Strategic Plan

2022-2028

ICOM
international
council
of museums

What is this Plan about ?

This Plan is about change – the changes that museums are facing, and the changes that will equip ICOM to support its network in the future.

ABOUT ICOM

Established in 1946, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) is an independent, non-governmental museum membership association with a global remit.

As an international body, ICOM currently has **44 686 individual members** in **138 countries** who participate through:

**118 National Committees,
6 Regional Alliances,
32 International Committees and
22 Affiliated Organisations.**

OUR VISION

**By 2028,
we will be a more
transparent, agile, collaborative
and democratic organisation,
supporting our network
to meet the demands of a
rapidly changing world.**

OUR MISSION

We connect and represent museum professionals across the world and provide a network for sharing **knowledge and practice.**

We advocate at an international level for the vital role that museums play in supporting **peaceful, healthy and sustainable communities.**

This Plan is about **Change!**

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OUR COMMITMENT

We are committed to **supporting our members** in the stewardship of museums, in the custodianship of collections and in the service of heritage and the public.

We face **contemporary challenges together.**

We work for the protection of **cultural and natural heritage.**

We foster **diversity, inclusion and equity.**

We address **decolonisation and climate change** and work for the sustainability of our sector in a post-Covid world.

OUR VALUES

We are
international
in outlook.

We are
professional
in focus.

We are
collaborative
in practice.

OUR PRIORITIES

ICOM strengthens its position as the **global voice** for the international museum community.

ICOM implements best practice in **governance and management.**

ICOM leads a global museum network **engaging with change.**
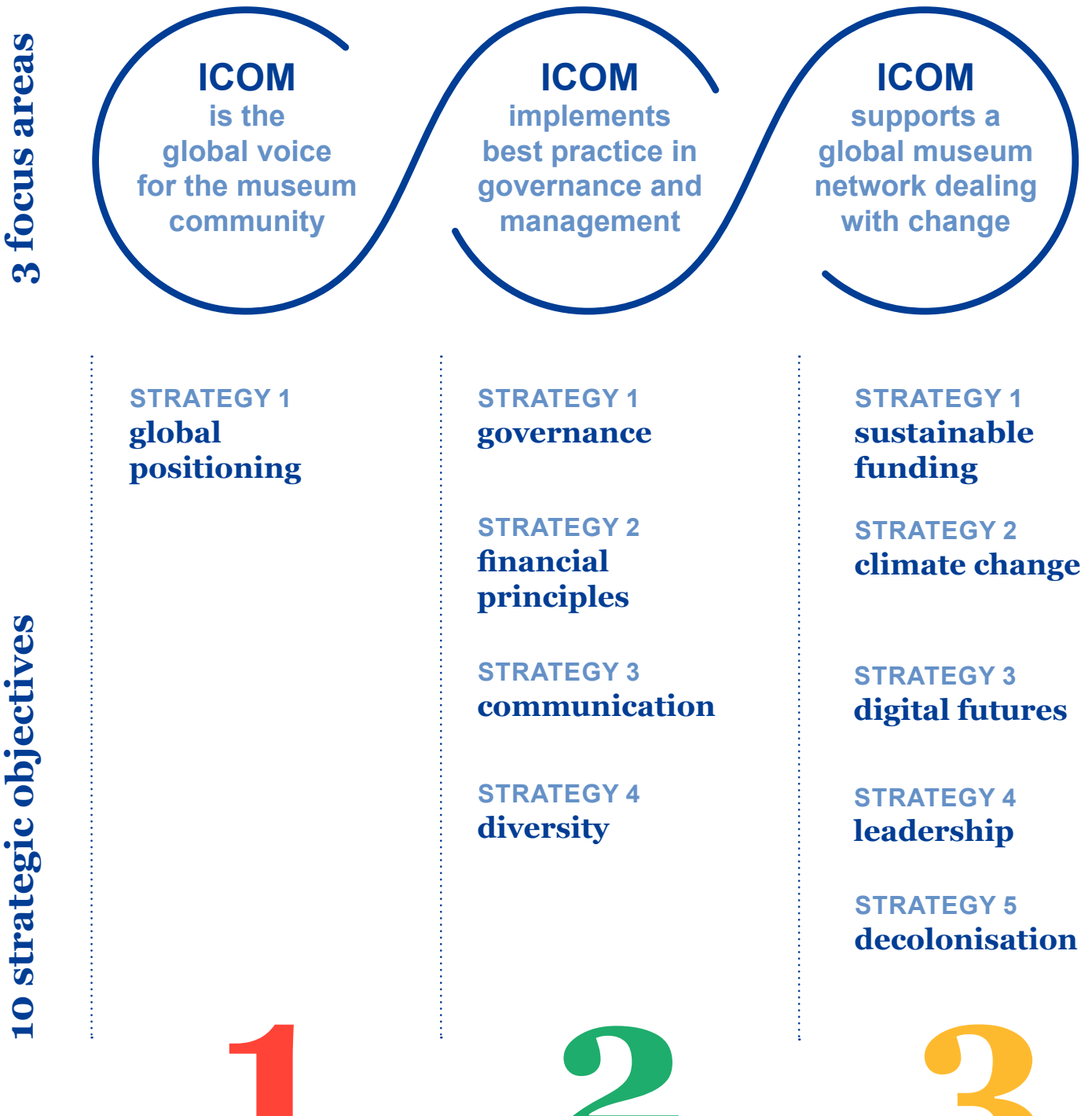
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IMPLEMENTING THE PLAN

