

New Professionals Programme Overview

What is the purpose of this document?

This *New Professionals Programme Overview* provides a summary of the ICA's New Professionals Programme (NPP), for the information of potential members of the Programme, Conference Buddies, Mentors, the New Professionals Programme Coordinator (NPP Coordinator), the NPP Committee, members of the ICA's Programme Commission, and others within and outside of the ICA.

This document outlines the background, purpose, and scope of the New Professionals Programme and the concept of, and differences between, a 'New Professional' and an 'Active New Professional.' The document also:

- explains what funding is provided as part of the NPP bursary scheme;
- explains how members of the Programme are selected and their term of appointment;
- outlines who can be an Active NP;
- describes the activities and tasks the Active NPs undertake over the period in which they are active members of the Programme; and
- defines key terms used as part of the NPP.

The document also explains the role of different ICA representatives in the NPP, including PCOM, the NPP Coordinator, the NP's 'Conference Buddy,' and the NP's Mentor.

Accompanying documentation, such as the *Guidelines for Active New Professionals*, application forms, and related resources, provide additional information and guidance;

this information is made available as needed to the various groups involved with the NPP.

What is the New Professionals Programme?

The International Council on Archives wants to engage future leaders in the field of archives and records management, encouraging them to be active members of the organisation and committed professionals who will help to stimulate international engagement with professional communities in their own countries and around the world. To this end, the ICA has developed the New Professionals Programme (NPP).

Currently the main focus of the NPP is to identify and designate an annual cohort of 'Active New Professionals' (Active NPs) and to provide this group with support, advice, and guidance throughout the year or so in which they are formally identified as active members of the Programme. However, the ICA encourages anyone new to the profession to consider themselves 'New Professionals' and to take advantage of the communications and documentation generated as part of the NPP.

ICA support specifically for Active NPs includes several major components:

- the provision of bursary funding to enable up to six Active NPs to attend the ICA's Annual Conference or Quadrennial Congress (hereafter referred to as the Conference) in the year in which they are Active NPs;
- coordination of opportunities to participate actively in the Conference, including organising a session for the Active NPs to make a formal presentation together on a topic of their choosing, and inviting all Active NPs to participate in a networking luncheon that includes other New Professionals and a range of representatives from the ICA community;
- the pairing of Active NPs with 'Conference Buddies' during the Conference, to provide them logistical support, advice, and guidance during the event;
- the pairing of Active NPs with 'Mentors' after the Conference, to provide professional support, advice and, guidance over a minimum one-year period (ideally continuing over two- to three years in total) as the Active NPs establish themselves in their careers;
- coordination of project work by the Active NPs, which may include the development of their own project or participation in an existing ICA project; and
- the provision of a technical infrastructure, primarily managed by Active NPs, to allow all New Professionals, including current and former Active NPs and other ICA members new to archival and records management work, to develop and maintain a communications network, which is intended to support information sharing amongst themselves and with the wider archival community and the public.

Active NPs are chosen from applicants around the world, including Europe and North America as well as Africa, Asia, and the Pacific. (Note that the financial support provided to Active NPs is different from the other bursary assistance offered by the ICA to all members from low-resource environments.) Advice about how to apply to be considered as an Active NP is provided on the ICA website and updated annually.

The NPP is a specific programme within the ICA Programme Commission's business plan and is managed by a team of volunteers from the Programme Commission (PCOM), under the direction of a New Professionals Programme Coordinator (NPP Coordinator), who works closely with the ICA's Programme Officer and the Deputy Secretary General. While the NPP Coordinator is identified as the primary liaison for all NPP activities, he or she is at liberty to designate tasks to others within PCOM or the ICA.

Volunteer and staff resources available within the ICA Secretariat and Programme Commission currently limit the NPP to running the NP bursary scheme and supporting the Active NPs throughout the year. However, the NPP has aspirations to provide more support and meet the needs of the wider archives and records management community as resources and opportunities become available.

What is the background to the New Professionals Programme?

The NPP developed out of a project known as the Flying Reporters initiative, launched at the 16th International Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in 2008. The Flying Reporters initiative aimed to create an international network of young professionals in the field of archives and records management. The last Flying Reporters group was deployed in 2012 at the Brisbane Congress.

Building on the Flying Reporters programme, the New Professionals Programme was established in 2014 specifically to facilitate attendance by NPs at the ICA's Annual Conferences and Quadrennial Congresses. The intention is to support PCOM's long-term goal to encourage and foster the development of new members of the archives profession. In 2014, three NP applicants received bursaries to attend the annual conference in Girona, Spain; in 2015, six applicants were selected to attend the conference in Reykjavik, Iceland; and in 2016, eight applicants were funded to attend the congress in Seoul, Korea.

