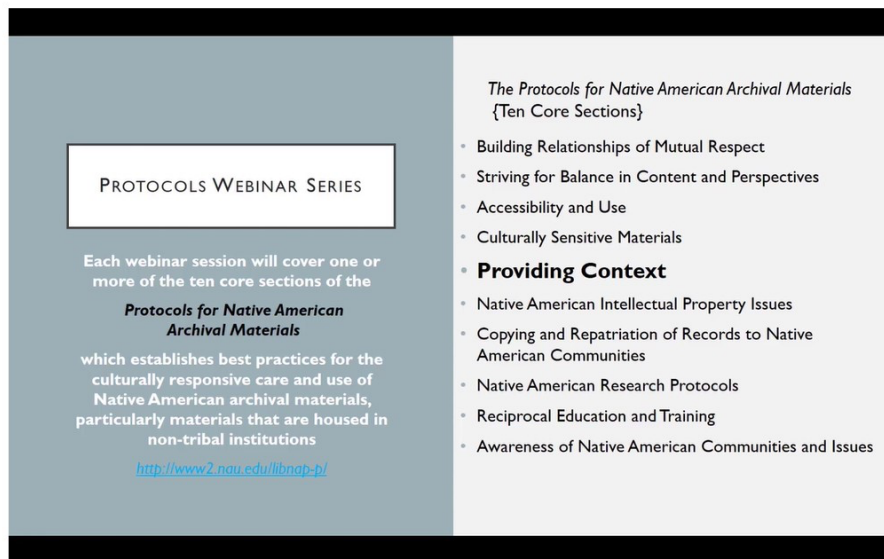


# DESCRIPTIVE NOTES

## Implementing the Protocols: Resources from SAA's Native American Archives Section

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**PROTOCOLS WEBINAR SERIES**

Each webinar session will cover one or more of the ten core sections of the *Protocols for Native American Archival Materials* which establishes best practices for the culturally responsive care and use of Native American archival materials, particularly materials that are housed in non-tribal institutions

<http://www2.nau.edu/libnap-pj/>

*The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials*  
{Ten Core Sections}

- Building Relationships of Mutual Respect
- Striving for Balance in Content and Perspectives
- Accessibility and Use
- Culturally Sensitive Materials
- **Providing Context**
  - Native American Intellectual Property Issues
  - Copying and Repatriation of Records to Native American Communities
  - Native American Research Protocols
  - Reciprocal Education and Training
  - Awareness of Native American Communities and Issues

### KEYWORDS:

film, metadata, Metadata Creation Consultation, collaboration, project planning, preservation, digitization, cultural protocols, TK Labels, access, Mukurtu CMS, oral history, education, Community Stakeholders, Community Outreach, Community Partnerships, Cultural arts

### COLLECTIONS:

SAA Native American Archives Section Resources

### ORIGINAL DATE:

2020 June 25th

### CREATOR:

Society of American Archivists Native American Archives Section

### CONTRIBUTOR:

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**By Rose Buchanan and Diana Marsh, on behalf of the SAA Native American Archives Section**

**The Protocols for Native American Archival Materials** (PNAAM) establish best

practices for the culturally responsive care and use of Native American archival materials, particularly materials that are housed in non-Tribal institutions. Following SAA's endorsement of PNAAM as an external standard in 2018, the Native American Archives Section (NAAS) launched a case studies and webinar series about implementing them. These resources include guidelines for providing culturally appropriate and accurate descriptive information for Native American and Indigenous collections.

Our ongoing case studies series, **Access Policies for Native American Archival Materials**, offers real-world examples of the ways in which contributors and their institutions have developed and/or implemented access policies for culturally sensitive Native American archival materials. Contributors are encouraged to write about the challenges and successes of developing and implementing these access policies. Case studies from institutions of all sizes and types are welcomed, as are case studies focusing on various types of archival materials (textual, photographic, audio/visual, etc.). To date, NAAS has published four case studies online via SAA.

