

CIDOC 2012 Chair's Report

2012 is proving to be as busy as the previous year for CIDOC. Our lively and international membership remains enthusiastic and committed, and we are investing in new ventures, to continue to fulfill our mission as the professional forum for the field of museum documentation. ICOM's strategic plan for the 2011-2013 contains four points:

- Increase Membership value and transparency
- Develop museum and heritage expertise
- Strengthen ICOM's global leadership in the heritage sector
- Develop and manage resources to implement to Strategic Plan effectively

Our efforts in 2012 have been directed to realizing these objectives.

CIDOC 2012 Helsinki

This year's annual CIDOC conference took place in Helsinki, Finland, June 10-14. The conference was attended by 200 delegates from around the world. The conference theme, "*Enriching Cultural Heritage*" encompassed recent developments, achievements, visions and new possibilities created by the evolving information society.

Keynote speeches were delivered by three speakers: Nick Poole spoke about Powering the Museum of tomorrow, Ora Lassila enjoined us to Love our Data and Patrick Le Boeuf presented the FRBR₀₀ conceptual model as an example of library and museum cooperation. Abstracts and many full papers can be found on the conference website.

The main venue was the National Museum of Finland, but events also took place at the Design Museum, the Sports museum, Kiasma and the Helsinki City Museum. The conference programme included tutorials, presentations, study visits and a lively social programme, as well as post conference tours to Tampere and Espoo.

As an economical alternative to simultaneous translation, we provided simultaneous captions in English during the plenary sessions. Nick Poole quipped that it was the first time he had been translated from English into English. The captioning was entered live by a team of specialists who normally provide the service at conferences for the deaf and hard of hearing. The service was appreciated by many of the delegates, including English speakers, as an aid to comprehension. The system is easier to put in place than a full translation service since it does not require the use of headphones. We intend to use a similar system at future conferences whenever the cost of simultaneous translation is prohibitive.

Impressions and images contributed by many participants can be found on the conference website and Facebook pages.

CIDOC Summer School 2012

Building on the success of the 2011 session, CIDOC organized a second Summer School in 2012, focusing on the principles and practice of museum documentation. The programme is organised in collaboration with the Museum of Texas Tech University (MoTTU). Two students who attended in 2011, Tariana Stradiotto (Brazil) and Julia Rosenow (Germany) returned to complete the course and receive their certificate of competence in museum documentation. Congratulations to both of them! In all, twelve participants attended the 2012 CIDOC Summer School that took place from May 20 –25 on the MoTTU campus. For

this second edition, the schedule was tightly packed. Eight instructors, three from CIDOC and five from MoTTU, delivered a total of thirteen training modules: eight introductory and five advanced. In addition, Stephen Stead, our treasurer and an experienced trainer, ran a special “Train the Trainers” workshop in preparation for the pre-conference Summer School session that will take place next year in São Paulo, Brazil, August 5-9. Our thanks again go to the executive director of MoTTU, Dr Eileen Johnson, for welcoming the Summer School to Lubbock and for generously providing staff, facilities and other services, without which the event would not be possible. MoTTU has agreed to host another session in 2013. ICOM also provided support for the Summer School, with the intention of using the experience as a model for similar training workshops organized by other International Committees.

Plans for 2013

As I write, preparations are well under way for the 2013 CIDOC conference, which will take place in conjunction with the ICOM triennial conference in Rio de Janeiro. The theme of the general conference takes the form of a curious equation *Museums (memory + creativity = social change)* and is one that some may find contentious, since it can be seen as suggesting that museums are instruments of social engineering. It is up to us to evaluate the impact on information management.

At last year’s AGM in Sibiu, it became clear that a new approach to the ICOM triennial conference was needed as time constraints and logistical considerations usually make it difficult to offer a satisfactory conference programme. Consequently, the CIDOC board has decided to concentrate on networking and cooperation with other International Committees during the Rio conference. This will enable us to build on the good relations we have with our colleagues in related fields, and establish new alliances. To this end we would like members of CIDOC to act as “ambassadors” to other ICs, presenting CIDOC and reporting back on documentation-related issues. In addition, we hope to maintain an information desk during the Rio conference so that potential members can find out more about what we do. During the run up to the conference we will be offering a full week of training workshops in São Paulo, in Portuguese and English, aimed both at newcomers and experienced documentation professionals. The state of São Paulo and the Pinacoteca have offered their generous support. São Paulo is less than one hour’s flight from Rio de Janeiro.

Inclusiveness

The Getty Foundation provided CIDOC with a substantial grant of 73,000 USD in 2012, which allowed us to offer financial support to participants from developing countries to attend the annual conference in Helsinki. These bursaries are calculated to cover reasonable travel and accommodation costs as well as the conference registration fee. Twenty-one people from ten different countries took advantage of this possibility. All the beneficiaries were satisfied with the event and we hope to see many of them return to future conferences. We are immensely grateful to the Getty Foundation for their generosity, without which these documentation professionals would not have been able to attend. For the 2013 conference, a limited number of bursaries and internships are available from ICOM. Application forms can be found on the ICOMMUNITY website.¹ To log in you will need your ICOM membership number and a password. The deadline for applications is February 4th 2013. Please note that

¹ <http://icomcommunity.icom.museum/en/user?destination=home>

the conditions of eligibility fixed by ICOM are more restrictive than those normally applied by CIDOC. For our 2014 conference, we hope to be able to offer bursary support directly.

CIDOC's own bursary fund contributed 12,000 USD to help students attend the 2012 CIDOC Summer School. This fund is built up from contributions included in conference registration fees. We are actively looking for additional sources of funding so that we can extend this type of support.

Grants such as these help us to reach out to new members in many countries where CIDOC is underrepresented. We are also looking at ways to attract existing ICOM members who are not currently registered with an International Committee. In this respect, the 2013 conference in Rio provides an ideal opportunity to extend our outreach.

Overall, CIDOC's membership remains relatively stable at close to 500 members. Unfortunately, the membership lists maintained by ICOM still contain many errors. If you suspect that your contact details are not be up to date, do please contact either myself or Regine Stein, the CIDOC secretary, so that we can keep in touch.

Standards and principles

CIDOC has two important documents in the pipeline that will be presented for formal acceptance at the 2013 ICOM General Assembly in Rio. Both were accepted during the CIDOC AGM in Helsinki. Details can be found on the CIDOC website.

The *Statement of Principles of museum Documentation*, produced by the Documentation Standards Working Group, is the result of a collaborative effort and wide consultation, and can be seen as a detailed development of section 2.20 of the ICOM code of Ethics for Museums. It provides a clear and explicit statement of a museum's legal, ethical and practical obligation to maintain adequate documentation of its collections. The goal is to ensure that museum documentation is clearly recognized as a fundamental requirement for any professional institution.

The *Statement on Linked Data identifiers for museum objects* is the result of collaboration between the co-reference working group and the CRM Special Interest Group. It emphasizes the importance of ensuring that museums provide the published identifiers that are needed for linked data applications.

CIDOC Newsletter/Bulletin

A special conference edition of the CIDOC newsletter, containing selected papers from last year's conference in Sibiu, was distributed in Helsinki. A full version, complete with French translation, is in preparation and will be published later in the year. Thanks go to our editor, Frances Lloyd-Baynes.

Looking forward to seeing you in Brazil!

Nicholas Crofts
CIDOC Chair
Helsinki, June 2012