

International Committees Recommendations 2025

Definition

Recommendations are proposed by National and International Committees and voted on by members of the Advisory Council. As per **Article 12, Section 2, of the ICOM Statutes**, recommendations primarily concern the internal functioning of the Organisation.

Nature and scope

Recommendations are non-binding but are submitted to the Executive Board for consideration and serve as voluntary guidance, leaving implementation at the discretion of the Executive Board.

In this regard, Recommendations should be concise, practical, and focused on ICOM's internal functioning or the implementation of its Strategic Plan or Resolutions adopted by the General Assembly.

Please use this template to draft and submit your Recommendation to the Advisory Council.

Recommendation 1

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Recommendation on Work Relations between the Triennial Conference Host and International Committees

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by DEMHIST,

Supported by 23 ICs : ICOM SUSTAIN, CIPEG, ICOMON, ICR, DEMHIST, COMCOL, ICOM-CC, Marie GILBERT, ICOMAM, DRMC, INTERCOM, UMAC, CECA, ICFA, NATHIST, ICTOP, COSTUME, ICETHICS, ICAMT, ICME, ICOM DOCUMENTATION, ICOM DESIGN, ICMEMHORI, CIMUSET

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

A key element of the ICOM Triennial General Conference is the International Committees' (ICs) off-site day and scientific sessions. Effective collaboration between the ICs and the host committee is essential to manage the complexities of these events, given the involvement of 35 ICs, each with distinct fields, needs, and requirements. While each triennial reflects the host country's character, guidelines, and laws, we recommend strengthening coordination through specific clauses in the ICOM–host contract.

Part 1: Local Liaison Support

We recommend requiring the host to provide local liaisons for the ICs from the earliest stages of planning, including the pre-conference symposium. These liaisons should be museum or heritage professionals with strong knowledge of the local field, able to advise on venues and logistics, and to support the organization of the off-site day. While planning the off-site day remains the responsibility of each IC, local contacts are critical—especially in cases where no natural local partnership emerges.

Part 2: Clear Planning Schedule

Given the scale of ICOM conferences, delays are common. To address this, **we recommend** establishing a detailed schedule built into the host contract setting logical deadlines with buffer for organizational delays for IC planning of scientific sessions and off-site activities. This timeline must be shared with ICs well in advance, with sufficient time allocated for each step. The paper selection process, in particular, should conclude at least six months before the conference to ensure high-quality programming and broad member participation.

Recommendation 2

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Updating of the process for the establishment of new International Committees

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICMEMOHRI

Supported by 18 ICs: ICOM SUSTAIN, CIPEG, ICR, ICOM DESIGN, ICOM MUSIC, DEMHIST, COMCOL, ICOM CONSERVATION, CIMUSET, ICOMAM, DRMC, INTERCOM, UMAC, CECA, NATHIST, COSTUME, ICETHICS, ICAMT

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

Background and Rationale

There are currently 35 International Committees which, as stated on the ICOM website, consist of 18 based on collection type and 17 on general topics of research. This represents an increase of three ICs since 2022.

While the current process for forming a new IC is based on the principle of addressing the needs of the members and giving them full voice in the organization and governance of the institution, two important developments have occurred over time that erode this democratic approach and could lead to unintended consequences.

The first is the establishment of the International Committee Working Group (ICWG) which has placed the ICs in direct communication with each other. Though as a Working Group, the ICWG may be disbanded, it remains that ICs possess the knowledge and understanding to evaluate the need for a new IC, assess any redundancies of research and programmatic initiatives, and evaluate the potential impact on fulfilling the ICOM Strategic Plan goals of good governance, financial accountability, and co-ordination and efficiency of effort.

Secondly, ICOM Internal Rules Article 7.3 Establishing an International Committee were adopted in 2017 and does not reflect the growth in membership of the organization in the past eight years.

We recommend a review of the current process and implementing the following changes for establishing a new International Committee:

- Consultation with the ICWG (if the mandate is renewed) or the IC Chairs and other relevant bodies within ICOM
- Ensure there are no redundancies with an overlapping focus or remit that mirrors, in part or in full, the work of an established IC
- Increase the number of signatures needed for the petition to establish a new IC
- Publish clear guidelines and procedures

Recommendation 3

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Strengthening GDPR Compliance and Consent Management Across ICOM and its Committees

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by INTERCOM

Supported by 19 ICs: ICOM SUSTAIN, CIPEG, ICOMON, ICR, ICOM MUSIC, ICLCM, DEMHIST, CIMUSET, ICOMAM, DRMC, INTERCOM, UMAC, CECA, ICFA, NATHIST, ICTOP, COSTUME, ICETHICS, ICAMT

