

ICOM international
council
of museums

ANNUAL REPORT
2019

18

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2019

ICOM



Making history, breaking ground in 2019

The most recent decade culminated for ICOM with an event that shattered records on many fronts: the 25th ICOM General Conference, held in Kyoto on 1–7 September, exemplified all that makes our network as vibrant and remarkable as it is — an opportunity to celebrate achievements and examine perspectives for the present and future of our organisation. Participation was unprecedented in the history of ICOM triennial General Conferences, these key moments for the global museum and heritage community to gather around the topics that make our field tick: 4,590 people hailing from 120 countries and territories physically attended ICOM Kyoto 2019. The event’s virtual reach was equally impressive, with tens of thousands of users tuning in for livestreamed sessions, and a flurry of social media coverage facilitating globe-spanning conversations over the course of the week and year. We extend our congratulations to the ICOM Kyoto 2019 Organising Committee for its tireless work in making this gathering as immensely successful as it was.

The General Conference theme was “Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition”, which also inspired International Museum Day 2019, building excitement for ICOM Kyoto 2019, where it sparked a broad array of spirited and stimulating panels, workshops, keynotes and plenaries, alongside the 231 ICOM committee sessions. These events revolved around the ongoing drive to ensure ICOM’s relevancy and dynamism in the 21st century — enhancing the role of museums in developing inclusive and empowered societies and communities, actively addressing difficult and divisive histories around decolonisation, mitigating risks to heritage from natural and human-made disaster, promoting sustainability, and so much more. This was also an opportunity for two new ICOM International Committees to officially kick off their work, respectively devoted to Disaster Resilient Museums and Ethical Dilemmas; these permanent spaces for reflection and action will further strengthen ICOM’s capacities in these areas at the heart of our work.

At this crucial time for our planet, the imperative for our organisation to engage with questions transcending our field of direct focus, to strive for sustainable futures for our world and its inhabitants, has grown urgent. The 25th General Conference saw ICOM formalise its commitment to help achieve the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; and throughout the week, the manifold resources held by institutions and individuals to promote responsible, accountable practices — environmentally, socially, economically — animated encounters and sparked fresh perspectives.

Ground-breaking discussions around how to most appropriately encapsulate the many missions of 21st-century museums in a revised ICOM museum definition were deepened during ICOM Kyoto 2019. This ongoing reflection successfully maximised inclusion, taking into account the astonishing diversity of ICOM voices in related events held over the course of 2019. The five resolutions adopted by the General Assembly in Kyoto reflect the challenges faced by today's global museum community, providing recommendations to move our network forward with grace, critically and confidently.

The most recent ICOM General Conference was a milestone event — for the scope of participation and the quality, depth and breadth of discussions and activities, but also for its distinctly outward-turned and forward-looking gaze. In this sense, it was emblematic of the extraordinary work carried out across the network in 2019, of which this report provides a glimpse. ICOM's positions in recent years and decades have rooted museums firmly in the societies they serve, as actors and advocates for equality and inclusion, education and cultural diversity, social justice, the environment and other critical priorities for our times; in turn, members of society entrust museums with their heritage, their stories and, increasingly, with broader aspects of their wellbeing. Our fundamental resources are each other, and collectively, we are aspiring to create brighter todays and tomorrows. We wish you an enjoyable read.

Suay Aksoy, ICOM President
Peter Keller, ICOM Director General
17 June 2020

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2019 MEMBERSHIP KEY FIGURES



48,931

45,880 ICOM individual members
3,051 ICOM institutional members

+9.5%



increase in individual
membership
compared to 2018

142



countries and territories
including
118 National Committees

22,794



members registered
in International Committees
+20.1% annual increase

ICOM KYOTO 2019 SCOPE IN ASIA-PACIFIC

+24.8%



membership in the region

18



national committees
(out of 22)
in strong increase

+33.8%



ICOM Japan members

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ICOM KYOTO 2019

ICOM Kyoto 2019 will go down as among the most successful General Conferences in the history of our organisation. Returning to Asia for its 25th edition, the most recent ICOM triennial General Conference extended a generous invitation to participants to discover the astonishing cultural riches of its host city and country. The conference theme, “Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition”, inspired extensive reflection, discourse and discussion on how museums are responding to shifting societal expectations, and ensuring the ongoing vibrancy and relevance of the cultural heritage they house — a theme also celebrated during the highly successful 2019 edition of International Museum Day. The historical Japanese capital of Kyoto, uniquely bridging tradition and innovation, provided a striking setting for the General Conference, but was much more than a backdrop: the dense and exceptional programme concocted by the Organising Committee offered privileged access to the traditions as well as the pioneering panache of Kyoto and Japan, through the professional and social encounters held over the course of the week.

ICOM Kyoto 2019 drew higher attendance than any previous ICOM triennial General Conference, with 4,590 participants representing 120 countries and territories. Their satisfaction

ICOM Kyoto 2019 drew higher attendance than any previous ICOM triennial General Conference, with 4,590 participants representing 120 countries and territories.

rate stands at over 90%, which speaks loud and clear: excellence was truly on display throughout the week, in all aspects of the programme and organisation. Attendees navigated through a prodigious schedule of events with ease, thanks in no small part to the army of 849 trained volunteers recruited by the Organising Committee. Opportunities for compelling exchanges abounded, in plenary sessions, panels and workshops, alongside 231 ICOM committee meetings, 31 offsite meetings, and a Museum Fair featuring 147 exhibition booths and 1,303 exhibitors showcasing innovative solutions for museum professionals. Here, the ICOM Japan-hosted Networking Lounge also provided a space for learning about Japanese museums and traditions and discussing museums more broadly. The three keynote speeches were opportunities for insight from three brilliant minds of our day: the Japanese

architect Kengo Kuma addressed environmental, human-oriented design in contemporary museum architecture; the Brazilian photographer and activist Sebastião Salgado spoke of the urgency of preserving and protecting the nature and communities of the Amazon region; and the Chinese artist Cai Guo-Qiang shared his perspectives on the significance of museums in the contemporary art world.

These vital moments for the sharing of knowledge, insights and expertise were coupled with a spectacular social programme that allowed participants to enjoy traditional Japanese dance, theatre and music performances and discover some of Kyoto’s most stunning historical sites, as well as its impressive contemporary heritage institutions. The 49 excursions invited 1,300 participants to explore Kyoto and the greater Kansai region, enjoying exclusive access to some of Japan’s most cherished historical treasures — unforgettable outings that were hands-on learning experiences and opportunities for networking.

A resolution formalising ICOM’s commitment to the central concept of ICOM Kyoto 2019, “Museums as Cultural Hubs”, was adopted by the 34th General Assembly, affirming the importance of this vision of museums as central axes for the exchange of information, able to span eras and generations to spark a broad array of connections. The four other resolutions adopted embraced sustainability and the implementation of the UN’s Agenda 2030; the integration of Asia into the ICOM community; the safeguarding and enhancement of collections in storage worldwide; and the value of “extended museums” for sustainability, in social, cultural, environmental and economic terms.

ICOM’s resourcefulness in tackling the challenges of the 21st century was apparent here and throughout ICOM Kyoto 2019; and its commitment to rooting museums firmly within the fabric of society — helping spark positive change, foster and strengthen bonds in their communities, raise awareness of sustainable practices and more — reached new heights. This was also a time for exciting discussions on revising the ICOM museum definition, via a sweepingly inclusive and collaborative process, and the quality of the exchanges during the Extraordinary General Conference bodes well for the dynamism and diversity of the network. ICOM Kyoto 2019 highlights were many, and the enthusiasm it generated will fuel actions for the years and decades to come.



Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition

25th ICOM General Conference 1-7 September 2019

For there to be a 'future of tradition', cultural heritage must be a living, breathing entity, a bridge between past and future.



ICOM KYOTO 2019 FIGURES



Museums as Cultural Hubs: the Future of Tradition

25th General Conference
1-7 September 2019, Japan
<http://icom-kyoto-2019.org/>

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ICOM
KYOTO 2019

Koji Kinutani. Official Poster for ICOM Kyoto 2019



5

Resolutions Adopted



31

Offsite Meetings



2

New International Committees



49

Excursions



849

Volunteers in total



120

Countries and Territories



90 %

Satisfied



147

Exhibition Booths



1476

Speakers



4590

Participants



145

Sponsors



150+

Related Events



231

Sessions

“ICOM Kyoto 2019 came at a major turning point in ICOM’s history, one in which museums are re-examining their roles and missions amidst a changing world.”

Dr Johei Sasaki, President of ICOM Kyoto 2019
Organising Committee



“ICOM is a platform that brings museum professionals from all over the world together to innovate, exchange best practices and advance knowledge; to advocate for social justice and the protection of our planet; to bridge cultures and nations, and, ultimately, to build a peaceful world.”

Suay Aksoy, President of ICOM

“After a week of thought-provoking debates, plenaries, workshops and 231 ICOM Committees’ sessions, there are many lessons for us to learn and many changes for us to make on every level.”

Suay Aksoy, President of ICOM



“On behalf of the organisers, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all who came to Kyoto to participate in this historic gathering.”

