

INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON ARCHIVES

ICA STRATEGIC IMPLEMENTATION PLAN 2014-2018

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A. CONTEXT: THE RAPIDLY CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

A.1 In the early 21st century, the environment in which ICA operates is changing profoundly. Globalization, with the dismantling of many economic and political barriers between nations, has created one vast market place for the creation, exchange and use of information. As the power of the nation state has declined, more decisions which impact on the daily practices of records and archive professionals are being taken at the regional or international level.

- Politically, the Open Government, Big Data and Access to Information agenda have all placed archives at the heart of public policy.
- The relevance of archives for the protection of citizens' rights is now being increasingly acknowledged.
- The balance between the right of access to information and the interests of the record creators (individuals, associations, private companies and public authorities) and the individual citizen's right to privacy, has never been more controversial and delicate than it is today.
- The world's population continues to grow, resulting in increased pressure on scarce resources and a greater likelihood of a climate of political instability
- Archives are especially vulnerable whenever there is war or civil unrest
- The recession has hit many countries very severely and budget reductions have had an impact on many national archives and other archive institutions.

A.2 Technological changes, including the advent of cloud computing and social media, are supporting the generation of huge quantities of information, much of it completely unmanaged. The rapid development of an information society in most areas of the world, in which the use of changing ICTs has become commonplace, has had, and will continue to

have, far-reaching consequences for records and archive professionals. The creation of ‘born digital records’ on a spectacular scale, and the mass digitization of archives originally in other formats, is changing fundamentally the relationship between archives and records creators as well as between archives and public users.

- Records and archive professionals need to be involved at the very beginning of the information cycle, before any records are created, so that the selected ICTs enable their accurate description and responsible management.
- Appraisal decisions about the long-term value of archives have to be taken at a much earlier stage.
- Archive institutions are the ultimate custodians of archives of enduring historical value and will continue to be responsible for them long after the record creators themselves have ceased to exist.
- At the same time archive institutions have the task of providing increasing amounts of information, online through the digitization of archives created on traditional media, at a time when public expectations about the speed and efficiency of information retrieval are constantly rising.

A.3 This changing environment requires the archives sector to be adaptable and flexible and also to set new standards and priorities. It is crucial that the sector works together on the basis of a shared vision and a common programme, for which the International Council on Archives (ICA) offers the unique global platform. Like other professional associations ICA needs to evaluate continually its role, strategic priorities and organization in order to enable its worldwide membership to face current and future challenges. One of its great strengths is that it is a multi-faceted organization, comprising national, regional, municipal and local archives that are an integral part of public administration, and many associations and institutions that are completely independent of government at any level. On the one hand, ICA is based on the concept of archive institutions as actors in the community, who respond to the needs of those outside the confines of the archive world and make an important contribution to general social well-being and improvement. On the other, ICA strives to support the field work of records and archives professionals who seek products (standards, best practices, tools, training) to enable them to do their jobs better. Increased professionalism entails a more effective contribution to society.

A.4 Over the past four years, ICA has carried out a process of internal reforms, leading to the re-structuring of membership fees for national archives, the launching of Annual Conferences and the Forum of National Archivists (FAN), a more strategic and coordinated approach to the professional programme, and the approval of a new constitution that

increases opportunities for participation in ICA by the working archivist and those with management responsibilities for archives throughout the public and private sectors. Externally, strategic partnerships have been formed or strengthened with the World Bank, UNESCO, IFLA and IRMT. Also, the archives sector has been linked explicitly to open government initiatives. On 10 November 2011, the Universal Declaration on Archives, a key pillar of ICA's outreach and advocacy strategy, was adopted by the 36th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO. Our core values, first encapsulated in the Code of Ethics of the 1990s, have been spelt out in ICA's Principles on Access (2012). Now is the time to build on these solid achievements and to continue charting the strategic course of ICA.

A.5 Clear choices and priorities are necessary to face the challenges confronting the archives sector as a result of the political, economic and technological changes described above. At the same time, the multifaceted and culturally diverse ICA faces its own challenges, such as pressures on budgets, membership and dues, and fragmented perspectives and expectations.

