

Revised ICOM Strategic Plan 2005 - 2007

INTRODUCTION

Seoul gave new resonance to the meaning and importance of adaptability and transformation. ICOM's 2004 Triennial General Assembly in that city reaffirmed our commitment to ICOM's Core values and Mission as articulated in the strategic plan of 2001-2007, while at the same time providing the forum to encourage global debate about the issues engaging the attention of museum professionals and museums in the determination to embrace diversity while at the same time protecting identity and preserving the world's heritage, tangible and intangible.

Through the dedicated work of the Seoul Programme Committee in structuring the initial version of the organization's 2004-2010 Strategic Plan, ICOM's membership adopted a programme for the future which took account of our expanding audience and the growing needs of its members and the audiences we serve. Given the tremendous challenges facing both the museum profession and the organization itself, ICOM's draft strategic plan reflected the critical need for active engagement with the realities of globalization while ensuring the sustainability of our cultural and natural environment. ICOM's process of regeneration must continue.

ICOM's Executive Council in December 2004 in examining the requirements for its implementation decided to go even further. In order to successfully execute the programme to which the organization was committed, it recognized the need for a distillation and clearer articulation of those elements which formed the essence of ICOM's *raison d'être*. The results of this intensive process of exploration and open dialogue with a core group of ICOM's strategic partners and staff, gave council the confidence to further pursue this process of restructuring and rearticulating the strategic plan.

The process was widened with the intensive scrutiny to which this draft was subjected by a small focus group of representatives of Programme Committee, council and staff in April 2005. Taking on board the important process of prioritizing the strategic objectives, this exercise afforded further opportunity for reflection and critical analysis. The Council then undertook further reviews when examining this new draft during the period following.

ICOM's Secretariat then engaged in the essential task of bringing to bear the invaluable knowledge and experience which remains at the heart of the organization in conducting a thorough gap analysis and articulating the environmental scan on which our assumptions are based. The Council wishes to take this opportunity to congratulate the staff on bringing its all the elements of its own resourcefulness, expertise and commitment to the organization to bear on this exercise to produce a remarkable, succinct and accurate projection for the future landscape in which ICOM must survive, exit and thrive.

This strategic plan envisages an accessible, resilient organization capacitated to promote mutually beneficial partnerships amongst its membership, while ensuring the integrity and relevance of its programmes within a flexible and authoritative framework for action. The Council is committed to making this vision a reality.

Alissandra Cummins
President

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ICOM Strategic Plan 2005-2007 reflects how the Organisation's Core Values and Mission statement are to be communicated through our activities, and how ICOM intends to position itself in the wake of new challenges and opportunities.

The implementation of the Strategic Plan will enlist the commitment, creativity and energy of the entire organisation – from individual and institutional members to National and International Committees – in increased synergy with present and new partners.

The realisation of the Objectives of the Strategic Plan will be achieved through actions resulting from an Environmental Scan that spells out our assumptions about the three-year period examined with regard to external and internal circumstances conditioning the creation and development of museums, the evolution of the museum profession, and the future needs of cultural and natural heritage; all of which, in turn, determine the activities that ICOM will undertake.

The Strategic Plan objectives will ensure that ICOM remains a dynamic and relevant organization in the heritage community. ICOM will intensify its efforts to promote best practices in museums through its Code of Ethics for Museums, and by continuously generating and sharing information and knowledge with professionals all over the world.

The need to raise public awareness for the protection of cultural identity and heritage against disasters and illicit traffic will also be addressed with yet greater vigour, as will the organization's role in assisting disaster stricken heritage institutions, continuing on the path set with its response to the tsunami catastrophe in the Pacific in December 2004.

The Strategic Plan will enhance the role that the UNESCO-ICOM Information Centre will have in the organization's service to the world community, including not only ICOM members and UNESCO specialists, but also NGO's, independent researchers, students, and museum professionals at large. Overcoming challenges (resource limitations) and seizing opportunities (computerisation and the Internet), the UNESCO-ICOM Information Centre must take a leap into the digital era, transcend its physical confines and make its resources available in cyberspace to support ICOM's mission and activities.

