

Meeting date	16 June 2023
Agenda item	03a
Subject	Co-Chairs Report
Author	Christian Baars, Catherine McDermott
Report	<p><u>ICOM UK</u></p> <p>ICOM 2022 Conference Prague: We organised our first ICOM conference networking reception at the UK embassy in Prague, to which were invited ICOM UK members, representatives of the Czech museum sector, and representatives from other ICOM National Committees. We were grateful to embassy staff for help organising and funding this event. Building on the 2019 Kyoto conference resolution on Sustainability, which had been jointly proposed by ICOM Norway and ICOM UK, we contributed to a panel discussion on ‘Museums for climate emergency. Bridging local governments, communities and activists.’ Sustainable development is now one of the new strategic aims for ICOM, and ICOM UK is currently one of the first National Committees to develop a Sustainable Development Action Plan. Carol Scott, a former ICOM UK Chair, who had led the ICOM Strategy report, wrote an account of the new strategy for our members which we published on our website.</p> <p>ICOM meetings: We contributed actively to meetings of, and discussions at, the ICOM Advisory Council, General Assembly, and Extraordinary Assembly.</p> <p>ICOM 2025 Conference Dubai: Following on from the ICOM Prague conference there has been discussion amongst the Committee about delegate safety; this has also been raised by several members as a concern. Following discussion at Committee meetings, we wrote to and spoke with UK-based ICOM Board member Steph Scholten about the concerns expressed by members and the Committee in relation to this conference, and how this could be considered as part of the selection process for future ICOM conferences. We asked Steph to formally log our concerns with the ICOM Board.</p> <p>2023 ICOM UK Conference in Glasgow: Our 2023 Conference with the theme ‘Addressing the legacies of colonialism’ was our largest conference to date, with 170 delegates attending in person from across Scotland, the UK and internationally, and a range of international contributors and presenters. Our conference partners and supporters were: NMDC, Glasgow Life, Museums Galleries Scotland, and Barker Langham.</p>

New ICOM UK website:

The Committee commissioned WeDigMedia, a digital marketing and web design company founded on principles of sustainable development and based in West Wales, to redesign our website. The project was delivered on budget and on time, and the new look website launched last year. This is now an improved platform for providing information to our membership and the sector.

Governance:

The Committee came together for a Strategy Away Day in Liverpool in November. The discussions were facilitated by our partner Barker Langham, who also wrote the report and helped shape this into a strategy. The new strategy is being presented at this AGM as a separate paper. We continued work on the application to Charity Commission to convert ICOM UK into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO), as agreed at the 2022 AGM; this is taking longer than anticipated and requires some collaboration with Charity Commission but is progressing well. As a result, we are not yet able to work to the new constitution until the conversion is complete.

Equality, Diversity, Inclusion (EDI):

There is broad agreement among Committee members that we need improvements to the diversity of trustees, the work supported by ICOM UK through its grants and bursaries, and the content of ICOM UK events. With the help of one Committee member (Edmund Connolly), a route to developing this work further has been identified; the implementation will be one focus of work in 2023/24.

Review of paid roles:

We set up a working group to discuss and develop our currently two paid roles to support the development and growth of ICOM UK going forward. This review is ongoing and will be completed in the coming months.

Partnerships**Devolved nations:**

We believe it is important that ICOM UK represents all four nations of the UK, and we have at least one Committee representative for each of the devolved nations.

Federation of Museums and Art Galleries in Wales:

Since the loss of our Wales representative in late 2022 we have been in contact with both Welsh Government (Museums, Archives and Libraries Division) and the Welsh Museums Federation, and agreed that Welsh Museums Federation would send an observer to attend our Committee meetings as a vital link to the Welsh museums sector.

Arts Council England:

ACE started reviewing the Government Indemnity Scheme guidance for loans between museums in 2022. The review is focussed especially on the

environmental guidance part of GIS. ICOM UK is represented on the ACE Reference Group of conservation experts supporting the review. A final report is due in 2023, following which it is anticipated that any changes to GIS will be implemented. ACE has currently (temporarily, during the winter and spring) suspended the temperature part of the GIS guidance due to the energy crisis to assist museums in times of rapidly rising energy costs. In addition, we closely liaise with ACE on a number of themes, including diversity and inclusion.

