



ICOM President

Paris, 14 December 2011

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For the attention of
the Chairs of National and
International Committees of ICOM

Subject: ICOM Response and information with regard to questions and recommendations of the last Advisory Committee

Dear Colleagues,

It has been a few months now since our annual June Meeting in Paris and I would like to share with you the plan of action that is the result of last June's inspired discussions.

Having now analysed the proposals, I would like to communicate on behalf of ICOM the actions taken in light of the recommendations made by the national (NC) and international committees (IC) in their respective separate meetings, and those of the Chair of the Advisory Committee, all of which was formally submitted to the appreciation of the Executive Council on 8th June, 2011. In this, I wish to underline my appreciation and thanks for the good liaison and consultation over the past few months that we have had with the respective Chairs of the separate meetings: Ms. Ann Davis and Mr. Kwame Sarpong, as well as the Chair of the Advisory Committee, Mr. Knut Wik.

- **ICOM is taking a strong position on Membership Development**

First of all, emphasis is being given to improving the process for membership. This is in spite of the great increase in the demand for cards over the past few years, while retaining the same human resources to deal with these requests.

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To date, national committees have already received the 2012 stickers for the renewal of ICOM members, to the extent that they have complied with the application procedure.

With regard to the clarification on the various categories of membership, ICOM is going to launch an interactive initiative with some national committees to explore various different possibilities in the new database. This work will provide more precise information and will permit refinement of the membership system if needed. For any questions on this issue, we have created an e-mail address icom.membership@icom.museum which will enable the national committees to ask specific questions and to receive customized answers directly from the Membership Department.

I am pleased to acknowledge that the national committees have confirmed their strong satisfaction with the new membership fee structure. The Executive Council, the Director General and I made sure that this direction was maintained by consolidating reduced fees for members in categories 2, 3 and 4 of the International Monetary Fund nomenclature. This contributes to our goal of inclusion which is integral to the New Strategic Plan 2011-13.

As for membership of international committees, emphasis is given once again to encourage all national committees to ask at the outset about the enrollment process for the inscription of each new or current ICOM member in an international committee.

- **ICOM Mediation has taken a credible path for an increasing impact in the Heritage community**

The support expressed by national and international committees to this new ICOM programme is very promising and instrumental for the development of this initiative. Subsequent to its June presentation to committees, several very successful seminars were organised during September and October 2011. A webpage dedicated to this has been created at <http://icom.museum/what-we-do/programmes/art-and-cultural-heritage-mediation.html>.

Simultaneously, a complete reference tool is provided for everyone at the following link: <http://icom.museum/what-we-do/programmes/art-and-cultural-heritage-mediation/icom-wipo-art-and-cultural-heritage-mediation.html>

- **International Museum Day (IMD) is on its way to a successful 35 year anniversary**

We welcome the suggestions made by national committees for the 2014 international museum day. Four themes were proposed: Museum Ethics, Museums & Society, Museums for Sustainable Society, and Museum Collections Make Connections. The recommendation for the final choice for 2014 will be determined by vote at the Advisory Committee meeting in June 2012, in accordance with the procedure implemented last year.

In this respect and in order to facilitate the preparation of the next IMD, on 2 November, 2011, ICOM sent to all committees a special downloadable kit that provides guidelines and material that can be customized in every country. You can also find full information on the dedicated website <http://imd2012.icom.museum>. Here you will also see the communications tools (poster, postcard, web banner) translated into several languages.

- **Reflections and improvements in organisation**

We confirm that an agenda will be distributed in advance of meetings. This year the agenda was sent out one month ahead, and, considering the amount of organisational work required, this time line cannot be shortened. This one-month timeframe will however be kept so that committees can have sufficient time to prepare their important contributions.

Following the wish of the national committees, in liaison with Mr. Kwame Sarpong (Ghana) and Mr. Michael Ryan (Ireland), we constituted a working group to enable further discussion on the remaining points that had not been covered. This discussion was launched in October 2011, during which a questionnaire was suggested. Such a questionnaire, seeking suggestions for potential administrative improvements, will be sent out by the General Secretariat and the Secretariat will then analyse the answers in order to improve future outcomes.

- **Better interaction through a new ICOM Interactive platform**

This recommendation made both by national and international committees on an Extranet / Collaborative platform is important for the strengthening of our network and for its collaborative work in the service of ICOM. In September, ICOM put out a tender to select an appropriate company, and in November 2011 *Hippocampe* was the chosen service provider. The process will be rolled out in phases throughout 2012, with some first operational and concrete results evident before the next June meeting and the procedure finalised in November 2012.

The project is divided into three phases:

- Phase 1 (March 2012): to develop the technical features and interface with the Eudonet member database and to offer information features (the general architecture of the home page; access, for example, to the digital version of ICOM News, e-mailing features, event management linked to the conference and training agenda of ICOM and its network, a Push information insert where administrators can insert messages for all their members, and a statistics tool).
- Phase 2 (June 2012): to develop groups and adapt them to ICOM's operating principles and to offer collaborative features (creation of groups and subgroups, versioning, forum, photo and video albums, information feedback to the main platform)
- Phase 3 (November 2012): to strengthen the collaborative dimension by adding the following features: member directory, publications' database, database of museums that accept the ICOM card and their location, search engine, flipbook feature, survey monkey, podcasts, live streaming, news pages with return to the home page, online payment linked to the Eudonet member database.

This is a vast and complex project and as such each version will be accompanied by a trial phase with a panel of ICOM committee members being asked to test the features and training. The completed project will provide a platform for exchanges between NCs and ICs.

