

## THE GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE PROPOSED PARTNERSHIP WITH ICOMOS-CIPA FOR RECORDING, DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

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### ABSTRACT

The Getty Conservation Institute is a program of The Getty Trust, a private foundation based in Los Angeles, California, USA. As part of its mission, the GCI undertakes conservation projects in partnership in various parts of the world.

The GCI recognizes and supports the long-term work undertaken by CIPA, the ICOMOS scientific committee for architectural photogrammetry, to bring together the information users and providers in the field of heritage conservation.

The GCI is interested in working in partnership with ICOMOS and CIPA on a five-year initiative to identify and define the gaps between the information users and providers and to support the International Committee in its efforts to find partners that will take on the task of bridging these gaps. The goal of this initiative entitled *Recording, Documentation and Information Management* (RecorDIM) is to raise the level of heritage conservation practice worldwide through the provision of supplementary guidance, training and information dissemination.

To reach this goal, the GCI, ICOMOS and CIPA would join their efforts and resources to:

- organize round-table discussions to define the gaps between information users and providers
- publish guidelines for heritage recording, documentation and information management
- develop “how-to” handbooks for recording
- create a web presence on this subject
- develop training opportunities and material

During the Potsdam Symposium, The GCI will be seeking formal support from ICOMOS and CIPA for this partnership.

This paper introduces the participants to the *Getty Conservation Institute*, the conservation project documentation and information requirements as per the *Project Management System* and the proposed *Recording, Documentation and Information Management Initiative*.

## 1 THE GETTY CONSERVATION INSTITUTE

### Background

J. Paul Getty, an American businessman who made his fortune in the oil industry, viewed art as a civilizing influence in society, and strongly believed in making art available to the public for its education and enjoyment. He founded the J. Paul Getty Museum in 1953. This small museum, established in his ranch house in Malibu, housed collections of Greek and Roman antiquities, 18th - century French furniture, and European paintings. Fascinated with the ancient world of the Mediterranean, he later built a Roman-style villa, modeled after the 1st-century AD Villa dei Papiri.

When most of Mr. Getty's personal estate passed to the Trust in 1982, the Trustees sought to make a greater contribution to the visual arts through an expanded museum as well as a range of new programs. Planning for the Getty Center began in the mid 1980s, when property in the Brentwood area of Los Angeles was acquired by the J. Paul Getty Trust and the American architectural firm of Richard Meier & Partners was awarded the design commission.

The Getty Center, a dramatic hilltop campus in Los Angeles, opened in 1997. The Villa closed for renovation that same year and will reopen in the future as a center for comparative archaeology and cultures.

### The Getty Conservation Institute

The Getty Conservation Institute works internationally to further appreciation and preservation of the world's cultural heritage for the enrichment and use of present and future generations. The Institute is an operating program of the J. Paul Getty Trust. Other programs of the Trust are:

- The J. Paul Getty Museum
- The Getty Research Institute for the History of Art and the Humanities
- The Getty Education Institute for the Arts
- The Getty Leadership Institute for Museum Management
- and The Getty Grant Program.

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) engages in activities dedicated to furthering conservation practice and education in order to enhance and encourage the preservation, understanding, and interpretation of the visual arts- broadly interpreted to include objects, collections, architecture, and sites.

The Institute serves the international conservation community through scientific research in the lab into the nature, decay, and treatment of materials; in education and training; model projects in the field; and the dissemination of information through both traditional publications and electronic means.

In all its endeavors, the Institute is driven by a commitment to address unanswered questions and to promote the highest possible standards of conservation.

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**A Brief History**

The Getty Conservation Institute (GCI) had its beginnings in 1982 when the Trust committed itself to the establishment of an institute dedicated to the advancement of conservation.

After consulting with professionals in the field -- and with the guidance of an international conservation advisory committee -- the Trust selected the following areas of emphasis for the Conservation Institute: scientific research, the collection and dissemination of information, and training in conservation theory and practice. Consistent with the Trust's underlying philosophy, the Institute adopted an interdisciplinary approach to conservation. Early on, the Institute decided to devote its resources not only to objects and collections but also to immovable cultural property, such as archaeological sites, monuments, and structures.

