

ICOM CONSERVATION By-Laws (2026 Revision)

Article 1: Name

The name of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) International Committee is:

- ICOM CONSERVATION ICOM Comité international pour la conservation [FR],
- ICOM CONSERVATION ICOM International Committee for Conservation [EN],
- ICOM CONSERVATION ICOM Comité Internacional para la Conservación [ES],
hereafter referred as the “Committee” or by the acronym CONSERVATION.

Article 2: Status and relationship with ICOM

International Committees are principal instruments for the work of ICOM and for the realisation of its programmes of activity. They are channels of communication between ICOM members with similar professional interests. International Committees are responsible for the development and implementation of ICOM's programmes and activities related to each International Committee's specific mandate. Furthermore, International Committees provide valuable advice to the ICOM Executive Board, the Advisory Council and the Director General on matters relevant to ICOM's mission and programmes.

International Committees are components of ICOM and are at all times subject to the ICOM Statutes, Internal Rules, Code of Ethics for Museums, Rules for International Committees and relevant decisions of the ICOM General Assembly and Executive Board.

The Committee is established under Article 16 of the ICOM Statutes and Article 7 of the ICOM Internal Rules.

As all International Committees, CONSERVATION is not entitled to operate as a legal entity but must operate within the generally accepted framework of ICOM with respect to CONSERVATION specific mandate described in the Article 3.

Each International Committee is represented at the ICOM Advisory Council by its Chair or its appointed representative, and at the ICOM General Assembly as determined by the ICOM Statutes and Internal Rules.

Article 3: Mandate

The aims of CONSERVATION are:

- a. Collaborative Framework: To provide an organised framework that facilitates interdisciplinary cooperation between conservation specialists and source communities, ensuring that diverse cultural perspectives and methodologies guide the professional care, treatment, and long-term stewardship and conservation of museum collections.
- b. Inclusive Professional Standards: To promote and maintain the highest standards of examination, documentation, and conservation by bringing together professionals and knowledge-bearers (as defined in Article 3 of the ICOM Statutes (2023) from all countries to ensure that stewardship respects both the material integrity and the intangible significance of museum collections.

- c. Equitable Research: To promote and facilitate equitable global research within the museum field—of a scientific, technological, ethical, historical, and/or philosophical nature—incorporating diverse knowledge systems and fostering interdisciplinary collaborations that reflect the geographic and cultural diversity of the global museum community.
- d. Ethical Information Management: To collect and disseminate information regarding materials and methods in conservation and related fields while prioritising transparent provenance research and ensuring that documentation is accessible and ethically shared with the communities of origin.
- e. Public Advocacy for Stewardship: To foster within the museum community, the general public, and policy makers an awareness of the need for culturally sensitive museum stewardship, advocating for the protection of heritage through inclusive institutional practices.

Article 4: Membership

The membership of CONSERVATION is open to all ICOM members in good standing upon request and without undue delay or restrictions.

Members of CONSERVATION are members of ICOM, either individual members or representatives of institutional members, who have nominated CONSERVATION as the International Committee of which they wish to be members. Any ICOM member shall be allowed to choose CONSERVATION as his/her designated International Committee.

Members of ICOM wishing to join CONSERVATION shall update their personal data in the ICOM database by ticking CONSERVATION as their International Committee in their personal member space on the [ICOM Website](#) or inform the ICOM Secretariat, which shall forthwith transmit details of the member's application to the Chair or the Secretary of the Committee, together with the information as to whether the member is a voting member of any other International Committee.

Each International Committee is composed of those ICOM members that have chosen to be a member of CONSERVATION and must maintain a membership of at least fifty (50) members. CONSERVATION membership list is maintained by the ICOM Secretariat on behalf of the Committee and for its purposes. The ICOM Secretariat shall provide restricted access to the Chair and the Secretary of CONSERVATION to the relevant parts of the ICOM membership database.

Membership of the Committee shall cease if the Member:

- resigns from the Committee, or
- is no longer a member of ICOM.

Article 5: Rights of Members

5.1. Participation:

Members of CONSERVATION are entitled to participate in the Committee's activities and programmes, and to attend its meetings. General information shall be distributed to Members on a regular basis as a membership service.

