

ICOM international council of museums UK

Strategic Plan

2025-30

What is ICOM?

ICOM is a membership association and a non-governmental organisation which establishes professional and ethical standards for museum activities.

As a forum of experts it makes recommendations on issues related to cultural heritage, promotes capacity building and advances knowledge. ICOM is the voice of museum professionals on an international stage and raises public cultural awareness through global networks and co-operation programmes.

ICOM has five main missions:

- Establish standards of excellence
- Lead a diplomatic forum
- Develop a professional network
- Lead a global think tank
- Carry out international missions

As an international body of more than **60,000 museum professionals** in **139 countries and territories** who participate through:

120 National Committees
8 Regional Alliances
35 International Committees
21 Affiliated Organisations



ICOM UK* is the only UK museum membership organisation with a dedicated international focus

Three interlocking goals to deliver on this unique status connect members' international interests with what an ICOM National Committee can offer:

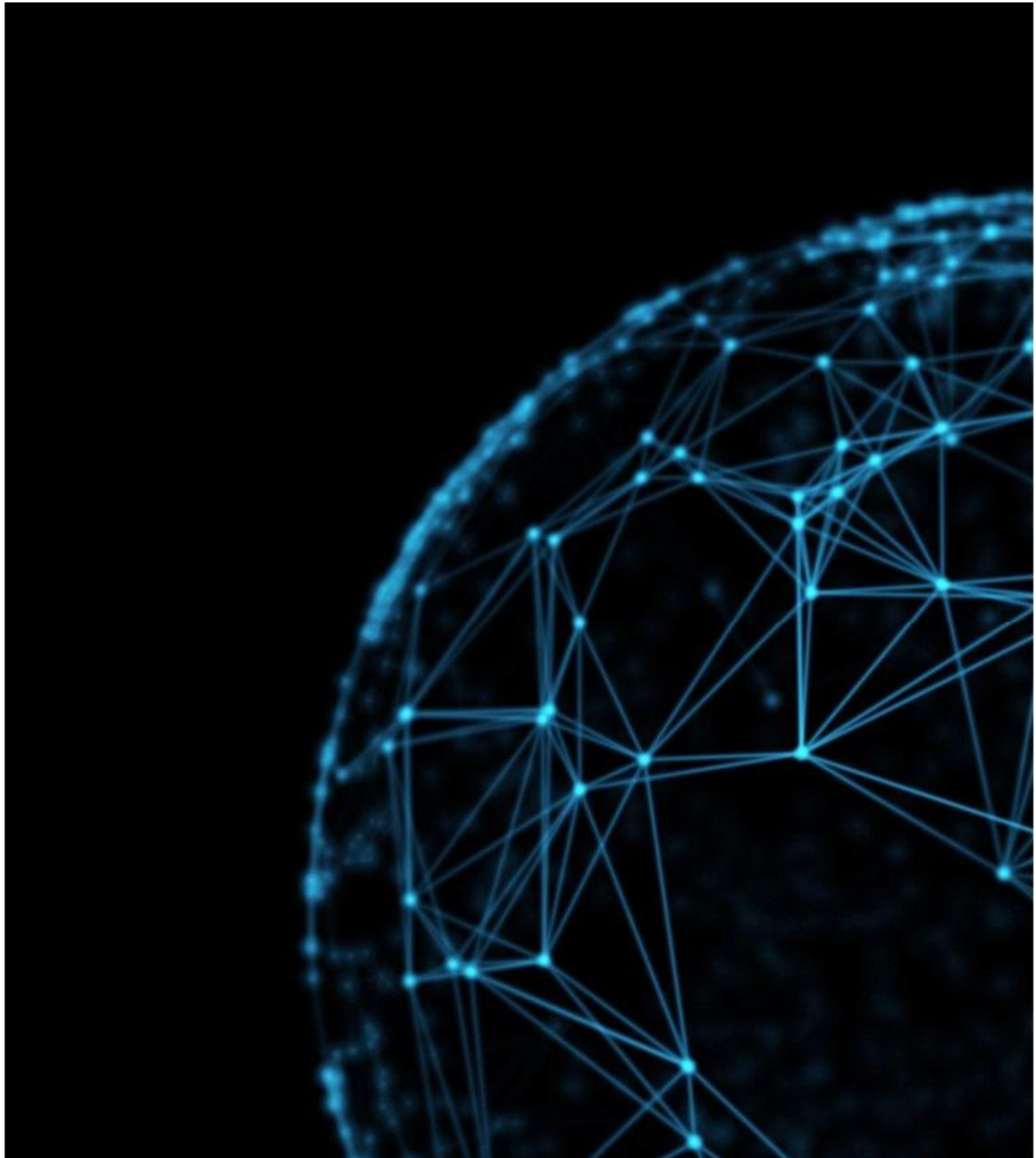
A. **Contribute to ICOM UK's programmes** focussed on the themes of heritage protection, decolonisation, and environmental responsibility.