In 1985 the GCI began full-fledged operation in an industrial building in Marina del Rey, a suburb of Los Angeles. Since its inception, the Institute engaged in a program of analytical and applied scientific research, training activities, international field projects, documentation work, and the dissemination of information through publications, conferences, and workshops.

Over time, the GCI staff -- which has grown in size from about a dozen people in 1985 to around one hundred today -- has developed expertise in a number of areas. Among these areas of focus are preventive conservation (including emergency preparedness), site management, archaeological conservation, earthen architecture and stone conservation, threats to collections from gaseous pollutants, conservation of mosaics in situ, and the adaptation of technology for conservation purposes. Since its founding, the GCI has conducted a number of field projects in Asia, Africa, North and South America, and Europe.

In 1996 the Institute moved to its permanent home at the Getty Center in Los Angeles where the other programs of Getty Trust are now located. Its facility at the Center includes an integrated system of scientific laboratories dedicated to the analytical characterization of objects and materials, studies of conservation deterioration mechanisms, and the development of conservation technologies.

Today, the GCI continues to build on the experience it has developed over the years, with continued emphasis on scientific research into the nature, decay, and treatment of materials; education and training; model field projects; and the dissemination of information through both traditional publications and electronic means.

**Purpose and Principles**

The Getty Conservation Institute aims to advance conservation practice worldwide through the development and implementation of model field projects which incorporate strong research, planning and educational objectives. In all projects, the GCI usually works closely in partnership with national cultural agencies to build local expertise and ensure sustainability. The Institute broadly disseminates information resulting from its project work through training and publications.

All projects follow recognized international principles of conservation and adhere to the highest standards of practice. These include an understanding of the cultural significance of the object or site, respect for the multiplicity of values associated with it, thorough documentation and diagnostic research, and intervention which is minimal, compatible, and appropriate to local circumstances.

### **Project Design**

Projects are chosen based on a consideration of both the needs of the conservation field and the GCI's own experience and expertise. The Institute may be approached by a potential partner or may sometimes identify possible partners in area of work in which it has an interest. Field projects are considered on the basis of the significance of the conservation problem to be addressed, the potential research or training opportunities, and the demonstrated willingness of local and national authorities to collaborate on the project. Initial contact is followed by a feasibility study during which all the conceptual and practical parameters of the project are evaluated. Chosen projects are then designed in cooperation with project partners and implemented according to a phased work plan.

All projects are unique in some respect and vary in emphasis, complexity, and scope. However, all adhere to a consistent methodology which includes documentation and recording, diagnostic research and assessment, the development and testing of conservation treatments and strategies, implementation, and, finally, dissemination and training.

By their nature, field projects are multidisciplinary, bringing together specialists from the arts and the sciences to exchange ideas and develop creative and sustainable solutions for preserving our cultural heritage. Current project teams consist of GCI (and sometimes other Getty) staff, representatives of partner organizations, and external consultants. They include archaeologists, conservators, curators, engineers, architects, art historians, biologists, geologists, chemists, city planners, surveyors, museum administrators, and site managers.

### **Field Projects**

The scope of the Institute's field projects is broad in terms of both subject area and geography. Current projects include the conservation of Mediterranean mosaics in situ, Buddhist wall paintings in China, and a Mayan hieroglyphic stairway in Honduras.

#### Current Field Projects

##### *China Principles*

The objective of the project is to develop and promote national guidelines for conservation and management of cultural heritage sites in China.

##### *Conservation of the St. Vitus Mosaic in Prague*

The project developed an appropriate system of protection for medieval glass and applied it to the conservation of the 14th-century mosaic on St. Vitus Cathedral in Prague.

##### *Gels Cleaning Research*

The objective of this research is to answer important questions regarding the use of solvent-based gels as cleaning systems for surfaces.

