



Background

The Working Group for AAA Public Statements was appointed to review the AAA public statement review process. The Working Group report shared findings and recommendations based on data drawn from surveys and interviews with stakeholders—AAA staff, Executive Board leadership, section presidents, and AAA members.

Some key findings were:

- Section leadership and AAA membership were unclear about the statement review process.
- The process was perceived as unclear and with hidden steps.

The working group identified areas needing improvement in the public statement guidelines, updated the statement submission process (approved and posted on the AAA website) researched, and reported on the existing statement review process and its limitations.

One of the recommendations was to establish a task force to devise a streamlined and transparent statement review process. The Task Force was commissioned to:

- Make recommendations to the Board concerning the current guidance on the nature and types of issues on which it is appropriate for the AAA to take public policy positions,[devise] A template or guide to AAA statement formats.
- [review and advise on] The organizational voice with which AAA addresses the membership and broader public, the roles and responsibilities of Sections, the structure and functions of a “Rapid Response Network” or equivalent group.

This Task Force is authorized to take its investigations into whatever areas it believes appropriate, but it will be generally guided by the following questions:

- If the President and Executive Director are the only positions authorized to speak on behalf of the Association, what are the implications for Sections wishing to issue their own statements without Association-wide endorsement?
- AAA’s current guidance is that for the Association to take a public position on an issue, the issue is expected to be one of public policy (a) for which there is a consensus in the anthropological literature, or (b) is related to matters concerning the well-being of the discipline and the profession. What modifications, if any, are needed to this guidance?
- What roles and responsibilities should be assigned to the Rapid Response Network (RRN), and what resources are required for the RRN to effectively carry out these recommended roles and responsibilities?
- What additional consultation is recommended with Sections and the membership at large before AAA issues public policy position



statements?

- AAA often must formulate statements in response to rapidly unfolding events. What changes in our current vetting process are required to ensure a timely response on the Association's behalf?