This Plan has evolved from a detailed consultative process. Each part of the Association has been involved in its development and every part will have a role to play in its implementation.

After adoption by the General Assembly during the ICOM Triennial Conference in Prague (August 2022), the Strategic Planning Committee will work with the International and National Committees, Regional Alliances, Standing Committees, Working Groups, the Secretariat and the Executive Board to develop specific implementation plans based on a selection of those objectives most relevant to the work which they do.

In a spirit of collaboration and resource sharing, this Plan will encourage National Committees, International Committees, Regional Alliances and partners to work with the Secretariat and the Executive Board to fulfil specific strategic objectives.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE PLAN

3 focus areas

ICOM
is the
global voice
for the museum
community

ICOM
implements
best practice in
governance and
management

ICOM
supports a
global museum
network dealing
with change

10 strategic objectives

STRATEGY 1
global positioning

STRATEGY 1
governance

STRATEGY 2
financial principles

STRATEGY 3
communication

STRATEGY 4
diversity

STRATEGY 1
sustainable funding

STRATEGY 2
climate change

STRATEGY 3
digital futures

STRATEGY 4
leadership

STRATEGY 5
decolonisation

1   **2**   **3**

Global positioning

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
ICOM is recognized as the trusted, objective voice for the global museum sector.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
ICOM offers an international perspective from which to communicate the role of museums to the public and to promote a deeper understanding of their contribution to societies.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM promotes museums in international forums and leads the sector in addressing issues of global significance to museums.	**BRANDING** **Build** on the 2014 branding study to position ICOM on the basis of its values, its professional benefits and its impact in areas of significance to the museum sector.	Communications Department and the Executive Board	Membership increases especially among young adults.
	CAMPAIGNS **Build** on ICOM's role as a leader in Heritage Protection by increasing its engagement with intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies to raise awareness for enhanced museum security and emergency response planning to deal with increasing military conflict and environmental events.	Heritage Protection Relevant partners	Increased number of initiatives that address museum security and risk management training are reported.
	PARTNERSHIPS AND ALLIANCES **Reactivate** ICOM's participation in UN Committees. **Review** existing partnerships to ensure they are current, relevant and impactful. **Identify** relevant like-minded organisations with which to form new partnerships or influential networks.	Executive Board and Director General, relevant partners	ICOM is a visible presence on UN Committees/ Existing partnerships are reviewed and the results reported/New partners are identified.