##### *Latin American Consortium*

The primary goal of the Latin American Consortium is to enhance preventive conservation in the region by strengthening training.

##### *Maya Initiative*

The initiative aims to reinforce and develop conservation practices through collaborative efforts in order to resolve common problems in the region.

##### *Mosaics in Situ*

The project addresses a number of important issues related to the conservation and management of ancient mosaic pavements in situ.

##### *Terra*

The project seeks to further earthen architectural heritage conservation through international institutional cooperation.

##### *Wall Paintings at Mogao Grottoes*

This project is researching wall paintings deterioration at the Mogao grottoes and developing conservation methods that can be applied to similar Silk Road sites.

## **2 THE PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM**

Recording, documentation and information management are essential to every conservation project. Whether considering a long-term and complex conservation project or a short-term and simple one, the way in which it will be managed is very similar. The type, and the level of quality or precision of the documents needed at various stages will vary.

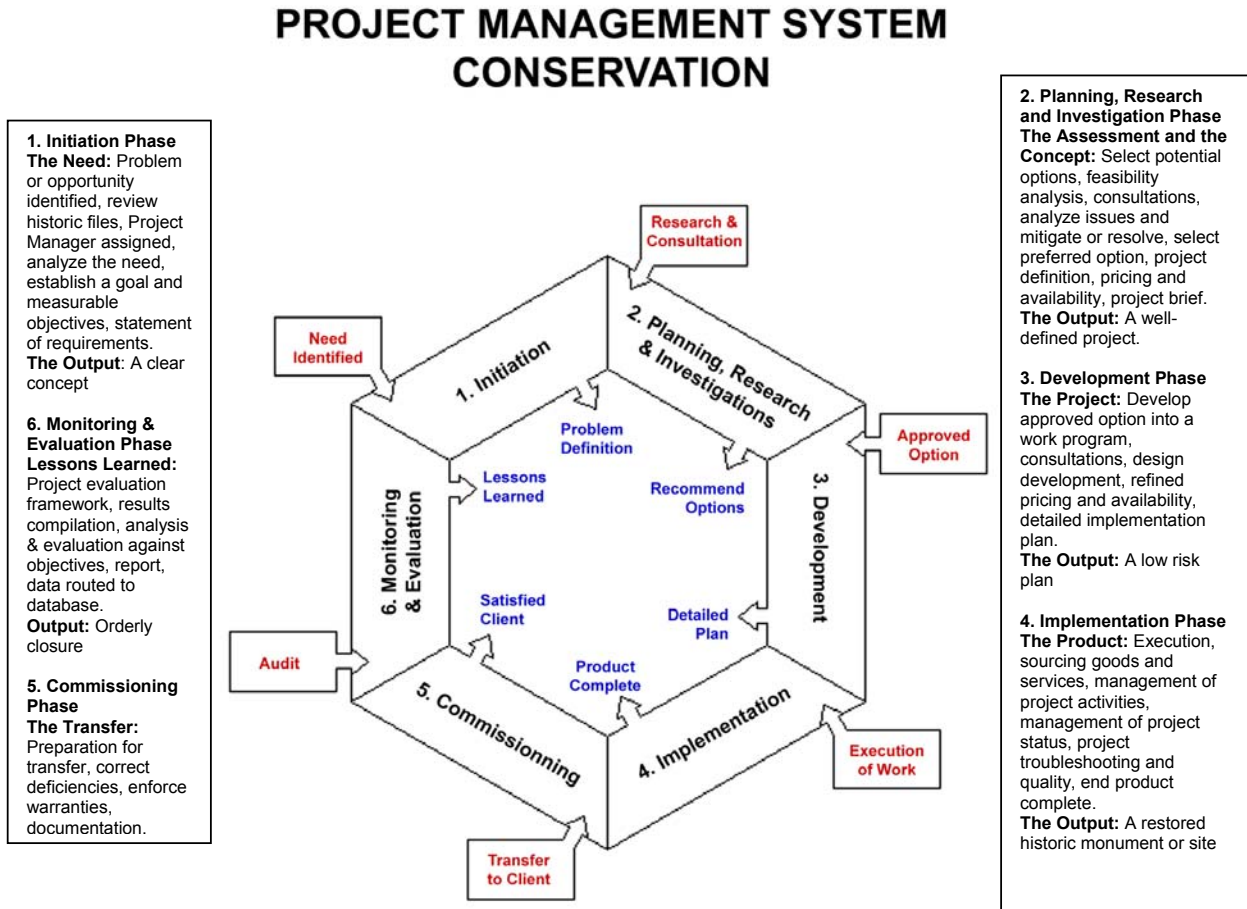
The Project Management System is a logical process that helps people define, plan and implement projects; it meets their needs to better manage time and resources. This "system" was developed quite some time ago and is commonly used in the construction and restoration industry by the professionals who manage projects.