- What should be ICA's strategy moving forward, and how can it provide added value for the international archives sector?
- What are its unique selling points?
- Should the efforts of the ICA be directed predominantly inwards, towards its members, or outwards, towards possible partner organizations, policy makers at national, regional and international level, and the IT industry?
- Should its activities focus on political / business processes or on professional development?

All of these considerations are relevant but there is a need for tighter coordination based on more clearly defined priorities.

A.6 At its Paris meeting on 10-11 April 2014 the Executive Board determined that a Strategic Implementation Plan was to be preferred to an entirely new Strategy. The conclusion is that the Strategic Directions 2008-18, as approved by the Kuala Lumpur AGM in July 2008, are by and large standing the test of time quite well, but that there is a need to reduce and refine the objectives. **The strategic objectives must also be accompanied by an implementation plan, to which all the main ICA bodies contribute, to ensure that they are achieved by 2018.** While the planning horizon is for the forthcoming four years, from Annual Conference 2014 to Annual Conference 2018, it is recognized that ICA has to be nimble and respond flexibly to any new strategic challenges that may emerge within this time-frame.

B. STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2014-18

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B.1 The EB believes that ICA should continue to adhere to the ICA vision and mission as proclaimed in the 2008 strategic document.

Vision

Through ICA's activities, key decision-makers in national and international organizations and the general public throughout the world will understand that effective records and archives management is an essential precondition for good governance, the rule of law, administrative transparency, the preservation of mankind's collective memory, and access to information by citizens.

However, the EB also feels that the way in which ICA strives to realize this vision and mission should be adapted to the changing context. Revision of the strategic course every two years was foreseen in the 2008 document. Furthermore, whereas this vision has a predominantly outward character, ICA has necessarily been more focused in recent years on internal reforms rather than on outreach, advocacy and raising awareness. The world has not been standing still, and indeed the pace of change is accelerating. ICA needs to spend less time contemplating its internal structures and more on understanding and responding to the wider environment in which it operates.

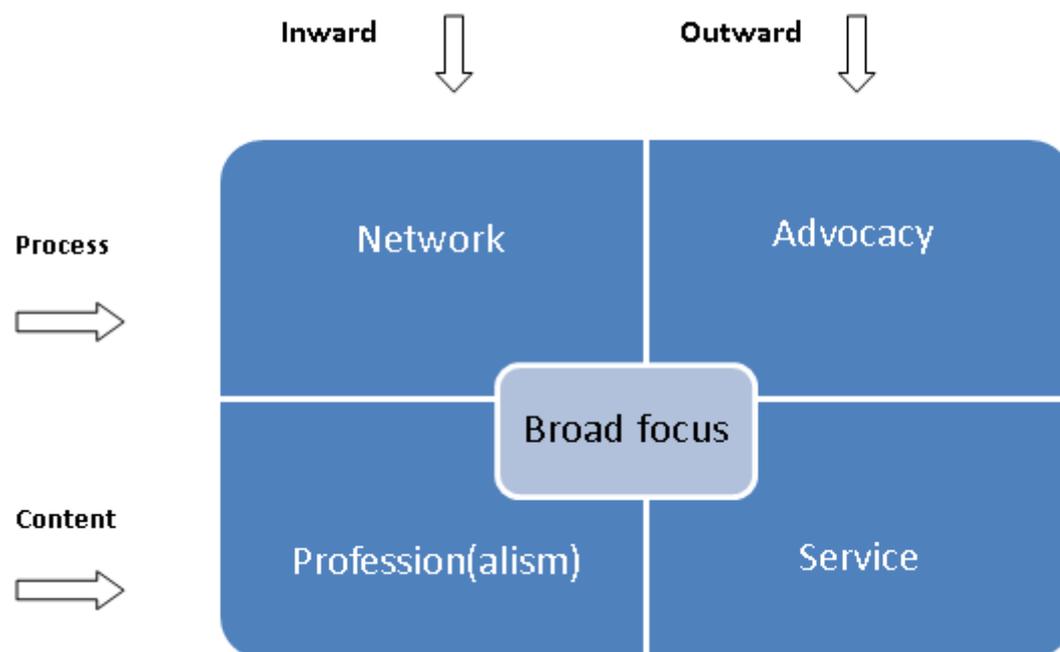


Figure 1: strategic choices for process, content, inward and outward approaches

In order to realize this outward-looking vision, the EB is of the opinion that a more focused strategic approach is required. This focus should be both inward (network and profession(alism)) and outward (advocacy/lobbying), both on process (network and advocacy/lobbying) and content (profession(alism)).