Dr Johei Sasaki, President of ICOM Kyoto 2019
Organising Committee

LIVE STREAMING DURING KYOTO 2019

FACEBOOK

TWITTER

9:20

hours of live streaming

133

hours viewed

#ICOMKYOTO2019

LIVE COVERAGE

17.8M

users reach

503,000

impressions

DOUBLE AUDIENCE

Each live reached

1,740

users on average

TOTAL REACH

90,717

users reached

17

languages

253

tweets

5,100

tweets

INSTAGRAM

AUDIENCE BREAKDOWN

HASHTAG REACH
#ICOMKYOTO2019

1,677

posts

with more than

2,000

photos and videos

LIVE COVERAGE

67

stories

ENGAGEMENT

1,668

likes

80

reactions, comments and messages

71%

women on average

A GLOBAL AUDIENCE
TOP LOCATION PER SESSION

Europe
Valencia
Gotland
Paris
Lisbon

Asia
Saitama
Tainan
Taipei
Ulan Bator

Latin America
Puerto Rico
Santo Domingo
São Paulo
Sinaloa

AUDIENCE

70,000

users reached

ANNUAL CONFERENCES OF INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES

1-9 SEPTEMBER 2019, KYOTO

AVICOM
Audiovisual and Social Media
Audio-Visual and Social Media as Tools of Research, Documentation, Information and Communication with the Public

CAMOC
Museums of Cities
City Museums as Cultural Hubs – Past, Present and Future

CECA
Education and Cultural Action
Roles of Museum Education: Supporting Self and Society

CIDOC
Documentation
Documenting Culture: a Culture of Documentation
Joint sessions: The Documentation of Music and Musical Instruments (with CIMCIM); Traditions, Collections, Management Systems and Digital Tools (with COMCOL)

CIMCIM
Musical Instruments
Music Museums and Education: Current and Future Perspectives

CIMUSET
Science and Technology
Voices of Traditions for Sustainable Future

CIPEG
Egyptology
The Future of Traditions: Paving the Way for Egyptian Collections Tomorrow

COMCOL
Collecting
Museums as Hubs for Contemporary Collecting: The Future of Collecting Traditions

COSTUME
Costume
With a joint session with ICOMAM (Kyoto)

DEMHIST
Historic House
Museums as Cultural Hubs: the Future of Tradition

ETHICS
Ethics
Creation of the ICOM International Committee on Ethical Dilemmas (IC Ethics)

GLASS
Glass Museums
Glass Museums as Cultural Hubs

ICAMT
Architecture and Museum Techniques
Museum Architecture, Techniques, Storage Facilities, Renovation and Exhibition Space. Joint Sessions with ICOM-CC and ICMS. Storage of Collections – Prepare for the Future

ICDAD
Decorative Arts and Design
The Future of Tradition in the Arts, East and West

ICEE
Exhibition Exchange
Building Resilience and Reinforcing Relevance in Exhibition Exchange

ICFA
Fine Arts
Western Art in Asian Museums, Asian Art in Western Museums

ICLCM
Literary Museums
Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition

ICMAH
Archaeology and History
Reconsidering Museums Versus Contemporary Archaeology

ICME
Ethnography
Diversity and Universality

ICMS
Museum Security
Museums as Cultural Hubs

ICMEMO
Memorial Museums
Historical Heritage in Museums and its Relevance Today

ICOFOM
Museology
Museology: The Future of Tradition

ICOMAM
Military Museums
Authenticity in Cultural Differences: Concept or Object?

ICOM-CC
Conservation
What is the Essence of Conservation?
Session 1
(partner *INTERCOM and ICOM-SEE*)
“How Far can we come with Traditions?”
Session 2
(partner *ICAMT and ICMS*)
“Storage of Collections – Prepare for the Future.”

Session 3
(partner *ICOFOM*)
“What is the essence of Conservation?”

ICOMON
Money and Banking
Numismatic Museums as Cultural Hubs: Future Perspectives

ICR
Regional Museums
Regional Museums Encouraging Sustainable Use of Natural and Cultural Heritage

ICTOP
Training of Personnel
ICTOP as a Hub of Museum Professional Training: Reflecting on the past 50 years, Envisioning the Next 50 Years

INTERCOM
Management
How Far Can We Come with Tradition? Shaping the Future

MPR
Marketing and Public Relations
Transforming Museum Communications in a Changing World

NATHIST
Natural History
Natural History Museums: a Nexus between Nature and Culture

UMAC
University Museums
University Museums and Collections as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition

MUSEUMS FOR SUSTAINABILITY

Bridging past and future,
nature and culture, local
and global

“ [...] For ICOM, the United Nations Agenda 2030, exposing people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership offer museums an all embracing vision of sustainable future. [...]”

Morien Rees, Chair of ICOM working group on Sustainability during the Plenary Session “Curating Sustainable Futures through Museums” at ICOM Kyoto 2019
2 September 2019

DEFINING PATHS TO SUSTAINABLE FUTURES TOGETHER

The 25th ICOM General Conference was an opportunity to advance the global museum community's objectives in terms of sustainability, which was a watchword over the course of the week. Sessions and encounters sparked discussion on the ways in which museums are embracing the roles they have to play in the collective effort to ensure an ecologically, economically and socially sustainable future, through community engagement, education and more. Resolutions adopted at the 34th General Assembly during ICOM Kyoto 2019 further formalised ICOM's commitment to sustainability for the present and future.

The opening Plenary Session on 2 September was devoted to "Curating Sustainable Futures", gathering participants from five continents with expertise on sustainability issues, including members of ICOM's Working Group on Sustainability, created in 2018 to examine how to mainstream the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement across the network's range of activities. Panel members took this opportunity to examine different paths and strategies being taken by museums in the face of the challenges that heritage and cultural institutions are confronting alongside their communities and broader societies, in the context of the SDGs. Later in the day a workshop on the same theme was held, welcoming everyone interested in exploring how to energise museum initiatives for environmental and social issues, locally and globally. It focused on sharing ideas and initiatives, and concrete steps to heighten the ability of museums to engage audiences in sustainable and responsible action.



Two resolutions adopted by the 34th General Assembly on 7 September made explicit reference to the notion of sustainability: Resolution No. 1, "On sustainability and the implementation of *Agenda 2030, Transforming our World*"; and Resolution No. 5, "Museums, communities and sustainability". The former asserts that museums, as trusted sources of knowledge, are invaluable resources for engaging communities, and ideally positioned to empower global society to collectively conceive and create a sustainable future for all; the latter recommends enhanced recognition of the value of community-led museums and organisations for social, cultural, environmental and economic development, and action to build the capacities of "extended museums".



ALIGNING DISCOURSE AND ACTION FOR THE PLANET: THE POWER OF MUSEUMS AS TRUSTED INSTITUTIONS

ICOM is aiming to reposition itself as a dynamic and future-oriented association to be an effective leading force in the 21st-century heritage sector. This objective is mirrored in the energy expended by ICOM in 2019 to affirm the heritage field's commitment to awareness-raising and action around sustainability.

In the aftermath of the ICOM General Conference, newly re-elected ICOM President Suay Aksoy issued a statement to endorse the alignment of ICOM's core activities with the UN's Agenda 2030 and its SDGs across the entire museum sector, in response to the urgent call issued by ICOM's Working Group on Sustainability in its first full year of existence.

The ecological and social crises that have been sparked by humans require a collective response across sectors and on all levels. To face up to this global challenge, Aksoy called upon museums, as "stewards of the planet's cultural and natural heritage [and] trusted sources of knowledge", to help address these crises by engaging with communities to generate positive action, and promote "respect for all living beings and the earth systems on which the future of the planet depends".

Constructive efforts consistent with these aims, particularly focused on issues of climate change, were undertaken by ICOM Norway, which helped organise an international workshop titled "Curating climate: Museums as 'contact zones' of climate research, education and activism" in Oslo on 28–29 October. Evoking growing "disenchantment" with scientific channels used to communicate the challenges of climate change, the event

highlighted how museums have the potential to overcome complacency and encourage change. This will entail revisiting collections, exhibition design and expert networks, and enhancing cross-societal appeal.

CIMUSET grappled with the question of reconciling tradition and innovation during its annual conference, “Traditions for a sustainable future”, on 2–6 September during ICOM Kyoto 2019, which drew over 400 participants. Discussions revolved around questions of how science and technology museums can advance ecological, economic, cultural and social sustainability, and be spaces for change; the definition of sustainable scientific and technical heritage; and the role of traditional know-how and techniques in the future.

NATHIST devoted its annual conference to the theme “Natural history museums: A nexus between nature and culture”, with explicit discussion of the SDGs, and museum actions to bridge the nature-culture gap, alongside talks on museum initiatives for interactive storytelling, community engagement and citizen science.



DIVERSITY, ENGAGEMENT, EQUALITY: INVIGORATING COMMUNITIES, IMPROVING MUSEUMS

Alongside sustainability, Resolution No. 5 adopted during ICOM Kyoto 2019, “Museums, communities and sustainability”, encompasses the other key term in the triad underlying much of ICOM’s reflection and action. The vitality, reciprocity and creativity of the ties between museums and communities are priorities now fundamental to museum identities, nourishing extensive discussion within the network over 2019.

A session organised by ICOM Japan during ICOM Kyoto 2019 on 3 September, devoted to “Museums and community development”, drew 158 participants, including non-museum professionals. Discussions centred on how the expanding understandings of traditional museums, in terms of exhibition display, preservation and more, are going hand in hand with the revitalisation of local identities, cultures, memories and shared heritage, and allowing for equal relationships to emerge between museums and local communities.

Discussions centred on how the expanding understandings of traditional museums, in terms of exhibition display [...] are going hand in hand with the revitalisation of local identities [...] and allowing for equal relationships to emerge between museums and local communities.

