding will fundamentally transform ASOR's ability to serve students, teachers, scholars and the public at large in the 21st century.

It will also render ASOR a model for change and renewal within other fields of academic study in the humanities and social sciences. In the Academy, the need for revitalizing education in the Humanities is clear, and of critical concern today. A new generation of scholars is rising within ASOR with interests that reach beyond the traditional fields of Biblical Studies, Languages and History into a broad disciplinary range that includes Anthropology, Ethnography, Geography, the Environmental and Physical Sciences, and Museum Studies. With its core commitment to creating and expanding research and educational opportunities in this interdisciplinary environment, ASOR is well-positioned to play a role in higher education that is both timely and of real consequence.

To support these strategic priorities, ASOR will focus its fundraising efforts on the following six major initiatives:

- **Endowment for Field Research [\$1 million].** This initiative will seek funding to support Near Eastern archaeological research (broadly defined) in the form of competitively awarded research grants to ASOR-affiliated field projects. It will function as an endowment, and complement the existing Harris Fund (currently at approximately \$122,000).
- **Student Field Research and Travel Fellowships [\$500,000].** This initiative will seek support for travel fellowships to enable students to participate in field research, and gain valuable educational training and experience. It will function as an endowment, and complement the existing Platt Fund (currently at approximately \$243,000).
- **Endowment for Electronic Publications [\$1 million].** This initiative will seek support for ASOR's publications program, in particular its various book series, with the aim of underwriting their continued production, as core assets central to ASOR's mission, in the rapidly changing world of academic publishing. It will function as an endowment, and complement the existing Opportunities Fund (currently at approximately \$106,000).
- **Endowment for Near Eastern Digital Archive [\$2 million].** A century and a half of Near Eastern archaeological research has generated an unparalleled body of digital data. However, attempts to store this vast and growing body of data have foundered on issues of access, data compatibility, integration and analytical capability. This initiative will build on the NEH-funded Archives Project (and previous ASOR initiatives), and will seek funding to create a sustainable, user-driven vehicle for large-scale data management and cross-project data integration of archaeological data from ASOR-affiliated and related projects in an online environment.
- **ASOR Lectureship Program [\$500,000].** This initiative will seek funding to support an active lectureship program designed to enhance ASOR's outreach efforts, in particular its involvement with the Regional Affiliate societies, and other regional groups and organizations.
- **ASOR General Endowment [\$2 million].** This initiative will seek funding to build ASOR's General Endowment (currently at approximately \$428,000), enabling it to underwrite ASOR's operations and a wide range of programs.

FUNDRAISING STRATEGY AND TIMELINE

- **Planning and Assessment Phase (2010-2011).**
- **'Building Capacity' Phase (2011-2013).**
 - Prepare promotional materials (brochures, posters, displays/travel exhibits, video/ppt presentations, etc.)
 - Marketing/Branding Activities
 - Visibility Events (Lectures in major centers; receptions, etc.)
 - Cultivation Events (Dinners; Gala Events, etc.)
- **Public Campaign Phase (2013-2015+).**