For any given Project, the Project Manager manages three key components: **people, time and money**.

The framework of the Project Management System includes 6 phases. These phases are:

1. Initiation (the need)
2. Planning, Research & Investigations (the concept)
3. Development (the project)
4. Implementation (the product)
5. Commissioning (the transfer)
6. Monitoring & Evaluation (lessons learned)

The following diagram shows the inter-relationship between each Phase and outlines the tasks within each one.



Of particular interest to the ICOMOS and CIPA specialists are the types of recording, documentation and information needs that occur during each phase. Following are a few examples of the documents or types of information needed during a conservation project.

### 1. Initiation Phase

**The Need:** Problem or opportunity identified, review historic files, Project Manager assigned, analyze the need, establish a goal and measurable objectives, statement of requirements.

**The Output:** A clear concept

Examples of documentation needs during this Phase:

- Past project files
- Historical plans & photos
- Existing Archaeological & Historical documents

- Legal description and survey of property
- Current listing or heritage designation documents
- Real Estate & zoning information (leases, appraisal, floor areas, special conditions, restrictions etc.)
- Lists & profiles of Professionals & Specialists who may be called upon to work on the project
- Reconnaissance recording

## **2. Planning, Research and Investigation Phase**

**The Assessment and the Concept:** Define potential options, feasibility analysis, consultations, analyze issues and mitigate or resolve, select preferred option, project definition, pricing and availability, project brief.

**The Output:** A well-defined project.

Examples of documentation needs during this Phase:

- Significance Assessment (Why and to whom is this site important?)
- Site Condition (What is the condition of the site, bldg. Etc.)
- Preliminary Recording
- Management Context (Constraints & Opportunities)
- GIS information on property limits, easements, public services
- Zoning restrictions
- Topographical maps
- Aerial and context photography
- Environmental Condition Assessment

## **3. Development Phase**

**The Project:** Develop approved option into a work program, consultations, design development, refined pricing and availability, detailed implementation plan.

**The Output:** A low risk plan

Examples of documentation needs during this Phase:

- Detailed Recording
- Records of maintenance and operation of existing systems
- Records of recent interventions
- Permits
- Insurance (liability) requirements
- Plans & Specifications
- Contract documents
- Research of materials, techniques

## **4. Implementation Phase**

**The Product:** Execution, sourcing goods and services, management of project activities, management of project status, project troubleshooting and quality, end product complete.

**The Output:** A restored historic monument

Examples of documentation needs during this Phase:

- As-built drawings
- Shop drawings
- Work Progress photography
- Warranties for equipment and materials
- Maintenance manuals
- Operation manuals
- Keying system documentation
- Detailed list of exterior and interior finishes
- Deficiencies list
- Life cycle maintenance/operation requirements

## **5. Commissioning Phase**

**The Transfer:** Preparation for transfer, correct deficiencies, enforce warranties, documentation, satisfied Client.

**The Output:** Transferred Project

Examples of documentation needs during this Phase:

- Record Drawings
- Record Photographs
- Site samples
- Testing, balancing & other installation reports
- Certification of systems and equipment
- Commissioning manual

- Training program for maintenance staff
- All legal and technical reports
- Presentation/marketing photography

## 6. Monitoring & Evaluation Phase

**Lessons Learned:** Project evaluation framework, results compilation, analysis & evaluation against objectives, report, data routed to database.