ICOM committees also reflected on community-related questions in their annual conferences during ICOM Kyoto 2019. Devoted to the theme of “City museums as cultural hubs: Past, present and future”, CAMOC’s conference featured a joint session with ASPAC around “Cultural tourism, city sustainability



and museums of cities”. Here, presentations covered experiences on shifting museum roles in Singapore, the Pacific Islands, China and Japan, from community rejuvenation to sustainable development. ICOM MPR’s conference, on “Transforming museum communications in a changing world”, included the sub-theme of “Local communities and museums”. ICOM ICEE’s conference, on “Building resilience and reinforcing relevance in exhibition exchange”, sparked discussion around the question: “How do you ensure the exhibitions you create resonate with the local communities you serve?”

ICOM Switzerland’s annual conference centred on the theme of “Glocal”, drawing 270 participants to St Gallen on 22 August to explore the pressing question of how, in a globalised world, with diverse audiences and international competitors, museums are able to remain significant in the eyes of the public.

POOLING EXPERTISE, SHARING PERSPECTIVES: MUSEUMS AND SUSTAINABLE COLLABORATIONS

ICOM pursued its advocacy and action for sustainable futures — for the heritage field and museums, for the planet and environment, for societies, cultures, communities and their inhabitants — in 2019. The network’s scope is among its greatest strengths, facilitating collaborations across borders and disciplines to further these aims, for the great many forms that sustainability can take.

ICOM CIMAO partnered for the organisation of a sub-regional forum titled “Strengthening intra-African cultural cooperation and the question of the restitution of African cultural property” on 6–7 November in Lomé, Togo. This meeting revolved in part around the question, “How to strengthen sustainable cooperation and the promotion of cultural property among African states?” The objective of launching joint projects — traveling exhibitions, cultural activities involving communities, collections digitisation, education and training opportunities — through bilateral and multilateral agreements was set forth, formalised through recommendations.



The research project “EU-LAC-MUSEUMS: Museums and community: Concepts, experiences and sustainability in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean” saw its third full year of activity in 2019. Involving academics, museum professionals and policymakers in Scotland, Portugal, Spain, France, Peru, Chile, Costa Rica and the West Indies, it aims to shed light on the cultural, scientific and social dimension of the relationship between the EU and LAC regions, using an approach rooted in a community museology perspective. January 2019 saw the publication of *On Community and Sustainable Museums: The Booklet of Sustainable and Community Museums*. This valuable open-access resource is intended to share the experience and knowledge of the project’s advisors on the key concepts and features of community and sustainable museums, as well as reflections and didactic tools to help communities conceive and create new community museums or ecomuseums.



An issue of *Museum International* devoted to “Museums and local development” was published in December, with contributions featuring an array of examples of how museums, through grassroots approaches, outreach, inclusion and more can help build community resilience and wellbeing, and nurture a sense of identity through collaborative work with their communities. ICOM ICR’s off-site meeting during ICOM Kyoto 2019 was a landmark event for the International Committee — an opportunity to collaborate with over 100 local residents for a tour of the Hirano Community-wide Museum in the morning of 5 September, and the international forum, “Ecomuseums and regional museums” in the afternoon. In the wake of this successful and meaningful event, ICOM ICR intends to further collaborate with groups of ecomuseums and community museums, and strengthen its promotion of research and practice on community engagement.



MUSEUMS FOR SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES WITHIN ICOM NETWORK

ICOM KYOTO 2019 1-7 SEPTEMBER

ICOM Working Group on Sustainability
Plenary Session 'Curating Sustainable Futures through Museums'

ICOM Japan
Session 'Museums and Community Development'

AVICOM
In partnership with ICOM Japan
Session 'Reducing Barriers: For Better Inclusion of All by Media'

CAMOC
Annual Conference 'City Museums as Cultural Hubs: Past, Present and Future'
Sessions on 'Reconsidering Multiculturalism' and 'Museums of Cities and Sustainable Urban and Local Community Development'

CIMUSET
Annual Conference 'Traditions for a Sustainable Future'

ICR
Off-site meeting
'Ecomuseums and Regional Museums'

MPR
Annual Conference 'Transforming Museum Communications in a Changing World'
Session on 'Local Communities and Museums'

NATHIST
Annual Conference 'Natural History Museums: A Nexus between Nature and Culture'

ICAMT
International Workshop 'Architecture and Museum Techniques'
Session 'Sustainability and Design Management'
28 January - 1 February
Milan, Italy

ICOM Spain
Conference on sustainability and cultural institutions
'Towards a Sustainable Culture: Partnerships and Actions Within the Cultural Sector to Achieve Agenda 2030'
12-13 March
Madrid, Spain

ICOM-ITC Training Workshop
'Why do Museums Collect? And How Can They Do It in an Ethical, Sustainable and Professional Way?'
10-18 April
Beijing, China

ICOM Switzerland
Annual Conference 'Glocal'
22 August, St. Gallen, Switzerland

ICOM-SEE
In partnership with INTERCOM, COMCOL, ICOM Croatia, ICOM Slovenia
Project "Intangible Heritage: A Challenge for Management and Collection Policy"
17-18 October
Zagreb, Croatia

ICOM Norway
International Workshop 'Curating Climate: Museums as Contact Zones of Climate Research, Education and Activism'
28-29 October
Oslo, Norway

ICOM-ITC Training Workshop
'Museum as Learning Environments'
6-14 November
Yixing, China

ICOM Training Programme
In partnership with Iziko Museums of South Africa, Smithsonian Institution, ICOM South Africa
'Museum Futures Today: Relevant, Meaningful and Responsible'
25-29 November
Cape Town, South Africa

ICOM Peru
2nd International Day of Social Museology
8-11 December
Túcume, Peru

ICOM BELARUS
International Conference: Museums in XXI century: new definition, new space, new imagery
April 9-10
Minsk, Belarus

ICOM India
In partnership with ICTOP and CAM
Training Workshop 'Access and Inclusion in South and Southeast Asian Museums'
28-30 November
Jodhpur, India

EU-LAC Museums Project
Museums and Community: Concepts, Experiences and Sustainability in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean Applied research project
Since 2016

EMBRACING, CHALLENGING, ADVOCATING FOR COHESION

21st-century museums
as societal actors

“ [...] While sustaining their primary missions – collecting, conservation, communication, research, exhibition – museums have transformed their practices in the pursuit of relevance for the communities they serve. [...]”

President Suay Aksoy, welcome message to members to ICOM Kyoto 2019 – 30 August 2019

A WEEK OF MUSEUM DEFINITION DEBATE, AND SPOTLIGHT ON COMMUNITIES

Over the week of ICOM Kyoto 2019, conversations on the potentials and responsibilities of 21st-century museums as agents for social change, and the accompanying need to grapple with societal challenges — local and global, emerging and engrained, shared and highly specific — took many forms. These engagements are reshaping museum roles and identities; ICOM Kyoto 2019 events revolving around the revision of the ICOM museum definition to appropriately reflect these shifts were among the most compelling moments of a conference full of high points.

During a plenary session on the museum definition—“The backbone of ICOM” — on 3 September, speakers from the ICOM community touched on contemporary societal issues and challenges fundamental to the revision process, from sustainability to geopolitics, decolonisation to community empowerment. The following day’s programme featured an afternoon of

roundtables on the definition, where participants were invited to share their thoughts and questions on the new proposal and process, and ICOM committee representatives had an opportunity to argue for and against the proposed new definition.

Alongside these internal discussions so vital to the network, the ICOM Kyoto 2019 spotlight also shone on ICOM’s partnerships with outside organisations to strengthen cohesion between museums and society. A joint ICOM/OECD session was held around the development and advocacy tool that is the Guide for Local Governments, Communities and Museums: the fruit of recent cooperation between the two organisations. This is intended as a resource for museums, communities and local governments to jointly define a local development agenda for a stronger, more vibrant future, socially, culturally and economically.

The ICOM Kyoto 2019 social programme featured conversations on museums and communities that took novel form with the ICOM x PechaKucha Night. Here, a series of presentations used the formula pioneered by this storytelling platform (Japanese for “chitchat”): 20 slides, 20 seconds of commentary per slide. The young speakers took their 400 seconds to share personal accounts of how communities and museums are converging in fresh ways.





DIVERSE VOICES AND REALITIES: A NETWORK DEEPLY COMMITTED TO RETHINKING THE MUSEUM DEFINITION

The work spearheaded by the Standing Committee on Museum Definition, Prospects and Potentials (MDPP) since the 2016 ICOM General Conference in Milan has engaged the network in vigorous and widespread reflection and debate on the nature of 21st-century museums, and how to best express this in a revised museum definition. This participatory process extended an invitation to ICOM members and committees to submit new proposals, formulated in countless workshops and roundtables around the globe and reflecting the diversity of experiences and perspectives within ICOM.

Events throughout 2019 deepened discussions on the definition, before, during and after the General Conference. In January, an ICOM Costa Rica workshop at the Museo del Jade in San José drew 20 participants who, in a guided exercise, drafted five proposals for a new definition, subsequently submitted to ICOM's digital platform. ICOM Venezuela incorporated the definition into its International Museum Day celebrations with a survey of participants around the question, "What is your definition of a museum?" On 9–10 April, ICOM Belarus co-organised an international conference on "Museums in the 21st century: New definition, new space, new imagery" at the National Library of Belarus in Minsk, devoted to the global and local challenges museums are now facing.

An impressive array of voices was heard over the course of the various museum definition-related sessions and roundtables, alongside the ICOM committee conferences and sessions with a focus on the definition during ICOM Kyoto 2019. DEMHIST and CAMOC held a joint session on "City and house

An impressive array of voices was heard over the course of the various museum definition-related sessions and roundtables.

museums in the context of revising the museum definition”, with presenters exploring how museums are evolving from being collections-based to focusing on community engagement; and a subtheme of the ICOM annual meeting was titled with the question, “Towards a new museum definition?” with lively debate around the definition marking the off-site meeting at Doshisha University.

