

Quilters' S.O.S. - Save Our Stories

Guide for Interviewers



1. **Talk to your interview candidate.** Ask them to choose one single touchstone quilt for the interview. Ask your interviewee to bring ONE quilt or quilted item to the interview that is significant to them and preferably also made by them. We call this their “touchstone object.”
2. **Request an ID number.** Once you have scheduled the interview, contact the Alliance for American Quilts (qsos@quiltalliance.org) to receive an ID number for the interview and provide your contact information.
3. **Prepare for the interview.** Review quadrant questions (you can find these on the Quilt Alliance website and in the Q.S.O.S. guidebook) beforehand and possibly add questions that relate to this quilter’s circumstances. Test your audio equipment and make sure you have enough tape or memory space. Always take extra batteries!
4. **Take pictures.** Write the Q.S.O.S. number in bold black marker (or via computer and printer) on a piece of white paper, so the number will be included in your photo of the quilter. Take a photograph of the quilter standing next to her/his quilt, holding their QSOS number. Try to get a full view, high quality (high resolution digital), well-lighted photograph of the entire quilt, as well as a few close-up detail shots to show embellishments, quilting, design detail.
5. **Complete the forms.** Before starting interview, get forms filled in and signed by the interviewee, make sure they understand how the interview is to be used and shared. Forms include the Quick Questions, Release Form, Quilt & Quiltmaker Information Form. On the day of the interview or before the interviewee should receive an Ethics Statement from the interviewer. All forms can be downloaded on the Quilt Alliance site.
6. **Conduct the interview!** Start and end the interview with a beginning and ending statement. At the beginning include your name, the full name of the project and the QA (“Quilters’ S.O.S. – Save Our Stories, a project of the Alliance for American Quilts”), the date and time, the name of the person you are interviewing, and the place. When you end the interview, say thank you, and don’t forget to give the time.
7. **Transcribe the interview.** You can find the official Quilt Alliance transcription format in the Q.S.O.S. Guidebook. When transcription draft is ready, mail or email to the interviewee. Ask them to make any additions or changes in red ink if in print and if by email, instruct them on how you’d like to receive edits. It’s often a good idea to give them a deadline for sending back the transcription and check in with them as the deadline nears.
8. **Send us the transcript to check.** Email the corrected version of the transcript via email to qsos@quiltalliance.org. Q.S.O.S. staff will proof the transcript and email you back a final copy along with comments on any major changes made. This is an important step to ensure that the final transcript file you will be burning to a CD, printing and sending us is formatted correctly.
9. **Send us your interview materials.** Mail the following to the Quilt Alliance, 125 S. Lexington Avenue, Suite 101, Asheville, NC 28801 so that we can send them to the Library of Congress:
 - a. All completed and signed forms
 - b. Paper copy of the final transcript and a copy showing any edits the interviewee made
 - c. CD with photos and digital copy of the transcript
 - d. CD or tape of interview audio
10. **Share!** Once the interview is posted on the QA website, we’ll notify you via email. We hope that all members of the interview team, including the interviewee, will help us spread the word when the interview is posted. We have special Q.S.O.S. graphics for your website, blog or social media space—just ask!

Questions? Ready to receive a Q.S.O.S. ID number for your scheduled interview? Contact Q.S.O.S. staff at qsos@quiltalliance.org or phone (828) 251-7073.