The Strategic Directions 2008-2018, passed at the AGM in Kuala Lumpur in July 2008, contained three other organizational objectives. Those that were based on strengthening the ICA network (4) and building partnerships (6) are now regarded as part of the core activity of the organization. Improving the performance and accountability of the ICA (5) is not so much a strategic objective as a constant organizational process within ICA.

Recommendations on Strategic Objectives

R1. To ensure ICA's added value for the international records and archives sector in an ever changing environment, it is recommended that ICA's strategic course and its implementation by ICA's main bodies should be reviewed every four years by the

General Assembly, corresponding with the cycle of ICA elections, and that a midterm review by the EB leading to appropriate adjustments takes place every two years.

R2. The recommendations in this document are offered to the Executive Board for final decision at their Girona meeting in October 2014. The Strategic Implementation Plan is in effect an update of the Strategic Directions and not a new and original Strategy. However, the final Implementation Plan will be circulated at the General Assembly in Girona, where members will have the opportunity to put questions.

R3. For the period 2014-2018, the six strategic objectives as formulated in Kuala Lumpur should be reduced to the following three key objectives (and the other three should be considered part of the organizational process):

- **Repositioning Archives as essential in good governance, administrative transparency and democratic accountability (formerly Raising Awareness).**
- **Monitoring and influencing the development and use of new technologies, especially in relation to the challenges of providing access to information, protecting citizens' rights and preserving collective memory, which are all implicit in archives management**
- **Building capacity (in particular new competencies and skills) in the records and archives profession (as stated in 2008), so that it can handle the twin challenge of managing digital records and archives on traditional media.**

R4. Professional Solidarity must always be a core value of ICA, for which FIDA is the main instrument and delivery mechanism within ICA. Solidarity with partner organizations in the Blue Shield network for disaster-preparedness will also be upheld.

R5. Within the strategic goal of repositioning archives (1), the focus should be on:

- **Increasing the visibility of the archives sector and highlighting its importance for good governance, administrative transparency and democratic accountability with key decision makers, potential stakeholders and partners.**
- **Stressing the importance of vital records in modern society in co-operation with other professionals, including auditors, accountants, lawyers, IT specialists and software companies**
- **Emphasizing the central place of archives in the heritage of communities, in close cooperation with other professions and institutions working in documentary heritage.**

- **Actively seeking cooperation with initiatives such as the Open Government Partnership and the Open Knowledge Society.**
- **Issuing clear position statements on such contemporary issues as the protection and preservation of personal data, access to information and Big Data**

R6. Within the strategic goal of promoting the opportunities of new technologies (2), the focus should be on:

- **Contributing to the modernization of archiving by promoting the opportunities of new technologies, and acknowledging its accompanying risks.**
- **Advocating and facilitating solutions to risks and problems, for example in the field of sustainable digital preservation, upholding authenticity and reliability etc.**
- **Exploiting new technologies to improve access to archives.**

R7. Within the strategic goal of building capacity in the records and archives profession (3), the focus should be on the key priorities defined by PCOM and implemented in its work plan:

- **Good governance**
- **Digital record keeping**
- **Preservation issues**
- **Access**

C. STRUCTURES: THE EVOLVING ROLES OF ICA BODIES

C.1 In addition to a more focused strategic approach, the EB considers that the responsibilities of the main ICA bodies should be defined more clearly. Indeed, co-ordination of the three main functions of ICA – advocacy/lobbying, network and profession(alism) – can be attributed to specific ICA bodies, which may be regarded as the lead agencies in their specific field. The different bodies will have their own core activities, but all exist in an unambiguous and complementary relation to the other bodies. The Secretariat should co-

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ordinate this work, provide the communications framework, and nurture the membership base. The proposal can be visualized in the following diagram.