A special issue of *Museum International* on “The Museum Definition”, guest-edited by MDPP Chair Jette Sandahl, was distributed to all ICOM Kyoto 2019 participants, with contributions contextualising the discussion of the future of museums and their definition within current broader societal trends and global issues.

The Extraordinary General Assembly held during ICOM Kyoto 2019 on 7 September featured extensive discussions, with a number of opinions and proposals from National and International Committees, Regional Alliances and Affiliated Organisations — exchanges emblematic of the importance of vibrant debate concerning the transforming museum landscape. The network ultimately concluded that collective reflection and dialogue must be further pursued before any decision is made, and a vote on the revision will occur at a later date to ensure an optimally relevant, functional and engaged new definition.

In the wake of the 25th General Conference, ICOM Brazil partnered with CECA and ICOMFOM for a panel on 15 October titled “ICOM Kyoto 2019: The Brazilian delegation and the debates on the new museum definition”, held at Japan House in São Paulo. On 26 November, ICOM Latvia held an informative seminar for museum staff, intended to present the broadest possible range of museum staff with definition options and various arguments in the context of the discussion of the new definition. During ICOM Portugal’s Autumn Days, held at the Palácio Nacional da Ajuda in Lisbon on 11 November, the committee held a roundtable on the museum definition that took into account the outcomes of ICOM Kyoto 2019, and focused on the vision and mission of museums in the 21st century.

SPACES OF SOCIALITY FOR ALL: ACCESSIBILITY AND INCLUSIVITY IN MUSEUMS

In 2019, ICOM’s work to promote the role of museums in the service of all members of society continued to flourish. Embracing a role that is far from neutral, museums around the world are striving to be welcoming and accessible spaces for all, proactively addressing exclusion, fostering mutual respect and harmonious coexistence. These values were placed at the heart of encounters across the ICOM network in 2019, strengthening its position at the forefront of advocacy for social action by museums in the name of inclusivity.

A major international conference titled “Heritage interpretation: The power of storytelling in museums” was jointly organised by ICOM Austria, ICOM Czech Republic, ICOM Russia, ICOM Slovakia and ICOM Switzerland on 27–29 June in St Petersburg. It focused on how museums as cultural storytellers can be powerful agents of change, by telling inclusive stories that break down the barriers dividing societies and states. In 2019 ICOM Russia also organised a series of activities — conferences, trainings, webinars, competitions, workshops and more — as part of its “Inclusive museum” project, ongoing since 2017, which has a dual focus on visitors with mental disabilities, and deaf and hard-of-hearing visitors. [...] how museums as cultural storytellers can be powerful agents of change.

Annual meetings of International Committees held during ICOM Kyoto 2019 spotlighted these issues as well. AVICOM, in partnership with ICOM Japan, notably hosted a session on “Reducing barriers: For better inclusion of all by media”; and announced forthcoming cooperation with CECA to sharpen its focus on museum media for visitors with special needs. CECA’s

annual conference, meanwhile, revolved around “Roles of museum education: Supporting self and society”. Among the questions it raised: “How can museum education participate in the development of the human being?” “What could be the connections between museum education and societal development?” UMAC’s annual conference, devoted to the General Conference theme, included presentations on “University collections and museums at the service of education and inclusion: Building collaborations from South to North”, and “Bold and beautiful: How can a university museum be meaningful to society?”

On 28–30 November in Jodhpur, India, ICOM India, ICTOP and the Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM) held a training workshop on “Access and inclusion in South and Southeast Asian museums”, which focused on creating an attitudinal shift in how people think about disability, equality and inclusion. This was an opportunity to analyse progress in making museums physically and intellectually accessible to all, and explore policies and projects that can be looked to as sources of inspiration.



ADVANCING AND CELEBRATING GENDER EQUALITY

ICOM’s longstanding commitment to promoting gender equality as a core diversity and inclusiveness issue in museums was reflected in actions, projects and campaigns of national and international scope throughout 2019.

The #WomenInMuseums social media campaign carried on in 2019, its third year, drawing ever-greater participation in this latest edition, featuring the motto “A woman’s place is in the museum”. The aim was to highlight the many ways in which women shape museums, from shifting narratives to fighting for inclusion. The hashtag has turned into a hub on social media platforms to share and celebrate the work of women in museums, women in the arts, and women in history. A total of 630 posted hashtags reached 4.7 million internet users, figures that continue to rise with each edition.

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The launch of ICMEMO’s Special Project “Art focus on human and women’s rights: Nigeria” was held on 21–22 November at the University of Barcelona with a roundtable jointly hosted by the European Observatory on Memories, with the participation of ICOM Nigeria, titled “Women, art and colonial memory in Africa”. With Nigeria as its starting point, the project will expand to other countries and regions, travelling with an exhibition and documentary, and holding local conferences and workshops.

ICOM further demonstrated its commitment to gender issues in museums in 2019 by issuing a call for papers for a forthcoming issue of Museum International devoted to the theme “Museums and gender”. It will focus on gender representation in museum management, operations and trusteeship, as well as in collections, exhibitions, education and public programmes.

ICOM EXPERTISE: AN ASSET FOR YOUNG PROFESSIONALS

Among the most valuable aspects of the ICOM network is how it fosters the transmission of knowledge and skills from more experienced museum professionals to those in earlier stages of their careers, as well as students.

In November 2019, ICOM Germany launched its “Young professionals’ network” during its annual conference at Nymphenburg Palace in Munich. Around 80 participants, including museum volunteers, employees with less than five years of experience and graduate students, were welcomed in to learn about the network’s aims and join a first working session around the concept of “speed meeting”.

A major international conference and ICOM Special Project devoted to “Intangible heritage, a challenge for management and collection policy” was jointly organised by ICOM SEE in partnership with ICOM Croatia, COMCOL, ICOM Slovenia and INTERCOM, held in Zagreb on 17–20 October. The rich and varied programme addressed challenges in collecting and documenting intangible heritage, sustainable solutions, and featured a special focus on “How to ensure transfer of knowledge and skills to younger generations?”

During ICOM Kyoto 2019, ICOM held a workshop on “How to get your work published in scholarly and professional publications”. Aimed at early career researchers and professionals who wish to contribute to current museum discourse but need help articulating their message, the workshop provided participants with tools to prepare successful proposals and papers, as well as insights into selection processes, copyright issues and publishing ethics.



The various capacity-building initiatives organised by ICOM were enriched through fresh partnerships allowing these activities to flourish in new parts of the globe, so vital for the sharing of expertise and perspectives among professionals of different backgrounds, ages and levels of experience. These included the ICOM training programmes “Be creative, build alliances” at the Aman Museum for the Water Civilization in Marrakech, Morocco (24–28 June); “Museums for reconciliation: Communities, pedagogies and memories” at the Museum La Tertulia in Cali, Colombia (7–11 October); and “Museum futures today: Relevant, meaningful and responsible” at IZIKO Museums of South Africa in Cape Town, South Africa (25–29 November). ICOM, ICOM Switzerland and ICOM Senegal also launched an exchange programme for museum professionals, with a Senegalese professional hosted at the Château de Prangins and other Swiss institutions, in this first phase (15–28 July). Two new ICOM-ITC training workshops were held in 2019: “The challenges of museum collections today” at the Palace Museum in Beijing (10–19 April); and “Museums as learning environments: Developing relevant public programmes” in Yixing (6–14 November).

MUSEUMS AS SOCIETAL ACTORS – ROUNDTABLES, WORKSHOPS AND TRAINING ACTIVITIES

ICOM KYOTO 2019 1-7 SEPTEMBER

AVICOM

In partnership with ICOM Japan
Session 'Reducing Barriers: For Better Inclusion of All by Media'

CECA

Annual Conference 'Roles of Museum Education: Supporting Self and Society'

ICEE

Annual Conference 'Building Resilience and Reinforcing Relevance in Exhibition Exchange'

CAMOC

Session 'Reconsidering Multiculturalism: Living with different 'diversities' in museums of cities?'

ICME

Sessions 'Decolonising Museums to Promote Citizenship and Social Cohesion', 'Collaboration to Safeguard Indigenous Knowledge' 'Cultural and Social Identities'

ICOFOM

The social and political role of Museology

ICOM-CC

With INTERCOM and ICOM-SEE
How far can we come with traditions?

MPR

Transforming Museum Communications in a Changing World
Three sub-themes: responding to global issues, local communities and museums and redefining the role of marketing and public relations at museums

UMAC

Bold and beautiful: How can a university museum be meaningful to society?

