

Report of the Treasurer General ICOMOS 2018 Annual General Assembly, Buenos Aires, Argentina

As is my standard practice when reporting on the financial business of ICOMOS, the report is intended to provide a high-level overview of the state of our finances and to highlight any concerns and issues that have arisen during the course of the past year, as well as to identify any future challenges for the year ahead.

Closing off of the financial year ending December 2017

At the General Assembly in Delhi it was agreed that the auditors be changed as this had not occurred for a number of years. The new firm of Cabinet CommissaireAuxComptes.fr was duly appointed and completed the audit for the year ending December 2017. The financial statements and audit report have been circulated in accordance with the statutes and will be dealt with in due course. There were no issues of concern identified by the auditors and the audit is unqualified. Every effort is made to ensure a balanced budget at the end of the year, and, given the challenging and very fluid financial situation globally the small deficit of 2,390 Euros for the past year is noted and is covered comfortably by our reserves.

It is pleasing to note that the membership contributions have once again increased with an amount of 426,000 Euros being received in comparison to the income of the previous year (2016) of an amount of 418,000 Euros. Sincere thanks must be extended to all the National Committee and individual members who have paid their subscriptions for the past year.

Remarks on the current financial year – 2018

Subsequent to the highly successful crowd funding that took place last year the Bureau has been exploring opportunities for further fund-raising with a view to ensuring that ICOMOS is sustainable financially going into the future. Members of the Bureau engaged in recent discussions with this in mind and we are all very cognisant of the risks that the organisation faces in terms of adequate funding going forward. We have also noted with sympathy the difficulties that a number of National Committees are facing and every effort is made to reach a compromise that will assist committees in extreme financial difficulty in a manner that is not detrimental to ICOMOS as an institution.

A number of opportunities to secure additional income have been explored by members of the Bureau, one of which is the development of International Institutional membership (for institutions with international outreach); there are a number of considerations relating to this including ways to avoid any risk of conflict in terms of the income that may be derived from national committees in which countries the Institutions are housed, as well as what benefits ICOMOS can offer to such members. These discussions are ongoing and, as always, colleagues are invited to discuss any suggestions in this regard with either myself, the President or the Secretary General.

Some good news too!

There have been at least two major items of good news for ICOMOS in financial terms. Firstly, an international organisation, the Christensen Fund, with whom ICOMOS engages on the Connecting Practice program, approached our Director-General and expressed an interest in supporting ICOMOS. Hence our first international Institutional member was signed up! This will establish a model as to how such a membership can be rolled out in the future.

Secondly, we have finally been informed by the French Ministry of Culture that we will not be liable for rental payments for our office premises in Paris, we shall of course be responsible for service fees such as water and electricity as we move forward, but this generous gesture by the Ministry makes a huge contribution to the financial situation of ICOMOS as the question as to the amount of rental possibly payable was always at the back of our minds. There will also be no backdated charges levied to us. Members will recall that allowances had been made in anticipation of receiving an account for rental; this saving (estimated at around 60,000 Euros) can be utilised for expenses and hopefully projects in the forthcoming year.

The increase in World Heritage Consulting activities also provided a modest increase to the budget. This is always encouraging but it should be borne in mind that this income is intended solely for work on the various World Heritage Activities and this situation may change in the future.

Funds management

In addition to our core finances, ICOMOS also manages the finances of a number of special accounts including those of most of the International Scientific Committees as well as the Victoria Falls Fund that was established at the General Assembly held in Zimbabwe in 2003. (This fund is intended to support the attendance of persons to General Assemblies from countries whose members would otherwise be unable to afford the costs associated with such attendance. These members are drawn from developing countries across the world). Donations to the VFF were received in the past from ICOMOS Walloon, ICOMOS Finland and various experts who undertook reviews for the World Monuments Fund and who kindly made the stipend that they received available to this Fund. National Committees and members are really encouraged to continue their support for this most important Fund. At the end of 2017 an amount of Euro 34,827 remained in the account, significantly higher than at the end of 2016 – Euro 13 665- as funds raised beyond our initial target during our crowdfunding campaign have been included in this Fund.

Similarly, another of the funds held by ICOMOS, the Raymond Lemaire Fund, is intended to support young/emerging professionals; no funds were dispersed from this fund during the course of 2018 and there is a balance of Euro 13,843 in this fund.

[A detailed breakdown of the accounts held in terms of the abovementioned funds may be found on page 14 of the audited financial statements].

Budget

The triennial budget has been made available on the website and is an informed estimate of both income and expenditure that will be further refined by the incoming Board in March. The budget has been based on a number of informed assumptions guided by historic information; figures have been escalated where deemed necessary:

A zero increase in costs is planned except for:

1.5% per annum increase for staff;

2% (average) for computer and IT costs per annum; and

2% for service charges for the premises at Charenton.

New activities

ICOMOS has engaged in a number of new projects and these are reflected in our budget stream. The projects are, 'Cherishing Heritage', supported by the European Commission, 'Connecting Practice', supported by the Christensen Fund, the Department of Culture and Tourism of Abu Dhabi (in partnership with IUCN), and the third with the Regional Centre for the Arab World for building capacity for World Heritage expertise within the region.

Our challenges remain

As I mentioned above more and more National Committees are facing financial constraints, making it increasingly difficult for members to attend meetings, conferences and workshops. It is commendable that the income from membership has remained so stable.

Staffing resources are still strained, although we have gained an additional staff member, in the form of Laura Maxwell, whom many of you will have 'met' electronically! Laura is proving to be remarkably efficient in dealing with many matters electronically for the membership. It is good to have her on board.

We also wish to acknowledge our generous donors who continue to provide financial support, we would like to thank Austria, Belgium, China and France for their ongoing assistance in this regard.

To conclude:

As always thanks must be extended to the staff at the Secretariat offices, especially the Director-General, Marie-Laure Lavenir, and our accountant, Henri Verrier for all the work that goes into the financial management of the ICOMOS activities and the support that they provide so willingly.

Thanks also to the Board members for their support, input and continuing oversight of the ICOMOS fiscus.

Laura Robinson: ICOMOS Treasurer-General: October 2018