Finally, Information and Communication Technologies have been identified as an essential tool to assist ICOM in achieving its Strategic Plan objectives through wider dissemination of information to the natural and cultural heritage community throughout the world. ICOM's innovative use of the ICTs has already proven its effectiveness in bringing together and strengthening the global heritage community, interconnecting with and giving visibility to small, local museums and museums in less developed countries; in this respect, ICOM intends to contribute to the World Summit of Information Societies' agenda by increasing its commitment to its <.museum> top level domain, and through it, the innovative Internationalised Domain Name, which will safeguard cultural identity through linguistic diversity in cyberspace.

This Strategic Plan has been conceived as a living document that will be adapted to an ever-changing environment. The product of a multi-year collective process that provides us with an updated road map, it is intended to consolidate ICOM as the undisputed international body of museum professionals, and as an effective advocate for heritage protection and cultural diversity.

2.0 ICOM'S CORE VALUES

ICOM acts upon these core values:

- *commitment to the conservation, continuation, and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, tangible and intangible*
- *recognition of human creativity in all its manifestations, and its value to all parts of society in interpreting the past, shaping the present, and mapping the future*
- *recognition of intellectual, cultural and social diversity, and respect for difference, as forces for cross-cultural understanding and social cohesion*
- *professional development, training, mentoring, exchange of expertise and mutual assistance among networks of museum personnel*
- *professional conduct, observance and promotion of ICOM's Code of Professional Ethics*
- *encouragement and particular support for museum work and heritage initiatives that are multi-lingual, inter-disciplinary, multi-faceted, or cross-cultural; or linking disparate people, countries and regions*
- *community education and skills-diffusion as an integral part of capacity-building, contributing to sustainable development according to varying socio-cultural needs*
- *publication and dissemination of information in support of ICOM's objectives*
- *democratic values, communication, and service-orientation promoted throughout ICOM as an organization*
- *engagement with public issues of social change, and active participation in debates on arts, culture and heritage impacting on the work of museums and museum professionals*
- *joint action with partner organizations, and projection of ICOM's work and values internationally*

3.0 ICOM'S MISSION

ICOM is the international organization of museums and museum professionals, committed to the conservation, transmission and communication to society of the world's natural and cultural heritage, present and future, tangible and intangible.

As a non-governmental, non-profit body, ICOM establishes professional and ethical standards for museum activities, promoting training, advancing knowledge, addressing issues, and raising public cultural and social awareness through global networks and co-operation.

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FOR STRATEGIC PLAN 2005-2007

The following assumptions for 2004 - 2007 identify those areas that may have an impact on ICOM's ability to effectively carry out its Strategic Plan..

External environment

1. Creation and development of museums will continue at a sustained rate
 - to promote (cultural and heritage) tourism,
 - as countries all over the world realize that museums are needed to preserve their moveable cultural heritage in the face of continued demand from. Private and institutional buyers.
2. Illicit traffic in cultural and natural heritage will increase to satisfy expanding market demand
3. Specialization will characterize a significant portion of new museums, which, in turn, will create new museum professions and needs for new services.
4. The ICT s will continue reshaping museums - marketing, exhibitions, collections, conservation, access to collections (e-museums, virtual experiences), new museum professions and new services.
5. Privatization and demands for economic sustainability of museums will continue threatening scientific rigour and testing ethical practices.
6. Restitution will cease being an isolated phenomenon as UNESCO's campaigns and ICOM's activities will sensitize international public opinion on the equation cultural heritage = cultural identity.
7. Strategies for the protection and promotion of cultural diversity will increasingly target young audiences and minorities, tightening the links between museums, schools, and communities.
8. Risk management capacity building programs for museums will be in greater demand as the media's coverage of natural and man-made catastrophes heightens museum professionals' and public awareness for the need of disaster preparedness and response.

Internal environment

9. ICOM individual membership will continue its growth in the next few years, as the profession will continue its expansion

10. ICOM institutional membership may be affected by membership cost rise.
11. New international committees will be created in response to evolving heritage definition specialized museums and new museum professional specialisms.
12. The Secretariat will be required to provide more services and support as International Committees and membership grow, and in response to the external environment.
13. ICOM will need to create synergies with other natural and cultural heritage partners to provide cost-effective responses to new needs by the museum community.

5.0 STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES FOR ICOM

ICOM has established three principal objectives that it will accomplish during the period 2005 - 2007. These are:

Objective 1: ICOM generates and disseminates knowledge.

Objective 2: ICOM is proactive.

Objective 3: ICOM is inclusive

For each objective, a series of desired results for the period 2005 - 2007 has been identified. These results will be tracked and measured collectively (see tables below).