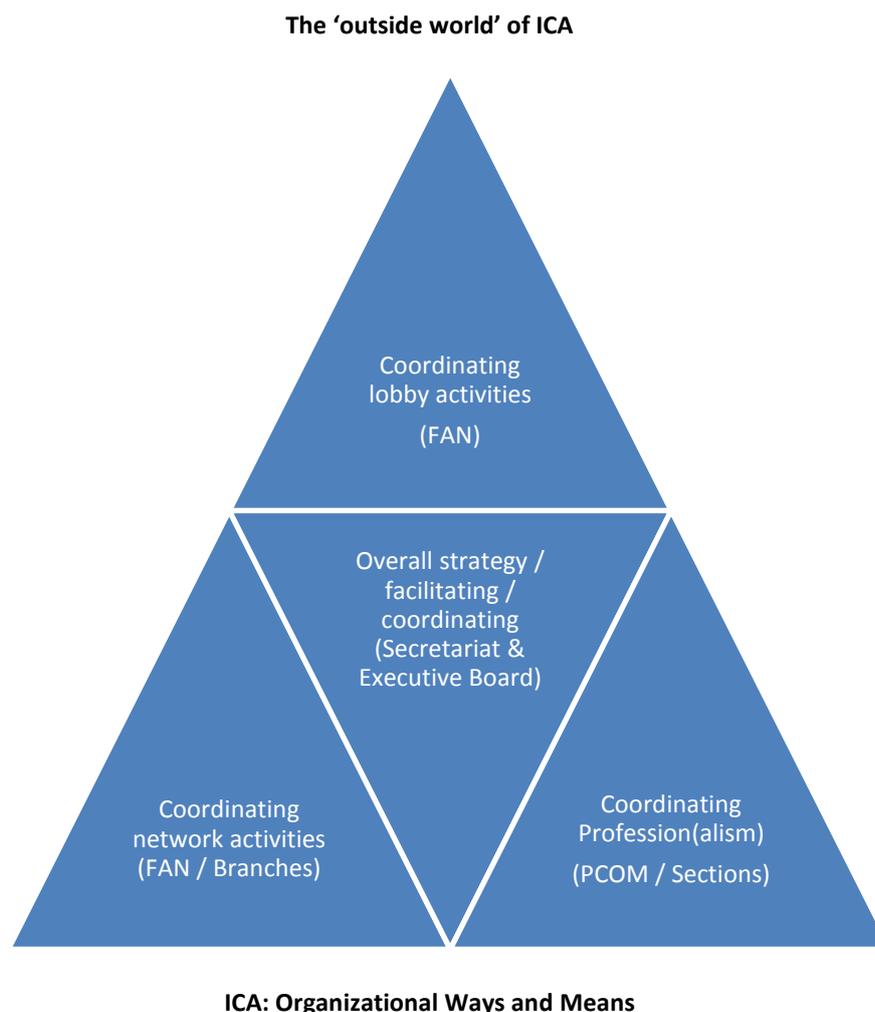


Figure 2: proposed organizational roles and responsibilities 2014-2018

Executive Board (EB)

C.2 The EB comprises representatives of all the main ICA bodies and is responsible for giving directions to these bodies in order to achieve the organization's aims and objectives, and for implementing the policies and programme agreed by the General Assembly. In particular, it shall recommend ICA's annual budget for the approval of the General Assembly and approve the Internal Regulations, subject to ratification by the General Assembly.

Programme Commission (PCOM)

C.3 PCOM is responsible for the preparation and execution of the professional and technical programme of ICA, for coordinating the activities of regional branches, sections and committees, and for the professional content of ICA international congresses, conferences and seminars. Members of PCOM represent the all the main ICA bodies, various areas of professional expertise, and different cultural traditions in the ICA network. PCOM has currently identified four priorities: Digital Record-Keeping; Good governance; Preservation; and Access. It creates expert groups in alignment with ICA's strategic objectives and its priorities and funds specific projects. It ensures that ICA addresses topics that are of concern to its members in all kinds of archival institutions, from the very large national archives to a single-person operation in a low-resource environment. The professional Expert Groups under PCOM provide platforms for the sharing of information, standards and best practices. PCOM needs a guaranteed level of funding to sustain the work of the expert groups over the next four years and to finance innovative projects at the same time. It has been given an expanded remit in the area of coordination of the professional activities of other ICA bodies, but desperately needs additional staff resources to do this effectively.