5.2. Voting Rights:

Voting members of the Committee shall have the following rights:

- a. To vote in the meetings of the Committee;
- b. To stand for election to the Board or as a Working Group Coordinator;

- c. To vote in elections for the Board and for Working Group Coordinators;
- d. To be appointed to the role of Working Group Assistant Coordinator;
- e. To be designated as a representative to vote at the ICOM General Assembly and in elections to the ICOM Executive Board.

5.3. Student Members:

Student Members are entitled to participate in Committee activities but do not have voting rights and are not eligible to stand for election to the Board or Working Group Coordinators, or be nominated as Assistant Coordinators

Article 6: Protection of personal data

6.1. Compliance:

The Committee shall take all necessary measures to process personal data in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and ICOM's Privacy Policy.

6.2. Use of Data:

Personal data of members shall be used solely for the legitimate purposes of the Committee, including membership management, newsletter distribution, and conference organisation.

6.3. Joint Data Control:

For activities organised jointly with third parties (e.g., ICOM CONSERVATION Triennial Conference or Working Group interim meetings), the Committee shall establish a Joint Data Controller Agreement to define responsibilities regarding data protection and liability. Any Joint Data Controller Agreement will be signed by the Chair of the Committee, on approval of ICOM Legal Affairs Secretariat.

Article 7: Meetings

The Committee shall organise an annual General Assembly and a Triennial Conference to fulfil its mission. It may also organise Working Group Interim Meetings, workshops, and regional meetings. Once every three years, the General Assembly shall be held in conjunction with the ICOM CONSERVATION Triennial Conference. Elections for Directory Board and Working Group Coordinators and the awarding of ICOM CONSERVATION Medals, if applicable, normally take place during the General Assembly held in conjunction with the Triennial Conference.

7.1. General Assembly:

a. The Committee shall hold a General Assembly at least once a year. The Committee shall determine the venue (in-person or virtual) and arrangements. The Date, Time and Location of the General Assembly will be communicated to members at least one (1) month prior to the meeting. The Agenda for the General Assembly will be distributed one (1) month prior to the meeting.

b. To ensure the proper legal and financial management of funds associated with its General Assembly, the Committee shall establish an agreement of cooperation with an entity in the host country (e.g., museum, university, institution) under the conditions set out in Article 11 and the ICOM Financial Regulation. Any cooperation agreement will be signed by virtue of a delegation of authority as described under Article 10.2. by the Chair of the Committee, upon review and approval of the ICOM Secretariat.

- c. The Committee will inform the relevant National Committee in advance that the meeting will occur.
- d. Other Years: In years without a Triennial Conference, the General Assembly may be held online or in conjunction with an ICOM General Conference, as determined by the Board.
- e. The Chair shall set the agenda in consultation with the Board. An official invitation including the agenda shall be sent to all Members at least thirty (30) days before the meeting.
- f. The Board may accept non-voting observers to the General Assembly.

7.2. Quorum

The quorum for a General Assembly meeting shall be ten per cent (10%) of the voting membership. If this quorum is not obtained, the meeting shall be convened again at the same place (or online link) within twenty-four (24) hours; at this second meeting, the Committee shall have the power to deliberate regardless of the number of Members present.

- a. Each voting member in good standing has the right to one (1) vote.
- b. Electronic voting will be used whenever technically and logistically possible.
- c. Members may allocate proxies for voting on approval of the Directory Board.

Article 8: Working Groups

8.1. Establishment:

The Committee may establish Working Groups to facilitate its activities based on the needs of the programme or requests by Members.

- a. Working Groups are established subject to approval of the Board at the initiative of at least thirty (30) voting members from at least three (3) countries and normally more than one continent. The new Working Group must be distinctive and not overlap with an existing Working Group.
- b. A Working Group name must be representative of the subject covered and distinct from others. All names must be approved by the Board.

8.2. Probationary Period:

A new Working Group shall have a development period of one complete triennial period. During this time, the Working Group administrators shall have the oversight of the Board and Secretariat. At the end of this period, the Board will evaluate if the Group acquires full status (working independently) or is dissolved based on previously agreed criteria.

8.3. Restructuring:

Proposals for name changes, mergers, and demergers of existing Working Groups must be submitted to the Board. The Board shall consult relevant Coordinators and members before arriving at a decision. Merged or demerged groups are subject to the same probationary conditions as new groups.

8.4. Coordination:

Each Working Group shall be led by a Coordinator elected by the voting members of that Working Group. Assistant Coordinators shall be nominated by the elected Coordinator and appointed

subject to the approval of the Board. Both Coordinators and Assistant Coordinators must be voting members of the Committee.

