

Heartland Association of Research Professionals
PO Box 3826
Shawnee, KS 66203

May 30, 2018

Hello, Colleagues,

I am writing this letter to better explain the past and current status of the Heartland Association of Research Professionals (HARP). The rest of the HARP Board and I want to be as transparent as possible with all of you, and to keep you abreast of any status changes as they may occur.

In December of 2017 the new HARP Board met with members of the incumbent board, and were given information regarding HARP and the responsibilities related to our new roles, which began in January of 2018. As part of this information relay, the previous HARP Treasurer, Richard Fretwell, was tasked with handing over all HARP financial records and leftover give-away items from previous HARP Conferences to the new HARP Treasurer, Jessica Cosby.

When Mr. Fretwell met with Ms. Cosby she noted that no Federal Tax information was included in the information she received. Mr. Fretwell reassured Ms. Cosby that no Federal Tax submissions were necessary due to the fact that the amount of income generated through this non-profit was below the amount required for filing to the IRS.

Upon hearing this, the newly appointed HARP Board investigated further regarding the IRS non-profit tax laws, and found that the Federal Government does require that information be submitted to the IRS on an annual basis to verify that the non-profit status of the group has not changed. For HARP, this would mean the annual submission of a postcard to the IRS verifying the total income of the organization (essentially an EZ type of tax submission), and to verify that this total income continues to be under the dollar amount in which a full non-profit tax submission must be made to the IRS.

As the new HARP Board continued to look into this situation, it was found that in actuality, the IRS had revoked the non-profit status of HARP as long ago as 2013, and there is no evidence that HARP has regained its non-profit status in the years since then. Based on this information (please see past IRS tax documents and IRS letters from 2003 uploaded to the HARP website), the new HARP Board decided to move forward with the continuation of this important group, and ensure it regained its status as an approved non-profit organization again. On March 13, 2018, Amber Jenkins (HARP Vice-President) submitted a Form 1023-EZ to the IRS to request the reinstatement of the non-profit status for HARP. We continue to wait to hear back from the IRS, and hope to hear their response within the next month.

Due to HARP no longer having non-profit status, we are not able to book locations for the HARP Annual Fall Conference using the lower non-profit fees that many venues charge. We hope to obtain IRS non-profit status approval in the near future, and once obtained, begin the planning for the Fall Conference. If we do not hear from the IRS within the next month, or if we obtain a letter from the IRS that they have not reinstated our non-profit status (i.e. they require additional information before making a final determination), we will move forward with the Fall Conference, and will pay the higher for-profit rates for the venue that we utilize.

Please know we are moving forward to the best of our ability and we look forward to more exciting and informative events with all of you in the future. It is the goal of the HARP Board to have an Annual Fall Conference this coming fall; however, it may need to take place in November as opposed to the usual October date.

We welcome any questions, comments, or concerns that any of you may have regarding any of the information presented in this letter, and/or regarding any topics related to HARP. We feel this is a very important organization, and want to see it perform to its greatest potential.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Marshall, HARP President

Amber Jenkins, HARP Vice President

Megan Bledsoe, HARP Secretary

Jessica Cosby, HARP Treasurer

Robin LaBelle, HARP Historian