B. **Offer value to members** by understanding and supporting their interests, providing excellent members services and growing our membership.

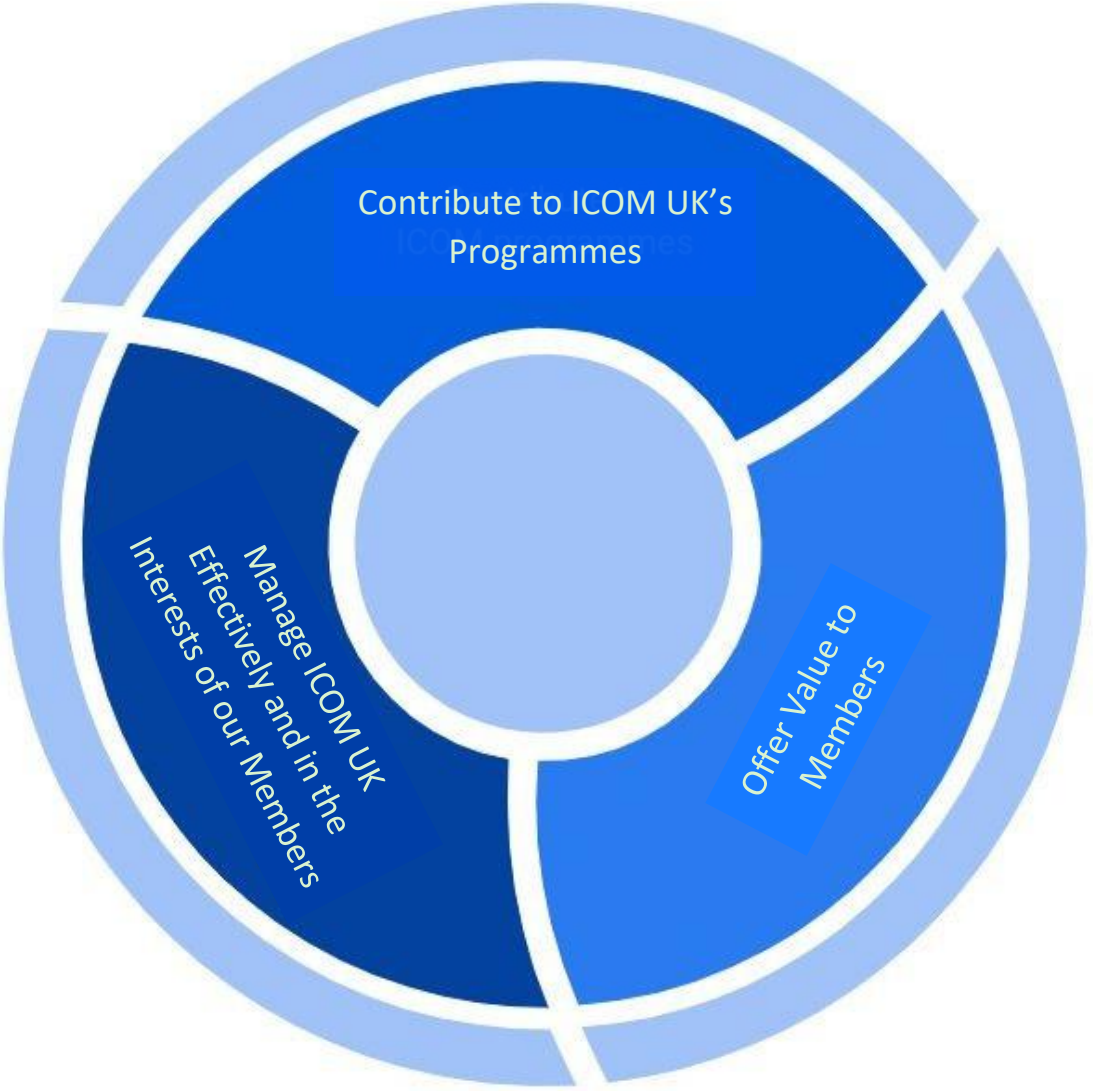
C. **Manage ICOM UK effectively** and in the interests of our members.