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ICOM STRENGTHENS ITS POSITION AS THE GLOBAL VOICE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM COMMUNITY

Governance

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
Best practice standards in governance and management.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
To build membership confidence in ICOM's elected bodies and the decisions they take and to implement ICOM's 2019 Resolution on Sustainability in relation to Sustainable Goal 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM builds membership confidence and trust through implementing the recommendations of the 2022 External Governance Review.	**ESTABLISH** a Working Group on Governance Reform (WGGR) as recommended by the External Review.	Executive Board, Advisory Council	Working Group established.
	DEVELOP A Governance Reform action plan.	Working Group on Governance Reform (WGGR)	Action Plan endorsed. Progress reported.
	CLARIFY the roles and relationships between (a) President and Director-General (b) President, Director General and Executive Board (c) the Executive Board, Committees and Working Groups (d) the mandates, time commitment and skills required to participate on Standing Committees, Working Groups and the Executive Board.	Executive Board, Director-General, Advisory Council spokespeople, WGGR	Roles and responsibilities clarified and changes to Statutes & Rules recommended.
	DEVELOP transparent processes for appointing the Director-General and **ESTABLISH** effective annual review processes.	Executive Board, Legal Department	Procedures approved by the Executive Board.
	REVISE Statutes and Internal Rules in line with governance reform.	Working Group on Statutes and Rules, Legal Department	Changes to Statutes and Rules adopted by the General Assembly in Dubai 2025.
ICOM achieves Association unity through implementing the Strategic Plan.	**IMPLEMENT** the Strategic Plan across the Association by working with Committees, Working Groups, Regional Alliances, the Secretariat and Executive Board to develop implementation plans.	Strategic Plan Committee, Executive Board, Secretariat, Committees and Working Groups	Workplans developed. Annual reports identify progress against the Strategic Plan.
	MONITOR the progress and implementation of the Strategic Plan after 3 years.	Strategic Plan Committee, Executive Board, Secretariat	Strategic Plan is re-assessed in 2025.

Financial principles

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
Financial transparency, fiscal clarity and strategic use of resources ensure the sustainability of the Association.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Members feel confident that funds are used effectively and efficiently in the best interests of the Association.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
Financial transparency and clarity increase trust and confidence across the membership.	**CONSULT** the Advisory Council in the development of the annual budget and provide sufficient background information to build confidence and understanding in the process.	Executive Board Treasurer, FIREC, Advisory Council	The draft budget is presented annually to the AC November meeting
	DEVELOP a transparent risk assessment procedure to evaluate the issues associated with major project expenditure.	Executive Board, FIREC, Treasurer, Secretariat	Risk assessment process adopted and implemented.
	COLLABORATE with National Committees to ensure that fees and member details are received in a timely manner to allow for budget management.	Membership, Finance Department, National Committees	More timely receipt of fees and members' details.
	IMPLEMENT a system to monitor the impact of ICOM's growth and development against available resources to ensure adequate provision, informed selection of activities and reasonable expectations.	President, Director-General, Treasurer, FIREC	System is developed and implemented. On-going monitoring of resources vis-a-vis growth is monitored and reported.

Communication

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE

ICOM's membership are confident that they are well informed about and can engage with ICOM's activities and decisions.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT

Transparent, accessible communication is key to the effective functioning of the Association.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM is confident that its internal communications are impactful.	**CONDUCT** an internal audit of communication channels within the Secretariat.	Communications and Heads of Department	Audit completed and reported to the Executive Board.
	APPOINT an Internal Communications Co-ordinator to (a) liaise with the National Committees and (b) work with all Committees to develop an Internal Communication Plan which provides an accessible flow of information in two directions.	Internal Communications Co-Ordinator, NCs, ICs, RAs, SCs and WGS	Plan adopted and implemented.
	ESTABLISH regular open forums for the President and Director General to answer questions on specific topics raised by the membership and committees.	Internal Communications Co-Ordinator, President, Director General	Open forums conducted. Fewer questions about lack of information.
	CONTINUE to build the website Member Space, to ensure that critical institutional memory remains accessible as leadership changes within ICOM.	Communications Department	More page views; longer dwell time; fewer requests for existing information.
	ENGAGE the NCs and ICs to identify areas for database improvement.	Membership Department, National and International Committees	Database fully functional by 2024. Committees report improved communication with their members.