After the Seoul Congress in 2016, the NPP Committee decided to limit the number of bursaries each year to a maximum of six, in order to ensure adequate resources were available (both financial and in terms of the NPP Coordinator's time) and to ensure the ICA could provide the best possible support for all Active NPs.

What funding is provided as part of the NPP bursary scheme?

NPP bursary funding is intended to support attendance by Active NPs at the ICA Conference. The following Conference-related costs are covered by the bursary: Conference registration fees; cost of travel to and from the Active NP's home and the Conference location; hotel nights for the time of the Active NP's required presence at the Conference; and an allowance of up to €100 for on-site costs during the Conference. Details about the specific terms and conditions of the bursary are included in the *Guidelines for Active New Professionals*.

Thus far no funds are available specifically to support the mentorship part of the NPP. It is expected that Mentors and Active New Professionals will communicate using low-cost mechanisms, such as email, text message, or Skype. As well, no funds are available for Conference Buddies, as it is assumed they intend to register for and travel to the Conference anyway.

How are Active NPs selected? What is the term of appointment?

Application forms for the NPP are typically made available on the ICA website when the call for application is made in December each year; the deadline for submission is usually early the following February. The NPP Committee, made up of PCOM members, reviews applications and selects the successful applicants. Final decisions are usually made by the end of April.

The NPP Coordinator then confirms that chosen candidates are willing and able to serve as Active NPs, after which an announcement is made introducing the Active NPs to the ICA community. The Active NPs are then given access to the NP Facebook page and to the section devoted to NP activities and resources on the ICA workspace. Active NPs are also connected with the outgoing Active NPs from the previous year, who provide support during the transition.

The NPP Coordinator helps the Active NPs with logistical matters as they prepare to attend the Conference. The NPP Coordinator, the Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison, and other members of PCOM also work together and in consultation with Active NPs to identify Conference Buddies and Mentors, who are introduced to their Active NP 'Mentee' at an appropriate time before the Conference (for Conference Buddies) or at or after the Conference (for Mentors).

As outlined further below, the role of the Conference Buddy is to help Active NPs navigate the Conference itself. The role of the Mentor is to provide advice and guidance to Active NPs on areas of professional interest over the course of a year or so, ideally longer, as the Active NP develops in his or her professional career.

The formal term of appointment for Active NPs is approximately 12-14 months. The cycle usually begins on or about the first of May each year, once applicants are confirmed and announcements made to the ICA community. The formal appointment ends approximately 14 months later, around July of the following year.

The extended and flexible time frame for the NPP is intended to allow incoming and outgoing Active NPs to overlap with each other, so that the outgoing Active NPs can help with the transition for incoming Active NPs. While the formal mentor-mentee relationship is expected to last for a year at a minimum, normally starting at the end of the Conference, it is hoped that the relationship will continue for as long as both parties find it beneficial.

Who can be an Active New Professional?

The New Professionals Programme is aimed at ICA members with less than 5 years' experience in the archives and/or records management profession. All successful applicants must meet one of the following conditions:

- (1) they must be individual (Category D) members of the ICA;
or
- (2) they must work for an organisation that has a Category A or C institutional membership with the ICA;
or
- (3) they must be studying at an educational establishment with an institutional (Category C) ICA membership.

Category A members include central archive directorates or national archival institutions, and Category C members include institutions concerned with the administration or preservation of records and archives or in archival training and education. Category D membership is lower for those who choose to receive digital publications only, and it is also reduced for students, retired or unwaged persons. More information about membership categories is available on the ICA website.

Membership in the ICA, whether from individuals, organisations, or educational institutions, must be up to date at the time of application. Note that being an individual member of a professional association that holds ICA Category B membership is not considered a valid membership for the purposes of the NPP application. (Category B membership is specifically for designated representatives of regional, national, or international associations, which could have hundreds of their own members. Therefore it is not logistically possible for the ICA to broaden the NP application scope to encompass all the potential members of other such associations.) Applicants to the NPP may be:

- students of archival science (including students who are individual ICA members and students of archives/records management schools that are ICA Category C institutional members); or
- trainees (including trainees who are individual ICA members and trainees in organisations that are ICA Category A or C institutional members).

Applicants to the NPP may be students of archival science, trainees or people starting out in their career in archives and records management. They must be a member of ICA as detailed above. Applicants to the NPP who are not students or trainees must have started working, part-time or full-time, in a paid position, as an archivist or records manager, in one of the 5 calendar years preceding the year in which the application is being evaluated by the ICA. Applicants with longer work experience are not accepted into the NPP.