8.5. Abeyance and Dissolution of Existing Groups

If an established Working Group fails to fulfil its aims or lacks activity, the Board may place the Group in abeyance for one triennial period. If there is no renewed activity after this period, the Group will be dissolved.

Article 9: Governance of the Committee and its Working Groups

9.1. Composition of the Directory Board:

The management responsibilities of CONSERVATION reside with an elected Directory Board. The Board shall consist of at least five (5) members and a maximum of nine (9) members, from whom the following officers are designated:

- One (1) Chair;
- Two (2) Vice-Chairs;
- One (1) Treasurer.
- The remaining members are designated as Ordinary Board Members.
- One ordinary Board member shall also hold the portfolio of Liaison officer to oversee communication functions between the Directory Board and Working Group Coordinators.

9.2. Elections (Directory Board):

a. Eligibility: Only ICOM members in good standing who are voting members of the Committee for at least five (5) years are eligible to stand for election. Candidates should be present at the Triennial Conference to stand for election.

b. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest: All candidates for the Board must declare any potential conflict of interest at the time of nomination. Specifically, candidates must state if they act in a managerial capacity in an external institution, museum, or organisation.

c. Election Committee: An Election Committee consisting of an Election Supervisor and two scrutineers will be established by the Board to conduct the election. Members of this committee shall not be candidates for election.

d. Election Process: The eligible voting membership shall elect the members of the Board as a group. Immediately following the election at the Triennial Conference, the newly elected Board members shall hold an Inaugural Meeting to elect the Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Treasurer from among their number.

e. Transfer of Responsibilities: When the newly elected Board is presented to the General Assembly, it assumes its functions from the end of the final plenary session of the Triennial Conference. Prior to that time, the outgoing Board maintains operational responsibility for running the Conference.

9.3. Elections (Working Group Coordinators):

a. Working Group Coordinators are elected by the voting members of their respective Working Groups during the Triennial Conference.

b. Candidates for Coordinator should be present at the Triennial Conference.

c. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest: All candidates for Working Group Coordinators must declare any potential conflict of interest at the time of nomination. Specifically, candidates must state if they act in a managerial capacity in an external institution, museum, or organisation.

9.4. Mandate and Renewal for Directory Board and Working Group Coordinators:

a. Board Term: Members of the Board are elected for a term of three (3) years. They may be re-elected once for a second consecutive term. If serving as an officer in the second consecutive term, a member may stand for a final third term. Total Board Limit: No member shall remain on the Board for more than nine (9) years in total.

b. Restriction on the Chair: The Chair may not simultaneously serve as Chair of a National Committee, Regional Alliance, or as a member of the ICOM Executive Board.

c. Coordinator Term: Elected for a term of three (3) years, renewable once (maximum 6 consecutive years in the same position). On completion of their term as Coordinator, the member may be nominated, on Board approval, as an Assistant Coordinator in the same Working Group for a maximum of one three (3) year term.

9.5. Termination of Mandate (Automatic):

A Board Member or Working Group Coordinator ceases to hold office under the following circumstances:

a. Resignation: By submitting a written resignation to the Chair.

b. Loss of Membership: If they cease to be a voting member of ICOM CONSERVATION.

c. Absence: Failure to attend three (3) consecutive meetings without valid justification accepted by the Board.

d. The Board may vote to remove a Board Member or Coordinator from office for serious cause, including violation of ICOM Statutes/Ethics, dereliction of duty, or conduct detrimental to the Committee. Procedure: The individual shall be notified in writing and given fourteen (14) days to present a defence. Removal requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board.

9.6. Filling Vacancies:

a. Vacancy of Chair: The Board shall appoint one of the Vice-Chairs to assume the function for the remainder of the term.

b. Vacancy of Vice Chair(s): The Board shall appoint Ordinary Member(s) to assume the function (s).

c. Vacancy of Treasurer: The Board shall appoint one of its Ordinary Members to assume the function.

d. Ordinary Member: In case of vacancy of a position of Ordinary Member, the position shall remain vacant for the remainder of the term of office, provided that there are at least five (5) Board members. If the Board falls below five (5) members, it may co-opt a voting member of the Committee to serve until the next election.

e. Vacancy of Coordinator: The Board may appoint an Interim Coordinator until the next election.