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

ICOM as a legal body implements all lawful activities regarding GDPR including ICs committees and RA as they are not separate legal entities. ICOM is not-for-profit, non-governmental organisation and GDPR consent for members requires clear, affirmative, and informed choices. The organisation must also clearly state the identity and the data's purpose, maintain records of when and how consent was given, and ensure transparency in their data handling practices which is mostly explained in the Privacy Policy but some parts are missing. The members of ICOM are actually members of national committees and their registration starts there. What is missing is the clear link with NCs who actually recruit members and should collect written statements from their members regarding the use of their personal data and how to share it with ICOM (including ICs as they are not a separate legal body).

For a large organisation like ICOM we recommend that the consent is given for all the activities within the organisation. In the Privacy Policy it is said that personal data are shared “when you contribute to the site or to the activity of ICOM (experts, authors, contributors, graphic designers, translators)” and we suggest to include here all aspects of participating at the conferences, meetings, trainings, panels, webinars, ... organised by ICOM (including all its bodies) and processing the data that involve grants. The recommendation is that ICOM creates an agreement with NCs (which are separate legal bodies) to collect consent from the

members for NCs and ICOM including all rights over the regular personal data and their consent that they are contacted through the membership base by all ICOM bodies. In order to avoid random collecting and processing we also recommend that the unique legal form is provided by ICOM as an integral part for registration to conferences and meetings, trainings, etc. which requires consent from a person who wants to register. So, consents are automatically gathered even by non-ICOM members who participate at the particular event.

We recommend that the ICOM appoints the data protection officer (DPO) for ICs (and NCs) who can assist in ensuring GDPR compliance and that we can contact and ask that person in cases we need more information or clarification. This person will also be in charge of processing and large-scale monitoring of data gathered from members by NCs. This recommendation will also help to update the membership database with correct contacts which is important for ICs.

Recommendation 4

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Clarifying the rules for International Committee Board Elections

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICAMT

Supported by 15 ICs: ICR, ICOM DESIGN, ICLCM, DEMHIST, COMCOL, CIMUSET, ICOMAM, DRMC, UMAC, CECA, NATHIST, ICTOP, ICETHICS, ICMEMOHRI, ICAMT

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board :

That ICOM establish a clear rule regarding the rights of candidates when applying for positions on the International Committee Board.

Background

The Board plays a crucial role in the governance of the Committee. The Committee's work entirely depends on the composition of the Board. Therefore, it is important that, during elections, the right candidates are chosen - those whom the members of the Committee will support and elect as Board members. The role of the Chair is particularly significant, as it carries distinct and greater responsibilities. Thus, it is essential that the rules and conditions of the elections are clearly defined.

Following the ICOM Internal Rules, Article 7 - Rules for International Committees, 7.4 – Elections of the board:

“Elections in International Committees shall be held every third year; The Chair shall be elected separately from the other members of the Board. A candidate may apply for a single function only”.

According to these rules, in cases where there are multiple candidates for the position of Chair, the unsuccessful candidate shall not be eligible to remain on the Board as an Ordinary Member, even if she/he wish to.

Such a provision may result in highly qualified and deserving candidates being excluded from the Board.

We recommend that ICOM revise and clarify the election rules for International Committee Boards to ensure fair treatment of candidates and to safeguard the inclusion of qualified individuals. Specifically, we recommend:
Candidates for the position of Chair who are not elected should, if they so wish, be allowed to stand for election as Ordinary Board Members.
To ensure transparency and fairness, this principle should be explicitly stated in each Committee's bylaws and election rules, and also clearly upheld within the ICOM Internal Rules.
This will prevent the unintended exclusion of experienced and capable candidates from Boards solely due to their candidacy for Chair, and will guarantee consistent application across all International Committees.

Recommendation 5

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Update IRIS database with information about members and engagement

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICOM DOCUMENTATION and ICOM SUSTAIN

Supported by 16 ICs: ICOM SUSTAIN, CIPEG, ICOM MUSIC, ICLCM, DEMHIST, COMCOL, CAMOC, DRMC, INTERCOM, UMAC, CECA, ICFA, COSTUME, ICOM COMMS, ICMEMOHRI, ICAMT

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

Background

This proposal responds directly to Focus Area 2 of ICOM's Strategic Plan on communication and builds on Recommendation 2 from 2024. The purpose is multifold: to identify, over time, engaged members for scholarships or potential board positions; to monitor the impact of scholarships; and to strengthen our understanding of members' global engagement. Information on membership behavior can also inform stronger leadership at all levels. Furthermore, collecting additional information on members (such as position, place of employment, or field of interest) will help ICs craft and direct their communication strategies more effectively. Overall, this effort aligns with ICOM's strategic plan regarding its global position, particularly in monitoring membership and supporting leadership development.