Because a key goal of the NPP is to provide NPs with a conference experience they might never otherwise be able to have, applicants to the NPP must have never attended an ICA Annual Conference or Quadrennial Congress in the past. While they may have attended regional branch conferences, they should not have received funding from the ICA for such attendance. Those who have received ICA funding in the past to attend regional or international ICA conferences will not be accepted into the NPP.

There is no age restriction on New Professionals in general within the ICA or on Active New Professionals in particular. The primary criteria is that they will have been working or studying in the archives and records management field for less than 5 years. NPP bursary funding is only provided to those who confirm that they meet this condition.

What do the Active NPs do?

Active NPs are encouraged to identify their own needs and goals and to develop viable plans for communications and activities. PCOM and the ICA will support any NP activities that fit within the wider ICA vision for professional development and capacity building.

To provide the Active NPs with the opportunity to pursue their particular goals, Active NPs participate in the following activities and carry out the following duties during the time they formally participate to the Programme.

Before, during, and after the **Conference**, all Active NPs will

- in the lead up to the Conference, communicate as a group facilitated by the NPP Coordinator on social media (Internet, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) about their role as Active NPs and their activities and ideas;
- attend the Conference in its entirety and participate actively from the beginning to end;
- attend all briefings and meetings organised for the Active NPs during the Conference;
- liaise regularly with their Conference Buddy to take advantage of as many opportunities as possible during the Conference (more information on Conference Buddies is provided below);
- run a session during the Conference, to be planned in consultation with the NPP Coordinator;
- participate in and support the workshops which are part of the Conference programme and/or any workshops specifically dedicated to new professionals;
- communicate about Conference events whilst the Conference is underway, using appropriate social media or other tools, such as Internet, Facebook, Twitter, etc.;
- attend all New Professionals events planned for the Conference; and
- write an article about the Conference or a related topic, after the Conference is over, for publication on the ICA website, FLASH or other appropriate publication.

Active NPs are also expected to participate in – and take the lead on – several **communications and social media** activities. The different NP communications tools currently in place are outlined below.

- A newsletter is published by the Active NPs once every two months, with contributions from NPs other than the active members, with topics in line with NPs' interests.
- A specific space on the ICA website is dedicated to information by and about NPs.
- Social media communications are carried out through Facebook, Twitter, and Wechat, as appropriate.

To support these communications, specific policies, procedures, and guidelines have been established. These documents are available on the NPP space on the ICA workspace and made available to different participants as needed. All communications must adhere to ICA guidelines and professional best practice.

Active NPs also engage in a **mentor-mentee relationship**, where they are paired with a Mentor who provides them with professional advice and guidance for the year or so in which they are Active NPs, ideally longer if appropriate. More information on the mentorship programme is provided below.

As the Active NPs' official term draws to a close, they will be expected to provide **transition support** for the next year's Active NPs. This work includes welcoming the new Active NPs into the programme, sharing information with them about the year's activities and events, and otherwise providing support to help the incoming group take over communications, social media, and other duties effectively. The NPP Coordinator will facilitate introductions between the outgoing and incoming Active NPs and will assist with the transition as needed.

Active NPs may also be encouraged to participate in the work of **branches, sections, or expert groups** as appropriate, as research assistants or observers. These relationships will be determined on a case-by-case basis, depending on the needs and priorities of the Active NP and the particular projects or activities underway in different parts of the ICA.

What is the role of PCOM?

The NPP is one of ICA's Programme Commission's three major programmes. It is overseen by a committee drawn from PCOM, led by the NPP Coordinator. This committee reviews NP applications for participation in the Programme, determines successful candidates, establishes and revises guidelines and requirements for NPP activities and provides liaison support for Active NPs, Conference Buddies, and Mentors.

A central responsibility for PCOM's NPP Committee is to develop a pool of professionals willing to provide support as Conference Buddies and Mentors and from that pool to identify appropriate Conference Buddies and Mentors for each year's intake of NPs. To facilitate this process, the Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison and other NPP Committee and ICA representatives actively disseminate messages to appropriate listservs and through ICA sections, branches, and expert groups, as well as through Facebook, Twitter, the ICA website, and other communications tools.

To support PCOM communications and activities related to the NPP, a wiki page has been set up on the PCOM workspace (<http://workspace.ica.org/projects/new-professionals/wiki>). This site is accessible to NPP Committee members only.

What is the role of the New Professionals Programme Coordinator?

