

# Draft

Note: This section was authored by Andy Vaughn, and it is a provisional draft presented for feedback, discussion, and revision.

## Part II. Infrastructure to Support Programs

### ASOR Mission Rubrics

- *Fostering original research, exploration, and archaeological fieldwork;*
- *Disseminating research results and conclusions in a timely manner, through a robust publication program, annual meeting, and other venues;*
- *Developing engaging programs of outreach for the general public;*

**Background:** Following our displacement from Boston University, ASOR’s Board made the bold decision to both relocate to the District of Columbia area and to purchase our own headquarters. The goal was to position ASOR’s operations in a metro area easily accessible by air, and in proximity to like-minded learned societies, NGOs, the US DOS and other grant making organizations. We concluded that such a location would provide greater opportunities for public outreach and engagement rather than an elite college city such as Boston. The decision to purchase our own home was to make ASOR independent of changes in University leadership. Three years later, ASOR successfully relocated to Alexandria, VA, and generous donations from our members have retired the building debt. Based on current pledges, we anticipate that ASOR will have a \$500,000 board-designated building fund by 2024. This building fund will support basic operations and maintenance and ensure that ASOR’s office will not be a long-term drain on operational revenue. Now that we have actualized this major achievement not even contemplated when the previous strategic plan was written, we must consider how the James Strange Center can be used to do more than provide ASOR with “free rent.”

### Actions:

#### 7A. Develop James Strange Center to best serve our various programs

On one hand, a central purpose for the ASOR office is to be the physical location where staff who support ASOR members (and our more than 240 volunteers) will carry out the operations needed to conduct ASOR activities and programs (e.g., journals, books, e-newsletters, grants, and the

annual meeting). While not losing sight of this need support our core operations, ASOR aspires to utilize our location near Washington, DC to support broader outreach and engagement with the public—both in the U.S. and abroad.

1. Undertake minimal / modest physical reconfiguring (not a remodel) needed to enable excellent office space for our staff to support our core programs.
2. Upgrade storage facilities appropriate for ASOR's archives and other core records. Recognizing that the creation of research center for archaeological archives is beyond the space and environmental control limitations at the James Strange Center, we need to create cost-effective and efficient storage systems. We should concurrently evaluate if long-term curation of basic archaeological and institutional records is within ASOR's budgetary means given our other strategic priorities.
3. Raise modest funds to reconfigure the first floor of the James Strange Center to create a multi-use meeting room / conference room that is completely ADA accessible. The physical changes will be short of a remodel, and will be designed to create office fully ADA compliant workspace(s) so that ASOR can encourage diverse hiring without consideration of disabilities. The space will also be suitable for education and advocacy meetings and events with governmental agencies and bureaus.
4. Raise modest funds to create a media room suitable for video and audio recordings that could be used in ASOR's growing webinar and educational video programs. The plan is to focus on basic functionality in this space, with the idea that state of the art video and recording studios are available for low to no cost at nearby affiliated institutions. Further, ASOR will explore the feasibility of physical network servers to be housed in this room if we determined that cloud hosting is not adequate or desired.
5. Expand the current facilities committee to include local membership who would be drawn from ASOR members who live in the wider area, and from faculty, administrators, and leaders from local education institutions and non-profits with whom ASOR partners or aspires to partner.

### **Staff Development at the James Strange Center**

Because ASOR has experienced the reality of abruptly losing our office home at Boston University, there was a two-year period in which the physical location for our operations were somewhat transient. During the period, remote work was necessary, and ASOR's staff did not work in one location. During an 18-month period in 2020–2021, a global pandemic necessitated the need for ASOR staff to work remotely. The disruption created by the pandemic came at a moment when

ASOR was just beginning to consolidate operations at the James Strange Center. Although ASOR has discovered that we are able to continue and even expand operations when staff are forced to work remotely, we have also concluded that our programs and activities will be more successful when employee team members can work together and collaborate in the same physical space.

We do not want to preclude specific programs continuing remotely (e.g., editors for our academic journals and the Annual Meeting), but we aspire to having as many staff as possible work together at the James Strange Center. We also want to facilitate and interaction and collaboration with staff from our three affiliated overseas research centers (ACOR, AIAR, and CAARI). In short, now that we have a permanent office home for ASOR, we need to rethink the optimum staffing to make the most of our new location in close proximity to other learned societies, governmental agencies, and education institutions. We also should think about the optimum staffing for the James Strange Center that can help actualize the goals articulated in the revised strategic plans set forth in Part I.

### **Improve Online Meeting and Office Data Management Systems**

The move to remote work and interactions necessitated by the COVID-19 global pandemic has only reinforced the need to ASOR to have excellent online meeting and data management systems. As mentioned in several places above in this strategic plan, ASOR recognizes that online and web support systems will expand even further as we emerge from the global pandemic. Our membership has been forced to develop its capacity for online meetings and research, and ASOR must look for ways to expand our support in this space within our budget constraints.

Because the costs for online systems can be large (and almost infinite), our focus will be on practical solutions that support our members and core operations. We will preference cloud-based solutions that do not necessitate ASOR investing in hardware that will become outdated in a few years. We will also seek to choose solutions that can be utilized with current staffing and supplemented by IT contractors. Further, and most importantly, our focus will be on expanding crowd-source resources for our membership rather than investing in expensive data management systems that primarily benefit ASOR's staff.