ICOM IMPLEMENTS BEST PRACTICE IN GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Diversity

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
ICOM's global diversity is represented across all components of the Association.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Museums serve diverse publics. In accordance with UN Sustainable Development Goal 10 (to reduce inequality within and among countries) ICOM and the museums it represents must reflect and serve diversity in governance, operations and engagement.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM actively seeks greater diversity in the Executive Board, Secretariat, Committees and Working Groups.	**DEVELOP** a policy that supports diversity in the membership of the Executive Board, Committees, Working Groups and the Secretariat.	Executive Board, Director-General, ETHCOM	Increased global diversity in membership of EB, Standing Committee, WG and Secretariat.
ICOM seeks to diversify its membership.	**SUPPORT** National Committees in underrepresented regions to increase their membership.	Membership Department, National Committees	Increased membership from the global south.
	EXPLORE the feasibility of developing a 5th category of membership for poorest countries.	Membership Department	Feasibility study reported and decision taken.
ICOM supports its network to implement policies and practices which promote internal diversity and social inclusion.	**SUPPORT** museums through capacity building programs that develop inclusive practices for diversity and social inclusion across governance, staff, programming and audience engagement.	Capacity Building Department	Attendance at capacity building programs and feedback from attendees.
	CUSTOMISE capacity building programs to reflect regional realities.	Capacity Building Department	Feedback from Regional Alliances, National Committees.

Sustainable funding

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
The value of museums to society is recognized through sustainable government investment.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Museums are active contributors to the social cohesion of communities, the well- being of individuals and an informed and active citizenry. Adequate levels of public funding are necessary for them to sustain and develop this role.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM makes the case for sustainable government funding for museums.	**DEVELOP** an international campaign for sustainable public investment in museums through promoting the value and social contribution of museums to societies.	Executive Board, Communications, National Committees	The campaign is used by NCs to advocate with governments at a national level.
	RESEARCH global patterns of public funding for museums, identify impacts and examine emerging business models.	Executive Board and other relevant partners	Research findings received by Dec 2023.
Museums confidently advocate for sustainable government funding at a national level and are aware of emerging business models.	**SUPPORT** the advocacy work of National Committees to make the case for sustainable government funding through publishing the Advocacy Training Manual and providing associated training.	Executive Board, Director-General, Communications, Capacity Building, relevant Committees	Advocacy Manual is published. Training for National Committees is developed and provided. NCs report impact on public funding for museums.
	BUILD capacity through programmes that facilitate the sharing of information on sustainable business models.	Capacity Building Department	Capacity building programmes on advocacy and business models are established.

Climate Change

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
ICOM fulfils its commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with specific reference to Goal 13 (Climate Action).

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Museums are recognised as trusted sources of knowledge and valuable resources for engaging communities to imagine and create sustainable futures for our planet (ICOM's Resolution on Sustainability, Kyoto 2019).

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM works proactively to address the role that museums can play in tackling climate change.	**DEVELOP AND IMPLEMENT** a 2030 Action Plan to fulfil ICOM'S commitment to the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).	Working Group on Sustainability, Museums and Society Department	Action Plan is produced, adopted and actioned.
	ADOPT a policy: that will see ICOM become a carbon neutral organisation by 2028.	Executive Board, Secretariat	Policy is established, adopted and actioned.
ICOM supports museums to implement policies and programs which address climate change.	**DEVELOP** and **IMPLEMENT** capacity building programs for museums to address climate change in their operations (to become carbon neutral by 2028), in public engagement and in advocacy with stakeholders.	Capacity Building Department, Museums and Society Department	Programs launched and promoted.
	PUBLISH a special issue of Museum International on climate change and sustainability.	Publications Department	Edition published.