ICOM x PechaKucha Night
Museums and Communities

ICOM Venezuela

In collaboration with the National Museums Foundation
International Museum Day 2019. Lecture 'Museum and new functions in society'
17 May
Caracas, Venezuela

ICOM Slovenia

13th International Summer School of Museology. The new roles of the museums as active actors in their communities
27-31 May
Koper & Piran, Slovenia

ICOM Austria, ICOM Czech Republic, ICOM Russia, ICOM Slovakia, ICOM Switzerland

Conference 'Heritage Interpretation: The Power of Storytelling in Museums'
27-29 June
St. Petersburg, Russian Federation

ICOM-CIMAO

In partnership with CCA, SMA, Togolese Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Leisure
Sub-regional forum 'Strengthening intra-African Cultural Cooperation and the Question of the Restitution of African Cultural Property'
6-7 November
Lomé, Togo

ICMEMO

with the participation of ICOM Nigeria
Special Project 'Art focus on human and women's rights: Nigeria'
Roundtable 'Women, art and colonial memory in Africa'
21-22 November
Barcelona, Spain

ICOM India

In partnership with ICTOP and CAM
Training Workshop 'Access and Inclusion in South and Southeast Asian Museums'
28-30 November
Jodhpur, India

ICOM Russia

Series of activities as part of 'Inclusive museum' project
Since 2017, Russia

ICOM training programmes

'Be creative, build alliances'
Aman Museum for the Water Civilization

24-28 June
Marrakech, Morocco

"Museums for reconciliation: Communities, pedagogies and memories"

Museum La Tertulia

7-11 October

Cali, Colombia

'Museum futures today: Relevant, meaningful and responsible'

IZIKO Museums of South Africa

25-29 November

Cape Town, South Africa

ACCOUNTABILITY, ADVOCACY, RESPONSIVENESS

Museums in a shifting
ethical and professional
landscape

“ [...] We often think of peace as the absence of conflict. [...] But let me ask you: is there peace, when minorities are still being discriminated against? Is there peace, when remains of colonialism still taint our institutions and our minds? [...]”

President Suay Aksoy, Opening remarks to “Heritage as a Builder of Peace”, Florence (Italy) – 2 March 2019



RE-EXAMINING THE PAST, RESPONDING IN THE PRESENT

ICOM Kyoto 2019 devoted extensive space to addressing the ethical and professional responsibilities of the museum field, linked with multi-layered challenges and opportunities for institutions and individuals. Important discussions and events around issues of decolonisation and disaster risk management occurred over the course of the week, intended to take stock and spur action moving forward.

A panel on “Decolonisation and Restitution: Moving Towards a More Holistic Perspective and Relational Approach” was held on 2 September. This was an opportunity for an array of ICOM voices to weigh in with their experiences and insight during two sessions, respectively devoted to decolonisation and the current state of restitution. They spotlighted the museum sector’s



prominent role in the decolonisation movement and the impact of this on restitution — and more broadly, on how museums manage, interpret and present their collections. Participants from over ten ICOM National Committees explored new perspectives, novel methods of creative problem-solving and approaches to conflict resolution. Discussions enhanced understanding of ICOM’s role as an international network able to support relationship-building and facilitate knowledge exchange in the field, to advance these vast and interconnected issues of the 21st century.

The 25th ICOM General Conference saw the first official meeting of the ICOM-Disaster Resilient Museums International Committee (DRMC) on 3 September, following the approval of its creation in July 2019 by the Executive Board. Conceived to respond to current and future challenges faced by museums in the fulfilment of their missions, this new International Committee is a space for ICOM members to be active in disaster risk management, offering an interdisciplinary platform on emergency preparedness and disaster response. The DRMC board was elected and its by-laws adopted during the meeting, and many ICOM members expressed their interest in joining the committee, to cooperate on an agenda to improve disaster planning and integrate museums into national and international disaster risk reduction frameworks.



EMBRACING CRITICAL PERSPECTIVES AND POST-COLONIAL APPROACHES IN CONTEMPORARY MUSEUM PRACTICE

Their engagement with contemporary societal issues leads museums to grapple with past injustices and difficult histories as well. As contemporary conversations by museums and states on the questions of decolonisation and restitution gain vigour and consensus around their urgency grows, related exchanges across the ICOM network multiplied and enriched the debate over the course of 2019.

Museum professionals gathered in Cotonou, Benin on 9–11 April for a meeting to examine the draft for the regional plan of action and road map for the return of African cultural objects to their countries of origins. Organised by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), representatives from the region's ICOM National Committees and CIMAO participated in this forum for exchanges on the ECOWAS 2019/2023 Action Plan and its implementation, with emphasis placed on the importance of cooperation with ICOM on the path to its accomplishment.

On 20 February, ICOM France hosted an evening of discussions for its members around the Sarr and Savoy report on the restitution of African cultural heritage commissioned by French President Emmanuel Macron, released shortly prior to this gathering. The aim was to provide the country's museum professionals with the keys to read and grasp the report, and discuss it in their respective institutions and with their partners, in particular with an eye to establishing better relations with African museums, and formulating constructive professional proposals and recommendations.



MUSEUMS AS ACTORS FOR MEMORY AND RECONCILIATION



On the occasion of its 7th Annual Working Internationally Conference in London on 11 March, ICOM UK organised an invite-only roundtable event to discuss restitution in UK museums; the committee hosted a second such event, devoted to decolonisation in museums, during the Museums Association Annual Conference in Brighton on 4 October.

ICME's annual conference, held during ICOM Kyoto 2019 on the theme of "Diversity and universality", featured compelling sessions on questions of decolonisation and restitution. A session on "Decolonizing museums to promote citizenship and social cohesion" included presenters from Namibia, Belgium, England and Italy, who considered a range of ways in which museums might tackle their colonial legacies by fostering social and civic bonds, through intercultural dialogue, mobile exhibitions, collections mapping and more.

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In processes of memory and reconciliation, museums harbour valuable resources to address the wounds of traumas past and present, through mediation and outreach work with concerned communities, education, research, prevention and more. These themes prompted initiatives within the ICOM network focused on these delicate and complex issues in 2019.

The training "Museums for reconciliation: Communities, pedagogies and memories" was organised by ICOM, ICOM Colombia and the Colombian Museum of Memory in Cali, Colombia on 7–11 October. With the participation of 30 museums professionals from nine Latin American countries, it focused on the museological and pedagogical challenges for contemporary Latin American museums in developing methodologies to work with visitors and communities around memory construction, conflicts, processes of resistance and resilience, dialogue and reconciliation.



ICMEMO held a conference in Phnom Penh, Cambodia titled “Genocide, memory and peace” on 28–30 August, devoted to learning about the Cambodian genocide, discussing technical and ethical aspects of digitisation and accessibility for education and genocide prevention, and more. Questions addressed included the preservation of dignity in displaying images of victims; the use of individual stories to approach viewers and draw their empathy; innovative ways of reaching victims; and safely and legally making documentation accessible online.

The “Human remains management” collaborative project, involving ETHCOM, ICME, ICOM Botswana, ICOM Namibia, ICOM South Africa, CAM, Iziko Museums of South Africa, the Museums Association of Namibia and the Botswana Museum/ National Museum of Botswana, held its third workshop, “Extending the conversation throughout Southern Africa”, in Gaborone, Botswana, on 11–12 March. Participants from eight countries gathered for presentations and discussions around the development of policies and guidelines for approaching the return of human remains; identifying relevant communities for consultation regarding returns; ways of involving communities in returns and reburials, and more.



ETHICAL PRINCIPLES: THE FOUNDATION FOR PROFESSIONALISM IN HERITAGE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION

Professional ethics for the museum and heritage field have long been at the core of ICOM’s missions. As a leading force on the global stage for guidelines and a broad forum for discussion, debate and decision-making on fraught ethical questions, in 2019 ICOM deepened its advocacy and action in this realm.

During ICOM Kyoto 2019, the ICOM International Committee on Ethical Dilemmas (IC Ethics) held its first official meeting. Founded as a permanent space for reflection, sharing and discussion on ethical issues, this new committee is intended to help museums and museum professionals make more informed choices around questions ranging from the handling of artefacts to economic issues. It will facilitate the sharing of experiences around ethical dilemmas and approaches to these dilemmas, helping disseminate good practices.

During the General Conference as well, ICOM-CC hosted a joint session with ICOFOM during its annual conference titled “What is the essence of conservation”? aimed to investigate ethical and philosophical questions in conservation. Discussions addressed issues of conservation and authenticity; criteria used to determine authenticity; and how different perceptions of authenticity affect conservation decision-making, as new perspectives and values emerge that transcend strictly technical and scientific concerns.





DEDICATION TO SAFEGUARDING MUSEUMS AND HERITAGE: PREPAREDNESS, POLICY AND PREVENTION

Beyond day-to-day museum practice, ICOM's concern for ethical standards applies in situations of explicit risk or insecurity with repercussions for cultural heritage.

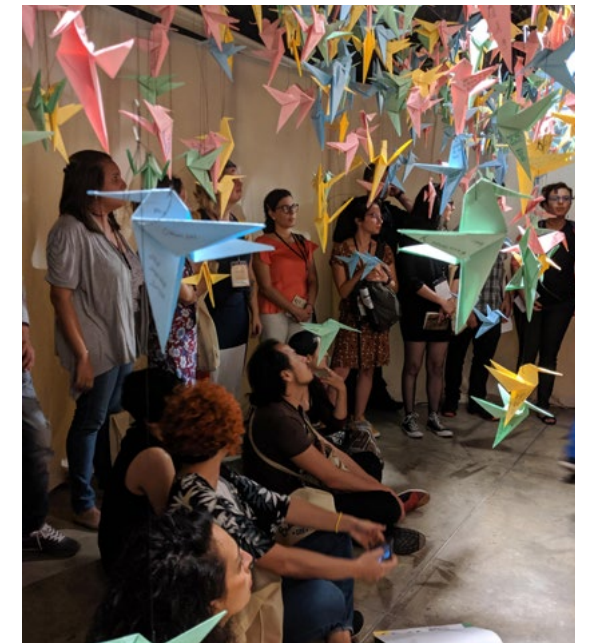
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Resolution No. 4 adopted during ICOM Kyoto 2019 concerns “Measures to safeguard and enhance collections in storage throughout the world”, further formalising ICOM’s drive to reduce risks for museum collections and storage through sufficient funding, tools and methods, including adequate support from local and national authorities and policies. The network saw a flurry of activity in 2019 focused on strengthening the protection and promotion of cultural and natural heritage for the present and future.

