

ASOR Cultural Heritage Committee Report Fall 2022

Last January, we began making plans for an FOA Seminar on cultural heritage in the time of armed conflict. Patty Gerstinblith volunteered to help us, with two other panelists. We charged no registration fee, but asked people to contribute to a cultural heritage fund. Our turnout was excellent, with at least one new member added. We are planning another Seminar for the spring.

Over the summer, Jane organized a workshop on “Contested Heritage” for the 2022 Annual Meeting. We had 6 speakers and a discussant and a lively discussion. We are making plans for another submission for the 2023 membership.

Several members of the committee have consulted with Andy on the first drafts of grant applications to various organizations, resulting in excellent ideas put forward by the committee. We would urge continued consultation, and consultation on second drafts, as well.

Other matters: in February, our committee discussed the process of evaluating suggestions that ASOR sign statements of protest or intent. We noted the need to be nimble, to ‘stay in our lane’ in terms of issues that are directly related to ASOR’s mission and expertise, and only briefly discussed how such suggestions would be handled. At the November meeting, we proposed to make a flowchart or outline of the process by which such suggestions could be evaluated. Jane will bring the first draft to the first meeting of 2023.

Sending letters of support for MoUs: committee members track when renewals are coming up; they then encourage archaeologists in the field (especially) to write in support. We have heard from an ex-committee member that these letters from archaeologists with facts about what is happening on the ground far outweigh, in importance, the numbers of one-line letters from the collecting community (especially the coin collectors). This year, we have worked with the AIA to write a joint letter for MoU renewals in MENA regions; Jane has also written letters as chair of the committee that focus only on coins.

The committee also discussed and suggested changes for the strategic plan that was approved by the Board.