

<b>Meeting date</b>	2020 ICOM UK AGM, Leeds Art Gallery 12 March 2020
<b>Agenda item</b>	03
<b>Subject</b>	Chair's Report
<b>Author</b>	Tonya Nelson, Chair, ICOM UK
	<p>With three new Executive Committee members, ICOM UK has had a productive year that primarily focused on undertaking a governance review, growing relationships with sector funders and advocacy groups, supporting ICOM Secretariat's ambition to adopt a new museum, restitution and acting as a convenor and thought leader around decolonisation and restitution practice.</p> <p><b>GOVERNANCE</b></p> <p><b>Review.</b> As announced in last year's Forward Plan, the Committee has completed its governance review. The review was intended to ensure ICOM UK is compliant with both ICOM statutes and UK charity law as well as to identify areas where governance could be improved. The review, conducted by an external consultant, uncovered no major compliance issues. However, best practice suggests improvements could be made in terms of clarifying Executive Committee roles and making the election process more transparent. As a result, Committee role descriptions have been updated and Executive Committee openings have been more widely discussed and advertised. The governance review also gave the Executive Committee the opportunity to consider new types of company forms. At the ICOM UK away day in 2019, the Executive Committee agreed to propose converting ICOM UK from a charity to a Community Interest Organization. The advantage of becoming a CIO is that ICOM UK would not have to duplicate effort by filing accounts with both Companies House and the Charity Commission – CIOs only need file with the Charity Commission.</p> <p><b>Executive Committee.</b> This year we said goodbye to three Executive Committee members: Janice Lane, Jim Broughton and Sinead McCarten. We thank each of them for their service. Four new Committee members will be elected this year. We are looking for Committee members representing national museums and museums from the devolved nations as well as Committee members who can lead on decolonisation/restitution and communications and marketing.</p> <p><b>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT</b></p> <p><b>ICOM Secretariat.</b> Three members of Executive Committee attended the ICOM Triennial in Kyoto in September 2019. The UK was well represented at</p>

the conference with members from the UK participating on many of the plenary, panel and workshop sessions. ICOM UK led the session on decolonisation and restitution that was well received and featured in The Art Newspaper. Overall, the conference was dominated by debate around the proposed new ICOM museum definition. The issues were summarised in the Museum Association Journal article 'Why ICOM postponed the vote on its new definition' (Oct 2019). Members voted to postpone the vote on the definition at the Extraordinary General Assembly. In Jan 2020, the ICOM Secretariat announced the next steps in the process, which will provide the Committee with the opportunity to further consult on the definition and propose a new definition.

**Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS).** We continued to meet with DCMS, with a particular focus on supporting planning around Brexit.

**British Council.** With the departure of Helen Thomas, ICOM UK no longer has British Council representation on the Committee. We were pleased that Emma Dexter, Head of the Visual Arts Programmes at British Council, attended the decolonisation roundtable ICOM UK hosted at the Museum Association conference. A meeting with Cortina Butler, Deputy Director, Arts, Emma Dexter, Director, Visual Arts and Miranda Stacey, Director, Exhibitions in January was fruitful from a number of perspectives. First, British Council intends to recruit a new Head of Museums who will be our main point of contact. In terms of priority areas, museum skills and training are in high demand and British Council would like to work with ICOM UK to create a pool of institutions that are prepared to develop and deliver training programmes internationally with relatively little notice. Decolonisation and restitution are also high on the agenda. In response, we proposed theming the next round of travel grants around the subject, which British Council supported. They are also interesting in exploring with ICOM UK the potential to reframe grants in order to support international partnership and collaboration projects at an institutional level and commissioning a study about best practice in international collaborations using digital platforms.

**MALD.** Per last year's forward plan, which stated ICOM UK would start to build relationship with devolved nations, Executive Committee member Christian Baars met with MALD (Museum and Library Division, Welsh government). MALD has expressed interest in supporting ICOM UK to hold a future Working Internationally conference in Wales.

**Arts Council England (ACE).** ICOM has primarily engaged with ACE in the context of restitution and decolonisation. ACE participated in the restitution and decolonisation roundtable at the MA conference and ICOM UK inputted into the development of the tender for new restitution guidance. ICOM UK has also started to participate in the quarterly museums sector body meeting. ACE's new 10 year strategy has a section on international activity and ICOM will seek opportunities to support ACE in meeting its objectives in this area.

**Museums Association.** ICOM UK has worked effectively with the Museums Association this year. In addition to co-hosting a roundtable on decolonisation at the MA conference this year, we are planning a joint project on the subject aimed deploying our respective networks to create international collaborations.

**National Museum Directors' Conference.** We continue to work effectively with NMDC in delivering the annual Working Internationally Conference.

#### **ADVOCACY**

Executive Committee member Christian Baars has worked on behalf of the Committee as an advocate around conservation issues. He contributed to a position paper that advocates removing the ban on the use of nitrogen in the context of museum conservation.

At the Kyoto Triennial, the membership overwhelmingly supported the resolution 'On Sustainability and the Implementation of Agenda 2030, Transforming Our World', drafted by the Sustainability Working Group and proposed by ICOM Norway and ICOM UK.

#### **CONFERENCES & EVENTS**

**Working Internationally Conference.** This year's conference has been organised by Catherine McDermott, Arran Rees, and Dana Andrew in collaboration with Kathryn Simpson from NMDC. For the first time, we have decided to combine the AGM with the conference. The aim is to reduce the cost of hosting a stand-alone AGM while creating an opportunity for more people to attend the AGM.

**Museums Association Conference.** ICOM hosted a roundtable on restitution and decolonisation funded by British Council at the MA conference. The session was well attended by leaders from across the sector. All agreed to sign up to at least one action proposed during the session.

#### **PROJECTS**

**SARAT.** Due to the success of the programme, we have been invited to submit an application for follow on funding that will allow for more advocacy building for the protection of heritage in Turkey. Outputs and outcomes from the project evaluation are as follows:

- The first study of Turkish attitudes to heritage revealed the high value attributed to archaeological assets across different lifestyle groups and established a baseline for leveraging these results to engage local communities in heritage protection.
- Over 2000 people graduated from the online training course in risk management and protection of archaeological assets as of the 4th November 2019.
- Journalists' workshops in 5 different centres attract 102 people. 94 people complete workshop surveys and a follow up study with 50% of the workshop participants reveals that the principles of ethical reporting are being applied in new articles about archaeology.

	<p><b>COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING</b></p> <p>New Committee member Arran Rees has put a lot of time and attention into ICOM UK 's social media this year. Members have responded particularly well to tweets about the 2020 Working Internationally Conference, the Museum Definition consultation, and the webinar delivered by NEMO (Network of European Museum Organisations). ICOM UK hosted the #MuseumHour on Feb 17th (MuseumHour is a Twitter based discussion or debate that takes place every Monday between 7-8pm) where it facilitated conversations on museum diplomacy and soft power.</p>
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