In the wake of the fire that ravaged the roof of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris in April, ICOM issued a call for increased public investment in cultural property protection; this echoed the call made only eight months prior in response to the devastating 2018 fire that consumed the National Museum of Brazil, for policy- and decision-makers to provide adequate funding and develop policies allowing cultural institutions to fulfil their societal roles.

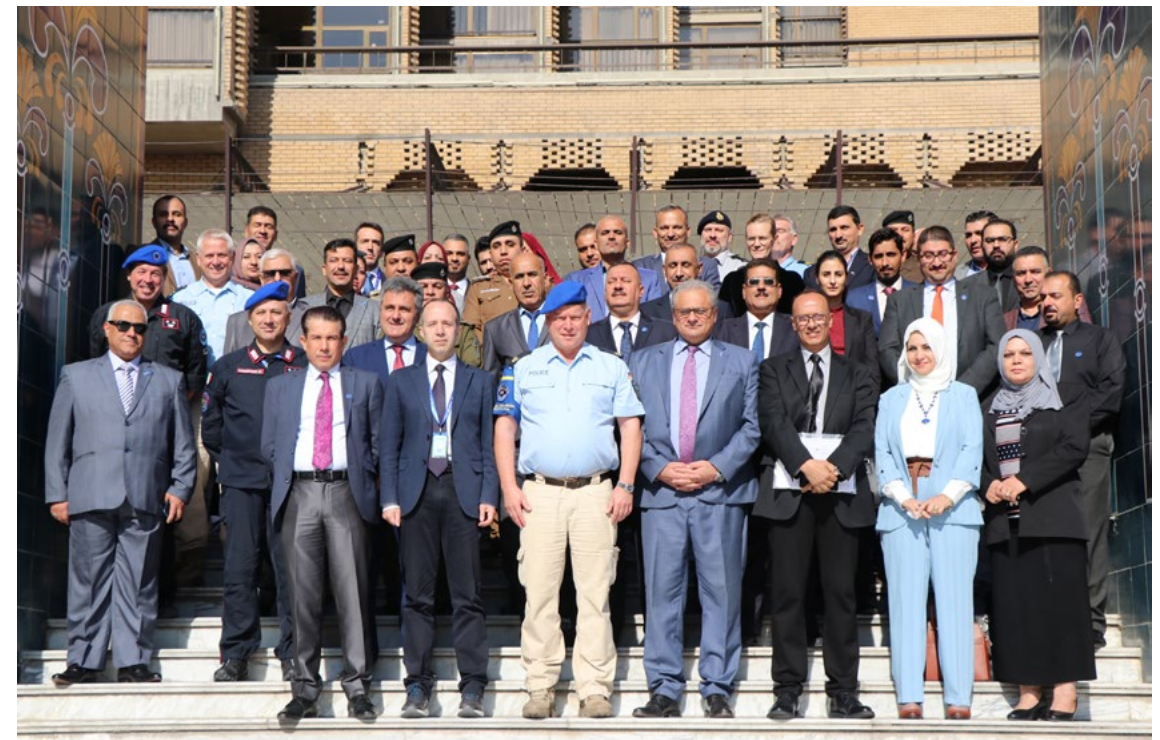
ICOM Brazil co-hosted an international seminar titled “Heritage on fire: Who’s next?” with the Brazilian Institute of Museums and ICCROM, on 26–28 June at the National History Museum in Rio de Janeiro; this culminated in the “Rio de Janeiro declaration on fire risk reduction in cultural heritage”, containing a series of recommendations. Alongside emergency preparedness, it advocates for the



promotion of more effective legislation and policies; the stimulation of research and the use of appropriate fire safety technologies; the creation of a fire prevention culture in heritage organisations; and the raising of awareness in society about this issue. ICOM Brazil was invited by ICOM Mexico, during its conference on “The reimagined museum” in Oaxaca, for a panel on “Museums on the verge of fire: Public policies and civic responsibility” on 22 November.

ICOM North Macedonia held a forum and an educational workshop on risk management at the National Gallery of the Republic of Northern Macedonia in Skopje on 24–25 December. Panels addressed topics such as “The legislative framework for the protection and rescue of museum goods from natural disasters and other disasters”, and “Crisis response measures and activities in the event of war and natural disasters”.

ICOM Seychelles held a “National workshop to strengthen capacities to fight against illicit trafficking of cultural objects in Seychelles: Prevention, cooperation, restitution”, jointly with the country’s Department of Culture and UNESCO, on 24–26 July in Mahe. Recommendations adopted included updating national legislations, policies and measures for the protection of cultural property in Seychelles in line with relevant international instruments, and developing a national inventory and database of cultural and natural property protected under the law.



ICOM also participated in workshops focused on prevention, the cornerstone to fight illicit trafficking of cultural property, with its international partners in this area (UNESCO, UNIDROIT, INTERPOL and WCO). A regional conference titled “Greater Mekong sub-regional executive symposium for ministerial officials on international cooperation to protect cultural properties” was held on 8–16 June in Bangkok, Thailand, with law enforcement officials and government representatives from Cambodia, China, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. This conference resulted in the publication of a capacity-building guide and methodologies with a particular focus on ICOM tools. Another two workshops in Kuwait on 18–19 February and Djibouti on 26–28 November, organised by the UNESCO Field Office in Doha, focused on the fight against illicit traffic in cultural goods in the region — two occasions for ICOM to present its tools and the latest Emergency Red List of Cultural Objects at Risk, which covers Yemen.

Other events focused on heritage protection, particularly from the threats of human-made conflict, were held with the participation of ICOM in 2019. A workshop in Baku, Azerbaijan on 24–25 October was devoted to “Safeguarding cultural property against foreseeable effects of armed conflict and other emergencies”; and a second workshop organised by the Advisory Mission of the European Union in Iraq titled “Museums: The casket of our history” was held in Baghdad on 19–20 November. Here, Iraqi and international experts provided information and training for combatting illicit trafficking, and the opportunities of setting up a National Committee in the country were discussed.

DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT AND CULTURAL HERITAGE PROTECTION INITIATIVES WITHIN ICOM NETWORK

ICOM Seychelles

In collaboration with the Department of Culture of Seychelles and UNESCO 'National Workshop to Strengthen Capacities to Fight Against Illicit Trafficking of Cultural Objects in Seychelles: Prevention, Cooperation, Restitution'.
24-26 July
Mahe, Seychelles

ICOM Brazil

With Ibram, and ICCROM International Seminar. Heritage on Fire: who's next? Organized by Rio de Janeiro Declaration on Fire Risk Reduction in Cultural Heritage.
June 26-28
National History Museum/IBRAM Rio de Janeiro

ICOM México

'El Museo Reimaginado' held November, 19-23. Oaxaca, México. Renata Motta (Chair, ICOM Brasil) held the panel "Museos al borde del incendio. Políticas públicas y responsabilidad ciudadana".

ICOM Czech Republic

Czech-Norwegian Fire-Safety workshop 'Stable fire extinguishers and fire protection in cultural institutions'.
Technical Museum - Brno (TMB),
20 June

ICOM Italy

The initiative 'Adotta un museo' (Adopt a museum) implements fundraising activities in favour of dozens of museums in the areas of Central Italy which suffered from the earthquakes of 2017. Supported by ICOM International and the DRMC Committee.

ICOM NORTH MACEDONIA

Forum and educational workshops on risk management with museum objects.
24-25 December
National Gallery of the Republic of Northern Macedonia, Skopje

MAC-Museums Association of the Caribbean

In the wake of Hurrricanes Irma and Maria, MAC through its Facebook page established a public group as a post-disaster community of support for museums, archives, collections and cultural institutions in the greater Caribbean region, which remains ongoing.

PARTNER EVENTS

Protecting Cultural Property: International Conference on the 20th anniversary of the 1999 Second Protocol to the 1954 Hague Convention.
25-26 April 2019
Geneva, Switzerland

International Conference on the Protection of Cultural Heritage. 50 years of experience looking to the future.
25-26 October
Rome, Italy

'Greater Mekong Sub-regional Executive Symposium for Ministerial Officials on International Cooperation to Protect Cultural Properties', organized by the UNESCO Bangkok, In coordination with ICOM-Thailand.
8-16 June
Bangkok, Thailand

Safeguarding cultural property against foreseeable effects of armed conflict and other emergencies.
24-25 October
Baku, Azerbaijan

The Peace Forum 'Reinforced partnerships against the trafficking of cultural goods and its use to finance terrorism'.
12-13 November
Paris, France

Museums: The Casket of our History Carabinieri Training on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property.
19-20 November
Baghdad, Iraq

Fighting Against Illicit Trafficking in Yemen and Djibouti by UNESCO Field Office.
26-28 November
Doha, Qatar

MUSEUMS AND INNOVATION

New approaches,
new solutions



“ [...] Museums keep reinventing themselves in their quest for becoming more interactive, audience focused, community oriented, adaptable and mobile. [...] ”

Director General Peter Keller, speech for International Museum Day 2019 in Rabat, Morocco – 18 May 2019

DEFT DIGITAL COVERAGE AND COMMUNICATIONS

ICOM Kyoto 2019 drew record attendance and was also a landmark event in terms of virtual reach. Savvy use of digital tools including social media, the website and official app facilitated access to information and furthered discussion, and virtual attendance through live coverage of selected sessions was high. Compounding this success, an ICOM Secretariat-led workshop offered lessons in effective digital communications campaigns for ICOM committees.