Digital futures

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
A forward-thinking museum sector that can use digital to connect in new ways with their communities, better manage their collections, and provide unprecedented access to the publics they serve.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Digital is changing. ICOM needs to support the museum sector to embrace the next generation of digital technology.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM models digital best practice in its operations.	**CREATE** an Expert Advisory Group to keep ICOM abreast of new developments in the digital field to address.	Executive Board, external experts	Expert Group reports to EB and Secretariat on a regular basis.
	MODEL best practice by using digital in innovative ways to communicate with and engage the ICOM network.	Communications Department	Digital enhances communication across the network.
	EXPLORE the feasibility of a digital ICOM membership card.	Membership Department	Report on feasibility by Dubai 2025.
Museums confidently plan for and participate in a digital future.	**ACTIVATE** the network to share solutions and best practice examples of using digital customised to regional realities.	Capacity Building Department, National and International Committees	Digital, capacity building programs reflect regional differences.
	COMMISSION new ways of employing digital using a program of webinars, workshops and podcasts.	Capacity Building Department, National and International Committees	New ways of using digital are tested and trialled.

Leadership

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
A leadership culture which is inspired, innovative and progressive in the face of change.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
Effective leadership is a key factor in the health of the Association and the sustainability of the museum sector.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM recognises the importance of effective leadership. It works to enhance the leadership of the Association.	**DEVELOP** and implement an orientation program for new Executive Board members covering International corporate governance, **ICOM** structure, roles and responsibilities.	Executive Board	Orientation program developed and implemented.
	REVIEW the Executive Board Code of Conduct at the beginning of each new Executive Board term.	Executive Board	Code of Conduct reviewed.
	ESTABLISH an Executive Board Communication Plan.	Executive Board, Internal Communications Co-ordinator	Executive Board Communication Plan produced.
ICOM supports capacity building for emerging and existing leaders.	**SUPPORT** current museum leaders to implement the Sustainable Development Goals and the 2015 UNESCO Recommendation through a professional development program.	Working Group on Sustainability, Capacity Building, Museums and Society	Webinars developed, promoted and attended.
	PROMOTE the Advocacy Manual and Training to leaders throughout the network.	Communications and Capacity Building	Feedback from museum leaders.
	CONDUCT a 2nd study of museum leaders to acquire a longitudinal picture of global leadership trends.	Relevant International Committees	2nd global study of museum leadership conducted and published.

Decolonisation

WHAT WE WANT TO ACHIEVE
ICOM leads a global forum to clarify the issues and identify best practice on decolonising museums.

WHY THIS IS IMPORTANT
ICOM recognises the role that museums have played in the colonising process and actively upholds international normative instruments, including the 2015 Recommendation on Museums, the 2001 Declaration on Cultural Diversity and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

What will this look like	How will we get there	Implementation	Monitoring progress
ICOM proactively addresses decolonisation and the role that museums have played in the colonising process.	**ADOPT** a policy on decolonisation that highlights the ethical issues underlying the decolonisation process and **ESTABLISH** an action plan.	Executive Board, Museums and Society	Policy developed and adopted. Action Plan developed and implemented.
	CREATE an Expert Group on Decolonisation to advise on policy, practice and program development.	Executive Board, External experts	Expert group is established and reports to Executive Board and Secretariat on a regular basis.
	LEAD a global conversation to clarify what is encompassed within the concept and practice of Decolonisation in museums.	Museum & Society, Executive Board, Expert Group, Heritage Protection	Decolonisation is the subject of a program of events and training
	UPDATE the Code of Ethics to reflect ICOM's policy on Decolonisation.	Executive Board, ETHCOM	Amended Code of Ethics adopted in Dubai 2025.
ICOM supports museums to engage with communities and find solutions to the legacy of colonialism.	**ESTABLISH** a series of open forums to discuss museums, decolonisation and solutions to the legacy of colonialism.	Capacity Building, Museums and Society	Open forums held.
	PUBLISH an issue of Museum International dedicated to museums and decolonisation.	Publications Department	Edition published.