The final section of each of the three tables describes specific Actions to be pursued, identifies the Responsibility for initiation and implementation, and provides a Start Date and a End Date for each.

This document must be read as a *'living' document*, open to change and adjustment as the Executive Council, the Advisory Committee and the Secretariat find necessary.

Strategic Objective 1: ICOM generates and disseminates knowledge ¹

Anticipated results by 2007 (in a prioritized order)

- a. ICOM has developed and implemented programs to generate and share knowledge
- b. ICOM is recognized as setting the standard in ethics and in specialized museum practices
- c. ICOM has confirmed its commitment to increasing awareness and knowledge of threats to cultural and natural heritage, tangible and intangible
- d. International Committees generate knowledge on a regular basis

¹ Definition: knowledge that is relevant to museums and their role in society, for the museum community and its stakeholders

- e. ICOM is recognized by the heritage sector as a source for expertise in museum-related heritage matters
- f. Most International and National Committees meet ICOM's requirements for services to their members
- g. Mechanisms are in place to ensure the quality of ICOM's publications²
- h. Based on tools provided by ICOM, all relevant international heritage conventions and standards are promoted to national governments
- i. ICOM is one of the 'first up' on web search engine queries on museum matters.
- j. ICOM publications are in citation indexes

Action Plan for Strategic Objective 1
1. Define ICOM's position with respect to the Documentation Centre.
2. Review, clean and update the Documentation Centre bibliographical data base in order to put it on-line and available for consultation on the web site.
3. Identify appropriate accommodation for the Documentation Centre that ensures both public access and the required environment for its resources.
4. Implement the Pilot Standing Committee on International Committees
5. Identify the nature of support required to assist International Committees in developing and carrying out their programs, with specific reference to publications and web presence
6. Establish an Editorial Committee; develop and implement a Publications Policy
7. Review ICOM's web site and up-date where necessary, guaranteeing user friendliness, so that it can be an effective universal vehicle for various programs designed to share knowledge
8. Identify, prioritize and assess internally, ICOM's principal actions/core initiatives ³ ;
9. Complete and publish the Guidelines for General Conferences. Stipulate ICOM's expectations in relation to the creation and sharing of knowledge at General Conferences in the Letter of Agreement.
10. Facilitate the dissemination of ICOM standards by the National Committees in their own country, by Regional Organizations and through International agencies (for example through UNESCO).

² Publications includes digital, electronic, print

³ During 2005 – 2007 these will include Capacity Building, Illicit Traffic; Intangible Heritage and Risk Management: (MEP, DRFM; ICBS)

Action Plan for Strategic Objective 1
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11. Develop and implement a policy that permits non-members (potential new members) to attend ICOM's programs

12. Examine the feasibility of on-line hosting and maintenance of International Committee data bases
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Strategic Objective 2: ICOM is proactive

Anticipated results by 2007 (in a prioritized order):

- a. ICOM's position on strategic issues is sought by stakeholders as is its participation in relevant forums
- b. ICOM is in the forefront of promoting awareness of the change and evolution in [the disciplines of] museums
- c. ICOM is recognized for its leadership in responding to the needs of museums and museum workers facing natural and man-made disasters
- d. ICOM's Code of Ethics for Museums is recognized and cited worldwide by international agencies, governments, intergovernmental organs and legal experts
- e. ICOM's actions have grown in response to members' needs; there are 'bottom-up' opportunities for program development

Action Plan for Strategic Objective 2

1. Define/research strategic issues for ICOM⁴; establish priorities and ICOM's position; communicate these to ICOM's stakeholders through various communication tools (Internet, ICOM News, museum-specific publications and its partners' - ICA, IFLA, ICOMOS, ICCROM, UNESCO, etc. press offices -).

2. Develop and implement a Communications Strategy and Plan; plus a Marketing Strategy.

3. Implement effective means to regularly inform its stakeholders of ICOM's strategic issues and priorities

4. Utilize various platforms to advocate ICOM's strategic issues

5. Engage appropriate advice/expertise to ensure that ICOM is informed and constructively involved, where possible, with relevant international agencies (e.g. UNESCO, UNIDROIT, ICBS, World Customs Organization, Interpol), and that it participates actively in the formulation and development of international heritage protection policy and practices.

6. Facilitate the involvement of National Committees and Regional Organizations in lobbying their local government on museum issues.