DCMS:

Our conversations with DCMS last year centred around sustainable development, climate change, climate resilience and adaptation, energy price rises and effects on museums, assistance for Ukrainian museums and museum professionals (including the new Red List for Ukraine), restitution and decolonisation.

NMDC:

NMDC were once again a key partner in the organisation of the ICOM UK Conference. We have also been coordinating our work on climate change mitigation, and issues surrounding environmental guidance for conservation and insurance reasons, closely with NMDC.

Barker Langham:

Barker Langham facilitated our Strategy Away Day, and supported the branding of our 2023 conference.

Museums Association:

We spoke to the MA about various themes, including our work on Ukraine, the Prague conference, and the ICOM Code of Ethics review.

In addition, we have been having conversations with other sector partners, including British Council, Touring Exhibitions Group (TEG), ICOM-CC (ICOM Conservation Committee), ICOM Europe, various ICOM National Committees (including Poland, Ukraine, Czech Republic, Germany, Netherlands, United States, Uganda).

Public Programme

Heritage in Crisis events:

In collaboration with the Ukrainian Institute London, Ukrainian Institute in Kyiv and ICOM Ukraine, and coordinated by Maria Blyzinsky, we presented a series of online lunchtime discussions about the destruction of cultural heritage, and what structures and organisations exist to help protect and rescue cultural heritage, and prevent any looted items from being trafficked illicitly. This events series consisted of three talks focussing on the war in Ukraine where cultural heritage is under attack. Through case studies and knowledge-sharing, practical actions were identified to protect heritage in times of war. Learning from the situation in Ukraine may, in turn, prove useful for responding to future crises elsewhere. These talks were recorded and now exist as a resource on the ICOM UK website and YouTube channel.

Policy and Advocacy

We continued the conversation with DCMS about options for supporting museums in transitioning to being more sustainable and climate change resilient, as well as helping museums adapt to the climate change impacts on buildings, collections and staff/volunteers.

Sustainable Development

The Committee formed a Task & Finish Group to develop a Sustainable Development Action Plan which has produced an outline document identifying key priorities and themes, based on which a full plan will be developed in 2023.

ICOFOM sustainability project:

We supported the successful funding application to SAREC for a three-year special project to support the research project 'Young people shaping the future of museology through the lenses of the SDGs', conceived by the International Committee for Museology (ICOFOM).

Heritage under threat

Through our Blue Shield representative (Elena Perez Alvaro) we have been working on integrating more information about global conflicts/emergencies into a new website section, focussing on international cultural emergencies.

Ukraine:

Together with partner organisations, and building on our contacts in Ukraine and Poland, we helped facilitate a shipment of conservation materials to Ukraine which arrived safely in the country in July.

Ukraine:

We commissioned a Ukrainian heritage professional, Viktor Soblianskyi, to write six articles about the impact of the war on the Ukrainian culture sector, which we published on our website during summer 2022.

Ukraine events series:

See under 'Public Programme' above. The events raised £345 in donations for the ICOM Poland refugee relief fund; ICOM Poland have since informed us that this fund is currently closed, but we are retaining the amount raised as a restricted fund to support similar projects or initiatives as they arise.

ICOM Special Project Grant: funding for joint project with ICOM Ukraine and Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra UNESCO world heritage site in Ukraine – digitisation of archives:

Our joint application (involving also the University of the West of England) for material to facilitate digitisation of the UNESCO World Heritage Site archive was approved. We received the full funding applied for (23,497 Euro). We are now in the process of assisting ICOM Ukraine and the local partners in Kyiv-Pechersk Lavra with the purchase of the materials to facilitate the digitisation of the archives.

	<p><u>Decolonisation</u></p> <p>Ukraine decolonisation guide:</p> <p>We were approached by the Ukrainian Institute to assist with coordinating the production of a decolonisation guide to provide a practical tool kit based on the document recently produced by the Museums Association, and to support new decolonisation legislation in Ukraine. We are in conversation with the Ukrainian Institute, the Museums Association, ICOM Ukraine, the British Council and ICOM head office; the next step is to define the scope and goals of this project and apply for funding from British Council.</p>
<p>Decision to be discussed/ made</p>	