An integral part of providing appropriate access to culturally sensitive materials is ensuring that the materials are identified and described accurately. As the PNAAM drafters **wrote**, “The use of outdated, inaccurate, derogatory, or Eurocentric language impedes access” to Native American archival collections and harms Indigenous communities of origin. They offered suggestions for engaging with Indigenous communities to identify and implement preferred terminology for people, places, and events, as well as advocating for changes to language used in classification schemes like the Library of Congress Subject Headings.

Our case studies authors each engaged with these guidelines and discussed how they implemented them in their holdings. For example:

- The American Philosophical Society (APS) secured grant funding to digitize Indigenous-related audio collections in their holdings. Between 2011 and 2014, the APS visited their four community partners—the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the Penobscot Nation, the Tuscarora Nation, and a group of Anishinaabe communities in the United States and Canada—and hosted community representatives in their archives. The visits allowed community members to provide “numerous corrections of inaccurate or incomplete metadata about materials from their community and explained the significance of many materials to contemporary Indigenous contexts” (**Carpenter**, p. 7).

- Northern Arizona University's Cline Library supports the preservation of both the original context of materials' creation and contemporary cultural perspectives and corrections. This is most commonly seen in titles of digital items, where problematic language is identified as original to the creator (**Pringle**, p. 11).
- The National Anthropological Archives (NAA) distributes "Information Please" forms to researchers that offer a way for them to identify problematic or incomplete catalog records as well as ethical issues in the collections. In 2018, the NAA began a project to collate and analyze the feedback provided in these forms to assist in future catalog updates (**Marsh et al.**, 27).
- At the Arizona State University Library, staff use ArchivesSpace's "Access Restrictions," "Subjects," and "User Defined" fields to identify Native American materials during their backlog survey of unprocessed collections. Staff add names of Native communities to the "Subjects" field and use a dropdown menu in the "User Defined" field to record types of representation: "'Own Voice (collection is created by the donor about him- or herself and the donor is Indigenous),' 'Culturally Sensitive,' 'Government Documents,' 'Donated by Researcher,' and 'Undetermined'" (**Sanchez et al.**, 9). Staff add a note in the "Access Restrictions" section to indicate whether culturally sensitive materials are present and the collection should be restricted accordingly. Box numbers are sometimes used to single out parts of collections rather than restricting entire collections.

Our five-part webinar series, **Implementing the Protocols for Native American Archival Materials**, is an SAA Foundation-funded grant project designed to complement our case studies series. Each webinar focuses on a different theme in the PNAAM—from building relationships, to providing context for archival collections, to protecting Native American intellectual property rights—and features an institution or project that embodies that theme. All webinars are freely available online through our partner, the **Sustainable Heritage Network**, and are captioned to improve accessibility.

The third webinar in the series, **Providing Context through Centering Indigenous Voices**, features a conversation between Project Manager Dr. Jennifer O'Neal (Confederated Tribes of Grand Ronde) and the Tribesourcing Southwest Films Project team. The project takes mid-twentieth-century educational films about Native peoples of the U.S. Southwest back into Tribal communities to record Native narrations and contextual information by the Native communities that the films represent. This "tribesourcing" method allows for identification of local knowledge that might

otherwise be lost, as well as provides rich, community-based metadata records for each film.

As Rhiannon Sorrell (Diné), Instruction and Digital Services Librarian at Diné College and member of the Tribesourcing Southwest Films Project, explained:

*Coming from an Indigenous background, I know a lot of our authority doesn't necessarily come from print materials. It comes from oral history, it comes from non-print materials. So I definitely wanted to be involved in [the Tribesourcing Southwest Films] project, which involved correcting the records on all of these films. A lot of them had a very disrespectful background, outdated language, from an outside, Eurocentric, anthropological perspective. So I knew I wanted to be part of that process of correcting the record.*

The webinar showcases the project's website, which is built using the Mukurtu content management platform, and demonstrates the merging of old video and new narrations.

Looking ahead, NAAS will soon be publishing a toolkit that will merge our case studies and webinars with other key resources for getting started with implementing PNAAM. The toolkit is intended to be a self-guided learning resource for those who want to implement PNAAM or seek to learn more about the guidelines as they prepare for implementation. NAAS envisions the toolkit as a living document that will grow and evolve over time, and we hope that further guidelines for, and examples of, archival description reflecting the spirit of PNAAM will emerge through these resources.

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