**Output:** Orderly closure

Examples of documentation needs during this Phase:

- Failures/deficiencies list
- Final project costs
- Final project schedule
- Successful approaches
- Records for archival purposes
- Original goals & objectives

## 3 THE RECORDING, DOCUMENTATION AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT INITIATIVE (RecorDIM)

The Recording, *Documentation and Information Management Initiative* explores ways for the GCI to contribute in partnership to raise the level of conservation practice through a more effective and improved use of recording, documentation and information management as a strategic component for the conservation of monuments and sites.

RecorDIM is the foundation for all field projects – it is the process of collecting and managing the essential data that will then be used to carry out the analysis, management and implementation of any project to conserve the built environment. We are looking specifically at recording, documentation and information management as it applies to the built environment but considering its applications to collections and other movable objects.

Over the last five years, under the guidance of Robin Letellier, CIPA has assembled Outreach workshops after CIPA's General Meetings. They have identified that gaps currently exist between the users and providers of information for built cultural heritage projects. So if professionals – architects, engineers, conservation scientists or archaeologists require information to design a documentation strategy in support of a project, there is little information available to help them.

Our Project is loosely called *Bridging the Gap* – and has as its objective to identify the gaps between the users and providers of information and to strategically find ways to fill them.

When CIPA was formed over 25 years ago its composition was intended to be 50% providers represented by ISPRS – the International Council for Architectural Photogrammetry, and 50% users represented by ICOMOS. Today the composition is weighted towards the providers with much higher attendance from ISPRS. This means that it has become a place for providers to share information with little input from the users community to guide them.

We already know of areas where gaps definitely do exist – namely in publications and training. The GCI intends to focus on publications that will address three basic needs in the field:

- A set of guidelines – looking at **why** we document.
- Handbooks for **how** to document – best practices, techniques and methodologies - both for those who require hands on information – to be able to carry out the work themselves and to be able to chose professional services -such as photogrammetry – advice on what is appropriate, who does it, what the deliverables are – how much it will cost and how long it will take.
- The third component would be a **web** presence – to be able to keep the information current and to provide a forum for information interchange.

We are also looking at designing modules for strategic training in documentation. For the publications and other activities, we will be looking for partners.

We are currently planning for a two-day meeting to be held in Los Angeles at the Getty Center. The meeting would bring together a dozen key international conservation professionals drawn mainly from the information users group to join some colleagues from the GCI. They will be carefully selected from all levels of the international community - private and the public sector, including countries where resources are scarce. They will include managers, historians, conservators, architects, planners and archaeologists.

The overall objective of the first round table will be for the participants to share their needs for RecorDIM and the areas they can identify where information and tools are required. We will carry out a critical review of the current availability of documentation knowledge and information - to evaluate how the needs of the field are being met and furthermore try to develop appropriate tools to address these needs.

The information gathered from this meeting will be synthesized into a report that will fully define the gaps for documentation knowledge in the field and at the same time identify potential partnerships. It will provide additional material to guide the content

and format for the publications – especially the handbooks. It will identify the areas where training is most required. It will also provide other areas where work is required – such as testing of new methodologies and technologies.

The information gathered from this Round Table will lay the foundation for a long-term sustainable project. In addition to the publication and training, we hope to tackle a few of the gaps that will have been identified – and where we have the appropriate expertise to be able to bring resources and suitable partnerships to address them through new and existing Getty Conservation Institute projects.

To implement this initiative, the Getty Conservation Institute has assigned Christopher Gray, a specialist in recording and surveying, as Project Manager and has retained the services of Robin Letellier, a well-known specialist in the RecorDIM field to coordinate this initiative at the international level.