

Amnesty International USA Archives

Guidelines for submitting materials

Columbia University Libraries currently holds on deposit the archives of Amnesty International's USA Section (AIUSA), along with those of other human rights organizations and advocates. The Center for Human Rights Documentation & Research manages the collecting program for human rights, and the Rare Book & Manuscript Library (RBML) processes, cares for and provides access to the archives for researchers, students and advocates.



Process for Submitting Materials to the Archives:

- **We cannot accept donations that have not been reviewed and discussed in advance of shipment.** Please begin by contacting us at chrdr@columbia.edu, or at 212-854-3630.
- Once we have cleared the donation for transfer, we will provide further instructions on packing and shipping the items.

What is the AIUSA Archives Project? What purposes does the archives project serve? What is the goal of retaining these materials?

AIUSA began the work of developing an archive in the late 1990s, working initially with the University of Colorado at Boulder. Since 2005, the Center for Human Rights Documentation & Research at Columbia University Libraries has partnered with AIUSA to collect and provide access to the archives. The archives project was created to document and preserve the history of AIUSA's work. Records of the work of the leadership, staff, and volunteers are important to documenting the organization's history. Alongside the published materials that AI and AIUSA have issued and disseminated publicly, AIUSA's unique primary materials enable a fuller understanding of the issues, campaigns, and tactics underlying AIUSA's work. The CHRDR also collects materials from other human rights organizations and advocates, making Columbia University Libraries a central hub for primary resources documenting human rights and the human rights movement.

What kinds of materials are appropriate for donation to the archives?

In general, we are interested in collecting unique materials that document AIUSA's work. For example, meeting minutes, event planning materials, monthly newsletters, photos and news

clips, work related to Prisoners of Conscience (letters to and from POCs, government replies, letters to the editors, Opinion Columns), Death Penalty, and items related to other AIUSA campaigns and programs. We welcome the chance to learn about other kinds of materials and their potential value to the archives.

What materials would NOT be suitable for donation?

Collections of AI and AIUSA publications may already be held by our archives and library, but materials related to the preparation of reports and other publications may be of interest. Generally, we do not collect personnel records or financial information. Donors are discouraged from sending memorabilia such as mugs and T-shirts as well as large conference poster displays. If you are unsure whether something should be part of the archives, please contact us.

Are you collecting digital and/or online AIUSA information?

As we develop greater capacity to accept digital information, we are interested in learning about the types of digital information AIUSA is producing and will work on such donations on a case by case basis. The website of AIUSA is regularly preserved via [Columbia's Human Rights Web Archive](#) initiative.

Who has access to using the AIUSA's archives? Are all materials open to the public?

The paper archives are available to be used by any researcher, following the standard processes and policies of the [Rare Book & Manuscript Library](#). As is common with human rights archives, access to some materials may be temporarily restricted to protect the safety and privacy of individuals. Please alert us if any of the materials you wish to submit may require temporary restriction.

Are any of the archives available online?

We have not digitized any of the AIUSA archives that we hold. One can view information about our archival holdings through our online library catalog, [CLIO](#) and our [Archives Portal](#) (View our [Human Rights](#) related holdings). Note that many items in the archives, especially AIUSA and AI publications, may be accessible online through various sources, including the website of Amnesty International.

How can I learn more about the AIUSA and other human rights archives at Columbia Libraries?

Please visit our online library catalog, [CLIO](#) (clio.columbia.edu) and our [Archives Portal](#) (clio.columbia.edu/archives) to explore information about collections held at Columbia Libraries, including our [Human Rights](#) related archival holdings. We welcome questions about our collections: please contact chrdr@columbia.edu and/or rbml@library.columbia.edu for more help.