

## Promoting the collections: Professionals at the core of museums

May 19, 2022 - 6-9pm

The place of collections within museums is more topical than ever. Their virtual access during the Covid-19 pandemic, the growing demand for its ethical and sustainable management, the awareness of the risks they run, particularly during an armed conflict, encourage us to renew our questions.

In ICOM's survey on the "definition" of museums, more than 60% of members considered that the word "collection" and the verbs describing the work it requires: conservation, research, exhibition,..., were essential to defining a museum. Nevertheless, the new definition put to the vote at the 2019 ICOM Congress in Kyoto did not underline those aspects of the museum definition. Three years later, the members of ICOM, meeting in an *ad hoc* working group - that was repeatedly questioned - have all reaffirmed the obvious: collections are at the core of museums.

Thus, how do institutions in France and abroad guarantee the access, the study and the transmission of the collections? How do museums respond to their responsibility and mission regarding its collection? How are professionals serving, in a sustainable perspective, the collections and the public?

Situations differ not only from one country to another but also from one type of institution to another: the managing organisation of collections in archives or libraries is not the same as in museums; some museums in the world have on-site teams dedicated to the management of its collections and others do not. In addition, in several countries there are hybrid formulas with functions performed internally and some skills sought externally.

The collections will be the starting point of our discussion. They allow us to remember the initial mission of museums and the responsibility of the professionals who serve the collections. We will ask ourselves what it means to 'serve' the collections. How can we facilitate the mobility of professionals from one institution to another, from one country to another, and what is the role of the various international professional organisations in this respect: ICOM, ECCO, ...?

The discussion will present the place of curator-restorers in the service of museums as a case study in the professional ecosystem. Several cases will illustrate the talk. Lastly, it will mention the work at the European level in this profession. It is a pilot work and allows progress on the designation of skills and interactions between different professions, within the framework of the CHARTER project (European Cultural Heritage Skills Alliance).

The meeting proposed on 19 May by ICOM France and Institut national du Patrimoine (Inp) does not claim to provide answers to all the questions. It should allow for a better understanding of the diversity of approaches in Europe and in the world.

and the sharing of feedback and results obtained in different configurations, from the point of view of the collections themselves, of the professionals and the objectives of sustainability.

### Practical informations

*This session is organised live on a digital platform and will be held simultaneously in French, English and Spanish. This event is registered.*

[To join us](#)

Meeting ID: 835 2247 9399 / Password : 583296