9.8. Administrative Secretariat:

[Important note: The secretary shall perform services autonomously and shall not be subject to any relationship of subordination, hierarchical authority, or control by the Committee or its Board members. The secretary shall organise their work independently and shall not be integrated into

the internal functioning of the Committee in a manner that could lead to reclassification as salaried employment].

The Board may engage external administrative support in the form of a secretary acting strictly as an independent consultant to assist with the day-to-day activities of the Committee.

- Status

The Secretary shall act exclusively as an independent service provider, remunerated upon presentation of invoices. Under no circumstances shall this engagement be construed as an employment relationship with the Committee.

- Governance

The secretary shall not be a member of the Board and shall not have voting rights.

- Agreement

Any engagement shall be formalised through a written service agreement defining the scope of services, duration, and remuneration, in accordance with Article 11.

Article 10: Role and Responsibilities of the Board and Coordinator

10.1. General Responsibilities:

The Committee's Board is responsible for managing the affairs of the Committee and for ensuring that the requirements of the ICOM Statutes, the ICOM Internal Rules and CONSERVATION's By-laws are met. The Board of the Committee, represented by the Chair, shall ensure that the Committee's activities do not compromise ICOM.

10.2. Financial and Legal Responsibilities:

The Board of the Committee, represented by the Chair, shall fulfil its financial obligations, as described in Article 11, and shall ensure that the financial accountability does not compromise ICOM. The Committee will comply with ICOM Financial Regulations.

Where the Committee's Board, represented by the Chair, needs to engage itself in a contractual agreement, a request for a delegation of authority shall be asked to ICOM. The Committee shall not enter into any contractual agreement or any legally binding agreement involving expenditure by ICOM without having first obtained a delegation of authority from the ICOM President. Delegations of authority can be granted on a case-by-case basis or for a term of office.

10.3. Roles and Responsibilities of the Directory Board:

The Board is also responsible for:

- a. The overall management and functioning of the Committee, according to the aims set out in Article 3;
- b. Developing, implementing, and monitoring the ICOM CONSERVATION Triennial Strategic Plan, which is based on the ICOM Strategic Plan;
- c. The proper preparation of the General Assembly meetings and Triennial Conference, such as but not limited to, securing the venue and logistical arrangements and for the negotiations of the agreement of cooperation with the host entity, as set out in Article 7;
- d. Overseeing the scientific quality of the Triennial Conference, including the peer review process and editorial policy;
- e. Monitoring the activities of Working Groups to ensure they remain active and fulfil their programmes;
- f. The annual reporting to ICOM Secretariat (report of activities and financial report), as set out in Article 11;

g. The conservation of the Committee's archives, as set out in Article 13.

10.4. Roles and Responsibilities of Working Group Coordinators

The Coordinator is the elected scientific leader of a Working Group. Their responsibilities include:

- a. Developing and executing a three-year programme of activities (the "Triennial Programme") submitted to the Board within the first three (3) months of the triennium for Board approval;
- b. Regular written and formal communications with Group members and maintaining the Group's website presence;
- c. Contributing to the peer review process for the Working Group's contributions to the Triennial Conference and the Preprints;
- d. Organising at least one (1) interim meeting or specialist workshop (in-person or online) during the triennium as part of their Triennial Programme;
- e. Producing at least one (1) and no more than three (3) Newsletter(s) per triennium;
- f. Submitting annual reports on the Group's activities to the Board.

10.5. Commitment

In accepting their office, the members of the Board and Working Group Coordinators undertake to devote sufficient time and to find the means necessary to carry out their functions. All officers are expected to actively advocate for the Committee's programmes of activities and participate in the efforts to promote the Committee's work. All officers are expected to attend in person the Triennial Conference at the start and end of their term of office.

Article 11: Financial resources

11.1. Financial Year

The financial year of the Committee shall be the calendar year, from 1 January to 31 December.

11.2. Financial Management and Bank Accounts

- a. Bank Account: All money received by the Committee shall be deposited in a bank account in the name of the Committee, established in accordance with ICOM Financial Regulations.
- b. Signatures: The power of signature shall be held by the Chair and the Treasurer. The Board may designate other Board members to have signature authority for specific operational limits.
- c. Compliance: The Board shall ensure that the Committee's financial management complies with the ICOM Financial Regulations.