The workshop “Digital and smart: Creating and running communications campaigns and partnerships” was held on 3 September by ICOM and OECD. Its objective was to provide an overview of the basics and tools for carrying out compelling digital communications campaigns, and establishing meaningful communication partnerships. Focused on maximising impact, the workshop highlighted the main communications tools available to ICOM committees: the Social Media Guidelines for ICOM Committees and the new ICOM website.

Among the General Conference’s many achievements, its digital reach was a resounding success. The hashtag #ICOMKyoto2019 was used in 6,364 tweets over the course of 2019, with a cumulative reach of 17.8 million users. The week of the conferences saw 5,103 of these tweets, sent from 88 countries on all continents. Together, the seven sessions broadcast on Facebook Live drew a total of some 48,200 viewers, while 235 live tweets covered most sessions, with 503,000 impressions. The combined Facebook, Instagram and Twitter posts by ICOM and the ICOM Kyoto 2019 Organising Committee came to over 1,000, while 16 YouTube videos received 14,784 views.



CHANGING PRACTICES AND EXPECTATIONS FOR MUSEUMS AND THEIR USERS

As technological tools have advanced at an astonishing rate in recent years, museums are seizing them as an opportunity to engage with their audiences and communities, real and virtual, in novel ways. From augmenting bricks-and-mortar exhibitions with virtual content to participatory campaigns and co-creative activities, the possibilities are dizzying, and were the focus of a number of ICOM events in 2019.

ICOM Ecuador hosted a conference on “Perspectives and trends in new museology” in February at the Museo Municipal de Babahoyo and the Museo Antropológico y de Arte Contemporáneo in Guayaquil. This drew 45 museum and culture professionals, artists, writers and more to converse around perspectives in museology, including the elaboration of more innovative practices, forms of curatorship and experiences to enable significant learning within museum spaces for and with visitors.

Reflecting on overarching transformations in contemporary museum theory and practice, ICOFOM featured a special focus on “The future of tradition in museology” at its annual conference during ICOM Kyoto 2019 on 1–7 September. Noting a contemporary shift in museum focus from objects and collections to visitors and users, inquiry here encompassed new forms of museums that challenge tradition, or reinterpret the concepts of traditional museums — developing into multicultural platforms to approach past and future, for example.



A complex adaptation to the deep transformations sweeping across society and everyday life.

ICOM Europe and ICOM Greece jointly held a conference at the Acropolis Museum in Athens on 21–23 November, around the theme “Embracing the virtual: European museums respond to the digital challenge”. On the ten-year anniversary of conference’s host museum, the event was an opportunity to consider how digital practices are being woven into the museum landscape — a complex adaptation to the deep transformations sweeping across society and everyday life.

For Digital Day 2019, on 25 April, members of ICOM Luxembourg were invited to the Lëtzebuerg City Museum (LCM) for a day of training on digital applications in museums. The expertise of the Rijksmuseum Amsterdam and the LCM’s new app were the focus of discussions. As part of its “Digital forum” series, meanwhile, ICOM Israel hosted a professional workshop on “Uses of AR/VR in museums in Israel and around the world” at the Tower of David Museum on 10 July, drawing 66 participants, and one on “Artificial intelligence in museums” at Petach Tikva Museum on 6 November, drawing 45 participants.



MUSEUM COLLECTIONS: ENHANCING ACCESS, STORAGE AND PRESERVATION

Technological leaps forward have allowed for accessibility to expand in unprecedented manner as collections go digital, while improved solutions for museum storage and collections management are continually sought to ensure optimal preservation of objects. This was illustrated in 2019 by a broad array of relevant ICOM encounters and events showcasing digital and technical initiatives benefitting contemporary museums and the general public.

A number of events in the network concerned aspects of digitalisation. ICOM Ghana and ICOM Niger jointly hosted a regional workshop on “Digitalisation of Museum Collections in Anglophone West African Countries” on 23–25 July in Accra. This was an opportunity for the 24 participants, including museum directors and professionals from Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria and Liberia, to share and learn from their respective experiences in the realm of collections digitalisation. The objective of expanding a database of tangible and intangible cultural heritage, launched in Niger in 2012, to encompass the heritage of the countries involved, was a focus here, alongside the development of a digital inventory system and the cataloguing of cultural heritage under threat.



ICOMON's annual meeting, on the theme "Numismatic museums as cultural hubs: Future perspectives", held on 3–5 September during ICOM Kyoto 2019, featured presentations on "The National Numismatic Collection [US] East Asian currency digitisation projects" and Harnessing the power of numismatics using 3D technology".

Initiatives for innovative storage multiplied in 2019. During ICOM Kyoto 2019, ICOM-CC organised joint sessions resulting in cross-disciplinary encounters, and on 3 September, its session with ICAMT and ICMS was devoted to "Storage of Collections: Prepare for the future", with presentations on practices for collections storage and space management, solutions for museums with limited resources and more. ICOM Slovenia, in partnership with ICOM SEE, ICCROM and several Slovenian museums, held two regional RE-ORG workshops at the National Museum of Contemporary History in Ljubljana, in the spring and fall. The knowledge acquired was taken back to their home institutions to share with colleagues and implement collections reorganisation projects.

The ICOM General Director coordinated a joint campaign by ICOM and ICOMOS, appealing for the withdrawal of a European Union regulation in force since 2017 banning the use of in situ generated nitrogen for integrated pest management in museums. ICOM Austria provided national authorities with information to advocate on the European level for the lifting of the ban to allow museums and cultural institutions to effectively protect and preserve the cultural heritage of which they are the stewards. Over 2019, ICOM Germany and ICOM UK also took leading roles in disseminating information and coordinating responses from the countries' heritage sectors to the European Union and ICOM headquarters.



STRATEGIES AND DEVELOPMENT FOR DIGITAL-AGE MUSEUMS

Museums in the digital age are innovating in terms of management and use of their collections and documentary resources, fundamentally reshaping relationships with audiences and users, in particular through greater proximity and dialogue with the public. While raising questions about museum business models in the digital economy, this is a boon in terms of accessibility and delivery of museum collections and content, and was an important topic across the network in 2019.

CIDOC engaged in reflection on "Traditions, collections, management systems and digital tools" jointly with COMCOL at the former's annual conference, titled "Documenting culture: A culture of documentation" during ICOM Kyoto 2019. Presentations touched upon questions of community-based collection, the challenges and possibilities of open data and open access, digital image licensing, digital archives and more. In May, the Secretary of CIDOC gave a presentation on "The economics of digital museums" at the Universidad Autónoma de México in Mexico City for the graduate museology program.

In 2019, a four-year action plan was developed to enhance and ensure the accessibility and visibility of ICOM's Archives and Documentation Centre. This will include the implementation of a digitisation plan and the development of a new database that will render this valuable resource accessible for ICOM members and the broader museum community.

In 2019, a four-year action plan was developed to enhance and ensure the accessibility and visibility of ICOM's Archives and Documentation Centre.



ICOM Germany's annual conference on "Opportunities and side effects – Museum 4.0" was held on 14–16 November in Munich and simultaneously livestreamed. Participants concurred that the digital change in museums is as exciting as it is challenging, calling for expertise, strategic orientation, reflection on formats for dialogue with visitors, as well as sufficient resources and support from museum powers-that-be.

A council on "Digital development of museums" was created under ICOM Russia in July. It is aimed to support cultural projects, organise information, consulting and methodological assistance for members of the council and of ICOM Russia, promoting the development of professional qualifications and digital literacy of museums specialists, as well as contributing to the elaboration of manuals and recommendations in the field of digital development.

RECONCILING TECHNOLOGY AND TRADITIONAL TOOLS

At a time when museums have a wealth of tools at their disposal for interpretation, education, outreach and more, the question is raised as to the most appropriate methods to adopt. As the demand for innovative and interactive approaches rises, museums must take into account their own resources and material possibilities to enhance their visitors' experiences. ICOM committees held events around these questions in the year of a General Conference interrogating "the future of tradition".

CECA partnered with ICOM Belgium and the House of European History for a seminar on "Boosting museum education – methodologies and tools" in Brussels on 18 March, examining goals of museum education and cultural action today, the tools available museum educators, current trends and best practices. A series of workshops was held for participants, including "Digital vs low-tech or no-tech", focused on the didactic functions of digital applications in museum education and the value of digital aspects, more broadly.

ICOM Mexico held a course and workshop on "Evaluation in museums: Approaches to the public and technologies in museums", on 5 and 12 October. The focus here was two fold: firstly, evaluating the knowledge that the public draws from museums; and secondly, reviewing the technological tools that they use to showcase culture heritage at a distance.





An international conference organised by ICOM Slovakia jointly with ICOM Austria and ICOM Czech Republic was titled “REVOLUTION: Velvet x digital – Digital and social media in museums 30 years after”, held on 6–7 November at Bratislava Castle in the Slovakian capital. The 200 participants from 11 countries included experts in museology, history, information technology and law; they gathered to take stock of transformations in how museums and the public approach cultural heritage preservation since the Fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989. Opportunities and challenges around digital content, new media strategies, legal aspects and more were discussed in 27 presentations, with critical perspectives on the “use and abuse” of digital and social media and new technologies in the museum context.