⁴ Which may include "Completing and publicizing the work on an ICOM Charter on Principles for Museums and Cultural Tourism" as well as "Clarifying a policy and determining a course of action to ensure a holistic approach to all ICOM's services and programs"

Action Plan for Strategic Objective 2
7. Encourage the International Committees to promote awareness of the change and evolution in [the disciplines of museums ⁵
8. Better coordinate/integrate the actions of the National and International Committees with those of ICOM Secretariat
9. Facilitate the promotion of relevant international conventions by providing ICOM bodies and members with appropriate material and examples of actions in other countries which could be followed.
10. Develop and implement an ICOM 'brand' which is grounded in a clear and consistent message and visual identity, ranging from the Mission Statement to all communications and publications for the ICOM Secretariat and the National and International Committees and Regional Organizations.
11. Re-conceptualize the membership data base
12. Research and identify specific issues for lapsed institutional members; investigate a redefinition of benefits for institutional members; and provide support tools to the National Committees to publicize and promote these.
13. Encourage ICOM meetings around the globe (Secretariat, Executive Council, and International Committees) to invite the national association of museums and other museum-related associations or interest groups in order to strengthen the national museum community's voice.

⁵ Specific suggestions related to this action that could be carried out by International/National Committees include:

- a) identifying issues which are relevant to the museum community;
- b) debating them and setting policies
- c) identifying new professional trends and professional needs in the field;
- d) organising awareness-raising activities (in the form of workshops, seminars, international museum's day, etc.);
- e) comparing the changes in other heritage areas (monuments, archives, natural heritage, etc.)

Strategic Objective 3: ICOM is [inclusive]

Anticipated results by 2007 (in a prioritized order):

- a. ICOM's membership profile is global, diverse, and reflects the many different kinds of museums, museum professionals and aspects of heritage
- b. ICOM members in LDCs and DCs are active participants in meetings and conferences
- c. ICOM's services, products and activities are both global and cross-cultural yet reflect local knowledges, heritages and languages.
- d. International organizations, in particular UNESCO, recognizes ICOM as the global spokesperson for museums
- e. ICOM has facilitated the development of new National and International Committees
- f. ICOM has successfully interacted with its partners in the implementation of activities
- g. ICOM is recognized by its cross-cultural partners
- h. International Museum Day is recognized and celebrated world-wide

Action Plan for Strategic Objective 3

1. Encourage National Committees to develop and apply new rules and procedures that facilitate broad participation of members in:
 - a) Elections for NC boards
 - b) International Committees
 - c) Development of local and/or national competence groups (study and/or expertise groups) to help museums fulfill their roles
 - d) Application for ICOM grants
 - e) ICOM's activities in and outside the countries
2. Implement a proactive Membership campaign. (Policy needed)
3. Guarantee the use of the three official languages of ICOM in all ICOM activities, printed documents and on-line information (Guidelines needed)
4. Facilitate the development of new and existing National Committees

Action Plan for Strategic Objective 3
5. Clarify the purpose and potential of the ICOM Fund, including ensuring the sustainable development of National Committees. Promote and publicize the benefits of contributing to the ICOM Fund to the National Committees.
6. Strengthen ICOM's electronic communications network to achieve inclusiveness.
7. Develop ICOM's leadership role in the dotMuseum (.museum) top-level domain, highlighting the significance of the first Internet domain dedicated to cultural activity having been entrusted to the museum community. Cultivate the potential of this action for mutual reinforcement of ICOM objectives with those of UNESCO and other heritage-sector NGOs, ensuring the widest cultural representation in the digital content repository, mediating and facilitating the participation of communities with no ready access to the requisite technologies. Elicit support for the development of these services.
8. Develop policy and explore opportunities to ensure that finances are not an obstacle to participation in the Executive Council and other key ICOM bodies
9. Research incentives to enable ICOM meetings to take place in all different parts of the world.
10 Identify and involve a broader resource expertise with local/regional knowledge.
11. Implement the Action Plan in Museums and Cultural Diversity Policy of ICOM
12. Encourage and facilitate inter-regional activities and joint projects with common professional interest
13. Develop a calendar of significant meetings that relate to ICOM's interests; ensure participation in all such meetings– be invited, be visible, and have a clear message to present. Ensure that ICOM members who participate in such meetings inform the Secretariat.
14. Clarify the "strategic patronage" policy and ensure that it provides clear criteria for the use of ICOM's name and logo