

Meeting date	11 July 2025
Agenda item	03
Subject	Co-Chairs Report
Author	Christian Baars, Maria Blyzinsky
Report – activities undertaken in 2024/25 to date	<p>Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In January 2025, we recruited a new Strategic Director (Kristina Broughton) to succeed our Interim Strategic Director, Kate Arthurs, when her contract expired. Kristina was previously the Partnership Manager of the Wessex Museums Partnership and, later, CEO of Wessex Museums Trust. • We undertook a skills gap analysis and ran a recruitment drive to identify new trustees. • The Board continues to meet quarterly to guide day-to-day operations of ICOM UK on behalf of our members. <p>ICOM & Membership</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We consulted with ICOM UK members to feed into the revision of the ICOM Code of Ethics. • We launched a revised ICOM UK Bursary Scheme as an important membership benefit which is funded better than in previous years. • Our Student and Emerging Professionals Working Group continues to organise regular talks and networking events. <p>Conference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In May 2025, we held the ICOM UK annual conference in Liverpool: <i>Regenerative Museums for Sustainable Futures</i>. This conference focussed on how museums around the world successfully address climate and social emergencies. The 2025 ICOM UK Conference was a collaboration between ICOM UK, National Museum Directors' Council and RegeneraMuseu, with kind support from Barker Langham, British Council, Narro Associates, National Museums Liverpool, and University of Liverpool Museums and Collections. Our media partner for the conference was blooloop. <p>Partnerships:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ukraine projects: At the time of writing, we are due to launch the new <i>Museum Guide to Decolonisation – Focus on Ukraine</i> in June/July 2025. The project has been developed in partnership with

	<p>ICOM Ukraine, Ukrainian Institute and Museums Association, supported by the British Council. The English language version will be published first, available to download for free from the project partners' websites. Last year, we planned and helped to deliver a workshop in Vienna with international participants, to test a draft version of the Guide. We promoted the Guide at the MA Conference in Leeds, November 2024; and at the Association for Slavic, East European and Eurasian Studies conference in Boston, USA, November 2024. A Ukrainian translation of the Guide is in development as well as online training. We are planning to write up the 'lessons learnt' from the project for a Museums Journal article. We will continue to promote the Guide through conferences, talks and online events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We facilitated the gift of two books damaged during from a missile attack on Kharkiv, Ukraine, which were donated to Cambridge University Library and the Imperial War Museum. • Blue Shield UK: In June 2025, both Maria Blyzinsky and Christian Baars spoke at the Blue Shield UK symposium on the protection of cultural property in conflict. • British Council: After a year-long preparation, we received a grant in March 2025 from British Council to undertake research on the opportunities and barriers for UK museums to establish partnerships with international museums, and vice versa. We appointed City Global Futures to undertake this work. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2025, following which we will be looking to implement the recommendations by the consultants to improve opportunities for UK museums to work with, establish new or deepen existing international partnerships.
Forward plan	<p>Additional activities planned for include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Partnerships <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blue Shield: We will continue to strengthen ties with BSUK by attending committee meetings and by playing an active role on their Working Groups for Illicit Trafficking; and Military and Conflict. • Sector representation: We will continue to attend sector organisation meetings hosted by DCMS, ACE, Blue Shield, Museums Association and other sector stakeholders and funders and support relevant advocacy campaigns within the sector. 2. ICOM & Membership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue working to increase membership numbers and diversify the membership of ICOM UK. • A review of our finances is pending, hence it is not yet clear whether rates will increase this year.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● At the time of writing, we are in the process of consulting our members to feed into the ICOM surveys on Governance and on Digital Membership Cards. ● We will implement three new thematic Working Groups (Decolonisation; Heritage Protections; and Environmental Sustainability) in fulfilment of our Strategic Plan, and to engage our membership directly in our topical work. After the recent phase of governance and administrative changes, this is an important cornerstone of our work going forward. ● We will continue attending ICOM meetings (Advisory Council, Ordinary Assembly, and others); and will represent ICOM UK at the 2025 General Conference in Dubai. <p>3. ICOM UK Conference 2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We will plan and deliver the 2026 ICOM UK Conference, which will focus on the theme of cultural diplomacy and soft power. <p>4. Governance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● We will finalise the conversion of ICOM UK from a registered Charitable Company to a CIO (Charitable Incorporate Organisation: Association Model) ● We will develop a Communications Strategy and improve communication with members and the museum sector. ● We will recruit a new finance trustee. ● We will review and update governance documents (including Risk Register, EDI Policy, Reserves Policy etc) and compile a new financial management handbook.
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