ICOM'S DIGITAL PRESENCE

@ICOMOFFICIEL



FACEBOOK

+31.8%

growth 2019
(+7,351 followers)



TWITTER

1,472

total tweets

Total impressions
through 2019:
5.2 million



INSTAGRAM

143

total posts



WEBSITE

113

New articles published
on icom.museum in 2019

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY 2019

#WomenInMuseums #MujeresEnLosMuseos #FemmesDansLesMusées

4.7 million

total hashtag reach

630

total hashtag posts

73

total social media posts
ICOM's campaign

130,000

total impressions
and reach
ICOM's campaign

MUSEUM DEFINITION CAMPAIGN 2019

Impact on social media



FACEBOOK

860,000

total impressions



TWITTER

1.3 million

total impressions



INSTAGRAM

41

posts



WEBSITE

The Call for Contributions
for a new definition
of museum was the most
popular article
throughout 2019

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2019



Serbia



Qatar



Mexico



Slovenia



Spain



Spain



Peru



Oman



India



Scotland



Australia



Canada



Peru



Australia



Taiwan



Canada



Scotland



Scotland

INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM DAY 2019

MUSEUMS AS CULTURAL HUBS: THE FUTURE OF TRADITION

18 May 2019

The role of museums in society is changing. Once static institutions, museums are reinventing themselves to become more interactive, audience focused, community oriented, flexible, adaptable and mobile. They have become cultural hubs functioning as platforms where creativity combines with knowledge and where visitors can also co-create, share and interact. For this reason, the theme chosen for International Museum Day 2019 is “Museums as Cultural Hubs: The Future of Tradition.”

COMMUNICATION CAMPAIGN

HASHTAG POSTS #IMD2019 (IN 48 LANGUAGES)



FACEBOOK

20,001
posts



TWITTER

32,592
tweets



WEIBO

602,418
posts



TOTAL

655,011
posts/tweets

ICOM'S CAMPAIGN @ICOMOFFICIEL #IMD2019



FACEBOOK

95
posts



TWITTER

170
tweets



INSTAGRAM

23
posts



TOTAL

288
posts/tweets

203,700
reachs

935,300
reads

48,900
reads

1,187,900
reachs/impressions

KEY FINANCIAL DATA FOR 2019

ICOM's membership dues reached €4,002,014 in 2019, representing an increase of 7.89%. This increase is mostly due to an increase of number of members amounting to 48,931 in 2019.

In 2019, ICOM received a total amount of €408,048 from:

- French Ministry of Culture and Communication	€20,000
- Subsidy from the Getty Foundation to fund the bursaries for the ICOM-CC triennial conference:	€75,000
- Subsidies directly allocated to the International Committees	€26,948
- Donations from the ICOM Foundation	€271,100
- The National Museums of World Culture (NMWC)	€15,000
- European Commission Consortium LAC-Museum:	-€5,000
- Werkplaats Immaterieel Erfgoed (Tapis plein)	€5,000

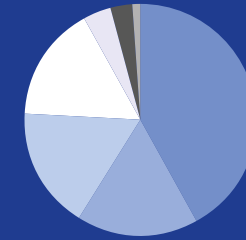
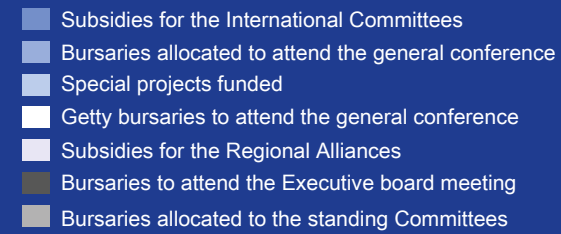
Account aggregation consists of assembling the accounting of several entities to assess the economic, financial situation and the assets of a group.

2019

Resources	4,589,520
Minus operating expenses	1,712,293
Minus salaries, social charges and taxes	1,927,175
Minus depreciation expenses	197,558
Operating result	752,493
Joint operations	233,938
Financial income	11,043
Financial expenses	74,817
Financial result	-63,774
Exceptional result	-9,462
Final result	913,196
Average staff number	28

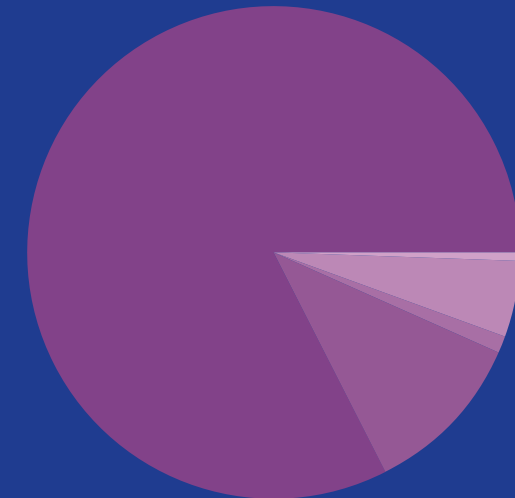
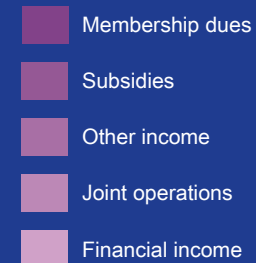
All figures expressed in euros

SUPPORT TO THE NETWORK

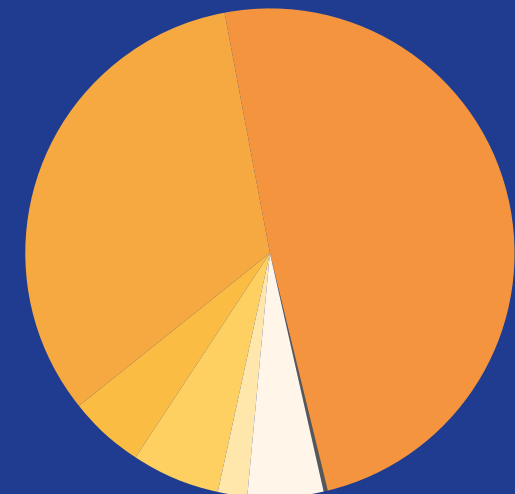


BREAKDOWN OF INCOME AND EXPENSES FOR 2019

REVENUES



EXPENSES





Print on PEFC paper

The PEFC (Promote Forest's Sustainable Management) certification promotes forest's sustainable management [...], guarantees consumer goods come from sustainable sources and engages people to participate in sustainable and responsible consumption.

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This report was written and finalized by Suay Aksoy, President of ICOM in office until 19 June 2020, and has been published under the new Presidency of Alberto Garlandini, in his capacity as newly appointed President of ICOM.

Partner organisations:

- ALECSO – Arab League for Education, Culture and Science Organization
- Blue Shield
- ICA – International Council on Archives
- ICCROM – International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property
- ICOMOS – International Council on Monuments and Sites
- IFLA – International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions
- ECOSOC – United Nations Economic and Social Council
- INTERPOL
- OECD – Organisation for economic co-operation and development
- UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
- UNIDROIT
- UNODC – United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
- WCO – World Customs Organisation
- WFFM – World Federation of Friends of Museums
- WIPO – World Intellectual Property Organization
- Château de Prangins – Musée national Suisse
- The Getty Foundation
- The Palace Museum, Beijing, China
- Smithsonian Institution
- European Union
- Ministry of Culture, France
- Swiss Confederation: Federal Department of Home Affairs & Federal Department of Culture
- U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs

Project partners

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- Iziko Museums of South Africa
- Museo de Memoria de Colombia
- National Museum of African American History & Culture, US
- National Museums of World Culture, Sweden
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- Werkplaats immaterieel erfgoed

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Intangible Cultural Heritage and Museums Project. Conference: “Intangible Cultural Heritage, Museums and Innovation”. Aubusson (France), 5 February 2019. ©Nicolas Gaillard.

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President Suay Aksoy at CIMAM 2019 Annual Conference. Sydney (Australia), 15-17 November 2019. ©Cassandra Hannagan.

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ICOM Training “Museums for Reconciliation: Communities, Pedagogies and Memories”. Cali (Colombia), 7–11 October 2019. ©ICOM/Carlos Serrano.

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ICOM SEE, INTERCOM, COMCOL, ICOM Croatia, ICOM Slovenia. Conference: “Intangible Heritage: A Challenge for Management and Collection Policy”. Zagreb (Croatia), 17-18 October 2019. ©ICOM SEE.

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ICOM Slovakia, ICOM Czech Republic, ICOM Austria, Slovak National Gallery, Slovak National Museum. International Conference: “Revolution: Velvet x Digital. 30 years of Digital and Social Media in Museums”. Bratislava (Slovakia), 6-7 November 2019. ©ICOM Slovakia.

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ICOM Training “Museum futures today: Relevant, meaningful and responsible”. Cape Town (South Africa), 25–29 November 2019. ©ICOM/Carlos Serrano.

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ICOM Training “Be creative, build alliances”. Marrakech (Morocco), 24–28 June 2019. ©ICOM/Carlos Serrano.

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ICOM Brazil, ICCROM, Brazilian Institute of Museums. International Seminar: “Heritage on fire: Who’s next? Fire Risk Management for Cultural Heritage”. Rio de Janeiro (Brazil), 26-28 June 2019. ©ICOM Brazil.

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Carabinieri TPC - Advisory Mission of the European Union in Iraq (EUAM). Training on the fight against illicit trafficking of cultural property. Workshop: “Museums: The Casket of our History”. Baghdad (Iraq), 19-20 November 2019. ©ICOM

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ICOM Israel. Workshop: “Uses of AR/VR in Museums in Israel and around the World”. Jerusalem (Israel), 10 July 2019. ©Eynat Sharon.

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ICOM Germany. Conference: “Digital Museums”. Munich (Germany), 15-19 November 2019. ©ICOM Germany.

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