We recommend automated information gathering on the IRIS system, generated from the proposed new Customer Relationship Management Database, regarding registration for annual meetings of ICs, NCs, and RAs, as well as for the reception of scholarships.

And

We recommend that ICOM ask all NCs to update their list of ICs and to monitor compliances so all ICOM members have accurate lists from which to select an IC to join or to note as an IC of interest when renewing or joining ICOM.

Recommendation 6

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Establish a Global ICOM Fund and Establish Grant Disbursement Policies to Ensure Equitable Access

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICOM DOCUMENTATION and ICOM SUSTAIN

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

Background

Many ICOM members, especially from Category 4 & 5 countries and the Global South, face serious barriers to participating in conferences and projects due to reimbursement-based funding models. Currently, members must advance their own money to attend events or carry out projects before receiving funds. This process is particularly restrictive where project grants (such as the Young Member Grant) require completion and proof of expenses before reimbursement. For members from the poorest countries, advancing these sums—sometimes exceeding the annual gross national income per capita—is unrealistic and effectively prevents participation.

Recommendation

We recommend that ICOM:

1. Create a global fund to provide scholarships and conference support without relying on reimbursement processes, including options such as purchasing refundable tickets in advance.
2. Adopt a more flexible grant policy that allows upfront or partial funding, particularly for Young Member Grant for projects and members from Category 4 & 5 countries.

These measures would reduce financial barriers, enhance equity, and significantly strengthen diversity and representation within ICOM programs and activities worldwide.

Recommendation 7

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

ICOM Online Glossary

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICOM DOCUMENTATION,

Supported by 15 ICs: ICOM SUSTAIN, CIPEG, ICOM MUSIC, ICLCM, DEMHIST, CIMUSET, CAMOC, UMAC, ICFA, NATHIST, COSTUME, ICOM COMMS, ICETHICS, ICOMON, ICMEMOHRI

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

Background:

We need to facilitate and clarify communication across ICs and with other partners beyond ICOM; to ensure harmonization in the understanding of key concepts across the various ICs and RAs of ICOM; to influence its adoption by the museum and heritage sector, following the expertise of ICOM.

We recommend creating and maintaining a glossary on the ICOM website containing key terms and their definitions, relevant to the focus of the work of each International Committee, in at least the three official languages. This glossary must be a living document, updated as changes in the field take place. It is meant to be accessible to all, at any time. Each Committee will have the space to showcase and clarify their expertise.

The glossary project is in line with ICOM's mission to establish standards of excellence, as well as with the strategic focus areas of Global Positioning and Digital Futures

Example proposed by ICOM COMMS: <https://glossary.tronviggroup.com/>

Recommendation 8

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Annual In-Person Meeting of International Committee Chairs

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICLCM

Supported by 11 ICs: ICLCM, ICOM-CC, CIMUSET, ICOMAM, DRMC, UMAC, CECA, ICFA, COSTUME, ICETHICS, ICAMT

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

While digital tools are valuable, direct human contact remains essential to create collaboration and cooperation.

We recommend the establishment of an annual face-to-face meeting bringing together the Chairs of International Committees.

Recommendation 9

Title of the Recommendation: *(Clear and concise – maximum 20 words)*

Improving Transparency in the ICOM Resolution Process

Proposing Committee(s): *(Specify the National Committee(s), International Committee(s))*

Proposed by ICOM SUSTAIN

Supported by 15 ICs: ICOM SUSTAIN, ICOMON, ICOM DESIGN, ICOM MUSIC, ICLCM, DEMHIST, CIMUSET, CAMOC, ICOMAM, DRMC, ICFA, ICTOP, COSTUME, ICOM COMMS, ICAMT

Recommendation:

The Advisory Council recommend the ICOM Executive Board to:

We recommend that ICOM appoint an ad hoc committee to review the procedure for writing, submitting, reviewing and finalizing Resolutions. The process during 2025 lacked transparency, especially as ICs that submitted resolutions did not know of mergers until the first part of the review process began. Communicating with ICs about plans to merge resolutions, perhaps even having an opportunity for submitters of proposed merged resolutions to meet with the Resolution committee, could increase engagement in the process.