R8. PCOM is the coordinating body for all of ICA's professional content activities, creating synergies and eliminating duplication of effort.

R9. PCOM should receive a guaranteed minimum percentage from the ICA annual budget from 2015 onwards, with an aspiration that this should increase over the four-year period, subject to budgetary factors.

R10. The Secretariat should examine ways in which increased support to PCOM might be provided, through staff resources and voluntary effort, including restructuring, secondments and internships.

Fund for International Development of Archives (FIDA)

C.4 This fund, hitherto largely financed by donations from members, is intended to provide focused help to colleagues working in especially challenging conditions in low-resource environments. It has close links with ICA's professional programme and expresses ICA's professional solidarity. It is administered by a Board of Trustees, whose nominations are approved by the Executive Board. Since its re-establishment in 2010 under the leadership of Sarah Tyacke (former UK National Archivist), it has proved its worth by funding many deserving projects. However, this is an area where needs far outstrip the resources available.

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In a very real sense FIDA enables noble sentiments of professional solidarity (which is to be distinguished from charity) to be translated into practical action. It need

R 11. FIDA should receive a guaranteed minimum amount from the ICA annual budget from 2015 onwards. This needs to be supplemented by external fund-raising efforts.

Forum of National Archivists

C.5 FAN is the coordinating body for ICA's advocacy/lobbying activities to outside bodies, especially international governmental organizations. It is the only network that gives National Archivists access to peers from every part of the world. Leveraging the combined strengths of Forum members, FAN serves ICA through identifying key contemporary issues and challenges of managing archives, developing high level strategic responses to these issues and fostering international collaboration around them, with a focus on accessible and useful resources that develop strategic capabilities, enhance the standing of our archival institutions and develop our profession.

FAN will explore options for collaboration on:

- Model legislation and policies related to the management of archives
- White papers on emerging technological or policy areas
- Position papers on archival issues
- Lobbying with Governments and international bodies
- Lobbying with the ICT industry
- Professional exchange programme to share expertise amongst FAN members

R 12. Working with the Elected Officers and the Secretariat, FAN should play the leading role in coordinating ICA's relationships with governments, international organizations and funders and the ICT industry. It should also develop a framework for model legislation and make a major contribution to the development of ICA position papers on key archival issues.

Branches

C.6 In the period between 1968 and 2004 ICA progressively set up thirteen regional branches that cover the entire globe. Without them, ICA could not credibly claim to be a global network or to have a global brand. Some branches, especially in Africa, have to overcome historical legacies and are bedeviled by internal communications difficulties. Geographical, linguistic and financial barriers also impede inter-branch cooperation. Finally, branch presidents, with certain distinguished exceptions, find it difficult to make a sustained impact

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on the central ICA governance bodies. ICA cannot do without regional branches, but they must be supported to become more effective. Some branches need to do more to embrace all ICA members in their region.

R13. Linked closely to FAN, branches are the coordinating bodies for the ICA global network in relation to professional cooperation at the regional level.

R14. Building on existing work, the branches should carry out their own review of what they need from ICA and what they can contribute to it. They should submit an interim report to the Executive Board in the spring of 2015 and a final version to the General Assembly in late 2015.

Associations

C.7 There are over eighty professional associations, representing many thousands of archivists, which are members of ICA today in category B. Members in associations are often able to comment more freely about the impact of government policies on archives than their counterparts working in national archives. In addition, members of associations represent many strands of the profession, not just one narrow specialism. These two factors have enabled the Section on Professional Associations (SPA) to make major contributions on cross-cutting issues such as the Code of Ethics and the Universal Declaration on Archives. Thanks to SPA, the professional associations punch above their weight in ICA. SPA should work closely with FAN, the branches and the sections;

R15. The work of the Associations on cross-cutting initiatives, especially advocacy, needs to be fully recognized in ICA governance.