The NPP Coordinator is the primary conduit for most NPP activity, assigning specific tasks to other members of the committee as needed. The activities and duties of the NPP Coordinator include the following:

- in the months before the Conference, communicating with Active NPs, to help them prepare various aspects of their participation and to help them get started with communications on social media;
- working with the Active NPs before and during the Conference to help with logistics and planning, including coordinating the activities of the different Active NPs, clarifying logistics, and planning for workshops, presentations, and other Conference events;
- organising all the necessary briefings and meetings for the Active NPs during the Conference;
- being available at the Conference to answer logistical or local arrangements questions from Active NPs or help with any procedural issues or concerns, if these cannot be answered by the Conference Buddy; and
- liaising with the Active NPs about the publication of their articles, written after the Conference and published on the ICA website, FLASH or other appropriate publication.

Assisting the NPP Coordinator is the ICA's Finance Manager, who is the primary contact for financial matters and other related practicalities during the year in which the Active NP is a member of the Programme. Also assisting the NPP Coordinator is the Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison, who is the primary contact for issues directly related to relationships and activities between Conference Buddies or Mentors and Active NPs.

What is the role of the Conference Buddy?

At or before the Conference, Active NPs will be introduced to a Conference Buddy. The Conference Buddy will serve as a 'shepherd' to the Active NP during the Conference, helping the Active NP navigate the conference by: offering advice about local arrangements or Conference activities, introducing Active NPs to colleagues, and facilitating the Active NP's attendance at meetings or other events, in order to expose the Active NP to aspects of the ICA's activities.

The Conference Buddy will be a member of the profession and either an individual member of the ICA (Category D) or someone working for a Category A or Category C member of the ICA.

Category A members include central archive directorates or national archival institutions, and Category C members include institutions concerned with the administration or preservation of records and archives or in archival training and education. Because Category B membership is specifically for designated representatives of regional, national, or international associations, which could have hundreds of their own members, it is not logistically possible for the ICA to nominate as

Conference Buddies any professionals whose only membership link to the ICA is through their Category B association.

Ideally, the Conference Buddy will be a mid-career professional in archives and records management, who has participated in two or more ICA Annual Conferences or Quadrennial Congresses, giving them experience with how ICA conferences operate and the activities and events New Professionals can undertake. PCOM members are welcome to serve as Conference Buddies if they wish

Conference Buddies perform the following specific duties:

- introduce themselves to the Active NP before the Conference and set up a time to meet the Active NP in person as soon as possible at the Conference to plan their activities together;
- introduce their Active NP to colleagues and other professionals at the Conference, to ensure the Active NP has the widest possible exposure to colleagues in the archival community;
- facilitate attendance by the Active NP at Conference meetings or other Conference events as possible, to provide them with exposure to the wide range of ICA activities underway at the annual Conference; and
- support the Active NP during the Conference by participating in any NP events that help foster communications and relationship building.

To ensure the most effective Conference experience possible, Conference Buddies and Active NPs are encouraged to liaise with each other as soon as possible before the Conference, to plan their activities together. The Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison will facilitate introductions and will be available at the Conference to provide additional assistance as needed.

Note that Conference Buddies must be ICA members as noted above, in either Category A, C, or D. They are expected to cover their own costs for attendance at the ICA Conference; no funding is available to support travel, accommodation, or conference registration.

What is the role of the Mentor?

As soon as possible after their selection into the NPP, Active NPs will be introduced to a Mentor. Mentors provide professional support to Active NPs by giving advice, answering questions, and otherwise being available to guide and support their assigned Active NP throughout a term of at least one year, ideally longer.

The Mentor will be a member of the profession and either an individual member of the ICA (Category D) or someone working for a Category A or Category C member of the ICA.

Category A members include central archive directorates or national archival institutions, and Category C members include institutions concerned with the administration or preservation of records and archives or in archival training and education. As noted earlier, because Category B membership is specifically for designated representatives of regional, national, or international associations, which could have hundreds of their own members, it is not logistically possible for the ICA to nominate as Mentors any professionals whose only membership link to the ICA is through their Category B association.

Ideally, the Mentor will be a seasoned member of the archives and records management profession with many years' experience in the field, such as a senior manager, educator, or active contributor to the profession. PCOM members are welcome to serve as Mentors if they wish.

Mentors perform the following specific duties:

- commit an average of at least 1-2 hours a week or 4-8 hours a month to liaise with and support their Active NP;
- communicate regularly with their assigned Active NP, following a general schedule or plan decided in consultation with the Active NP and the NPP Coordinator;
- be as supportive as possible of their Active NP throughout the year, with the goal of enhancing the Active NP's experience within the profession (note that this support is intended to relate to professional and career-oriented issues, not personal matters);
- as appropriate, provide support as their Active NP prepares an article for the ICA website, *FLASH* or other appropriate publication, ideally by reading a draft and providing input or offering other support as appropriate; and
- at the end of the first year in which they are serving as Mentor, write a report on their experience, which will be used to help improve the mentorship programme in future. (Personal information within reports will be kept confidential to the NPP Committee.)