The following pages explain why each goal is important and form a strategic plan working towards each goal.

ICOM UK (International Council of Museums UK, including the 14 places designated by the UK government as British Overseas Territories) is the National Committee of ICOM in the UK.



Our three goals support and strengthen one another



Goal A: Contribute to ICOM UK's Programmes

Programmes express our priorities through action. They show the international museums community **what we stand for** and **how we will help achieve shared goals** on critical topics for museums, and the world at large.

We will develop our thinking about what it means to focus on the thematic pillars of **heritage protection, decolonisation, and environmental responsibility** and develop and deliver new programming aligned to these themes.

We review the annual and ongoing **action plan** to ensure all ICOM UK-led or supported programmes fit with these priorities. This will include **a review of networks and connections, bursaries, the conference, and special projects.**

Partnerships are crucial to the long-term success of ICOM UK, to help deliver programmes, diversify and extend the membership offer and increase access to expertise and networks. We will undertake a **partnership review** to clarify how all current collaborations help further the goals of ICOM UK on behalf of our membership, potentially adjusting to ensure they are purposeful, mutually beneficial and strategically aligned.

We will **develop future partnerships** that may take various forms or durations, that are aligned, purposeful, help ICOM UK from a resourcing perspective, and framed with clear written agreement. Any new partnerships will help expand the impact ICOM UK can have in line with strategy and resource constraints.

Goal B: Offer Value to Members

As a membership organisation, **our core remit is to support members.** To do that we need to **understand their interests** and **provide excellent member services**.

We aim to continually improve our **services to members**, particularly **membership administration** and preparation for ICOM's move to **digital membership cards**.

We aim to grow ICOM UK membership for **mutual value**: because our **offer is relevant and valuable for UK museums and museum professionals**, and because growth in membership will **enable ICOM UK become a more stable and sustainable organisation and so to do more to service members' priorities.**

We will seek to **clarify connections between ICOM and ICOM UK** on behalf of members, with this strategy a starting point, aiming to make communication, opportunities and relationships as transparent and accessible as possible.

Through **refreshed communications**, aligned with this strategy, we will over time build and strengthen ICOM UK's identity via consistent and relevant messaging. We will focus on things that matter to members, in alignment with this strategy and on a timely basis.

We also know that **funding, digital, equity, skills, and leadership** are strategic and daily preoccupations for members. We will focus on these topics when they are internationally relevant, and when they integrate with programme priorities of heritage protection, decolonisation, and environmental responsibility.

Goal C: Manage ICOM UK Effectively

This goal ensures that ICOM UK **runs smoothly** with its **resources used to best effect** and in the **interests of our members.**

Goal C supports goals A and B.

We will develop a full **action plan** that includes a timeframe for delivery over the strategic period; milestones; clear intended outcomes; measures of success, targets and KPIs for each year; methods of evaluation and reporting.

Undertake a **governance review** including the role of the board, its accountability for implementing strategy, its skills and composition, and its relation to paid staff. Future board vacancies will be recruited based on any identified gaps in skills or expertise resulting from the review.

We will deliver an **annual programme of Board development** including a strategic planning day and work to **embed equity, diversity and inclusion** in the organisation.

We will set out a handbook for **financial management** that defines the roles, responsibilities and key dates in an annual cycle for use by paid staff members and the board.

We will set out a **reporting** calendar that defines statutory requirements under UK law and ICOM's rules to ensure we understand and meet our commitments.

Who is involved and how it works

ICOM UK is served by:

An active and committed voluntary **Board of Trustees** (representatives of the UK National Committee) bringing together specialist skills and experience in service to ICOM UK members.

An **Executive Team** comprised of a Director, Membership Officer and Marketing & Communications Officer who manage ICOM UK's operations.

Support from **specialist freelance contractors** where appropriate and necessary to support our goals.

Committees that oversee the operations of ICOM UK.

Working Groups that support member engagement and development of our programmes.

A **variety of partnerships** that contribute to our strategic goals.