Sections

C.8 Over the years twelve professional sections (including SPA above) have been created, largely as a result of the determination of a few key members in the early years when the section had provisional status. The sections are a great source of professional knowledge and expertise, enhanced by exchanges of information at the international level. They also provide a natural home for many institutional and individual members. Some sections focus on professional themes, and others on types of archival institution. Because the sections have grown from the bottom-up on the basis of creative improvisation, there is a case for examining how far they correspond today with the contours of the contemporary archival landscape.

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R16. There should be a review of the structures and coverage of the existing sections and a survey of current activities. The meeting of Section Chairs is asked by the Executive Board to perform a survey and an analysis of current and future sectional activity, including processes for establishing new sections and model constitutions for sections. A preliminary report should be presented to the EB in spring 2015, an interim report in the fall of 2015, and a final report for the spring EB 2016, with a final document for approval at the General Assembly in 2016.

R17. There should be a review of the existing structure of benefits and membership dues for category C and D members, with the objective of devising packages that attract more institutions of different types and individuals to become members of ICA.

Secretariat

C.9 The Secretariat, headed by the Secretary General as the senior paid member of staff, is the nerve centre of the organization, attempting to meet the many expectations of ICA members from a comparatively slender resource base. Since its inception it has benefited from substantial support from the host country, which continues to provide office space in central Paris entirely free of charge, together with a significant annual programme subvention. Its staff, both those who work in Paris and those volunteers who are based elsewhere, have considerable knowledge of ICA as an organization and in effect are its collective memory. It is constantly looking forward and planning ahead, but it also upholds the enduring values of ICA and is the guardian of the constitution. It aims to facilitate and enable the work of other ICA bodies. It has responsibilities in the following areas:-

- Representation, both of central ICA at meetings of other ICA bodies and of ICA at meetings of partners and external stakeholders
- Coordinating internal and external communication
- Organizing central governance meetings
- Making a major contribution to the strategic planning process
- Providing high quality services (for example, an enhanced website is planned for 2015) and benefits (for example, publications and newsletters) to members, as far as resources allow, and keeping membership administration up to date
- Organizing campaigns to grow the membership of ICA with other ICA bodies
- Handling financial transactions and preparing financial documentation

In the period 2014-18 the Secretariat will concentrate on improving communications especially through the innovative use of new technologies, increasing ICA membership (in partnership with the relevant ICA bodies), in particular by offering more high quality products in more languages. It will also pay particular importance to strengthening the

global network of ICA branches. It will also kick-start initiatives to generate revenue from existing ICA products and services.

R18. The Secretary General should report on the on-going modernization of the Secretariat, including the increase of capacity through volunteers, to each meeting of the Elected Officers and at each meeting of the Executive Board. In addition, the respective roles of the President and the Secretary General in the area of representation need to be clarified.

Evaluation Commission

C.10 This is a new body which has succeeded the former Audit Commission. Issues relating purely to financial audit are tackled separately. Under the constitution, it is responsible for evaluating the ICA programme, its internal and external communications, and its governance. If appropriate, it will make recommendations for improvement. ECOM needs to base its work on clearly defined Critical Success Factors (CSFs) for ICA and certain targets of ICA bodies that are selected as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

R19. The Evaluation Commission should devise an annual work plan, which is based on identified CSFs and KPI targets, and submit it to the Elected Officers and Secretary General. All ICA bodies must cooperate fully and quickly with an ECOM investigation, and it will be supported in this by the Secretariat. It should submit an annual report to the EB and General Assembly at the Annual Conference.

Elected Officers

According to the constitution (art.6 section 2, para j), the President has the power to convene meetings comprising the two elected Vice-Presidents), the Secretary General and other office holders as appropriate. This group is responsible for the smooth operation of the organization between EB meetings and for the wellbeing of the organization's salaried staff.

R20 The Elected Officers are responsible for high-level operational decisions between EB meetings and are accountable to the full EB for these decisions. Summaries of Elected Officers meetings, together with key documents, will be circulated to the EB within one month of these meetings. After Girona there will be a recurring item on the EB agenda about the work of the Elected Officers since the previous meeting. The three office-holders will continue to represent reports to the General Assembly every year.