11.3. Income

The Committee may accept sponsorships and apply for subventions, grants, or other supports for its activities. The resources of the Committee shall consist of:

- a. The annual subvention from ICOM;
- b. Income from the Committee's activities, specifically conference registration fees, publications, and workshops;
- c. Grants, donations, and sponsorships, accepted in accordance with ICOM's Code of Ethics and Fundraising Policy;
- d. Fees for special activities and services rendered (within the limitations stated in Article 2 and subject to prior agreement by ICOM).

11.4. Expenses

The funds of the Committee shall be used solely to cover the expenses required to carry out its mission and activities. This includes:

- a. Operational costs (e.g., Board meetings, website maintenance, banking fees);
- b. Fees for professional services (e.g., Administrative Secretariat consultant, audit, technical support);
- c. Costs related to the Triennial Conference and publications.

11.5. Reporting and Approval of Accounts

- a. Annual Report: The Treasurer shall prepare the annual budget and financial report, keeping proper accounts of all monies received and expended.
- b. Submission: The Committee shall submit the annual report of activities and financial report to ICOM in a timely fashion. Upon submission, the Committee is eligible for a subsidy from ICOM.
- c. Member Approval: The financial report shall be presented to the Members for approval at the annual General Assembly.
- d. Transmission: The Committee shall transmit a copy of the report to the ICOM Director General for presentation to the ICOM Executive Board.

11.6. Contracts and Authority

- a. Operational Contracts: The Chair is the legal representative of the Committee and is authorised to sign contracts for services and agreements strictly related to the Committee's internal activities (including the Secretariat Service Agreement and Conference Host Agreements) provided they are within the approved budget.
- b. Delegation of Authority: The Committee shall not enter into any contractual agreement or any legally binding agreement involving expenditure by ICOM (Global) without having first obtained a delegation of authority from the ICOM President.

Article 12: Evaluation

International Committees shall be evaluated at least once every six (6) years or at such times as may be deemed necessary, to determine the International Committee's conformity with the ICOM Statutes, Internal Rules, Rules for International Committees and the relevance of the International Committee's activities in relation to the ICOM mission, core values, and programmes.

Article 13: Archives

The Committee shall complete and keep records of financial accounts and expenditures, annual financial reports, annual reports of activities and minutes and proceedings of the Board, General Assembly meetings and, if relevant, meetings of the working groups. Such records shall be maintained by the Secretary in electronic and hard copy form and will be communicated to the ICOM Secretariat for its archives.

Article 14: Approval and subsequent amendments to the By-laws

Each International Committee may establish its By-laws. These must be based on the ICOM Statutes and the ICOM Internal Rules.

The present By-laws of the Committee may be amended at any General Assembly meeting of the Committee.

The suggested amendment to the By-laws must be proposed and seconded by voting members of the Committee. The decisions are taken by a two thirds (2/3) majority of the voting members present and represented.

The text of any proposed amendment, together with any explanatory material, shall be sent to the Members of the Committee at least one (1) month prior to the holding of the meeting of the General Assembly at which they are to be considered.

Article 15: Dissolution

The majority of the members of an International Committee or the ICOM Executive Board may decide that the International Committee may be suspended if the Committee is no longer functioning effectively or has acted in violation of the ICOM Statutes or Internal Rules or the Code of Ethics for Museums and failed to comply with such norms despite formal notice from the ICOM Executive Board.

In the event of dissolution being declared, the ICOM Executive Board shall appoint one (1) or two (2) liquidators. Any remaining assets should be transferred to ICOM.

Adopted by the ICOM CONSERVATION General Assembly on [Date] in [City]. Approved by the ICOM Executive Board on [Date].

Note to members: The proposed amendments are to be approved as a whole (yes / no / blank vote), as this revision must be read in its entirety. Some amendments cannot be approved if others are left out, and vice versa. If the amendments are not approved together, the resulting By-Laws could contain inconsistencies.

This approach is consistent with ICOM practice:

- *The amendments to the Statutes presented in 2016 were adopted as a whole.*
- *The amendments to the Statutes presented in 2017 were adopted as a whole.*
- *The amendments to the Statutes presented in 2023 were also adopted as a whole.*

It should also be noted that the Strategic Plan is adopted in its entirety.

Chronology of recent revisions to the ICOM Statutes:

- **2016:** Revised Statutes adopted as a whole during the EGA
- **2017:** Revised Statutes adopted as a whole during the EGA
- **2021:** Article 25 (use of telecommunications to hold meetings)
- **2022:** Article 3, Section 1 (museum definition)
- **2023:** Revised Statutes adopted as a whole during the EGA