

2022 Annual Report of the ICOM Australia Committee

1. Introduction

ICOM Australia entered the post COVID-19 pandemic world in 2022 with a new board and enthusiasm to reengage with the Museum world in person at meetings and conference in Australia and international, especially at ICOM General Assembly 2022 in Prague

The ICOM Australia Annual General Meeting was held in June 2022 with the confirmation of Dr Mathew Trinca AM to continue for one final year and the appointment of new members to the committee.

2. Executive Board

The ICOM Australia Board, 2022-23, comprised:

Chair	Dr Mathew Trinca AM	National Museum of Australia
Vice-Chair	Alex Marsden	Alex Marsden Cultural Services
National Secretary	Vicki Northey PSM	National Museum of Australia
Treasurer	Lisa Walters	SLM/Unaffiliated
Membership Secretary	Dr Toner Stevenson	University of Sydney (SOFI)
Public Officer	Alex Marsden	Alex Marsden Cultural Services
Ordinary Members	Robyn van Dyk	Australian War Memorial
	Rebecca Georgiades	Powerhouse Museum
	Elizabeth Gehde	Queensland Museum Network
	Lynda Bryne	National Museum of Australia, Blue Shield representative
Co-opted Member	Eric Archer	Research Fellow, National Museum of Australia
	Jessica Bridgfoot	Bendigo Art Gallery
Ex-Officio	Seb Chan	Australian Museums and Galleries Association
Ex-Officio	Tarisi Vunidilo	Port Moresby, Pacific Islands Museums Association representative
Ex-Officio	Sana Balai	Logan QLD/Buka, Pacific Islands Museums Association representative

3. Year in Summary

The Australian museum sector was still affected in limited ways by the Pandemic but many museums in our regional centres and communities faced devastating floods and fires. However, visitors continued to return to museums with many reaching their pre-Pandemic levels especially in the last half of 2022.

ICOM Australia continues to advocate for our members and to be an active participant in making submissions and providing feedback on the new Commonwealth Government Cultural Policy, *Revive*, which was launched in early 2023.

With the improvements to the website and proactive work of the Membership Secretary in particular, membership figures for 2022 were 545 individual and 37 institutional members, representing another modest increase over the previous year. Membership in 2023 is also expected to increase on the previous year.

ICOM Australia continued to support its involvement in Blue Shield Australia, GLAMPeak (which brings together leaders across the galleries, libraries, archives and museum industries), and ongoing issues related to climate change and sustainability. In addition, members of ICOM Australia served on a series of working groups and standing committees for ICOM, namely the Strategic Planning etc., the SAREC group, ETHCOM, ICOM Define and ICOM standing Committee on Ethics.

ICOM Australia also supported the work of the Australian Museums and Galleries Association and contributed strongly to the national conference, *Hear Us Now* 14-17 June, held in Perth. ICOM Australia supported the attendance of the conference keynote speaker Sabah Abdel Razik Saddik, General Director Egyptian Museum, Cairo.

ICOM General Assembly 2022

A strong contingent of ICOM Australia Committee Members and members from Oceania attended and participated in the ICOM General Assembly 2022 in Prague. Seb Chan was a keynote speaker, *The Future of Digital* and Craig Middleton was one of the speakers for Stephen E. Weil Memorial Lecture on *Queering the Museum* are only two of the major contributors to the program. ICOM Australia initiated and co-convened with PIMA a very successful session, *Decolonisation in Museums: New perspectives on ownership, custodianship and restitution*. ICOM Australia also strongly supported the successful election of Deborah Tout-Smith to the Executive Board.

The national committee continues to work with ICOM New Zealand and Pacific Island Museum representatives to develop a training program that will be rolled out in 2023/24.

The working group formed by ICOM Australia and ICOM Singapore finalised the development of the wet and dry tropics heritage conservation workshop. The workshop will address the needs raised in the survey from the working group and possible participants. The first workshop is scheduled to run from 8-12 May 2023.

4. Working/Standing Committee representation

International Engagement

The ICOM Australia Executive Board served on the following ICOM Committees:

ICOM Define
ICOM Ethics Committee

Dr Mathew Trinca
Dr Mathew Trinca

This year saw the final consultations and advocacy with members regarding the proposed new definition of museums, the review of the ICOM Code of Ethics and the Strategic Planning Process. This culminated with the successful voting at the General Assembly in Prague for the new definition

and the announcement of the Strategic Plan. The Chair, Dr Mathew Trinca, continued to play a significant role in these final consultations with Paris and in the ICOM External Governance Review.

International Museum Day 2022

ICOM Australia was pleased to join with others around the world to celebrate International Museum Day, and to focus on the theme *The Power of Museums*.

2022 Fellowships

ICOM Australia established a Fellowship for early career professionals and students which offers a travel grant to visit overseas institutions to research key questions in museum theory and practice. Submissions that propose research in museums in the Asia Pacific are especially encouraged. The first Fellowship will be awarded by mid-2023.

Australian Museums and Galleries Association Relationship

During 2022 ICOM Australia continued its long-term relationship and resourcing of administrative support with the Australian Museums and Galleries Association (AMaGA).

The heads of both organisations sit ex officio on the Council/Committees of the respective body and confer throughout the year on matters of common interest. In general terms, ICOM Australia continues to focus upon the international dimension of the work of museums and galleries in Australia and supports members engagement with the corresponding institutions and individuals overseas.

ICOM Australia Awards

ICOM Australia is delighted to reestablish the ICOM Awards in 2022. The winners were announced at the AMaGA Conference in Perth and were: -

- Individual Award – Gaye Sculthorpe
- Institutional Award – Bendigo Art Gallery