Mentors are also encouraged to use as many different communications tools as possible, including email, telephone, Skype, Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn or other social media platforms, to provide for the most diverse and rich communications experience possible.

The Mentor may also provide some support as the Active NP participates in branch, section, or expert group activities, as appropriate. The time available for this support will be determined by the schedules and other priorities of both the Mentor and the Active NP.

Should the Mentor be unable to continue his or her duties throughout the year, he or she will contact the Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison immediately to discuss the

situation and identify options so that their Active NP continues to receive support, even if another Mentor needs to be selected.

To support the **mentor-mentee relationship**, Active NPs are encouraged to:

- provide the NPP Coordinator with a summary of issues or topics of interest to them, so that they can be matched with Mentors who share the same interests or represent particular disciplinary specialties;
- confirm the most appropriate language(s) for communication so that they can be matched with Mentors who can meet their language needs;
- work with their Mentors to define the scope and boundaries of their relationship, including frequency and methods of communication, particular topics of interest and so on, so that both parties can contribute successfully without being overburdened; and
- at the end of the mentorship programme, write a report on their experience, which will be used to help improve the mentorship programme in future. (Personal information within reports is kept confidential to the NPP Committee.)

Note that Mentors are expected to be ICA members, as noted above. They are not expected to attend the ICA Conference and no funding is available to support their attendance. However, if Mentors are attending the Conference, we encourage them to consider serving as Conference Buddies as well as Mentors, to help develop the professional relationship with their New Professional 'buddy'/mentee.

Key Terms

Below are some key terms used in relation to the New Professionals Programme.

Active New Professional

An active New Professional is an NP who has been selected officially as a member of the NPP through the annual application process. They contribute time and effort to the year-round activities of the NPP, and they benefit from the NP Bursary Scheme to attend the annual Conference or Congress.

Conference Buddy

A mid-career professional in archives and records management, who has participated in two or more ICA Annual Conferences or Quadrennial Congresses, who will serve as a 'shepherd' to the Active NP during the Conference, helping the Active NP navigate the conference by: offering advice about local arrangements or Conference activities, introducing Active NPs to colleagues, and facilitating the Active NP's attendance at meetings or other events, in order to expose the Active NP to aspects of the ICA's activities. Conference Buddies must be Category D members of the ICA or they must be affiliated with Category A or C institutional members, as noted in this document.

Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison

The Conference Buddy/Mentor Liaison is a member of the NPP Committee responsible for identifying and coordinating the activities of Conference Buddies and Mentors with Active NPs over the given year in which those New Professionals are active.

Mentor

A seasoned member of the archives and records management profession with many years' experience in the field, such as a senior manager, educator, or active contributor to the profession, who provides professional support to Active NPs by providing advice, answering questions and otherwise being available to guide and support their assigned Active NP throughout a term of at least one year, ideally longer. Mentors must be Category D members of the ICA or they must be affiliated with Category A or C institutional members, as noted in this document.

New Professionals Programme

The New Professionals Programme (NPP) is a programme of the ICA whose goal is to facilitate the entry into the profession of New Professionals, by creating and providing them with opportunities to develop their professional networks and skills within the

archives and records management communities globally. The programme has several components: 1) year-round NP activity including a newsletter and social media presence; 2) activity during the Annual Conference or Quadrennial Congress, including a bursary programme to cover registration fees and travel costs for six Active New Professionals, and a workshop and/or panel session(s) designed by and for NPs; 3) a mentors and buddies component, in which Conference Buddies are connected with Active NPs provided during the Annual Conference or Quadrennial Congress and Mentors are provided for a period of at least one year to provide advice and guidance on professional matters to the Active NPs.

New Professional

A New Professional (NP) is an archival or records management professional who has been working in the field for less than 5 years.

NP Bursary Scheme

The New Professionals or NP Bursary Scheme is one element of the NPP; it provides financial assistance to a selected number of New Professionals to support attendance at the Annual Conference or Quadrennial Congress. As of 2017, a total of six bursaries are provided in accordance with criteria determined by the ICA Programme Commission, the NPP Committee, and the Vice President Programme.

NP Cohort

The NP Cohort is the group of six Active New Professionals in a given year.

NPP Coordinator

The NPP Coordinator is a member of the extended ICA Secretariat team who has been given specific responsibility to oversee the various elements of the NPP.