ICOM LEADS A GLOBAL MUSEUM NETWORK ENGAGING WITH CHANGE

STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITTEE 2020-2022

CHAIR
Ole WINTHER (Denmark)

MEMBERS
Ani AVAGYAN (Armenia)
John BARNES (UK)
Ech-Cherki DAHMALI (Morocco)
Robin HIRST (Australia)
Jane LEGGET (New Zealand)
Claudia PORTO (Brazil)
Luis RAPOSO (Portugal)
Antonio RODRIGUEZ (USA)
Joana SOUSA MONTEIRO (Portugal).

EXECUTIVE BOARD REPRESENTATIVES
Laishun AN (China)
Carol SCOTT (UK)

SECRETARIAT
Francesca POLLICINI

COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP
John BARNES (Convenor)
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Alexandra FERNANDEZ
Francesca POLLICINI

SURVEY WORKING GROUP
Robin HIRST
Jane LEGGET
Antonio RODRIGUEZ
Carol SCOTT
Ole WINTHER

GLOSSARY

STANDING COMMITTEES
DRMC /Disaster Risk Management Committee
ETHCOM /Ethics Committee
FIREC /Finance and Resources Committee
ICOM Define /Museum Definition
LEAC /Legal Affairs Committee
SAREC /Strategic Allocation Review Committee
SPC /Strategic Plan Committee

WORKING GROUPS
NCWG /Working Group National Committees
WGSR /Working Group Statutes and Rules
WGS /Working Group Sustainability
ICWG /Working Group International Committees

REGIONAL ALLIANCES
ICOM ARAB /Arab countries
ICOM ASPAC /Asia-Pacific countries
ICOM EUROPE /Europe countries
ICOM LAC /Latin America & Caribbean countries
ICOM NORD /Northern European countries
ICOM SEE /South-East Europe countries
CIMAO /West Africa countries

PARTNERS
ITC /International Training Centre
ICOM-IMREC /International Museum
Research and Education Centre

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEES
COSTUME/ Museums and Collections of Costume, Fashion and Textiles
ICAMT/Architecture and Museum Techniques
AVICOM /Audiovisual, New Technologies and Social Media
COMCOL /Collecting
ICOM-CC /Conservation
CIDOC /Documentation
CECA-Education and Cultural Action
CIPEG-Museums and Collections of Egyptology
ICEE /Exhibition Exchange
DEMHIST /Historic House Museums
ICLCM /Literary and Composers' Museums
ICFA /Museums and Collections of Fine Arts
GLASS /Museums and Collections of Glass
NATHIST /Museums and Collections of Natural History
CAMOC /Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities
ICEthics /Ethical Dilemmas
MPR /Marketing and Public Relations
ICMEMO /Memorial Museums in Remembrance of the Victims of Public Crimes
ICOMON /Money and Banking Museums
ICOFOM /Museology
INTERCOM /Museum Management
ICMS /Museum Security
ICMAH /Museums and Collections of Archaeology and History
ICOMAM /Museums and Collections of Arms and Military History
ICDAD /Museums and Collections of Decorative Arts and Design
ICME /Museums and Collections of Ethnography
CIMCIM /Museums and Collections of Instruments and Music
CIMUSET /Museums and Collections of Science and Technology
ICR /Regional Museums
ICTOP /Training of Personnel
UMAC /University Museums and Collections
DRMC (IC) /Disaster Resilient Museums