Accountability of ICA Bodies

R 21. It is essential that all of the ICA bodies with responsibility for delivery of various aspects of the overall strategy should make annual reports to the Executive Board and the General Assembly. The existing constitutional provisions for this reporting should be implemented thoroughly and supplemented if necessary. In addition, the case for setting each ICA body performance targets in an annual business plan should be examined.

D.FINANCE

Revenue

D.1 Regardless of the strategic objectives, a balanced and stable financial basis is a necessity in any organization. Looking at the revenue side first, ICA has to make considerable efforts to raise non-member generated income. This concerns the outward oriented part of our association which can benefit from the opportunity to open new financial sources by attracting new sponsors and donors as well as by selling its products, services and expertise. That means that we have to strengthen entrepreneurial thinking in all fields of activities and among all our members, representing a major change in organizational culture.

Looking at the inward generated income, we still have to consider some long-standing suggestions as to adapt the current due system and to design it more equitable even if we insist, in accordance with the strategic objectives, on the particular and salient role of Category A members.

Expenditure

D.2 We have to face the fact that ICA needs a stable organizational and communication infrastructure to operate smoothly and to keep its members, dispersed throughout the globe, together for their common benefit. The Secretariat is the backbone of the association. However, we have to verify its effectiveness and efficiency and we also have to check the opportunities for shared services within the archival community worldwide, while of course respecting ICA's obligations as an employer and the framework of employment law. Understandably there is discussion about the Secretariat's efficiency. One way of finding out more would be to hold benchmarking exercises with NGOs which have a similar resource base.

D.3 Regarding the expert work, it is evident that its funding has to be expanded to direct project funding as well as to sell the final products and outcome to a wider range of stakeholders than the archival community itself. This therefore requires that ICA members not only regard themselves as beneficiaries from its activities, but also feel obligated to give something back in return. Their professional knowledge as well as their professional diversity constitutes ICA's real wealth.

D.4 Looking at ICA's solidarity track, ICA has to check carefully how, in the future, its funding could be organized, what an agreement about the contribution to pay a given amount to FIDA could look like, and how ICA can control efficiently the target specific use of the FIDA contributions

Summary

D.5 Therefore, the main principles for all financial decisions shall be to provide fair, equitable and transparently calculated obligations for all members and transparent and accountable expenditure decisions. According to its inward and outward orientation, the funding must again become an internal and an external one as it has been for decades before the beginning of the new century. This implicitly means that the archival community has to open itself again to the non-archival world. External financial sources, however, should not only include sponsorship but also the possibility to provide benefits in products and services. Furthermore, expenses will have to relate to the agreed strategic objectives and the allocation of funding streams must reflect this.

R 22. There should be a review of all potential sources of income, including possible non-member generated revenue and taking account of previous work done in recent years. The results should be presented to the EB meeting in spring 2015. Meanwhile, the Secretariat will start to identify 'quick wins' in this area.

R 23. All ICA expenses must be clearly linked to ICA strategic objectives. The budget lines and allocation processes should be adjusted to reflect this. The current allocation of funding for the professional activities of sections and branches should form part of the PCOM budget from 2015 onwards, and PCOM should determine allocations (apart from any funds for governance travels) to sections and branches.

R 24. The Annual Conferences should be made into a profitable, income generating event for ICA by opening these events to the largest possible audiences. The timely involvement of the Vice-President Finance in the organization of conferences is therefore necessary, including relationships with major sponsors and vendors.

R25. As regards membership dues, category A2 and C memberships should be reviewed first, as suggested by the DAC studies, the other member categories later. The review shall examine inter alia the possibility of converting payments into service delivery.

E.OVERALL CONCLUSION

ICA has set itself ambitious objectives and now needs to develop a detailed plan to implement them, based on the timely completion of the recommended actions. Without rigorous reporting, this plan may remain on the drawing board and make no practical difference either inside or outside the archival world. So, once the plan has been approved,

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progress in relation to all the above recommendations should be monitored every year. However, it cannot be stressed too strongly that ICA needs to be more externally focused and should not get bogged down in internal preoccupations. With this in mind, it is also proposed that ICA should commission an independent assessment of the impact of its activities as a whole in time for presentation to the General Assembly in September 2018.

DAL

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