- **Set-up of an improved system for subvention process management for Special Projects and for International Committees**

After discussion last June among the Executive Council, a thorough review was launched in compliance with processes announced by me and the Director General at the separate meeting of the International Committees. In the past few days, consultation has been made based on the results with the Executive Council, the Chair of the Advisory Committee, and the Chairs of the respective separate meetings on the constitution of this new technical committee, considering the need to prepare 2012 subventions and project applications. This technical committee will be called the

Strategic Allocation Review Commission, to be chaired by Mr. Claude Faubert and will be composed of the following:

- A Chair appointed from the members of the Executive Council;
- The Chairperson of the Advisory Committee
- ICOM Treasurer
- A Member of the Executive Council
- An immediate past-Representative of an International Committee
- An immediate past-Representative of a National Committee
- An immediate past-Representative of a Regional Alliance
- A member of the former Committee for International Committees
- ICOM Director for Finance and Administration, who will also serve as permanent secretary of the Commission.

In line with the new Strategic Plan, this Review Commission will review the subvention applications proposed by committees or alliances. On the one hand it brings together all the subventions for International Committees, and on the other hand it assesses special projects. This will allow for an improved review process for all the requests and provide a comprehensive and strategic vision for ICOM.

The Strategic Allocation Review Commission will review application dossiers within the framework of the ICOM Strategic Plan and give consideration to the real capacity of applicants to fulfill their objectives through the full expenditure of allocated funds. The presented recommendations must fall within the budget voted every year by the Executive Council of ICOM. Recommendations for subventions must comply with ICOM statutes and regulations and international regulations, and need to avoid any conflict of interest.

The Review Commission will meet around April 2012, and ICOM will provide responses to ICs by May 2012. The process will be advanced the next year to give an even earlier response to committees.

- **Legal and financial Status of international committees and Budget consolidation**

- i) Funding

The international committees have asked to have more information about the funding allocated to other committees. For your information, details on the funding of all international committees can be found at the following link <http://archives.icom.museum/download/2011ICsubsidies.html> .

- ii) Legal status

With reference to the ICOM Statutes, it has been confirmed by ICOM's legal advisor, Delsol law firm, that the international committees cannot be independent entities. They are integral beings of ICOM and as such cannot be legally separated.

The focus of the debate should now be placed on how the secretariat can offer the most appropriate means for the further development of ICOM international committees (ICs). In this respect, rest assured that ICOM is willing to provide the best support possible for the development of international committees. In this light, ICOM is currently developing a series of tools specially designed to enhance the committees' day-to-day operations. This framework, which will apply to all International Committees, will be put into effect gradually over the next two years.

iii) Consolidation of accounts and legal obligations

Anti-money laundering and consolidation laws oblige ICOM to consolidate accounts. This consolidation requires all ICs to provide timely, reliable financial information and to open bank accounts in Paris. This process will involve the opening of dedicated bank accounts for each IC through an internet based system, and the providing of secure management of banking operations, available in 12 languages including English, French and Spanish. It will allow each Chair or/and Treasurer to manage the budget of the IC, give access to detailed information on the accounts and transactions over the past 180 days, and to process payments. This system was analysed and discussed during the Finance and Resources Committee of 21 November 2011 with two representatives of ICs (ICR, AVICOM) and two representatives of NCs (Germany, Ireland) present. The Financial and Resources Committee noted in its recommendations that the consolidation of accounts is a legal obligation, and if it is not respected, not only would ICOM be in contravention of the law, but ICOM would lose the certification made by the independent external certified accountant. Without such a certification, ICOM would lose all legal ability to receive government grants or foundation support, all of which requires as an eligibility prerequisite the certification of past financial statements.

Furthermore, this new system resolves the long-standing concern expressed by IC Chairs and Treasurers about personal financial liability. Indeed, from now on, this new delegation system, once it has been implemented for every committee, will remove their former personal legal liability when acting on behalf of their ICs.

iv) New Services

New services for ICs will include:

- The use of a standard reporting template for budget and accounting purposes that will permit the consolidation and the recognition of in kind contributions. This system has to and will be constructed according to the legal regulations imposed by TRACFIN anti-money-laundering laws;
- The opening of bank accounts with all management facilities dedicated to the use of each IC; I am happy to notice that many international committees have since June already made their application for this account system;
- The assignment of full banking rights to the Chairs and/or Treasurers of the international committees (IC) in order to facilitate the operating process as easily as it is today, whilst giving total legal security for each IC chairperson ;
- The possible provision of tax reduction receipts for donations dedicated to particular ICs actions in order to stimulate private donations.

The above framework, which will apply to all International Committees, will be undertaken gradually over the next two years. In 2012, ICOM will have workshop sessions with a pilot group to ensure that the tools developed are adapted to IC activities.

- **Data base Development and Membership recruitment**

Upon the request of some international and national committees, the ICOM Secretariat is keen to assist committees that would like to work on membership development. This would be done with a target list of those institutions or individual members who could be members of the committees but are not yet. This work shall, however, be developed with cross reference between various national and international committees and the Secretariat, supplemented by a draft list of potential targets proposed by the committees themselves. Depending on the number of requests, ICOM may have to phase in this plan by creating several groups of committees.

We are ready to work constructively on these important modernisation processes that are going to be of great benefit to our organisation and provide better coordination, as well as improve the everyday life of committees.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hans-Martin Hinz". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'H'.

Dr. Hans-Martin HINZ
ICOM President